**Texas Forensic Association** 

**Constitutional Amendment Form**

***The following must be provided before your proposal will be accepted by the Executive Committee.***

**Name:** Constitution Committee

**School:** N/A

**Region: N/A**

**Email address:** [neal.white@pisd.edu](mailto:neal.white@pisd.edu)**,** [yxsilva@episd.org](mailto:yxsilva@episd.org)**,** [andy.zeigler@amaisd.org](mailto:andy.zeigler@amaisd.org)

**Rationale for Amendment: The TFA Constitution, oddly, places Judge Conduct in Standing Rules for Competition events, and not with the Standards that are listed for competitors and students. It is also silent on such questions as who is allowed to judge at a tournament, what a judge’s general behavior in a room should be, and under what conditions a judge can recuse themselves due to a potential conflict. This amendment would move Judge Conduct to be in a more topical section of the constitution, and add language around these questions.**

**Section of the Constitution where Change occurs:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Constitution

\_\_\_\_\_ ByLaws

**\_\_X\_** Code of Professional Standards

**\_\_X\_\_** Standing Rules: Competition Event Guide

\_\_\_\_\_ Standing Rules: IQT Operations Manual

\_\_\_\_\_ Standing Rules: State Tournament Operations Manual

**Page number of change:** 28, 86

**Select One of the Following: X Add Language Delete Language Amend Language Implementation Time Frame: Immediately Upon Passage**

**Proposed Change(s)** *(List the change/add here. Changes should include any language you are replacing from the existing constitution along with the proposed new language.)*

Page 86 of the constitution will be moved to immediately follow page 28 of the constitution (and will therefore become the new page 29).

After the existing paragraph on the page, the following text will be added:

The following are guidelines for judge behavior at TFA contests:

* All judges are to report to their assigned rooms at least five minutes before the time the contest round is scheduled to begin.
* Each judge's ballot is to be secured from contest officials and returned immediately following each round. If online ballots are used, judges should follow tournament procedure for opening their ballot and submitting their ballot within the allotted time.
* Read the instructions on the ballot.
* Judges should not interrupt the flow of debates or contests in any way. They are silent evaluators.
* College-age judges are permitted at the discretion of the tournament host. Current high school students may not judge any state qualifying event at IQTs or the State tournament.
* All judges are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct and recuse themselves from any round in which there is a conflict of interest per the policy below.

A judge must recuse themself from judging a student under the following conditions:

1. The judge and the student may be perceived to have a competitive or financial agreement that may bias the judge’s impartial evaluation of the round. Examples include but are not limited to:
   1. The student attends a school (or a collaboration of schools) that the judge attended, coached for, or competed with.
      1. NOTE: Two potential exceptions to this guideline would be that if the tournament director felt that enough time has passed since that judge’s attendance at the school to resolve the appearance of impropriety. In addition, if all coaches felt comfortable with a judge that graduated from a school of one of the competitors, the tab room may allow that judge placement.
   2. The judge has a paid or unpaid coaching, consulting, or judging relationship with the student or school during the same academic year.
   3. The judge has received or provided expressed or implied offers to provide future coaching, consulting, or judging to a school or student.
   4. The judge has provided exclusive pre-round preparation to a student either before or during a tournament through any method including electronically, verbally, or through the transfer of resources.
2. The judge and the student may be perceived to have a personal or social arrangement that may bias the judge’s impartial evaluation of the round.
   1. The judge and the student may be perceived to have had a personal relationship that may bias the judge’s impartial evaluation of the round.
   2. The judge and the student are or have been in a familial, physical, or emotional relationship.
   3. The judge and the student have communications of a personal nature over email, telephone, or the internet including social networking sites that go beyond casual exchanges.
3. The judge does not believe they are able to fairly and impartially adjudicate a competition involving a particular student for whatever reason.