

NFA Bylaws

Please note: The constitution and the code of ethics can be found separately on the website.

I. GENERAL: All amendments to the Constitution apply to the following:

II. EVENTS AT THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT:

A. The events at the National Championship Tournament are:

1. **Persuasion:** An original speech by the student, designed to inspire, reinforce or change the beliefs, attitudes, values or actions of the audience. Audiovisual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Limited notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

2. **Extemporaneous:** Contestants will be given three topics in the general area of current events, choose one, and have 30 minutes to prepare a speech that is the original work of the student. Limited notes are permitted. Students will speak in the listed order. Maximum time is 7 minutes.

3. **Impromptu:** In each section, contestants will be given a topic of a proverb nature and will have a total of seven minutes to divide between preparation and speaking. Limited notes are permitted.

4. **Rhetorical Criticism:** An original speech by the student designed to offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a rhetorical event. Any legitimate critical methodology is permissible. Audiovisual aids may be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Limited notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

5. **Informative:** An original, factual speech by the student on a realistic subject to fulfill the general purpose to inform the audience. Audiovisual aids may be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Limited notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

6. **Prose:** A selection or selections of prose material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. Play cuttings and poetry are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including original introduction.

7. **Poetry:** A selection or selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. Play cuttings and prose works are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including original introduction.

8. **After-Dinner:** An original, humorous speech by the student, designed to exhibit sound speech composition, thematic coherence, direct communicative public speaking skills, and good taste. The speech should not resemble a night club act, an impersonation, or comic dialog. Audiovisual aids may be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Limited notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

9. **Dramatic Duo:** A cutting from a play, humorous or serious, involving the portrayal of two or more characters presented by two individuals. This is not an acting event; Thus, no costumes, props, etc., are to be used. Presentation is from manuscript and focus should be off-stage. Maximum time is 10 minutes including original introduction.

10. **Lincoln-Douglas Debate:** This event is one-person, policy debate on traditional stock issues. It is a communication event in which competitors are evaluated on their analysis, use of evidence, and ability to persuasively organize, deliver and refute arguments. Judges will assign each contestant in a round a win or loss with between 1-30 speaker points. Time limits are:

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Affirmative Constructive | 6 minutes |
| Cross-Examination | 3 minutes |
| Negative Constructive | 7 minutes |
| Cross-Examination | 3 minutes |
| Affirmative Rebuttal | 6 minutes |
| Negative Rebuttal | 6 minutes |
| Affirmative Rebuttal | 3 minutes |
| Prep time per debater | 4 minutes |

B. The following rules apply to all events:

1. All must be presented in the English language.
2. No speech or program used by the contestant in competition should have been used prior to September 1, preceding the National Championship Tournament.
3. No student may perform two cuttings from the same literary work at the National Championship tournament in the same year.

C. Experimental event at the National Championship Tournament:

1. All proposals for any experimental event at the National Tournament must be submitted for consideration to the National Council by April 1. Proposals must include event name, rules, rationale, and names and affiliations of authors.
2. National Council will select worthy proposals to submit to the NFA Student Assembly at the National Tournament.
3. The Student Assembly, if it chooses to do so, will pick from Executive Council submissions an Experimental Event for implementation at the following year's National Tournament.
 - a. A maximum of one (1) experimental event may be implemented in any tournament year.
 - b. The experimental events will not be part of sweepstakes or pentathlon at the National Tournament.
 - c. Other appropriate elements of the NFA Constitution, By-laws, and Code of Ethics will apply to the experimental event. An implemented experimental event cannot be added to the slate of regular NFA events unless it constitutionally replaces another event.
 - d. Execution of the experimental event is contingent upon available space.

III. QUALIFICATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. A student may qualify for any of the events in Section II (except L-D) of the By-laws by being in a final round or in the top 10% of that event at a tournament that had at least seven schools participating. The tournament must have had at least two preliminary rounds and at least 12 contestants in the event. When an event has less than 12 contestants in preliminary rounds, the top 50% (rounding up) of the finalists will qualify for I. E. Nationals.

B. In Lincoln-Douglas Debate, tournaments, which employ the NFA L-D topic and rules, will qualify for nationals. There must be a minimum of 3 schools in attendance and a minimum of four preliminary rounds. Elimination rounds are encouraged but are optional. Students qualify for nationals based on their placement according to the following formula:

| Entrants: | Qualifiers: |
|-----------|-------------|
| 5-8 | 2 |
| 9-16 | 4 |
| 17-32 | 8 |
| 33+ | 16 |

C. Each qualification application must be submitted to the Tournament Director with written proof of meeting the requirements stated above.

D. Regardless of event size, only one set of finalists per event may qualify for the National Championship Tournament.

E. Events that restrict entry to only those who have not yet qualified for the National Championship Tournament shall not be accepted as qualifying events.

