

# **Standing Rules for the Operation of the National Debate Tournament**

(as of January 2021)

## **Rule I: GENERAL REGULATIONS.**

### **A. DATES FOR THE TOURNAMENT.**

The tournament shall be held either the last weekend of March or the first weekend of April; if at all possible, the tournament shall not be held on Easter weekend.

### **B. RESEARCH AT THE TOURNAMENT.**

The National Committee encourages research in conjunction with the tournament. Research must be approved by the National Committee under the following procedures:

1. By February 1 the principal researcher must forward to the Director a request for authorization for research. This request should include:
  - a. a brief description of the nature of the research project;
  - b. a description of the data collection proposal for the National Tournament;
  - c. a statement of the impact (if any) of the project on the operation of the tournament;
  - d. the names of all involved researchers;
  - e. copies of any questionnaires to be administered;
  - f. a statement of plans to debrief and/or distribute results on any human subjects involved.
2. At the next meeting of the National Committee the Director shall present the proposal along with his or her estimation of the impact of the research on the operation of the tournament, and the statement of support or opposition to the project's access to the tournament.
3. A majority vote of the National Committee members present and voting shall be required to approve the project's access to the tournament.

4. The Director shall notify the researcher of the National Committee's action. The research, if approved, shall be conducted as specified in the proposal. All researchers are subject to supervision by the Director during the tournament.

5. The researcher shall place a copy of research results in the National Debate Tournament archives.

### **C. NATIONAL DEBATE TOURNAMENT CONDUCT POLICY.**

The National Debate Tournament is committed to promoting ethical and rational communication behavior as an important part of an activity that maintains a deep respect for freedom of expression. The NDT recognizes that the adversarial and competitive nature of academic debate places participant students, educators, judges, and tournament administrators in the position of having to weigh the merits of competing strategies that may have ethical implications. At the same time, the NDT is an association of professional educators committed to promoting a respectful form of argumentation. In adopting this policy, the NDT recognizes that behaviors which belittle, degrade, demean, or otherwise dehumanize others are not in the best interests of the activity because they interfere with the goals of education and personal growth. All NDT participants should recognize the rights of others and communicate with respect for opponents, colleagues, critics, tournament hosts, and audience members. Communication which engenders ill-will and disrespect for forensics ultimately reduces the utility of forensics for all who participate in it and should, therefore, be avoided.

This Policy has been prepared and adopted by the National Debate Tournament Board of Trustees and the National Debate Tournament Committee, and will be in effect for the 2014 and subsequent National Debate Tournaments.

All debaters, coaches, judges, staff, and all other individuals present at the National Debate Tournament, or participating in activities associated with the NDT, in any capacity whatsoever, are expected to know and are required to abide by this Policy. For the purposes of this Policy, the term "activities associated with the NDT" includes the National Debate Tournament; the various District qualification tournaments; other aspects of the qualification process (for example, the preparation, submission, and evaluation of at-large bids); any official tournament functions (for example, awards ceremonies, receptions, and the like); and any other activities while present at the NDT or District qualification tournaments. NDT participants should also adhere to the Charter of the NDT, the Standing Rules for the Operation of the NDT, the American Forensics Association Code of Ethics, the policies and requirements of their own educational institutions, and local, state and federal laws, and avoid discrimination or harassment based on any basis prohibited or regulated by law or applicable policies.

Coaches and program directors are encouraged to discuss the Policy with other participants prior to the NDT, and are expected to take any reasonable and necessary actions to ensure compliance by participants who are affiliated with their respective schools. By participating in the NDT or in activities associated

with the NDT, each individual shall be deemed to have agreed to comport her or himself in accordance with this Conduct Policy.

1. *Policy.* All persons participating in the National Debate Tournament, or in any activity associated with the NDT, shall at all times and in all circumstances conduct themselves with respect for all other participants, during debate rounds and at all other times.

No participant shall suffer or cause discrimination or harassment during the course of, or in connection with, the NDT on the basis of any protected characteristic. Protected characteristics include age, color, religion, disability, race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran or reserve status, or any other basis prohibited by any applicable law, regulation, or ordinance.

Specific threats of violence whether or not motivated in whole or in part by any protected characteristic, have no place whatsoever in academic debate. Bullying and intimidation, whether or not motivated in whole or in part by any protected characteristic, has no place whatsoever in academic debate.

## 2. *Discussion, Definitions, and Procedures*

a. *Background:* It is the nature of the academic debate community to provide a forum for the robust expression, criticism and discussion of, and engagement in, the widest range of opinions. This does not provide a license for bigotry in the form of demeaning, discriminatory speech actions and the NDT does not tolerate harassment or threats of violence. Any member of this community who is threatened by discrimination or harassment is liable to be harmed in mind, body or performance and is denied the guarantee of an equal opportunity to work, learn, and grow inherent in the above principles. In the debate community, the presentation of a reasoned or evidenced claim during the course of argument about a societal group may unavoidably offend a member of that group. Reasoned and responsible argument of this type is analytically distinct from a gratuitous, denigrating claim about, or addressed to, an individual or group made with the purpose or intent of degrading, demeaning, or otherwise dehumanizing the target. In context, the former may be a legitimate part of bona fide academic behavior. The latter, which is intended to demean, degrade, or victimize in a discriminatory manner, is not. Harassment is a form of discrimination and consists of verbal or physical conduct imposed on the basis of a protected characteristic, which has the effect of denying or limiting one's right to participate in the activity, or creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment that places the victim in an untenable situation or diminishes the victim's opportunity to participate fairly. Discrimination or harassment by one person against another is particularly abhorrent when the first person is in a position

of power with respect to the second. At the same time, it should be understood that false accusations, whether malicious or fanciful, have serious far-reaching effects. A deliberate false accusation will be regarded as a very serious matter, as will threats of retaliation by the accused against individuals who have filed complaints of discrimination or harassment. Both the making of a deliberate false accusation and any form of retaliation constitute violations of this Policy.

Virtually all colleges and their sponsored activities are subject to federal law prohibiting discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex (Title IX of the Education Act Amendments of 1972), color, race, national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act), and other protected classifications. Other federal, state, and local laws and ordinances impose similar requirements on activities occurring in schools or other places of public accommodation.

The American Forensics Association regulations provide that “[a]ll tournaments should operate in an environment free of any behavior (whether verbal or nonverbal) that results in the harassment of any participant (whether student, coach or judge.)” “All participants in an AFA sponsored event shall recognize the rights of others and communicate with respect for opponents, colleagues, critics, tournament hosts and audience members. Behaviors by any tournament participants occurring at an AFA sponsored event that violate the community standard of a healthy educational environment shall be deemed” unprofessional conduct and subject to sanctions.

This Policy supplements, and does not supplant, any other applicable policy. It is incumbent upon the participants in the NDT to ensure full and enthusiastic compliance with the anti-discrimination and anti-harassment goals of these provisions, as well as any requirements imposed by their individual colleges or universities.

This Policy is not intended to create any legal right, or to create any cause of action in favor or against any person. This Policy does not attempt to define any term or conduct for purposes of any law, but rather only for the purposes of the Policy itself. This is an internal policy of the National Debate Tournament.

b. For purposes of this policy, the term “harassment” means any act or course of conduct that:

- (1) is predicated on or derogatory of a protected classification, such as sex, race, or national origin;

(2) is offensive to the recipient of the conduct, and would be offensive to a reasonable person in the same situation or circumstances as the recipient of the conduct;

(3) is severe in nature or pervasive in extent, or both, under the circumstances, and

(4) interferes materially with an individual's participation in the NDT or any associated activity, or creates an environment that is intimidating or hostile, or which substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the NDT or the rights of any person to participate in or benefit from the activities of the NDT.

(5) Such conduct may include threats; gestures; making remarks which are by common usage lewd, obscene, or may expose a person to hatred; or any other conduct which is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a person's ability to participate in, or benefit from, the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the NDT.

(6) Such conduct also includes any act of actual or threatened *quid pro quo* harassment, i.e., the granting of promising of favorable treatment (or withholding negative treatment) based on acquiescence to, or the withholding of a complaint about, unwelcome conduct, usually based on sex.

