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## Section 2: High School Event Rules Manual

The following rules should be interpreted literally and followed exactly. All members are entitled to assurance that points were earned and reported strictly according to the rules. The national office will check all reports critically and strike out incomplete or questionable entries.

For questions not answered here, please contact the national office at [info@speechanddebate.org](mailto:info@speechanddebate.org) or call (920) 748-6206.

# Main Event Rules

## Policy Debate

1. **Resolution:** The resolution will be one requiring a policy judgment. The current national question will be used and will be published in *Rostrum* and at [www.speechanddebate.org/topics](http://www.speechanddebate.org/topics).
2. **Entries:** An entry is comprised of two students from the same school; each debating both sides of the resolution and advancing on its own record. No substitution is permitted once the tournament has begun.
3. **Order of Speeches:** Each debater must give one and only one constructive speech, one period of questioning, one period of answering, and one rebuttal speech, in the following order:

Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Prep time	5 minutes per team

4. **Prompting Philosophy:** Oral prompting, except time signals, either by the speaker's colleague or by any other person while the debater has the floor, is discouraged though not prohibited and may be penalized by some judges. Debaters may, however, refer to their notes and materials and may consult with their teammate while they do not have the floor.
5. **Use of electronic devices:** The use of laptop computers is permitted at the National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be the autonomous decision of each district. Laptop use must comply with the Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events.
6. **Timing:** Timekeepers are an option but not required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their partners or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each team is five minutes.

## Public Forum Debate

1. **Resolution:** Specific resolutions for district tournaments held during certain months and the National Tournament topic will be published in *Rostrum* and at [www.speechanddebate.org/topics](http://www.speechanddebate.org/topics). Public Forum Debate focuses on advocacy of a position derived from the issues presented in the resolution, not a prescribed set of burdens.
2. **Entries:** An entry is comprised of two students from the same school; each debating both sides of the resolution and advancing on its own record. No substitution is permitted once the tournament has begun.
3. **Procedure and order of speeches:** Prior to EVERY round and in the presence of the judge(s), a coin is tossed by one team and called by the other team. The team that wins the flip may choose one of two options: EITHER the SIDE of the topic they wish to defend (pro or con) OR the SPEAKING POSITION they wish to have (begin the debate or end the debate). The remaining option (SIDE OR SPEAKING POSITION) is the choice of the team that loses the flip. Once speaking positions and sides has been determined, the debate begins (the con team may lead, depending on the coin flip results). Following the first two constructive speeches, the two debaters who have just given speeches will stand and participate in a three-minute "crossfire". In "crossfire" both debaters "hold the floor." However, the speaker who spoke first must ask the first question. After that question, either debater may question and/or answer at will. At the conclusion of the summary speeches, all four debaters will remain seated and participate in a three-minute "Grand Crossfire" in which all four debaters are allowed to cross-examine one another. The speaker who gave the first summary speech must ask the first question.

First Speaker - Team A	4 minutes
First Speaker - Team B	4 minutes
Crossfire	3 minutes
Second Speaker - Team A	4 minutes
Second Speaker - Team B	4 minutes
Crossfire	3 minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team A	2 minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team B	2 minutes
Grand Crossfire	3 minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team A	2 minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team B	2 minutes
Prep Time	2 minutes per team

4. **Plans/Counterplans:** In Public Forum Debate, the Association defines a plan or counterplan as a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation. Neither the pro or con side is permitted to offer a plan or counterplan; rather, they should offer reasoning to support a position of advocacy. Debaters may offer generalized, practical solutions.
5. **Prompting Philosophy:** Oral prompting, except time signals, either by the speaker's colleague or by any other person while the debater has the floor, is discouraged though not prohibited and may be penalized by some judges. Debaters may, however, refer to their notes and materials and may consult with their teammate while they do not have the floor and during the Grand Crossfire.
6. **Use of electronic devices:** The use of laptop computers is permitted at the National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be the autonomous decision of each district. Laptop use must comply with the Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events.
7. **Timing:** Timekeepers are an option but not required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their partners or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each team is two minutes.

## Lincoln-Douglas Debate

1. **Resolution:** The resolution will be one requiring a value judgment. Districts must use the current Lincoln-Douglas topic for the month in which the competition occurs. Refer to *Rostrum* or [www.speechanddebate.org/topics](http://www.speechanddebate.org/topics) for the current topic.
2. **Entries:** Each contestant will debate both sides. No substitution is permitted once the tournament has begun.
3. **Order of speeches:**

Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes
Negative Cross Examination	3 minutes
Negative Constructive	7 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examination	3 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	6 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 minutes
Prep Time	4 minutes per debater
4. **Timing:** A timekeeper is an option but isn't required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each debater is four minutes.
5. **Use of electronic devices:** The use of laptop computers is permitted at the National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be the autonomous decision of each district. Laptop use must comply with the Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events.

## Evidence Rules for Policy, Public Forum, and Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Evidence is one of the important components of arguments in debate rounds. All debaters involved are expected to act in an ethical manner that is in accordance with the rules. In keeping with the National Speech & Debate Association Code of Honor, all participants are expected to use and interpret evidence, evidence rules, and procedures in good faith.

**Editor's Note:** Highlighted sentences were modified or added since the release of the 2014-2015 piloted debate evidence rules.

