

Constitution and By-Laws  
North Florida Catholic Forensic League  
Last updated August, 2018

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**This Version Controls All Future NFCFL Events.**

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## North Florida Catholic Forensic League Constitution

Article I. **Name:** The name of this organization shall be the North Florida Catholic Forensic League. Hereafter, it shall be referred to as “THE LEAGUE”.

Article II. **Purpose:** It shall be the purpose of this organization to promote interest in interscholastic forensics by encouraging a spirit of fellowship among students and coaches, a spirit of professionalism among coaches, and by conferring upon deserving candidates awards recognizing their achievements.

### Article III. **Membership and Annual Meeting**

#### **A. Membership**

##### 1. Admission

- a. Admission is open to any Catholic, private, or public high school, junior high school, or ninth grade center, that is currently located within the Diocese of Orlando.
- b. Any school located outside of the Diocese of Orlando, but maintains a membership that pre-dates December 10, 2005, is also eligible for admission into the league.

##### 2. Membership Fees

- a. The annual school membership fee shall be fifty dollars (\$50.00) for all schools.
- b. Renewal memberships paid after October 15 shall be seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for all schools.
- c. Any school that has not been an active league member for the previous three years shall be considered a new school and the membership fee shall be waived for the first year.

##### 3. Tournament Fees

- a. Each school shall pay a fee for each tournament it enters based on number of entries.
- b. The fee for each individual entrant shall be thirteen dollars (\$13.00) for entry to regular season tournaments, and twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for entry into the Grand Final Tournament. This entry fee shall include all applicable competitor meals.
- c. Meals must be ordered for each judge and coach at a cost of eight dollars (\$8.00) each for lunch at ten dollars (\$10.00) each for dinner.
  - i. Extra pre-ordered meals at all tournaments may be purchased for observers at the above-listed prices.
  - ii. Failure to purchase the mandatory number of meals will result in the NFCFL Executive Board adding the appropriate number of meals to a school’s invoice.

**B. Coaches’ Meeting:** An annual coaches meeting shall be conducted. Agenda items shall be solicited from the member coaches. The League President shall chair the meeting.

#### Article IV. **League Organization**

- A. **Organization/Operation:** All schools that have attained membership, their students, and their coaches shall constitute the League.
- B. **Function:** The League shall conduct at least six tournaments beginning as early as September and ending in March. The last tournament shall be the Grand National Qualifying Tournament and shall determine the League's representatives to the Grand National Tournament of the National Catholic Forensic-League. The League reserves the right to offer additional non-qualifying tournaments.

#### Article V. **Executive Committee**

##### A. **Members**

- 1. The Executive Committee of the League shall be composed of the President, the First Vice-President, the Second Vice-President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.
- 2. All Executive Committee members shall be forensics coaches at their schools, and their schools shall be League members.

##### B. **Election**

- 1. The election of the members of the Executive Committee shall occur after the last regular season tournament and no later than two weeks prior to the Grand National Tournament.
- 2. All member school forensics coaches shall be eligible to vote.
- 3. Each member school shall be allowed one vote regardless of the number of coaches at a given school.
- 4. Special elections to fill vacancies will be conducted.
- 5. Vacancies in the office of NFCFL President will be filled as specified below.

##### C. **Term of Office:**

- 1. The term of office for all members of the Executive Committee shall be two years beginning on the first day of July and ending on the last day of June.
- 2. Resignation
  - a. In the event that an officer can no longer fulfill their duties and chooses to resign, notice will be given to the Board, which will then email the membership.
  - b. The League president or designee shall accept candidate nominations for a period of 96 hours.
  - c. Within 24 hours of the closing of candidate nominations, the President will email candidate statements to the membership.

- d. 24 hours after candidate statements are emailed to the membership, voting will be open for a period of five calendar days.
- e. The individual with a majority of votes at the end of the election shall be deemed the winner. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will occur. The run-off election will be announced within 24 hours of initial vote tallying. Member schools will have 48 hours to vote. This process shall continue until a winner can be declared.

**D. Vacancies**

- 1. Vacancies on the Executive Committee in all offices except that of the President shall be filled by election within thirty days according to the above criteria.
- 2. The First Vice-President shall fill a vacancy in the office of President, with that office being filled by an election.