3. In formulating a policy on discrimination and harassment, the NDT hopes to eliminate a rather narrow range of behaviors and actions from this activity. But we cannot guarantee that the argumentative environment will be free from anxiety for all members of the community all of the time. Often, reasoned arguments which are pertinent to the debate are unsettling and disturbing.

The experience of making, meeting, or being exposed to such arguments can be both painful and highly educational. The simple fact that a situation is uncomfortable does not automatically make it discriminatory or harassing. Teachers and students should be able to take controversial positions without fear, in accordance with the principles of academic freedom and ethical, rational discourse, informed by a commitment to simple civility.

4. Violence and threats of violence are absolutely prohibited. A “threat of violence” is either an explicit threat of violence, or any action, oral or physical, that creates in the target or another observer a reasonable perception that violence is, or may be, imminent or intended. Participants must not engage in behavior that threatens the safety, security, or functioning of the NDT; the safety and security of other participants, or the safety and security of others. Orderly conduct is required of all participants at any activity associated with the NDT.

a. Participants, either individually or as a group, shall neither cause violence nor threaten violence. No participant shall commit any assault, battery, unwelcome body contact or touching, or the impeding or blocking of safe movement.

b. This policy includes the prohibition of bullying. “Bullying” includes physical intimidation, taunting, name-calling, or insults; or the making of false or derogatory statements about another.

5. Coaches, program directors, judges, and other individuals who may be (or who may reasonably be perceived to be) in a position to exert power or undue influence over other participants, and particularly over student-debaters, should be particularly aware of their responsibilities to avoid harassment or discriminatory actions.

a. Judges, researchers, and assistants, like coaches and program directors, should consider themselves to be educators who will lead by deed as well as by word.

b. Coaches, program directors, judges, researchers and assistants should scrupulously avoid using their position, or their perceived position, as leverage either to engage in inappropriate exclusion of individuals based on a protected classification (for example, excluding individuals from activities based on national origin) or to engage in inappropriate relationships.

c. Coaches, program directors, judges, researchers and assistants must ensure their conduct complies with this Policy during all facets of the NDT, including situations that may generate inherent tension, such as during a judge’s explanation of her or his reason for decision in a particular round.

6. Procedures:

a. The Chair of the NDT Committee shall appoint a Committee, which shall be responsible for enforcement of this policy. At least one member of the Committee shall be a member of the NDT Board of Trustees. The Committee shall consist of not fewer than five, nor more than seven individuals. In appointing members of the committee, the Chair of the NDT Committee shall take into consideration such factors as breadth of experience in the activity; maturity of judgment; diversity with respect to demographic factors; representation of large, small, public, and private institutions; any particular expertise required, and other factors the Chair shall deem appropriate. Membership on the NDT Committee or on the NDT Board of Trustees, or affiliation with a team competing at any given NDT, shall not be a prerequisite for membership on the Committee. The composition of the Committee shall be public, and the Chair of the NDT Committee may establish such procedures as she or he deems useful in determining the individuals to appoint. The Chair may appoint substitute members if a particular allegation cannot be fairly adjudicated by one or more of the members of the Committee.

b. Any individual who seeks to make a complaint of harassment or discrimination at or in connection with the National Debate Tournament, on their own behalf or on behalf of another, should immediately contact a member of the Committee or the Committee's designee. The Committee or its designee(s) shall promptly conduct an investigation of the matter, with due regard for the privacy of all parties and witnesses to the greatest extent possible consistent with adequate investigation. However, the nature of the conduct may make it impossible to conduct an investigation without apprising witnesses, as well as the accused, of the nature of the accusations. The Committee shall then take such action as it deems appropriate under the circumstances, including the imposition of sanctions. Sanctions may be imposed by majority vote of the members of the Committee present at the tournament, or under such other strictures as the Committee itself shall adopt. If the Committee or its designee determines that interim action is immediately necessary, prior to completing an investigation and due to the nature of the allegations, the Committee or its designee may immediately take such actions. In the rare case of a complaint that appears to raise the possibility of an intentional violation of a criminal law, the Committee or its designee may report those allegations to appropriate authorities.

c. The nature of sanctions the Committee may impose will necessarily vary, based on the type of conduct found to have occurred as well as the role of the individual who has committed the conduct. For example, a sanction against a debater who has engaged in harassment may involve some competitive consequence, whereas an assistant team researcher's violation of the Policy may or may not appropriately be imputed to the team, and in some circumstances may not properly implicate a competitive consequence. The Committee may impose some or all of the following sanctions, based on a finding that this Policy has been violated, taking into account the seriousness of the offense, the nature of the injury caused (if any); the context in which the offense occurred; any differential in position between the offender and the complaining person; and all other circumstances the Enforcement Committee may find to be appropriate:



- (1) A confidential letter of admonition or censure to the offender (usually appropriate only in the case of a de minimis first offense);
- (2) A letter of admonition or censure to the offender, also provided to the director of the debate program with which the offender is associated;
- (3) A letter of admonition or censure to the offender, also provided to the administration of the college or university with which the offender is associated;
- (4) The making of a formal complaint to the appropriate governing board of the offender's college or university, such as the university Title IX Coordinator or Honor Council;
- (5) Limitation of or prohibition on the offender's attendance at the remainder of the current NDT, or at future National Debate Tournaments;
- (6) Competitive sanctions at the current NDT, including reduction or elimination of speaker points; losses of ballots or rounds; preclusion from elimination rounds; preclusion from speaker award recognition, or such other competitive consequences as the Committee deems appropriate in the circumstances.

The Committee may take into consideration whether the proscribed conduct was a first offense or a repeat offense. A record of sanctions, including confidential admonition and censure, shall be kept. The Committee shall produce a publically-available written decision (save for confidential admonitions or censure) in the original case and for appeals to help ensure that a consistent set of principles is applied to cases.

d. A decision of the Committee (or its designee) imposing, or declining to impose, sanctions, may be appealed to the Appeals Committee of the NDT. The Appeals Committee or the NDT Committee may provide for the manner in which such appeals may be decided, including delegation of authority for deciding appeals (save that such authority may not be delegated to the Committee or any member thereof), and including the number of members of such committee who shall constitute a sufficient quorum for action on an appeal. A participant desiring to file a complaint should do so as soon as practicable. Complaints regarding tournament behavior will generally not be entertained

unless made within 30 days of the end of the tournament. Complaints regarding post-tournament behavior related to or arising out of the NDT will generally not be entertained unless made within 30 days of the behavior complained of.

e. The NDT emphasizes that each and every individual participating in the NDT, or in any event associated with the NDT, is deemed to have agreed to this Policy. Given that predicate, each individual participating in the NDT, or in any activity associated with the NDT, agrees that any action taken in good faith by the NDT Board of Trustees, the NDT Committee, the Committee or any designee of the Committee, any witness or participant in any investigation, any complaining party, or any member, employee, attorney, agent, or designee of any of those bodies or persons, pursuant to this Policy, shall not give rise to any claim or cause of action whatsoever, of any kind, against any person, including specifically but not exclusively any claim for defamation, libel, or slander.

7. No person shall suffer any retaliation, in any form, by any person for making a good faith complaint under this Policy, whether or not the complaint is ultimately determined to be founded. Any retaliation, by any person or in any form, for the making of a good faith complaint under this policy is, itself, a violation of the Policy and subject to sanctions.

8. For an accommodation request based on an Incident that occurred prior to the tournament, a letter requesting accommodation from a Title IX Coordinator of the complainant's institution of higher education, briefly describing the incident to the extent permissible and practicable, must be received by the Tournament Director not later than 5 days before the tournament. If an incident requiring TIX accommodation occurs after the ability to reasonably submit a request 5 days prior to the tournament it may be presented at registration. The Tournament Director has discretion to consider and to determine whether to make accommodations based on that letter, such as keeping parties separated in common spaces and preventing parties from debating in preliminary debates. No accommodation will change or affect elimination debate scheduling. If any accommodation is adopted, both parties will be informed by the Tournament Director. [Adopted in Austin 2-3-2018]

#### **D. ARCHIVES.**

1. The University of Utah Library shall be the official archivist of the National Debate Tournament.
  
2. Non-financial agreements with the archivist shall be established and altered with the agreement of a simple majority of members present and voting at the National Committee meeting.
  
