

BQCFL Congress Judge Guide
Joan M. Cargulia Grand Tournament at MELS
03/07/2026

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Tab Room Contacts</u>
<p>PF: Resolved: The Federal Trade Commission should establish a federal regulatory framework for sports betting.</p> <p>LD: Resolved: The possession of nuclear weapons is immoral.</p> <p>Congress Legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Tab Room is located on the third floor near the elevators, in the nook of rooms at the center of the floor <p>For any issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WK Kay: 917-533-9590 (text only) - Equity Concern Reporting Form

Overview

Thank you so much for volunteering your time to judge this weekend, as our tournament literally could not run without you!

We will be running 3 preliminary rounds of speech and debate, and 2 preliminary sessions of Congress. Elims will be run as needed, depending on the number of entries, and there will be a Super Session of Congress. In order to run such a tight schedule, we need a few things from you:

- ***Please stay in the judges' lounge if you are not judging a round:*** we may need to pull you into a round if a judge we paired in is unavailable, and we may even need you to judge an event different from the one(s) you signed up to judge. Please be in the lounge so we can find you and plug you into rounds.
- ***All judges must submit ballots immediately after their round ends:*** you can edit and submit feedback right up until the end of the tournament, but decisions and ranks need to be submitted ASAP after the round ends. Do not disclose the round's result to students, and do not give

verbal feedback after the round beyond “Great job and good luck!”. There is plenty of room for feedback on your ballot.

In-Round Reminders for ALL EVENTS:

- **Silence all devices before a round starts**
- Sit in a place where all competitors are in front of you but you can still hear everything going on in the round.
- Greet students politely as they enter the room, make them feel welcome, and wish them luck as they exit: beyond that, please keep communication with competitors to a minimum; you are the adult in the room, the umpire/referee in this game, and a part of the educational process, please convey this in your demeanor and attitude at all times.
- Take “roll” in speech/debate rounds: read through the list of codes on the schematic for the group so that you are certain that the right students are in the right place. If there is a question about a certain student, please bring it to the attention of the tabroom. Under no circumstances should you ever ask for the school affiliation of a student. Congress should do a roll call before the start of session.
- All speech judges need to keep time, and provide speakers with time signals – ask “how would you like your time” and follow their requests to the letter. Debate judges should keep official time, even if students are timing themselves. Congress will be timed by the Presiding Officer.
- All ballots are online ballots. Speak to WK or another member of the tab staff after the morning judges’ meeting if you’re not sure how to access your online ballots
- We recommend taking your notes in a separate document (e.g. Google Doc, Microsoft Word, or Notes app), then copy and paste your notes into Tabroom later. This will ensure that you don’t lose your feedback
- Start on time and end on time: submit ranks and speaker points ASAP: you will have time to input more in-depth comments throughout the day!

- All rounds will have multiple judges. Please check all pairings and your ballot to make sure you have the correct number of judges in the room and the correct students ready to speak in front of you.

Congress Overview

Districts-specific reminders

- You will have multiple judges in each room, as well as a parliamentarian. Please do not start the round without all adult scorers/parliamentarian as listed on the schematic / the righthand side of your ballot page on tabroom.com.
- Parliamentarians are the final say on issues of procedure, they should consult the Committee if there are any concerns.
- Direct Questioning is mandated by the [NSDA Unified Manual](#), p. 45.
- There is no “motion to open the floor for debate” under NSDA rules

NSDA Evidence Standards

- Please review pp. 49-54 of the [NSDA Unified Unified Manual](#) to fully understand the evidence standards for this tournament. Parliamentarians will be instructed to closely and fully understand these rules.
- Copies of the NSDA Evidence Challenge form will be distributed to Parliamentarians. (Appendix D of the [NSDA Unified Manual](#)).

Types of Speeches

Though the types of speeches in Congress are not explicitly stated, speeches will fall into one or more of the following categories

- Authorship/Sponsorship - 1ST SPEECH ON EVERY BILL
 - Introduces the bill/resolution for debate
 - Should establish that there is an issue that needs solving (inherency) and how the bill solves the issue (solvency)
- 1st Negation - 2ND SPEECH ON EVERY BILL
 - constructs opposition by explaining how attempting to solve/mitigate a problem using this legislation will fail to meet objectives or will make the problem worse
 - “Doesn’t do enough,” or “actively does harm”
- Rebuttal
 - Directly responds to and refutes arguments made on the other side of the debate with evidence and active analysis/explanation

- NOT just namedropping other competitors
 - Extension
 - Expands and expounds upon a previously made argument with new evidence/analysis
 - NOT just namedropping other competitors and repeating/rehashing
- SPEECHES AFTER THE FIRST CYCLE ARE OFTEN A COMBO OF REBUTTAL AND EXTENSION, AND EARLIER ON WILL OFTEN CONSTRUCT NEW ARGUMENTS**
- Crystallization
 - summarizing positions of both sides, and weighing the impacts to prove why one side wins over the other. This speech establishes key voting issues in the round. They will be in the last few speeches of the debate.