### 7.1. Responsibilities of Contestants Reading Evidence

- A. **Evidence defined.** Debaters are responsible for the validity of all evidence they introduce in the debate. Evidence includes, but is not limited to: facts, statistics, or examples attributable to a specific, identifiable, authoritative source used to support a claim. Unattributed ideas are the opinion of the student competitor and are not evidence.
- B. **Oral source citation.** In all debate events, contestants are expected to, at a minimum, orally deliver the following when introducing evidence in a debate round: primary author(s)' name (last) and year of publication. **Any other information such as source, author's qualifications, etc., may be given, but is not required.** Should two or more quotations be used from the same source, the author and year must be given orally only for the first piece of evidence from that source. Subsequently, only the author's name is required. Oral citations do not substitute for the written source citation. The full written citation must be provided if requested by an opponent or judge.
- C. **Written source citation.** To the extent provided by the original source, a written source citation must include:
  - 1. Full name of primary author and/or editor
  - 2. Publication date
  - 3. Source
  - 4. Title of article
  - 5. Date accessed for digital evidence
  - 6. Full URL, if applicable
  - 7. Author qualifications
  - 8. Page number(s)
- D. **Paraphrasing, authoritative source versus general understanding.** If paraphrasing is used in a debate, the debater will be held to the same standard of citation and accuracy as if the entire text of the evidence were read. For example, if a debater references a specific theory by a specific author, the debater must also be able to provide an original source. If a debater were to reference social contract theory in general, that would not be an authoritative source that would require citation. However, if the debater references "John Locke's Social Contract," evidence would need to be available.
- E. **Ellipses prohibited.** In all debate events, the use of internal ellipsis (...) is prohibited **unless it is a replication of the original document.** Debaters may omit the reading of certain words; however, the text that is verbally omitted must be present in the text of what was read for opposing debaters and/or judges to examine. The portions of the evidence read including where the debater begins and ends must be clearly marked as outlined in 7.1(G)(2).
- F. **Availability of evidence.**
  - 1. In all debate events, for reference, any material (evidence, cases, written citations, etc.) that is presented during the round must be made available to the opponent and/or judge during the round if requested. When requested, the original source or copy of the relevant (as outlined in 7.2) pages of evidence read in the round must be available to the opponent in a timely fashion during the round and/or judge at the conclusion of the round.
  - 2. **Original source(s) defined.** Understanding that teams/individuals obtain their evidence in multiple ways, the original source for evidence may include, but is not limited solely to, one of the following:

- a. Accessing the live or displaying a copy of a web page (teams/individuals may access the Internet to provide this information if requested).
  - b. A copy of the pages preceding, including, and following or the actual printed (book, periodical, pamphlet, etc.) source.
  - c. Copies or electronic versions of published handbooks (i.e., Baylor Briefs; Planet Debate, etc.).
  - d. Electronic or printed versions or the webpage for a debate institute or the NDCA sponsored Open Evidence Project or similar sites.
3. Regardless of the form of material used to satisfy the original source requirement, debaters are responsible for the content and accuracy of all evidence they present and/or read.

- G. **Distinguishing between which parts of each piece of evidence are and are not read in a particular round.** In all debate events, debaters must mark their evidence in two ways:
1. Oral delivery of each piece of evidence must be identified by a clear oral pause or by saying phrases such as “quote/unquote” or “mark the card.” The use of a phrase is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. Clear, oral pauses are left solely to the discretion of the judge.
  2. The written text must be marked to clearly indicate the portions read in the debate. In the written text the standard practices of underlining what is read, or highlighting what is read, and/or minimizing what is unread, is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. The clarity of other means of marking evidence is left to the discretion of the judge.
- H. **Private communication prohibited** Private, personal correspondence or communication between an author and the debater is inadmissible as evidence.

## 7.2. Definitions of Evidence Violations

- A. “Distortion” exists when the textual evidence itself contains added and/or deleted word(s), which significantly alters the conclusion of the author (e.g., **deleting ‘not’**; **adding** the word **‘not’**). Additionally, failure to bracket added words would be considered distortion of evidence.
- B. “Non-existent evidence” means one or more of the following:
1. The debater citing the evidence is unable to provide the original source or copy of the relevant pages when requested by their opponent, judge, or tournament official.
  2. The original source provided does not contain the evidence cited.
  3. The evidence is paraphrased but lacks an original source to verify the accuracy of the paraphrasing.
  4. The debater is in possession of the original source, but declines to provide it to their opponent upon request **in a timely fashion (as outlined in 7.4.C).**
- C. “Clipping” occurs when the debater claims to have read the complete text of highlighted and/or underlined evidence when, in fact, the contestant skips or omits portions of evidence.
- D. “Straw argument”  
A “straw argument” is a position or argumentative claim introduced by an author for the purpose of refuting, discrediting or characterizing it. Reliance on a straw argument occurs in a debate round when a debater asserts incorrectly that the author supports or endorses the straw argument as his or her own position.

Note: A debater who acknowledges using a “straw argument” when verbally first read in the round, would **not** be misrepresenting evidence. However, if the debater fails to acknowledge the use of a “straw argument” and their opponent questions the use of such an argument, then that debater has committed an evidence violation.

