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## Competition Events Guide

### National Forensic League

The National Forensic League offers a number of speaking, literary interpretation, and debate events at district tournaments that determine qualification to the National Tournament. As a national organization, many of the event rules and guidelines serve as model standards for state and local levels of competition.

**NOTE: Please consult the District Tournament Operations Manual and the National Tournament Operations Manual for tournament *procedures*. This document is strictly a guide to event rules and standards.**

The NFL Board of Directors has established these rules, and often works with advisory committees on a periodic basis to review their effectiveness and educational value.

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## Policy Debate

Debaters work in pairs (teams) to address the school year's topic, either from the affirmative side (to propose a plan to solve a problem with the topic), or the negative side (to prove how the affirmative's plan is flawed). Argumentation includes a constructive case, cross-examination, and refutation. Skills learned include research, policy analysis, case building, refutation, questioning, organization and communication.

1. **Resolution:** The resolution will be one requiring a policy judgment. It is determined annually by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), and is published in *Rostrum* and at [www.nflonline.org](http://www.nflonline.org).
2. **Order of Speeches:** Each debater must give one and only one constructive speech, one period of questioning, one period of answering, and one rebuttal speech, in the following order:

Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
<i>Prep time</i>	5 minutes per team

3. **Prompting Philosophy:** Oral prompting, except time signals, either by the speaker's colleague or by any other person while the debater has the floor, is discouraged though not prohibited and may be penalized by some judges. Debaters may, however, refer to their notes and materials and may consult with their teammate while they do not have the floor.
4. **Reading case and/or plan:** A team may decide, when asked by the opponent team for a copy of their case and/or plan, whether or not to provide it; if the team refuses they will not be penalized in any way.
5. **Timing:** Timekeepers are an option but not required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their partners or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each team is five minutes.
6. **Oral Critiques:** No debate ballot may be returned without a reason for decision. Oral commentary is not considered a substitute for the written ballot. The NFL strongly discourages judges from disclosing decisions in the preliminary round of NFL competition. Comments made by a judge (orally or written) should be constructive and professional.

## Congressional Debate

This is individual debate in a large group setting. Legislative debaters research and write pieces of Congressional legislation that they feel will better the society in which we live. At a tournament, debaters will then speak on the legislation while using proper parliamentary procedure. Judges score each competitor based on argumentation ability, speaking technique, knowledge of parliamentary procedure, and overall participation.

**Mission Statement:** The National Forensic League is committed to educational development of the individual through the vehicle of Congressional Debate, which promotes leadership and communication skills through rigorous interaction and debate on issues confronting our democracy. These skills will prepare them for learning and leadership throughout our lives.

**Core Values:** As members of the National Forensic League community, we share a commitment to:

- ❖ Promote ethics in research and competition
- ❖ Promote respect for diversity of ideas and of community.
- ❖ Promote seriousness of purpose and demeanor.
- ❖ Promote empowerment gained through knowledge.
- ❖ Promote the tools of effective and ethical leadership.
- ❖ Promote active participation in Democratic processes.
- ❖ Provide an opportunity for developing higher level thinking skills and critical analysis of issues.
- ❖ Develop interaction skills and cooperative decision making skills used in an assembly or in a committee.
- ❖ Learn the basic principles of Parliamentary Procedure and its use in a democratic society.

**Oath of Office:** I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter, so help me God.

## Guidelines

### Terminology

- ❖ **Chair** - the leader of an assembly who runs its meetings by recognizing members (legislators) to speak or move. Also called the “presiding officer,” or “P.O.” Modeled after the Speaker of the House, Vice President, or President pro tempore of the Senate.
- ❖ **Floor** - when a member has the full attention of the assembly to speak (also refers to the area where the assembly meets, where its legislators speak, and where it conducts its business).
- ❖ **Committee** - a small group of legislators who meet and bring recommendations to the full assembly.
- ❖ **Legislation** - a specific, written proposal (“bill” or “resolution”) by a legislator or committee for the assembly to debate.
- ❖ **Amendment** - a specific change to an item of legislation, explaining exactly which words it modifies, and not changing the intent of the overall bill or resolution.
- ❖ **Bill** - type of legislation that describes details of how a policy would be enacted, if voted into law by the assembly.
- ❖ **Resolution** - an expression of conviction, or value belief, which may urge, request or suggest further action by another decision-making authority.
- ❖ **Docket** - the complete packet of legislation (as titles or full text) distributed by a tournament.
- ❖ **Agenda** - the order of legislation as suggested by a committee or legislator, and voted on by the assembly (sometimes called the “calendar”).

- ❖ **Authorship Speech** - a constructive speech of up to three (3) minutes given by a legislator, introducing an item of legislation s/he or her/his school wrote, for debate by the chamber. All authorship speeches are followed by a two-minute questioning period. The first negative speech has a two-minute questioning period. All affirmative and negative speeches that follow an authorship speech should introduce new ideas (arguments) and respond to previous arguments (refute or rebut).
- ❖ **Sponsorship Speech** - a constructive speech of up to three (3) minutes given by a legislator who is not the author, but is introducing the legislation for debate. It is followed by two minutes of questions, followed by a first negative speech with two minutes of questions.
- ❖ **Questioning** - period where the members of the assembly ask individual questions of the speaker (sometimes called cross-examination). Multiple-part (or two-part) questions are not allowed (unless the rules are suspended for that instance), because they take time from other members who may wish to question the speaker.
- ❖ **Precedence** - when several legislators stand to speak, the presiding officer must first recognize those who have not spoken, then those who have spoken least. Precedence resets at the end of each session.
- ❖ **Recency** - in addition to precedence, the presiding officer also recognizes speakers based on who has spoken earliest (least recently). When assigning such numbers, the presiding officer is numbered at the end of his/her term. Recency resets at the end of each session.
- ❖ **Session** - minimum of 3 hours of floor debate, excluding election of presiding officer, committee meeting to set the agenda, recesses, meals, etc.; for more than 20 students, adding 10 minutes per student is recommended to allow for equitable speaking time.

### Understanding Legislation

There are two types of legislation: bills and resolutions. The primary difference between the two is jurisdiction. If the U.S. Congress has the authority to act on an issue, the legislation should be a bill. Other issues should be addressed as resolutions, including Constitutional Amendments.

A bill establishes the details and nuances behind how a particular law must work, including when it takes effect, how much of the treasury (tax levy) will be appropriated (if applicable), how infractions/violations will be dealt with, etc. A bill may answer the who, what, when, where – and most specifically how – but it will never answer “why.” Legislators must explain the rationale behind bills in their speeches.

Resolutions encourage, and when passed, establish a strong conviction by a lawmaking body to do something. Any time a lawmaking body wants to take further and “higher” action (i.e., amend the Constitution, engage in a treaty, take action through the UN or some other multinational group), a resolution is the means by which this is done. Unlike bills, resolutions never establish the “how” of law, i.e., enforcement, funding, and how it will work when passed.

Appropriate topics exhibit seriousness of purpose. The action proposed should be feasible, and such that the actual United States Congress would consider. Topics should be debatable, meaning substantive argumentation exists on both sides.

