



Qualification System

2024-2025

 **NCFCA**
CHRISTIAN SPEECH & DEBATE



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Version History

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2025.02 Updated elimination round details for National Opens and Mixers, corrected Triple Octa At-Large tables for Mixers and Opens, December 2, 2024



Qualification System

NCFCA’s qualifying tournament structure provides regional and national opportunities for eligible competitors to earn at-large points and invitations to higher levels of competition. Qualifying tournaments are structured in a way to maximize educational value, promote fair and excellent competition, cultivate constructive community, and support our mission and values overall.

NCFCA seeks to provide the best possible competition with the end goal of having the best performing team/individual win. This is accomplished in debate by dividing teams into brackets based on their records, pairing teams to compete within their respective brackets, ranking them after preliminary rounds so that they can be paired by seedings, and ultimately having the best performing teams meet in finals. This is accomplished in speech by having competitors compete against as many different competitors as possible, using judge preference to rank each competitor in each room, and having the best speakers compete in finals.

NCFCA’s qualifying tournament structure provides regional and national opportunities for eligible competitors to earn at-large points and invitations to higher levels of competition.



Tournament Types

Qualifying Tournaments (Table 1)

What tournaments are offered?	Who can compete?	What can be earned?	Events Offered		
			Policy & Value Debate	Speech* (10 Events)	Moot Court
Regional/ District Qualifier	Eligible competitors within the region or district	- Invitations to the Regional Championship -National At-Large points	X	X*	
National Open	Eligible competitors from any region	-Invitations to the Regional Championship -Invitations to the National Championship -National At-Large points	X	X*	X**
National Mixer	Eligible competitors from any region.	-Invitations to the Regional Championship -Invitations to the National Championship -National At-Large points	X***	X***	
Regional Championship	Eligible competitors within the region who have qualified through a Regional or District Qualifier or National Open or National Mixer	-Invitations to the National Championship -National At-Large points	X	X	

* The largest speech event may only be one room larger than the next largest event.

** Moot Court is offered only at Moot Court National Opens and the Moot Court National Championship. Other events are not offered at Moot Court tournaments.

***May be Debate only or Speech only or any combination of the two.

Championship Tournaments (Table 2)

Tournaments Offered	Who can compete?	What can be earned?	Events Offered		
			Policy & Value Debate	Speech (10 Events)	Moot Court
Regional Championship	Eligible competitors within a region who have qualified through a Regional or District Qualifier or a National Open or National Mixer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Honors Invitations to the National Championship National At-Large points 	X	X	
National Championship	Eligible competitors from any region who have qualified through a National Open, a Regional Championship, or National At-Large points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Honors 	X	X	X*

* Moot Court is offered only at Moot Court National Opens and the Moot Court National Championship. Other events are not offered at Moot Court tournaments.

Regional Championship Invitations

Invitations to a Regional Championship are extended to students from within that region who qualify at a Regional or District Qualifier, a National Mixer, or a National Open. Invitations to Regional Championships are not rolled down for any reason.

Invitations Awarded through Qualifying Tournaments (Table 3)

Tournaments	Debate (TP / LD)	Speech (10 Events)	Moot Court
All qualifying tournaments	All teams that advance to elimination rounds or are recognized at an Awards Ceremony at a qualifying tournament earn invitations to their Regional Championship	All competitors who advance to elimination rounds or are recognized at an Awards Ceremony at a qualifying tournament earn invitations to their Regional Championship	Not offered

National Championship Invitations

National Championship slots will be allocated to National Opens, National Mixers, Regional Championships, and to the National At-Large System. National Championship slot invitations will roll down to the next eligible competitor in line if the awarded competitor is unable to accept the invitation.

An eligible competitor is one who has advanced to an elimination round or has earned National At-Large Points at the current tournament.

Important note: Once an invitation is issued, National Slots must be accepted within 24 hours and must be paid within 72 hours or the invitation will be rolled to the next eligible competitor(s). Declined or rolled National Championship slots will not be offered again, even if they would have been awarded at a subsequent tournament or through the At-Large system.

Number of National Championship Slots (Table 4)

	Policy and Value Debate	Speech (10 Events)	Moot Court
Number of Designated Slots	140	800	24

Allocation of National Championship Slots (Table 5)

Awarded through:	Debate (TP / LD)	Speech (10 Events)	Moot Court
National Opens	1st-2nd place TP teams 1st-2nd place LD teams	1st-2nd place competitors in each event	1st - 4th place MC teams
National Mixers	1 st place TP teams 1 st place LD teams	1 st place competitors in each event	Not offered
Regional Championships *	75% of remaining slots after the National Tournament slots above have been allocated	75% of remaining slots after the National Tournament slots above have been allocated	Not offered
National At-Large System**	25% of remaining slots after the National Tournament slots above have been allocated	25% of remaining slots after the National Tournament slots above have been allocated	All remaining slots after the National Tournament slots above have been allocated



*Regional Championship Slot Allocation

Divided Between Events

After all the National Championship slots to be awarded through the National Tournaments have been allocated as indicated in Table 5, 75% of the remaining National Championship slots will be proportionally distributed to each debate and speech event based on the number of unique competitors in that event nationally with the following parameters.

