

Memorandum to Participants, Coaches, and Judges

April 23, 2013

Please read all of the enclosed information, *carefully*.

Item #1 - Contestants

All contestants must prepare one “Morning Hour” speech. They will deliver this speech at the beginning of Session 1, and after all contestants in the chamber (minus the PO) have done so, they will move to traditional debate on an agenda they establish. The “Morning Hour” is inspired by time in the U.S. House of Representatives, and our contestants will give one compelling speech discussing issues pertinent to their state/region, ideology, etc. **Considerations for judging:**

- The speech is a *soapbox*, and may indicate the **imperative need to solve a problem, may or may not indicate a solution, or may simply raise awareness, or attempt to change attitudes on an issue.**
- Legislators may acknowledge correlative points made by peers, but the focal point for the speech is not necessarily direct clash/debate with other speakers.
- Students may employ more rhetorical strategies, stylistic devices, or even creative risks in these speeches that may slightly deviate, surpass, and vary from the traditional decorum/style of congressional debate speeches.
- This should not simply be a “recycled” speech on past debate on legislation. Be innovative!

Item #2 - Coaches & Judges

→ Please double-check your judges in Tabroom.com to make sure their cell phone is listed.

→ We still need profiles completed for the following judges, at: <http://goo.gl/5A4iD>

K. Casey, Ardrey Kell	Shawn Matson, Whitefish Bay	Alexandra Sencer, Lake Mary Prep
Alan Devlin, Monticello	Ben Miller, Cypress Bay	Jack Stanislaw, John Hersey
Jennifer Firer, Highland Park	Howard Miller, Nova	David Trigaux, St. Petersburg
Emmanuel Gerard, Shrewsbury	Leslie Moeller, Geneva Sch Boerne	Susan Wallace, St. Petersburg
Grant Hamersma, St. Petersburg	Martin Page, Ridge	Zack Vrana, Whitefish Bay
Spencer Howland, New Trier	Yvonne Palmer, Amer. Heritage	
Milton Lozano, Lamar Houston	Ron Richards, Broad Run	
Judge from Freedom HS (no name)	Judge from Torrey Pines HS (no name)	

Item #3 - Contestants & Coaches

We will post chamber assignments at Tabroom.com Friday evening (tweeted via @CongressDebate), after registration has concluded. We also will post in the classroom building, 1st floor, near CB114. All chambers are in this building. The postings will include tentative judge assignments, and we also will post a PDF of judge profiles for contestants to peruse when we post chamber assignments. Contestants always should ask judges to introduce themselves, in case the tournament makes last-minute substitutions.

Item #4 - Coaches & Judges

All judges are expected to attend the judge meeting at 8 a.m. Saturday morning, unless they have made prior arrangements to be in the judging pool at a later time. Materials will be distributed at this meeting. For any questions, the tab/headquarters is CB 234.

2013 Schedule

Saturday, April 27		Sunday, April 28		Monday, April 29	
8:00am	Mandatory Judge Briefing	8:15am-11:30am	Session 4	8:00am-10:00am	Breakfast of Champions
8:30am-12:00pm	Session 1 (incl. Morning Hour)	11:30am-12:45pm	Lunch (Student Ctr. Gr. Ballrm)	11:00am or ASAP	Final Session Convenes
12:00pm - 1:00pm	Lunch (Student Ctr. Food Court)	12:45pm - Assembly	(Student Ctr. Worsham Theatre)	2:30pm	Final Session Adjourns
1:00pm - 4:15pm	Session 2	1:00pm - 3:30pm	Semifinal Session 1	Awards completed by 3:45 p.m.	
4:30pm - 7:45pm	Session 3	3:45pm - 6:00pm	Semifinal Session 2		

Rules

There are a number of changes in 2013. Please read this information *carefully*. Updated 4/23, 9:05 p.m. CST

- Students are issued school *codes*, and should not reveal their school identity publicly in a chamber. This maintains the integrity of competition, and allows judges to write codes on evaluation sheets to assist Tab staff in sorting them after sessions.