### Preparing Legislation

1. The legislation must be typed, double-spaced, and no longer than one page.
2. A specific title should indicate the legislation’s intent or action (a title that simply states “concerning or related to” an issue doesn’t indicate enough detail).
3. **Preparing a bill** - The first words of a bill are “Be It Enacted by this Congress here assembled,” followed by numbered sections (which may include lettered sub-sections), which delineate the details of what steps a bill will take to implement a policy if enacted (it may include funding details, agencies responsible, and timeframe).
4. **Preparing a resolution**

- a. Resolutions begin with one or more “WHEREAS” clauses, which state the principal reasons for adoption.
  - b. Following the final whereas clause, is a transitional phrase, “now, therefore, be it” which immediately precedes the “RESOLVED” clause, which indicates the resolution’s precise purpose, “RESOLVED, By this Congress here assembled that...”
  - c. An optional “FURTHER RESOLVED” clause may indicate further purpose or intention for action.
5. All lines should be numbered, except the title and signature line.
  6. Generally, the author’s name and school should be included following the last line of the legislation, worded as “Introduced by [Name of Student], [School].”

Bills and/or resolutions that do not conform to these guidelines may be rejected from consideration for the agenda.

*Guidelines for amendments can be found under “Rules” below, §8.*

Samples of legislation formatted in the proper manner, as well as word processing templates are available under the “Forms and Manuals” section of the NFL Web site.

### **Parliamentary Procedure**

The NFL offers a downloadable guide to Congress, including instructions on parliamentary procedure, conducting elections for presiding officer, and a suggested script for presiding. This can be found under the “Events” section of the “Forms and Manuals” page under “About the League” on the NFL Web site.

## **Rules**

1. A **session** is defined as including:
  - a. Minimum of three hours of debate (not including elections and recesses)
  - b. 18-20 students as the optimum number for a three-hour session; otherwise, a session should be lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional student beyond 20. If a district offers a super session, it has the flexibility to have additional, smaller preliminary chambers before advancing students to the super session.
  - c. Election of a presiding officer
  - d. New seating chart (necessary accommodations for students with special needs may be made)
  - e. Resetting of precedence/recency
  - f. New legislation that has not been debated in a previous session at that tournament
2. **Recognizing Speakers**
  - a. When more than one speaker seeks the floor, the presiding officer must follow the precedence/recency method:
    - i. First recognize students who have not spoken during the session
    - ii. Next recognize students who have spoken fewer times
    - iii. Then recognize students who spoke earlier (least recently)
  - b. During any session, precedence/recency should not reset, to ensure that all students in a chamber have an equal opportunity to speak and receive evaluation from scorers. When a new session begins, precedence/recency will be reset along with a new seating chart, and election of a presiding officer.
  - c. Before precedence is established, the presiding officer should explain his/her recognition process and it must be fair, consistent and justifiable.
  - d. Scorers will include answers to questions when evaluating speeches. For non-NFL district or national congresses, official scorers can award students 1-6 points per speech or 1-6 points

per complete hour of presiding, up to 24 points per calendar day. There are no participation points, nor may a coach arbitrarily award his/her own students points. An official scorer must be present.

- e. A speaker may yield time on the floor during debate (for questions or clarifications) but that speaker will remain in control of his/her three minutes (see #6 below regarding questioning).
3. **Speeches introducing legislation** are allotted up to three minutes, followed by two minutes of questioning by other delegates. A student from the school (or at the national level, the District) who wrote the legislation gets the privilege of recognition (called *authorship*), regardless of precedence; otherwise the presiding officer may recognize a “sponsor” from the chamber, provided this recognition follows the precedence guidelines above. Regardless, this speech of introduction must be followed by two minutes of questions. Should no student seek recognition for the authorship/sponsorship, the chamber will move to lay the legislation on the table until such time that a student is prepared to introduce it.
  4. **The first negative speech** must be followed by two minutes of questions.
  5. **Following the first two speeches** on legislation, the presiding officer will alternately recognize affirmative and negative speakers, who will address the chamber for up to three minutes, followed by one minute of questioning by other delegates. If no one wishes to oppose the preceding speaker, the presiding officer may recognize a speaker upholding the same side. When no one seeks the floor for debate, the presiding officer may ask the chamber if they are “ready for the question,” at which point, if there is no objection, voting may commence on the legislation itself. There is no “minimum cycle” rule, however, if debate gets “one-sided,” the chamber may decide to move the previous question.
    - a. In the event a student speaks on the wrong side called for by the presiding officer and the error is not caught, the speaker shall be scored and the speech shall count in precedence, but the speaker must be penalized at least three points for not paying close attention to the flow of debate.
    - b. In the event a student speaks on an item of legislation *not currently* being debated, said speech shall count in precedence, but zero points shall be awarded.
  6. **The presiding officer fairly and equitably recognizes members to ask questions** following each speech. The presiding officer starts timing questioning periods when s/he has recognized the first questioner, and keeps the clock running continuously until the time has lapsed. Speakers are encouraged to ask brief questions, and may only ask one question at a time (two-part/multiple-part questions are not allowed, since they monopolize time and disallow others to ask their questions). There is no formal “permission to preface,” however, presiding officers should discourage students from making statements as part of questioning, since that is an abusive use of the limited time available.
  7. The presiding officer will pause briefly between speeches to recognize any motions from the floor, however, he/she should not call for motions (at the beginning of a session, the presiding officer should remind members to seek his/her attention between speeches).
  8. **Amendments** must be presented to the presiding officer in writing (an official form is available in this manual’s appendix), with specific references to lines and clauses that change. This must be done in advance of moving to amend.
    - a. The parliamentarian will recommend whether the amendment is “germane” – that is, it upholds the original intent of the legislation – otherwise, it is considered “dilatatory.” The title of the legislation may be changed.
    - b. A legislator may move to amend between floor speeches. Once that motion is made, the presiding officer will read the proposed amendment aloud and call for a second by one-third of those members present, unless he/she rules it dilatatory.

- c. Should students wish to speak on the proposed amendment, the presiding officer will recognize them as per the standing precedence in the chamber, and the speech will be counted toward their total, accordingly.
  - d. Simply proposing an amendment does not guarantee an “author/sponsor” speech, and any speeches on amendments are followed by the normal one minute of questioning.
  - e. Amendments are considered neutral and do not constitute an affirmative or negative speech on the original legislation.
  - f. If there are no speakers or the previous question is moved, the chamber may vote on a proposed amendment without debating it.
9. **All major voting** (such as the main motion/legislation) which a Congressperson’s constituents should have a record of, shall be done with a counted vote. Secret balloting is used when voting for presiding officer.
10. Student should ask permission to leave and enter the chamber when it is in session (move a personal privilege). However, do not interrupt a speaker who is addressing the chamber.
11. **Ethics and Evidence**
  - a. Conduct
    - i. A congressperson’s conduct shall be above reproach and he/she should never be guilty of intentional harassment. Impeaching and censuring other participants is not allowed.
    - ii. Participation in this event demands the seriousness of purpose and maturity possessed by real world policymakers. All adult officials, including scorers, will hold each participant to this standard.
    - iii. Congresspersons should have a cooperative nature and if there is a problem, then the student should take any concerns to an adult official.
    - iv. Participation in the legislative debate is essential. Extended absence from the chamber during a session will affect a contestant’s overall impression and performance. The practice of “open chambers” interferes with the parliamentarian’s ability to monitor student participation.
  - b. Evidence and Use of Electronic Devices
    - i. Visual aids are permitted in Congressional Debate, provided they do not require electronic retrieval devices in the chamber.
    - ii. All evidence used is subject to verification. Honesty and integrity are of utmost importance in legislative debate. Falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence may result in the legislator being suspended by tournament officials.
    - iii. Please see guidelines for use of laptops/electronic retrieval devices on p. E13. Cell phones, music players and games are not to be used in the chamber during a session. Traditional timing devices are permitted.
12. Since the rules above ensure fairness for competition, they may not be suspended; the presiding officer should rule such motions *out of order*; except to extend questioning and allow for open chambers provided the tournament staff permits doing so.



