### Tournament Committee

#### Composition

At its Fall meeting the National Debate Coaches Association Board shall elect, by majority vote, a tournament director to conduct the spring championship tournament (The National Debate Coaches Association Championships). The appointed individual may serve multiple terms but must be reappointed at each Fall meeting. The tournament director shall create a policy debate tab room committee that should include, but not necessarily be limited to, a three person committee to run the tournament as directed by this document. The tournament director should strive to create a tab room committee with a high school college partnership seeking to avoid personnel with students competing in the tournament. Individuals may serve on more than one of the tournament committees.

#### Jurisdiction

At the beginning of round one onward all decisions related to running the policy debate tournament will be made by the policy debate tab room committee, guided by this document, and implemented by the tournament director until the tournament is completed. This rule is meant to clarify that it is impossible for the NDCA Board to anticipate every contingency that will arise during the tournament and efficient tournament management will occasionally require that difficult decisions be made quickly without a specific rule outlined in this document. NDCA Board members should not be members of the tab room committee. The Tournament Director may be an NDCA Board member, however, once the tournament is underway the tournament director is charged with implementing decisions of the tab room committee but is not a member of that committee.

### Tournament qualification

Tournament participants will be determined using the following qualification procedures:

Policy debate competition is considered a team activity. Both students on a participating team must attend the same school, represent that school and be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities for that school. Even if the school district allows some students to compete with other schools within the district the NDCA National Championships will not allow those entries. If the tournament director determines that a given entry does not represent a school that entry(ies) may only file an appeal to the board if they registered for the tournament prior to March 15th. Coaches acknowledge that by entering the tournament that their teams are in compliance with the tournament rules. It is the obligation of the coach to file an appeal prior to March 15th if there is a situation that stretches the limits of one of the rules, such as the definition of the word “school”.

Each member school of the NDCA is entitled to enter one team.

All additional teams must qualify using the following process:

Teams registering for the NDCA Championships will automatically be placed on a waiting list until they achieve the requisite points, as detailed below, determined by sending in their qualifying point sheets or using the NDCA points database. Teams will be released off the waiting list immediately if they have earned at least 500 points and if they apply prior to March 15 and until 75 teams have been admitted to the tournament. The application deadline is April 1. On April 1 an additional 25 teams will be released from the waiting list even if some of those applicants don’t have 500 points. Applications will be accepted, regardless of a team’s point total, after April 1 until 100 teams are entered in the tournament or until the Monday preceding the start of the tournament whichever comes first. The list of accepted teams should be made publicly available.

Points are calculated using the following formula:

The number of teams attending the tournament (up to 80 teams) X Diversity of Tournament Multiplier (below) X Elimination Success Multiplier (below) X your preliminary round win percentage = TOTAL POINTS EARNED FROM THE TOURNAMENT.

Diversity of Tournament Multiplier (DTM):

1-2 states: 1.0

3-5 states: 1.2

6-8 states: 1.4

9-12 states: 1.6

13-15 states: 1.8

16 or more states: 2.0

Elimination Success Multiplier (ESM):

Didn’t clear: 1

Clearing but not winning an elimination round: 1.1

Octas: 1.2 (winning at least one elimination round)

Quarters: 1.4 (winning at least one elimination round)

Semis: 1.6 (winning at least one elimination round)

Finals: 1.8 (winning at least one elimination round)

Winning Finals: 2.3

Every elimination round from octafinals on is worth a bonus after the number of participants in elimination rounds is less than or equal to half the number of entries. For example, a tournament with 15 entries doesn't count for a bonus until semifinals. A tournament with 16 entries would count beginning with quarterfinals. A team must win an elimination round to get bonus points beyond clearing. For example, if a tournament breaks to semifinals and a team loses in semifinals the multiplier is 1.1.

Example: In 2005, Grapevine had 72 teams representing six states. Six states is a Diversity of Tournament Multiplier (DTM) of 1.4. If a team is 4-1 in prelims their prelim win percentage is .8, winning an octas debate and losing in quarters gives them a 1.4 Elimination Success Multiplier (ESM). So if a team was 4-1 in prelims and lost in the quarterfinals at Grapevine their points would be: 72 X 1.4 X 1.2 X .8 = 96.768

A team counts their best five tournament performances in the varsity/open division of virtually any tournament using the current NFL resolution. A team may accrue points competing in the varsity/open division of any tournament occurring prior to the application deadline and that has at least twice as many entries as preliminary rounds. For example, a tournament with 6 preliminary rounds must have at least 12 entries to become a tournament that can count towards qualification. Tournaments such as round robins that utilize an even number of judges for preliminary competition are not eligible. A team may apply even if they haven’t debated together previously or if they haven’t debated at five tournaments together. In this instance each individuals best five tournaments regardless of partner are counted, then divided by two, and then the two individual scores are added together to create the team point total. The team with the highest point total using this qualification system that attends the NDCA Championships will be awarded The David P. Baker Award for Season Long Excellence. The NDCA National Championships tournament will count toward winning the Baker and will be the last tournament at which points can be earned. To be considered for this award a team must have debated together at all five tournaments used for qualification.