3. Free access to the archives for research shall be guaranteed by the archivist.



## **Rule II: PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATION. In compliance with Article VI, Sections E and F of the NDT Charter:**

### **A. GENERAL REGULATIONS. [1.g Revised, April 2020]**

1. Schools who have an institutional membership in the AFA, or whose director has an individual membership in the AFA, and who are subscribers to the NDT may qualify up to three teams of two student-debaters for participation in the National Tournament through three selection processes: First Round At-Large selection, District Qualification and Second Round At-Large selection. A maximum of seventy-eight (78) teams shall qualify for participation in the National Debate Tournament as follows: sixteen (16) through the First Round At-Large selection, forty-six (46) teams through the District process, and the remaining teams through the Second Round At-Large process. A maximum of six subscribing schools may qualify a third team of two student-debaters for participation in the National Tournament through Second Round At-Large selection: these teams must follow the current procedures for selection, and must meet the 50% or greater preliminary win-loss requirement for Second Round At-Large Bids. However, notwithstanding the foregoing

- a. Any student in compliance with the eligibility definitions of the AFA Debate Program and Debate Tournament Standards is eligible to represent his or her school, except that no student who has previously served as a judge at the NDT shall be eligible to participate as a debater.
- b. A team is composed of two eligible debaters from a single subscribing institution. Any team of students from a subscribing institution who qualify for the NDT and who are restricted from attending the tournament by state or municipal travel restrictions shall be allowed to attend as an unaffiliated team, barring any objections from their subscribing institution. [Adopted 3-23-2017 in force for the 2018 NDT]
- c. The composition of any team qualifying for the National Debate Tournament must remain intact. If one member should, for any reason, be unable to fulfill the commitment, the subscriber loses its invitation for that team.
- d. A debater may qualify for and attend the NDT a maximum of four times.
- e. For the purpose of determining eligibility to participate at the National Debate Tournament, the number of time blocks in which a student has competed will include all intercollegiate debate competition. The counting of years of eligibility shall begin in the fall of 1996.
- f. In addition to AFA eligibility standards, participation in any debate tournament in more than ten semesters renders a debater ineligible to attend the NDT.
- g. To be an eligible debater for the National Debate Tournament, a student must provide, by February 8th to the NDT committee chair, an official document from appropriate university officials verifying that the student is registered as an undergraduate, degree-seeking student, and is in good standing at the school for which the student is participating. The document should be dated any date starting January 21 through

February 8 immediately preceding the NDT in which the student wishes to participate. The degree-seeking requirement does not apply to any student enrolled in a junior college or a community college. The Chair of the NDT Committee shall promptly notify the applying program director of any application which does not meet the above criteria. The program director may then appeal the eligibility of the debaters by contacting, and submitting all relevant documentation to, the NDT Committee Chair not later than one week from the date of notification. The appeal will then be forwarded to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee may conduct the appeal by means of telephone calls, email or conference calls. The Appeals Committee may grant an exemption when the student's school provides written documentation explaining why a student may be officially enrolled but may not be in good standing, for example, if the university/college defines "in good standing" by criteria other than satisfactory academic performance.

h. Within two weeks of the conclusion of the tournament each year, all students who received one of the top ten speaker awards or who participated in the quarterfinal round of the tournament shall submit an official document similar to that specified in rule "g" above, attesting to their enrollment in good standing as of the date the tournament concluded. The NDT Chair shall promptly report to the membership the results of the verification process. Violations of the duty to verify eligibility may be subject to review and sanction by the NDT governing bodies.

i. No school which has refused or neglected to pay any fees or assessments associated with past national debate tournaments shall be allowed to register teams for the tournament, and no individual who has refused or neglected to pay fees or assessments associated with past tournaments will be allowed to attend or serve as a judge at the NDT.

j. A medical waiver request to the Subcommittee on Appeals for one additional semester or year of eligibility may be requested BY November 1 immediately prior to the next National Debate Tournament for which the student is attempting to qualify if: (1) a student has not competed previously in the NDT in more than 3 years, and (2) if the student did not compete in an intercollegiate tournament past the sixtieth percent (60%) census point of the Fall Semester or First Quarter, or no later than Feb 8<sup>th</sup> in the Spring Semester or respective quarter, for a period of enrollment in their undergraduate career, and (3) the student transcript indicates that the period of enrollment either does not academically count for their undergraduate career or was retroactively withdrawn for medical reasons approved by their institution. The student will waive any remaining eligibility to qualify to the National Debate Tournament after the next time the student qualifies for and attends the National Debate Tournament.

1. This appeal requires both Academic Documentation and Medical Documentation to be evaluated.

2. Academic Documentation requires a minimum of a student's official college transcript with an indication of a "Leave of Absence" (also known as "Total Withdrawal", "Matriculation of Maintenance", or other documented institutional term for non-continuous enrollment within the institution) indicated for the semester or year that is the period of enrollment for the basis of the Appeal. The student may

supplement this documentation by providing a copy of their original LOA request or approval within their institution to clarify transcript notations, which may include institutional forms, letters, or electronic communications. Supplemental documentation must be clearly dated and no later than the sixtieth percent (60%) census point of the Fall Semester or First Quarter; or no later than Feb 8<sup>th</sup> in the Spring Semester or respective period of enrollment such as 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter. The total number of days of Leave of Absence or approved non-matriculation/enrollment documented in the transcript, request, or approval may not exceed 180 days.

3. Medical Documentation requires either a copy of the original medical documentation submitted for the Leave of Absence AND the original institutional communication approving this documentation for leave during the period of enrollment, OR the student may submit original medical documentation from during the period of enrollment the Leave of Absence took place AND a current institutional letter indicating the Leave of Absence was approved.

4. A student requesting a medical waiver cannot have been enrolled in any other institution of higher education during the period of Leave of Absence or non-matriculation identified in their appeal.

2. Team eligibility: Hybrid Exception Waiver: An intra-district hybrid team composed of two debaters from two different schools may petition the NDT Committee Chair for a waiver from the Appeals Committee of Standing Rule II.A.1.(b) to participate in District Qualification for the NDT if:

a. Two-thirds of the member schools of the District in question vote to approve participation of the team in question, AND

b. The hybrid team meets all of the following criteria:

(1) The individual hybrid team has 24 preliminary rounds of varsity or open collegiate competition TOGETHER on the topic over 4 tournaments with at least 6 teams from 4 different schools.

(2) The schools represented by the individual debaters historically and currently operate a joint program demonstrated by, but not limited to, a shared budget, coaching staff, travel, and meetings/practices.

(3) The schools for the debaters are traditionally represented as the same "program" for the purposes of competition, either by competing under one school name or consistent representation as the hybrid, unless prevented from doing so by individual tournament registration or tabulation procedures.

(4) The ability for at least one program of the two schools represented to participate in intercollegiate competitive debate would be jeopardized without the combination of resources, documented by either the lack of an official coaching/director position within the educational institution, a program budget of less than \$3000 excluding coaching/judging compensation, or a lack of an established/recognized debate program in either a department or student organization.

(5) One student in the hybrid team is the ONLY Open collegiate debater from their college.

(6) A hybrid team provides evidence of substantial program development efforts at one or both of the team member's home institutions.

c. The submission to the NDT Committee Chair must be made by the January 23 immediately preceding the NDT in which the team wishes to participate, and will be forwarded by the Committee Chair to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will respond within one week of the submission of the request for the waiver.

B. These rules do not overrule any other eligibility requirements in number of rounds or tournaments attended for determining bids. Districts may make additional considerations or constraints on the participation of hybrids at their qualifier tournaments. The validity of any hybrid team qualifying for the NDT may be challenged through the normal petition process with the Appeals Subcommittee of the NDT as outlined in the Standing Rules of the NDT Committee, Section IV (Rules of Procedure) if it can be substantiated that such a partnership is in violation of the above criteria. Otherwise, a team granted such a waiver is considered eligible to compete in the NDT if they qualify through the District Qualification process and will count towards the total number of teams in the District for purposes of Bid Allocation.

C. Intra-district schools in such a hybrid must BOTH have either an institutional membership in the AFA or have a director who has an individual membership in the AFA and must pay NDT dues for BOTH schools. (This is not a JOINT membership). The qualification of such a hybrid teams would count against the total number of qualifying teams for BOTH schools.

