



NEBRASKA SPEECH, COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE ASSOCIATION DEBATE TOURNAMENT MANUAL

Preface

This manual has been created to provide guidelines for the administration of the NSCTA Debate Tournament. The debate tournament will include competition in Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate, and Student Congress. The provisions of the document have been approved by the NSCTA Executive Committee and shall govern the NSCTA tournament unless amended by the NSCTA Executive Committee.

NSCTA Manual for the Annual Debate Tournament

Section One: Included Activities

- 1.1 The NSCTA Tournament shall include competition in Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate and Student Congress.

Section Two: Tournament Eligibility

- 2.1 All students competing in the NSCTA Tournament shall be members of Nebraska High Schools. *It is suggested that all students meet the eligibility requirements set for by the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).*
- 2.2 There will be no qualifying tournaments required for competition in the NSCTA Tournament.

Section Three: Supervision.

- 3.1 The sponsor, coach, or an authorized faculty member must accompany the team at the NSCTA Tournament.

Section Four: Administration

- 4.1 Tournament Director and Committee
 - 4.1.1 The NSCTA Executive Committee shall appoint a tournament director for the NSCTA Tournament. The tournament director shall be responsible for all administrative duties pertaining to tournament.
 - 4.1.2 The NSCTA Executive Committee shall appoint a committee to assist in preparing and operating the NSCTA tournament.

4.2 Tournament Staff

- 4.2.1 The NSCTA Executive Committee shall appoint no more than two independent contractors to operate the tournament. They shall be paid by the NSCTA at an amount determined by the NSCTA Executive committee and/or tournament director.

4.3 Tournament Fees

4.3.1 Entry Fees for the tournament shall be:

- \$35 per Public Forum Debate Team for non-NSCTA Member Schools
- \$25 per Public Forum Team for NSCTA Member Schools
- \$35 per Policy Debate Team for non-NSCTA Member Schools
- \$25 per Policy Team for NSCTA Member Schools
- \$20 per Congress Entry for non-NSCTA Member Schools
- \$15 per Congress Entry for NSCTA Member Schools

Section Five: Event Rules

- 5.1 Scouting of preliminary rounds, including flowing by observers or recording of rounds, is expressly forbidden.

5.2 Policy Debate

- 5.2.1 Policy Debate shall debate a topic of policy. The topic used will be the annual topic as set forth by the NFHS.
- 5.2.2 Each school shall be allowed to enter up to three policy debate teams.
- 5.2.3 Unless exceptions noted, rules governing the NSCTA Policy Debate Tournament shall follow the rules set forth by the National Forensics League (NFL).
- 5.2.4 Policy Debate Times
- First Affirmative Constructive--8 minutes
 - Cross-Examination of First Affirmative Constructive by one of the Negative team members--3 minutes
 - First Negative Constructive--8 minutes.
 - Cross-Examination of First Negative Constructive by one of the Affirmative team members--3 minutes.
 - Second Affirmative Constructive--8 minutes.
 - Cross-Examination of Second Affirmative Constructive by other Negative team members --3 minutes.
 - Second Negative Constructive--8 minutes.
 - Cross-Examination of Second Negative Constructive by other Affirmative team members -- 3 minutes.
 - First Negative Rebuttal--5 minutes.
 - First Affirmative Rebuttal--5 minutes.
 - Second Negative Rebuttal--5 minutes.
 - Second Affirmative Rebuttal--5 minutes.
- Each time will have 8 minutes of preparation time.

5.3 Public Forum Debate

- 5.3.1 Public Forum shall debate the national topic for the month of competition as set forth by the NFL.
- 5.3.2 Each school shall be allowed to enter up to three public forum debate teams.
- 5.3.3 Unless exceptions noted, rules governing the NSCTA Public Forum Debate Tournament shall follow the rules set forth by the National Forensics League (NFL).

5.4 Student Congress

- 5.4.1 Student Congress shall debate a total of 15 bills or resolutions submitted by participating schools.
- 5.4.2 Each school shall be allowed to enter up to six student congress entries.
- 5.4.3 Schools shall submit bills and resolutions to the tournament director. The tournament director shall establish the deadline for submission.
- 5.4.4 Participating schools will vote on the bills to be used in competition according to the following docket:
- Prelim Bill/Resolution #1 - "Nebraska North" (NFL District) Fifth Ranked Bill/Resolution

