

Standing Rules: Invitational Qualifying Tournament

Operations Manual

** Rules or Regulations in the following sections may be amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any annual meeting, special meeting, or mail ballot provided that copies of the Proposed amendment have been mailed to all members or placed on the official TFA website at least fourteen (14) days prior to the vote, or without prior notice by a three-fourths majority of those present and voting.*



The Texas Forensic Association is committed to providing every student with the opportunity to qualify for the State Tournament in a fair and impartial manner. This document provides the specific procedures for hosting Invitational Qualifying Tournaments. Due diligence must be made to ensure that these procedures are followed to ensure fairness as well as the absence of the perception of impropriety when running an IQT. The members of TFA have established and approved these procedures for all Invitational Qualifying Tournaments. During each contest, your Tournament Director, Region Representative, and Executive Council are available to adjudicate disputes regarding these rules.

Hosting an Invitational Qualifying Tournament

In regions with more than 15 applications, each member school will be limited to hosting a single qualifying tournament. Any TFA member school or institution wishing to apply for its tournament to be a TFA Qualifying tournament must meet the following conditions:

1. Sponsor at least four TFA events: Policy Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Public Forum Debate, Duet Acting, Duo Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, United States Extemporaneous Speaking, International Extemporaneous Speaking, Original Oratory, Program Oral Interpretation, Informative Speaking, and Congressional Debate. Tournament directors must follow TFA rules in all aforementioned events.
2. The designated tournament director must have experience in directing/coordinating a competitive tournament of a similar nature to the TFA qualifiers. If a school wishes to host a tournament, but doesn't have an experienced director, it may apply under the aegis of a group of two or more experienced directors, who may be from other schools. Letters of acceptance of responsibility from each experienced director must accompany the application. Approval is pursuant to the Executive Council's contact with these sponsors. This also applies to approved tournaments where the director leaves the TFA host school during the year.
3. The tournament shall be held between the dates of the weekend following the 4th Monday in August and the second weekend in February. A tournament weekend should be defined as Monday-Sunday. No qualifying tournament can be held on the dates of the TSCA convention. In the event of a natural or man-made disaster, the Executive Council shall be granted authority to alter the qualifying requirements, in regions so affected, so as not to affect the ability to host the State Tournament on its predetermined weekend.
4. TFA members will be notified by March 15 of the availability of the IQT application on the TFA website. Members wishing to host a tournament will complete the online application form and submit the document. Tournament hosts will be expected to print a copy of the form and submit the tournament fee to the TFA Treasurer no later than May 1. The website administrator will move forward copies of the form to the TFA President, TFA Treasurer, and the appropriate Region Representative. Tournament dates will be established by the Executive Council. Applications received after May 1 will be considered, but may not be accepted. No applications will be considered after August 15. Tournaments that do not submit their profit/loss statement by May 1 shall be sanctioned from hosting the following year. This shall be submitted with the application for the new tournament season.
5. The tournament dates shall be assigned according to the following priorities:
 - a. Those schools having previously hosted a qualifying tournament and who are requesting the same weekend as the previous year.

- b. Those schools having previously hosted a qualifying tournament and who are requesting a different weekend from the previous year.
 - c. Anyone requesting to hold a qualifying tournament who had not hosted one the previous year.
 - d. Any application received after May 1.
 - e. Those schools who requested a tournament date the previous year and subsequently cancelled their tournament or moved their tournament date.
 - f. The Executive Council reserves the right to revoke or alter precedence for tournaments who were protested and sanctioned in the previous competitive year.
 - g. If two or more schools choose to host a tournament together (co-host), the co-hosting pair has precedence based on the guidelines stated above. If the co-hosting schools choose to apply separately in subsequent years, they qualify for priority c above.
6. By the third week in May, the Secretary shall notify all TFA members of the posting on the TFA website of the tentative list of tournaments which will be TFA qualifiers for the next school year. The tournament list will be reviewed, amended, and given final approval in August. Petitions for changing approved tournament dates must be submitted to the TFA Executive Council prior to August 15th unless extenuating circumstances are documented by the administrator and coach involved prior to the beginning of the TSCA convention. Requests for date changes and tournament additions to the list received after August 15th will be brought before the members of TFA attending the business meeting at the TSCA convention and must be approved by that body for those changes and additions to occur.
 7. The Tournament Director for any IQT must be a regular member of the school's faculty.
 8. The tournament must have a minimum of ten schools participating in order for it to be a qualifier.
 9. The host school must be a current school year TFA member at the time its tournament is held.
 10. A maximum of two tournaments per region can be scheduled on the same weekend, with the exceptions of tournaments being 150+ miles apart within a region or when all possible tournament slots have been filled by other schools. When 150+ miles apart, from the closest hosting school, a region may host up to four tournaments per weekend. When there are more applicants in a region than available calendar spots and the 150+ mile rule cannot apply, regions can offer 3 tournaments on a weekend. Conflicts will be resolved by application of the above priorities. If no tournament in the region offers a qualifying event on a given weekend, a third tournament in that region may be offered that holds only the event(s) that are missing from the other tournaments. Such tournaments would have to meet any other requirement such as minimum schools, following the TFA rules, etc., with the exception of the four qualifying event