D. Schools may only petition for this exemption a maximum of 5 times. Schools may no longer petition for the waiver after qualifying for the NDT through this process

3. Should teams withdraw or become ineligible for the tournament after their qualification:

a. their bid will go to the highest rated team in the Second Round At-Large selection not having qualified.

b. if procedure a fails to provide a team the bid will go to the next highest rated team in the Second Round At-Large selection not having qualified.

c. if procedures (a) or (b) fail to provide a team the tournament Director is authorized to designate a team.

4. Should a debater or a team be unable to participate in any debate at the National Debate Tournament, the team shall forfeit the round and receive zero points.

**B. DISTRICT QUALIFICATION. [1b. Revised for 20-21 season, December 2020, 1.b Revised to 4/four preliminary rounds, November 2019]**

1. The 46 district bids will be allocated to districts according to a proportional system:

a. Each district will receive the same percentage of the total pool of bids (number of slots available divided by the number of eligible teams), but the actual number of bids each district receives will depend on the number of eligible teams.

b. Eligible teams: To submit for the bid allocation process, a team must have paid their NDT subscription fee and have either (1) a minimum of 18 intercollegiate preliminary rounds on the fall CEDA topic or its NDT topic parallel either both as individuals or as a team of varsity or open debate in at least three tournaments, each consisting of a minimum of 4 preliminary rounds with at least 6 teams from at least four different schools in varsity or open division, or (2) one member of the team with a minimum of 32 intercollegiate preliminary rounds on the fall CEDA topic or its NDT topic parallel in at least four tournaments, each consisting of a minimum of four preliminary rounds, with at least six teams from at least four different schools in varsity or open division (i.e., if one member of the team has at least 32 rounds satisfying the above requirements, no minimum number of rounds is required of the partner in order for the team to be eligible for the bid allocation process). For the 2020-2021 season, the required minimum number of rounds for team members and/or individuals is reduced to 12 (at a minimum of two tournaments) and to 24 (at a minimum of three tournaments) if satisfied by one member of the team.

(1) These bids must be received by the district chair within one week of the first round bid submission deadline.

(2) The number of eligible teams from each school shall be no greater than the number of teams that school can qualify through the district process.

(3) The names of all submitting teams from each district will immediately be forwarded by the district chair to the chair of the bid allocation committee.

(4) The chair of the bid allocation committee will enter any teams submitted for a First Round At-Large bid but not receiving a First Round At-Large bid into the pool of eligible teams.

(5) Teams awarded First Round At-Large bids will not be counted for purposes of allocating district bids.

c. The number of bids each district receives will be determined by dividing the number of district bids by the overall number of eligible teams and then applying that percentage to the number of eligible teams in each district (e.g., if 75 eligible teams applied for district



bids, or applied for but did not receive a First Round At-Large bid, then 46/75 or 61.33% of the teams in each district would receive bids). When the number assigned to a district is more than a whole number (e.g., 6.5), the district would only be assured of the whole number (e.g., 6 bids).

d. If the total number of whole numbers allotted is less than 46, the allocation committee will assign additional bids to those districts with the highest fraction until the 46 team limit is reached.

e. If there is a tie districts that would exceed the 46 bid limit, extra bids will be allocated from the second round pool.

f. Within four days after the First Round At-Large bids are announced the bid allocation committee will assign bids among the districts.

2. Districts will have the option of holding a tournament, of ranking teams, or of selecting an alternative procedure to fill the district bids. Districts must make a binding decision prior to the bid allocation submission date as to the method of qualifying teams.

3. If a district makes a good faith attempt (evidence of planning or economic commitments) to host a tournament, but cancels the tournament because weather would make travel unsafe, that district shall not lose allocated bids due to this rule. In this event, the District Chair must notify the Bid Allocation Committee, who will confirm that the situation appears to be a good faith cancellation. The decision of the Bid Allocation committee is final, but must be publicized to the broader community. If a member of the Bid Allocation committee is from the district, the NDT chair will appoint a replacement member for any deliberations.

4. Any slots not filled by such an alternate procedure will be shifted to the Second Round At-Large pool. A tournament is defined as actual debate competition in which judges award wins and losses.

5. By 12:00 noon ET on the Saturday of their district qualifying weekend, each District Chair shall report to the Bid Allocation Chair the actual number of debate teams competing for bids to the NDT. The Bid Allocation Chair shall calculate a final allocation of the 46 District Bids upon receipt of the actual number of competing teams from all districts. The Bid Allocation Chair shall report the final allocation of the bids to each District Chair by 5:00 p.m. ET on the Saturday of the second qualifying weekend. In the event that all districts conduct their qualifying process on the first qualifying weekend, notification of the final allocation shall take place by 5:00 p.m. ET on the Saturday of that weekend.

### **C. At-Large Qualification. [(2.c.2 Revised, November 2019)]**

1. The following regulations govern submission of at-large applications:

a. The Director shall provide each subscribing school appropriate instructions by January 15 of each year.

b. Those subscribing schools wishing to nominate their teams for At-Large consideration must submit copies of their completed electronic Official NDT At-Large Application (without covering letters or other supplementary materials) no later than a February date for First Round At-Large and a March date for Second Round At-Large. The specific dates will be established each year by the National Committee. Applications must be received by this date and sent to the Chair of the National Committee in accordance with

instructions. Schools submitting at-large applications must have paid their NDT subscription fee prior to submitting their application for the bid to be considered.

c. For reporting tournaments where two judges are used in preliminary rounds, the number of ballots won shall be divided by two and represented as a win-loss total.

2. The following regulations govern awarding of At-Large bids:

a. Selection of At-Large participants shall be determined by the voting membership of the National Committee with the exception of the NDT Tournament Director. National Committee members shall rank for At-Large selection a number of teams (excluding their own teams containing a student they have previously coached) double the number of awardable bids for the First Round At-Large and triple the number for Second Round At-Large. All other teams shall be given the next rank. On an agreed date all voting members of the Committee will telephone the NDT Tournament Director and inform him or her of their rankings.

b. The NDT Tournament Director will sum each team's total after dropping high and low ranks (using the average of all other ranks for a member's own team) and award the bids to the lowest ranked teams. If a tie results among the top positions (i.e., the last bid in the given At-Large round), the NDT Tournament Director shall drop an additional high and low ranks for the teams involved down to eight total ranks. If a tie still exists the NDT Tournament Director shall re-rank the teams involved in the tie based on the original ranked relationships of each committee member (except the member(s) with teams involved). If a tie still exists, then each member (except with teams involved) shall be telephoned and given the opportunity to re-rank the tied teams, after re-evaluating the respective credentials.

c. Second Round At-Large process.

(1) Any teams not selected for participation in the NDT through the First Round At-Large or district processes may apply for a Second Round At-Large bid.

(2) All teams selected through the Second Round At-Large process must have a 50% or greater preliminary round win-loss record in rounds at open-invitation tournaments, or the combination of open-invitation tournaments and NDT district-qualification tournaments, on the fall CEDA topic or its NDT topic parallel immediately prior to the District tournament or at the time of submission for second round bids. The team's record for every tournament attended prior to submission must be reported on the application form.

(3) Teams submitting Second Round At-Large applications may include a paragraph of explanation concerning extenuating circumstances.

(4) Unless a school has received two bids in the First Round At-Large process, participation in the district process shall be a prerequisite for receipt of a Second Round At-Large selection. Participation in the district process is defined as:

a. both members of a team debating in at least 50% of the preliminary rounds at a tournament component;

b. in districts that allow a limited-number of teams from each school participating in the tournament component, submission to rankings as part of the district process that determines district-eligible teams and being ranked as ineligible;

c. receiving one of the allocated district bid slots as determined by the district.

(5) If a school has not qualified two teams through a First Round At-Large or district process, it shall not be eligible to qualify a third team through the Second Round At-Large process unless the team(s) that participated in the district process shall also have qualified through the Second Round At-Large process.

(6) The next two lower teams that do not qualify for Second Round At-Large bids will be designated as first and second alternate.

(7) Should there be an odd number of teams selected through the three qualification processes, the first alternate (or the second, should the first be unable to attend), will be allowed to participate at the National Debate Tournament. Should there be no additional alternate teams, the tournament director will make arrangements to assure an even number of teams.

