

**Cal State Long Beach's
Jack Howe Memorial Tournament**



September 30 – October 1, 2017

**Student Congress
Information Packet**

For Contestants, Judges, and Coaches

Legislation Requirements

Each school **must** submit at least one piece of legislation for consideration. Legislation must be emailed to jackhowelegislation@gmail.com by **Wednesday, September 13th by 5:00 PM PDT**. The tabulation staff is willing to review and provide guidance on your legislation if it is submitted no later than **Monday, September 11th by 5:00 PM PDT**. This will give you time to make any needed revisions.

We will be using the tournament-approved templates, which can be found on the tournament website's main page on the bottom right-hand side.

If you have **never** used a template before, it is easy! Simply download the appropriate template and type directly on to the opened document. There will be guidelines provided about what should go into each section. Please adhere to those guidelines. When done, please save the document in the following way SchoolName.docx.

Just some reminders:

- No extra sections may be added, but you may add sub-sections to the pre-established format in order to provide more detail.
- All sections must be included.
- **Bills** should be about national issues and must be within the jurisdiction of the legislative branch. This means that almost all domestic pieces of legislation can be written in the format of a bill. Also, legislation that funds international expenditures can be done through the bill format. We encourage students to provide both an oversight body as well as funding provisions.
- **Resolutions** generally focus on foreign policy issues where Congress has no authority but would like to encourage the President or a foreign country to act in a particular way. The resolution uses a variety of whereas clauses to explain the need for such action.
- **Amendments** should be written any time a specific change to the Constitution or the Bill of Rights is desired. This legislation is generally the least labor intensive, but students have to carefully construct the language used in the wording of the proposed amendment. Students should remember that in order for this piece of legislation to pass, 2/3rds of the chamber must provide consent.
- All legislation should be authored by a school.
- All questions or concerns should be sent to jackhowelegislation@gmail.com.

Thanks for your hard work and diligence so early in the year!

Official Rules

Important Note:

The information in this packet is tentative with regard to the preliminary round format. If numbers drop significantly between the release of this packet and the beginning of the competition, the tournament reserves the right to adjust the numbers and procedures accordingly.

The rules contained herein are designed to promote procedural unity among the chambers. They are subject to change by the staff at any time, but they may NOT be altered or ignored through a suspension of the rules by the chamber.

CHAMBER DECORUM:

- Each chamber is designated a HOUSE.
- A member of the House of Representatives is always referred to as “Representative.”
- The Presiding Officer is addressed as “Mister/Madam Speaker.”

LEGISLATIVE DAY:

- A legislative day is one session.
- Speaker order (recency) resets after each session.

AGENDA ORDER: Each chamber may determine its own agenda based on the order of the legislation assigned compiled in the tournament docket.

PRESIDING OFFICER NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS:

- Coaches must nominate and certify prior to the close of registration, which students would like to be considered for presiding officer nomination.
- There is **one (1) elected Presiding Officer** in each session.
- No legislator may serve in that office for more than one session if there are other willing candidates within the chamber.
- In the event none of the school recognized presiding officers choose to run for election, nominations may be taken from the floor.
- The *Parliamentarian* using a secret ballot conducts elections. A majority vote is required to elect a candidate.
- The chamber’s best presiding officer as determined by the *Parliamentarian* and *Scorers* is guaranteed to advance to the next round of competition.

RECOGNITION OF SPEAKERS:

- Presiding officers must precede when recognizing speakers. This means that presiding officers must choose speakers who have spoken least (or not at all). The only exception to precedence is when the speaker has *authorship* privileges. In this case, precedence must be broken in order to recognize the author as the initial speaker of the newly introduced legislation.
- Presiding officers should employ recency once precedence has been set. This means that the presiding officers should select the speaker who has spoken *least recently* (or earliest).
- Before precedence is set, the presiding officer must choose and explain to the chamber the manner in which speakers will be recognized. Only two methods are strictly prohibited: activity and longest standing.
 - Activity – The presiding officer may not select speakers based on who has already been recognized for questions and/or motions.
 - Longest Standing (Standing Time) – The presiding officer may not track how many times speakers stand to be recognized.