- Each speech event may receive no more than 18% with a maximum of 136 of the speech slots allocated to the Regional Championships.
- Neither style of debate will be allotted more than 74 of the 140 slots available.

Divided Among Regions

- **Policy and Value Debate Slots.** Once slots have been allocated to each style of debate as indicated above, they will be divided proportionally among regions based on their unique participation over the course of the season. Slots will only be offered to competitors who advance to an elimination round.
- **Speech Slots.** Once slots have been allocated to each speech event as indicated above, they will be divided proportionally among regions based on their unique participation over the course of the season. For speech events that held elimination rounds, slots will only be awarded or rolled down to competitors who advanced to elimination rounds.

**National At-Large Slot Allocation

A competitor or team who is recognized at an Awards Ceremony at any qualifying tournament will earn National At-Large points according to their final placing. The number of points awarded corresponds to the tournament type and final placing in an event. Please see the charts below for the number of points awarded. If additional placings are announced beyond the number of placings indicated in the charts, the competitor or team will earn the correct number of mathematically derived points. These situations are outlined in the [Speech](#) and [Debate](#) Tabulation Rules.

In order to qualify for a National At-Large slot to the National Championship in an event a competitor (in individual events) or team (in team events) must have acquired points at a minimum of two qualifying tournaments with the exception of Moot Court which only requires points to be acquired at one qualifying tournament. If a competitor or team has acquired points at more than three qualifying tournaments, the three highest point values will be used to calculate the competitor/team final At-Large score for that event. Points earned as a team are not eligible for division or recombination with another partner.

- **Policy and Value Debate Slots.** After all the National Championship invitations to be awarded through the National Tournaments and Regional Championships 25% of the remaining National Championship debate slots will be reserved to be awarded to top-scoring teams who do not otherwise receive invitations. Slots will be proportionally distributed



among debate styles based on the number of unique competitors. Neither style of debate will be allotted more than 74 of the 140 slots available.

- **Moot Court Slots.** After all the National Championship invitations to be awarded through the National Tournaments have been allocated, the remaining National Championship Moot Court slots will be reserved to be awarded to top-scoring teams who did not otherwise receive invitations.
- **Speech Slots.** After all the National Championship invitations to be awarded through the National Tournaments have been allocated, 25% of the remaining National Championship speech slots will be reserved to be awarded to top-scoring competitors who did not otherwise receive invitations. Slots will be proportionally distributed among events based on the number of unique competitors with no event receiving an allocation greater than 18% of the total National At-Large slots.

National At-Large Points Awarded at Qualifiers and Regional Championships (Table 6)

National At-Large Points Awarded at Qualifiers and Regional Championships									
Based on Prescribed Rounds found in Speech and Debate Tabulation Rules									
Final Placing	Policy and Value Debate					Speech			
	Double-Octa	Octa	Quarter - Final	Semi-Final	Final	Semi-Final	Final	Prelims	
1	60.000	40.000	20.000	10.000	5.000	40.000	20.000	10.000	
2	30.000	20.000	10.000	5.000	2.500	20.000	10.000	5.000	
3	20.000	13.333	6.667	3.333		13.333	6.667	3.333	
4	15.000	10.000	5.000	2.500		10.000	5.000	2.500	
5	12.000	8.000	4.000			8.000	4.000		
6	10.000	6.667	3.333			6.667	3.333		
7	8.571	5.714	2.857			5.714	2.857		
8	7.500	5.000	2.500			5.000	2.500		
9	6.667	4.444				4.444			
10	6.000	4.000				4.000			
11	5.455	3.636				3.636			
12	5.000	3.333				3.333			
13	4.615	3.077				3.077			
14	4.286	2.857				2.857			
15	4.000	2.667				2.667			
16	3.750	2.500				2.500			
17	3.529					2.353			
18	3.333					2.222			
19	3.158					2.105			
20	3.000					2.000			
21	2.857					1.905			
22	2.727					1.818			
23	2.609					1.739			
24	2.500					1.667			
25	2.400					1.600			
26	2.308					1.538			
27	2.222					1.481			
28	2.143					1.429			
29	2.069					1.379			
30	2.000					1.333			
31	1.935					1.290			
32	1.875					1.250			

National At-Large Points Awarded at National Mixers (Table 7)