**E. Duties**

- 1. All members of the Executive Committee shall be responsible for the enforcement of all provisions of this constitution and its by-laws and all regulations and procedures enacted under its authority.
- 2. The Board shall attend all League tournaments except as excused by the other members of the Executive Board on a “just cause” basis.
  - a. The petitioning member will submit in writing at least 48 hours in advance to the Board notice of inability to attend a League tournament.
  - b. The third notice in a given school year that a board member is unable to attend a League tournament will also be deemed as notice that the board member is unable or unwilling to serve, which will then trigger the League’s vacancy rules.
- 3. The President shall:
  - a. maintain and increase the League membership;
  - b. represent the League at the fall and spring meetings of the NCFL Executive Board;
  - c. conduct all communication with NCFL including preparation of the League’s entry to the Grand National Tournament and for the purchase and proper distribution of all League awards;
  - d. attend all League tournaments except as exempted by the other members of the Executive Committee on a “just cause” basis; and
  - e. be empowered to undertake any action which does not violate this constitution or its by-laws provided that such action is approved in advance by a majority of the members of the Executive Committee.
- 4. The First Vice-President shall:
  - a. assume the duties of President in his/her absence; and
  - b. act as the tournament director and operations manager

- including but not limited to: receiving and preparing all tournament entries and materials, communication with host schools, and acting as tabulation director.
5. The Second Vice- President shall:
    - a. provide extemporaneous speaking topics and questions to be used at NFCFL tournaments;
    - b. coordinate all Congressional Debate operations; and
    - c. provide a report at the Spring Meeting of proposed changes for the Congress Manual.
      - i. This report shall include a pro/con sheet of the suggested changes.
      - ii. Membership will vote on changes at the Spring Meeting.
      - iii. Changes shall be implemented during the next competitive season.
  6. The Secretary shall:
    - a. create a record of business conducted at the annual meeting of the League;
    - b. maintain and oversee the League website, which shall include a league directory;
    - c. maintain student records from all league activities
  7. The Treasurer shall:
    - a. maintain the financial records of the League;
    - b. make an annual report showing general categories of income and disbursement at the League's annual meeting;
    - c. be responsible for all financial transactions at tournaments;
    - d. reimburse other members of the Executive Committee for expenses incurred at his/her discretion; and
    - e. be reimbursed by the President for all approved league expenses, whose name shall also appear on all financial accounts.

#### Article VI. **Annual Meeting**

- A. The annual meeting of the League shall be held in the spring prior to Grand Nationals at a time and date established by the Executive Committee no later than September 1 of the preceding year.
- B. The meeting shall be open to all League coaches and shall be chaired by the President.
- C. Items for the agenda shall be solicited at least one month in advance and shall be finalized and distributed no later than one week in advance.
- D. Each member school shall be allowed one vote.
  1. A coach or a coach's designee from a given member school must be present to vote for that school.
  2. Voting privileges shall be extended only to those schools that have fully finalized their annual memberships in the NFCFL/NCFL.
  3. Schools unable to attend the Spring Meeting may designate a

- proxy vote who may cast a vote on the school's behalf.
- E. Robert's Rules of Order-Revised shall serve as the basis for the conduct of the meeting, except that a quorum shall consist of the member schools present.
  - F. All action taken at the meeting will be regarded as the will of the League.

Article VII. **General**

A. ***Financial Records***

1. The Treasurer shall make an annual report (V.E.6.b).
2. Financial records shall be open to any member coach upon written request to the President and the Treasurer.

B. ***Expense of Meeting Attendance***

1. The League treasury shall bear reasonable expenses incurred by the President at the fall and spring meetings of the National Catholic Forensic League's Executive Council.
2. Expenses for the spring meeting shall be provided if and only if the President's school fails to qualify at least one student to the Grand National Tournament.
3. In the event that the President shall be unable to attend, the same shall be provided for the Executive Committee's designated representative. Reasonable expenses incurred for Executive Committee meetings shall be paid for from the League's treasury.

C. ***Special Referendum***

1. Whenever three members of the Executive Committee certify that a question should be decided by the membership, that question will be put to a vote of the League.
2. The question and an accompanying pro and con statement shall be published on the NFCFL website.
3. Voting will take place electronically and each member school shall be entitled one vote on the question.
4. The question shall be decided by a majority of the ballots returned.

Article VIII. **Dissolution**

- A. The property of this organization is irrevocably dedicated to educational charitable purposes and no part of the net income or assets of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private person.
- B. Upon dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes with the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or state or local government for public purpose. Any such asset not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the organization or organizations as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

## North Florida Catholic Forensic League By-Laws

### Operation of the League

#### By-Law 1. *Enactment Date for All By-Laws*

- A. All provisions of this constitution and these by-laws shall become effective immediately upon adoption.
- B. Provisions relating to events that have already transpired during the season in which said documents are adopted are exempt from immediate adoption.

#### By-Law 2. *Procedures for Election of Executive Committee Members*

- A. Nominations for the Executive Committee shall be taken through e-mail.
- B. The Executive Committee shall appoint one member coach who is not on the Executive Committee and not running for a board position to receive the nominations and create the ballot.
- C. Nominations will be accepted for a thirty-day period.
- D. Once the ballot has been created and posted on the NFCFL website, voting will be open for a two week period through e-mail.
- E. All member coaches nominated for the office of President must have served a full term as an Executive Committee member during the previous five years.

