

ILLINOIS DEBATE COMMUNITY CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE RULES

Adapted from the ICTA Congressional Debate Rules 2/2018

Revised 3/2019 UG

I. Definitions

- A. Congressional Debate is a simulated congressional activity (debate) modeled after the State or National Congress. Participants research and write bills and/or resolutions, which will be debated in chambers while utilizing the tools of deliberative decision-making such as Parliamentary Procedure and other group communication skills.
- B. The Illinois Debate Community Tournament Committee (IDCTC) shall have the ability to vote to amend these rules before the IDC Debate Tournament.
- C. The Illinois Debate Community Tournament Committee (IDCTC) shall have the ability to vote to adjudicate and enforce these rules during the IDC Debate Tournament.

II. Debate Subject

- A. Schools will debate the docket chosen by the IHSA State Debate Committee for the IHSA State Tournament.
- B. If registration numbers determine that a Final Congress is needed, the IDCTC will select three pieces of legislation to be used in the Final Congress of all divisions of Congressional Debate. When possible, Final Congress legislation will be chosen so as to give no advantage to any participating team.

III. State Final Time Schedule

- A. Sessions will begin at the posted times. Debate will not wait for a late participant. Each session shall last for the scheduled duration. Debaters may not vote to end a session early.
- B. Debate will consist of two to three sessions for at least six hours of preliminary debate, and a Final Congress, as determined by the IDCTC. If registration does not permit a Final Congress, there will be three, three-hour sessions.

IV. Procedures in Preliminary Chambers:

- A. Each chamber will act as a Committee of the Whole at the beginning of the Session I in both divisions.
- B. The Committee of the Whole will vote to determine the docket for the chamber for all three preliminary sessions. The Committee of the Whole will select the most debatable bills. Discussions within the Committee will be restricted to promoting original debate ("Is the bill controversial, timely and well written?" "Are there substantial pro and con arguments concerning the bill?").

C. The Committee will have the authority to recommend amendments to the legislation.

D. The docket created by the Committee must start with Economics, Foreign Affairs, and Public Welfare.

E. The docket created by the Committee of the Whole must alternate by Economics, Foreign Affairs, and Public Welfare. Changes to the docket after the Committee ends are not permitted. During a session, the chamber may table or un-table legislation using standard parliamentary procedures.

V. Apportionment and Order of Events

A. Apportionment:

1. If there are sufficient entries, novice and junior varsity debaters will be placed in separate chambers.
2. Additional chambers will be added if the ICDTC determines that additional chambers are in the best interest of the students. If multiple novice or junior varsity chambers are used, a break to a Final Congress will occur.
3. Selection of students in the Final Congress will be described later in this document.

B. Order of Events:

1.A Two adult judges will be assigned to each session of each JV chamber. When possible (determined by registration), a parliamentarian will be assigned to all sessions of each chamber. The IDCTC will prepare a seating chart for each chamber. This procedure will also take place in the event of a Final Congress.

1.B Beginning in 2019, at least one adult and one student judge will be assigned to each Novice chamber. If numbers allow, additional student judges may be assigned to each Novice chamber to maximize participation and maintain even judging numbers across all Novice chambers.

1.C A “best ballot” award will be given for the student judge submitting the most consistently valuable feedback.

2. At the beginning each session, judges will conduct an election for a Presiding Officer (P.O.) for that session. This procedure will also take place in the event of a Final Congress.

3. Debate will begin once the Presiding Officer has been elected. There is no specific time limit on the debate of any one piece of legislation other than the total amount of debate time allotted within the three sessions.

4. Due to the duplication of the IHSA State Debate docket, there shall be no authorship speeches. All speeches will be three minutes in length.

5. All three-minute speeches will be followed by two minutes of cross-examination.

6. During the cross-examination period, cross-debate is allowed. The Presiding Officer will designate two people to cross-examine the speaker. Each shall have one minute to cross-examine the speaker. Unused time does not carry over into the subsequent questioner’s time.

7. The Presiding Officer must follow the precedence method before any other method when recognizing students who have not spoken during the session and next follow recency by recognizing students who have spoken fewer times. A Point of Order ought to be called on a Presiding Officer who violates these rules.
8. Precedence resets after the end of a session. Precedence will also reset if a Final Congress is held.

VI. General Rules

- A. A student may not speak on both sides of the same legislation. If a student does, the judge shall mark the second speech on the opposing side as a zero.
- B. Voting on all matters in all sessions will be by one vote per person.
- C. Abstentions shall not be counted in voting totals.
- D. Members of a chamber may not suspend the rules.

VII. Judge Roles:

- A. Judges will be responsible for evaluating the participants' speeches. Judges will evaluate every speech and never alternate, except that no judge will evaluate the speech of a student from his/her own school. In this case, the unaffiliated judge's score will count as double. Ballots shall be kept secret from debaters but not from any judge.
- B. The judges will be required to keep track of the participation of members of the chamber by recording speeches and questions on the seating chart. Judges are to compare their seating chart with the chart of the Presiding Officer for accuracy. Both seating charts will be submitted to the Tab Room. No participation points will be awarded; however, participation may be considered as part of the overall performance when it comes time for the judge to rank the debaters.
- C. The parliamentarian shall be the ultimate authority on parliamentary procedure and fairness in recognizing speakers and questioners. They shall have the power and the responsibility to correct or overturn a decision of the Presiding Officer (especially since the Presiding Officer is not a varsity debater). If a Final Congress occurs, the Parliamentarian of either division will not be one of the Parliamentarians from the preliminary sessions.
- D. At the end of every session, each judge will rank, who they prefer, as the top eight debaters on the basis of their quality of debate during the session. A judge **may not** rank a debater from his or her own school. The parliamentarian will rank at the end of the preliminary sessions and at the end of the Final Congress Session. Parliamentarians will always rank every student in the chamber when they complete their preferential ballot, including their own students. **The Presiding Officer must be considered for ranking. The judges must not confer when ranking students.**
- E. Both judges and the parliamentarian, together on one ballot, will evaluate the performance of the Presiding Officer following each session. The P.O. will be given a score from 1-6 per hour of debate, which will count as 1 speech per hour toward the minimum of four speeches to break to Final Congress based on cumulative average but not toward the Top Speaker award.