### 7.3. Procedures for Resolving Evidence Violations

- A. Judges are responsible for resolving disputes between debaters regarding oral citations (7.1(B)); written source citations (7.1(C)); distinguishing between what parts of each piece of evidence are and are not read in a particular round (7.1(G)). When the judge(s) have such a dispute in the round, they must make a written note on the ballot or inform the tabulation committee of the dispute. They must do so particularly if it impacts the decision in the debate. **These decisions may not be appealed.**
- B. An appeal can only be made if the issue has been raised in the round with the exception of the issues listed in 7.3(C). Appeals may only be made if judge(s) have misapplied, misinterpreted, or ignored a rule.
- C. A formal allegation of violation of the evidence rules is permitted during the round only if the debater(s) allege a violation of 7.2(A) (distortion); 7.2(B) (nonexistent evidence); 7.2(C) (clipping). If a formal allegation of violation of these rules is made during a round, the following procedures must be followed: (see section 7.3(D) for procedures for making a formal allegation after the conclusion of the round):
1. The team/individual alleging a violation must make a definitive indication that they are formally alleging a violation of an evidence rule.
  2. The team/individual alleging the violation of the evidence must articulate the specific violation as defined in 7.2(A); 7.2(B) and/or 7.2(C).
  3. The judge should stop the round at that time to examine the evidence from both teams/individuals and render a decision about the credibility of the evidence.
    - a. If the judge determines that the allegation is legitimate and an evidence violation has occurred, the team/individual committing the violation will be given the loss in the round. Other sanctions may apply as well as articulated in 7.3(E).
    - b. If the judge determines that the allegation is not legitimate and that there is no violation, the team/individual making the challenge will receive the loss in the round.
- Note: Teams/individuals may question the credibility and/or efficacy of the evidence without a formal allegation that requires the round to end. Teams/debaters may make in-round arguments regarding the credibility of evidence without making a formal allegation or violation of these rules. Such informal arguments about the evidence will not automatically end the round, and will be treated by the judge in the same fashion as any other argument.
- D. The tabulation committee is authorized to hear: (1) appeals, pursuant to 7.3(B), claiming that a judge ignored, misinterpreted or misapplied rules other than those from which no appeal is permitted pursuant to 7.3(A); (2) appeals from a judge's decision, pursuant to 7.3(C), on a formal in-round allegation of distortion or non-existent evidence (note: **judge decisions regarding clipping may not be appealed**); and (3) a formal allegation of distortion or nonexistent evidence that is made for the first time after conclusion of the debate.
- E. The procedures for making an appeal or post-round formal allegation are as follows:
1. A coach or school-affiliated adult representative **from the school(s) competing in the debate or a judge for the round** must notify the tabulation committee of intent to submit an appeal or formal post-round allegation within 20 minutes of the end of the debate round. The 20-minute time period begins once the last ballot from all rounds (if flighted, both flights) has been collected by the tabulation committee.
  2. The coach must submit the post-round formal allegation to the tabulation committee within 10 minutes of the formal notification of the intent to appeal. The allegation must be in writing and articulate the specific evidence violation that is being challenged. The challenged contestant and coach will then be notified.
  3. If the tabulation committee determines that the original protest has merit, the coach or school affiliated adult and contestant(s) being challenged will be given 20 minutes to provide evidence denying, or to the contrary of the claim. If such evidence cannot be offered, the challenged debater(s) will be given the loss in the round and may be subject to additional penalties. If the tabulation committee determines that the allegation is not

legitimate and that there is no violation, the team/individual making the challenge will receive the loss in the round.

4. The tabulation committee has the discretion of extending the time limits for these actions if circumstances do not allow a coach or school-affiliated adult to be available within the prescribed time limits.
- F. The tabulation committee's decision to disqualify a student can be appealed by the coach or school affiliated adult. The following procedure should be followed:
1. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the tabulation committee within 10 minutes of the notification to disqualify.
  2. The tabulation committee will then submit the appeal to the national office referee(s). The committee will contact the national office referee once the written appeal has been received. Both sides will be able to provide written explanations and supporting evidence to defend their individual side.
  3. A decision will be rendered in a timely manner. The decision of the national office shall be final and cannot be appealed.
  4. No more than one round may occur between the round being protested and the decision of the national office referee.
  5. If the appeal is successful and the contestant(s) may now continue in the tournament, they will be put into the appropriate bracket for pairing the debates.
- G. If appeals are made in rounds in which multiple judges are being used, normal procedures should be followed to ensure each judge reaches their decision as independently as possible. Judges will be instructed not to confer or discuss the charge and/or answer to the potential violation. It will be possible for one judge to determine that an evidence violation has occurred and the other judge(s) to determine no violation has occurred. The tabulation committee will record the panel's decision in the same fashion as a normal win or loss; the outcome is thus tabulated in the same fashion as a round in which an evidence violation has not occurred. If the majority of the panel finds an evidence violation did not occur, no sanction may be applied to the team/individual charged with the violation. If the majority finds a violation has occurred, the appropriate penalties will be administered.