## Lincoln Douglas Debate

Lincoln Douglas debate centers on a proposition of value, which concerns itself with what ought to be instead of what is. A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. Debaters are encouraged to develop argumentation based upon a values perspective. To that end, no plan (or counterplan) will be offered by the debaters. In Lincoln Douglas Debate, a plan is defined by the NFL as a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation. The debate should focus on reasoning to support a general principle instead of particular plans and counterplans. Debaters may offer generalized, practical examples or solutions to illustrate how the general principle could guide decisions.

The hallmarks of Lincoln Douglas debate include:

1. **Parallel Burdens:** No question of values can be determined entirely true or false. This is why the resolution is debatable. Therefore neither debater should be held to a standard of absolute proof. No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.
  - ❖ Burden of proof: Each debater has the equal burden to prove the validity of his/her side of the resolution as a general principle. As an LD resolution is a statement of value, there is no presumption for either side.
  - ❖ Burden of clash: Each debater has an equal burden to clash with his/her opponent's position. After a case is presented, neither debater should be rewarded for presenting a speech completely unrelated to the arguments of his/her opponent.
  - ❖ Resolutional burden: The debaters are equally obligated to focus the debate on the central questions of the resolution, not whether the resolution itself is worthy of debate. Because the affirmative must uphold the resolution, the negative must also argue the resolution as presented.
2. **Value Structure:** The value structure (or framework) is established by the debater to serve two functions: a) to provide an interpretation of the central focus of the resolution, and b) to provide a method for the judge to evaluate the central questions of the resolution. The value structure often consists of a statement of the resolution (if affirming), definitions (dictionary or contextual), the value premise (or core value), and the value criterion (or standard). This structure is commonly but not always employed.
  - ❖ Definitions: The affirmative should offer definitions, be they dictionary or contextual, that provides a reasonable ground for debate. The negative has the option to challenge these definitions and to offer counter-definitions.
  - ❖ Value Premise/Core Value: A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. that serves as the highest goal to be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved. In general, the debater will establish a value which focuses the central questions of the resolution and will serve as a foundation for argumentation.
  - ❖ Value Criterion/Standard: In general, each debater will present a value criterion (a standard) which the debater will use to:
    - explain how the value should be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved.
    - measure whether a given side or argument protects, respects, maximizes, advances, or achieves the value.
    - evaluate the relevance and importance of an argument in the context of the round.

The relationship between the value premise and the criterion should be clearly articulated. During the debate, the debaters may argue the validity or priority of the two value structures. They may accept their opponent's value structure, prove the superiority of their own value structure, or synthesize the two.

3. **Argumentation:** Because Lincoln Douglas debate is an educational debate activity, debaters are obligated to construct logical chains of reasoning which lead to the conclusion of the affirmative or negative position. The nature of proof may take a variety of forms (e.g., a student’s original analysis, application of philosophy, examples, analogies, statistics, expert opinion, etc.). Arguments should be presented in a cohesive manner that shows a clear relationship to the value structure. Any research should be conducted and presented ethically from academically sound and appropriately cited sources.
4. **Cross-Examination:** Cross-examination should be used by the debater to clarify, challenge, and/or advance arguments in the round.
5. **Effective delivery:** Lincoln Douglas debate is an oral communication activity that requires clarity of thought and expression. Arguments should be worded and delivered in a manner accessible to an educated non-specialist audience. This encompasses:
  - ❖ - Written communication: Cases and arguments should be constructed in a manner that is organized, accessible, and informative to the listener. The debater should employ clear logic and analysis supported by topical research.
  - ❖ -Verbal communication: The debater has the obligation to be clear, audible and comprehensible, and to speak persuasively to the listeners. Additionally, debaters should strive for fluency, expressiveness, effective word choice, and eloquence.
  - ❖ - Non-verbal communication: The debater should demonstrate an effective use of gestures, eye-contact, and posture.

Throughout the debate, the debaters should demonstrate civility as well as a professional demeanor and style of delivery.

## Rules

1. **Resolution:** The resolution will be one requiring a value judgment. Districts must use the current Lincoln Douglas topic for the month in which the competition occurs. Refer to *Rostrum* or NFLOnline.org for the current topic.
2. **Order of speeches:**

Affirmative Constructive	6 Minutes
Negative Cross Examination	3 Minutes
Negative Constructive	7 Minutes
Affirmative Cross Examination	3 Minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 Minutes
Negative Rebuttal	6 Minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 Minutes
Prep Time	4 Minutes per debater
3. **Timing:** A timekeeper is an option but isn’t required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each debater is 4 minutes.
4. **Reading case:** A team may decide, when asked by the opponent team for a copy of their case, whether or not to provide it; if the team refuses they will not be penalized in any way.
5. **Oral critiques:** No debate ballot may be returned in without a reason for decision. Oral commentary is not considered a substitute for the written ballot. The NFL strongly discourages judges from disclosing decisions in the preliminary round of NFL competition. Comments made by a judge (orally or written) should be constructive and professional.

## Public Forum Debate

1. **Resolution:** Specific resolutions for district tournaments held during certain months and the National Tournament topic will be published in *Rostrum* and at NFLOnline.org. Public Forum Debate focuses on advocacy of a position derived from the issues presented in the resolution, not a prescribed set of burdens.
2. **Procedure and order of speeches:** Prior to EVERY round and in the presence of the judge(s), a coin is tossed by one team and called by the other team. The team that wins the flip may choose one of two options: EITHER the SIDE of the topic they wish to defend (pro or con) OR the SPEAKING POSITION they wish to have (begin the debate or end the debate). The remaining option (SIDE OR SPEAKING POSITION) is the choice of the team that loses the flip. Once speaking positions and sides has been determined, the debate begins (the con team may lead, depending on the coin flip results).
 

First Speaker - Team A	4 Minutes
First Speaker - Team B	4 Minutes
Crossfire (first question by speaker A1)	3 Minutes
Second Speaker - Team A	4 Minutes
Second Speaker - Team B	4 Minutes
Crossfire (first question by A2)	3 Minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team A	2 Minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team B	2 Minutes
Grand Crossfire	3 Minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team A	2 Minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team B	2 Minutes
Prep Time	2 Minutes per team
3. **Timing:** Timekeepers are an option but not required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their partners or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each team is two minutes.
4. **Plans/Counterplans:** In Public Forum Debate, the NFL defines a plan or counterplan as a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation. Neither the pro or con side is permitted to offer a plan or counterplan; rather, they should offer reasoning to support a position of advocacy. Debaters may offer generalized, practical solutions.
5. **Prompting Philosophy:** Oral prompting, except time signals, either by the speaker's colleague or by any other person while the debater has the floor, is discouraged though not prohibited and may be penalized by some judges. Debaters may, however, refer to their notes and materials and may consult with their teammate while they do not have the floor and during the Grand Crossfire.
6. **Reading case:** A team may decide, when asked by the opponent team for a copy of their case, whether or not to provide it; if the team refuses they will not be penalized in any way.
7. **Oral Critiques:** No debate ballot may be returned in without a reason for decision. Oral commentary is not considered a substitute for the written ballot. The NFL strongly discourages judges from disclosing decisions in the preliminary round of NFL competition. Comments made by a judge (orally or written) should be constructive and professional.
8. **Judges:** The use of community judges is strongly encouraged.