(8) If the tournament host school has not qualified a team to the National Debate Tournament at the conclusion of the second round bid process, the director of the host school may opt to enter one team from their institution to the total number of teams already qualified. This team will have to have competed in the district process for their host institution. In this case, the tournament host should notify the tournament director within two days after the release of the second rounds. To even out the number of teams, the tournament director will add the next highest second round bid team to the tournament. The total number of teams competing will be 80. This amendment supersedes any other language limiting the tournament to 78 teams.

3. The following regulations govern announcement of At-Large bids:

a. All schools submitting At-Large applications in either round shall be notified immediately after completion of the selection process concerning their own acceptance or rejection and the names of all schools and their teams who were selected.

b. Information concerning the voting of the Committee on At-Large bids shall be disseminated by the Director to all involved parties following the National Tournament.

4. Subscriber appeals for exceptions to any of the At-Large regulations shall follow the procedures of Standing Rule VII.C.1.

# **RULE III. NATIONAL TOURNAMENT**

## **JUDGES.**

### **A. Qualifications. [5 & 7 Revised, December 20]**

To be eligible to judge at the NDT a judge must:

1. Hold a baccalaureate degree, or have no eligibility for future NDTs, or waive such eligibility, and
2. Have judged at least 12 rounds on the current topic, and
3. Not have competed on the current topic, and
4. Have an appropriately published judge philosophy, and
5. Confirm their conflicts of interests by email to the tournament director, and
6. Be available for assignment to any and all debates through the octafinal round, at the discretion of the Director, plus one debate beyond the elimination of the school for which the person is judging.
7. For the 2020-2021 season, the required minimum number of rounds judged on the current topic is reduced to 9.

### **B. Judging Obligations of Participating Institutions**

1. Schools must provide 13 rounds of eligible judging for each team entered. The school must provide the Director with the names of the persons who will fulfill this commitment seven (7) days prior to the start of the tournament. Any school failing to meet this deadline will be fined \$100 per day. Failure to provide a complete list, or the failure of the designated persons to appear and fulfill the commitment, shall result in sanctions that can include: monetary fines up to \$500 per round missed or forfeited by removal, replacement of rounds obligated by other members of the coaching/judging staff from the school(s) for which the judge is fulfilling obligation, removal from the tournament for the current year and up to three years, and/or disqualification of the team or teams whose obligations are unfulfilled. These sanctions will be determined by the Director of the National Debate Tournament. Schools may arrange to allocate their obligation among any judge in the pool as they see fit, except that all judges must be committed for at least four preliminary rounds.
2. In the event the Director shall declare that failure of a judge to be available to fulfill a commitment is due to an emergency, medical or otherwise, the Director shall assess a fee of \$100 per round of commitment not covered, and the team or teams shall not be disqualified. The Director shall have the discretion to expend funds so collected to procure available rounds of judging from judge persons already in the pool.

## **Rule IV: GENERAL TOURNAMENT**

### **PROCEDURES.**

#### **A. Timing Regulations. [3 Added, December 20]**

1. Speech format. The following speaking format shall be employed in all debates:

- Up to 9 minute first affirmative constructive
- Up to 3 minute either negative speaker cross-examines first affirmative
- Up to 9 minute first negative constructive
- Up to 3 minute either affirmative speaker cross-examines first negative
- Up to 9 minute second affirmative constructive
- Up to 3 minute other negative speaker cross-examines second affirmative
- Up to 9 minute second negative constructive
- Up to 3 minute other affirmative speaker cross-examines second negative
- Up to 6 minute first negative rebuttal by a negative speaker
- Up to 6 minute rebuttal by an affirmative speaker
- Up to 6 minute second negative rebuttal by other negative speaker
- Up to 6 minute rebuttal by other affirmative speaker

2. Preparation Time. Each team shall have a cumulative total of ten minutes of preparation time in a round. This time includes: amount of time elapsed between the announced time for starting the round (see Standing Rule IV.C) and when the team is ready to debate, organizational time, and any other time for preparation. Upon exhaustion of the allotted preparation time, any additional preparation time shall be deducted from subsequent speeches.

3. Tech Time – If debates occur utilizing an online platform, each team shall be allotted up to fifteen total minutes of “Tech Time”. This time is exclusively for resolving uniquely online tech-related problems (e.g. internet connection, audio/video issues). Tech time should not be used as additional standard prep time. If the time elapses before the team can resolve the issue within the official tournament platform, they will forfeit the debate. In the event a speech needs to be redelivered entirely or in part, the time for that should count as tech time for the team experiencing the problem, if their tech time runs out while giving the speech, the remaining time should be deducted from prep time.

#### **B. Announcement of Round Pairings. [Revised, December 20]**

The Tournament Director shall orally announce the pairings before each round. Written copies of the pairings shall be provided as soon as possible.

If debates occur utilizing an online platform, the Tournament Director should orally announce the pairings for the first preliminary round and the last preliminary round. In all instances, electronic pairings should be provided as soon as possible.

### **C. Beginning Rounds. [3 & 4 Added, December 20]**

1. At the announcement of pairings, the Director shall announce a designated starting time for the round.
2. At the designated time, the timekeeper will begin compiling and announcing alternative use time for either or both teams not in place and prepared to debate the round.

3. If debates occur utilizing an online platform, the Tournament Director should designate a check-in time (shortly after pairing) and report time (shortly before the start time) by which competitors and judges need to check-in and report to their online room. Judges are potentially subject to failure to appear fines (Rule III.B.1) if they do not appear at those times.

4. If debates occur utilizing an online platform, at the designated starting time, the timekeeper will begin compiling and announcing alternative use time for either or both teams not in place and prepared to debate the round in the official tournament platform.

### **D. Decision Time for Preliminary Rounds. [3 Added, December 20]**

1. Judges' decisions, which must be on the prescribed ballot form and must specify either the affirmative or the negative as the sole winner of the debate, must be turned in to the Director by 2 hours and 45 minutes after the official starting time for each preliminary round of debate.
2. After the expired time, the Tournament Director will notify the judge that a coin toss will determine the outcome of the round. The coin toss will become the permanent result of the debate for that judge.

3. If debates occur utilizing an online platform, the Tournament Director has the discretion to extend decision time in the event that Tech Time is utilized by any of the debaters or if a judge has a tech issue in a given debate. In the event that a team invokes tech time, or a judge has tech difficulties, the judge or other members of the panel should communicate the issue to the tab room immediately in order to minimize delays in the tournament schedule.

### **E. Elimination Round Procedures.**

In addition to the provisions of sections A, B and C, the following apply to elimination rounds.

1. Each judge in an elimination round shall render a decision on the prescribed ballot form which shall specify either the affirmative or the negative as the sole winner of the debate.
2. Except for the final round, results of each elimination round shall be announced in the room in which the debate has taken place immediately upon the collection of ballots by a chair designated by the Director.
3. Judges in the final round shall be asked to write critiques of the debate which the Director shall forward for publication on the NDT webpage.

### **F. Miscellaneous Regulations. [6.e Added, 1, 8 & 9 Revised, December 20]**

1. Electronic recording of debates is allowed by official participants and observers affiliated with a school attending the NDT and by other individuals authorized by the NDT Committee or the tournament host. In the event that the National Debate Tournament is held via an online platform, the Tournament Director will direct the platform host to record all debates. These recordings should be deleted within a reasonable timeframe after the conclusion of the tournament. Access to

any recording should be restricted to cases where said recording is a) needed to resolve a formal ethics challenge or harassment complaint or b) where a debater or assigned judge missed a portion of the debate because of technical issues. Recording is also permitted by debate participants (debaters, assigned judges [a coach of one of the teams participating in the debate]). Distributing participant-generated recordings without the consent of the participating debaters and judges is not permitted. Tournament Administration and affiliated Program Directors are permitted to receive and review any recordings. Requests from groups or individuals wishing to provide media coverage of the National Debate Tournament must be submitted to the NDT committee on Media Coverage. This committee shall make an initial evaluation of the request and submit a recommendation to the NDT Committee for its consideration. The committee on Media Coverage shall be composed of five members appointed by the chair of the NDT Committee to two year terms.

2. Decision confidentiality. It is up to the discretion of judges to decide if they wish to reveal their decisions. Judges desiring to reveal their decisions must wait until all white copies of ballots for that debate are delivered to a bona-fide representative of the Tournament Director. Judges must still provide a written ballot for all preliminary rounds.

