NDT District VII Rules

(Revised, February 2018)

SECTION I: GOVERNANCE

#### A. THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE

(1) The District Committee shall consist, in total, of five persons, four to be selected at meetings held at the District Tournaments. Elected committee members will serve for two years. Nominations shall be open to all coaches of District VII subscriber programs. Election shall be by plurality. Terms will be staggered so that each year, two members’ terms will be expired.

(2) An alternate shall also be chosen to fill any vacancies during the year. The alternate shall be the nominee with the third highest number of votes.

(3) An election to Committee membership goes to an individual not a school.

(4) The tournament host becomes the fifth member of the District Committee. In the case in which the NDT representative is **NOT** a member of the committee, then the host will be a non-voting member.

#### B. DISTRICT COMMITTEE OFFICES

(1) District Chair: District Committee members will elect one of the four regularly elected Committee members, or the NDT Representative where s/he is not one of the four regularly elected members, to serve as chair. This person shall be responsible for planning, organizing and conducting District Meetings. In consultation with the host, the chair will plan the District Tournament. The chair will also be responsible for securing hired judges in accordance with the procedures specified in Section II. The chair will serve a one-year renewable term. The chair for the coming year will be selected before the close of the District Tournament.

(2) Secretary-Archivist: District Committee members will elect one of the four “elected” members to serve as Secretary-Archivist. This person shall be responsible for taking minutes at all District Business Meetings and for distributing copies of those minutes to all subscribing schools in District VII. This person shall also take minutes at District VII Committee Meetings and distribute them to District Committee members. Finally, this person will be responsible for gathering and preserving the important records and materials which constitute the “history” of District VII affairs.

#### C. NDT REPRESENTATIVE

The NDT representative shall represent the district to the NDT Committee. He/she may or may not be a member of the committee. He/she shall be elected by plurality vote at the district meeting each year. He/she shall promptly report to all district schools on the outcome of the NDT committee meeting and on any changes in the NDT rules. He/she will be an ex officio member of the District Committee, if not already serving on the committee and will be eligible to vote on all issues before the committee.

#### D. DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP

To be a voting member of the District, a school must have paid the NDT fee. If a school paid the NDT subscription the previous academic year, it shall be considered a member until January 15th the following calendar year. A member school’s debate program director or a designated proxy must be in attendance at district meetings in order to vote unless a mail ballot or electronic voting is specified.

#### E. DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee will meet as a body at site(s) determined by the chairperson. The meetings will occur at least three weeks prior to the District Tournament. The number of such meetings needed will be determined by the chair.

#### F. DISTRICT BUSINESS MEETINGS

(1) A meeting of the full district will be held the night before the District Tournament begins. Other meetings may be scheduled during the year as needed. It is recommended that at least one District Meeting be scheduled each semester to be held at a District VII Tournament. These meetings will be held to discuss relevant matters connected with District VII and NDT business.

(2) Students may attend District Meetings.

(3) Votes, when taken at any District Meeting, shall be limited to one vote per subscribing school.

#### G. QUALIFICATION FOR THE NATIONAL DEBATE TOURNAMENT

Each team desiring to attend the NDT will submit a complete entry to the Committee Chair and the online entry system by a date announced by the Chair of the Committee. The Committee Chair will compile entries, including swing teams, and report them to the district. If the district decides not to qualify teams to the NDT by a tournament process, then the district will conduct a ranking procedure.

SECTION II: THE DISTRICT QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT

#### A. TOURNAMENT DATE

The District Tournament shall be held on continuous days being either Friday, Saturday, and/or Sunday – the choice of days to be up to the host in consultation with the District Committee.

#### B. ENTRIES

(1) The due date for entries will be the day before the deadline for declaration of intent to attend districts (as set by the NDT).

(2) District Hybrid Waiver: A team seeking an NDT Hybrid Exception Waiver to participate in the District Qualifying Tournament shall notify the District Chair by January 15th. The notification should include documentation of the team’s qualifications for the waiver to be evaluated by the District Committee. The District membership shall vote on whether to approve participation of the team in question by January 25th. The District Chair will notify the team and membership of the outcome of the vote.