## Debate Evidence Rules

### 1. Responsibilities of teams reading evidence

- a. The team is responsible for the validity of all evidence they read in the debate.
- b. In all rounds of LD and Public Forum Debate, debaters should, at a minimum, orally deliver title of the source and the author's name. In Policy Debate, all debaters shall orally deliver the name of the author, title of source (E.G. title of book, not chapter; title of journal, not article), and complete date.
- c. In all rounds of debate, complete citations for each piece of evidence introduced in the round must be available in the round. Written citations must include name of the author, qualifications, complete title of source (E.G. title of book, not chapter; title of journal, not article), and complete date. Online sources must also include the title of the site, database, or access point, the date accessed, and the web address. The additional citation required for online sources must appear on all evidence, but is not required to be read. Should two or more quotations be used from the same source, the author and title need be given orally only for the first piece of evidence from that source. In the subsequent oral citation, only the author's name is required.
- d. Either no internal ellipsis (Ellipses occur after the first word of the quotation and before the final word) may be used in evidence cited on a card, or ellipses may be shown on cards, if the original source or a xerox copy is present. The evidence may be read in ellipsed form, but the entirety of the evidence must be available in one of the two ways previously cited.
- e. Personal letters or telegrams shall not be admissible as evidence.

### 2. Responsibilities of teams challenging evidence

- a. Indictments or protests of the validity of evidence must be made on substantive grounds.
- b. A challenger must have either the original source or a xeroxed copy of the source being cited, or
- c. A challenger must demonstrate that reasonable search has not been able to locate the source -- xeroxed copies of relevant pages in Books in Print, Readers Guide, P.A.I.S., etc.

### 3. Definitions of Non-existent evidence or evidence which seriously distorts the intention of the original source.

- a. "serious distortion" exists when the evidence itself contains added or deleted word(s) which do not clarify but in fact change the position of the author with respect to the issues in question.
- b. "Non-existent evidence" means that
  - i. Reasonable search is unable to produce the original source and/or the team reading the evidence is unable to provide the original source or a xerox copy of the relevant pages.
  - ii. The evidence cited is not located in the original source cited. Typographical errors in citation will not automatically result in the evidence being labeled non-existent, if the team reading the evidence can produce the correct information.

### 4. Penalties

- a. Evidence lacking specified citation and challenged by the opposition shall be disregarded by the judge unless said citation is proffered immediately in the subsequent speech. At the conclusion of a challenge related to the oral presentation of or in round availability of a

citation, the judge is the sole determiner of the level of penalty in the round in relationship to the level of the violation, not to exceed a maximum penalty of a loss with zero points, as part of the judge's decision making process.

- b. If an evidence violation is presented where a debater is found to have committed a "serious distortion" or to have used "non-existent evidence," at the conclusion of due process, the offending debater(s) may be disqualified from the tournament.
- c. Depending on the severity, an offense MAY result in notification of said offense to their high school administration and coach, loss of NFL points earned, and/or revocation of NFL membership.

#### 5. Tournament Adjustments

- a. Under no circumstance shall a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
- b. In the case of a disqualification of a contestant, all previous ranks and decisions of other contestants stand and no revision of past round ranks will take place.

## Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events

*Applies to Lincoln Douglas, Congressional, Public Forum and Policy Debates*

- A. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
- B. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
- C. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
- D. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited. (This does not prohibit non-electronic communication between debate partners during prep time.)
- E. **Penalty:** Contestants found to have violated provisions A through C above will forfeit the round of competition and receive zero NFL points. Contestants found to have violated provision D (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all rounds and NFL points. At NFL district tournaments, the District Committee will make the final decision concerning disqualification. In case of a serious dispute or critical question, the acting tournament referee (representing the national office) can be contacted for a ruling.
- F. **Availability of Evidence:** Contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. Printers may be used. Evidence may be printed in the round or produced electronically, but must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team and the judge.
- G. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, batteries, extension cords, and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts will not be responsible for providing computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants.
- H. Because public speaking decorum remains an important element of debate, all debaters are expected to stand at the front of the room facing the judge while speaking.

- I. Contestants choosing to use laptop computers and related equipment accept the risk of equipment failure. Judges and/or contest directors will give no special consideration or accommodation, including no additional speech time or prep time, should equipment failure occur.
- J. By choosing to use laptop computers in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

## Cross-Examination or Crossfire Guidelines

### *Applies to Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum and Policy Debates & Extemporaneous*

**Purpose of Cross Examination:** To clarify an obscure point in an opponent's case, to expose factual error or unsupported assertion, or to obtain damaging admissions are the purposes of cross-examination. It should not be used (as it is in law) to attack the witness' personal integrity

**Attitudes of Questioner and Witness:** Both should appear to be reasonable, cooperative and eager to please. Either one should be "marked down" for unpalatable sarcasm, obvious "stalling," or appearing to browbeat his opponent

**Relation to Case:** The virtue of any cross-examination decreases unless the results are tied to later speeches. The cross-examination should be an integral part of the debate, not a sideshow.

**Delivery:** Both speakers must talk to the audience. Cross-examination takes the form of an exchange between two debaters, but basically, it is for the benefit of the listeners. In public debates it is vital that both speakers face the audience while questioning or responding.

In Public Forum Debate, speakers should stand during regular Crossfire and remain seated for the Grand Crossfire.

#### **The Questioner:**

1. Controls the time, and may interrupt the witness to request shorter or more direct answers, or to indicate that the answer s/he has given is insufficient.
2. Must ask fair and relevant questions. S/He should neither comment on the answers, argue with the witness, nor make speeches. S/He should use time for questioning alone, not for either constructive argument or summary. In fact, a conclusion is all the more effective if the audience reaches it without the questioner's help.
3. Should have considerable scope in the questions s/he asks. Since the time is his/hers, s/he may waste time if s/he wants to. The witness should answer even if the significance or relevance of the question is not immediately apparent to him/her.
4. Should begin with common ground on which agreement may be expected, and proceed to areas in which disagreement develops or the witness makes significant admissions. The questioner may well begin with the questions which reveal his purpose: "Do you maintain that the Nationalist Chinese Army stands as a bulwark against Communism in Asia?" "Yes." "And do you further maintain that recognition of Red China would weaken or destroy this bulwark?" "Yes." Agreement on such questions is almost certain, and the questioner clearly indicates the direction of his inquiry.
5. Should develop an attack along the lines of his/her basic case. S/He should limit the number of objectives s/he tries to reach. A series of at least five questions, probing a single issue of the debate thoroughly and following up the leads which the witness' answers provide, is preferable to a miscellaneous assortment of questions lacking interrelation and adaptation to the witness' answers.
6. May not insist on a simple "Yes" or "No" answer unless the question is simple, direct, and factual.

Questions about why something is true are necessarily complicated and the questioner cannot expect the witness to answer them briefly. Factual questions are best, and the questioner can ask them in enough different ways to lend variety to the cross-examination.