3. Topicality. Topicality is a "voting issue" at the National Debate Tournament.

4. No Smoking Policy. All rooms in which NDT competition takes place shall be declared No Smoking Areas, where smoking shall be prohibited. Host schools shall post signs announcing this rule. The NDT Director shall inform attendees of this rule at the opening assembly and again at the start of the final round.

5. Alcohol and Controlled Substance Policy. The use of controlled substances and alcohol shall be prohibited in rooms in which NDT competition takes place. The NDT Tournament Director shall inform attendees of this rule at the opening assembly and again at the beginning of the final round.

6. Tournament Disclosure and Scouting.

a. Prior to the announcement of the decision, one of the judges will request that the Affirmative disclose a 1ac and the Negative a 1nc on the college caselist.

b. Information Disclosure. Disclosure will take place in two steps:

(1) Shortly after arriving to their debate room, if the affirmative teams chooses to disclose, they should makes sure that an outline or thorough description of their affirmative is available on the college caselist, or state "new affirmative."

(2) At an appropriate time during or after the debate, one of the judges should make sure that relevant information about the debate is uploaded to the college caselist.

c. Scouting Guidelines.

(1) Prior to the announcement of the decision in the debate, scouts should make sure that a description of the debate and relevant citations are uploaded.

(2) Observers should not interrupt pre-round preparation by asking questions of either team.

- (3) Observers should not intrude during the debate. This includes the cross-examination periods.
- (4) Observers should not interrupt post-debate discussions.
- (5) After the post-round discussion the observers should expect no more than a ten minute period in which they can inspect evidence for citations from the debate. Neither scouts nor observers should copy entire pieces of evidence, either by hand or electronically.

d. The NDT committee shall appoint scouting co-directors (who are released from judging requirements), who shall continuously make available to the tournament participants the information gathered, and train and direct official scouts who shall:

- (1) complete pre-tournament scouting training and abide by the rules and guidelines established for scouts
- (2) deliver to the scouting directors the information gathered immediately after the round
- (3) Have the authority to gather information in ways that do not disrupt the debate process as directed by the scouting directors
- (4) Debaters are required to provide evidence they have read only to judges, opponents, and official scouts who request it.
- (5) Scouting directors should prioritize gathering information on teams that have the least amount of information on their caselist –
  - i. all teams attending the NDT should provide information on the 1ac including a description of the central thesis, plan text, and advantage(s).
  - ii. all teams attending the NDT should provide a description of past Inc's
  - iii. prior to the start of Round 1, the scouting directors should identify the teams that do not meet the minimum standards and prioritize gathering scouting information on those teams.
  - iv. before the start of Round 3, 1ac and 1nc information should be available on the caselist for all teams in attendance.

e. In the event that the National Debate Tournament is held via an online platform, for the purposes of tournament disclosure and scouting, “room” and “debate room” should be understood to include the virtual meeting space to which a particular debate is assigned, and “provide” in the context of scout access to evidence used in a debate should be understood to include providing the scout with access to the email thread used by the debaters and judges to share evidence during the debate.

7. Programs should not encourage nor expect high school guests to engage in the process of producing or distributing research, or to engage in the tournament disclosure and scouting effort.

8. Once the debate has begun, a team may not receive assistance, suggestions, or coaching from anyone while the round is in progress. This does not prevent debate partners from helping one another, but does prevent outside persons from helping a team during the course of a debate. Debaters MAY receive outside assistance in the event of a technical issue directly related to online competition, which threatens to substantially delay or end the debate, such as: audio-video



issues, connection issues, or Zoom/platform related issues. In the event that outside assistance is needed, debaters should be transparent and notify the judges and opponents of the nature of the issue, who is assisting them, and how it is being resolved.

9. NDT Workers: Individuals in attendance at the National Debate Tournament who provide significant coaching to, or argument production for, any team participating in the NDT should be required to enter the judging pool on a supplemental strike sheet for at least four debates or, if it is more appropriate, provide a significant equivalent contribution to the tournament as defined by the tournament host or director. Access to tournament spaces may be restricted to debaters, judges, and registered observers.

For the 2020-2021 season, individuals who provide significant coaching to, or argument production for, any team during the NDT should be required to enter the judging pool on a supplemental strike sheet for at least four debates or, if it is more appropriate, provide a significant equivalent contribution to the tournament as defined by the tournament host or director.

10. In accordance with enforcement of Rule III.B and Rule IV.F.9 of the Standing Rules for the Operation of the National Debate Tournament, the Tournament Director shall have the discretion to consider any or all of the following options – designating NDT Committee members for outreach to Program Directors accused of being in violation of these Rules; contacting Administrators at schools in violation of these Rules; and assigning alternate remedies that constitute a significant equivalent contribution to the tournament as defined by the tournament host or director. This should not be read to strictly limit the Tournament Director's enforcement remedies to solely these options.

## **Rule V: TOURNAMENT SCHEDULING.**

### **A. Pairing Rounds.**

1. Rounds one and two of the Tournament should be preset. Schools within the same district shall not meet.
2. After the first two rounds the tournament should be completely power matched reflecting the following criteria: (1) win-loss record, (2) number of ballots, (3) adjusted speaker points (with highs and lows dropped and averages replacing points in bye rounds or rounds with penalties under Standing Rule VII.B), (4) two teams from the same school shall not meet.
3. As per Standing Rule I.C.8, in the case of a Title IX Coordinator request from a participating institution regarding competitors in the tournament for an incident prior to the tournament, the Tournament Director may request for the Tab Director to treat two participants as constrained from meeting in the preliminary debates if there are sufficient alternative teams to still preserve power matching based on (1) win-loss record and (2) number of ballots. The SHDC Committee may also request applied constraints resulting from any incident reviewed during the course of the tournament. [Adopted in Austin 2-3-2018 as part of the title IX accommodation amendments]

### **B. Assignment of Judges.**

#### 1. Preliminary Procedures. Before the Start of the Tournament:

- a. At registration all judges shall complete a form declaring their conflicts of interest with any schools or debaters in the Tournament.

Conflicts of interest in which a judge should preclude themselves from judging a particular team or school include:

- i. Previous significant coaching relationship with a debater,
- ii. Current or previous romantic relationship with a debater,
- iii. Current romantic relationship with a member of the coaching staff of a school,
- iv. Familial relationship with a debater or member of the coaching staff of a school,
- v. Recent (within the last four academic years) coaching position with a school,
- vi. Recent (within the last four academic years) undergraduate competitor for a school,
- vii. Anything else that would create a serious perception of a conflict of interest.

The Director may add teams to this list with the consent of the judge or a majority agreement of the Subcommittee on Appeals of the National Committee.

- b. A form of mutual preference shall be used.

2. Following the pairing of each round, judges are assigned according to the discretion of the Director. The following constraints operate to disqualify judges from assignment (in decreasing order of importance):

- a. The judge cannot judge a team from his or her school.

- b. The judge shall not judge a team he or she has previously judged on the same side.
- c. The judge shall not judge a team on his or her conflict of interest list.
- d. The judge shall not judge a team that he or she has heard on the opposite side.
- e. A judge shall not judge a team on whose strike list he or she appears.
- f. The judge shall not be assigned in excess of the number of rounds which he or she is obligated to the Tournament.

### **C. Determination of Participants in and Scheduling of Elimination Rounds.**

1. All teams with a win-loss record of 5-3 or better shall qualify for the elimination rounds, up to a total of 32 teams. If the number of qualifying teams exceeds 16 but is less than 32, a First Elimination Round will be held with a partial bracket so that the number of remaining octafinalists will equal 16.
2. Seeding. The criteria for determining the seeding for elimination rounds shall be administered in the following order: (1) wins, (2) ballots, (3) adjusted combined speaker points (dropping high and low ballots), (4) continue dropping high and low ballots down to twelve remaining ballots, (5) flip of a coin.
3. Pairings shall follow a standard seed-protect bracketing.
  - a. Teams representing the same school shall be placed into the bracket according to their seeding. Coaches of the teams involved shall be consulted on the conduct of a debate round between the teams from the same school.
  - b. Teams which have met in the preliminary rounds shall switch sides. In other debates the flip of a coin shall determine sides, unless the teams agree on opposing side preferences.