requirements. Schools in any given region that intend not to host an event should make that intention known in the tournament application process. Region reps then should make that known to smaller schools to plan their schedules for applying for tournaments. In the instance that this circumstance arises, schools would be allowed to host a second tournament (with the events not offered elsewhere in the regions only) in a school year.

11. If more than two tournaments within any one region apply for the same date, the Executive Council shall attempt to accommodate the alternate dates on the tournament applications. If an alternative date cannot be found, the TFA Treasurer shall accept only the first two applications and return the other application(s) along with the registration fee.
12. Any host of a TFA qualifying tournament may offer a formal complaint against student(s) attending their TFA qualifying tournament based on their inappropriate behavior during the tournament. Such complaints must be accompanied by proof of the complaint (proof can include security camera footage and/or written corroboration of witnesses.) Such complaints will be forwarded to the Executive Council of the TFA. If deemed a violation of appropriate student behavior the Executive Council shall remove all current TFA State points (individual and team events) from the student(s) found to be in violation. The Executive Council shall also impose a two-month suspension from TFA qualifying tournament participation for the student(s) found in violation.

Qualifying Numbers

1. Invitational Qualifying Tournaments must have ten (10) participating schools in attendance in order to award any qualification points. Minimum numbers in each event to award qualification points are: Policy-10 teams, PFD-10 teams, LD-10 entries, Congressional Debate-10 entries, World Schools Debate-6; all IE's (including Duo and Duet)-10 entries/teams. The Executive Council may modify this section at the beginning of the tournament season in order to make it consistent with any changes to the point system if the need arises.
2. Qualification points will be awarded as outlined in the current year's Qualifying Point Schedule on www.txfa.org.
3. A tournament director must certify that the number of entries at the tournament do not include "phantom" entries. The number must include only those students who actually participate in at least one round of the scheduled event at the tournament, compete using their own names, and are listed with the appropriate school affiliation. Tournament directors who do not follow accepted practices will be considered to be in violation of the Professional Code of Conduct and applicable procedures will then apply.

4. It will be the responsibility of the school's TFA coach of record to keep track of students' points. They will notify the IQT coordinator of students' qualifications which will then be checked with the finalists list from the tournament.
5. The Executive Council may modify this point schedule at the beginning of the tournament season if the need arises.

Requirements

1. Separate divisions for men and women shall not be offered in any TFA event.
2. The specified qualifying events shall follow the rules, including time limits, of those events as outlined in the TFA Standing Rules.
3. Tabulation and tie-breaking procedures shall follow those specified in the standing rules.
4. TFA/AFA ballots should be used as available.
5. The minimum number of rounds for TFA-sanctioned individual events and Duet Acting or Duo Interpretation is at least one preliminary round, followed by semifinals and finals. For tournaments with single preliminary rounds, at least two competitors must advance from each preliminary section to semifinals, and at all tournaments at least two competitors must advance from each semi final section to finals in all TFA events. At tournaments in which there are 24 or fewer entries in an individual event or duet acting/duo interpretation, the tournament may have two or more preliminary rounds, followed by a finals round.
6. Entries from the same school must not be assigned to compete in the same section or pairing in TFA events unless there are more entries from that school than there are sections or pairings.
7. No more than eight contestants may be scheduled to appear in any section of individual events/duet/duo in TFA events.
8. The minimum number of preliminary rounds shall be three in Policy, Public Forum, and Lincoln-Douglas Debate. The last preliminary round shall be power-matched. The minimum number of elimination rounds for all divisions shall be semifinals and finals. Additional rounds may be required based on event entries.
9. The Tournament Director shall report all qualifiers to the IQT Coordinator online at www.txfa.org within 24 hours following the completion of his/her tournament.
10. Videotaping of rounds will not be allowed. The use of audio recordings will only be used to ensure that students accurately represent the material they read during debates.

