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The Yale Debate Association (YDA) is an undergraduate organization of Yale University in New Haven, CT. Every year, the YDA travels across the world to compete in American and British Parliamentary Debate formats.

To encourage speech and debate activities among high school and college students, the YDA hosts several tournaments each year. Our four annual tournaments are the Yale Parliamentary Tournament, the Yale Invitational High School Tournament, the Osterweis Tournament, and the Yale IV.

Yale Debate Association
Thirty-Fourth Annual Yale Invitational
High School Tournament

May 2026

Dear Speech and Debate Coaches,

On behalf of the Yale Debate Association, we invite you to the 34th Annual Yale Invitational High School Tournament from Friday, October 2nd to Sunday, October 4th. The tournament will offer Varsity and JV divisions in Public Forum and Lincoln-Douglas Debate, open divisions in Policy and Congressional Debate, and eight Speech Events (DUO, DI, EXT, HI, INF, OI, OO, POI). We're excited to announce the return of virtual divisions for both Parliamentary and World Schools Debate.

It is with great pleasure and pride that we invite competitors back to our tournament this Fall. We hope to honor your patience with a refined tournament experience shaped by our commitment to build upon our successes and learn from our mistakes.

Year after year, our tournament continues to grow and earn national recognition for its high level of competition. Octafinalists in Public Forum Debate, Quarterfinalists in Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and Semifinalists in Congressional Debate will earn bids to the 2026 Tournament of Champions. In addition, high-level competitors in all eight Speech Events will earn a bid to the University of Kentucky TOC.

We are so pleased to welcome back our team of nationally experienced and successful tab chairs: Jeffrey Kahn in Public Forum Debate, Janet Novack in Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Sheryl Kaczmarek in Policy Debate, Kimberly Bayan-Berlat in Congressional Debate, Joe Vaughan in Speech Events, Josh Leffler in Parliamentary Debate, and Shane Stafford in World Schools Debate. We are thrilled to have Sarah Donnelly returning as our Tournament Chair and Ashley Murphy returning as our Equity Lead. The expertise of our staff will ensure a smooth, efficient tournament.

If you need assistance in the coming months, please email yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com. Best wishes for a restful and enjoyable summer, and we look forward to seeing many of our friends, old and new, this October.

Sincerely,
Kylie, Vishwa, Michael, and Adrian
2026 Tournament Directors

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1. Overview and Policies

A. Code of Conduct, Adult Supervision, and Safety

All participants must comply with all applicable laws (New Haven, Connecticut, and U.S. federal law) and the rules of Yale University, including directions from tournament staff and university officials. Participants must remain in permitted areas, follow instructions, treat others with respect, refrain from harassment or bullying, and avoid creating safety or security risks. Violations may result in removal from the tournament.

Illegal or disorderly conduct—including possession or use of alcohol/controlled substances, or property damage—may result in disqualification from further competition, notification of parents/guardians, financial liability, and/or referral to local law enforcement, at the discretion of tournament staff.

Every student must be accompanied by an authorized adult (parent, legal guardian, or school-approved adult such as a teacher/coach) responsible for their care in emergencies. This adult must not be a high school student (including those 18+), must be on-site and reachable during the tournament, and their name and phone number must be provided at registration. No exceptions (Yale University policy). The tournament and the Yale Debate Association assume no responsibility for student health or safety beyond notifying this adult of concerns.

Tournament staff reserve the right to refuse entry to any participant, judge, or observer at their discretion.

B. Equity

We will convene an external equity team to support an inclusive tournament environment. The team will publish an equity policy and be available throughout the tournament as a resource for students and judges on equity-related issues.

C. Source Integrity

We follow NSDA source rules in all events (with the exception of OI, which will follow NCFL source rules). Violation of these rules (significant misrepresentation of sources, use of unavailable sources, etc.) may result in disqualification at tab's discretion.