7. Should phrase questions with the verb first, then the subject, and finally the object or modifying phrase: e.g. "Do you admit the Joseph R. McCarthy is the junior senator from Wisconsin?" S/He should avoid negative questions, or any phrasing with "not": "Do you not know that there have been thirty-seven violations of the Korean truce by the Red Chinese?" The answer to this can only be confusing.
8. May remind the audience and the witness of a relevant fact by beginning the question: "Are you aware that . . ." or "Are you familiar with . . ." However, the questioner's motive in putting such questions should be to put the witness on record concerning the statement involved, and not to present material.
9. Should summarize a series of questions on an issue by repeating an opening question: "Do you still consider, in light of these facts, that the Chinese Nationalist Army stands as a bulwark against Communism in Asia?" This calls for a "Yes" or "No" answer, clearly indicates that the Questioner has concluded that particular approach, and allows the members of the audience to draw their own conclusions.

#### **The Witness:**

1. Must answer directly and briefly any legitimate question . S/He should not question the questioner (except in using a rhetorical question as an answer), nor should s/he engage in "stalling" tactics.
2. May refuse to answer a tricky or unfair question -- "When did you stop beating your wife?" -- if s/he states a good reason for doing so.
3. May ask questions to clarify a question possibly giving the reasons for considering the question obscure, or may ask the questioner to stop making speeches and to continue the questioning.
4. May clarify a question, if to do so is appropriate. S/He should state the qualification before his answer: "Do you believe in the desirability of democratic elections?" "For people educated in the tradition and practice of democracy, yes."
5. Can exercise some control over the question period by controlling the timing of answers. If s/he feels that the questioner is dragging out the question period, s/he can answer rapidly, exposing the questioner's ineptitude.
6. Should not be afraid to admit ignorance if the question demands knowledge of an obscure fact.
7. Should answer without consulting his/her colleague or receiving help from him/her.

(Adapted from *Cross Examination Debating* by Dr. Robert P. Newman and Lloyd H. Fuge, University of Pittsburgh.)

## **Extemporaneous Speaking**

A contestant draws three questions, selects one, then has 30 minutes to prepare a speech in response, of up to seven minutes. The contestant utilizes files of published materials (books, magazines, newspapers, online sources) s/he has compiled as a resource for answering the question. The NFL divides extemp. into two separate events: United States (dealing with domestic issues), and International (issues beyond US borders).

1. **Drawing:** Thirty minutes before the contest is to begin, the first speaker draws three questions, choose one, and return the other two. The other contestants draw in like manner, in the order of speaking, at intervals of seven minutes. The entire list of questions for that round must be used for

each entry in each section. A contestant drawing a question on which s/he has spoken previously in the tournament must return it and draw again.

2. **Preparation:** As soon as a question is chosen, the contestant will prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles, provided:
  - a. They are originals or copies of whole pages.
  - b. Provided those originals or copies are uncut.
  - c. There is no written material on that original or copy other than citation information.
  - d. Topical index without annotation may be present.

No other material will be allowed in the extemp. prep room other than stated above. Extemp. speeches, handbooks, briefs and outlines are prohibited from the extemp. prep room. Underlining or highlighting in extemp. will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. **Please see rules below concerning use of electronic retrieval devices.** Printed copies of information from online computer services may be used. Electronically retrieved evidence used in any NFL Extemp. competition must conform to the citation standard of the Modern Language Association [consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition)* or <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/>].

3. **Notes:** Contestants may make notes during the preparation time, but the use of notes, cards, briefs or other aids is prohibited during the speech.
4. **Time:** The time limit in both extemporaneous speaking events is 7 minutes with a 30 second “grace period”. If the judges in the round agree that the student has gone beyond the “grace period”, the student may not be ranked 1st, but need not be ranked last based on time. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
5. **Recuse:** Contestants may not leave the preparation area until dismissed by the Extemp. Proctor. Consultation with any person other than the Extemp. monitor between the time of drawing and time of speaking is prohibited.
6. **Cross-Examination:** cross-examination may be used in the final round of extemporaneous speaking events. Each speaker shall be assigned a position in the speaking order. Drawing shall take place at twelve minute intervals. Thirty minutes after speaker first has drawn, speakers first and last shall enter the contest room. Speaker first shall give a speech and speaker last shall listen and may take notes. At the conclusion of speaker first's speech, speaker last shall question speaker first for two minutes. Speaker last shall return to the prep room and speaker first shall stay and question speaker second. Speaker second will question speaker third, etc.
7. **Laptop use:** The use of laptop computers in Extemporaneous Speaking is permitted at the NFL National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be autonomous decision of each individual District Committee.

#### **Extemporaneous Speaking Computer Use Rules and Guidelines**

- A. Extemporaneous Speaking contestants may make use of electronic retrieval devices to store and to retrieve their subject files at all NFL tournaments (district and national). Students can retrieve extemporaneous files to read, but cannot write speeches or organize their thoughts on the computers. **This rule in no way prevents students from still utilizing traditional paper copy files to**



**enable the competitor to successfully compete in Extemporaneous Speaking. The NFL takes no position on which form of file storage is preferable for use at NFL tournaments (district or national).**

- B. The use of electronic retrieval devices at the district competition will be the autonomous decision of each individual district committee.
- C. Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop computers, netbooks, iPads, or other portable electronic retrieval equipment. Secondary devices such as flash drives or external hard drives are allowed as well. **Cell phones or smart phones are prohibited from being used while preparing or before speaking at NFL tournaments (district or national).**
- D. **Source Materials:** Students may consult published books, periodical articles, newspaper articles, think tank articles, government reports or journal articles saved on their electronic retrieval device **or present in hard copy form** provided:
  - i. There are no notations made within or on the saved article other than citation information.
  - ii. Any highlighting or underlining of the articles is done in only one color within each article. Bolding, italicizing, or any other manipulation of the original text of sources (other than highlighting or underlining as previously stipulated) is prohibited.
- E. No other source materials will be allowed in the Extemporaneous prep room other than stated above. Pre-written Extemporaneous speeches, handbooks, briefs or outlines are prohibited from the prep room, **whether stored electronically or present in hard copy form.**
- F. **Power Source:** Power plugs or outlets may not be used in the prep room at any time. All computers used in the prep room must be battery operated at all times.
- G. Competitors are responsible for making certain their electronic retrieval devices are fully charged at the start of each competition day and for proper power management ensuring that their device remains functional throughout the competition day. Contestants may not use external power sources in the prep room, such as wall outlets and/or extension cords.
- H. **Internet:** Extemporaneous Speaking contestants shall not access the Internet or communicate electronically with any other individual while in the prep room at any NFL tournament (district or national). All computers must comply with the following provisions:
  - i. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
  - ii. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
  - iii. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
  - iv. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited.
  - v. **Penalty:** Contestants found to have violated provisions i through iii above will be ranked last in the round and receive zero NFL points. Contestants found to have violated provision iv (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all round credits and NFL points. At NFL district tournaments, the district committee will make the final decision concerning disqualification. In case of a serious dispute or

critical question, the acting tournament referee (representing the national office) may be contacted for a ruling.

- I. **Liability:** Extemporaneous Speaking competitors accept full responsibility for the safety and security of their electronic retrieval devices throughout the entire course of any NFL tournament (district or national). *The NFL may put stickers and/or tape on computers to ensure they are not opened or used, or to ensure appropriate owners take their own machines. The NFL does not assume any liability for the computers. Students are welcome to use Kensington locks or other such devices to secure their computers in the prep room. Students, parents, and coaches should be aware that the students are bringing and using the computers at their own risk. The NFL is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken computers.*
- J. **File Monitoring:** The NFL retains the right to view and search any electronic retrieval devices to ensure compliance with any and all rules at any NFL tournament (district or national).
- K. Devices should be muted in the prep room. Contestants should not play games or engage in other distracting activities on their electronic devices in the prep room. Tournament officials may ask a student to power-off the device if it becomes distracting.
- L. Students from the same school may share computers during preparation. However, communication among contestants during preparation time is strictly prohibited.