Participants who are recorded may require the recording be deleted after the judge has rendered a decision and ethics charges were not raised during the debate.

11. In advance of the tournament, all non-member schools must be provided with a copy of TFA regulations for all TFA events.
12. TFA regulations must be followed in all TFA events. Only matters of rule interpretation or clarification may be made by the tournament director. Under no circumstances may event rules or time limits be altered.
13. Judges of any and all TFA events shall have already graduated from high school.
14. Texas students participating at TFA tournaments must be affiliated with and a representative of the schools they are attending.
15. Fees collected for judging must be used for payment of judges and not as tournament profit.
16. Dissemination of Ballots: Following tabulation of preliminary rounds, and all subsequent rounds, except for finals, the ballots shall be made available to the coaches. A reasonable time and place shall have been designated for verification of preliminary results. This verification period must allow reasonable time for coaches to be made aware that a challenge is taking place and must occur in a location that is easily accessible to the coach. Challenge/verification for all divisions of a category of events (ex. all debate) must occur at the same location. An open tab room may not be substituted for the formal challenge period. Following this verification period, except for finals, results are to be considered final and any errors should stand. Following the beginning of the rounds for each subsequent elimination round, the results for the previous rounds are considered final. No challenge of judges' decision is allowed. Once the school has been eliminated from the tournament, no ballots should be withheld from that coach.
17. No rounds of any TFA event may begin after midnight on Friday or Saturday. Any tournament in violation of this policy may, at the discretion of the Executive Council, forfeit status as a TFA State Qualifying Tournament in the following year.
18. No school may participate in elimination rounds at their own tournament.
19. A tournament must disclose in their invitation whether panels will be used in quarterfinals and beyond of debate events and finals of Individual Events, Duet Acting, and Duo Interpretation.

20. Tournament hosts shall make their sweepstakes formula available in their invitation information or information given to participating schools at the beginning of the tournament.
21. No Texas Forensic Association Invitational Qualifying Tournament may offer a separate division in which all pre-qualified students must/are encouraged to compete.
22. Any team that concedes or forfeits an elimination round debate to a team from another school other than their own shall only be awarded points for the last elimination round they actually participated in. For example, a team that concedes in the semifinals in a tournament that would award them 4 points would receive 2 points for successfully participating in the quarterfinals. Another example, a team that concedes in the quarterfinals in a tournament without octofinals, would be awarded no points. Additionally, any tournament that arranges or encourages concessions may forfeit their TFA qualifying status in that debate event at the discretion of the Executive Council. The Executive Council may grant exceptions to this rule to accommodate unavoidable extenuating circumstances (such as weather).
23. Competitors who forfeit elimination rounds in finals of individual events will receive qualification points as if they had placed last in the I.E. round.
24. Any name changes must be submitted in writing to the tournament director prior to the end of the first round of that event.
25. Information required to be communicated on the tournament invitation includes:
 - a. Judge paneling information for quarterfinals and beyond in debate events and finals of IEs, Duet Acting, and Duo Interpretation
 - b. Sweepstakes formula
 - c. Power-matching method used (high-high or high-low within brackets)
 - d. Whether brackets will be broken (if not properly communicated ahead of time, the default is to break brackets)
 - e. Debate topics
 - f. Congressional dockets (from approved legislation) with designation of legislation to be used in preliminary, semifinals, and/or finals rounds.

Procedure for Processing Protests of Violations

1. Any violation of Texas Forensic Association rules or regulations by an Invitational Qualifying Tournament host should be reported to the TFA Executive Council, along with data to support such a charge. If investigation results in confirmation of such charge, eligibility of the offending school to host an IQT may be revoked for one year.
2. Any violation of the TFA Code of Professional Standards by a coach concerning an IQT should be reported to the TFA Executive Council, along with data to support such a charge. See TFA Code of Professional Standards and Code of Conduct.