Preliminary Session

- There are six preliminary chambers of 18-19 students each. Two judges are assigned in rotation to each chamber, as well as one designated parliamentarian. Each judge ranks eight (8) contestants (presiding officers are eligible). After Session 4, the parliamentarian selects the best presiding officer (PO) from among the **four** who served in the preliminary sessions – to advance to semifinals. The remaining six (6) top delegates in each chamber – based on lowest rank totals – advance to the semifinal session.
- One presiding officer will be elected for each session; precedence and recency resets for each session.
- MORNING HOUR** (first half of Session 1): legislators address an issue of importance to themselves or their constituents.
 - Until the morning hour period of Session 1 has concluded, there are no bills or resolutions considered. Legislators have three (3) minutes to deliver their speeches. The topic may be of national concern or a state/local problem that Congress has the ability to remedy. The topic of the speech may not be the same as any legislation scheduled for debate at the TOC, **nor should legislators simply deliver an old speech on a bill/resolution**. Creativity, originality, and seriousness of purpose are encouraged in the creation and delivery of a Morning Hour speech.
 - The PO recognizes each legislator once. There are no “pro/con” speeches, so once a speech ends the PO simply calls for the next legislator who wishes to speak. The PO also recognizes delegates for a one-minute questioning period. The PO is not permitted to give a Morning Hour speech, nor ask questions of speakers. Judges will consider quality of questions asked, and while friendly questions are permissible, they are discouraged in favor of more meaningful interaction. This should influence ranking, too.
 - Judges are given a modified evaluation sheet for this time period.** Criteria include fluency of delivery, the use of persuasive evidence, etc. Each legislator is expected to demonstrate that he/she has carefully prepared for this polished presentation. Refutation of previous speakers is permissible, but not required. For example, a speaker who gives a speech in favor of a policy may respond to a previous legislator’s comments opposing that same policy. **Effective analysis of unique topics not often found in Congressional Debate, such as highly localized issues, should be rewarded.**
 - The session concludes when each legislator has given one speech, and the chamber has elected their second session PO.
- All other preliminary session speeches are three minutes, with two-minute questioning of speakers introducing legislation, as well as the first negative, and for subsequent speakers, one minute of questioning where any legislator is recognized to ask single questions apiece. Unused speech time is not added to the questioning period. This speaking/questioning time follows current NFL rules.

Semifinal Session

- There will be three semifinal chambers of 14 students each. Two, three, or four judges are assigned each session to each chamber, as well as a parliamentarian. Each judge ranks eight (8) contestants (inclusive of presiding officers). The better-ranked PO, based on rank by the judges and parliamentarian, shall advance to finals (with ties broken on the parliamentarian’s rank). The remaining top four (4) contestants in each chamber shall advance to finals.
- Two of the six advancing POs will be assigned to each chamber, and the parliamentarian shall flip a coin to determine which session each presides. Precedence and recency resets for each semifinal session.
- Speaking and questioning time is the same as standard preliminary speeches; however, each questioner has 30 seconds within the one or two minutes to engage in **direct questioning** with the speaker.

Final Session

- Finals shall consist of 15 students, three of whom are the top PO advanced from each semifinal chamber. At least three judges (one designated parliamentarian) rank eight (8) contestants (in finals, **exclusive** of presiding officers).
- Speeches are **four minutes**, with two-minute questioning of speakers introducing legislation as well as the first negative, and one minute of questioning for subsequent speakers. Each questioning period will use **direct questioning**, as did the semifinal session.
- Each of the three POs shall serve for eight floor speeches, and may not give a speech during the final session. Each PO will draw a random number to determine order of presiding. The champion presiding officer shall be selected based on cumulative judge *ratings*, beginning with the preliminary session, with ties broken by the final session parliamentarian’s rank. The runner-up final session POs will be recognized as “Presiding Officer Finalists.”
- The session ends when all speakers have spoken twice, or at **2:30 p.m.**, whichever comes first. Placement of the top six speaking contestants shall be calculated in the same manner as advancement is described above. Remaining students are honored as finalists.

Procedures

The following rules are designed to promote procedural unity among the chambers. They cannot be altered or ignored by a chamber through the use of a motion to suspend the rules.