(3) Teams which fail to meet completely the eligibility criteria specified in these rules will be notified of rejection by the Tournament Director. Teams rejected may appeal to the District Chairperson. The decision made will be made by majority vote of the District Committee.

(4) Schools may identify one or more alternate teams or debaters in their entry if they so choose, in addition to three preferred teams. Schools should also identify any team they wish to have eligible as a candidate for swing team.

(5) Up to two teams will be permitted entry in the District Tournament from a college or university that has already qualified a team for that year’s NDT. No team may be entered from a school that has qualified two teams for the NDT. If a school has received two first round bids, and plans to submit a third team for a second round at-large bid, that school must complete and submit an entry by the entry deadline for the District Tournament. In accordance with the NDT Standing Rules, the District Committee must establish a rank order for all teams entered in the tournament and those precluded from participation by the District’s rules, but who wish to submit for a third team, second round at-large bid to the NDT.

(6) Except in emergency situations as decided by the District Committee, no school shall be permitted to change a preferred team entry within seven days prior to the District Tournament.

#### C. QUALIFICATION OF TEAMS

Eligibility to participate in the District Qualifying Tournament and eligibility to count toward NDT bid allocation

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 6 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 six 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).

#### D. JUDGES OF RECORD

(1) Each school is responsible for providing eight rounds of judging per team entered in the district tournament.

(2). Qualifications.

To be eligible to judge at the District Qualifier, 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, or 30 rounds on the national topic within the last three years, and
3. Not have competed on the current topic, and
4. Have an appropriately published judge philosophy. Team entries will be considered incomplete until judging philosophy statements are received.

(3) If an individual does not meet the judging requirements, a waiver request must be submitted to the District Committee at least one week prior to the District Tournament. Judges will be notified of the result of the request by the District Chair in a timely fashion.

#### E. DISTRICT HIRED JUDGES

(1) All judging obligations should be the responsibility of the school in need of judging. In dire circumstances the district committee can hire judges as needed to facilitate the running of the tournament. All hired judges will receive a minimum of $30.00 per round. If a hired judge is available for all 8 rounds, the committee may offer a minimum guarantee of $180.00. Housing costs will be borne by the district and paid out of district fees. No travel expenses or food expenses will be paid.

(2) A district hired judge must have judged at least twelve rounds of debate on the current NDT topic unless approved by the District Committee. A district hired judge must declare, prior to being hired, his/her availability to judge all of the rounds scheduled for the District Tournament.

#### F. REGISTRATION

(1) Teams must register before the Tournament Director closes registration. A team which is delayed transit must notify the Tournament Director that they are in transit, providing a description of the problem and an estimated arrival time. The Tournament Director will provide this information to the District Committee which will then decide on appropriate action. Appropriate actions may include but not be limited to extending the time for registration for all teams, allowing a late registration for one team, or declaring a forfeit after the beginning of the first round.

(2) All teams must pay their expected tournament and/or judging fees during the registration period. If a team should become liable for unanticipated fees, e.g., through loss of a judge after the close of registration, they must pay these additional fees before the end of the last round unless the District Committee unanimously agrees to an extension or a waiver.

(3) All teams will pay an entry fee per team set by the District Committee. Any surplus money will be refunded to participating schools.

#### G. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

(1) Each team will compete in eight rounds of debate on the current national question.

(2) Each team is guaranteed an equal number of affirmative and negative rounds.

(3) No team will meet the same team twice during the tournament except in Round VIII.

(4) All debates shall use the format specified by the standing rules of tournament procedure for the National Debate Tournament.

(5) Decisions may be revealed by judges at their discretion.

(6) Once a round has begun, a debater may not communicate with anyone except his/her partner, the members of the other team and the judges assigned to the round.

(7) Judges will be placed based on an ordinal preference system, after consideration of preclusions.