2. Hospitality and Event Logistics

A. Hotel Blocks

We have arranged group rates with most nearby hotels for **400** total hotel rooms. To book rooms, use the available link or call and explain that you are booking a room blocked for the **Yale Debate Association**. Hotels displaying multiple rates have different room options. These rooms are substantially discounted from their regular prices, but of course you may stay at any listed or unlisted hotel you would like.

Tournament-affiliated hotels in order of *distance from campus*:

- **Marriott Courtyard New Haven:** (203) 777-6221 (*9 minute walk / 5 minute drive*)
 - \$189/night for one king bed with a pull out sofa
 - \$189/night for two queen beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Blake Hotel New Haven:** (203) 390-5352 (*9 minute walk / 3 minute drive*)
 - \$319/night for one king bed
 - \$359/night for two queen beds
 - Reservations must be made by 8/18 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **New Haven Hotel:** (203) 498-3140 (*12 minute walk / 5 minute drive*)
 - \$229/night for one king bed
 - \$229/night for two queen beds
 - Reservation must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservations by phone or email: sales@newhavenhotel.com
- **Cambria New Haven:** (203) 903-2999 (*19 minute walk / 7 minute drive*)
 - \$250/night for one king bed
 - \$260/night for two double beds
 - Reservation must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Hampton Inn New Haven:** (203) 932-0404 (*13 minute drive*)
 - \$199/night for one king bed
 - \$199/night for two queen beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Best Western Executive Hotel West Haven:** (203) 933-0344 (*14 minute drive*)
 - \$135/night for one king or one queen bed
 - \$145/night for two queen beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/11 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Marriott Courtyard Orange/Milford:** (203) 799-2200 (*15 minute drive*)
 - \$239/night for one king bed
 - \$259/night for two double beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)

- **Marriott SpringHill Suites Milford:** (203) 283-0200 (20 minute drive)
 - \$229/night for one king bed
 - \$229/night for two double beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Marriott Fairfield Wallingford:** (203) 284-0001 (23 minute drive)
 - \$185/night for one king bed with a pull out sofa
 - \$185/night for two queen beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Hilton Garden Inn Wallingford:** (203) 284-0000 (23 minute drive)
 - \$212/night for one king bed (junior suite)
 - \$212/night for two queen beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Hampton Inn Shelton:** (203) 925-5900 (29 minute drive)
 - \$219/night for one king bed with a pull out sofa
 - \$219/night for two queen beds
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)
- **Marriott Courtyard Shelton:** (203) 929-1500 (30 minute drive)
 - \$239/night for one king bed with a pull out sofa
 - \$239/night for double rooms
 - Reservations must be made by 9/2 to receive the group rate
 - Reservation [Link](#)

B. Schedules and Locations

Event locations and schedules will be published near the end of summer. Please note that **PF, LD, Policy, Congress** (change from previous years), and **World Schools** start prelim rounds on **Friday** afternoon.

C. Food

For adults (tournament staff, coaches, judges), breakfast (assorted bagels and cream cheeses, coffee, and orange juice) on both Saturday and Sunday will be provided. Details for dinner on Friday, lunch on Saturday, and dinner on Saturday **for adults** and all meals **for students** will differ slightly by site/event. **We will communicate the preorder and payment process near the end of summer as event schedules and locations are finalized.** Tournament-provided food will only be available by preorder before the tournament. The system and timeline for preorders will be entirely decoupled from registration so please look out for that information!

D. Awards and Trophies

For events held in person, we won't be able to ship trophies. For World Schools and Parliamentary debate, we can ship within the U.S. Please fill out [this form](#) by October 16th, 2026 11:59 PM ET to request a trophy. For international competitors, we're happy to provide e-Certificates upon request. Feel free to contact us at yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com with questions or concerns!