Any entry denied admission to the National Debate Coaches Association National Championships by the tournament director may appeal to the NDCA Board for admission to the tournament if they tried to enter the tournament prior to March 15th. Any entries admitted to the tournament after March 15th will be solely at the discretion of the tournament director. Any student registered for the tournament after March 15th will not be allowed to appeal the decision of the tournament director.

### Rounds of competition

The tournament will use the current National Speech and Debate Association resolution for policy debate.

The tournament will offer 6 rounds of preliminary competition.

Time limits will be 8 minute constructive speeches, 5 minute rebuttal speeches, and 3 minute cross-examination period. Each team will be given 10 minutes of preparation time.

All teams winning four or more of their preliminary rounds will qualify for elimination rounds.

Policy debate competition is considered a team activity. Once tournament competition begins should one or both members of a team be unable to participate in a scheduled round of competition the team must forfeit those debates.

The NDCA considers debate events to be, by definition, open to the public. Interested parties, parents, friends, other competitors, school officials, etc. are all allowed to observe, including note taking, preliminary and elimination rounds of competition in all events.

Any student who forfeits a round of competition will be ineligible for a speaker award. For seeding purposes students who forfeit debates will have their points averaged.

### Pairing of debates

To the extent possible the tabroom should equalize competition in preset debates and power match high/low within brackets starting with round 3.

### Teams qualifying for elimination rounds

(All teams winning four preliminary rounds advance to elimination rounds. These procedures remain as guidance for seeding purposes in both preliminary and elimination round competition.)

Wins

High/low points

Total points

Opposition Wins

Double high/low points

Ranks (for policy debate only)

Judge Variance

Random number

### Speaker awards

The tournament will use the following tie breaking procedure to determine speaker awards:

High/low points

Total points

Double high/low

Ranks

Opposition wins

Judge controlled variance

Opposition points

Random number generation

Any student who forfeits a round of competition will be ineligible for a speaker award.

### Judge assignment

Judges should be assigned using a five category mutual preference system (either judge or unit based) where tournament participants are required to rank a minimum of 20% of judges/rounds available as A+, 20% of judges/rounds available as A, 20% of judges/rounds available as A-, 15% of judges as B+. Tournament participants may strike up to 10% of judges/rounds available. Conflicts should be ranked as C.

When filling out the mutual preference system teams have an affirmative obligation to select as “conflicts/constrainted” those judges they know will be required to conflict themselves as identified in the “Judge conflicts” portion of this document.

The tab room will “correct” mistakes in preferences by randomly moving judges up categories to ensure the requisite percentages are met. Judges will all be ranked as A+ for teams not turning in a preference sheet.

Mutual preference sheets should be received no later than 12 hours prior to the scheduled release of pairings for round 1. Teams may turn in their mutual preference sheets after this deadline however the tab room will be under no obligation to honor the stated preferences until 2 rounds after the sheets are received.

Debates should be assigned judges by computer in the following priority order whenever possible:

Round 3 teams with no losses get first priority, then teams with 1 loss, then teams with 2 losses.

Round 4 teams with 1 loss, undefeated, 2 losses, 3 losses

Round 5 teams with 2 losses, 1 loss, undefeated, 3 losses, 4 losses.

Round 6 teams with 2 losses, 1 loss, undefeated, 3 losses, 4 losses, 5 losses.

Starting with the quarterfinals, when possible, the tab room will present competing teams with “strike cards” listing seven potential judges and teams will be allowed to strike two of the seven judges on the strike card to create judging panels of either three, five or seven judges.

In addition to the mutual preference system, 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.

### Judge conflicts

Tournament judges should be provided with a conflict sheet and asked to complete the following procedure:

You should mark as a conflict any student:  
(1) whose high school you attended in recent years;  
(2) to whom you are related;  
(3) who attends a school with whom you have had a coaching or judging relationship, paid or unpaid, during the past two school years (does not apply if your only relationship to a school was as a hired judged at that school’s tournament);  
(4) who attends a school that has offered to hire you to coach or judge in the future;  
(5) for whom you have ever had primary instructional responsibility as, e.g., a school coach or a personal coach  
(6) with whom you have or have in the past had personal friendships or romantic relationships, or with whom you socialize in non-debate settings;  
(7) who personally has provided your transportation or housing at this tournament, or who attends a school that has provided your transportation or housing at this tournament;  
(8) who has been hired by, or who has an outstanding explicit or implicit offer from, a debate business (e.g., workshop or brief company) to which you have financial ties.  
(9) if your current, or in the past two years, coach of record is currently coaching the student.

(10)  If you coach or debate for a college/university, any student that is debating for your program next year or whom your school is still actively recruiting.