### **D. Assignment of Elimination Round Judges.**

1. In the First Elimination Round, judges will be assigned in the same manner as in the preliminary rounds, except that each panel will include five judges. This procedure may be continued during the octafinals if deemed necessary by the Tournament Director. As early in the elimination rounds as feasible, however, the procedure in steps 2-4 below will be employed.
2. Teams will be given an opportunity to revise their preliminary round judge rankings prior to the elimination debates. "Elimination round preference sheets consisting of a list of all judges in the tournament shall be made available to each team qualifying for the elimination rounds, with ordinal rankings used to inform judge placement beginning in the octafinals. At least 20 judges - those ranked at the bottom of each team's ordinal rankings - will count as 'strikes'. Judges in the judging pool who do not meet the 12 round minimum requirement prior to the start of the National Debate Tournament will not count towards the maximum number of disapproved judges.
3. Tentative panels of eleven judges will be selected using the preferences provided in the revised preference sheets.

4. Selection of judging panels.

a. The coach of each school shall be presented with a list of the tentative panel for the debate in which his or her team is paired. He or she will approve at least eight of the judges.

b. The Director shall compare the lists by the coaches of the teams in each pairing and create panels of not less than five judges from the agreements. If there are an even number of agreements the Director shall delete a judge that has high mutuality but low preference.

## **Rule VI: AWARDS.**

- A. A special permanent award shall be given to each student participant and each school.
- B. Awards denoting their level of accomplishment shall be presented to all teams in the elimination rounds.
- C. Awards shall be presented to the top twenty speakers in the tournament.
  - 1. The first determinant of speaker ranking shall be second-order z-scores, followed by speaker points, with the highest and lowest ballots of each debater's individual ratings dropped. Penalty points under Standing Rule VII.B. shall not be dropped.
  - 2. In case further ties must be broken, additional high and low ballots shall be dropped down to a total of sixteen ballots. Should that not resolve a tie, then use total points, then drop ballots down to a total of 12. In the case of remaining ties, duplicate awards will be presented.

## **Rule VII: EVALUATION AND APPEAL** **PROCEDURES.**

### **A. Evaluation.**

1. Forms soliciting suggestions for improving the National Tournament shall be provided to each coach, debater, and guest judge at the tournament.
2. The Director shall annually report the results of this evaluation to the National Committee.

### **B. Procedure for Adjudication of Evidence Integrity Challenges.**

1. Standards governing evidence use shall be those of the AFA Debate Program and Debate Tournament Standards with the following additional stipulations/interpretations:
  - a. All evidence should include full source citation of original sources, either in a master file available in the round, or on individual cards. The source citation should be sufficient to permit others to locate the original source. It should include, at a minimum, the author's name (if given in the original), name of the published source (journal, magazine, book, newspaper, or government document), full date, and page number.
  - b. All paraphrases of evidence must be indicated both on the evidence artifact and orally in the round. All quotations should include ellipses when appropriate, according to MLA standards. c. Other MLA standards are considered advisory.
  - c. The portion of the quotation or paraphrase of evidence introduced should be clearly communicated during speech time and clearly indicated on the evidence artifact. Intentional and/or negligent misrepresentation of the portion of quotations or paraphrases of evidence introduced during a speech is prohibited. Attempts should be made to determine intent and clarify the representation prior to making the allegation.
    - i. Examples of misrepresentation may include:
      - stopping before the end of quoted section without indicating the words read.
      - repeatedly skipping words or lines of words through the content of the quoted section without indication.
      - speaking without sufficient clarity for participants to determine which parts of the quoted evidence was read with the intent to gain competitive advantage
  
      - distributing evidence artifacts to other participants after speech time that do not accurately indicate the portion of quotation or paraphrase communicated during speech time.
    - ii. Examples that do not meet the standard of misrepresentation:
      - skipping words or parts of words due to mitigating circumstances or unintentional actions.
      - brief lack of clarity due to mitigating circumstances or without an attempt to inform the participant that clarity is insufficient.

## 2. Adjudicating evidence challenges.

- a. The individual judge in a round shall make his or her own judgment on the basis of materials available to him or her at the time. If he or she determines that distortion and/or falsification has occurred, he or she shall award the offending team a loss and award zero speaker points to the offending speaker(s). In situations where both teams have violated the evidence integrity standards, both teams may receive a loss.
- b. After individual ballots have been completed, sealed, and handed in, judges in the round shall confer; and if two or more of the judges concur on the evidence challenge, that challenge shall be submitted to the Tournament Director along with a copy of the evidence in question.

## 3. Appeals of challenges.

- a. When a case of evidence challenge has been referred to the Director following a preliminary round:
  - (1) The Director shall forward the challenge to the Subcommittee on Appeals along with a copy of the evidence.
  - (2) The Subcommittee shall investigate including the soliciting of statements on the claimed offense and/or mitigating circumstances from the judges in the round and from the offending team/speaker/coach.
  - (3) As soon as possible the Subcommittee shall decide by a simple majority of the subcommittee members whether a violation of the evidence code occurred, and whether to declare the offending team ineligible to advance to the elimination rounds. The polling shall be by secret ballot. Tournament records of the teams shall not be considered as mitigating circumstances.
  - (4) The coach of the offending team shall be notified as soon as possible. In the case of a less than unanimous decision of the Subcommittee, he or she may appeal the decision to the National Committee.
  - (5) In the case of such an appeal, the Chair shall call an emergency meeting of the National Committee. The Chair of the Subcommittee on Appeals shall present the results of the Subcommittee's investigation. The judges and/or coach of the offending team shall then have the opportunity to address the Committee.
  - (6) The Committee shall then vote by secret ballot on the appeal. A vote of two-thirds of committee members present and voting is necessary to overturn the decision of the Subcommittee.
  - (7) Persons whose teams are involved in the debate round in question or whose teams would profit from a successful challenge shall not vote in any of these deliberations. When these persons are members of the Subcommittee on Appeals, the Chair of the National Committee may appoint temporary replacements to adjudicate the case.
- b. When a case of evidence challenge is referred to the Director following an elimination round:

- (1) The Director shall forward the challenge to the Subcommittee on Appeals along with the copy of the evidence.
- (2) The Subcommittee shall investigate the soliciting of statements on the claimed offense and/or mitigating circumstances from the judges in the round and from the offending team/speaker/coach.
- (3) The Subcommittee shall decide as soon as possible by a simple majority of the Subcommittee polled by secret ballot whether a violation of the evidence code occurred and whether to declare the offending team ineligible to advance.
- (4) Persons whose teams are involved in the debate round in question or whose teams would profit from a successful challenge shall not vote in any of these deliberations.

### **C. Procedure for Appeal of Operational Decisions. [1.a.4 Revised, March 2019]**

The following govern review under Article VI, Section B of the Charter:

1. Eligibility and Participation Decisions. Decisions in preparation for the tournament with regard to Standing Rules II and III shall be handled before the start of the tournament.

a. Emergency procedure.

- (1) All such appeals must be communicated to the Chair of the National Committee three days prior to the first day of the tournament competition. In consultation with the Director, the Chair will determine if the matter can be reviewed after all parties arrive at the tournament site or if an email conference and/or conference call is required.
- (2) The Chair shall then bring the matter before the Subcommittee on Appeals whose Chair shall be responsible for gathering whatever information is necessary to review the appeal.
- (3) Through a meeting, email conference, or conference call which includes the appellant, the Director, and any involved parties if those parties so desire, the Subcommittee shall reach a decision. The decision of the Subcommittee is final for the National Tournament operation.
- (4) In the case of a Medical Waiver request as per Rule II. A. 1. J, additional care should be taken to maintain both Privacy and Confidentiality of student records as additional FERPA and HIPAA compliance may be required. In cases of a Medical Waiver request, the Chair of the National Committee should facilitate direct communication between the student requesting the Medical Waiver and the Chair of the Subcommittee on Appeals. The Chair of the Subcommittee on Appeals will directly instruct the student on the method to provide the Subcommittee with required documentation and may request additional documentation from the student to verify institutional compliance and Leave of Absence dates. All members of the Subcommittee on Appeals are expected to maintain strictest standards for student privacy in evaluating the request. The report of the Subcommittee on Appeals to the NDT Committee shall only indicate if there was a medical waiver requested and if it was approved or denied for eligibility.



b. Appeal of the Subcommittee Decision. If either the Director or the appellant wish the decision of the Subcommittee reviewed after the tournament, the procedures of Standing Rule VII.C.3. will be followed.