3. Registration

A. Timeline and Details

<p>Thursday, August 6th 1:00 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online registration opens at yale.tabroom.com <p>All entries will automatically be placed on a waitlist. Two weeks after registration opens, we will begin admitting students from the waitlist. <u>We advise you do not finalize plane tickets/hotel reservations until your entries are verified.</u></p>
<p>Thursday, August 20th 1:00 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial sweep of waitlist entries <p>We cap each school's <u>initial</u> entries to promote regional and school diversity. Tab directors for each event will set fair caps based on interest and site availability.</p>
<p>Tuesday, September 1st 11:59 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsequent sweeps of waitlist entries (ongoing) <p>We will evaluate registration numbers and begin distributing additional entry slots as available. We allocate additional entries based on total interest, school diversity, registration date, and prior attendance at our tournament. Schools are notified as entries are admitted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for Congress registration and bill submission <p>Acceptance of late registration will be based on availability in chambers. No legislation from late additions will be accepted. See 5. Event Details for directions on submitting and voting for legislation.</p>
<p>Monday, September 21st 5:00 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for Hired Judge requests in all events • Congress Docket released on Tabroom • World Schools Prepared Motions released on Tabroom
<p>Friday, September 25th 11:59 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for all registration
<p>Monday, September 28th 11:59 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration and hired judge fees freeze in all events <p>Rooms are booked, trophies purchased, food ordered, and judges hired. We will notify you if your hired judge request is granted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judge registration and names due in all events <p>After this point, you will need to contact Tab to make any further judge substitutions/changes. Approval is on a case-by-case basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judge obligations freeze (unless all entries in an event are dropped) <p>If you fail to meet your judge obligation for an event, don't maintain entries, or drop a judge after the deadline, you will be charged the cost of a hired judge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for submitting required school supervision/parent forms
<p>Wednesday, September 30th 12:00 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LD and PF judge pools lock <p>After this point, Tab will no longer approve further judge substitutions/changes in LD and PF. For other events approval will continue on a case-by-case basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LD MPJ ratings/PF strikes open
<p>Thursday, October 1st 11:59 PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for registration payments. • Deadline for hired judge payments. • Deadline for food payments. <p>Proof of payment for those who plan to drop off checks during the tournament.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for LD MPJ ratings/PF strikes
<p>Friday, October 2nd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Check-In is open during this window. <p><i>All schools must check in online through Tabroom on Friday between 9:30 AM</i></p>

9:30 AM–1:30 PM ET

and 1:30 PM ET. To check in, click “Confirm Onsite” at Tabroom.com. There is no in-person registration. Checking in confirms that your entries and judges are correct, and that everyone from your school is ready to participate. Schools that do not check in will be dropped from the tournament.

During check-in, please confirm that your school’s primary contact information is correct and up-to-date. The individual listed must be reachable at all times during the tournament, as we may contact you if there is an issue involving one of your students or judges. Please answer all calls during the tournament, even from numbers you don’t recognize.

You can contact yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com with any questions about registration. Please do not email with questions concerning the probability of an entry leaving the waitlist. The answer is a variable function of constantly-updating registration, judge, and room counts. We appreciate your patience and understand the time-sensitivity of arranging travel!

B. Eligibility

Students must compete as part of their diploma-granting high school and meet one of the following criteria:

- Be enrolled in grades 9–12 in the United States; or
- If international, have their ages submitted by their institution so tournament staff can confirm their eligibility (yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com)

The registering institution must be a diploma-granting high school. Registration must be completed by an adult authorized by the school to represent the institution and supervise its students. For the purposes of this policy, an adult is defined as an individual who has graduated from high school and is at least 18 years old. Organizations that believe they have special circumstances warranting an exception should contact yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com. Entries found in violation of these criteria may be disqualified from the tournament (forfeiting their entry fees) or have their TOC qualification revoked.

Online divisions of this tournament (Parliamentary Debate and World Schools Debate) are open to independent entries and entries from clubs, camps, and for-profit institutions. They are still subject to all other rules and expectations of the tournament, and must still be registered by their adult contact, who will be reachable at all times during the tournament.