F. Students who graduate during the academic year may compete in those events in which they qualified between September and the date of graduation.

G. The third Monday prior to the beginning of the National Championship Tournament shall be the tournament qualification deadline. The third Wednesday prior to the beginning of the National Championship Tournament shall be the mail entry deadline.

IV. ELIGIBILITY OF CONTESTANTS

A. Contestants must be enrolled undergraduates at the school they represent at the National Championship Tournament. Exceptions will be made for those students who graduate in mid-year. Contestants need not be full time students but must be enrolled at their institution for more than just a course in forensics.

B. Contestants may not have received a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent. The only exception is noted in Article III, Section F.

C. A student is allowed the equivalent of eight semesters of competitive eligibility. Attendance at 3 or more tournaments and/or any national tournament (as defined in Article IV, Section D) within a semester constitutes a semester of eligibility.

D. Contestants are limited to four national tournament years. These years need not be consecutive. These national tournaments include those sponsored by NFA, PKD, DSR-TKA, IOA, PRP, CEDA, NPDA, AFA, and Novice Nationals or any other forensic national competition added to this list by the NFA Executive Council.

E. Transfer Students: Qualifications go with the student. If the school to which the student transfers does not have a forensic program or does not attend the NFA National Tournament, the student may compete for the former school in those events for which he/she qualified while attending the former school.

F. All Contestants must meet the minimum standards of eligibility for participation in intercollegiate activities as determined by their respective institutions.

G. Final determination of a student's eligibility to compete in the tournament will be made by the President along with the National Council.

V. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

Section 1:

The schematic should include the following items and procedures:

- A. Maximum rotation--ideally, contestants should meet new competition each round.
- B. Sections should be no more than six and not fewer than five contestants.
- C. Four preliminary rounds of competition plus quarterfinal, semifinals, and final rounds in each event.
- D. Each contestant in an event shall have a different code number for that event. Schematics will use only those numbers. The contestant's school (by name or code) shall not be identified in the schematic or in any posting and/or announcement of elimination rounds.
- E. Contestants will not compete against contestants from their own school if mathematically possible. If not, then such conflicts should be kept to a minimum.

Section 2: Tournament Schedule

- A. Schedule no more than three events per time bracket.
- B. Schedule time for the National Assembly and Student Assembly meetings.

Section 3: Assignment of Judges.

- A. Any potential judge who is not an active college/university forensic instructor must be certified by the Tournament Committee.
- B. No judge will judge students from his/her current school or from any other school he/she declares an association with on the certification form.
- C. Judges should not judge the same contestant more than once in the same event. Under no circumstances should this occur more than twice.
- D. No judge hired by the host school will judge contestants from that school. Exceptions may be granted by the Tournament Committee when necessary due to availability of judges, for judges hired by the host school solely for National Tournament judging.
- E. Two judges will be assigned to each section in preliminary rounds in random order. Five judges will be randomly assigned by the Tournament Committee for each section of elimination rounds.
- F. Last names of judges assigned to rounds will be printed in the tournament schematic.

Section 4:

Judging Ballots. Association ballots will be utilized. They will include ranks, ratings, and space for written comments. All contestants will be from 1-5 in preliminary rounds and from 1-6 in all elimination rounds. All contestants will be given rating points from 100-70 in both preliminary and elimination rounds. There can be no ties given in ratings points.

Section 5: Tabulation and Results Recording.

- A. The Tabulation Sub-Committee of the Tournament Committee shall be in charge of the tabulation room.
- B. No one in knowledge of results at any time shall judge in a following round except in an emergency. If such an emergency occurs then the judge(s) shall be selected by random draw from those available.
- C. Specific Procedures for Tabulation.
 - 1. Record rank and rating for each entry at the end of each round.
 - 2. Record sweepstakes points for each entry at the end of each round.
 - 3. At the end of the preliminary rounds, total ranks calculated, drop the lowest rank for each contestant. Total ratings calculated, drop to the lowest rating. Determine the top 24 contestants in each event. Rank top 24 in order from 1 to 24 using first total ranks than total points. Record pentathlon and sweepstakes points on appropriate record sheets. Repeat procedure for semifinals and final rounds. Total pentathlon and sweepstakes.
 - 4. All tabulations will be double-checked by the tabulation staff.
- D. Ranks and ratings will be recorded for each contestant for each round from the Judge's Individual Ballots which are his/her signed official decision.

E. At the end of the preliminary rounds, the lowest rank and lowest rating will be deleted for each contestant (this does not affect sweepstakes.)

F. Ranks will be totaled. The 24 contestants in each event with the lowest ranks enter quarterfinals. The following procedure will be used in case of ties in ranks: (1) total ratings points; (2) use "greatest number of firsts in preliminary rounds"; (3) if a tie still exists at this point, the additional person will be added to quarterfinals.

