

You are cordially invited to attend the annual Alan Nichols Debate Tournament to be held on January 3-5, 2013 at the University of Southern California. Once again we are happy to partner with CSU Fullerton as your California Swing tournament hosts.

We have continued the new tradition of keeping the dates placed after the New Year. We hope this will both reduce your travel costs and improve the quality of lives of all of our guests. We plan to run an event that we hope will offer great competition in a humane environment.

We hope you will enjoy the opportunity to have quality competition in a friendly winter climate. Please let us know if you have any questions. We look forward to ringing in the New Year in Southern California.

Warmest Regards,

Gordon Stables, Ph.D.
Director of Debate & Forensics
stables@usc.edu

Tournament Information

Registration: All registration will be handled through: <http://www.tabroom> All entries must be received by December 20, 2012. We also will need your judging finalized by this time.

Format – Debates will use the 2012-2013 CEDA topic and employ a 9-3-6 time format with 10 minutes of preparation time per team. Eligibility for the divisions is determined by CEDA rules. We will offer six preliminary debates in all divisions. The open division will advance the top 32 teams with winning records into an elimination bracket. The JV division will clear teams consistent with CEDA rules. Typically the JV division clears to a semi-finals.

Teams – Entries are unlimited per division. Each team must consist of two students formally representing their university. Individual students are not allowed to enter, qualify for, or compete in elimination rounds. Individual debaters can win preliminary debates, but unless the team is intact for more than half of the preliminary rounds that team cannot qualify for the elimination rounds. Hybrid teams are not eligible to participate in elimination rounds, unless the hybrid involves an inactive program and/or the hybrid has already satisfied the NDT hybrid criteria.

Guest conduct at the tournament – We are very excited to have you as our guests in Los Angeles and to our campus. At the same time, it is important that we remind everyone that you are representatives of your university or college when you are at the tournament. All participants debate at the invitation of the University of Southern California according to its tournament rules as well as any rules of their sponsoring institutions. The tournament abides by the rules and norms of the American Forensics Association, the American Debate Association, and the Cross Examination Debate Association.

If our guests engage in destructive, threatening, violent, or harassing behavior we are obligated as university employees to report it to our appropriate campus office, including the Department of Public Safety and the Office of Equity and Diversity. Those offices will provide specific guidance which may include the decision to report specific actions to your college or university. We trust that no such actions will be needed, but we wish to alert you of this requirement.

Pairings – Brackets will not be broken in elimination rounds. Sides for elimination rounds will be determined by reversing the sides from preliminary rounds or allowing the teams to choose sides based on a coin toss. We will be using Gary Larson's SOP algorithm for prelim pairings so we will not have any high- high debates.

We will employ a mutual preference judge system for both divisions using categories that counts each judge based on the number of rounds they are committed to judge. Judge preferences will be made available via www.tabroom.com on December 21st and due no later than midnight on December 30th. Adam Symonds of ASU will be primarily responsible for the operation of the tab room, along with the USC staff.

A USC team may be added to avoid having a bye, but they are not eligible to participate in elimination rounds or win individual awards.

Scouting - Participating teams and schools are expected to contribute to opencaselist.paperlessdebate.com as a precondition for entry and should provide their most recent affirmative and negative information. This should include an outline of the arguments sufficient for novice comprehension as well as full citations.

Judging – Schools are required to provide qualified judging. All judges should post their judge philosophy and make sure their conflicts of interest are marked at www.tabroom.com. Each team requires three rounds of judging obligation. We ask that all coaches are expected to be available for at least some judging and will be on the preference sheet. Judges must have either completed their bachelor's degree or rescinded their eligibility. Anyone who judges in the open division at the Nichols will not be allowed to subsequently enter as a competitor in future Nichols tournaments.

Schools may arrange their own hired judging and we cannot guarantee the ability to provide extensive hired judging from the tournament.

All judges are obligated through the octafinals on the morning of the 5th. Judges are asked to support a healthy educational environment in each debate and to provide a judgment on that debate. All debates must be decided with only one win and only one loss. The tournament will provide a judgment if the assigned judge is unwilling to complete this request. All preliminary decisions must be rendered no later than two hours and thirty minutes after the start time of any round.

Speaker Points – We are utilizing a 30-point scale, accepting points in increment of one-tenth of a point. Speakers should be differentiated in each debate. There cannot be any tie within a single debate. We ask that judges not regularly award the bulk of their points at or below the 'below average' (27) standard or at or above the 'very good' (29) standard. In order for speaker points to have some sense of meaning individual judges must feel comfortable providing evaluations across the range of items.

Awards – We will provide a nice selection of awards for all teams participating in elimination rounds and for the top speakers in each division.

Fees - Fees are \$50.00 per person attending the tournament. These fees include entry, trophies, several meals, and our general hospitality. All checks should be made payable to the USC Annenberg Trojan Debate Squad. USC's Federal Tax ID # is 95-1642394. We will seek to accommodate schools with financial difficulty. Please let us know about the number of vegetarians and vegans in your group so we can accommodate their dietary needs.

