Dear Colleagues,

I am excited to invite you and your students to attend the eighteenth annual **Georgia State University National College Debate Tournament**, to be held in Atlanta, **September 15-18, 2017**. This invitation contains all the information you will need to register, including hotel info.

**Tab Staff:**  Dr. Jon Bruschke has agreed to return to run the tab room this year. He’ll likely be running it remotely again, and Logan Gramzinski will be supporting our efforts on site.

**Novice Packet per ADA**: The Novice Division will once again use the ADA evidence set. I will distribute more information about the packet as it becomes available.

**One Judge Pool**: if you are judging for a school with competitors in Novice and/or JV, you are committed to judge in those divisions’ elimination debates, even if you have fulfilled your prelim commitment. Directors and coaches, please communicate this to your judges and assistants—even if you judge. Rounds 7 and 8 are typically quite important to competitors, and we are stretched thin. If your team’s judges don’t fulfill these responsibilities, the tournament may have to forfeit your team’s competitors to properly cover debates. That’s an undesirable result for students and teacher-coaches, so please work with us to make sure that your judges fulfill their obligations.

**Judge placement**: We will continue to use MPJ as in past years. We will utilize a preference rotation system across divisions again, and plan to use the ‘opt-in’ process for judging diversity. We also may increase the size of elim panels. We will post a separate document detailing our tab procedures in early August, as we did last year.

**Clipping:**  Clipping issues should be decided by the assigned judge, within the time allotted for a normal debate decision. It is not the tournament director’s intention to have an appeals process, or to enact a penalty that exceeds a judge’s authority in a given debate. We will post further guidance concerning the relevant options for judges to assign points shortly.

**Tournament governing issues:** Any matter that arises in the course of tournament administration will be handled at the discretion of the Tournament Administrator. The Administrator will make decisions that conform to GSU policies and procedures. This includes GSU’s relevant policies on harassment and discrimination, which can be found here: <http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfhb/sec20603.html>. The Administrator will also use the CTD document as a guide where applicable.

**Important Features:**

**Three Divisions:** Bring everyone who wants to debate.

**Hotel Rate:** $105 per night, quadruple occupancy (while they last!), and in-room Internet is free.

**Prelims:** 8 prelims in Open, with all Open elims on Monday. Novice and JV will stay at 6 prelims, and elims for the lower divisions will begin on Sunday.

**Hotel Information**

The tournament hotel is the Marriott Atlanta Century Center, 2000 Century Boulevard  NE, Atlanta, GA, 30345, (404) 325-0000. Website: [**http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/atlne-atlanta-marriott-century-center**/](http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/atlne-atlanta-marriott-century-center/). The Marriott Century Center is about a 10-15 minute drive from campus, and is easily accessible from I-85. Our contacts there is **Rutta Tesfaldet.**

For reservations, you can also call (800) 228-9290 and ask for the GSU Debate Team event. **The deadline for the block rate is August 25, 2017, so book now!** If you wish to book through a reservation link, this should work:

**[Book your group rate for Georgia State University Debate](http://www.marriott.com/meeting-event-hotels/group-corporate-travel/groupCorp.mi?resLinkData=Georgia%20State%20University%20Debate%5Eatlne%60gstgsta%60105.00%60USD%60false%604%609/15/17%609/19/17%6008/25/17&app=resvlink&stop_mobi=yes" \t "_blank)**

For schools who wish to claim a tax exemption, the hotel prefers to receive a copy of the tax exempt form, a purchase order, and to receive payment via Government issue credit card or state check. Feel free to call the information number at the Marriott for details about this issue - the hotel is eager to work with you.

**Internet Access at the Hotel**

Internet access in the room will be complimentary, according to the terms of our contract.

The hotel has recently started providing free wireless access in the main lobby area. We will have Internet codes for participating teams in the elims that will allow them to access the Internet in the convention space. More details about this benefit will be available in the pre-tournament packet and at registration.

**Tournament Entry**

Online registration is available at [http://www.tabroom.com](http://www.tabroom.com/). Please enter your teams by **5pm Friday, September 8** (so our preset committee can do its work) and specify your judging by **5pm Tuesday, September 12**. Please contact Tim Barouch if you are planning to enter more than 6 teams in the Novice or JV division.

**Fees**

We accept cash and checks. **We can’t accept credit cards at this time (sorry!)** **Make checks payable to “GSU Debate.” Our FEID# is: 58-1845423. Address: PO Box 5060, Atlanta, GA 30302-5060. I will post a W9 form shortly.**

The fee for the tournament is $80 per person for all Open competitors, as well as all judges and scouts. For JV and Novice teams, the fee is $70 per person. **Any drops after the 9/13 deadline will incur the regular registration fee**.

If you need an invoice prior to the tournament, please e-mail timbarouch@gmail.com with relevant details.