(11) with whose coach(es) you have or have in the past had romantic relationships.

(12) to whom you bear any other relationship that might reasonably be thought to compromise your impartiality as a judge.  To determine whether a relationship meets this test, you might ask yourself, “If I were a competing student and knew nothing about my judge except that he or she bore the relationship in question to my competitor or my competitors coach, would I have any doubts about his or her impartiality?”  If the answer is “yes,” you should mark students to whom you bear that relationship as conflicts.

### Use of Technology

The use of computers during debates is permitted for both flowing and research purposes including retrieval of evidence stored on hard drives and accessing resources via the internet during debates.

Students should not attempt to use electronic devices to initiate contact with outside parties during a debate. The penalty for violation of this rule is loss of the debate in question and zero speaker points assigned to the offending debater. This rule recommends, but does not require, that all text messaging devices and cell phones be turned off during debates. It is meant to restrict the debaters from initiating that contact. Example: A student’s cell phone ringing during a debate would not violate the rule. A student calling or text messaging their coach during a debate would violate this rule.

### Clipping

A judge should find clipping has occurred when a debater represents they have read five words or more that they did not read in any speech. If the judge finds that clipping has occurred the penalty is a loss for the team and zero speaker points for the debater who "clipped." If a team makes a false accusation of clipping the penalty is a loss and zero speaker points for both debaters on the team who made the false accusation.

Technical malfunction isn't an excuse for clipping. Debaters have an obligation to accurately represent the material they have read. If a judge finds that students represented that they read material that they did not read then it's clipping and penalties should be imposed even if the judge doesn't think there was ill intent.

The enforcement is left solely to the discretion of the judge(s) and cannot be appealed to the tabroom or the NDCA Board.

Tournament participants will be required to submit a parental permission form (Appendix D) allowing students to be audio taped to ensure that clipping is not occurring. Participants who are recorded may require that the recording be deleted after the judge has rendered a decision and clipping was not raised as an issue.

### Elimination Round procedures

All participants winning at least 4 preliminary rounds of competition will advance to elimination rounds.

The elimination round bracket should be released no later than four hours after the completion of the last preliminary debate.

Brackets should not be broken during elimination rounds.

If a team fails to arrive at their designated round at least fifteen minutes prior to the announced start time in a flip for sides round the tab room will allow the team present to choose their preferred side for the debate. If sides are locked and the late arriving team is designated affirmative the negative team may request a delay of up to fifteen minutes to ensure both teams have adequate preparation time.

Forfeit time is fifteen minutes after the announced start time of each round. Only a member of the tab room committee or their designee may declare a debate a forfeit due to the late arrival of a team.

### Recommended tournament schedule

Day 1

5 pm Onsite electronic registration opens

8 pm Mutual preference sheets due

Day 2

7:30 am Round 1 pairings released

8 am Round 1

10 am Round 2 pairings released

11 am Round 2

1 pm Lunch

2:30 pm Round 3

5:30 pm Round 4

Day 3

8 am Round 5 pairings released

9 am Round 5

11 am Lunch

Noon Round 6

3 pm Awards

4 pm Elimination round 1

7 pm Elimination round 2

Day 4

7 am Strike cards available (if used)

7:15 am Strike cards due

7:30 am Pairings for the first elimination round of Day 4

8:00 am Elimination round 3

11:00 am Elimination round 4 (if necessary)

2 pm Elimination round 5 (if necessary)

5 pm Elimination round 6 (if necessary)

In both preliminary and elimination round competition forfeit time is fifteen minutes after the announced start time of each round. Only a member of the tab room committee or their designee may declare a debate a forfeit due to the late arrival of a team. The tournament committee should strive to create an announced start time that is at least thirty minutes after the release of the pairings for each round. On Day 1 and 2 the forfeit rule should be strictly enforced.

### Chaperone

Students competing in tournaments must be accompanied by an adult who is an employee of the school or school district the student represents. To fulfill the requirements of this section schools must fill out and send in Appendix C.

### Amendments

This document may be amended in any of the following ways:

1) By a simple majority vote of the board.  
2) A member of the NDCA that is not a board member may submit a written request for amendment to the NDCA President at any time. If said written request includes the signature of 10 or more members of the NDCA the NDCA President should, within one week, submit the amendment to the board to be voted on. The amendment is approved if a simple majority of the board votes in favor. If the amendment fails to receive a simple majority of board votes the person  
submitting the amendment may attempt to include more signatures. If the amendment is resubmitted with signatures of more than half of the NDCA membership within one year of the boards rejection of the amendment then the amendment  
is approved without a board vote. For the purposes of this procedure "half of the NDCA membership" will be determined by dividing the number of NDCA members on the day the amendment is rejected by the board and divided by two.

3) These procedures may be amended by a simple majority vote of the board consistent with voting procedures as specified in the bylaws.