Debate Tabulation

The following methods have been devised by the Texas Forensic Association for determining winners in Policy, Public Forum, and Lincoln-Douglas Debate. Specific exclusions will be applicable for Public Forum Debate in regards to side constraints.

Pairing of Preliminary Rounds

1. The first two rounds of an IQT will be a pre-set in a manner that schedules each entrant in one affirmative and one negative round. These rounds should be randomly paired, attempting to minimize individuals from the same two schools hitting one another (if possible), and avoid the pairing of individuals from the same school.
2. At least one round of a three or four round preliminary tournament will be power-matched. If the tournament features five or more preliminary rounds, power matching will begin no later than the 4th round. If time allows, tournaments are highly encouraged to use some form of power matching beginning with the 3rd round. The power matching should take place within win/loss brackets as commonly practiced. Undefeated entrants should debate undefeated entrants; entrants with one loss should debate entrants with one loss, and so on. Tournaments should announce in their invitation which form of power matching they will be using (high-high or high-low within brackets).
3. At the end of each even numbered round, each entrant (with the exception of entrants having received a BYE) will have debated an equal number of affirmative and negative rounds.
4. If using a computer to run the tournament, the tournament host will be aware and take proper steps to set-up the tournament, including but not limited to room use; entrant code/names; division characteristics including how pairing and power matching procedures will occur; and the avoidance of team and judge conflicts. These steps will be taken to minimize and/or avoid challenges as the tournament progresses.
5. When power matching teams, priorities shall be as follows:
 - a. Entrants shall have an equal number of affirmative and negative debates following each even numbered round.
 - b. Entrants shall not meet another entrant from their own school during any preliminary round unless a school's entry comprises more than half the field.
 - c. Entrants shall not meet the same entrant more than once in preliminary rounds.
 - d. In the event entrants cannot be paired within a given bracket during power matching, entrants should be pulled from the next lower bracket(s) until these requirements are met. Pulling from two or more brackets down may be required in some instances.

Advancement

The criteria for determining teams advancing to elimination rounds are in the following order:

1. If Only 3 Prelim Rounds are Held:
 - a. Win-loss record
 - b. Total speaker points
 - c. Adjusted speaker points (drop highs and lows) per team
 - d. Total speaker ranks
 - e. Opponent's win-loss record
 - f. Opponent's speaker points
 - g. Opponent's ranks
 - h. Adjusted ranks
 - i. Blind draw

2. If More than 3 Prelim Rounds are Held:
 - a. Win-loss record
 - b. Adjusted speaker points (drop highs and lows) per team
 - c. Total speaker points
 - d. Total speaker ranks
 - e. Opponent's win-loss record
 - f. Opponent's speaker points
 - g. Opponent's ranks
 - h. Adjusted ranks
 - i. Blind draw

Elimination Brackets

1. If a tournament holds three preliminary debate rounds and 51 or more entries compete, elimination rounds must include an octofinal round; if 75 or more entries compete, elimination rounds must include a double octofinal round, if 120 or more compete, elimination rounds must include a triple octofinal.
 - a. If a tournament holds four preliminary rounds and 51 or more entries compete, elimination rounds must include an octofinal round; if 100 or more entries compete, elimination rounds must include a double-octofinal.
 - b. If 15 or fewer entries compete, quarterfinals do not have to be held.
 - c. Upon completion of the preliminary round portion of a tournament, all students with an undefeated record shall advance to the elimination bracket.

2. Entries will be seeded according to their prelim round record for the purpose of creating an elimination round bracket. This seeding shall not be changed, even if entries are removed from the bracket. New entries may not be pulled up into the bracket because of entry removal. The only exception to this rule shall be if an entry is designated prior to the final preliminary round in writing as not being eligible to break (they will not be considered in the seeding process).

