

Student Congress Mission Statement & Core Values

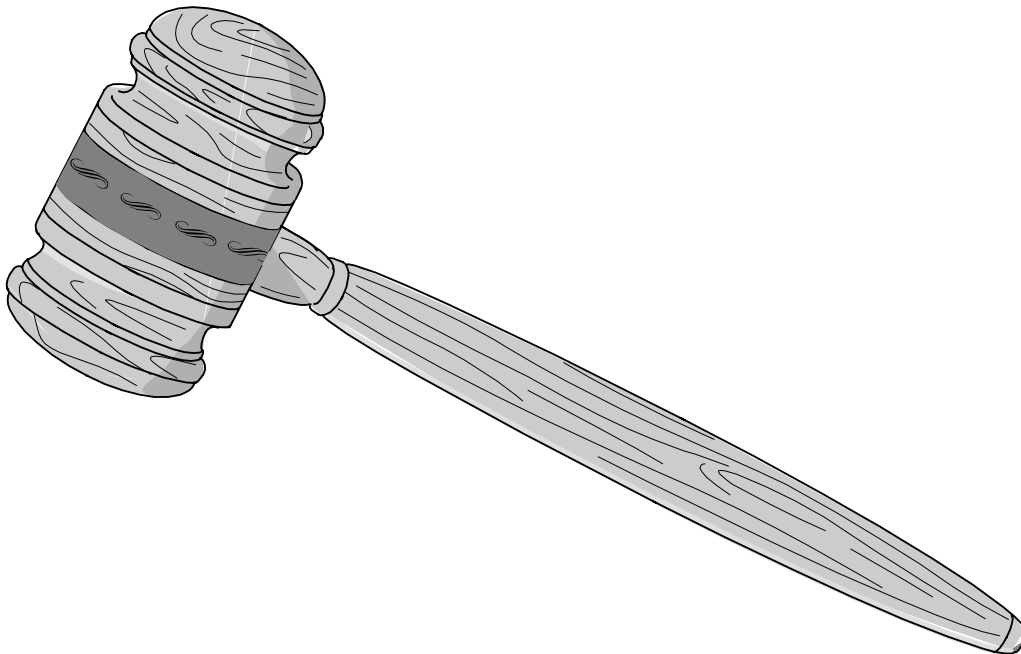
Congress Mission Statement

The National Forensic League is committed to educational development of the individual through the vehicle of Congressional Debate, which promotes leadership and communication skills through rigorous interaction and debate on issues confronting our democracy. These skills will prepare students for learning and leadership throughout their lives.

Core Values

As members of the National Forensic League community, we share a commitment to:

- Promote ethics in research and competition.
- Promote respect for diversity of ideas and of community.
- Promote seriousness of purpose and demeanor.
- Promote empowerment gained through knowledge.
- Promote the tools of effective and ethical leadership.
- Promote active participation in Democratic processes.
- Provide an opportunity for developing higher level thinking skills and critical analysis of issues.
- Develop interaction skills and cooperative decision making skills used in an assembly or in a committee.
- Learn the basic principles of Parliamentary Procedure and its use in a democratic society.



NEW PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING THE DISTRICT STUDENT CONGRESS

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WILL BE COMBINED WITH SEVERAL UNALTERED POLICIES IN THE CURRENT RULES MANUAL. COACHES AND STUDENTS SHOULD REFER TO THE 2006-2007 DISTRICT STUDENT CONGRESS MANUAL TO READ COMPLETE VERSION OF THE RULES.

Qualifying Chambers

Every district committee has the autonomy to conduct the District Congress using one of two options.

Option 1: A Senate and a number of houses (depending on the number of participating students) may be held.

Option 2: A number of preliminary chambers will elect delegates (the number of selected contestants based on chamber size) to a "Super Congress" (a Super Senate and/or a Super House). These super chambers will select delegates to the National Congress in the House and Senate. The Super Session must convene for a minimum of three hours of "on-floor" debate.

Chamber Assignments

- A. All participating schools can choose to enter zero, one, or two students to participate in the District Senate. The request of specific students to be entered in the Senate shall be honored. A minimum of eight schools must participate in the Senate for a District Senate to be held.
- B. When entering students in the District House, schools shall determine the grouping of individual students from their schools, as long as the number of entries in each house is approximately equal (i.e., three houses 3-3-2 or two houses 4-3). Placement of a school's groups into specific chambers shall be done by blind draw, but the tournament director may adjust placement of individual school groupings, so that chambers are approximately equal in size.
- C. Chamber assignments shall be made at registration and are final. At registration, alternates listed on the entry form (or alternates with a letter signed by the school Principal) may be seated in the chamber replacing an absent student.
- D. No changes in the District Congress entry or in those seated in the District Congress may be made once a District Congress chamber has initially convened.

Presiding Officers

- A. Presiding Officers must be chosen from a list of nominees in each chamber. Each chapter may nominate one congressperson in each of their entry groupings to serve as Presiding Officer in their respective chamber as assigned. The first four (4) nominated in each chamber, as determined by chapter's entry date, will audition for Presiding Officer in that chamber. Random chamber placement should not be manipulated to accommodate for Presiding Officers.
- B. A student who presides in an official NFL District or National Congress shall receive speaker credit points for every full hour of presiding. Fractions of an hour are not to be scored.
- C. At an NFL District Congress, presiding officers shall receive not less than four (4) or more than eight (8) speaker credit points for each full hour of presiding but not more than forty (40) points total for a legislative day.
- D. At the NFL National Congress, presiding officers shall receive not less than five (5) or more than nine (9) NFL speaker credit points for each full hour of presiding.
- E. Each full hour of presiding shall be equivalent to one scored speech.