Prelim Bill/Resolution #2 - "Nebraska South" (NFL District) Fifth Ranked Bill/Resolution
Prelim Bill/Resolution #3 - "Hole in the Wall" (NFL District) Fifth Ranked Bill/Resolution
Prelim Bill/Resolution #4 - "Nebraska South" (NFL District) Fourth Ranked Bill/Resolution
Prelim Bill/Resolution #5 - "Hole in the Wall" (NFL District) Fourth Ranked Bill/Resolution
Prelim Bill/Resolution #6 - "Nebraska North" (NFL District) Fourth Ranked Bill/Resolution
Prelim Bill/Resolution #7 - "Hole in the Wall" (NFL District) Third Ranked Bill/Resolution
Prelim Bill/Resolution #8 - "Nebraska North" (NFL District) Third Ranked Bill/Resolution
Prelim Bill/Resolution #9 - "Nebraska South" (NFL District) Third Ranked Bill/Resolution
Super Congress Bill/Resolution #1 - "Nebraska North" (NFL District) Second Ranked Bill/Resolution
Super Congress Bill/Resolution #2 - "Nebraska South" (NFL District) Second Ranked Bill/Resolution
Super Congress Bill/Resolution #3 - "Hole in the Wall" (NFL District) Second Ranked Bill/Resolution
Super Congress Bill/Resolution #4 - "Nebraska South" (NFL District) First Ranked Bill/Resolution
Super Congress Bill/Resolution #5 - "Hole in the Wall" (NFL District) First Ranked Bill/Resolution
Super Congress Bill/Resolution #6 - "Nebraska North" (NFL District) First Ranked Bill/Resolution

- 5.4.5 If sufficient bills and/or resolutions are not initially available, the tournament director shall take necessary steps to ensure the required number of bills.
- 5.4.6 The Student Congress Tournament shall follow the guidelines set forth by the NFL, including adherence to Roberts Rule of Order unless otherwise noted in this manual.

Section Six: Tournament Procedures

6.1 Policy Debate

6.1.1 Preliminary Rounds

- 6.1.2 The Policy Debate tournament will include four preliminary rounds.
- 6.1.3 Round One and Round Two shall be random, preset rounds.
- 6.1.4 Each team will debate one affirmative and one negative round.
- 6.1.5 Round Three and Four shall be "power matched" pairings. For pairings, the following considerations shall be followed:
- (a) Teams from the same school shall not debate each other in preliminary rounds.
 - (b) Teams that have previously debated shall not debate more than once in preliminary rounds.
 - (c) Teams shall have a balance of affirmative and negative rounds,
- 6.1.6 Preliminary rounds shall have one adjudicator.
- 6.1.7 **Elimination Rounds**
- 6.1.8 Teams in elimination rounds will flip a coin to determine sides unless they have previously met.
- 6.1.9 Elimination Rounds shall have three adjudicators.
- 6.1.10 The Policy Debate tournament shall have semifinal and final rounds.
- 6.1.11 Seeding of the semifinal rounds shall be based upon the following hierarchy:
- (a) Highest total wins (including byes)
 - (b) Total team speaker points after dropping the highest and lowest points.
 - (c) Total team speaker points.
 - (d) Opponent wins.
 - (e) Judge Variance.
- 6.1.12 In the semifinal round, the Number 1 seed shall debate the Number 4 seed and the Number 2 seed shall debate the Number 3 seed.
- 6.1.13 Semifinal pairings shall not be broken if teams from the same school are scheduled to debate. Teams from the school may debate or advance one team to the final round based on a coach's decision.
- 6.1.14 Winners of the semifinal round will debate in a final round with a panel of three adjudicators.

6.2 Public Forum Debate

6.2.1 Preliminary Rounds

- 6.2.2 All rounds in Public Forum Debate will begin with a coin flip. The winner of the coin flip may elect either the side of the resolution they will debate or their speaking position. The non-winner of the coin flip will elect the remaining option.
- 6.2.3 The Public Forum Debate tournament will include five preliminary rounds.
- 6.2.4 Round One and Round Two shall be random, preset rounds.
- 6.2.5 Rounds Three, Four and Five shall be “power matched”. For pairings, the following considerations shall be followed:
- Teams from the same school shall not debate each other in preliminary rounds.
 - Teams that have previously debated shall not debate more than once in preliminary rounds.
- 6.2.6 Preliminary rounds shall have one adjudicator.
- 6.2.7 Elimination Rounds
- 6.2.8 Elimination Rounds shall have three adjudicators.
- 6.2.9 The Public Forum Debate tournament shall have octafinal, quarterfinal, semifinal and final rounds following preliminary rounds.
- 6.2.10 Seeding of the octafinal rounds shall be based upon the following hierarchy:
- Highest total wins (including byes)
 - Total team speaker points after dropping the highest and lowest points.
 - Total team speaker points.
 - Opponent wins.
 - Judge Variance.
- 6.2.11 Elimination round pairings shall not be broken if teams from the same school are scheduled to debate. Teams from the school may debate or advance one team to the final round based on a coach’s decision.
- 6.2.12 Elimination rounds in Public Forum Debate shall use the following pairings:

Octafinal Debates	
Debate 1: Seed 1 v. Seed 16	Debate 5: Seed 5 v. Seed 12
Debate 2: Seed 2 v. Seed 15	Debate 6: Seed 6 v. Seed 11
Debate 3: Seed 3 v. Seed 14	Debate 7: Seed 7 v. Seed 10
Debate 4: Seed 4 v. Seed 13	Debate 8: Seed 8 v. Seed 9
Quarterfinal Debates	
Debate 9: Winner of 1 v. Winner of 8	Debate 11: Winner of 3 v. Winner of 6
Debate 10: Winner of 2 v. Winner of 7	Debate 12: Winner of 4 v. Winner of 5
Semifinal Debate	
Debate 13: Winner of 9 v. Winner of 12	Debate 14: Winner of 10 v. Winner of 11
Final: Winners of Semifinal Debates	

- 6.2.13 The level at which the elimination rounds in public form begins shall adhere to the following guidelines:
- 10 – 20 entries will have semifinals
 - 20 – 32 entries will have quarterfinals
 - 33 – 64 entries will have octafinals
 - 65 or more entries will have double octafinals

6.3 Student Congress

6.3.1 Preliminary Houses

- 6.3.2 Students will be assigned to preliminary houses. Houses shall be divided so that students from schools shall be balanced among the houses with the following considerations:
- No school shall have more than two students in any one house.
 - If a school enters an even number of students, each student will be in a house with one other student from the same school.

- (c) Coaches may elect which students will be paired together in preliminary houses.
 - (d) Coaches may petition to have students participate as 'solo' competitors. Solo competitors will have no other students from their school in their respective houses.
- 6.3.3 The number of preliminary houses will be determined by the following formula:
- (a) 1 – 26 entries: One Preliminary House
 - (b) 26 – 50 entries: Two Preliminary Houses
 - (c) 50 – 75 entries: Three Preliminary Houses
 - (d) 76 – 100 entries: Four Preliminary Houses
 - (e) When entries surpass 100 entries, the Tournament Committee shall make a decision on the number of preliminary houses.
- 6.3.4 Students will engage in three sessions of debate in preliminary houses.
- 6.3.5 Each house will designate one Presiding Officer.
- 6.3.6 Any student may run for Presiding Officer; however, the tournament director must be notified which students plan to do so upon submission of entries.
- 6.3.7 Each house will have one adult point recorder and one adult parliamentarian.
- 6.3.8 Super Congress and Honors Congress**
- 6.3.9 Upon completion of the preliminary congress, voting will take place to determine which students advance to the Super Congress session.
- 6.3.10 Students will advance to Super Congress based on the following guidelines:
- (a) If two houses, the top 13 students (including the Presiding Officer) in each house will advance to Super Congress.
 - (b) If three houses, the top 8 (excluding the Presiding Officer) students in each house will advance to Super Congress.
 - (c) If four houses, the top 6 (excluding the Presiding Officer) students in each house will advance to Super Congress.
 - (d) If five houses, the top 5 (including the Presiding Officer) students in each house will advance to Qualifying for Super Congress.
- 6.3.11 Independently, the point recorder and parliamentarian will nominate 6 students for consideration for Super Congress.
- 6.3.12 Upon completion of the preliminary congress, the point recorder, parliamentarian and assembly will rank the nominated congresspersons beginning with first place and continuing to the number of students nominated.
- 6.3.13 The assembly's vote will be totaled and the student with the lowest cumulative number will be ranked first. The second lowest will be ranked second and so forth. In case of ties the following tiebreaker will be used:
- (a) Greatest number of ones.
 - (b) Next?
 - (c) Next?
- 6.3.14 The assembly's vote, the parliamentarian's vote and the point recorder's vote will be totaled. The student with the lowest ranking will be placed first in the house; the second lowest will be second and so forth. In case of ties, NFL tie breaking rules will be used.
- 6.3.15 The presiding officer in each house will automatically advance to Super Congress.
- 6.3.16 Each presiding officer from the preliminary houses must try out for presiding officer. No other students may try out for presiding officer in the Super Congress.
- 6.3.17 Students not qualifying for the Super Congress will be randomly assigned to Honors houses. The total number of honors houses plus one shall equal the number of preliminary houses.

