



The Columbia Invitational

December 3, 2008

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2008-2009
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The Columbia Parliamentary Debate Association (CPDA) is an undergraduate organization of Columbia University in New York, NY. Every year, the CPDA travels throughout the United States and the world to compete in parliamentary debate.

The CPDA hosts an annual high school speech and debate competition and an annual college parliamentary tournament to encourage participation in these activities.

Dear Speech and Debate Coach:

On behalf of the Columbia Parliamentary Debate Association, we cordially invite you and your team to the 9th Annual Columbia University High School Invitational. The tournament will begin on Friday, January 23, 2009 and conclude on Sunday, January 25, 2009. It will consist of competition in Varsity and Novice Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Public Forum Debate, Student Congress, and six Speech events.

Last year, 67 schools from across the country helped make the 2008 Invitational a huge success. We've been growing every year and hope to continue to provide a great experience to all schools. This year, we're pleased to announce that the four semi-finalists in Varsity Lincoln-Douglas Debate will receive bids to the Tournament of Champions, a change from the finals bid previously offered. Columbia is also a Semis bid for the TOC in Public Forum, and a top-six bid in Student Congress.

Many of the Parliamentary Debate Association members are also seasoned veterans of high school speech and debate. These committed members form the core of a highly experienced judging pool and tournament staff. Additionally, we invest a great deal in seeking out quality hired judges to promise fair decisions and educational rounds.

Our tab room will be managed by the best. The tab room director for the 8th consecutive year will be Chris Palmer from Newton South. Debate tab will be directed by Jim Menick from Hendrick Hudson and Joe Vaughan from Scarsdale, and Speech Tab will be directed by Jonathan Chavez of Newton South. All are highly regarded and exceptionally capable tab coordinators. For the past few years, they have been integral in our ability to run a smooth tournament.

The information provided with this invitation and on our tournament website, <http://columbia.tabroom.com>, should answer any questions that you may have about our tournament. If you need additional assistance, please email us at columbia@tabroom.com.

Best wishes for a restful and enjoyable winter break. We look forward to seeing many of our old friends and competitors in New York in January.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Halpern

Speech events will be broken into two groups. Group A will consist of *Declamation*, *Duo* and *Oral Interpret*. Group B will consist of *Extemp*, *Dramatic Performance*, and *Oratory*. A student may enter up to two different speech events in each group. Be aware that the Columbia campus is large and entering two events in one group will be difficult. Our schedule does not allow double entries in debate or Congress.

Varsity and Novice Lincoln-Douglas Debate

The resolution will be the January/February NFL topic. Both LD divisions will follow the 6-3-7-3-4-6-3 format. Debaters will have 4 minutes of prep time. Ties will be broken based on record, adjusted points, total points, double-adjusted points, judge variance, opponents' record, and coinflip, in that order. The break will be to double-octafinals.

Novice LD will be for students in their first year of high school debate competition ONLY.

Public Forum Debate

There will be a single, open division of public forum debate. The tournament will be using the NFL topic for January, 2009. Ties will be broken using the same criteria as Lincoln-Douglas Debate. The event will break to octas or doubles depending on field size.

Student Congress

There will be a single, open division of Student Congress. Chambers will comprise no more than 25 members and will debate up to three bills per session. A Super Congress session consisting of the top speakers from each chamber will be held on Sunday morning. Legislation must be emailed to columbia@tabroom.com by **5 pm on January 16, 2009**. Legislation should be signed by a student author; only one bill per student should be submitted. Legislation that has not been received by that date will not be included. Legislation will be emailed to participating schools and posted online on Sunday, January 18th.

Speech Events:

All speech events will follow **National Catholic Forensic League** rules and guidelines. Speech events will break to either quarterfinals or semifinals based on the size of each field.

All rules are subject to change. The tournament will make you aware of any changes at registration.