What makes a good speaker?

- Content: organization, evidence and language; logical arrangement of ideas; depth of thought; support from a variety of credible quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (expert testimony) evidence analyzed to draw conclusions; compelling language; memorable introduction and conclusion; and cohesive transitions to establish speaker's purpose and frame perspective of the issue's significance
- Argument & Refutation: arguments have clear claims, are substantiated with sound, analysis and evidence, and explain the impact on those affected; these ideas are either new/fresh, or clear extensions rather than mere repetition of what has already been said; refutation of opposing arguments actually disproves them, rather than simply listing and saying they're wrong; answers to questions are given in similar structure.
- Delivery: vocal control and physical poise are deliberate, crisp and confident. Delivery should be extemporaneous and engaging others in the room, with few errors in pronunciation. Eye contact is effective and consistent.
- Good Legislator: command of parliamentary procedure; asks questions; makes motions; takes actions that are in service of the chamber; plays the role of Congressperson effectively; respects the chamber and all those in it

So who wins?

- You will rank the top 8 speakers in the room, with 1 being the best and 8 being the furthest from the best. Your ranks will be averaged with the other judges' to determine who advances to the elimination rounds and final placements for the day.

How do I score/rank the PO?

- You are evaluating them on:

- Speaker Recognition: methods are clearly explained at the beginning of the session and executed consistently. The PO is consistent in recognition (very few errors) and rulings, distributing speeches throughout the room, equally between schools of the same size, and among individuals.
- Parliamentary Procedure: command of parliamentary procedure (motions) to transparently run a fair and efficient session, seldom consulting written rules and ruling immediately on whether motions pass or fail, but consulting the parliamentarian when necessary to ensure accuracy.
- Delivery/Presence: dynamically fosters order and trust, and relates to peers well through vocal and physical presence. Word choice is economical and eloquent. The PO does not hesitate to rule abusive or inappropriate motions out of order. they foster trust by peers
- Unless the PO has made a noticeable and dramatic series of mistakes, they should get a rank from you commensurate with their performance in the aforementioned areas.

What should my ballots look like?

You will write a critique and give speaker points (2-6, 2 being barely intelligible and/or offensive and 6 being better than actual Congresspeople) for each speech a student gives. Separate from these critiques for individual speeches, you will also rank the top 8 speakers in the room, with 1 being the best and 8 being the furthest from the best. Your ranks will be averaged with the other judges' to determine who advances to the elimination rounds and final placements for the day. Ranks are on cumulative performance in the session, inclusive of all speeches/activity in that session. To do this, your ballot on tabroom.com will have two tabs: one to record feedback on individual speeches, and the other to input ranks. Please see WK Kay at the conclusion of the session if you are struggling to navigate tabroom.com

A Good Ballot

Fracking Aff - Time was 3:02

- Love the intro, but slow it down to make sure we catch the wordplay
- Good to go right for the text of the bill and explain the "it's not in the bill" debate that was happening a bit early on
- Excellent work of speaking extemporaneously and not relying on your notes

A Ballot That Needs Improvement

You are a good speaker, you had a good pace and tone. Just be careful with your balance with your notes and eye contact with the chamber. Time 3.03

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- You're doing solid crystallization in a relatively early cycle speech, nicely done- Warrant 'entire towns can perish" more: you don't tell us how that happens- Rhetoric is strong in the "harming our constituents" bit of the first point- Investopedia is not as helpful as you think as it is - find what they're citing from and cite that instead; you wouldn't cite Wikipedia, don't cite this- Great clash with Smith, who has the strongest Neg so far- make your gestures stronger: we lose anything you do below the waist- Strong rhetoric in conclusion, just don't stumble during the wordplay (which was clever!)- Well done in questioning, stood strong especially against Johnson- Great questioning against Jones late in the debate, nice job to re-insert yourself in the debate	
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