

NPDA Constitution

(Updated April 2002)

Article I: The Organization

This organization shall be known as the National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA).

Article II: Purpose of the Association

Section 1. The purpose of the National Parliamentary Debate Association is to promote limited preparation debate that emphasizes both content and delivery.

Section 2. In March or April of each year the Association will host a Championship Tournament. The tournament shall be scheduled to avoid conflicting with significant religious holidays, such as Easter and Passover.

Section 3. Each year the Association will provide awards to recognize outstanding participants in debate tournaments sanctioned by the Association.

Article III: Membership

Section 1. Institutional membership in the National Parliamentary Debate Association is open to any college, University, community college, secondary school, or other academic institution that, acting through its Director of Forensics, association President, or other appropriate authority wishes to join.

Section 2. Individual membership is designed to allow individuals without an institutional affiliation the opportunity to be a part of the organization. Individual membership is open to any interested person, without regard to sex, race, creed, age, or other consideration, who is willing to support the goals of the organization.

Article IV: Officers and Elections

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall include a President, a Vice President, an Executive Secretary, a Treasurer, and a National Student Representative. The President, Vice President, Executive Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected to staggered, two- year terms, with the offices of President and Vice President running concurrently and the offices of Executive Secretary and Treasurer running concurrently. The National Student Representative shall be elected for a one-year term. These officers shall constitute the Executive Council. Officers can be removed for mis-, mal-, or nonfeasance by petition of 2/3 of the membership of the organization or by a 2/3 vote of members present at any Business Meeting.

Section 2. A Regional Representative shall be elected from each American Forensic Association district that has at least five NPDA member schools. These representatives shall be elected for two-year terms with representatives from even numbered districts elected in even years and representatives from odd-numbered districts elected in odd years. If for any reason a regional or community college representative cannot serve, then the members of the representative's constituency shall call a new election to be held as soon as possible to fill the remainder of the term.

Section 3. A Two-Year Schools Representative shall be elected for a two-year term, in even years, at a meeting during the NPDA Championship Tournament called by the current Two-Year Schools Representative.

Section 4. Nominations for offices except National Student Representative shall be submitted to the Executive Council for presentation at the first Business Meeting of the academic year, at which time additional nominations may be submitted by any member present.

Section 5. The National Student Representative shall be elected each year at the student business meeting held during the Championship Tournament. For the purposes of this election, each member school shall have one vote.

Article V: Officers and Their Duties

Section 1. The Executive Council shall lead the Association between Business Meetings; shall provide interpretation of any article of the Constitution and its By-Laws; shall by majority vote, approve the applications to host the NPDA Championship Tournament; shall perform the functions outlined for them in the By-Laws; and shall be consulted when any action not clearly specified in this Constitution or in the By-Laws is to be taken.

Section 2. The President's duties are:

- a. To establish the agenda for and to chair the Business Meetings of the Association;
- b. To uphold this Constitution and By-Laws and all other decisions of the annual Business Meetings of the Association;
- c. To chair and be a voting member of the Executive Council;
- d. To serve as the representative of the Association to other organizational meetings (if unable to attend, the Vice President, Executive Secretary, or the Treasurer, in that order, shall fulfill that obligation, or if none of them can attend, then the President shall appoint a member of the Association as a representative);
- e. To appoint members to standing committees as specified in Article VI of the Constitution;
- f. To appoint, with the approval of the Executive Council, a Tournament Director for the annual NPDA Championship Tournament;
- g. To appoint from time to time, such committees as deemed suitable or as requested by the annual Business Meeting;
- h. To fill, by appointment, any offices that become vacant for any reason, such an appointment to be for the unexpired term of the individual who has been replaced;
- i. To assist as needed in the administration of the annual Championship Tournament.

Section 3: The Vice President's duties are:

- a. To conduct elections for officers of the Association, for amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws, and for other issues as directed by the Executive Council;
- b. To chair the Championship Tournament Site Committee;
- c. To chair the Elections Committee;
- d. To serve as a voting member of the Executive Council;
- e. To assist as needed in the administration of the annual Championship Tournament;
- f. To assume the office of President at the conclusion of the term of Vice President, or upon vacancy in the office of the President.