2. During the tournament, the Director shall take no action which he or she believes will depart from normal operating procedures of the NDT, without first contacting the coaches of the teams involved. When the Director believes his or her action will depart from normal operating procedures of the NDT, he or she shall consult with a three-person Tournament Procedures Advisory Subcommittee of the National Committee.

3. Tournament Operation Procedures. Decisions of the Director during the tournament including those in Standing Rules IV, V, and VI are not appealable at the tournament.

a. Any party with objection to the procedures under these Standing Rules shall, after the tournament, write to the Chair of the National Committee explaining the nature of and justification for the objection, including specification of the rule violated.

b. The Chair shall refer the matter to the Subcommittee on Appeals who shall review the matter including interviews with appellant(s), the offended party(ies), and the Director.

c. The Subcommittee shall then report back to the National Committee including with their report any suggested Committee actions.

d. The Chair of the National Committee shall respond to the appellant notifying him or her of the Subcommittee's findings and any National Committee actions with regard to the appeal.

4. Appeals of Precedent Setting Decisions of the Director:

a. Each year the Director's report to the National Committee shall include information on any interpretations or decisions which would become applicable to future tournaments. The National Committee will then consider these for incorporation into the Standing Rules.

b. Anyone can bring to the attention of the National Committee interpretations or decisions of the Director which he or she considers potentially precedent setting.

(1) Appeals of such decisions should be addressed to the Chair of the National Committee and should explain the nature and justification for the appeal.

(2) The Chair of the National Committee shall report in writing to the appellant on the Committee's review and action.

## **Rule VIII: TOPIC SELECTION. [2.B. Revised, Nov 2019]**

In any year that the CEDA topic selection process includes the following elements:

1. The CEDA topic release date is no later than August 15, and,
2. The topic area ballot announcement date is no later than May 1, The NDT will use a topic parallel to the Fall CEDA topic. The Topic Committee will develop alternate wordings for any CEDA topics the NDT Topic Committee feels should be reworded as soon as possible within two weeks of the final CEDA ballot release. Should the NDT Topic Committee not write a parallel wording for the chosen CEDA topic, the CEDA wording will be used. If the topic release dates and the final ballot announcement dates above are not met and if CEDA releases their problem area by June 1, then the NDT Topic Committee shall draft topics consistent with that area.

### A. Director of topic selection.

1. Election: The Director of Topic Selection will be elected by the NDT Committee.
2. Term of Office: 3-year term, limited to two consecutive terms.
3. Duties of Office:
  - a. Coordinate writing of topic papers and wording of topics with the CEDA Topic Selection Committee.
  - b. Chair the Topic Selection Committee
  - c. The Director of Topic Selection shall serve as the NDT representative to the CEDA Topic Selection Committee in cases where such a position is made available by CEDA

### B. Topic Selection Committee: 4 members to serve two-year staggered terms.

1. Representative drawn from District one or two, elected by the dues-paying membership of Districts one and two, in odd years.
2. Representative drawn from District three or four, elected by the dues-paying membership of Districts three and four, in even years.
3. Representative drawn from District five or six, elected by the dues-paying membership of Districts five and six, in odd years.
4. Representative drawn from District seven or eight, elected by the dues-paying membership of Districts seven and eight, in even years.

## **Rule IX: Amendment Procedures**

A. These Standing Rules may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the AFA NDT Committee, or a simple majority in two consecutive academic years.

B. Amendments to the Standing Rules shall take effect according to the following guidelines:

1. Amendments adopted in accordance with VIII.A. prior to January 15 shall take effect at that academic year's tournament.

2. Amendments adopted in accordance with VIII.A. after January 15 shall take effect at the following academic year's tournament, unless the emergency clause of the Charter is invoked.

C. It shall be the duty of the Committee Parliamentarian, in consultation with the Director of the National Debate Tournament, to codify these rules so as to incorporate amendments adopted during each academic year. The Parliamentarian shall report such codification to the NDT Committee at its first meeting of the ensuing year.

## **Revision History:**

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, February 6, 1993, Evanston, Illinois. Revisions incorporated by Arnie Madsen and verified by Frank Harrison, NDT Parliamentarian. Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 19 and 20, 1993, Miami, Florida. Revisions incorporated and verified by Arnie Madsen, NDT Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, February 13, 1994, Evanston, Illinois. Revisions clarified by the National Debate Tournament Committee, March 17, 1994, Louisville, Kentucky. Revisions incorporated and verified by Arnie Madsen, NDT Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 18, 1994, New Orleans, Louisiana. Revisions incorporated and verified by Arnie Madsen, NDT Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, February 12, 1995, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Revisions incorporated and verified by Arnie Madsen, NDT Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 17, 1995, San Antonio, Texas. Revisions incorporated by Arnie Madsen.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, February 10, 1996, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Revisions incorporated by Arnie Madsen.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, March 28, 1996, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Revisions incorporated by Arnie Madsen.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 22, 1996, San Diego, California. Revisions incorporated by Arnie Madsen.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 19, 1997, Chicago, Illinois. Revisions incorporated by Arnie Madsen.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 3, 1999, Chicago, Illinois. Frank Harrison, Secretary; David Hingstman, Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Committee, Oct. 31, 2001, Atlanta, GA. Latest revisions added February 5, 2002 per notice from David Hingstman

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 3, 1999, Chicago, Illinois. Revisions incorporated by David Hingstman, Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, Oct. 31, 2001, Atlanta, GA. Revisions incorporated by David Hingstman, Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, February 5, 2002, Evanston, Illinois. Revisions incorporated by David Hingstman, Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 20, 2002, New Orleans, LA. Revisions incorporated by David Hingstman, Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, April 2, 2003, Atlanta, GA. Revisions incorporated by David Hingstman, Parliamentarian.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, passed at Northwestern University meeting, February 8, 2003 Revisions incorporated by David Hingstman, Parliamentarian. Revisions incorporated by Cate Palczewski, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, passed Miami FL, November 19, 2003.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 15, 2006, San Antonio, TX. Revisions incorporated by Timothy O'Donnell, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, March 27, 2008, Fullerton, CA. Revisions incorporated by Timothy O'Donnell, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, March 26, 2009, Austin, TX. Revisions incorporated by Timothy O'Donnell, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, February 6, 2010, Austin, TX. Revisions incorporated by Timothy O'Donnell, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November 20, 2013, Washington DC. Revisions incorporated by Danielle Leek, NDT Treasurer, Revisions verified by Dallas Perkins, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, February 9, 2014, Austin, TX. Revisions incorporated by Danielle Leek, NDT Treasurer, Revisions verified by Dallas Perkins, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November, 2014, Chicago, IL and February, 2015, Austin, TX. Revisions incorporated by Danielle Leek, NDT Treasurer, Revisions verified by Dallas Perkins, Chair.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November, 2015, Las Vegas, NV. Revisions incorporated by Danielle Leek, NDT Treasurer, Revisions verified by Dallas Perkins, Chair, and Sarah Partlow LeFevre, Executive Director.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, November, 2016, Binghamton, NY and 2016, Philadelphia, PA. Revisions incorporated by Sarah T. Partlow Lefevre, NDT Director, Revisions verified by Dr. Mike Hester.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, March, 2017, Kansas City, Kansas and February 3, 2018, Austin, TX. Revisions incorporated by Sarah T. Partlow Lefevre, NDT Director, Revisions verified by Adrienne Brovero.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, March, 2019, Minneapolis, MN & November, 2019, Baltimore, MD. Revisions incorporated by Adrienne Brovero, NDT Committee Chair, and verified by Sarah T. Partlow Lefevre, David Cram Helwich, Matt Vega.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, April, 2020, Zoom. Revisions incorporated by Adrienne Brovero, NDT Committee Chair, and verified by David Cram Helwich.

Revised by action of the National Debate Tournament Committee, December, 2020, Zoom, and January 2021, Email Ballot. Revisions incorporated by Adrienne Brovero, NDT Committee Chair, and verified by David Cram Helwich, Ryan Galloway, Glen Frappier.

