



# Penn for Youth Debate 41st Annual Liberty Bell

## Classic

February 13-14, 2016

## Congressional Debate

## Preliminary Round

## Rules Packet

## CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

### Saturday, February 13th

8:30 AM Congressional Debate Meeting for All Judges and Competitors

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM Round 1

12:30 AM – 3:00 PM Round 2

3:30 PM – 6:00 PM Round 3

### Sunday, February 15th

8:00 AM Meeting for Semi-Finalists and Out Round Judges

8:30 AM – 11:00 AM Semi-Finals

12:30 AM – 3:00 PM Finals

### **Important Note:**

**The information in this packet is tentative with regard to preliminary and elimination round format. If numbers drop significantly between the release of this packet and the beginning of competition, the tournament reserves the right to adjust the numbers and procedures for semifinals, etc., accordingly.**

# Official Procedural Rules

The rules contained herein are designed to promote procedural unity among the chambers.

**They are subject to change by the staff at any time, but they may NOT be altered or ignored through a suspension of the rules by the chamber.**

--**DECORUM:** Each preliminary chamber is designated as a HOUSE. A member of the House of Representatives is always referred to as "Representative." The Presiding Officer of a House of Representatives is addressed as "Mister/Madame Speaker." The Presiding Officer is responsible for enforcing proper decorum in the chambers.

--**LEGISLATIVE DAY:** A legislative day is one session; speaker order (recency) resets after each session.

--**RECOGNITION OF SPEAKERS:** The RECENCY system, as explained by the National Speech and Debate Association, is the required method for recognizing speakers at this tournament. Presiding Officers are required to use this form of recognition. Individual recency is to be used at all times; other systems are prohibited!

--**QUESTIONING:** A MANDATORY two minute questioning period follows all AUTHORSHIP, SPONSORSHIP, and SPONSORSHIP ON AMENDMENT speeches; a two-minute questioning period also follows the FIRST NEGATIVE speech on any item of legislation. The Presiding Officer recognizes legislators who wish to ask a question of a speaker; the speaker MAY NOT perform this function him/herself. All other speeches will have a mandatory one-minute questioning period that MAY NOT be suspended. **The PO has an obligation to rule "two-part," misleading, or irrelevant questions OUT-OF-ORDER during preliminary and semifinal debate.**

--**AGENDA ORDER:** Each chamber determines its own agenda order based on the legislation assigned to it by this packet. All legislation assigned to a chamber **must** be debated before the chamber may proceed to legislation assigned to another chamber.

--**LEGISLATION WITHOUT AN AUTHOR:** If the author of a bill or resolution is not present in the chamber, withdraws from the tournament, or waives service as the author, a SPONSORSHIP speech is in order. Sponsorship is determined by recency. The sponsor becomes accountable for the mechanics of the bill and **must** yield to two minutes of questioning from the chamber.

--**VOTING:** The PO determines the method of voting on each question that comes before the chamber, EXCEPT:

1. For final votes on legislation, amendments, and motions to appeal the chair, a recorded vote must be taken.
2. On all other votes, "voice voting" is acceptable. A recorded vote must follow if any member asks for a division.
3. When a member of the chamber moves for a roll call vote and the motion is agreed to by 1/5 of the chamber.

ALL simple majority votes are based upon the number of legislators PRESENT and VOTING in the chamber; therefore, the PO may not 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.

--**AMENDMENTS:** Legislators submit amendments to the PO in writing. A motion to amend is necessary to consider the written amendment. 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 NOT germane, the chair rules it OUT OF ORDER and the amendment process stops. If the chair rules the amendment germane, the chamber considers the amendment. In this case, the PO reads 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. There is no minimum cycle requirement for amendments, so legislators may make a motion to table or call 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.

## Preliminary Competition Format

- This year's Congressional Debate division features **five (5) chambers**.
- There are **three (3) sessions** of debate in the *Preliminary Competition*. Each session consists of **two and one half (2 ½ ) hours** of floor debate.
- There is **one (1) elected Presiding Officer** in each session. For purposes of this competition, one complete session is a legislative day. Priority for speaking resets at the end of each legislative day. ***Thus, all legislators will have zero speeches at the start of each session.*** Any member of the chamber may run for Presiding Officer, but no legislator may serve in that office for more than one session. Elections are conducted by secret ballot, with a majority vote required to elect a candidate.
- **A Parliamentarian and a Scorer evaluate each chamber.** The *Parliamentarian* remains in the chamber throughout the preliminary competition, while the Scorers rotate to different chambers throughout the tournament. The *Scorers* evaluate every speech that is given in a session, rating them on a scale of 1 to 6 (1 is low; 6 is high). The points awarded by a *Scorer* for a given speech can thus be used to determine NSDA points for that speech. The *Parliamentarian* keeps notes on the overall performance of each legislator and will write formal ballots, including an evaluation for each Presiding Officer, awarding him/her up to 18 points on the basis of his/her performance during a given session.
- At the end of each session, the *Scorer* will each independently nominate eight students for *Best Legislator* during the session. The *Scorer's* nomination form is converted into credits by the Tabulation Staff with the 1<sup>st</sup> place legislator receiving 8 credits, the 2<sup>nd</sup> place legislator receiving 7, and so on. Those students who were not ranked by the *Scorer* will receive zero (0) credits from that *Scorer*.
- At the conclusion of all three sessions, the *Parliamentarian* will rank all of the students in the chamber. The *Parliamentarian's* top eight ranks shall be converted into credits by the Tabulation Staff with the 1<sup>st</sup> place legislator receiving 8 credits, the 2<sup>nd</sup> place legislator receiving 7, and so on. Those students who were not ranked by the *Parliamentarian* will receive zero (0) credits.

- The three students from each chamber who have earned the highest number of judge credits (the three *Scorers* plus the *Parliamentarian*) during the Preliminary Sessions will advance to the Semifinal Round.
- At the conclusion of the third session, the students who ranked fourth through eighth on the basis of judge credits will be placed into nomination for a preferential ballot election. Each student ballot will be worth one vote in this election, with the ballot of the *Parliamentarian* breaking any ties. If there is a tie in determining nominees for the election, the tie will be broken using inverse reciprocal ranks, followed by head-to-head competition, followed by *Parliamentarian's* preference. If a tie remains, additional nominees may be added.
- Finally, the highest-ranking student on *Parliamentarian's* ballot who has not advanced from preferential balloting or judge credits will then advance to the Semifinal Round.
- Thus, seven legislators qualify for the Semifinal Round from each chamber as follows
  1. 3 students on the basis of *total judge credits*
  2. 3 students on the basis of *preferential balloting*
  3. 1 student on the basis of *Parliamentarian's Preference*