1. **DECORUM:** The PO is responsible for enforcing proper decorum. Moving to suspend the rules for an open chamber is out-of-order at the TOC.
2. Each session constitutes its own legislative day, however, for NFL points, each *calendar* day has a recording limit of 24 points. ***Debate on legislation may not be carried from one session to the next, so each session must conclude with orders of the day, where students vote on legislation.***
3. **RECOGNITION OF SPEAKERS:** There is some question as to recent trends that attempt to “randomize” recognition before precedence and recency are set (such as “Activity” or “Longest Standing”). Those are now illegal as per NFL rules. It is entirely acceptable for a PO to simply say s/he will randomly call on speakers. The PO’s recognition method is subject to critique by judges. Seating charts, precedence and recency reset for each session (including each semifinal session). Following earlier sessions, POs may take speaking order from previous sessions into account, any may even employ a “reverse recency,” so that someone recognized late in an earlier session has the opportunity to speak earlier in a new session.
4. **QUESTIONING:** Questioning periods vary, depending on session; see #s 5, 8 and 10 under “Rules” for details. The PO recognizes legislators who wish to ask a question of a speaker; the speaker MAY NOT perform this function him/herself. The PO has an obligation to rule that “two-part,” misleading, or irrelevant questions are OUT-OF-ORDER. The exception is specified ***direct questioning*** periods in the semifinal and final sessions, and because fewer questioners are recognized, the PO should strive to be equitable and fair, and the parliamentarian will monitor for flagrant abuse.
5. **AGENDA ORDER:** Each chamber will establish its own agenda order by majority vote.
6. **OPENING DEBATE:** Whomever begins debate on legislation *introduces* that item to the chamber. Since none of the legislation in the docket has been submitted by contestants, the PO will recognize a SPONSOR based on *recency*; this sponsor is held to the standard two-minute questioning period under any session.
7. **VOTING:** The PO determines the method of voting on each question before the chamber. Notes on voting:
 - a. Final votes on legislation, amendments, and motions to appeal the chair require a recorded vote.
 - b. Voice voting is acceptable for all other votes, but a recorded vote must be taken if any one legislator calls for a division of the chamber.
 - c. A roll call vote is not permitted, since voting record is not of consequence in Congressional Debate.
 - d. ALL simple majority votes are based upon the number of legislators PRESENT and VOTING in the chamber; therefore, the PO does not need to call for or count abstentions. For all votes requiring a fraction of the chamber to agree to a motion or question (2/3, 1/3, 1/5, etc.), the chair determines whether the chamber agrees with the motion/question using the number of legislators PRESENT in the chamber. Because of this system, the PO must track the number of legislators in the chamber at all times.
8. **AMENDMENTS:** Legislators submit amendments to the PO in writing. A motion to amend is necessary to consider the written amendment; such a motion is in order anytime after the SPONSORSHIP SPEECH. Once the motion is made, the PO decides if the amendment is germane. The PO may consult with the Parliamentarian to make this decision. If the amendment is found to be NOT germane, the chair rules it OUT OF ORDER and the amendment process stops. If the chair rules the amendment germane, s/he should read the contents of the amendment to the chamber. A 1/3 second of the members PRESENT in the chamber is required to debate the amendment. If the chamber votes a second, debate on the amendment commences immediately. Legislators may move to lay on the table or move the previous question on the amendment at any time. The first speech on the amendment is a SPONSORSHIP speech. The chair determines speaker recognition for the SPONSORSHIP speech on the basis of recency; the author of the amendment is NOT guaranteed the sponsorship speech. The sponsor accepts responsibility for the mechanics of the amendment and yields to two minutes of questioning. All amendment speeches receive a score and count towards recency. A majority vote is necessary for the chamber to adopt the amendment.
9. **OVERTIME SPEECHES:** Any regular floor speech that extends more than ten (10) seconds beyond the maximum speaking time of three minutes shall be penalized one (1) full point by the Scorer(s) evaluating the session. The PO is required to keep accurate time of each speech and report it to the Scorer(s) when the speaker has finished. The Parliamentarian/Scorer(s) shall heavily penalize the PO for inaccurate timing and/or reporting. Use of time by speakers is subject to judge critique.
10. For any circumstances not specifically covered by these rules, Congressional Debate at the TOC defers to NFL rules, then to *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised 10th Edition*.



Questions? Contact TOC Congressional Debate Director, Adam Jacobi • info@congressionaldebate.org
Check www.congressionaldebate.org for legislation and important tournament updates!

Direct Questioning Format

The same speaking and questioning times used in earlier rounds are in place for finals, except that all questioning periods are broken into 30-second segments, with one questioner per segment, who may ask multiple questions of the speaker during that segment. Additionally:

- The PO must keep a separate questioning recency (to ensure equal opportunity for legislators to ask questions), and should promptly adjudicate the end of each 30-second period.
- If a questioner does not use her/his full 30 seconds, the presiding officer has the discretion to call on another speaker, or absorb the time.
- No suspensions of the rules to extend questioning are permitted.
- Questioners may not prefer questions with information external to the speaker's remarks.
- Questioners may interrupt a speaker during his/her response, but the manner in which they do so is subject to critique by judges – remember, this is Congress – there is a standard of decorum and courtesy that members should be held to!

Questioners should strive to expose flaws in the speaker's arguments by asking a series of questions about the speaker's remarks. These questions should subject the speaker's arguments to intensive and focused scrutiny. There should be no "softball questions." The segment is for asking questions; not for making new arguments or rehash old arguments. Questions and answers should be concise and to the point. To that end, questioners may politely interrupt speakers during their responses when, for instance, they ramble or do not directly answer the question.

Direct Questioning Judging Considerations: Speakers always should be evaluated on how well they answer questions, and this should factor into the score for each speech. There also is a space on the evaluation sheet for judges to comment on the quality of questions asked, which should factor into the holistic ranking of legislators at the end of the session.

Evaluation of Speakers:

- Brevity of responses (short and clear, to the point)
- Non-evasiveness (is the speaker answering the question being asked?)
- Quality of argument defense (does the speaker successfully defend his/her argument?)

Evaluation of Questioners:

- Coherence and relevance of questioning line (are questions connected? Do they expose flaws in arguments?)
- Brevity of questions (short and clear, to the point)
- Quality of follow-up questions (is the questioner responsive to the speaker's initial responses in the CX segment?)
- Quality of argument scrutiny (does the questioner successfully probe or poke holes in the speaker's arguments?)
- Degree of courtesy and decorum in necessary interruptions

Evaluation of the PO:

- Adherence to time guidelines (does the PO enforce the 30 second limit?)
- Fairness in calling on questioners (fairly distribute opportunities among those who want to ask questions?)

NFL rules allowing for laptop computers (inclusive of tablets/iPads) in debate events applies to the TOC. These rules have been included below. Judges will monitor students and may elect to penalize violators or students using their laptops for non-Congress related business in chambers by choosing not to rank them, as well as deduct points. Serious infractions will be reported to the tab room.

NFL Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events

- 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.
- 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.
- Wired connections (ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
- 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.)
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.