## Original Oratory

Orators are expected to research and speak intelligently, with a degree of originality, in an interesting manner, and with some profit to the audience, about a topic of significance. Although many orations deal with a current problem and propose a solution this is not the only acceptable form of oratory. Your oration may simply alert the audience to a threatening danger, strengthen its devotion to an accepted cause, or eulogize a person. An orator is given free choice of subject and judged solely on the effectiveness of development and presentation.

- 1. **Contest:** This contest comprises only memorized orations actually composed by the contestants and not used by them during a previous contest season. No visual aids are permitted.
- 2. **Subject:** Any appropriate subject may be used, but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, must be so identified.
- 3. **Length:** The time limit in Original Oratory is 10 minutes with a 30 second "grace period". If the judges in the round agree that the student has gone beyond the "grace period", the student may not be ranked 1st, but need not be ranked last based on time. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stop watch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
- 4. **Quotation:** Not more than 150 words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing and such quotations must be identified in a printed copy of the oration supplied prior to registration. Extensive paraphrasing from other sources is prohibited.
- 5. **Script:** The orator's script must be sent to the District Chair no later than two weeks prior to the district tournament. The script must identify the quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, include a work cited page in A.P.A. or M.L.A. format, and both the orator and the coach must attest by signature that the oration is the original work of the contestant.

## Interpretation

This includes categories of individual (solo) performance of dramatic (serious) and humorous literature, as well as duo performance of either emotive appeal, with selections drawn from published, printed: novels, short stories, plays, poetry, or other printed, published works.

1. **Divisions.** Separate contests will be conducted in Dramatic, Humorous, and Duo Interpretation, each presented as memorized selections and without the use of physical objects or costume.
2. **Length:** The time limit in Interpretation Main Events (Humorous, Dramatic and Duo Interpretation) is 10 minutes with a 30 second "grace period". If the judges in the round agree that the student has gone beyond the "grace period", the student may not be ranked 1st, but need not be ranked last based on time. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
3. **Selections:** Selections used in these contests must be cuttings from published, printed novels, short stories, plays or poetry. Recorded material (video tape, DVD's, audio tape, CD's or phonograph recordings) or material from the Internet that is not published and printed is prohibited. Original material published in a high school publication such as a newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook is prohibited. During the presentation the contestant/team must name the author and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made. Monologues are acceptable in Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation. In Duo Interpretation each of the two performers may play one or more characters so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible. If the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.
4. **Adaptations:** Adaptations may only be used for the purpose of transition. The gender stated by the author must be honored. However, a female contestant may play a male role, and a male contestant may play a female role.
5. **Focus:** In Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation, use of focal points and/or direct contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted. In Duo Interpretation, focus may be direct during the introduction [the performers may look at each other] but must be indirect [off-stage] during the performance itself.
6. **Source:** A cutting must be a single work of literature: one short story or one play or one novel or one or more poems. The original published source of any selection used in Dramatic, Humorous, or Duo must be immediately available at the tournament as well as a complete script of the cutting used. A complete script of the cutting includes:
  - a. A photocopy of every page from which any line of the cutting is taken; pages are to be in the order in which they are performed.
  - b. All words used from the script should be highlighted (any words/lines not used should be left unmarked).
  - c. Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink.

**Caution:** It is the affirmative duty of each coach and each student entered in NFL Interpretation contests to determine absolutely that the cutting being performed meets NFL rules.
7. **Re-Use:** A student may not use a cutting from a work of literature the student used in NFL district or NFL national competition in any previous contest year. A student entered in two events may not use the same selection of literature in both events.

## Judge Instructions & Guidelines

### General Instructions

- All judges are to report to their assigned rooms at least five minutes before the time the contest round is scheduled to begin.
- Each judge's ballot is to be secured from contest official and returned immediately following each round.
- Read the instructions on the ballot.
- Do not confer with other judges.
- Judges should not interrupt the flow of debates or contests in any way. They are silent evaluators and should not reveal their decision.

### Judging Debate Events

Thank you for agreeing to judge a debate round. Your service is especially important as this event is designed to bring judges and debaters together in an educational, productive, and encouraging experience. This activity is designed to teach excellent critical thinking and public presentation skills. Your role as a judge is to determine which debater did a better job of convincing you that his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.

#### **BEFORE THE ROUND:**

- Find out the exact wording of the debate resolution and write it down.
- Read and follow the instructions on the judging ballot you will receive.
- Talk with debaters before the round starts if you wish, but the conversation should not demonstrate favoritism toward a debater.
- Debaters should **always** be respectful of one another and of you, and you should set a tone of decorum and professionalism.

#### **TO BEGIN THE ROUND:**

- You will be instructed as to which side the debaters have been assigned.
- The affirmative/pro side should be listed on the left side of the ballot and you may ask the debater to sit on the left side of the room as you, the judge, look at the debaters.
- The negative/con side should be listed on the right side of the ballot and you may ask the debater to sit on the right side of the room as you, the judge, look at the debaters.
- Record each debater's code and side. You can confirm this information with the debaters.
- When both debaters are ready, the Affirmative debater (in Public Forum, the team speaking first) will stand in the front of the room to deliver the initial speech.

#### **DURING THE ROUND:**

- While the debaters may keep track of their own time, judges need to monitor speaking times during the round. Speech times and order are listed on the ballot.
- Each debater has preparation time in each round that can be used prior to any of that debater's speeches or cross-examination period. Judges need to monitor how much preparation time has elapsed for each debater.
- During the debate, you are encouraged to take notes of the arguments made by the debaters to assist you in making your decision at the end of the round.
- You should also keep track of what a debater says, if anything, in response to the other debater's arguments. To ensure fairness, your notes should help you determine if a debater is improperly making brand new arguments in the final rebuttal speeches to which the opposing debater has

- no opportunity to respond.
- Judges should not ask questions during the round.
- During the questioning periods in Policy and L/D, the time belongs to the debater asking the questions. The questions should be brief and the answers short and specific. The person answering the questions should not be permitted to refute, but should be limited to simply answering the questions. The questioner should not be permitted to comment on the answers.
- During the "crossfire" questioning periods in Public Forum debate, the time belongs to all debaters to ask and answer questions. The first speaking team should give the first question of each crossfire period. The questions and answers should be brief and specific. Speakers should stand during regular Crossfire and should remain seated for the Grand Crossfire.

#### **AFTER THE ROUND:**

- Check your codes carefully. This is especially important when marking the winner of the debate.
- In your written comments, please be as constructive and educational as possible.
- Provide a detailed justification of your decision, referring to the central issues the debaters presented in the round.
- Evaluate the round based only on the arguments that the debaters made and not on personal opinions or on arguments that you would have made.
- Please completely fill out the ballot and return it promptly to the designated location.
- A judge must render a decision no later than 10 minutes after the final speaker concludes.