Section 4. The Executive Secretary's duties are:

- a. To prepare and give a report on National Parliamentary Debate Association Membership to each Business Meeting of the Association;
- b. To maintain official records of the current standings of schools in the National Parliamentary Debate Association sweepstakes competition, and periodically to communicate this information to the membership of the Association;
- c. To record and disseminate to the membership the minutes of the Business Meetings;
- d. To serve as a voting member of the Executive Council;
- e. To maintain an updated version of the Constitution and By-Laws and to disseminate these to the membership periodically;
- f. To chair the Publications Committee;
- g. To create and maintain the NPDA tournament calendar;
- h. To assist as needed in the administration of the annual Championship Tournament.

Section 5. The Treasurer's duties are:

- a. To receive all membership dues and other payments to the Association and to pay all expenses of the Association that are authorized by the Executive Council;
- b. To prepare and give an accounting of the financial state of the Association to the second Business Meeting each year;
- c. To accept membership applications to the Association;
- d. To serve as a member of the Championship Tournament Site Committee;
- e. To serve as an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee;
- f. To serve as a voting member of the Executive Council;
- g. To file needed tax documents on behalf of the Association and maintain related records;
- h. To assist as needed in the administration of the annual Championship Tournament.

Section 6. The National Student Representative's duties are:

- a. To interface with NPDA students and to bring their concerns to the attention of the officers of the organization;
- b. To represent NPDA at annual meetings of other parliamentary debate organizations (national and international) that are solely student run;
- c. To prepare and give a report concerning his or her area of responsibility to each Business Meeting of the Association, and to serve on such committees to which he or she shall be elected or appointed;

1. Funding for the student representative's travel to such meetings will normally be in conjunction with the student's travel to compete in the championship competitions held at the same time. Such costs will normally be covered by the institution that the student attends.
 2. The Student Representative may petition the Executive Council for travel funding for the purpose of attending these meetings. The Executive Council has the option of approving funding for all or part of this travel, but is not obligated to do so.
- d. To serve as a voting member of the Executive Council except as provided elsewhere in the Constitution or By-Laws.

Section 7. In addition to the duties subsequently described under the Publications Committee (Article VI, Section 4), the Webmaster and the Editor of *Parliamentary Debate* shall serve as voting members of the Executive Council.

Article VI: Standing Committees

Section 1. Finance Committee

- a. The duties of the Finance Committee shall include:
 1. To meet prior to the first Business Meeting of the academic year;
 2. With the assistance of the Treasurer, to prepare an annual budget;
 3. To present the annual budget to the first Business Meeting of the academic year;
 4. To perform other duties related to finance as assigned by the President.
- b. Finance Committee Membership:
 1. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee.
 2. Other members of the Finance Committee shall be appointed for staggered three-year terms.

Section 2. Elections Committee

- a. The duties of the Elections Committee shall include:
 1. To solicit from the membership, potential nominees for all soon to be vacated Association offices;
 2. To present nominations for offices of the Association at the first Business Meeting of the academic year, at which time additional nominations for any office may be submitted by any member present at the meeting;
 3. To perform other duties related to elections as may be assigned by the President.
- b. Elections Committee Membership:
 1. The Vice President shall chair the Elections Committee.
 2. In addition to any other members the President shall appoint, the three immediate past presidents of the Association shall serve on the Elections Committee.
- c. The Elections Committee shall not nominate any of its members for any office.

Section 3. Championship Tournament Site Committee

- a. The duties of the Championship Tournament Site Committee shall include:
 1. To solicit bids for future Championship Tournament sites;
 2. To select sites to be visited by members of the site committee;
 3. To negotiate contracts with prospective hotels;
 4. To recommend Championship Tournament sites to the Executive Council;
 5. To perform other duties related to Championship Tournament sites as may be assigned by the President.
- b. Championship Tournament Site Committee Membership:
 1. The Vice President shall chair the Championship Tournament Site Committee.
 2. The Treasurer shall serve on the Championship Tournament Site Committee.
 3. In addition to any other members the President shall appoint, at least two previous tournament hosts shall serve on the Championship Tournament Site Committee.