#### By-Law 3. *Annual Tournament Calendar*

- A. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to establish the annual tournament calendar. If at all possible, the tournament calendar shall be tentatively established at the Spring Meeting in the prior school year. The final calendar, including host venues, shall be established and announced on the NFCFL website no later than August 15.
- B. The criteria for selecting host schools for the regular-season tournament schedule shall be as follows (in no particular order):
  1. size of school
  2. geographical balance
  3. order of request
  4. date requested
  5. new sources of request
  6. previous hosting history
  7. support of other NFCFL tournaments
- C. If the schedule is not filled, the League reserves the right to request that a school that has not hosted in the last two years do so.

#### By-Law 4. *Votes of Membership*

- A. All ballots shall be prepared by the Executive Committee and published on the NFCFL website.
- B. Ballots shall be cast and returned by e-mail.
- C. Each member school shall be entitled to one vote in all elections.

D. A member coach shall cast the vote.

**By-Law 5. *Affiliated Schools***

- A. The Executive Committee shall closely examine membership applications from affiliated schools, which are those schools (often ninth grade centers and middle schools) that are closely linked to another school (often a high school) with membership in the league.
  - 1. In general, membership from an affiliated school will be accepted only if the school is a separate facility from the related high school and has a separate principal.
  - 2. The final decision on admissibility of a membership application rests with the Executive Committee of the League.
- B. In all League matters, high schools and middle schools/ 9<sup>th</sup> grade centers that are affiliated shall be treated as separate entities.
- C. Judges from one school are excluded from hearing students from schools deemed to be affiliated.

**By-Law 6. *Schools Outside of NFCFL Boundaries***

- A. All schools that are members of another NCFL League will be allowed to compete in regular-season NFCFL tournaments with the payment of a school fee and a sixteen (\$16.00) entry fee, which shall include lunch.
- B. All entries from schools outside of NFCFL boundaries shall be considered invitational and not qualifiers. Therefore, only schools within the NFCFL boundaries shall be eligible to attend the NFCFL Grand Qualifier.
- C. NFCFL members attending tournaments in other leagues cannot count such attendance toward their eligibility requirements for the NFCFL Grand Final Tournament. If extenuating circumstances exists, the coach may petition the Board for an exemption.

**By-Law 8. *Rules Regarding Student Safety***

- A. All tournaments will be a closed campus.
  - 1. Closed campus shall mean that once competitors and student judges arrive at the tournament they are to remain at the tournament location until dismissed by tournament officials at the conclusion of the awards ceremony.
  - 2. Tournament officials will not release competitors prior to the conclusion of the awards ceremony without written notice from the coach that the competitor may leave early. Upon this notice, the League is no longer responsible for the attendee's welfare and safety and the coach accepts full liability.
  - 3. Competitors who violate this rule will be immediately disqualified from the tournament.



- B. Photography of rounds will be strictly prohibited.
  - 1. No individual will be allowed to take still or moving pictures of students during competition rounds.
  - 2. Any student who violates this rule shall be disqualified from the tournament.
  - 3. Any judge who violates this rule will be immediately removed from the judge pool and the school must immediately replace the judge or face dropped entries.
  - 4. Any visitor who violates this rule may be escorted off campus.
- C. A school-approved adult must accompany students to the tournament and remain on site for the entire competition.
  - 1. If the school-approved adult is NOT the coach of record on the membership card, a letter signed by the school principal and printed on school stationary MUST be presented at registration. The letter needs to specifically name the adult in charge.
  - 2. The penalty for failing to bring this letter when it is required is disqualification of all contestants from the school involved.
  - 3. A coach on record must be present during the entire duration of the Grand Finals tournament.
  - 4. Coaches must remain onsite during competition until all students from their team leave.
    - a. Should a coach or designated adult leave prior to their students without alerting the tab room, the tab room may fine that school \$100.
    - b. Should it be discovered that a team does not have a coach or designated adult present during the tournament, all team members will be disqualified immediately and the tab room may fine that school \$100.