Judging Requirements:

We require teams to bring one judge for every 3 Lincoln-Douglas debaters or fraction thereof **in each division**. That is, you need to cover your varsity separate from your novices. For example, if you have 2 varsity and 1 novice, you are required to provide a judge for the 2 (it's a 1-3 ratio) varsity, and a judge for the 1 (a similar 1-3 ratio) novice. Seniors with at least 2 years of LD experience are acceptable as novice judges. Teams must bring one judge for every 3 Public Forum teams or fraction thereof. For all Speech events and Student Congress, teams must bring one judge for every 5 entries or fraction thereof. Judges in every division are obligated to judge one round past the last round in which their students are active. If you have completed your school's judging obligation, please inform the tab room if you are unwilling to take further assignments.

Hiring high quality judges is not the easiest endeavor, and we need to plan ahead. The registration system will explicitly request you to designate how many judges you wish to hire. New judge hire requests in the last week before the tournament may be refused, and will incur an additional fee. You may add judges to the tournament at any time, but **judges dropped after registration closes, even if you have dropped students to compensate, will incur a fee.**

The hired judge charge for all speech events is \$40.00 per uncovered entry. For Lincoln Douglas or Public Forum debate judges, the charge is \$75.00 per uncovered entry. We don't make money off of judges; this is what we pay judge hires. If you can bring extra judges, we may be willing to hire them in return for a reduction in your entry fees until our pool fills; but you must email us by January 1st to confirm.

VLD judges should submit a judging paradigm (or a link to an online paradigm) in the reg system, or to columbia@tabroom.com by Wednesday, January 21, 2009, or they will automatically be designated as novice-only judges. These paradigms will be made available on the tournament website by the evening of Thursday, January 22nd. We will also ask you to designate any novice-only judges on registration; you cannot cover VLD entries with novice-only judges. Schools will each also be offered 5 judge strikes in VLD. Judge strikes may be entered online between 1/20 – 1/22, or at onsite registration. Schools missing judges will not be allowed to enter strikes.

Like last year, schools whose judges fail to appear for an assigned round may be fined \$25 for a prelim or \$50 for an elimination round at the tournament's discretion. These fines will be given to the judges who pick up your ballots, and so they are non-negotiable; please listen for announcements and be on-site for rounds. We will also ask for judge cell phone numbers at registration; being able to contact judges quickly and directly will help us stay on time.

Please note: Competitors from any school with outstanding fines will not advance to elimination rounds, nor may the school pick up awards or ballots until they have settled their balance.

Awards:

All competitors reaching elimination rounds will receive awards. We will not mail trophies and encourage all schools to stay for the awards ceremony in order to receive their awards or arrange for another school to pick them up.

Ballots:

We do not release ballot packets until the tournament is complete under any circumstances. If you anticipate leaving early, bring a self-addressed, stamped envelope of sufficient size and postage to mail your ballots, label it with your school name, and deliver it to Tab. The postage is not because we need the money, it's because it takes forever and a day for us to go to the post office and mail 40 envelopes, so realistically this never happens. Therefore, please give us actual postage; don't just staple dollar bills to envelopes, as this saves us zero effort. We will put your ballots into the envelope and send it after the tournament.

Independent Entries:

Our non-negotiable tournament policy is that independent entries (i.e. competitors unaffiliated with a particular school) will only be accepted if accompanied by their own parent, legal guardian, or a school-appointed guardian.

Registration:

Columbia has extremely limited space available to student groups. Schools registering online at first will be given only 5 slots in Varsity Lincoln-Douglas Debate and 4 in Novice Lincoln-Douglas Debate; further students will be added to the waitlist. Any student entered after the overall event cap will also be added to the waitlist. Our room crunch last year dictates that the overall event cap in NLD will be smaller. After January 10th, we will take students off the waitlist on a first-come, first-serve basis until we reach capacity. We anticipate many waitlisted students will get in, but this system allows us flexibility in case we fill quickly or cannot get a sufficient amount of space from the university. Please register early.

Online registration will begin at <http://columbia.tabroom.com> on December 10th, 2008 Online registration will close on January 19 at 9:00 PM, or as the tournament reaches its capacity. Fees and judging obligations will be based on your entry as it stands on January 19; drops and changes after this point do not increase your registration fees.