(8) In rounds with single judges, judges are expected to render a decision within 2:30 of the announced start time. In rounds with three judges, judges are expected to render a decision within 2:45 of the announced start time. If a judge is unable to make a decision within the appropriate time parameters for that round, the tab room should randomly decide the winner of that ballot by coin flip.

#### H. PAIRING OF ROUNDS

There will be four preset rounds of competition. These rounds will be paired according to the rank total method:

* The District Committee will establish a deadline for team rankings. Each team entered will rank all teams submitting official entries (not including themselves). The District Committee will compile all rankings submitted by the deadline to establish a rank order for use in pairing the tournament. The highest and lowest ranks for each team will be dropped in preparing this composite ranking. In the event of a tie after dropping the highest and lowest ranks, the District Committee will continue to drop the highest and lowest ranks until the tie can be broken.
* In the four preset rounds, pairings will be based on a blind system designed to equalize opponent strength as determined by ranking.
* The sum total of opposition seeds for all teams will be roughly equivalent.
* Affirmative and negative totals of opposition seeds will be roughly equivalent.
* Round five will be power-matched off the first four debates using a “high-high” pairing, relying on the tie breaker process in Section I. Round six will be power-matched off the first four debates using a “high-low” pairing and breaking ties according to the process in Section I.
* All round pairings will be announced in scrambled order.

#### ROUNDS VII & VIII

(1). At the conclusion of Round VI, teams will be paired on the basis of the record during the first six rounds.

(a). Criteria for pairing round VII and VIII when three-judge panels have been assigned are, in order: number of wins, number of ballots, number of opponent wins, number of opponent ballots, adjusted team points, double adjusted team points, triple adjusted team points, total team points, total team ranks, and computer-generated random number.

(b). Criteria for pairing round VII and VIII in the case of single judge adjudication are, in order: number of wins, number of opponent wins, adjusted team points, double adjusted team points, triple adjusted team points, total team points, total team ranks, and computer-generated random number.

(c). Criteria for ranking when three-judge panels are assigned only for rounds VII and VIII are, in order: number of wins, number of opponent wins, adjusted team points, double adjusted team points, triple adjusted team points, total team points, total team ranks, and computer-generated random number.

Teams will be pulled from the middle, if there is no middle, pull from one below the middle and teams pulled into the bracket will be reordered based on points.

(2) In Round VIII, teams may debate against each other a second time, on the other side. No team will meet a team from its own school.

#### J. JUDGING INELIGIBILITY AND PRECLUSIONS

(1) A judge will be ineligible to hear a team if (a) he/she debated as an undergraduate for that school in the last four years, (b) he/she coached at that school in the previous two years, (c) he/she coached either of the two debaters on the team.

(2) A judge may request that he/she not hear a specific team. This request is to be made prior to round one and, if possible, when that judge registers for the tournament on a form provided at the tournament registration desk.

#### K. JUDGING ASSIGNMENTS

(1) Strikes: The bottom 10% of the ordinal ranks (rounding down) are presumed strikes unless judge assignment for an individual round is impossible.

(2) Judge assignment: In rounds 1-6, judge assignments will be generated simultaneously. In rounds 7 & 8, judge assignment will begin with teams at the break point, followed by those above and those below.

(3) Eligibility to hear teams more than once: Judges may hear a team once in rounds 1-6 and not more than twice in 8 debates.

(4) Judge commitments: All eligible judges are obligated for a minimum of 3 debates in rounds 1-6. *Judge commitments apply only to the first six debates*. All judges are obligated to be available to judge in rounds 7 & 8 unless otherwise granted dispensation by the district committee. Requests for dispensation should be made at the point of entry prior to the tournament, except in extraordinary circumstances. Information regarding those constraints will be provided to participants for preference purposes.

(5) Preference formula: Preference and mutuality assigned will be set to maximize preference within the constraints of the tournament.