## **General Tournament Regulations**

### **By-Law 9. *Governance of Tournaments***

- A. At least three members of the Executive Committee shall be present at all League tournaments from the opening of registration until the end of the awards assembly.
- B. All members of the Executive Committee shall be present for the Grand Final Tournament.
- C. Only the Executive Committee and tab designated officials who they may appoint shall be allowed free access to the tabulation room during the course of tournaments.
  - 1. Only the Executive Committee and tab designated officials shall be involved in the tabulation of results.
  - 2. Members of the Executive Committee present at a given tournament shall be involved with pairing/scheduling of the tournament.
  - 3. Access to ballots may be provided at the Grand Final

- Tournament at a time determined by the Executive Committee and as communicated in advance of the tournament.
4. Leaking information from tab or ballot check-in by any tournament official is strictly prohibited. Violation of this rule will result in the official's team being disqualified from that tournament.
- D. Members of the Executive Committee present at a given tournament shall serve as the final authority in the arbitration of any grievances/challenges involving the conduct of the tournament, the conduct of any coach, the conduct of any student, the conduct of any judge, or the alleged violation of rules and regulations pertaining to any category of competition.
1. In order to file a protest, a coach must bring their protest to the tabulation room in person.
  2. Depending on the nature of the protest, any or all of the following actions may be taken:
    - a. Judge consultation;
    - b. Selection review; and/or
    - c. Piece observation by a member of the Executive Committee.
  3. Before the Executive Board makes a decision on the protest, the coach of the alleged violator will be consulted.
- E. The host school shall be reimbursed at the tournament for meals ordered and school fees paid.

By-Law 10. ***General Tournament Regulations & Guidelines for Hosts***

A. Tournament Calendar

1. Member schools shall host all League tournaments on dates selected at the annual meeting.
2. The tournament schedule/calendar shall be finalized and published on the NFCFL Website no later than August 15 of the involved season.
3. No school shall host more than two tournaments during a given season.

B. Categories of Competition

1. Each tournament shall offer all NFCFL categories of competition.
  - a. Novice divisions for Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum debate shall be offered.
  - b. In the event that any novice individual event division does not have six entries or that any novice debate division does not have twelve entries, these divisions will be collapsed into the varsity division.
  - c. In the event that any varsity debate does not have

the numbers to run an efficient tournament the league reserves the right to combine the varsity and novice events for competition.

2. This information is included on the published calendar.
3. The Grand Final Tournament shall offer competition in all Grand National Tournament categories.

C. Definition of a Novice:

1. A “novice” shall be a student who has competed in no more than two tournaments in divisions in which high school students compete in previous years.
2. Students who are no longer in their first year of competition and change events do not revert back to novice status.

D. Host Responsibilities: Host schools and coaches shall provide:

1. all pertinent tournament invitation information to the First Vice-President no later than 30 thirty days prior to the close of tournament registration;
2. adequate rooms and facilities for all categories/competitors;
3. an auditorium or large room sufficient to hold registration and the awards assembly;
4. a tabulation room, centrally located to both the judges/coaches room and posting sites;
5. the ability to produce photocopies;
6. a coaches’/judges’ lounge with refreshments;
7. lunch prepared by a commercial vendor; and
  - a. The league will reimburse the host school eight (\$8.00) for each lunch ordered and ten dollars for each dinner by member schools in accordance with their registration.
  - b. All tournaments will be considered closed campus.
8. supply school maps to all competitors and judges/coaches.
9. Hosts should refer to the League’s website for the “Host Information Sheet” for further information.

E. Fees: All fees shall be deposited in the League treasury.

F. Event Rules: National Catholic Forensic League rules and regulations shall apply in all categories except in the case where the NFCFL needs to operate under uniquely designed rules as determined by the Executive Committee.

G. Competition Rounds:

1. All League tournaments with the exception of the Grand Final Tournament shall offer four rounds of competition with the sectioning/pairing of those rounds determined by a random process.
2. Congressional Debate shall adhere to the provisions for sessions as outlined in the NFCFL Congressional Debate Manual until such time as the Executive Committee determines those provisions to be outmoded.

By-Law 11. ***Drops from NFCFL Events***

- A. Drops in the regular-season tournaments after the entry deadline, but before 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday will result in forfeiture of the entry fee and lunch fees per student.
- B. Drops after 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday will result in the above penalties plus a five-dollar (\$5.00) fee per student dropped.
- C. Drops after 6:00 p.m. Friday, including those claimed at final registration or “discovered” after the start of the tournament, will result in the above fee forfeiture and drop fee plus a ten-dollar (\$10.00) nuisance fee per student.
- D. All drop fees will be directed to the NFCFL treasury.
- E. Drop fees for the Grand Final Tournament will be doubled.

By-Law 12. ***Online Entry***

- A. It shall be up to the Executive Committee to determine the form of registration that is most effective and affordable for the League’s use based on current technological trends and patterns within the forensics community as well as the skill set of the Executive Committee.
  1. This form of registration shall be selected prior to the start of the competitive year.
  2. In order to provide consistency for the year, no other form of registration may be used during the course of the competitive year.
  3. No other forms of entry will be permitted unless authorized by the Executive Committee because of technology failure.
- B. Entries will be due no later than 4:00 pm on the eighth day prior to each regular-season tournament.