Changes to your tournament registration after the 19th should be emailed to columbia@tabroom.com. Name changes will be accepted without fee, but drops will invoke a nuisance fee of \$10 each after midnight on Thursday, January 22, in addition to the registration fee. Additions after Jan 19th will carry the same nuisance fee and may be refused at the tournament's discretion depending on available space.

In the past, some schools have not reported all their drops to the tournament; this harms competitive balance in panel assignments. Schools with *unreported* drops the day of the tournament will be assessed a fee of \$25 per round missed.

Onsite registration for the tournament will run in Lerner Hall from 2:30-4:00 PM on January 23 for schools with Debate students, and from 7:00-8:00 PM for Speech & Congress only schools. You can also call in to confirm your registration to the tab room phone number at 617 981 2754 and pay once rounds have begun. You must either call or register before 4:00 PM for Debate schools and by 8:00 PM for Speech and Congress only schools.

Fees:

♣ Lincoln-Douglas debate: \$40 per entry	♣ Duo Interpretation: \$35 per team
♣ Speech & Student Congress: \$25 per entry	♣ Public Forum debate: \$45 per team

Safety:

The policy of the Columbia Tournament concerning consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors, illegal use of controlled substances, vandalism, and destructive, and other illegal or disorderly behavior shall be: (1) to disqualify involved contestants from further competition, (2) to communicate the offending incident to the contestants' on-site coaches, chaperones, guardians, and/or parents, (3) to require financial reimbursement for all damages or liabilities caused directly or indirectly by the incident, and (4) to notify the local legal authorities. The tournament will retain discretion to select the precise remedy or remedies.

Every student must be accompanied by an adult empowered by the student's school and/or parent to care for that student in the event of a medical or other emergency. The contact information for this adult must be given to the Tab Room on registration. The tournament takes no responsibility for the health and safety of students beyond notifying the accompanying adult of concerns or problems as we become aware of them.

Columbia University Public Safety will address any safety concerns, provide escorts for students walking to or from distant buildings, and open locked buildings and rooms. They can be reached at 212.854.2797.

Housing:

We have reserved blocks of rooms with the Hotel Newton and Hotel Belleclaire, both of which are a 15-minute subway or cab ride away from Columbia's campus.

Hotel Newton:

\$150 per night for a double; \$175 for a triple or quad

2528 Broadway, between 94th and 95th

To make a reservation, call 212.678.6500 between 9am and 5pm, Monday through Friday and ask to speak to Emilio. The block of rooms is reserved under the name Columbia University High School Invitational. The rooms' release date is January 1st.

Hotel Belleclaire:

\$249 per night for a double

250 West 77th Street, between Broadway and West End Avenue

To make a reservation, call 212.362.7700 at any time. The block of rooms is reserved under the name Columbia University High School Invitational. The rooms' release date is December 23.

The following hotels currently have plenty of availabilities and some of New York City's lowest rates:

Apple Core Hotels: \$140 per night for a single; \$160 for a double; \$175 for a triple; \$190 for a quad

- Comfort Inn, 129 W. 46th St, between Sixth and Seventh Aves.; 212-221-2600
- The Hotel at Times Square, 59 W. 46th St, between Fifth and Sixth Aves.; 212 719-2300
- La Quinta, 17 W. 32nd St., between Broadway and Fifth Ave.; 212-736-1600
- Red Roof Inn, 6 W. 32nd St., between Broadway and Fifth Ave.; 212-643-7100
- Ramada Inn, 161 Lexington Ave., at 30th St.; 212-545-1800

If you have any difficulties finding housing, please contact us. If your school is paying the hotel fees, you **MUST** present a tax exempt form to the hotel to get tax exempt status. Without it, you will have to pay tax. For driving instructions and information about transportation and airports, please see our website.

Questions:

Questions should be addressed to the tournament staff. We can best be reached by e-mail at columbia@tabroom.com. Our tournament Web site, <http://columbia.tabroom.com>, also contains all of the latest information.

3:30 Awards & Ballot Distribution