(6) District workers: Individuals in attendance at the district tournament who provide significant coaching to, or argument production for, any team participating in the district tournament and who meet the judge eligibility requirement are required to enter the judging pool. If they do not meet the minimum judge requirement, the district committee may, at their discretion, place the individual in the judging pool or require them to provide a significant equivalent contribution to the tournament.

#### L. RULES GOVERNING EVIDENCE USE

(1) All evidence artifacts used in the District Tournament should include full source citation, either in a master file, on individual cards, or original sources. The source citation: (1) should be sufficient to permit others to locate the original sources, and (2) should include, at minimum, the author’s name (if given), name of published source, (journal/magazine/book/newspaper/government document), full date, and page number. Other MLA standards may be considered advisory. Each team in the tournament should be in possession of this material and capable of providing it in a given round without leaving the room to secure this material from a coach or another team.

(2) All paraphrased evidence must be orally indicated as such in the speech where it is used.

(3) All evidence quotations should contain ellipses when appropriate according to MLA standards.

(4) The individual judge(s) in a round should make the determination of evidence distortion and/or fabrication and if appropriate, award a loss to the offending team and zero speaker points to the offending speaker(s).

#### M. SWING TEAMS

(1) The District Tournament should avoid an odd number of teams by selecting a "swing team." Hybrid swing teams will only be eligible for consideration if neither school is represented at the tournament.

(2) If no eligible team is available to make the field even, the swing team should be selected from a District 7 school by the Committee and the Host through the following procedures:

(a). First priority will go to schools with no teams represented at the tournament. If multiple schools with no team represented have a potential “swing,” team names will be drawn randomly to determine which team is offered the spot.

(b). Second priority will go to schools with one team represented at the tournament. If multiple schools with only one team represented have a potential "swing," school names will be drawn randomly to determine which school is offered the spot.

(c). Third priority will go to schools with one team represented at the tournament and one team pre-qualified through the First Round At-Large process. If multiple schools meet this criteria to have a potential "swing," school names will be drawn randomly to determine which school is offered the spot.

(d). Fourth priority will go to schools with two teams represented at the tournament. If multiple schools with two teams represented have a potential "swing," school names will be drawn randomly to determine which school is offered the spot.

(e). Fifth priority will go to schools with three teams represented at the tournament. If multiple schools with three teams represented have a potential “swing,” school names will be drawn randomly to determine which school is offered the spot.

(3) The swing team should be ranked alongside all the participating teams and paired accordingly.

(4) The District will cover fees and judges for the swing team in cooperation with the swing team's school and assistance from programs in the District.

#### N. RESULTS AND QUALIFIERS

(1) The following procedure will be used to rank teams at the conclusion of the tournament. The appropriate number of teams will advance to the National Debate Tournament.

(a). Criteria for ranking when three-judge panels have been assigned are, in order: number of wins, number of ballots, number of opponent wins, number of opponent ballots, adjusted team points (with team points defined as the total of the individual speaker points given to the two debaters on a team in a particular round of debate), double adjusted team points, triple adjusted team points, total team points, and pre-tournament ranking.

(b). Criteria for ranking in the case of single judge adjudication are, in order: number of wins, number of opponent wins, adjusted team points, double adjusted team points, total team points, and pre-tournament ranking.

(c). Criteria for ranking when three-judge panels have been assigned only for rounds VII and VIII are, in order: number of wins, number of opponent wins, adjusted team points, double adjusted team points, triple adjusted team points, total team points, and pre-tournament ranking.

(2) Highest ranking speakers, determined by median scores, may be compiled and announced at the conclusion of the tournament.

#### O. CONTROL ROOM

(1) No one but the District Committee members and district directors/coaches with teams in the tournament will be allowed in the control room. Students of the host school may assist.

(2) All tabulations will be double checked for accuracy.

SECTION III: RULES AND PROCEDURE CHANGES

#### A. DISTRICT RULES

It shall be the responsibility of the District Chair to update the District VII rules each year, including all motions and amendment passed at the preceding District VII meeting(s). The Chair shall forward a set of these revised rules to the NDT representative for distribution along with his/her report in the first semester of the academic year following the district meeting. The NDT representative shall mail these revised rules to all District VII members.