By-Law 13. ***Entry Requirements/Restrictions***

- A. For all tournaments, including Grand Finals, a school may enter up to six entries in each category, with the exception of Congress. For Congress, schools may enter up to eight students during the preliminary season competition.
- B. No student will be allowed to enter more than one category per tournament.
- C. Grand Final Tournament competition requires that students be in at least grade nine.
- D. Schools holding an account balance and owing money in excess of \$50.00 for more than 60 days will not be permitted to register for regular season or the Grand Finals tournament until their debt is settled.

By-Law 14. ***Pairing of Rounds at Regular Season Tournaments***

- Proposed: Pairing of Rounds at Regular Season Tournaments
- A. Debate Event pairing rules:
  - A. The first two rounds will be randomly paired.

- B. Round 3 will be paired from the bracket established following the first round. Round 4 will be paired from the bracket established following the first two rounds. Brackets shall be established after each round using the competitors' records.
  - i. Brackets shall be created such that all undefeated entries comprise the top bracket; all entries with one loss shall comprise the next bracket; all entries with two losses shall comprise the third; all entries with three losses shall comprise the fourth (if applicable); and all entries with four losses shall comprise fifth (if applicable).
  - ii. Each bracket should contain an even number of entries; in the event that there are an odd number of teams in a bracket, the highest-ranked entry in the next lowest bracket shall be drawn up to that bracket to create a pairing. If drawing the highest-ranked entry in that bracket would violate one of the other pairing constraints for the round, the next-highest ranked entry shall be drawn up. This process will continue until a bracket is created that does not violate the pairing constraints.
  - iii. If there are an odd number of entries, the lowest rank entry in the bottom bracket shall receive the bye, unless that entry has previously drawn the bye. In that case, the bye shall be awarded to the next lowest entry in the bracket.
- a. Within each bracket, the rankings of each entry shall be established per the tie-breakers outlined in By-law 22.
- b. Within each bracket, the highest-ranked entry shall debate the lowest-ranked entry, the second-highest ranked entry shall debate the second-lowest ranked entry, the third-highest ranked entry shall debate the third-lowest ranked entry, and so forth.
- B. Teams from the same school will not hit each other. Debaters who have already meet in a prior round at the same tournament will not hit each other.
- C. Individual Events: Individual events with more than six entries will be randomly divided into a number of rooms such that no room has more than seven entries or fewer than three entries.
  - 1. At the discretion of the executive board, an individual event having seven entries may have the first two rounds paired such that all students are slotted to compete in the same room. Rounds 3 and 4 the board may randomly split the students into a room of 3 and a room of 4.
- D. Congressional Debate: Congress will follow the rules of pairing outlined in the Congressional Debate Manual.

**By-Law 15. *Public Forum Debate***

- A. Public Forum Debate will be offered at all NFCFL preliminary tournaments.
- B. This event will be governed by NFL rules.
- C. The Executive Committee shall publish those rules on the NFCFL website.

**By-Law 16. *Interpretation and Speech Restrictions:***

- A. No student member shall use an original oration, a non-original oration (declamation) or a selection of prose/poetry, or drama during a given League season that has been used by that student in any tournament of a previous season, regardless of that student's participation in NFCFL that previous season or of the category in which that previous season use occurred.

B. Rules Specific to Oratorical Declamation

1. The speaker should convey the message in a sincere, honest, and realistic attempt to recreate the spirit of the original presentation, however, this event is not an acting event and impersonation of the original speaker is not allowed. The message should be clear and convincing as if the words were the student's own. The speech must be delivered in English unless the speech uses a foreign language for rhetorical purposes.
2. This event will be open to students in the ninth or tenth grade and those in eleventh and twelfth grade who are deemed novices according to the NFCFL guidelines. Only students in ninth and tenth grade can compete in Grand Finals.

By-Law 17. ***Copies of Scripts:***

- A. All member students competing in non-script, memorized categories shall either bring to each League tournament a written copy of their presentations, or shall have access to a digital or electronic copy of their presentation, and shall present said copy upon demand to the Executive Committee members present if there is a challenge involving said presentation.
- B. Failure to present said copy shall result in disqualification from the involved tournament.

By-Law 18. ***Oral Interpretation:***

- A. The prose/poetry alternation in the Oral Interpretation category of any League tournament shall be determined by a coin toss or alternate non-bias method at the beginning of the tournament.
- B. In Oral Interpretation, competitors are not permitted to move their feet at any time during the performance, exclusive of any introduction to the selections, unless such movement is necessary to prevent a competitor from incurring physical harm.