#### 7.4. Penalties for Evidence Violations

- A. If the judge determines that an entry has violated one of the rules listed in 7.3(A) and 7.1(H) (oral citation, written citation, indication of parts of card read or not read, use of private communication), the judge may at his or her discretion disregard the evidence, diminish the credibility given to the evidence, take the violation into account (solely or partially) in deciding the winner of the debate, or take no action.
- B. If a debater(s) commits an evidence violation for "clipping" (7.2(C)), the use of a "straw argument" (7.2(D)) or the use of "ellipses" (7.1(E)) will result in a loss for the debater(s) committing the evidence violation. The judge should award zero speaker points (if applicable), and indicate the reason for decision on the ballot.
- C. If debater(s) commits an evidence violation of "distortion" (7.2(A)) or have used "nonexistent evidence" (as defined by 7.2(B)) the offending debater(s) will lose the debate and be disqualified from the tournament. However, if a debater(s) loses a round due to "non-existent evidence" (7.2(B)) violation during an in-round formal allegation, but can produce it after the round within 20 minutes to the tabulation committee, the committee may decide not to disqualify the entry. The loss that was recorded by the judge may not be changed. If a post-round protest is levied against a debater for not providing evidence or an original source in round (non-existent evidence), and the judge confirms they in fact did not provide the evidence in a timely fashion when requested in round, the debater(s) will lose the round and be disqualified from the tournament. However, if a debater(s) produces the evidence within the post-round challenge period, that debater(s) may avoid disqualification.
- D. Evidence infractions violate the Code of Honor. Depending on the severity, an offense may result in notification of said offense to the contestant's high school administration and chapter sponsor, loss of all District and/or National Tournament merit points, including trophy and sweepstakes points for the offending student(s), and/or revocation of

Association membership. These decisions would be left to the national office, and not the individual District Committee.

### 7.5. Tournament Adjustments

- A. Under no circumstance will a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
- B. In the case of a disqualification of a debater(s), all ranks and decisions of other debater(s) made prior to the start of the round being protested stand and no revision of past round ranks will take place. Penalties listed in 7.4 will be applied.
- C. When a round has been held between the round being protested and a final decision regarding the protest, the result of that round will be recorded as follows:
  - 1. If the protest is upheld, and a debater is disqualified, the opponent of the disqualified debater will receive a forfeit win.
  - 2. If the protest is overruled, and the protesting debater won the protested round, no revision of the result on the ballot will take place.
  - 3. If the protest is overruled, the protesting debater lost the protested round, and had no previous losses, no revision of the result on the ballot will take place.
  - 4. If the protest is overruled, the protesting debater lost the protested round, and had a previous loss, the opponent will receive a forfeit win regardless of the result on the ballot.

### Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events

- A. 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.
- B. 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.
- C. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
- D. 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 email, 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.)
- E. **Penalty:** Contestants found to have violated provisions A through C above will forfeit the round of competition and receive zero merit points. Contestants found to have violated provision D (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all rounds and merit points.
- F. **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.
- G. 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.
- H. 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.

- I. 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.
- J. 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.

## Congressional Debate

1. A **session** is defined as including:
  - A. Minimum of three hours.
  - B. 18-20 students as the optimum number for a three-hour session; otherwise, a session should be lengthened by ten minutes per each additional student beyond 20. Chambers may not be larger than 30 students.
  - C. Election of a presiding officer. The presiding officer must be elected with a majority of the vote- if one candidate does not receive a majority of votes, eliminate the candidate with the fewest votes and vote again. If candidates are tied for the fewest number of votes, vote to determine which of the tied candidates should remain in contention. Repeat this process until one candidate receives a majority of votes.
  - D. New seating chart (necessary accommodations for students with special needs may be made).
  - E. Resetting of precedence/recency. See 'Recognizing Speakers' below.
  - F. New legislation that has not been debated in a previous session at that tournament.
2. **Recognizing Speakers**
  - A. When more than one speaker seeks the floor, the presiding officer must follow the precedence/recency method:
    - 1) First recognize students who have not spoken during the session.
    - 2) Next recognize students who have spoken fewer times.
    - 3) Then recognize students who spoke earlier (least recently).
  - B. Before precedence is established, the presiding officer should recognize speakers fairly and consistently. They may not link recognition of speakers to previous recognition of students asking questions, moving motions, or longest standing (standing time).
  - C. During any session, precedence/recency should not reset, to ensure that all students in a chamber have an equal opportunity to speak and receive evaluation from scorers. When a new session begins, precedence/recency will be reset along with a new seating chart, and election of a presiding officer.
  - D. Before precedence is established, the presiding officer should explain their recognition process and it must be fair, consistent and justifiable.
  - E. Scorers will include answers to questions when evaluating speeches.
  - F. A speaker may yield time on the floor during debate (for questions or clarifications) but that speaker will remain in control of their three minutes (see #6 below regarding questioning).
3. **Speeches introducing legislation** are allotted up to three minutes, followed by two minutes of questioning by other delegates. A student from the school (or at the national level, the district) who wrote the legislation gets the privilege of recognition (called *authorship*), regardless of precedence; otherwise the presiding officer may recognize a "sponsor" from the chamber, provided this recognition follows the precedence guidelines above. Regardless, this speech of introduction must be followed by two minutes of questions. Should no student seek recognition for the authorship/sponsorship, the chamber will move to lay the legislation on the table until such time that a student is prepared to introduce it.
4. **The first negative speech** must be followed by two minutes of questions.
5. **Following the first two speeches** on legislation, the presiding officer will alternately recognize affirmative and negative speakers, who will address the chamber for up to three minutes, followed by one minute of questioning by other delegates. If no one wishes to oppose the preceding speaker, the presiding officer may recognize a speaker upholding the same side. When no one seeks the floor for debate, the presiding officer may ask the chamber if they are "ready for the question," at which point, if there is no objection, voting may commence on the legislation itself. There is no "minimum cycle" rule; however, if debate gets "one-sided," the chamber may decide to move the previous question.