### **Making a Decision In Policy Debate**

#### **A decision *SHOULD NOT* be based upon:**

1. *The merits of the resolution.* The judge should not be influenced by prejudices in favor or against the resolution.
2. *Partiality.* The judge should not be influenced by the reputation of, or partiality for or against, either of the competing teams, their schools, or coaches.
3. *Preconceived notions on arguments.* The judge should not allow his idea of what the best affirmative or negative arguments or cases may be to influence the decision.
4. *Personal preferences on debating style.* A judge should not penalize a team if its style, either in case construction or delivery, differs from that which s/he personally prefers; but should evaluate all styles on the basis of effectiveness in winning conviction.

#### **A decision *SHOULD BE* based upon the consideration of any or all of the following questions:**

1. *Skill in analysis.* This includes not only the analysis of the proposition, but also analysis of the debate as it progresses.
2. *Use of evidence.* This includes the use of sufficient evidence and proper reference to source.
3. *Validity of argument.* This includes reasoning and conclusions drawn from the evidence presented.
4. *Clarity of organization.* This includes clear outlining of constructive arguments and easily followed handling of refutation.
5. *Effectiveness of delivery.* This includes all matters pertaining to oral presentation with special emphasis upon extemporaneous abilities.

#### **A team/debater should be penalized for:**

1. *An unfair interpretation.* If the interpretation is disputed by the negative, it shall rest with the judge whether or not the affirmative is supporting a tenable position.
2. *Discourtesy toward opponents.* Discourtesy should be penalized according to the

seriousness of the offense.

3. *Falsification of evidence.* If a team falsifies evidence in support of a point, it shall lose the point, and if the falsification is obviously deliberate, the judge shall impose an additional penalty according to the seriousness of the falsification.
4. *Misconstruing an opponent's arguments.* A speaker who misconstrues and argument unintentionally should not be penalized more than the time wasted. If it is intentional, the team should in addition, forfeit the argument.
5. *Introducing new arguments into rebuttal.* The judges shall disregard new arguments introduced in rebuttal. This does not include the introduction of new evidence in support of points already advanced or the answering of arguments introduced by opponents.
6. *Speaking overtime.* When a speaker's time is up, the judge shall disregard anything beyond a closing statement.

**There is general agreement among debate coaches on:**

- a. *Interpretation.* Judges should regard no interpretation of the question as official, unless the National Wording Committee issues an official interpretation and labels it as such.
- b. *Technicalities.* The team shall debate the basic principles underlying the proposition. Too much emphasis should not be placed upon a technicality.
- c. *Burden of proof.* A debate team need not destroy all opposing argument. It need only show that the preponderance of argument and evidence rests on its side.
- d. *Affirmative burden.* An affirmative team need not destroy all negative argument. It need only show that the preponderance of argument and evidence rests on its side. This holds true equally for the negative team.
- e. *Questions.* A team need answer questions only when they are shown to be pertinent and consequential to the debate.
- f. *Irrelevant arguments.* Arguments as to whether the proposition is constitutional, or whether it will be adopted are irrelevant.
- g. *Direct Clash.* The negative team is primarily responsible for a direct clash, providing the affirmative team is not evading the proposition. The affirmative team is responsible for a clash on arguments advanced by the negative as evils in the proposition.
- h. *Delayed replies.* An argument introduced in constructive cases should be replied to by the opponents in time to give the team which advanced the argument an opportunity to reply.
- i. *Adaptation.* A high premium should be placed upon adaptive extempore debating. This should not excuse a team for lack of clarity in organization or for errors in the use of English.
- j. *Persuasion.* A premium should be placed upon the ability of the debaters to utilize human interest and accepted premises. Fallacies committed in an attempt to gain persuasive power should be treated the same as other fallacies.
- k. *Fallacies.* A judge should not discredit an argument as fallacious, unless the fallacy is exposed by the opposition, except in the closing affirmative rebuttal, when the judge shall discredit it upon discovering the fallacy.
- l. *Constructive solution.* Credit should be given to the team which most nearly approximates a constructive solution to the problems.

- m. *Point of order*. The negative team shall not be denied the right to rise to a point of order after the closing affirmative rebuttal. However, if they argue the point instead of stating the point, they shall be heavily penalized on the point. In this contingency, final disposition of the matter shall rest entirely with the judge. In general, this practice is to be discouraged.

## Making a Decision In Lincoln Douglas Debate

### A decision **SHOULD NOT** be based upon:

1. *Personal bias* – A judge’s preference for a side of the resolution or a topic bias should not enter into the decision. A judge must decide the round based on the arguments presented in that round. Objectivity is the primary responsibility of any judge.
2. *Partiality* – The judge should not be influenced by the reputation of or relationship with the debaters, schools, or coaches. If a situation arises where impartiality is in doubt, the judge has the responsibility to report this potential conflict of interest to the tab room.
3. *New arguments introduced in rebuttals*– The judges shall disregard new arguments introduced in the rebuttals. This does not include the introduction of new evidence in support of points already advanced or the answering of arguments introduced by opponents.

### A decision **SHOULD BE** based upon the consideration of any or all of the following questions:

1. *Burden of proof* - Which debater has proven his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle by the end of the round? No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. A judge should prefer quality and depth of argumentation to mere quantity of argumentation. A judge should base the decision on which debater more effectively resolved the central questions of the resolution rather than on insignificant dropped arguments.
2. *Value structure* – Which debater better established a clear and cohesive relationship between the argumentation and the value structure?
3. *Argumentation* – Which debater better presented his/her arguments with logical reasoning using appropriate support? Which debater best utilized cross-examination to clarify, challenge, or advance arguments?
4. *Resolutionality* –Which debater best addressed the central questions of the resolution?
5. *Clash* – Which debater best showed the ability to both attack his/her opponent’s case and to defend his/her own?
6. *Delivery* – Which debater communicated in a more persuasive, clear, and professional manner?

A judge should give weight only to those arguments that were presented in a manner that was clear and understandable to him or her as a judge.

## Making a Decision In Public Forum Debate

Public Forum Debate is a team event that advocates or rejects a position posed by the resolution. A central tenet of the debate is that the clash of ideas must be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or “citizen judge”, i.e. a member of the American jury.

A Public Forum Debate should:

- Display solid logic, reasoning, and analysis
- Utilize evidence but not be driven by it
- Present a clash of ideas
- Counter the arguments of the opponents (rebuttal)
- Communicate ideas with clarity, organization, eloquence, and professional decorum

Public Forum is a unique debate form. While Policy Debate focuses on a plan to solve the problem(s) posed by the resolution, and Lincoln Douglas Debate focuses on the core value of the resolution, Public Forum Debate focuses on advocacy of a position derived from issues presented in the resolution, not a prescribed set of burdens.

In Public Forum Debate, the NFL defines a plan or counterplan as a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation. Neither the pro or con side is permitted to offer a plan or counterplan; rather, they should offer reasoning to support a position of advocacy. Debaters may offer generalized, practical solutions.

New arguments in the “final focus” should be ignored. The “final focus” must be based on argument and issues previously addressed in the debate.

Logical reasoning, maturity of thought, and effectiveness of communication are of primary consideration. Evidence, examples, and analogies are to be used for the purpose of illustration.

In making a decision, a judge should be as objective as possible. Remember these are propositions upon which there may have strong feelings of which the debaters are unaware. Judges should adjudicate the round as it is debated, not as they personally feel.