LEGISLATION WITHOUT AN AUTHOR:

- Two pieces of legislation will be assigned to each session. Each school must submit one piece of legislation for consideration.
- The purposes of debate, the author shall be considered the student from the school submitting the legislation that is both seeking to speak and has precedence and/or recency. In the event that neither precedence nor recency has been established, it is up to the discretion of the Presiding Officer to select the author.
- If the author of a bill or resolution is not present in the chamber, withdraws from the tournament, or waives service as the author, a sponsorship speech is in order.
- Sponsorship is determined by recency.
- The sponsorship becomes accountable for the mechanics of the legislation and must yield to two minutes of questioning by the chamber.
- The Presiding Officer may not step down in order to take the floor as an author and/or sponsor.

QUESTIONING DURING PRELIMINARY AND NOVICE OUTROUND COMPETITION:

- A mandatory two-minute questioning period follows all authorship, sponsorship and sponsorship on amendment speeches.
- A two-minute questioning period also follows the first negative speech on any item of legislation.
- The Presiding Officer shall recognize legislators who wish to ask a question of the speaker; the speaker **MAY NOT** perform his function him/herself.
- All other speeches will have a mandatory one-minute questioning period that may not be suspended.
- Questioners may only ask one question at a time. Thus, the Presiding Officer has an obligation to rule “two-part,” misleading, or irrelevant questions out of order.

QUESTIONING DURING VARSITY OUTROUND COMPETITION:

- The same questioning times in preliminary competition remain in place for semifinal and final rounds of competition, except that all periods are broken into 30-second segments, with one questioner per segment, who may ask multiple questions of the speaker.
- The Presiding Officer must keep a separate precedence chart, but does not need to keep track of recency.
- The Presiding Officer should promptly adjudicate the end of each 30-second period.
- If a questioner does not use the full 30-seconds, the Presiding Officer has the discretion to call on another questioner, or absorb the time.
- No suspension of the rules to extend questioning is permitted.
- Questioners may not preface.
- Questioners may interrupt a speaker, but the manner in which they do so is subject to critique by judges.
- Questioners should strive to expose flaws in the speaker's arguments by asking a series of questions.
- These questions should subject the speaker's arguments to intensive and focused scrutiny. This is neither the time nor the place for "softball questions."
- The segment is for asking questions, not for making new arguments or rehashing.
- Questions should be concise and to the point.

AMENDMENTS:

- Legislators must submit amendments in writing.
- A motion to amend is necessary to consider the written amendment.
- Once the motion is made, the Presiding Officer decides if the amendment is germane.
- The Presiding Officer may consult with the Parliamentarian to make this decision.
- If the amendment is found not germane, the chair rules it out of order and the amendment process stops.
- If the chair rules the amendment germane, the chamber considers the amendment. In this case, the presiding officer reads the amendment to the chamber.
- A 1/3rd second of the members present in the chamber is required to debate the amendment.
- If the chamber votes a second, debate on the amendment commences immediately.
- There is no minimum cycle requirement for amendments, so legislators may make a motion to table or call the previous question on the amendment at any time.
- The first speech on the amendment is a sponsorship speech. The chair determines speaker recognition for the sponsorship speech on the basis of recency; the author of the amendment is not guaranteed the sponsorship speech. The sponsor accepts responsibility for the mechanics of the amendment and yields to two minutes of questioning.
- All amendment speeches receive a score and count towards recency. A majority vote is necessary for the chamber to adopt the amendment.

VOTING:

- The Presiding Officer determines the method of voting on each question that comes before the chamber, except for final votes on legislation, amendments, and motions to appeal to the chair, a recorded vote must be taken. On all other votes, “voice voting” is acceptable.
- A recorded vote must follow if:
 - any member asks for a division; or
 - a member of the chamber moves for a roll call vote and the motion is agreed to by 1/5th of the chamber.
- All simple majority votes are based on the number of legislators present and voting in the chamber. Therefore, the Presiding Office may not call for or count abstentions.
- For all votes requiring a fraction of the chamber to agree to a motion or question (2/3, 1/3, 1/5, etc.), the chair determines whether the chamber agrees with the motion/question using the number of legislators present in the chamber.
- Thus, the Presiding Officer must track the number of legislators in the chamber at all times.