- A. In the event a student speaks on the wrong side called for by the presiding officer and the error is not caught, the speaker shall be scored and the speech shall count in precedence, but the speaker must be penalized at least three points for not paying close attention to the flow of debate.
  - B. In the event a student speaks on an item of legislation *not currently* being debated, said speech shall count in precedence, but zero points shall be awarded.
6. **The presiding officer fairly and equitably recognizes members to ask questions** following each speech. The presiding officer starts timing questioning periods when they have recognized the first questioner, and keeps the clock running continuously until the time has lapsed. Speakers are encouraged to ask brief questions, and may only ask one question at a time (two-part/multiple-part questions are not allowed, since they monopolize time and disallow others to ask their questions). There is no formal “permission to preface,” however; presiding officers should discourage students from making statements as part of questioning, since that is an abusive use of the limited time available.
  7. The presiding officer will pause briefly between speeches to recognize any motions from the floor; however, they should not call for motions (at the beginning of a session, the presiding officer should remind members to seek their attention between speeches).
  8. **Amendments** must be presented to the presiding officer in writing with specific references to lines and clauses that change. This must be done in advance of moving to amend.
    - A. The parliamentarian will recommend whether the amendment is “germane”—that is, it upholds the original intent of the legislation—otherwise, it is considered “dilatatory.” The title of the legislation may be changed.
    - B. A legislator may move to amend between floor speeches. Once that motion is made, the presiding officer will read the proposed amendment aloud and call for a second by one-third of those members present, unless he/she rules it dilatatory.
    - C. Should students wish to speak on the proposed amendment, the presiding officer will recognize them as per the standing precedence and recency, and the speech will be counted toward their totals, accordingly.
    - D. Simply proposing an amendment does not guarantee an “author/sponsor” speech, and any speeches on amendments are followed by the normal one minute of questioning.
    - E. Amendments are considered neutral and do not constitute an affirmative or negative speech on the original legislation.
    - F. If there are no speakers or the previous question is moved, the chamber may vote on a proposed amendment without debating it.
  9. **All major voting** (such as the main motion/legislation) which a Congressperson’s constituents should have a record of, shall be done with a counted vote. Secret balloting is used when voting for presiding officer.
  10. Student should ask permission to leave and enter the chamber when it is in session (move a personal privilege). However, do not interrupt a speaker who is addressing the chamber.
  11. **Use of Evidence**
    - A. Visual aids are permitted in Congressional Debate, provided they do not require electronic retrieval devices in the chamber.
    - B. All evidence used is subject to verification. Honesty and integrity are of utmost importance in legislative debate. Falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence may result in the legislator being suspended by tournament officials.
    - C. The use of laptop computers is permitted at the National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be the autonomous decision of each district. Laptop use must comply with the Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events.
  12. Since the rules above ensure fairness for competition, they may not be suspended; the presiding officer should rule such motions *out of order*; except to extend questioning and allow for open chambers provided the tournament staff permits doing so.

## Congressional Debate Legislation Guidelines

Most legislation should have a national/domestic focus that the U.S. Congress would have *jurisdiction* over, taking the form of a **bill**. A bill establishes details behind *how* a particular law must work, including when it takes effect, how much tax levy would be appropriated (if applicable), how infractions/violations will be dealt with, etc. A bill may answer the who, what, when, where—and most specifically how—but it will never answer “why.” Legislators explain rationale behind bills in their speeches, and how a bill implements its solution can spark deeper, more meaningful debate.

Students should consider what the U.S. Congress has jurisdiction over. Since the Executive Branch runs most of the agencies that enforce federal laws, understanding those helps; for more information, visit [www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/Executive.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/Executive.shtml). While foreign affairs often fall under the jurisdiction of the Executive Branch, funding efforts such as USAID can have an impact on the success or failure of United States involvement in other countries, and therefore, can be framed as a bill. Inspiration for legislative ideas can be found at [thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov).

Writing an effective bill involves more time and research than researching one written by someone else. A student must ask her/himself what the legislation does, who is involved (government agencies), where it happens, when it is feasible to take place and how much time is needed for implementation, and how it should be carried out (a plan of action). All of these questions must be answered in writing the sections of the bill, with thoughtful consideration as to how thoroughly each section explains its plank of implementing the overall bill’s plan of action.

**Resolutions** are simply position statements on issues Congress does not have jurisdiction over (such as a foreign issue, although a bill can suggest foreign aid), or further action (such as amending the Constitution). Resolutions lack the force of law, and never establish enforcement.

Appropriate **topics** exhibit seriousness of purpose. The action proposed should be feasible, and such that the actual United States Congress might debate it. Topics should be debatable, meaning substantive argumentation exists on both sides. Legislation should be typed and double-spaced with line numbers, **not exceeding one page**. Capitalizing the words “WHEREAS” and “RESOLVED” in resolutions, and “SECTION” in bills, as well as inverse-indenting each clause or section helps to distinguish between ideas and concepts.