By-Law 19. ***Extemporaneous Speaking***

- A. The Executive Committee shall maintain, update, and publish on an annual basis a set of guidelines covering preparation room rules and procedures as well as rules regarding the permissibility of various types of sources in extemporaneous speaking files.
- B. These guidelines will include what is a disqualifying offense or a lower level of offense that will result in other penalties.
- C. Publication of said guidelines shall be published no later than two weeks prior to the first tournament.

By-Law 20. ***Timing Rounds***

- A. All judges in the judging pool must have a stopwatch or other digital timer for use throughout the day.
- B. Judges are required to use that stopwatch to keep and record time accurately.

- C. It shall also be each contestant's responsibility to confirm with his/her judge that time signals will be given and how those signals will be given.

By-Law 21. ***Speaker Points in All Events***

- A. The Speaker Point range for Debate Events shall be 24-30.
- B. The Speaker point range for Individual Events shall be 88-100.
- C. Ballots submitted with points below the minimum shall be adjusted to the minimum.
- D. Half points are not permitted and shall be rounded up if received.
- E. Low point wins are not permitted in Debate Events but ties are.
- F. Low point wins are permitted.

By-Law 22. ***Tie-Breakers in All Events***

- A. Cumulative ranks followed by cumulative rating, cumulative adjusted rating (the highest and lowest rating will be discarded), reciprocals, and judges' preferences (in that order) will be used as the method of determining placement in all regular-season tournaments in categories where those criteria apply.
  - 1. In the event of an uneven split in entries, the entry earning the lowest rank in the larger room will be elevated to the lowest rank in the smaller room.
- B. In debate events the sequence shall be win/loss record, dropping of high/low speaker points, cumulative speaker points, opponent's record and results of head- to-head debate.
- C. Congressional Debate shall follow the League's Congressional Debate Manual.

By-law 23. ***Debate Evidence Rules***

- A. All debate events will be governed by the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) evidence rules.
- B. Those found in violation of these rules will be subject to the appropriate punishment determined by the board based on the criteria outlined in the NSDA evidence rules.

By-Law 24. ***Forfeiture Rules***

- A. All competitors must be to their competition rooms within 10 minutes of the round beginning.
- B. Students who are not in their competition rooms within the allotted time will be given a rank of 6th and 80 speaker points in speech events and a loss with a score of 24 in debate events.
- C. In an attempt to guarantee that tournaments run on time, this rule will also apply to the first round should a school be late to registration.

By-law 25. ***Disqualification for Rules Violations***

- A. All students must follow the rules which govern their event outlined in this document. Should an omission occur in this document, the NFCFL will default to the NCFL Constitution.
- B. Violation of rules should be brought to the tabroom immediately upon the completion of the round. The tabroom will complete a thorough investigation of the incident including talking with the judge, competitor(s), and coaches involved. Should a coach wish to appeal a disqualification decision made by the tabroom, said appeal must take place prior to the start of the round following the disqualification.
- C. Penalties for Rule Violations.
  - i. 1st Violation – Debaters will be awarded a loss in the round with 20 speaker points. Speech competitors will be ranked last in the round and given 80 speaker points.
  - ii. Future Violations – Upon the second violation of the same rule, the competitor will be disqualified from the tournament. The tournament in which the disqualification takes place will not count towards their NFCFL tournament quota for the year.
  - iii. Future violations of the same rule by students previously disqualified will result in immediate disqualification at future tournaments.
  - iv. The NFCFL Secretary will keep track of these violations throughout the year.
  - v. Violations will reset at the beginning of each new school year.

By-Law 24. ***Tournament Awards***

- A. The President shall make arrangements for the purchase of all League tournament awards and for making sure that awards are delivered to the tournament site in a timely fashion.
- B. All league tournament awards shall be trophies.
- C. Awards shall allow for the following:
- C. Awards shall allow for the following:
  - 1. At least one award shall be presented in each competitive category at each tournament.
  - 2. In events where there is no novice division, novice awards will be presented at a rate of one award for every 6 novice students or fraction thereof for a maximum of 3 novice awards. These awards will be presented to the top novice students in each event. These awards will not affect the number of varsity trophies awarded at the tournament.

By-Law 25. ***Conduct and suitability of material***

- A. Member coaches shall be responsible for the conduct of their school's student members during the course of all League activities. They also shall be responsible for the following:
- B. the suitability of material to be used in competition both in terms of good taste and in terms of League rules and regulations
- C. the strict enforcement of and adherence to all elements of the



League's constitution and these by-laws. This includes the training of judges for every competitive event offered by the League not only those in which the particular school has competitors.