3. If entries from the same school are meeting, brackets may be broken, at the discretion of the tournament director, in the following manner. Brackets will be broken unless an Invitational Qualifying Tournament's invitation stipulates that they will not be broken.
 - a. The lower seeded entry of the two will be moved up in the bracket (i.e., In a conflict between the 5th seed and the 12th seed, the 12th seed will be switched with the 11th seed). In the case where the initial switch does not resolve the conflict, additional switches may be made by moving the entry causing the conflict one place at a time until the conflict is resolved (i.e., in a conflict between 1 and 32, the 32nd entry would switch with 31, then 30, then 29, and so on until the conflict is resolved). Brackets shall be broken by working down the pairings in seed order (i.e., check the 1-32 pairings first, if it works, then move to the 2-31 pairing, the 3-30 pairing, etc.). In all cases where a switch is made, either by the tab room before a round or by a lower seeded entry winning a round, the new seed position will be assumed for purposes of breaking brackets in the next round (i.e., in a debate between 1-31, if the 32nd entry wins, it assumes the first seed position for the next round).
 - b. Brackets are broken only when a conflict occurs. Brackets are not broken in anticipation of conflict in future elimination rounds.
 - c. In the event that a conflict cannot be avoided, the entries involved will not be forced to debate. The coach of the squad involved will make the determination if there is to be a debate or which entry will advance.
 - d. In the event that a school closes out both sides of the bracket, the coach (sponsor) may have the option of choosing any of the involved students to advance for the qualifying positions even if this involves two competitors or teams from the same side of the bracket. In the event a school closes out the final round of debate and chooses not to debate, the coach must declare who the winner is prior to the end of the tournament. If they do not do so, the higher seeded team/individual will be declared the winner and awarded IQT points. Those results will be considered final.

Determining Speaker Points for Forfeit or Bye

In order to determine speaker points for a bye the debater(s) will receive the average number of points given in their preliminary rounds. In case of a forfeit, the team forfeiting the debate will receive zero speaker points. The team who is being forfeited to will be given the average number of points given in their other preliminary rounds.

Congressional Debate Tabulation

Entry Numbers and Requirements

Requirement	Number
Minimum number of entries for Qualifying Event	10
Maximum number of students per Preliminary House	20 (if 20 or fewer entries exist, then one chamber for the entire tournament may be used)
Semifinals Houses required	61 or greater entries
Maximum entries per Semifinal chamber	16 per chamber
Minimum total hours of actual floor debate (recesses do not count as floor debate time)	Minimum total hours of actual floor debate for prelims (recesses do not count as floor debate time) 2 hours for fewer than 10 competitors, 2.5 hours for 10-14 competitors, 3 hours for 15-20 competitors. (Amended 10-17) 2 hours for semis with 12 competitors (add 10 minutes for each additional competitor – not to exceed 16 competitors); 2 hours for finals with 12 competitors (add 10 minutes for each additional competitor – not to exceed 16 competitors).
Preliminary Judges	A minimum of 1 Judge (who scores speeches and serves as Parliamentarian)
Semis	A minimum of two judges (1 Scorer and 1 Parliamentarian)
Finals Judges	A minimum of THREE judges (2 Scorers and 1 Parliamentarian)
Maximum advancing to Super Congress	16 with a minimum of 8
Presiding Officer Audition Time	Campaign speeches enumerating qualifications to preside, not to exceed one minute each.
Score per speech	0 min – 6 max

Presiding Officers

Tournament Directors shall decide if students may run for Presiding Officers in all sessions and shall indicate this opportunity in the tournament invitation. Students wishing to run for PO shall declare their intention on the tournament entry form or with the tournament director by the due date.

If students are permitted to run, brief speeches of qualification not to exceed one minute may be given. Candidates shall be elected via secret ballot by the members present. Candidates for PO shall be equally divided among houses, and if multiple preliminary sessions are held, candidates may be divided equally among sessions. Candidate speeches shall not be scored, will not count against precedence, and will not be included in the students' totals. Parliamentarians shall award 0-6 points per hour of service to the elected Presiding Officer, which shall count against precedence and be included in the students' totals. Parliamentarians and scorers shall award 0-6 points per hour of service to the elected Presiding Officer, which shall count against precedence and be included in the students' totals.

If no PO candidates are running or are permitted to run, the designated Presiding Officer shall be an adult (high school graduate) parliamentarian designated to conduct the session. This adult PO will not have scoring responsibilities, or serve as Parliamentarian.

Scoring and Advancement

In all sessions, the Scorer(s) shall be responsible for evaluating every student speech given. The Parliamentarian scores only the student PO, and ranks all competitors in the room. Elected Pos shall receive one score per hour of service from the Parliamentarian. If a student receives a score from the scorer, for both speaking and service, these scores shall be added together to compute the student's total.