The samples above show proper formatting. In the resolution, note the semicolon, and how it precedes the word “and” at the end of each “whereas” clause, and the phrase “now, therefore, be it” at the end of the last “whereas” clause.

**Note: Legislation that is submitted for consideration at the district and/or national tournament may be rejected if serious issues exist with the adherence to these guidelines.**

Templates for bills, resolutions, and resolutions to amend the Constitution are available online at [www.speechanddebate.org](http://www.speechanddebate.org).

### A Bill to Establish a Specific Policy

BE IT ENACTED BY THIS CONGRESS THAT:

1. **SECTION 1.** State the new policy in a brief
2. declarative sentence, or in as few
3. sentences as possible.
4. **SECTION 2.** Define any ambiguous terms inherent
5. in the first section.
6. **SECTION 3.** Name the government agency that will
7. oversee the enforcement of the bill
8. along with the specific enforcement
9. mechanism.
10. **SECTION 4.** Indicate the implementation
11. date/timeframe.
12. **SECTION 5.** State that all other laws that are in
13. conflict with this new policy shall
14. hereby be declared null and void.

### A Resolution to Urge Further Action on a Specific Issue

1. **WHEREAS,** State the current problem (this needs
2. to be accomplished in one brief
3. sentence); and
4. **WHEREAS,** Describe the scope of the problem
5. cited in the first whereas clause (this
6. clause needs to flow logically from the
7. first); and
8. **WHEREAS,** Explain the impact and harms allowed
9. by the current problem (once again,
10. the clause needs to flow in a logical
11. sequence); now, therefore, be it
12. **RESOLVED,** By this Congress that: state your
13. recommendation for dealing with the
14. problem (the resolution should be a
15. clear call for action); and, be it
16. **FURTHER RESOLVED,** That (an optional additional
17. recommendation; if not used, end the
18. previous clause with a period).

## Original Oratory

1. **Contest:** This contest comprises only memorized orations actually composed by the contestants and not used by them during a previous contest season. No visual aids are permitted.
2. **Subject:** Any appropriate subject may be used, but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, must be so identified.
3. **Length:** The time limit in Original Oratory is ten minutes with a 30 second “grace period.” If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
4. **Quotation:** Not more than 150 words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing and such quotations must be identified in a printed copy of the oration supplied prior to registration. Extensive paraphrasing from other sources is prohibited.
5. **Script:** The orator's script must identify the quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, include a work cited page in APA or MLA format, and both the orator and the coach must attest by signature that the oration is the original work of the contestant. **It is the responsibility of the contestant to have a script ready upon request should the speech be challenged.**
6. **Re-Use:** A student may not use an oration the student used in district or national competition in any previous contest year.

## Interpretation

This includes categories of individual (solo) performance of dramatic (serious) and humorous literature, as well as duo performance of either emotive appeal, with selections drawn from published, printed: novels, short stories, plays, poetry, or other printed, published works as well as limited online works as provided for in the rules below.

1. **Divisions.** Contests are conducted in Dramatic, Humorous, and Duo Interpretation. See additional rules for the supplemental and consolation interpretation events of Poetry, Prose, and Storytelling.
7. **Length:** The time limit in Interpretation Main Events (Humorous, Dramatic and Duo Interpretation) is ten minutes with a 30 second “grace period. “If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
2. **Material:** Selections used in these contests must be cuttings from a single work of literature—from one short story or one play, or one novel, or one or more poems—as described in the following subsections:
  - A. **Print Publications:** includes novels, short stories, plays or poetry, published in print (see requirements pertaining to source verification in section 4(A) below).

NOTE: In addition to print sources, certain online materials are allowed as per 3(B). Also, if a *treatment* of a movie script is ordered from a company that provides printed movie scripts, keep the original treatment, receipt, and proof of mailing (envelope). Please note that text of the treatment may differ from the actual film, so students are advised against transcribing directly from the film.
  - B. **Digital (Online) Publications:** Material is only allowed from pre-approved online publishing sources listed at [www.speechanddebate.org/approvedwebsites](http://www.speechanddebate.org/approvedwebsites). Online material must meet the **web page standards** outlined below:
    - i. If the website offers online material in a variety of formats, **only material** that can be printed directly from the web page is allowed. Downloaded files will NOT be accepted.
    - ii. The Association defines a web page as a document coded with hypertext markup language (HTML), displayed in a web browser. The Association defines a downloaded file as a specific non-hypertext format, such as PDFs or word processing documents.
    - iii. These guidelines determined digital (online) publication sources selected:
      - 1) The literary material is from a website with strict editorial submission standards that include editorial review and acceptance. Unacceptable sites include:
        - a) Personal sites (social network profiles, blogs)
        - b) Personal professional sites (those where a writer who has their own site and can place their works for sale or view)
        - c) Publish it sites (those with one click upload or that accept submissions without a selection process)
      - 2) Texts must come from a verifiable website that can be accessed universally by any user. The site and literary text needs to be verifiable on the web if challenged.
        - a) Unmarked or casual sites where individuals can easily post work either for performance or criticism will not be accepted.
        - b) The website has been in existence for a minimum of two years prior to submission for consideration by the National Speech & Debate Association for the upcoming school year (several online tools allow for verification of the existence of a website).
- a. **Prohibited Material:** not published in print or allowable online material as per above, including:

- i. Recorded material (videotape, DVDs, audio tape, CDs, MP3s, or phonograph recordings).
    - ii. Original material published in a high school publication such as a newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook.
  - c. **Source Verification:** Interp source material must be available at all district tournament contests in the event of a protest. However, it shall be the choice of each individual District Committee whether or not to require these materials be submitted prior to the district contest. At the National Tournament, all quarterfinalists are required to turn in the original source OR printed web manuscript (as outlined above under Source Verification) to the ombudsmen by noon on the third day of competition. Photocopies are not acceptable. Any contestant failing to produce the original source to the ombudsmen by the aforementioned deadline will not qualify for the semifinal rounds of competition.
3. It is the affirmative duty of each coach and each student entered in Interpretation contests to determine absolutely that the cutting being performed meets all rules for material.
- A. **Print Publications:** The original published source of any selection used must be immediately available at the tournament as well as a complete script of the cutting used. A complete script of the cutting includes:
    - 1) A photocopy of every page from which any line of the cutting is taken; pages are to be in the order in which they are performed.
    - 2) All words used from the script should be highlighted (any words/lines not used should be left unmarked).
    - 3) Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink.
  - B. **Digital (Online) Publications:** The material the competitor performs must presently appear on the website if questions arise in competition, additionally, a printed manuscript must be available:
    - 1) Manuscript items to be printed directly from the screen:
      - a. The first page in the website (the home page)
      - b. All other linked pages needed to navigate to the literary text selected for competition shall be printed out and the link must be highlighted in the manuscript
      - c. All web pages upon which the cutting appears
    - 2) Each page must have printed in the header and/or footer:
      - a. Date the page was printed
      - b. Web address
    - 3) Only the printed manuscript shall be considered adequate proof of authenticity. In other words, the student or coach must provide printed pages or an identical copy for examination.
    - 4) The highlighted manuscript submitted for material verification will follow the same rules designated for printed publications (see section 4.A. immediately above).
    - 5) The website and online version of the digital publication need to be available for comparison if challenged. Online access is the fundamental responsibility of tournament officials and/or individual filing the protest. NOTE: If tournament officials cannot gain online access and the above requirements have been met, the piece is considered legal for use.
4. **Performance:** The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. During the presentation the contestant/team must name the author and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made. Additionally:
- A. Adaptations to material may only be used for the purpose of transition. The gender stated by the author must be honored. However, a female contestant may play a male role, and a male contestant may play a female role.
  - B. Humorous, Dramatic, and Duo Interpretation selections must be presented from memory.
  - C. In Duo Interpretation each of the two performers may play one or more characters so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible.
  - D. Monologues are acceptable in Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation. If the selection is prose or poetry and

contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.

- E. Videos of previous final round performances are intended to provide educational examples for coaches and students. They are not intended to serve as a model to directly imitate or duplicate in performance. The wholesale impersonation of final round performances is strongly discouraged.
- 6. **Focus:** In Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation, use of focal points and/or direct contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted. In Duo Interpretation, focus may be direct during the introduction [the performers may look at each other] but must be indirect [off-stage] during the performance itself.
- 7. **Re-Use:** A student may not use a cutting from a work of literature the student used in National Speech & Debate Association district or national competition in any previous contest year. A student entered in two events may not use the same selection of literature in both events.

## Extemporaneous Speaking

1. **Divisions:** Two divisions of Extemporaneous Speaking will be held at the district and national level:
  - A. **United States Division:** Questions will cover U.S. domestic and U.S. foreign policy.
  - B. **International Division:** Questions will cover the domestic affairs of foreign countries and the foreign affairs of all countries, including the United States.
2. **Topics:** The district chair will obtain a list of questions phrased for contest use and based on subjects discussed in periodicals during the current school year. The contents of the list must not be disclosed except as contestants draw questions. A new subject area will be used for each round with no duplication of questions between the divisions.
3. **Entry:** At the National Tournament, no student is allowed to enter both divisions in a single contest year. Each district has the autonomy to determine whether double entry in Extemporaneous Speaking events is allowed. The decision of the District Committee is final.
4. **Drawing:** Thirty minutes before the contest is to begin, the first speaker draws three questions, choose one, and return the other two. The other contestants draw in like manner, in the order of speaking, at intervals of seven minutes. The entire list of questions for that round must be used for each entry in each section. A contestant drawing a question on which they have spoken previously in the tournament must return it and draw again.
5. **Preparation:** As soon as a question is chosen, the contestant will prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles, provided:
  - A. They are originals or copies of whole pages.
  - B. Provided those originals or copies are uncut.
  - C. There is no written material on that original or copy other than citation information.
  - D. Topical index without annotation may be present.

No other material will be allowed in the Extemp prep room other than stated above. Extemp speeches, handbooks, briefs and outlines are prohibited from the Extemp prep room. Underlining or highlighting in Extemp will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. **Please see rules on p. 26 concerning use of electronic retrieval devices.** Printed copies of information from online computer services may be used. Electronically retrieved evidence used in any Association Extemp competition must conform to the citation standard of the Modern Language Association [consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition)* or <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/>].

