

# Iowa High School Forensic League Constitution

## **ARTICLE I – Name**

- A. The name of the organization shall be The Iowa High School Forensic League, abbreviated IHSFL.

## **ARTICLE II – Purpose**

- A. The purpose of the IHSFL shall be to encourage participation in interscholastic debate, oratory, and public speaking, including:
  - a. to promote development of more effective communication skills,
  - b. to offer regional competition among Iowa high school students,
  - c. to recognize outstanding achievement in forensic activities,
  - d. to recognize outstanding coaching in Iowa forensics,
  - e. and to awaken community interest in forensic activities.

## **ARTICLE III – Membership**

- A. Obtaining membership
  - a. Member programs shall be high schools in the state of Iowa.
  - b. A freshman feeder school is considered part of the high school program it feeds and may not have a separate entry.
  - c. All contestants from a particular school must be students at that school enrolled in grades 9-12.
  - d. A school obtains membership by:
    - i. Entering an IHSFL sponsored event, and
    - ii. Paying member fees in a timely manner.
- B. Fees
  - a. Membership fees shall be \$75.00 if paid “on time,” or \$100.00 if paid “late.”
    - i. Fees will be due and payable by October 30th of each year.
    - ii. The executive committee will be responsible for sending each member school from the last year a bill for membership by September 31st of each year.
      - 1. If the executive committee fails to meet this deadline, the deadline for payment will be extended to be one month after bills are sent out.
  - b. Fees are waived for “first year schools.”
    - i. A first year school is one that requests membership in one year and has not been a member school for three consecutive years prior to that year.

## **ARTICLE IV - Leadership**

- A. The Iowa High School Forensic League governing body shall be an Executive Council consisting of one President, one Treasurer, three members and one alternate.
- B. Elections
  - a. Members shall be elected as follows:
    - i. Candidates interested in serving as a member must self-nominate by submitting their name to the President at a time determined by the President, not later than one week prior to the IHSFL State Tournament. Candidates may also submit a biography paragraph.
    - ii. The President shall produce a ballot consisting of the names of all self-nominated candidates and their biographical paragraphs, and distribute the ballot to all member schools. The President shall also indicate in this ballot the number of positions to be filled. And, the President shall indicate the deadline for submission of votes, not later than one day prior to the State Tournament.
    - iii. Each member school can vote for one candidate for each open position on the Council. For example, if there are two open positions, and five names on the ballot, each school may vote for two of the five.
    - iv. The President shall then tally the votes and present the results at or before the awards ceremony of the IHSFL State Tournament. Those candidates receiving the most votes will be named to the Executive Council. In the case of ties, the President shall, in a timely manner, submit a run-off ballot including the names of the tied candidates to all member schools.
    - v. Of any candidates not elected, the one receiving the most votes shall be named Alternate. The Alternate shall attend all meetings of the Executive Council but may not vote.
- C. Terms
  - a. Members elected to the Executive Council shall serve two-year terms.
  - b. If a member resigns during the school year but prior to the State Tournament, and an Alternate is available, the Alternate shall replace him or her, and the Executive Council may, at its discretion, appoint another Alternate.
  - c. If no Alternate is available, the Executive Council shall appoint a new member.
  - d. If a member resigns mid-way through their term, the open position shall be included in the ballot for that year's election. Members elected to fill a position vacated by a resigning member will serve a full two-year term.
  - e. The term of the Alternate is one year.
- D. Decisions
  - a. Unless otherwise specified, Executive Council decisions will be made either by acclamation or by vote.
  - b. In the case of a vote, decisions will require a simple majority.
- E. Officers
  - a. The five-member board shall elect by acclamation a President and Treasurer.
  - b. Both President and Treasurer shall serve one-year renewable terms.
  - c. Selection of President and Treasurer shall take place at the first meeting of the Executive Council each year.

- d. Duties of the President
  - i. Act as Tournament Director for the IHSFL State Tournament.
  - ii. Convene and chair meetings of the Executive Council.
  - iii. Conduct the annual election to the Executive Council.
  - iv. Appoint Tournament Director[s] for the IHSFL Season Opener.
  - v. The President shall be a signatory on the IHSFL checking account and will be responsible for verifying the details of the account with the Treasurer.
- e. Duties of the Treasurer
  - i. Receive all funds including membership dues and tournament entry fees.
  - ii. Manage the IHSFL checking account.
  - iii. Pay hired judges, trophies, and any other costs associated with the management of the Fall Conference and State Tournaments.
  - iv. Submit a budget report at the April meeting of the Executive Council.
- f. Who May Run
  - i. Any coach of a member program may submit their candidacy and be elected to serve on the Executive Council.
- g. Current Members

## **ARTICLE V - Tournaments**

- A. The IHSFL will hold, at minimum, two yearly tournaments
  - a. The IHSFL Season Opener
  - b. The IHSFL State Tournament
- B. The Executive Council shall determine the time, place, fees, and schedule of each tournament.
- C. The IHSFL Executive President shall name the Tournament Director of each tournament.
- D. Events
  - a. IHSFL Tournaments shall offer, at a minimum:
    - i. Congressional Debate
    - ii. Lincoln Douglas Debate
    - iii. Policy Debate
    - iv. Public Forum Debate
    - v. International Extemporaneous Speaking
    - vi. United States Extemporaneous Speaking
    - vii. Original Oratory
    - viii. Informative Speaking
    - ix. Humorous Interpretation
    - x. Dramatic Interpretation
    - xi. Duo Interpretation
    - xii. Program of Oral Interpretation
  - b. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, a novice division may be added in any event.