C. Entry Caps and Registration Costs

Event	Div	Tentative Event Cap <i>We set caps based on our physical hosting capacity and commitment to fair breaks. It is our intent that all teams with clearing records participate in elimination rounds. We reserve the right to alter these caps based on registration interest and site acquisitions.</i>	Registration Fee <i>We are committed to an accessible tournament. Please contact us by Friday, August 21st at 5 PM ET if your team is experiencing financial hardship. We are happy to discuss financial aid and work with teams in need. Preference will be given to Title I schools and equivalents.</i>
Public Forum Debate	Var	168	\$130 per team
	JV	84	\$120 per team
Lincoln-Douglas Debate	Var	100	\$110 per entry

	JV	40	\$100 per entry
Policy Debate	Open	42	\$100 per team
Congressional Debate	Open	240	\$80 per entry
Parliamentary Debate	Open	Based on Interest	\$90 per team
World Schools Debate	Open	Based on Interest	\$120 per team
Speech Events	Indiv	Based on Interest	\$80 per individual entry
	Duo		\$130 per duo team

D. JV/Varsity Status Eligibility

Coaches are expected to select divisions with debate's educational purpose in mind. Entering overqualified debaters in Junior Varsity divisions can undermine education and compromise tournament experiences. Tournament staff reserve the right to disqualify entries that do not adhere to these guidelines.

Students must enter the Varsity division of their event if they meet **any** of the following criteria:

- Have two or more years of debate experience, including middle school participation;
- Are currently in 12th grade; or
- Advanced to elimination rounds (“broke”) in a Varsity or Open division at a high school tournament during the previous academic year.

Students not meeting any of the above criteria may be entered in JV or Varsity at coaches' discretion. In Public Forum debate, if either member of a team meets any of the above criteria, the team must be entered in Varsity. Organizations that believe they have special circumstances warranting an exception, or who have questions/concerns regarding eligibility, should contact yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com.

E. Payment

Fees will be due on Thursday, **October 1st at 11:59 PM ET**. Payment (proof of payment) is required **upfront** to be eligible for competition. Accepted payment methods are listed below in order of YDA preference. The **Yale Debate Association W9** is available for download on the tournament Tabroom site.

Please contact yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com and copy treasurer.yda@gmail.com with questions.

#1 Zelle

1. Select direct payment to “treasurer.yda@gmail.com” — this account will show that it is enrolled with Zelle as the “YALE DEBATE ASSOCIATION INC.”
2. **After inputting the sum due, “Add a message” and write the name of the school/institution for which you are making the payment.**
3. Select “SEND” and complete the payment by selecting “OK.”
4. Complete this [Google Form: Registration Payment Record](#).

#2 Paypal

1. Please direct payment to “caleb.loh@yale.edu.”
2. **After inputting the sum due, “Add a message” and write the name of the school/institution for which you are making the payment.**
3. After continuing to “Review” the payment, select “For friends and family” as the Payment Type. **If you do not select “For friends and family”** PayPal will collect a transaction fee. The YDA is not responsible for this fee and we will be in touch further to collect it from you.
4. Complete the payment method information and send the payment.
5. Complete this [Google Form: Registration Payment Record](#).

#3 Check – Complete this [Google Form: Registration Payment Record](#) (select the Check option).

#4 Bank Transfer/Wire – Please email yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com and copy treasurer.yda@gmail.com with the subject line “[HST Payment – School Name] Bank Transfer” to request payment by this method. Then, complete this [Google Form: Registration Payment Record](#).

NOTE: Students from schools owing outstanding registration fees or fines to our tournament will be permanently waitlisted until those fees are paid. After payment, these schools will be admitted last where space is available. Please reach out to us if you are unsure about your outstanding fees.

F. Drops

Entry drops **prior to the tournament** incur no extra penalty, but for drops occurring after the fee freeze on Monday, September 28th at 5 PM ET, associated registration and hired judge fees remain in effect.