By-Law 26. ***Judging Requirements***

- A. Member coaches shall provide qualified judges for League tournaments at the following rate:
1. one judge for every five entries in the non-debate categories (including Student Congress);
  2. one judge for every two entries or fraction thereof in the debate categories (one team counts as one entry in terms of judging quota); and
  3. any other judges that may be required as a result of the entry of students in categories not specifically covered here.
  4. Fractions round up when determining judge requirements (e.g., six entries in the non-debate categories would require two judges, while three debate entries would also require two judges).
  5. Schools with 5 or more entries must bring a "supplemental judge" qualified to judge in any and all pools of competition.
  6. Subsequent drops do not affect this rule.
  7. Each Executive Committee member's school shall have its total judge quota reduced by one regular judge.
  8. Schools that fail to meet their judge quotas shall be required to drop the minimum number of students to meet the judge quota.
  9. Judges who fail to report and pick up an assigned ballot will be issued a warning through the head coach or his or her designee for the first offense. For every subsequent offense at a given tournament, the school will be liable for a \$15 fine per offense. All fines must be paid by the next tournament.

By-Law 27. ***Judge Qualifications***

- A. All judges shall be duly qualified in all events.
1. The Executive Committee shall maintain an official league judge-training manual.
  2. Judge training sessions will allow all judges to judge all events.
  3. All member coaches will distribute the manual to their judges and shall certify that their judges have been trained by reading the manual.
  4. All judges at the Grand Final Tournament must have previously judged in their pool at tournaments, NFCFL or otherwise, during the school year. Congress

judges, however, may be pulled from any pool. There will be three pools at the Grand Final Tournament: Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum, and Individual Events. In the event of Policy Debate competitors, a fourth pool will be added.

- a. Coaches must certify that all judges at Grand Finals are experienced.
  - b. Coaches shall be on the honor system when making this certification.
  - c. The league will circulate a list of committed judges at final registration.
    - i. At that time, coaches or their designee will be given the opportunity to strike one judge from the entire judge pool.
    - ii. Only Tab officials will know the identity of the struck judge.
- B. At all NFCFL tournaments, a member of the Executive Committee, or its designee, shall provide judge instructions prior to the distribution of ballots for Round One.

By-Law 28. ***Oral Critiques***

- A. No judge at an NFCFL tournament shall give an "oral critique" or disclose the results of any round in any event to other coaches or students.
- B. Any judge who violates this rule shall be removed from the judging pool for any remaining rounds and suspended from judging at NFCFL tournaments for the remainder of the school year.
- C. Furthermore, the school the removed judge is from shall be required to immediately replace that judge slot or drop the required number of contestants in order to meet its judge quota.

By-Law 29. ***Right to Refuse Judges:*** The Executive Committee shall be empowered to forbid member schools to send judges to League tournaments if the Executive Committee has ruled that said judges have demonstrated incompetent, inappropriate, or generally malfeasant behavior in a previous League tournament.

Grand Finals

By-Law 30. ***Governance of Grand Finals:*** The Executive Committee shall be responsible for all procedural, entry, set-up, and execution aspects of the Grand Final Tournament.

By-Law 31. ***Scheduling of Grand Finals:*** The Grand Final Tournament shall be conducted in a Friday-Saturday time frame with no more than 2 rounds or one session of policy on Friday night, the dates calculated so as to provide for the timely preparation and submission of the League's Grand National Tournament entry materials.

By-Law 32. ***Observers at Grand Finals:*** Observers shall be allowed at Grand Finals. However, competitors in Public Forum, Lincoln Douglas, and Policy Debate reserve the right to ask all observers to leave before the round begins.

By-Law 33: ***Grand Finals Qualification Requirements:*** A student is entitled to enter the Grand Final tournament if:

- A. S/he has participated in at least two complete regular season tournaments of the NFCFL; and
- B. S/he has participated in at least one complete regular season tournament in the same event s/he wishes to enter Grand Finals. C.

A complete tournament consists of active participation in all rounds or sessions of a given NFCFL one-day tournament.

By-Law 34. ***Grand Finals Guaranty Fee***

- A. Each member school that enters the Grand Final Tournament shall pay a one hundred dollar guaranty as a part of its entry fees.
- B. This money shall be refunded after the awards assembly if a given school does not qualify at least one student for the Grand National Tournament.
- C. If at least one student from the school does qualify for the Grand National Tournament and attends, this money shall be refunded at the conclusion of the Grand National Tournament in the event that the school has incurred no fines.