- c. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, additional events may be offered.
- d. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, if there are not sufficient entries in any event, the event may be cancelled or combined with another event by the Monday before the tournament.

E. Entry

- a. The IHSFL Season Opener shall be open to all member schools.
  - i. Non-members may be admitted at the discretion of the Tournament Director.
- b. The IHSFL State Tournament shall be open to all member schools
  - i. Each school's entry shall be capped at the 6 entries in each event.
  - ii. Qualification
    - 1. Every member school shall automatically receive 5 entries to the State Tournament.
    - 2. In order to qualify for the state tournament, a student must obtain 25 National Speech and Debate Association Points at a tournament or tournaments in the State of Iowa that season in the event they wish to enter at the State Tournament.
      - a. Member schools will be responsible for certifying that students are eligible for the State Tournament.
      - b. If a school certifies that students are qualified for the State Tournament despite those students not meeting the qualifications, that school shall lose an automatic entry to the State Tournament for every student they incorrectly certified.
    - 3. For each student that qualifies for the State Tournament, the student's school's automatic qualifications shall be reduced by 1.
  - iii. Special Circumstances
    - 1. A member school may apply to include their students in the State Tournament in special circumstances.
    - 2. The application must be submitted to the Executive Committee in writing at least 2 weeks before the State Tournament.
    - 3. The application will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, who will hold an official vote on whether or not to admit the students to the State Tournament.
  - iv. Entry Rules
    - 1. Students may enter two speech events and one debate event.
    - 2. A Student must qualify in each event that they wish to enter.

F. Judge Procedures

- a. Judging Requirements
  - i. The Tournament Director will set judge obligations for each event.
  - ii. For the State Tournament schools that have entries in six of the eight speech events *must* hire judges to cover their entries in speech events.
    - 1. The Executive Committee will determine and announce, at least two weeks before the beginning of the State Tournament, the cost

of covering judges for schools that meet the criteria of this section.

- b. Hired Judges
    - i. Schools are encouraged to cover as much of their judging obligation as possible.
    - ii. A small number of hired judges shall be made available.
      - 1. Hired judging must be requested, and hire requests will be granted at the discretion of the Tournament Director in consultation with tab staff.
      - 2. Entries not covered by judging *will not be permitted to compete*.
    - iii. All judge hires are full
      - 1. Schools cannot hire a portion of a judge
      - 2. Judge hires cannot be shared among schools.
    - iv. Tabulation staff shall prioritize, as much as possible, the assignment of hired judges.
  - c. Conflicts
    - i. If it is unavoidable, a judge from a school may be assigned to judge students from that school.
    - ii. These conflicts should be minimized, but it is understood that they will not be entirely avoidable.
    - iii. In all cases, however, the following conflicts shall be avoided:
      - 1. A parent judge shall not be assigned to judge their own child
      - 2. A judge shall not be assigned to judge a contestant with whom they have a close personal relationship.
    - iv. Judges, coaches, and contestants shall notify tabulation staff immediately if a judge is assigned in violation of 3.i-ii above.
  - d. Judge Preference
    - i. Judge strike sheets may be made available at the discretion of the Tournament Director
- G. Topics
- a. The topics for debate events will be the applicable NSDA Topics
  - b. The Tournament Director will be responsible for ensuring that there are topics for the limited preparation events.
  - c. Students will be encouraged to submit legislation for Congressional Debate. If not enough legislation is submitted for either tournament, NSDA Legislation will be added to supplement.
- H. Tabulation
- a. Tabulation decisions are the discretion of the Tournament Director unless specified otherwise below.
    - i. The Tournament Director may override the below tabulation standards with the approval of a majority of the Executive Committee.
  - b. Selection of Elimination Round Participants
    - i. Speech Events
      - 1. Elimination Rounds
        - a. Speech events that have more than 14 entries will advance

- to semifinals.
- b. Speech events that have less than 14 entries will advance directly to finals.
- ii. In Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum, and Policy debate, all debaters or teams with winning records (3-2 or 4-2) will advance to elimination rounds.