Entry drops **during the tournament** should be reported to Tab immediately. A drop is “unreported” if Tab is not notified before the next round of that entry’s event ends. Unreported drops harm our ability to pair and panel quality rounds. Schools will be assessed a fee of \$50 per unreported entry drop. Please notify tab immediately if a student withdraws from competition during the tournament.

G. Required Forms

There are two required forms.

1. **One Participant Supervision Agreement is required per school.** The primary contact for each school—who must be an authorized school official—must complete and submit the “Participant Supervision Agreement.”
2. **One Parent/Guardian Waiver is required per student.** Coaches should distribute the form to the parent/guardian of every student entered in the tournament and ensure each form is fully completed and submitted by the appropriate legal guardian. **Please enter the student’s and school’s name exactly as listed on Tabroom.**

All forms are due on Monday, September 28th at 11:59 PM ET. It is the responsibility of each attending school—not the tournament—to ensure all required forms are submitted on time.

You can view the compliance tracker [here](#) which displays the schools that have completed all required forms. Please contact yaleinvitational2026@gmail.com with questions about the forms or your status.

4. Judging Obligations

Public Forum Debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 qualified judge for every 3 PF teams, rounded up Judges are obligated through Octafinals OR one round past the last in which their school is actively competing, whichever is later.
Lincoln-Douglas Debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 qualified judge for every 3 VLD entries, rounded up • 1 qualified judge for every 3 JVLD entries, rounded up Judges are obligated through Octafinals OR one round past the last in which their school is actively competing, whichever is later.
Policy Debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 qualified judge for every 2 CX teams, rounded up Judges are obligated through Quarterfinals OR one round past the last in which their school is actively competing, whichever is later.
Congressional Debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If 5 or less Congress entries: 1 qualified judge • If 6+ Congress entries: 1 qualified judge and 1 Parliamentarian Judges are obligated for, but will likely not judge, every round. Please mark judges available to act as Parliamentarians when entering info on Tabroom.
Speech Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 qualified judge for every 5 Speech entries, rounded up* Judges are obligated for, but will likely not judge, every round.
Parliamentary Debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 qualified judge for every 2 Parli teams, rounded up Judges are obligated through Octafinals OR one round past the last in which their school is actively competing, whichever is later.
World Schools Debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 qualified judge for every 2 WSD teams, rounded up Judges are obligated through Octafinals OR one round past the last in which their school is actively competing, whichever is later.

*Coaches of a small number of Speech entries (≤ 2) may reach out to Tab to consider exceptions in order to fulfill judge obligations for debate competitors entered under the same organization.

A. Hired Judging

If you do not have enough judges to cover your obligation, you may request Hired Judges. Schools **may NOT** hire out their entire obligation in any full division of the tournament. There are no exceptions to this policy. Hired judging costs differ based on the number of days the event runs, whether it's an in-person or online commitment, and the degree of qualification required to judge the event well. Please request Hired Judges through Tabroom registration as early as possible and no later than the deadline of Monday, September 21st at 11:59 PM ET. Note that requests are typically fulfilled, but this is not a guarantee—the best way to receive additional entry slots is to enter your own judges.

Public Forum Debate	\$210 per team not covered
Lincoln-Douglas Debate	\$210 per entry not covered
Policy Debate	\$240 per team not covered
Congressional Debate	\$80 per entry not covered (maximum 5 entries*)
Speech Events	\$80 per entry not covered
Parliamentary Debate	\$180 per team not covered
World Schools Debate	\$180 per team not covered

*Congress judging costs are capped: you do not need to hire beyond your first 5 entries (\$400).

B. Judge Swaps and Drops

The judge registration deadline is Monday, September 28th at 11:59 PM ET. The judges you bring to the tournament must be the judges you register online by this time. Any substitutions and swaps that you want to make after that must be approved by Tab (case-by-case). Schools that change judges after the PF and LD judge pools **lock** will also forfeit their strikes and ratings for the affected division(s).