## Awarding Points in Congressional Debate

Speeches in Congress should be clearly and logically organized, and characterized by depth of thought and development of ideas, supported by a variety of credible quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (testimony) evidence analyzed effectively to draw conclusions. Compelling language, an attention-grabbing introduction and clear transitions should clearly establish the speaker’s purpose and give perspective to the issue’s significance.

**Argument** – The speaker should contribute to the spontaneity of debate, effectively synthesizing response and refutation of previous ideas with new arguments. When the speaker fields questions, he/she should respond with confidence and clarity.

**Delivery** – The speaker should have polished, deliberate, crisp and confident vocal control and physical poise. Delivery should be extemporaneous, with few errors in pronunciation. Eye contact should be meaningful and consistent.

Judges award 1-8 points for each individual speech a student gives, accounting for the student’s answers to questions. It is entirely acceptable to award 8 points if the judge feels the student met the burdens of argument and the standards above. If the students fell short of expectations, the judge may deduct points as s/he sees fit. Scores of fewer than three (3) points are rarely encouraged, and should be reserved for such circumstances as abusive language, a degrading personal attack on another legislator, or for a speech that is extremely brief (less than 45 seconds) or delivered without purpose or dignity for the cause demanded by the legislation. Substantial written comments and description of specific incidents should accompany such scores.

At the end of a session, judges will also *rank* students in order of best to “least best,” accounting for all students’ overall participation and conduct during the session.



## Judging Speech Events

These events are designed to bring judges and students together in an educational, productive, and encouraging experience. This activity is designed to teach a variety of skills including analysis, synthesis, and artistic interpretation.

- If a contestant is not present when his/her number is called, the judge is to proceed to the next available speaker. When the contestant arrives, s/he should be heard next. At some district contests, students are participating in another contest scheduled for the same hour and they cannot avoid being late. For the same reason, a student may have to leave immediately after speaking.
- As students announce their titles, the judge is to write the title of the selection in the designated space on the ballot.
- If a contestant does not arrive by the end of the contest, the judge is to inquire about the absent contestant before s/he marks the ballot. Every contestant should be heard.
- After all contestants have been heard, they are to be ranked 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 (ties are not permitted) in the order of excellence. Number 1 is the best speaker.
- The judge must be sure to double check the ballot, sign it, seal it in the envelope, and return it to the ballot table.

### Speech Event Time Limits

Extemporaneous Speaking (US & International)	7 minute speech with 30 second grace period Preparation time is 30 minutes
Original Oratory	10 minutes with 30 second grace period
Dramatic Interpretation	10 minutes with 30 second grace period
Humorous Interpretation	10 minutes with 30 second grace period
Duo Interpretation	10 minutes with 30 second grace period

**If judges in the round agree that a student has exceeded the “grace period”, the student may not be ranked first (1), but *need not be ranked last* based on time. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.**

### Extemporaneous Speaking

The extemporaneous speech should not be regarded as a memory test of the material contained in any one magazine article, but rather as an original synthesis by the speaker of the current fact and opinion on the designated topic as presented by numerous sources.

The contestant therefore should be held accountable for strict adherence to the precise statement of the topic drawn and discounted severely for shifting to some other phase of the topic on which s/he might prefer to speak. The information presented should be well-chosen, pertinent, and sufficient to support the central thought of the topic.

The material should be organized according to some logical plan to produce a complete speech within the time allowed. Delivery should be free from marked defects in the mechanics of speech -- poise, quality and use of voice, enunciation, fluency, bodily expressiveness -- and should be effective in enlisting and holding the interest of the audience.

The best extemporaneous speech combines clear thinking, good speaking, and interesting presentation to establish a definite thought with respect to the subject chosen.

Do not require a contestant speaking on a *controversial subject* to take a personal stand on that issue.

S/He may do so, or s/he may elect to present both sides of the controversy as currently set forth in the public press. Judge him/her on the effectiveness with which s/he develops the subject according to his/her own plan.

There is NO minimum qualifying time for the extemp. speech. Do not penalize a contestant for brevity unless s/he fails to cover adequately the subject s/he has chosen. Maximum time is seven minutes. Impose no penalty for slight overtime, but do so if in your judgment it is excessive.

### **Original Oratory**

Since the contestants delivering them have written these orations, the judges should consider thought, composition, and delivery. However, since this is a contest in speech rather than in essay writing, the emphasis should be placed on the speech phase. Thought and composition should be considered primarily in the way they are employed to make effective speaking possible.

The orator should not be expected to solve any of the great problems of the day. Rather, s/he should be expected to discuss intelligently, with a degree of originality, in an interesting manner, and with some profit to his/her audience the topic s/he has chosen. Any appropriate subject may be chosen but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, MUST be so identified.

Although many orations deal with a current problem and propose a solution, the judge is expressly reminded that this is not the only acceptable form of oratory. The oration may simply alert the audience to a threatening danger, strengthen its devotion to an accepted cause, or eulogize a person. The orator should be given free choice of subject and judged solely on the effectiveness of its development and presentation.

The composition should be considered carefully for its rhetoric and diction. The use of appropriate figures of speech, similes and metaphors, balanced sentences, allusions, and other rhetorical devices to make the oration more effective should be noted especially. Use of American English should be more than correct; it should reveal a discriminating choice of words and altogether fine literary qualities. It should be especially adapted to oral presentation.

Delivery should be judged for mastery of the usual mechanics of speech -- poise, quality and use of voice, bodily expressiveness, and for the qualities of directness and sincerity which impress the oration upon the minds of the audience. An orator should not be penalized for a few seconds overtime.

No particular style of delivery is to be set up as the one correct style to which all contestants must conform. Rather, each contestant is to be judged upon the effectiveness of his/her delivery, free to choose or develop whatever style will best give him/her that effectiveness with his/her particular oration. No visual aids are permitted.

### **Interpretation**

The art of interpretation is to be regarded as recreating the characters in the story presented and making them seem living and real to the audience. Presentation shall be from memory and without the use of physical objects or costume.

A selection for interpretation must be a cutting from a single literary work: one novel, or one short story, or one play, or one or more poems. Monologues are acceptable. During the presentation, contestants must name the author and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made. Adaptation may be for the purpose of transition. In Duo Interpretation each of the two performers may play one or more characters, so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible. [If the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.]

The selection should be judged for its appropriateness as contest material and its suitability to the

particular contestant using it. The use of good literature should be noted favorably and a selection devoid of literary merit graded lowest.

This is a contest in interpretation. The contestants should be evaluated on poise, quality and use of voice, inflections, emphasis, pronunciation, enunciation, physical expression, and especially the ability to interpret characters correctly and consistently. Narrative, if included, should be vivid and animated so as to be an interesting and integral part of the story rather than just "filler" between portions of dialogue.

The final test of good interpretation is the ability to use all these factors so successfully and unobtrusively that the hearer forgets that this is a contest and in a created atmosphere is carried away to the time and place of the story being unfolded.

## Change Log

The purpose of this page is to document the revisions made to the Competition Events Guide over the course of the competitive season. In January 2011, the National Office introduced the second edition (2.0) of this document. Any policy (rules) changes are indicated by a change in the second digit (i.e., 2.1.0), while minor edits or revisions to the current document are indicated by a change in the third digit (i.e., 2.0.1). The following are updates to the original version.

Date	Version	Change Description
01/31/11	2.0.0	Initial release. Includes clarification of Congress point-recording expectations at non-NFL district and national tournaments; also adds rules for use of electronic devices in all debate events as well as Extemporaneous Speaking.