6. **Notes:** Contestants may make notes during the preparation time, but the use of notes, cards, briefs or other aids is prohibited during the speech.
7. **Time:** The time limit in both Extemporaneous Speaking events is seven minutes with a 30 second “grace period. “If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
8. **Recuse:** Contestants may not leave the preparation area until dismissed by the Extemp proctor. Consultation with any person other than the Extemp proctor between the time of drawing and time of speaking is prohibited.
9. **Cross-Examination:** Each district has the autonomy to determine whether cross-examination will be used in the final round of Extemporaneous Speaking events at the district tournament. The National Tournament will utilize an open-cross examination period of 2 minutes for both the semi-final and final rounds. If cross-examination is used, the district must use the National Tournament final round format. The decision of the District Committee is final.  
*Procedure:* Each speaker shall be assigned a speaker order position. Drawing shall take place at 12-minute intervals. Thirty minutes after speaker first has drawn, speakers first and last shall enter the contest room. Speaker first shall give a speech and speaker last shall listen and may take notes. At the conclusion of speaker first's speech, speaker last

shall question speaker first for two minutes. Speaker last shall return to the prep room and speaker first shall stay and question speaker second. Speaker second will question speaker third, etc. Unless it is unavoidable, students from the same school shall not cross-examine one another. Speaker order should be adjusted accordingly.

10. **Observation:** Students in Extemporaneous Speaking are encouraged, but not required, to stay and watch the remaining speakers after they deliver their speech. Students who are double entered may be able to observe as time permits.

### Guidelines for Laptop Use in Extemporaneous Speaking

The use of laptop computers in Extemporaneous Speaking is permitted.

1. Extemporaneous Speaking contestants may make use of electronic retrieval devices to store and to retrieve their subject files at tournaments (district or national). Students can retrieve extemporaneous files to read, but cannot write speeches or organize their thoughts on the computers. **This rule in no way prevents students from still utilizing traditional paper copy files to enable the competitor to successfully compete in Extemporaneous Speaking. The Association takes no position on which form of file storage is preferable for use at tournaments (district or national).**
2. The use of electronic retrieval devices at the district competition will be the autonomous decision of each individual district committee.
3. Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop computers, netbooks, iPads, or other portable electronic retrieval equipment. Secondary devices such as flash drives or external hard drives are allowed as well. **Cell phones or smart phones are prohibited from being used while preparing or before speaking at tournaments (district or national).**
4. **Source Materials:** Students may consult published books, periodical articles, newspaper articles, think tank articles, government reports or journal articles saved on their electronic retrieval device **or present in hard copy form** provided:
  - a. There are no notations made within or on the saved article other than citation information.
  - b. Any highlighting or underlining of the articles is done in only one color within each article. Bolding, italicizing, or any other manipulation of the original text of sources (other than highlighting or underlining as previously stipulated) is prohibited.
5. No other source materials will be allowed in the Extemporaneous prep room other than stated above. Pre-written Extemporaneous speeches, handbooks, briefs or outlines are prohibited from the prep room, **whether stored electronically or present in hard copy form.**
6. **Power Source:** Power plugs or outlets may not be used in the prep room at any time. All computers used in the prep room must be battery operated at all times.
7. Competitors are responsible for making certain their electronic retrieval devices are fully charged at the start of each competition day and for proper power management ensuring that their device remains functional throughout the competition day. Contestants may not use external power sources in the prep room, such as wall outlets and/or extension cords.
8. **Internet:** Extemporaneous Speaking contestants shall not access the Internet or communicate electronically with any other individual while in the prep room at any Association tournament (district or national). All computers must comply with the following provisions:
  - a. 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.
  - b. 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.
  - c. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
  - d. 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.

- e. **Penalty:** Contestants found to have violated provisions i through iii above will be ranked last in the round and receive zero points. Contestants found to have violated provision iv (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all round credits and points. At district tournaments, the district committee will make the final decision concerning disqualification. In case of a serious dispute or critical question, the acting tournament referee (representing the national office) may be contacted for a ruling.
- 9. **Liability:** Extemporaneous Speaking competitors accept full responsibility for the safety and security of their electronic retrieval devices throughout the entire course of any Association tournament (district or national). *The Association may put stickers and/or tape on computers to ensure they are not opened or used, or to ensure appropriate owners take their own machines. The Association does not assume any liability for the computers. Students are welcome to use Kensington locks or other such devices to secure their computers in the prep room. Students, parents, and coaches should be aware that the students are bringing and using the computers at their own risk. The Association is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken computers.*
- 10. **File Monitoring:** The Association retains the right to view and search any electronic retrieval devices to ensure compliance with any and all rules at any Association tournament (district or national).
- 11. Devices should be muted in the prep room. Contestants should not play games or engage in other distracting activities on their electronic devices in the prep room. Tournament officials may ask a student to power-off the device if it becomes distracting.
- 12. Students from the same school may share computers during preparation. However, communication among contestants during preparation time is strictly prohibited.



**Contestants with laptops are responsible for providing sufficient battery power. No electrical power will be supplied by the tournament, and contestants may not plug in to outlets in the Extemp prep area.**