If you have a late judge drop, you **may** be able to pay a **dropped judge fee** equivalent to a hired judge in place of dropping entries, depending on if the tournament has enough judges **and** your school still has enough adults on site. Adding a judge late does not waive fees for previously granted hired judge requests.

Schools whose judges fail to appear for an assigned round will be fined a **missing judge fee** of \$50 per round missed. We do not want your money; we want judges to show up. However, schools with unpaid fines will not be able to pick up any awards, and will be prevented from registering at other YDA-hosted tournaments until those fines are paid.

C. Judge Expectations

1. Availability: We assume judges will stay for the duration of their obligation unless we hear otherwise. You must contact us if you are unable to complete your obligations. Judges are required to have their phone numbers in Tabroom, and the site will not allow you to register judges without a phone number. This enables us to call them, not you, to resolve issues that arise during the tournament.

2. Qualification: Please appreciate the impact your judge will have on the rounds they evaluate. We often only notice unqualified judges after a number of competitors have been unfairly adjudicated. A qualified judge understands the activity and is either experienced sitting in the back of the room with a ballot or flow pad, or has been carefully trained by the team they are accompanying. A qualified judge knows how to assign ranks/wins/losses/speaker points and fill out the ballot. **Judges may not be in high school.**

3. Tabroom Accounts: Your judges' Tabroom accounts should be linked and ready by Monday, September 28th at 5 PM ET. All events will communicate updates on yale.tabroom.com. Please ensure that you have your notifications sent to your phone and be prepared to check Tabroom for pairings and updates as well. Students and/or judges who miss rounds will not be forgiven because of "technical problems." In our experience, most technical issues result from students' or judges' Tabroom.com profile not being linked correctly or contact information (phone and email) not being provided within the profile.

4. Paradigms: All debate judges must post a paradigm under their Tabroom account's profile. Judges should also be willing to indicate before a round to competitors a general sense of their vision of debate (if any) or a sense of their experience, to aid competitors in choosing how best to make their arguments. Debate entries in PF and LD will not be allowed to submit preferences and strikes unless all of their school's affiliated judges have paradigms.

5. Disclosure: All debate judges must verbally relay their decision to debaters after the round concludes, specifying the name and side (Affirmative/Negative) of the team that won. Reasons for the decision are not required to be delivered verbally, but they are expected to be in written ballots. We find that disclosure decreases the number of mistaken ballot entries and improves debaters' tournament experiences.

Judge Hospitality: Judges will receive complimentary breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings, as well as access to a judges' lounge stocked with water and snacks during their event rounds. Availability of other meals will depend on the specific site.

5. Event Details

Public Forum Debate

We will hold both Varsity and Junior Varsity divisions, each with six preliminary rounds, and will follow NSDA rules using the NSDA September/October 2026 topic. Ties will be broken based on record, high/low adjusted points, double-adjusted points, opponent's record, total points, judge variance, and coin flip, in that order. We plan to break to partial triple-octafinals in Varsity and partial double-octafinals in Junior Varsity, with all teams holding a 4–2 record or better advancing.

Wednesday, September 30th at 12:00 PM ET: Strikes open on Tabroom.

Thursday, October 1st at 11:59 PM ET: Strikes close on Tabroom.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

We will hold both Varsity and Junior Varsity divisions, each with six preliminary rounds, and will follow NSDA rules using the NSDA September/October 2026 topic. Ties will be broken based on record, high/low adjusted points, double-adjusted points, opponent's record, total points, judge variance, and coin flip, in that order. We plan to break to partial triple-octafinals in Varsity and partial double-octafinals in Junior Varsity, with all competitors holding a 4–2 record or better advancing.

Varsity LD uses Mutually Preferred Judging (MPJ). Each debater, provided their judging obligation is covered, will be able to rank all judges from 1 (most preferred) to 6 (strike). Debaters whose judging obligation is not covered will not see an option to rank judges in Tabroom.