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY:

- During the course of debate on a piece of legislation under consideration, use of the Internet shall be strictly prohibited.
- Internet may be used during recesses called by the chamber or during the time period between sessions, but may not be accessed during motions of personal privilege.
- Both judges and peers present in the chamber shall monitor inappropriate use of the Internet.
- Concerns should be brought to the Parliamentarian in a discreet manner that has limited impact on the flow of the chamber.
- The Parliamentarian will then bring these concerns to the attention of the tabulation staff.

PRELIMINARY NOVICE COMPETITION FORMAT

There are **three (3) sessions** of debate in the Preliminary Competition. Each session consists of **two (2) hours** of floor debate.

For purposes of this competition, one complete session is a legislative day. Priority for speaking resets at the end of each legislative day. *Thus, all legislators will have zero speeches at the start of each session.*

A Parliamentarian and two (2) Scorers will evaluate each chamber. The *Parliamentarian* remains in the chamber throughout the preliminary competition, while the *Scorers* rotate to different chambers throughout the tournament. The *Scorers* evaluate every speech that is given in a session, rating them on a scale of 1 to 6 (1 is low; 6 is high). The points awarded by a *Scorer* for a given speech can thus be used to determine NFL points for that speech. The *Parliamentarian* keeps notes on the overall performance of each legislator, including an evaluation for each Presiding Officer, awarding him/her up to 18 NFL points on the basis of his/her performance during a given session. The *Parliamentarian* will also rank all of the students at the end of the session based on the legislator's holistic performance.

At the end of each session, the *Scorers* will each independently nominate eight students for Best Legislator during the session. Each Scorer's nomination form is converted into credits by the Tabulation Staff with the 1st place legislator receiving 8 credits, the 2nd place legislator receiving 7, and so on. Those students who were not ranked by the *Scorer* will receive zero (0) credits from that *Scorer*. The an equal number of students from each chamber who have earned the highest number of judge credits during the Preliminary Sessions will advance to the Semifinal Round. If need, the *Parliamentarian's* ballot shall serve as a tiebreaker.

PRELIMINARY VARSITY COMPETITION FORMAT

There are **four (4) sessions** of debate in the Preliminary Competition. Each session consists of **two (2) hours** of floor debate.

For purposes of this competition, one complete session is a legislative day. Priority for speaking resets at the end of each legislative day. *Thus, all legislators will have zero speeches at the start of each session.*

A Parliamentarian and two (2) Scorers will evaluate each chamber. The *Parliamentarian* remains in the chamber throughout the preliminary competition, while the *Scorers* rotate to different chambers throughout the tournament. The *Scorers* evaluate every speech that is given in a session, rating them on a scale of 1 to 6 (1 is low; 6 is high). The points awarded by a *Scorer* for a given speech can thus be used to determine NFL points for that speech. The *Parliamentarian* keeps notes on the overall performance of each legislator, including an evaluation for each Presiding Officer, awarding him/her up to 18 NFL points on the basis of his/her performance during a given session. The *Parliamentarian* will also rank all of the students at the end of the session based on the legislator's holistic performance.

At the end of each session, the *Scorers* will each independently nominate eight students for Best Legislator during the session. Each Scorer's nomination form is converted into credits by the Tabulation Staff with the 1st place legislator receiving 8 credits, the 2nd place legislator receiving 7, and so on. Those students who were not ranked by the *Scorer* will receive zero (0) credits from that *Scorer*. The an equal number of students from each chamber who have earned the highest number of judge credits during the Preliminary Sessions will advance to the Final Round. If need, the *Parliamentarian's* ballot shall serve as a tiebreaker.