#### I. Awards

- a. The Executive Committee will purchase appropriate awards for each event.
  - i. Appropriate awards include, at a minimum
    - 1. Top 6 Awards in All Speech Events
    - 2. Awards for every outround in Public Forum, Lincoln Douglas, and Policy Debate
    - 3. Top 8 Speaker Awards in Public Forum, Lincoln Douglas, and Policy Debate
    - 4. Top 8 in Congressional Debate
    - 5. Two identical awards for the champion in each event; one for the student, and one for the school.

### VI. Additional Awards

#### A. Coach of the Year Award

- a. The IHSFL will present an annual Coach of the Year award.
- b. Nomination
  - i. Any student or coach of a member school may offer one nomination per year.
  - ii. The nomination must be submitted to the Executive Council President by a deadline set by the President. Nominations can include a statement of no more than 250 words explaining the qualifications of the nominee and promoting their selection.
- c. Balloting and Presentation of the Award
  - i. The President will compile the list of nominees, including qualification paragraphs and publish the list to the membership. Ballots will be due at a deadline determined by the President.
  - ii. Each member school shall receive one vote for Coach of the Year.

#### B. Senior of the Year Award

- a. The IHSFL will present an annual Senior of the Year award.
- b. Nomination
  - i. Any member coach can offer one nomination per year.
  - ii. The nomination must be submitted to the Executive Council President by a deadline set by the President. Nominations can include a statement of no more than 250 words explaining the qualifications of the nominee and promoting their selection.
- c. Balloting and Presentation of the Award
  - i. The President will compile the list of nominees, including qualification

paragraphs and publish the list to the membership. Ballots will be due at a deadline determined by the President.

ii. Each member school shall receive one vote for Senior of the Year

C. Team Sweepstakes Awards

a. The State Tournament will present Team Sweepstakes Awards in the categories of speech and debate.

i. The speech award will include points from all individual events categories.

ii. The debate award will include points from policy, public forum, Lincoln Douglas, and congress.

b. Points will be awarded according to this schedule:

i. Speech Events

1. 1st place - 10 points
2. 2nd place - 8 points
3. 3rd place - 6 points
4. 4th place - 4 points
5. 5th place - 3 points
6. 6th place - 2 points
7. 7th place and/or semifinals - 1 point

ii. Congress

1. 1st place - 10 points
2. 2nd place - 8 points
3. 3rd place - 6 points
4. 4th place - 4 points
5. 5th place - 3 points
6. 6th place - 2 points
7. All other congress contestants who clear to the final Session receive one sweepstakes point, regardless of how they finish.

iii. Debate

1. 1st place - 10 points
2. 2nd place - 8 points
3. Semifinals - 6 points
4. Quarters - 4 points
5. Octos - 2 points
6. Double Octos - 1 point

**ARTICLE VII - Event Rules**

A. The National Speech and Debate Association High School Unified Manual will be the source of rules for all events including rules of evidence.

**ARTICLE VIII - Rules of conduct**

A. Procedures in Case of Rules Violation

a. If conflicts, circumstances or questions arise not addressed in the Constitution, By-Laws, or Rules of Conduct, the Executive Council or a quorum thereof shall have the authority to resolve said conflicts, etc.

- b. Potential Consequences
  - i. The members of the Executive Committee can impose sanctions including:
    - 1. Loss of Judge Preferences
    - 2. Loss of the Debate in which the rule violation occurred.
    - 3. Disqualification from elimination rounds
    - 4. Disqualification from the tournament
  - c. Under no circumstance shall a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
- B. Scouting
  - a. All rounds at the IHSFL State Tournament are open to the public.

### **ARTICLE IX - Amendment**

- A. Amendments to this Constitution can be offered by any member school. 1. Procedure
  - a. Amendments must be offered via the team's head coach.
  - b. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the President of the Executive Committee.
  - c. The President shall distribute the proposed amendment to all member schools along with a means to vote and a deadline for votes to be submitted.
  - d. Each member program will have one vote regarding the amendment, that vote to be submitted by the program's head coach to the President.
  - e. Amendments that receive 2/3 of the vote shall be incorporated into the Constitution for the following year. Amendments receiving fewer than 2/3 of the vote will be discarded.
- B. The Executive Council has the authority to make small operational changes, for example to the amount charged for entry or judges, without amendment.

### **ARTICLE X - Ratification**

- A. This draft Constitution shall be submitted to the full membership of the IHSFL.
- B. Head coaches may make official comments on any part of the Constitution, which will be sent to the Executive Council President, who will forward the official comment to the full membership.
- C. Upon discussion, revisions shall be made by the Executive Council. A second draft will be submitted to the full membership for ratification.
- D. Ratification
  - a. Programs wishing to vote on ratification must submit their votes to the President.
  - b. Each program may vote once.
  - c. Votes must be offered by the program's head coach.
  - d. If 2/3 of the voting programs vote to ratify the Constitution, it shall be ratified and go into effect for the next school year.
  - e. If the Constitution does not receive 2/3 of the vote (from among the voting schools), it will be resubmitted for revision on a schedule to be determined by the Executive Council.