The required method for determining advancement and tabulating final results in Congressional Debate is ranking of the top 8 legislators. Speech points are required for NFL points only. Advancement is selected by the scorer, ranking the top 8 Best Overall Legislators. All other students will receive a rank of 9. Parliamentarians are to rank ALL members of the chamber. For initial rankings, the Parliamentarian's ranks, up to eighth are tabulated as well, with subsequent ranks considered as ranks of 9. Parliamentarians will have scoring responsibilities only for the presiding officer.

Each individual chamber is tabulated independent of the others. Legislators with the lowest cumulative rank total advance to the next level of competition, employing the following tiebreakers:

1. Judge's preference
2. Reciprocal fractions
3. Rank by the parliamentarian

Speech and Interpretation Tabulation

The criteria for determining winners in speech and interpretation events are in the following manner.

1. The contestant with the lowest cumulative score of the individual judges in the round. In tournaments with multiple preliminary rounds, students with the lowest cumulative ranks will advance.
2. If there is a tie in cumulative ranks in the round, judge's preference shall be used to break the tie. The following diagram illustrates the "judge's preference" method of breaking ties:

	Judge 1	Judge 2	Judge 3	Total
Speaker A	1*	2	3	=6
Speaker B	4	1*	1*	=6

In this case, both speakers' ranks are the same when combined (Rule 1); however, Judge 1 ranks Speaker A over Speaker B, Judge 2 ranks Speaker B over Speaker A, and Judge 3 ranks Speaker B over Speaker A. Essentially, two out of the three judges have preferred Speaker B to Speaker A, even though the ranks are tied.

If there is a 3-way tie, judge's preference can be used to compare each pair of speakers head to head. If one speaker wins head to head judges' preference against both tied opponents, that speaker will be awarded the highest rank. The remaining two contestants will be compared using judge's preference to determine the next highest ranking. For example:

	Judge X	Judge Y	Judge Z	Total
Speaker A	3	1	5	=9
Speaker B	1	2	6	=9
Speaker C	4	3	2	=9

In this example, Speaker A wins judge's preference against Speaker B (Judge Y and Z) and Speaker A wins judge's preference against Speaker C (Judge X and Y). Hence, Speaker A would receive the highest rank amongst the three, Speaker B would receive the next highest rank.

3. In case of an unbreakable three-way tie, inverted fractions (reciprocals) shall be used.

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Reciprocal	1	½	1/3	¼	1/5	1/6	1/7	1/8
As a Decimal	1	.5	.33	.25	.2	.17	.14	.125

Then add these numbers and the contestant with the highest score is the best of the three, and the next highest score receives the next rank, etc. See example below:

	Ranks	Converts to	Total	Place
Speaker A	1 3 3 = 7	1.00 .33 .33	1.66	2 nd

Speaker B	2 1 4 = 7	.50 1.00 .25	1.75	1 st
Speaker C	3 2 2 = 7	.33 .50 .50	1.33	3 rd

In case of a tie in inverted fractions among 2 of the 3 tied speakers, revert back to judge preference to resolve the tie between the 2 tied speakers. See the example below:

	Ranks	Converts to	Total	Place
Speaker A	4 2 5 = 11	.25 .50 .20	0.95	4 th
Speaker B	3 6 2 = 11	.33 .17 .50	1.00	3 rd
Speaker C	2 3 6 = 11	.50 .33 .17	1.00	2 nd

*The 1.00 tie between speakers B and C is broken on the basis of Judge Preference (Speaker C is preferred over Speaker B by 2 of the 3 judges).

4. These methods shall be used in all rounds including the final round.
5. If for any reason the above methods cannot be utilized in the final round, winners shall be determined on the basis of accumulated ranks, including ranks from preliminary rounds, and all elimination rounds. This is also the procedure to be used for breaking unbreakable ties in quarterfinals and semifinals at the State Tournament.
6. If there is still a tie after the provisions mentioned above, a blind draw should be used to determine placement in the round. If the tie is to determine a state champion, a dual championship will be declared.

Appendix A – Seeding Order for Debate Elimination Rounds

32 Team Single Elimination