Strikes are separate from conflicts. Conflicts occur when a judge has a pre-existing relationship (for example, a shared school affiliation) with a debater that would prevent an impartial decision. Debaters who misuse conflicts as additional strikes will face consequences, which may range from losing all of their preferences to disqualification from the tournament.

Wednesday, September 30th at 12:00 PM ET: MPJ ratings open on Tabroom.

Thursday, October 1st at 11:59 PM ET: MPJ ratings close on Tabroom.

Policy Debate

We will hold a single Open division with six preliminary rounds, and will follow NSDA rules using the NSDA 2026–2027 topic. Ties will be broken based on record, high/low adjusted points, double-adjusted points, opponent's record, total points, judge variance, and coin flip, in that order. We plan to break to quarterfinals, with all teams holding a 4–2 record or better advancing.

Congressional Debate

We will hold a single Open division with three preliminary sessions. We plan to break to semifinals.

Please mark judges available to act as Parliamentarians when entering judge info on Tabroom.

The registration deadline for Congress is Tuesday, September 1st at 11:59 PM, **before other events**. This allows time to vote and compile the docket. Late entries may be admitted as entries drop from the pool. Chamber assignments will be published on Tabroom at least an hour before Session 1.

Students can submit legislation for preliminary rounds on Tabroom.com. Please ensure that students:

1. Submit legislation in a document format (no PDFs)
2. Follow the templates provided at www.congressionaldebate.org
3. Title the document files to match the title of the legislation

Legislation that does not meet these criteria may be returned to coaches for revision.

Tuesday, September 1st at 11:59 PM ET: Deadline for Congress registration and bill submission.

Monday, September 7th at 5:00 PM ET: Voting for the Congress docket opens.

Friday, September 11th at 11:59 PM ET: Voting for the Congress docket closes.

Monday, September 21st at 5:00 PM ET: Dockets released on Tabroom.

Speech Events

We will offer open divisions of DUO, DI, EXT, HI, INF, OO, OI, and POI. OI will follow NCFL rules and guidelines. All other events will follow NSDA rules and guidelines.

We plan to break to quarterfinals or semifinals depending on the size of the event (quarterfinals for events with 60 or more competitors). To break into elim rounds, we will use cumulative scoring. To break from one elim round to the next, we will drop the lowest prelim score and use cumulative scoring for remaining ranks. Ties in prelim rounds will be based on reciprocal ranks. Ties in elim rounds will first be based on ranks in that elim round, followed by ranks in all elim rounds, followed by reciprocals of all counted scores. Competitors with ties unbroken at this stage will all be advanced to the next elim round. In final rounds, judge preference will be the final tie break.

Speech competitors may double-enter in a maximum of two events. There is no cross-entry between speech and any debate event, nor between debate events. Students entered in Extemp may not double-enter. Students may not enter the same event twice. Students may not use the same source material in two events, at the penalty of disqualification from both events (two works from the same collection, volume, or anthology do not qualify as the same material; two cuttings of the same work do).

The grace period is 30 seconds for all IEs. Any participant who exceeds the grace period may not receive a rank of 1 in the round. Further penalties are at the judge's discretion, but valid only if the judge uses a precise timing device, communicated clearly with the student before the round on how time would be given, and notes the penalty on the ballot.

We reset IE speaker codes on the Wednesday before the tournament—do not print codes until you receive an email saying it is time to print codes.

Parliamentary Debate (Online)

We will hold a single Open division virtually with five preliminary rounds, and will follow the American Parliamentary Debate Association (APDA) format and rules (see [here](#) for details). Each round's motion will be released 15 minutes before the round start time. We plan to break to octafinals.

World Schools Debate (Online)

We will hold a single Open division virtually with five preliminary rounds, and will follow NSDA rules. Prepared motions will be released on the tournament Tabroom site on Monday, September 14th at 5 PM ET. Impromptu motions will be released 60 minutes before the round start time. We plan to break to octafinals.