G. Quarterfinals sections shall be made up of the following ranked contestants:

Section A - 1, 8, 9, 16, 17, 24;

Section B - 2, 7, 10,15, 18, 23;

Section C - 3, 6, 11,14, 19, 22;

Section D - 4, 5, 12,13, 20, 21.

There will be no exceptions to this section assignment (such as two or more contestants from the same school in the same section). Seeding ties will be broken using the same criterion as in Section 5f above, except that in quarter-final rounds, if a tie still exists, seeding will be randomly assigned.

H. The top three contestants from each quarterfinal section will advance to the semifinals. The top three contestants from sections A and D will comprise one semifinal section and the top three contestants from sections B and C will comprise the other semifinal section. The top three contestants from each semifinal section will advance to the final round.

If a tie exists in any elimination round, the tie-breaking procedure will be:

1. Total rank;
2. Total rate;
3. Judge's preference.

I. Speaking order in all elimination rounds will be determined by random draw.

J. Contestants earn 3 sweepstakes points for each first place; 2 points for each second place; and 1 point for each third place ballot received in the four preliminary rounds.

Thus, the maximum points would occur when a contestant received eight firsts equaling 24 points. The total preliminary points are halved.

K. All students in quarterfinals and semifinals will be awarded three sweepstakes points. In the final round, sweepstakes points are allotted as follows: 1st-12; 2nd-10; 3rd-8; 4th-7; 5th-5; 6th-3.

L. When the preliminary rounds are completed, ranks totaled and sweepstakes points for each contestant are computed, each school receives the sweepstakes points for its top three contestants in each event. (Three contestants with the most points.)

Section 6: Lincoln-Douglas Procedures.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate rounds at the NFA National Tournament will be paired as follows:

- A. The first two rounds of the tournament will be pre-set with debaters randomly matched with debaters outside their own geographical region as determined by the tab room staff.
- B. Power matching should begin with the third round.
 - 1. The odd number rounds should use a direct power match scheme since there is not a problem with side constraints in the odd number rounds.
 - 2. The even number rounds should use a high/low power match scheme within win/loss brackets to allow for side constraints.
- C. So far as possible, a judge should not judge a debater from a school within their own geographical region in any round.
- D. The formula for determining the number of debaters advancing to elimination rounds will be stated in the tournament invitation.

Breaking to Double-Octo's:

- A. Take debaters with a record of 4-2 or better.
 - 1. If there are more than 32 debaters with a 4-2 or better record, break on speaker points.
 - 2. If there is a tie in speaker points, then the tie will be broken using the following tie-breaking procedure: first, dropping the highest and lowest assigned speaker points; second, strength of the opponent; and third, z-score or judge variance.
- B. If there are not enough 4-2 debaters to make a full bracket of 32, take the debaters with the highest 3-3 records. Break ties by the same method used above. There should be no byes in elimination rounds.
- C. Pairing shall be as follows: 1-32; 2-31; 3-30; 4-29; 5-28 etc. to 16-17.

VI. SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATION OF NFA RULES AND PROCEDURES

A. Contestants and coaches bear the burden of ensuring their compliance with NFA rules and procedures. Any contestant or coach who violates NFA rules or procedures is subject to the sanctions as indicated in the Code of Ethics & applied at the discretion of the NFA National Council.

B. Those in doubt as to their compliance with any rules or procedures should correspond with the President or Tournament Director of the association in advance of the National Tournament to insure their compliance. Those suspecting violations of rules or procedures should report alleged violation to an

officer of the NFA as soon as practical and if at all possible, well in advance of the National Tournament.

VII. CATEGORIES OF SWEEPSTAKES AWARDS

A. Individual Events

There will be four categories of sweepstakes. The 10 schools with the most entered slots are eligible only for open sweeps; the next 15 - President's I, the next 20 - President's II, and the remainder for President's III. Categories are determined the Sunday before Nationals. All numbers will be rounded up when categories are calculated. Schools winning an award in one of the Presidential categories are also eligible to win an award in the Open Division. Categories will be announced at the awards ceremony on Monday.

B. Lincoln-Douglas Debate

There is an open division in Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and there will be five sweepstakes awards given in Lincoln-Douglas Debate.

C. Pentathlon

1. Students entered in five or more events are eligible for Pentathlon awards (Two duos do NOT count as two events). In determining these awards, only the student's best 5 slots in prelims and/or finals will be considered.
2. In the event of a tie in Pentathlon, the tie-breaking procedure will be:
 - a. Number of events in final rounds;
 - b. Number of events in semifinal rounds;
 - c. Number of events in quarterfinal rounds;
 - d. If a tie still exists, the tie will be broken on placement in final rounds.