Section 4. Publications Committee

- a. The duties of the Publications Committee shall include:
 1. To recommend to the President and the Executive Council, a person to be the Editor of *Parliamentary Debate*;
 2. To recommend to the President and the Executive Council, a person to be the Webmaster;
 3. To perform other duties related to research and publications as may be assigned by the President.
- b. Publications Committee membership:
 1. The Executive Secretary shall chair the Publications Committee.
 2. The remaining members of the Publications Committee shall be appointed by the President.

Article VII: Business Meetings of the Association

Section 1. The Business Meetings of the National Parliamentary Debate Association constitute the governing body of the National Parliamentary Debate Association at the times they are meeting, and are the only bodies that can institute changes in the Constitution or its By-Laws. Between Business Meetings, actions of the Executive Council will have the force of By-Laws. These decisions must be reported to the next Business Meeting and are automatically placed on the agenda pursuant to Article VII, Section 2.

Section 2. Business Meetings shall be held annually at the National Championship Tournament and at any other time and place agreed to by the Executive Council. At least sixty days notice will be given before the meeting.

Section 3. Each member institution may be represented by one voting representative at a Business Meeting. No member institution represented at a Business Meeting may vote more than 10 proxies in addition to the member's own vote. At least 5% of member institutions must be personally represented (proxies do not suffice for this purpose) for the meeting to conduct any business other than hearing reports and discussing them.

The National Student Representative and District Student Representatives will each be given a vote at the fall and spring NPDA business meetings. If the District Student Representatives are unable to attend either the fall or spring business meeting, the National Student Representative may deliver the respective vote by proxy

Section 4. If sufficiently attended, as defined in the preceding section, a Business Meeting may adopt new By-Laws or change existing ones by a majority vote of schools present (personally or by proxy). The Business Meeting may propose constitutional changes by a two-thirds vote of the schools represented (personally or by proxy).

Section 5. The presiding officer of a Business Meeting will be entitled to vote as the representative of his or her institution.

Section 6. Any vote that results in a tie will be considered to have failed.

Article VIII: Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution

- a. An amendment to the Constitution may be initiated by any member school.
- b. Amendments to the Constitution must be submitted to the Executive Secretary thirty days prior to a Business Meeting to be considered at that meeting. The Executive Secretary will communicate proposed amendments to the membership no later than fifteen days prior to the Business Meeting.
- c. A two-thirds vote of the schools represented at the Business Meeting will be necessary for a proposed constitutional amendment to be sent to the membership.
- d. Within ten days following the Business Meeting, the Executive Secretary will distribute by mail a ballot containing all proposed constitutional amendments. Balloting on these will cease at midnight thirty days after the date of the Business Meeting.
- e. A two-thirds vote of the schools voting by mail on the proposed amendment will be necessary for its enactment.

Section 2. Amendments to the By-Laws

- a. An amendment to the By-Laws may be initiated by any member school.
- b. Amendments to the By-Laws must be submitted to the Executive Secretary no later than thirty days prior to a Business Meeting to be considered at that meeting. The Executive Secretary will communicate proposed amendments to the membership no later than fifteen days prior to the Business Meeting.
- c. A majority of the schools represented and voting at the Business Meeting will be necessary for enactment of the amendments to the By-Laws.

Section 3. Further Amendment Procedures for the Constitution and By-Laws

- a. An amendment may be proposed by two-thirds of the Executive Council or by a petition of five percent of the current National Parliamentary Debate Association membership to the Executive Secretary and the President.
- b. The proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership. Members shall have forty-five days to send comments on the proposed amendment to the Executive Secretary.

- c. Within sixty-five days of the publication of the proposed amendment, the Executive Secretary shall mail a ballot to the membership containing a copy of the proposed amendment, along with a statement of the arguments for and against the amendment. The author of the amendment shall have the opportunity to include a statement of the reasons for the amendment. The President may designate an individual to outline potential objections to the amendment. Both of these individuals shall have access to the comments received by the Executive Secretary. Ballots shall be due no later than three weeks after the mailing.
- d. A three-fourths vote of all members voting will be required to enact an amendment initiated under this section.
- e. A majority of the Executive Council may vote to exclude the time. From June 1 to September 1 from the time period in items b. and c. of this section.

Article IX: Management of Assets

Section 1. The National Parliamentary Debate Association is organized exclusively for educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 2. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, officers or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in the furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)2 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Section 3. Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such asset not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.