Tournament Hotel –We are very happy to be using the Radisson Hotel Los Angeles Midtown at USC (3540 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles California 90007). This property is located at the corner of campus and will allow you to walk to the tournament each day. We have secured a \$109.00 per night rate for up to four guests per room at this property. This rate includes free wireless and free parking.

You can make your reservations directly at <http://www.radisson.com/DEBATE2013> or by calling (213) 748-4141. Please identify your reservations as part of “USC Debate.” The block typically fills so please reserve as early as possible. The block will close on December 21, 2012

Ground Transportation –

Parking at USC - School parking is \$10 per day. If you park on campus, you should enter through the gate at Jefferson and McClintock (Gate #5). If you would like to pre-order parking passes, please let me know.

LA Transportation

In the last few months, the city of Los Angeles has completed a new train line that connects USC to the rest of Southern California. This is a new and very helpful option to both get to downtown LA as well as to Fullerton.

The Expo line train has a station both on the Exposition side of USC’s campus (walking away from VKC and toward the LA Coliseum) as well another station directly behind the Galen Center on Figueroa. The USC/Galen Center station is also on Figueroa and just a short walk from the Radisson. You can plan trips here http://socaltransport.org/tm_pub_start.php

Trains to Fullerton

Traveling to Fullerton involves taking the Expo Line to Union Station and then transferring to the Metrolink (commuter trains). The trip from USC to Union Station is a short trip and \$3.00 per passenger.

The specific connection information is:

Expo Line to 7TH STREET METRO CENTER STATION

Connect to the Red/ or Purple Line to

From: 7TH STREET/METRO CENTER STATION To: UNION STATION

The LA Union Station to Fullerton Metrolink Station is an \$8.00 one way fare and the metrolink train will take approximately 34-37 minutes. You can plan your own trip here, <http://www.metrolinktrains.com/>

Shuttles to Fullerton

We have traditionally offered vendor options if you need a shuttle service to the second half of the swing at California State University at Fullerton, but we don’t usually have any takers. If you need to arrange ground transportation on the 6th please let us know.

Campus Internet – USC has an open guest wireless network for public use.

Audio and Video Recording: All rounds (defined as the speeches of the participants) are open to registered tournament participants and may be electronically recorded for private educational use by tournament participants (registered coaches, debaters and helpers, and USC tournament staff) only. Public distribution of such recordings is expressly prohibited unless prior written consent of all people on the recording is obtained and unless prior written consent of USC is obtained. Private sharing for educational use is permitted.

Questions – We are very interested in making your trip enjoyable and a great competitive experience. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions. If you have any tournament related questions, please contact Gordon Stables at (213) 915-8201 or stables@usc.edu

2013 Nichols Tournament Schedule

January 2nd – Registration in two phases.

- 1) **Travel check-in** - At the beginning of their travel, schools should check in via email (stables@usc.edu) or text (213-915-8201) and confirm that their entire party is in transit. We want to know early if there are any dropped teams or judges.
- 2) **Payment and final check-in** – From 6-8 pm in the Radisson lobby we will formally hold registration. Pairings will be released online no later than 9 pm.

January 3rd – All rounds at USC

(The central tournament hub will be at the VKC plaza)

9:00 AM Round 1
11:30 AM Round 1 decision deadline

Boxed lunches will be provided by the tournament. They will be made available from 11:30 am until 3:15 pm so tournament participants can pick them up at their convenience.

11:45 AM Round 2
2:15 PM Round 2 decision deadline

3:15 PM Round 3
5:45 PM Round 3 decision deadline

Dinner (provided by the tournament)

7:00 PM Round 4
9:30 PM Round 4 decision deadline

January 4th - All Rounds at USC

(The central tournament hub will be at the VKC plaza)

8:00 AM Round 5 pairings released
9:00 AM Round 5
11:30 AM Round 5 decision deadline

Lunch on campus (Provided by the tournament)

12:30 PM Round 6
3:00 PM Round 6 decision deadline

3:30 PM Awards Ceremony
4:30 PM Open Double-Octafinals and JV Semifinals
The full bracket will be released along with these elim pairings
We will release the full octos pairings (with judges) online after the doubles concludes

January 5th – All Rounds at the Radisson (2nd floor)

7:00 AM	Continental breakfast at the Radisson, 2 nd Floor.
8:00 AM	Open Octafinals start time
10:45 AM	Octafinals Decision deadline
11:00 AM	Postround ends
11:30 AM	Open Quarterfinals & JV Finals start time
2:15 PM	Decision deadline
2:30 PM	Postround ends
3:00 PM	Open Semifinals start time
5:45 PM	Decision deadline
6:00 PM	Postround ends
6:30 PM	Finals start time
9:00 PM	Finals decision time