**JUDGING REQUIREMENTS**

In Open, each school must provide 4 rounds of prelim judging for each of their first two entries. For each team a school enters after its first 2, it must provide 5 rounds of judging per team. In Novice and JV, each school must provide 3 rounds of prelim judging for each of their first two entries. For each team a school enters after its first two in these divisions, it must provide 4 rounds of judging per team. All qualified persons attending the tournament as a coach must make themselves available for at least two rounds of judging.

As usual, we are also looking to hire judges to help improve mutuality and the overall quality of the pool. IF A JUDGE FULFILLING YOUR SCHOOL'S OBLIGATION DOES NOT SHOW UP for an assigned round, we will assign another one of your judges (our choice) to adjudicate an additional round beyond their original obligation. This is true even if we are able to replace your absent judge with someone other than a judge from your school.

All judging for hire should be arranged through the system at tabroom.com.

**All judges are obligated to judge through octafinals**, or one round after their school's last team exits the tournament, whichever comes later.

We expect each school to cover their own judging obligations, and we strongly encourage teams to bring judges whose reputation will allow them to judge their entire commitment of rounds. If you are willing to be hired beyond your obligation, please contact me immediately -- it is likely we will want your services.

In prelims, judges will have 2 hours and 30 minutes from the start of every prelim round to turn in a decision. In elim debates, judges will have 2:45 with 15 minutes of discussion time.

As needed, we may assign judges from schools without JV or Novice teams to judge debates in those divisions to fill a judging commitment.

We expect all judges at the tournament to make a decision at the end of the round signifying that one team has won and the other team has lost the debate, and to fill in appropriate speaker points. Ballots attempting to award a double win or loss will be adjusted to this procedure by use of a coin toss.

**TOURNAMENT ADMINISTRATION DETAILS**

We will debate the official CEDA resolution, though what that means and most other stylistic and content-based decisions are issues for individual debaters and judges to decide. Any student meeting AFA eligibility requirements may enter the open division. The JV and novice divisions will be restricted to students who meet the relevant AFA requirements.

Hybrid may be allowed at the discretion of the tournament director. If you wish to enter a hybrid team into the tournament, please contact timbarouch@gmail.com

9-3-6, 10 minutes prep.

Maverick teams cannot register; debaters may debate maverick due to illness or other partner issues, but all maverick debates will be ‘for educational purposes only.’

GSU teams will enter the tournament in one or more divisions. Those teams will be eligible for elimination rounds. Neither the Director nor any other GSU representative will make judge placement or other tab decisions for GSU teams. Judges can judge rounds involving schools they used to attend 3 years after they leave the school (assuming no other conflicts are present).

We are seeking CEDA sanctioning, and will implement CEDA policies on sexual harassment and discrimination. We are also seeking ADA sanctioning, and for our tournament’s attendees to receive ADA points.

We will use speaker points on a 0-30 scale in tenths but will not use ranks. The first two prelim debates will be preset as A v. B and AA/BB. Debates after that will be individually power matched high-low within brackets, barring unforeseen scheduling issues that require us to lag pair a round. We may lag pair round 6 off of the first four, per CTD suggestions. Clearing teams and speakers will receive awards, recognition, or both. We will not break brackets in elimination rounds. Sides in elims will be determined by pre-existing constraints (when available) or a coin toss; we will not use side equalization.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15**

6:00 - 9:00 p.m.    Registration, Marriott Century Center Hotel

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16**

7:00 - 8:00     Breakfast and pairings available at GSU Campus

8:00     ROUND 1 (10:30 decision time)

11:00    ROUND 2 (1:30 decision time)

1:00     Lunch

2:30     ROUND 3 (5:00 decision time)

6:00     ROUND 4 (8:45 decision time)

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17**

7:00 - 8:00     Breakfast and pairings available at GSU Campus

8:00     ROUND 5 (10:30 decision time)

11:00 ROUND 6 (1:30 decision time)

1:00 Lunch

2:45     ROUND 7\* (5:15 decision time)

5:00    Dinner

6:15     Round 8\* (9:00 decision time)

We will release brackets in Open as soon as they are available on Sunday night. Judging panels will be released Monday morning.

\* Elimination rounds in the JV and Novice divisions may begin during rounds 7 and 8, depending on the size of the division and our judging constraints. If necessary, additional JV or Novice elim rounds will be held on Monday.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18**

7:00 am    Panels available online and, at Marriott Century Center Hotel

8:00     Double-octafinal round in Open. JV and/or novice elimination rounds as necessary

11:00    Awards ceremony (at the Marriott, room TBA)

Noon    Octafinal round in Open.

Elims will proceed with a 2:45 decision deadline, 15 minutes discussion time, and 30 minutes prep time from end of decision time until beginning of the next round, or ASAP.

We hope to see you in Atlanta in September!

Tim Barouch

Assistant Professor and Director of Debate

Georgia State University