F. Judges will conduct elections for Best Legislation at the end of the third session if there is no Final Congress and at the end of the second session if there is a Final Congress. All legislation that was debated within the chamber will be eligible. Each person in the chamber will be allowed one vote. The winning legislation must receive a simple majority of the votes cast. If no legislation earns a simple majority, the legislation which receives the lowest vote total (or legislation with the same lowest total) will be dropped from consideration until such a time as one-piece of legislation does obtain the required simple majority.

G. Judges will conduct elections for Best Presiding Officer at the end of the last preliminary session. Each person in the chamber will be allowed one vote. The winning candidate must receive a simple majority of the votes cast. If no person earns a simple majority, the candidate who received the lowest vote total will be dropped from consideration and voting will be repeated. If the two lowest vote getters are tied, a run-off between the two will occur with the lowest vote getter being dropped. Another vote will be taken between the two remaining candidates.

VIII. Awards

A. If there is no Final Congress, the novice and junior varsity State Champion and the runner-up (2nd Place) debater will be determined by the judge's preferential ballots (two from Sessions I, II, and III), plus the parliamentarian's final ranking, in both divisions. The parliamentarian's ballot shall rank all of the debaters in the chamber. Winners will be tabulated by a straight preferential ballot method rather than a redistribution of ballots. The lowest rank shall be dropped from each debater's cumulative rank total.

B. If there is a Final Congress, the novice and junior varsity State Champion and the runner-up (2nd Place) debater will be determined by the Final Congress judge's preferential ballots (one from each judge) completed in the novice and junior varsity Final Congress Chamber, plus the parliamentarian's final ranking, in both divisions. The parliamentarian's ballot shall rank all of the debaters in the chamber. Winners will be tabulated by a straight preferential ballot method rather than a redistribution of ballots.

C. In addition to the above awards, a Top Speaker trophy will be presented in each chamber to the debater with the highest speech average as determined by the judges' scores of the students' speeches throughout the tournament regardless of whether or not there is a Final Congress. This average will include all speeches a student gave throughout the entire tournament. The calculation will be a simple average and will not use the NFL base system. To qualify for this award, a student must have given at least five speeches in the preliminary sessions of the tournament. Speech scores entered into the scoring system for the purposes of recording the points of a Presiding Officer will not be averaged toward this award (but do count towards the minimum number of speeches). There is no limit to the number of speeches a student may give.

D. Best Legislation will be awarded to the piece of legislation that receives a simple-majority during the vote at the end of the preliminary sessions (regardless of whether or not it is a Final Congress).

E. Best Presiding Officer will be awarded to the Presiding Officer in each preliminary chamber that receives a simple-majority during the vote at the end of the third session.

IX. Final Congress Addendum

If registration numbers call for more than one chamber in a division, a Final Congress, an elimination Congressional Debate round, will take place to determine the State Champion and runner-up (2nd Place).

A. Provided there are two chambers within a division, the students who advance will be determined as follows: four students from each chamber based on the four preferential ballots of the judges (which rank the top eight) and the solitary preferential ballot of the Parliamentarian (who ranks all students). Four additional students (not among those advancing by preferential ballot) with the highest critique point average will also advance. These students must have given at least five speeches in the preliminary sessions. The final chamber will then consist of twelve students and two hours of debate.

B. Provided there are three or more chambers within a division, the students who advance will be determined as follows: four students from each chamber based on the four preferential ballots of the judges (which mark the top eight) and the preferential ballot of the Parliamentarian (who ranks all students). Two additional students (not among those advancing by preferential ballot) with the highest critique point averages will also advance. If the total number of students in the Final Congress exceeds fourteen by this method, then the students who would have broken by highest critique point average will not advance.

C. Two judges and one Parliamentarian will be assigned to the Final Congress. Judges will be responsible for evaluating the participants' speeches. Judges will evaluate every speech and never alternate, except that no judge will evaluate the speech of a student from his/her own school. In this case, the unaffiliated judge's score will count as double.

D. One Presiding Officer will be elected at the beginning of the Final Congress. The election will be by one vote per student with a majority necessary for the Presiding Officer. The election period will not be included in the two-hour debate period.

E. The legislation to be debated will be determined by the IDCTC. There will be no authorship speeches and all speeches will be three minutes in length followed by a two-minute question period. There will be a committee of the whole to determine the order in which the legislation is debated. The time for the committee meeting is included in the two hour debate period.

F. IDCTC will assign the seating during the Final Congress.

G. At the conclusion of debate, each judge will complete a preferential ballot ranking the top eight debaters in the Final Congress and the parliamentarian will rank every student in the chamber. **The Presiding Officer must be considered for ranking.** Winners will be tabulated by a straight preferential ballot method rather than a redistribution of ballots.