National Qualification Procedures

Reporting National Qualification Procedures - Prior to the opening of the District Congress, the district committee must determine, announce, and post the national tournament selection method(s) to participants, as well as the National Office.

Judging - In a one or two day Congress with no Super Session, two scorers and a parliamentarian must be used. In a Congress holding a Super Session, one scorer (parliamentarian) may be used in prelims, however, two scorers and a parliamentarian must be used in the Super Session.

Creating the Slate of Seven Nominees- At the end of a one-day Congress or at the conclusion of the Super Session, a slate of up to seven nominees must be selected. The District has the autonomy to choose the slate of seven nominees from the following options:

Option A: Judges' Scores Only-Using the Base System take the top seven scoring students at the end of a one day Congress, a two day Congress, or at the end of the Super Session.

Option B: Judges' Scores Only-Take the top seven scoring students by using the cumulative of the top three speech scores (up to 8 speaker credit points per speech) earned by each student throughout a one day Congress or Super Session or the top five speech scores (up to 8 speaker credit points per speech) earned throughout a two day non-Super Session Congress.

(Ties for the slate of seven are broken by a preferential vote of the Parliamentarian.)

Option C: Judges' Nomination Only-Each of the scorers and the parliamentarian are allowed an appropriate amount of nominations to fill the slate of seven nominees. No more than seven nominees are to be placed on the final ballot. To avoid a slate of over seven nominees, the District committee should allow a maximum of two nominations per judge until it is determined how many additional nominations may occur.

Option D: A Combination of Judges' Nomination and Judges' Scores- Each of the scorers and the parliamentarian nominate one or two students to fill the slate of seven nominees. Any remaining vacancies are filled with the top scoring students (of those not nominated) using either the results of the Base System process or the top speech scores (as described under letter B above). No more than seven nominees are to be placed on the final ballot.

(Judges will consider Presiding Officers as viable nominees during the process)

Selecting National Qualifiers-Each district committee has the autonomy to select a method of National qualification from the following options, once a slate of nominees has been prepared by the District Committee and the Congress officials:

Option A: Student Voting Only- Students may select the national qualifiers in every chamber by either preferential ranking of the nominees or through the traditional voting method of dropping the low vote total and re-voting until a majority is achieved. Ties will be broken by the preferential vote of the parliamentarian.

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◆ *Appendix - Council Minutes*

League Administration

Option B: Judge Voting Only- National qualifiers in each chamber may be selected by the results of **ONE** of the following:

1. By taking the final speech scores at the end of the competition (or Super Session) using the Base System.
2. By taking the final speech scores of students using the cumulative of the top three speech scores (up to 8 speaker credit points per speech) earned by each student throughout a one day Congress or Super Session or the top five speech scores (up to 8 speaker credit points per speech) earned by each student during a two day non-Super Session Congress.
3. By a ranking of the nominees (if ranking is done, the scorers/judges must have officiated the entire day session of that Chamber. If using a ranking system, the judges will rank the slate of nominees (from 1 to 7). Ranks of 6 and 7 will be converted to a 5 by the District Committee. The total ranks of the three judges will be added to determine the placement of the finalists. Ties will be broken in the following order: judge's preference of the converted ranks, reciprocals, and then the judges' preference using the actual ranks. The final tie breaker will be the parliamentarian's ranking.

Option C: A Combination of Judge and Student Selection- Judges and students will each select the qualifiers for the National Congress by ONE of the following methods:

1. In the Senate, a Super Senate, or a Super House, the judges may select up to half of the qualifiers (one or two) and the students may select the remaining (one or two) qualifiers (depending on the number of qualifiers allotted based on the number of participating students (House) and the number of schools participating in the Senate (must have a minimum of 8 schools to hold a Senate.)
2. In the House(s) with no Super House, either the judges select the national qualifiers in all House chambers or the students select the national qualifiers in all House chambers (Using Option A or B as the procedure.)

Determining Alternates-Alternates will first be chosen from the original slate of seven in the order of finish using the stipulated protocols. To provide a sufficient number of additional alternates, a second pool of seven candidates (if there are that many remaining in the pool) must be determined by judge score using the Base System process or the cumulative of each student's top three speech scores per day or in the Super Session. Alternate placements from 8th to 14th are determined by the same protocol options used to determine the top 7 places.

Auditing Congress

A. Each District committee shall complete an official form that provides the following data:

1. Name of contestants and schools
2. Number of students that gave at least a minimum of one speech
3. Number of speeches each contestant gave
4. Scorers' (Judges') ratings for each student
5. NFL speaker credit points earned per speech by each student

B. Each district will complete an official form, which provides data on:

1. Students selected for honors
2. Methods of selection
3. Record of Judge Nominations and/or the Results of the Base System that determined the slate of 7 nominees and 8-14 alternates.
4. Record of the actual Preferential Balloting, the Ranking Totals from Elections or the Base System Results (Depending on the method(s) used to determine the Qualifiers and all alternates.