By-Law 35. ***Procedures for Pairing Rounds at Grand Finals***

- A. In years in which the League has more than thirteen member schools, the procedures below shall apply to the Grand Final Tournament.
  - 1. Policy, Lincoln Douglas, and Public Forum debate shall be conducted in the following manner:
    - a. The first two rounds will be randomly paired.
    - b. Each subsequent preliminary round shall be paired based upon the bracket established after tabulation of the previous round. Brackets shall be established after each round using the competitors' records.
      - i. Brackets shall be created such that all undefeated entries comprise the top bracket; all entries with one loss shall comprise the next bracket; all entries with two losses shall comprise the third; all entries with three losses shall comprise the fourth (if applicable); and all entries with four losses shall comprise fifth (if applicable).
      - ii. Each bracket should contain an even number of entries; in the event that

there are an odd number of teams in a bracket, the highest-ranked entry in the next lowest bracket shall be drawn up to that bracket to create a pairing. If drawing the highest-ranked entry in that bracket would violate one of the other pairing constraints for the round, the next-highest ranked entry shall be drawn up. This process will continue until a bracket is created that does not violate the pairing constraints.

- a. Within each bracket, the rankings of each entry shall be established per the tie-breakers outlined in By-law 22.
- b. Within each bracket, the highest-ranked entry shall debate the lowest-ranked entry, the second-highest ranked entry shall debate the second-lowest ranked entry, the third-highest ranked entry shall debate the third-lowest ranked entry, and so forth.

iii. If there are an odd number of entries, the lowest rank entry in the bottom bracket shall receive the bye, unless that entry has previously drawn the bye. In that case, the bye shall be awarded to the next lowest entry in the bracket.

c. The guidelines in By-Law 13 and By-Law 14 shall also be followed at the Grand Final Tournament.

2. Non-debate categories with the exception of Congressional Debate shall be conducted in the following manner: There shall be five preliminary rounds. The preliminary rounds shall be randomly sectioned except in cases involving the “same school” preclusion.
3. Whenever mathematically possible, no student shall meet another student from his/her school.
4. Congressional Debate shall follow the procedures outlined in the League’s Congressional Debate Manual. B.

In years in which there are fewer than thirteen member schools, the Executive Committee shall have the power to determine format/procedures.

By-Law 36. ***Qualification for NCFL Nationals***

- A. These procedures presume that the NFCFL is eligible to qualify six (6) entries to NCFL in each event.
  1. In debate events with 18 or more entries, the top eight competitors shall advance to the quarterfinal round. Competitor preliminary records shall determine seeding. In the event of ties, refer to By-law 22.B.
    - a. Once the bracket is established for elimination competition, it cannot be broken.
    - b. The quarterfinal round shall be arranged such that

- the first and the eighth seed debate; the second and seventh seed debate; the third and sixth debate; and the fourth and fifth seed debate.
- c. The winning entry of each quarterfinal debate shall automatically qualify to the Grand National Tournament.
  - d. The losing entry of each quarterfinal debate will participate in a semifinal round. In the semifinal round, the losing entry of the round between the first and eighth seeds shall debate the losing entry of the round between the fourth and fifth seeds and the losing entry of the round between the second and seventh seeds shall debate the losing entry of the round between the third and sixth seeds.
  - e. The winning entry of each semifinal round will also advance to the Grand National Tournament.
  - f. The losing entry of each semifinal round shall serve as an alternate to the Grand National Tournament. The distinction between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> alternate shall be determined on the seeding that was established at the start of elimination competition. The competitor with the highest seed shall be the 1<sup>st</sup> alternate.
2. Debate events with fewer than 18 competitors shall determine qualifiers to the Grand National Tournament based on performance in the five preliminary rounds
  3. Individual events with 18 or more competitors break to semi-finals.
    - a. The top three contestants in each section *based on cumulative rank* qualify to the Grand National Tournament.
    - b. The two fourth place competitors *based on cumulative rank* in the final sections will be the alternates.
    - c. The distinction between 1st and 2nd alternates will be determined by seeding after the final round.
  4. Individual Events with fewer than 18 competitors shall determine qualifiers to the Grand National Tournament based on performance in the five preliminary rounds.
  5. In all speech/individual events, each contestant's lowest (worst) ballot (rank and corresponding points) from the preliminary rounds shall be dropped from the results.
  6. Three-judge panels shall be used for all semi-final rounds in Individual Events and the quarter and semi-final rounds in debate events.
  7. Judges in all cases at the Grand Final Tournament shall not be in any way affiliated with the school or students they judge; judges may not judge students from schools

- that the judge attended within the past five years.
- B. In any year in which this presumption is not true, the Executive Committee shall publish alternate qualification procedures in the invitation to attend Grand Finals.
  - C. The NFCFL Congressional Debate Manual shall govern Congressional Debate.

By-Law 37.        ***Drops from NCFI Nationals***

- A. Any school, which qualifies students to Nationals, shall ensure that those students attend that tournament.
- B. The fine for each dropped competitor, payable to the NFCFL shall be structured as follows:
  - 1. \$50.00 until March 31 as a nuisance fee for the Board.
  - 2. Beginning April 1, a fee of up to \$600 may be assessed if needed by the alternate's school.