6.3.18 Final Placings

- 6.3.19 Each Honors house and the Super Congress house will have separate awards. Nominations and voting will follow the same procedure used to determine advancing students from the preliminary houses.

Section Seven: Judging

- 7.1 Debate events
- 7.1.2 Quotas
- 7.1.3 Each school is required to provide adult judges based on the number of teams entered in the respective events as follows:
- (a) One or two Policy entries require one Policy judge.
 - (b) One or two Public Forum entries require one Public Forum judge.
 - (c) Three Policy entries require two Policy judges.
 - (d) Three Public Forum entries require two Public Forum entries.
- 7.1.4 Any payment of judges shall be made by the school that hires the judge. The NSCTA will not pay judges in Policy or Public Forum Debate.
- 7.2 Obligations
- 7.2.1 All judges must be available for all preliminary rounds.
- 7.2.2 All judges must be available for elimination rounds. Judges are considered eligible for elimination panels for one round beyond the elimination of the school they are representing. For example, a judge representing a school that is eliminated after preliminary rounds must be available for the first elimination round. If a school is eliminated in the first elimination round, the judge is obligated through the second elimination round. This requirement continues through the duration of the tournament.
- 7.3 Affiliations
- 7.3.1 Judges shall not adjudicate rounds in which the school that has hired the judge is participating.
- 7.3.2 Judges shall not adjudicate rounds if:
- (a) That judge has provided coaching for either of the teams involved.
 - (b) That judge has an affiliation (graduate, assistant coach, etc) to a school involved within the past two years.
 - (c) That judge is related to a competitor.
 - (d) Judges are asked to make the tournament director aware of any potential conflicts of interest in regard to affiliations.
- 7.4 Congress
- 7.4.1 The NSCTA Tournament committee shall be responsible for securing adult point recorders and parliamentarians.
- 7.4.2 Participating schools are encouraged to submit names of qualified adults to serve in this capacity.
- 7.4.3 The NSCTA will pay congress officials at a rate to be determined by the NSCTA Executive committee.

Section Eight: Awards

8.1 Policy Debate

- 8.1.1 Each semifinal team will receive a trophy and two medals.
- 8.1.2 The runner-up will receive a trophy and two medals.
- 8.1.3 The champion will receive a trophy and two medals.
- 8.1.4 Each of the top speakers after the preliminary rounds will receive medals based on the following criteria:
- (a) H/L points dropped
 - (b) Total points
 - (c) Judge variance

(d) Opponents' wins

8.2 Public Forum

- 8.2.1 Each octafinal team will receive two medals.
- 8.2.2 Each quarterfinal team will receive a trophy and two medals.
- 8.2.3 Each semifinal team will receive a trophy and two medals.
- 8.2.4 The runner-up will receive a trophy and two medals.
- 8.2.5 The champion will receive a trophy and two medals.
- 8.2.6 Each of the top speakers after the preliminary rounds will receive medals based on the following criteria:
 - (a) H/L points dropped
 - (b) Total points
 - (c) Judge variance
 - (d) Opponents' wins

8.3 Student Congress

- 8.3.1 Each presiding officer from the preliminary houses will receive a small gavel.
- 8.3.2 The presiding officer from the Super Congress will receive a gavel.
- 8.3.3 The first ranked student in each honors house will receive a trophy.
- 8.3.4 The second through sixth ranked student in each honors house will receive a medal.
- 8.3.5 All students who qualify for the Super Congress will receive a marble award.
- 8.3.6 The students ranked first through fourth will receive a trophy.
- 8.3.7 The remaining nominated students in the Super Congress will receive medals.
- 8.3.8 Sweepstakes Awards
- 8.3.9 The NSCTA will award an overall "Sweepstakes" and a "Sweepstakes" runner-up trophy.
- 8.3.10 Team points will be awarded as follows:

LD Debate 75 points total	Policy Debate 75 points total	Public Forum Debate 75 points total	Student Congress 75 points total
1 st – 20	1 st – 25	1 st – 20	1 st – 20
2 nd – 15	2 nd – 20	2 nd – 15	2 nd – 15
Semifinalist – 10	Semifinalist – 15	Semifinalist – 10	3 rd & 4 th – 10
Quarterfinalist – 5		Quarterfinalist – 5	5 th thru 8 th – 5

Section Nine: Miscellany

- 9.1 Any rules, regulations or other topics not covered in this manual shall be determined by the Tournament Director and/or the Tournament Committee.
- 9.2 Any determination that requires the NSCTA to change financial obligations for the tournament must be approved by the NSCTA executive committee.
- 9.3 The NSCTA will provide lunch and refreshments for coaches and judges.