#### B. PROCEDURE CHANGES

(1) Changes may be made in the District VII rules and procedures only by a majority vote of the district subscribers at either a duly constituted district meeting or by ballot. A duly constituted district meeting or ballot is defined as one that is announced to district subscribers at least three weeks prior to the meeting date and at which authorized representative of 40 percent of the district subscribers plus one are in attendance. In the event of a ballot, responses must be received from 40 percent of subscribers plus one within the required time period established by the Committee for response for the balloting to count. Each subscriber will have one vote. Only changes that are adopted before the announcement of that season’s topic may take effect immediately.

(2) The committee, however, may make the minimum necessary changes in order to maintain consistency with NDT regulations. The committee may make minimum necessary changes to alter language within the rules that does not alter the meaning of current language. The committee shall promptly inform all district schools of any changes.

(3) If rule changes are necessary to hold that year’s tournament, a motion to suspend the rules, requiring two-thirds majority, will be required and another two-thirds vote will be necessary for passage of the motion. Each new motion must be preceded by a separate suspension of the rules.

Revision History

[Revised December 1986 by Philip Warken (United States Naval Academy - District Chairperson) and Edward Grinder, O.S.B. (Saint Vincent College - NDT Representative). Approved by mail ballot in December-January 1987 with sufficient votes to become immediately effective. Effective for NDT Qualifying Tournament, 1987. Revised October 1994 by Ron Wastyn (James Madison University - District Chairperson) at District Meeting 10/21/94 with sufficient votes to become immediately effective. Revised February 1998 by Brett O’Donnell (District Committee) and approved at the District VII Tournament meeting. Revised December 2001 by Anand Rao (Clarion University - District Chairperson) and approved by mail ballot in December 2001 with sufficient votes to become immediately effective. Revised February 2002 by Anand Rao (Clarion University – District Chairperson) and approved at the District VII Tournament meeting. Revised November 2002 by Anand Rao (Mary Washington College – District Chairperson) and approved at the District VII Fall 2002 meeting. Revised February 2003 by Anand Rao (Mary Washington College – District Chairperson) and approved with sufficient votes to become immediately effective at the District VII Tournament meeting. Revised in February 2007 by Kevin Kuswa (University of Richmond—District Chairperson) and approved at the District VII Tournament meeting. Revised in February 2008 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington-District Archivist) and approved with sufficient votes at the Towson District VII Tournament meeting. Revised in February 2009 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington-District Archivist) and approved with sufficient votes at the UMW District VII Tournament meeting. Revised in November 2009 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington-District Chair) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective immediately at the Liberty District VII meeting. Revised in January 2010 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – District Chair) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for 2010-2011 season at the Navy District VII meeting. Revised in February 2010 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – District Chair) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for 2010-2011 season at the UMW District VII meeting. Revised in November 2010 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – District Chair) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for 2010-2011 season at the Liberty District VII meeting. Revised in February 2011 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – District Chair) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for 2011-2012 season at UMW District VII meeting. Revised in November 2011 by Michael Hall (Liberty University – District Chair) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for 2011-2012 season at the Liberty District VII meeting. Revised in February 2012 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – NDT Representative) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for the 2012-2013 season at the UMW District VII meeting. Revised in February 2013 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – NDT Representative) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for the 2013-2014 season at the UMW District VII meeting. Revised in November 2014 by Danielle Verney O’Gorman (US Naval Academy – District Chair) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for the 2014-2015 season at the Liberty District VII meeting. Revised in January 2015 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – NDT Representative) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for the 2014-2015 season at the Navy District VII meeting. Revised in February 2015 by Adrienne Brovero (University of Mary Washington – NDT Representative) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for the 2015-2016 season at the UMW District VII meeting.] Revised in February 2018 by Nick Ryan (Liberty University) and approved with sufficient votes to be effective for the 2017-18 season at the Navy District VII meeting.