National At-Large Points Awarded at National Mixer Tournaments									
Based on Prescribed Rounds found in Speech and Debate Tabulation Rules									
	Policy and Value Debate							Speech	
Final Placing	Triple-Octa	Double-Octa	Octa	Quarter-Final	Semi-Final	Final		Semi-Final	Final
1	National Championship Invitation								
2	80.000	60.000	40.000	20.000	10.000	5.000		40.000	20.000
3	40.000	30.000	20.000	10.000	5.000			20.000	10.000
4	26.667	20.000	13.333	6.667	3.333			13.333	6.667
5	20.000	15.000	10.000	5.000				10.000	5.000
6	16.000	12.000	8.000	4.000				8.000	4.000
7	13.333	10.000	6.667	3.333				6.667	3.333
8	11.429	8.571	5.714	2.857				5.714	2.857
9	10.000	7.500	5.000					5.000	
10	8.889	6.667	4.444					4.444	
11	8.000	6.000	4.000					4.000	
12	7.273	5.455	3.636					3.636	
13	6.667	5.000	3.333					3.333	
14	6.154	4.615	3.077					3.077	
15	5.714	4.286	2.857					2.857	
16	5.333	4.000	2.667					2.667	
17	5.000	3.750						2.500	
18	4.706	3.529						2.353	
19	4.444	3.333						2.222	
20	4.211	3.158						2.105	
21	4.000	3.000						2.000	
22	3.810	2.857						1.905	
23	3.636	2.727						1.818	
24	3.478	2.609						1.739	
25	3.333	2.500						1.667	
26	3.200	2.400						1.600	
27	3.077	2.308						1.538	
28	2.963	2.222						1.481	
29	2.857	2.143						1.429	
30	2.759	2.069						1.379	
31	2.667	2.000						1.333	
32	2.581	1.935						1.290	

Note: Competition resulting in partial rounds earn at-large points commensurate with the registration round prescription.



National At-Large Points Awarded at National Opens (Table 8a)

National At-Large Points Awarded at National Open Tournaments (Speech & Debate)									
Based on Prescribed Rounds found in Speech and Debate Tabulation Rules									
Final Placing	Policy and Value Debate						Speech		
	Triple-Octa	Double-Octa	Octa	Quarter-Final	Semi-Final	Final	Semi-Final	Final	Prelims
1	National Championship Invitation								
2	National Championship Invitation								
3	80.000	60.000	40.000	20.000	10.000		40.000	20.000	10.000
4	40.000	30.000	20.000	10.000	5.000		20.000	10.000	5.000
5	26.667	20.000	13.333	6.667			13.333	6.667	
6	20.000	15.000	10.000	5.000			10.000	5.000	
7	16.000	12.000	8.000	4.000			8.000	4.000	
8	13.333	10.000	6.667	3.333			6.667	3.333	
9	11.429	8.571	5.714				5.714		
10	10.000	7.500	5.000				5.000		
11	8.889	6.667	4.444				4.444		
12	8.000	6.000	4.000				4.000		
13	7.273	5.455	3.636				3.636		
14	6.667	5.000	3.333				3.333		
15	6.154	4.615	3.077				3.077		
16	5.714	4.286	2.857				2.857		
17	5.333	4.000					2.667		
18	5.000	3.750					2.500		
19	4.706	3.529					2.353		
20	4.444	3.333					2.222		
21	4.211	3.158					2.105		
22	4.000	3.000					2.000		
23	3.810	2.857					1.905		
24	3.636	2.727					1.818		
25	3.478	2.609					1.739		
26	3.333	2.500					1.667		
27	3.200	2.400					1.600		
28	3.077	2.308					1.538		
29	2.963	2.222					1.481		
30	2.857	2.143					1.429		
31	2.759	2.069					1.379		
32	2.667	2.000					1.333		

Note: Competition resulting in partial rounds earn at-large points commensurate with the registration round prescription.



National At-Large Points Awarded at National Opens (Table 8b)

National At-Large Points Awarded at National Open Tournaments					
Based on Prescribed Rounds found in Tabulation Rules					
Moot Court (MC)					
Final Placing	Double- Octa	Octa	Quarter- Final	Semi- Final	Final
1	MC National Championship Invitation				
2	MC National Championship Invitation				
3	MC National Championship Invitation				
4	MC National Championship Invitation				
5	60.000	40.000	20.000	10.000	
6	30.000	20.000	10.000	5.000	
7	20.000	13.333	6.667	3.333	
8	15.000	10.000	5.000	2.500	
9	12.000	8.000			
10	10.000	6.667			
11	8.571	5.714			
12	7.500	5.000			
13	6.667	4.444			
14	6.000	4.000			
15	5.455	3.636			
16	5.000	3.333			
17	4.615				
18	4.286				
19	4.000				
20	3.750				
21	3.529				
22	3.333				
23	3.158				
24	3.000				
25	2.857				
26	2.727				
27	2.609				
28	2.500				
29	2.400				
30	2.308				
31	2.222				
32	2.143				

Note: Competition resulting in partial rounds earn at-large points commensurate with the registration round prescription.



Tabulation Rules

All NCFA tournaments are tabulated by NCFA software, which is programmed according to the rules presented in this document. The methodology and specifications for the tabulation process are included for your understanding and validation. Any decisions required to be made in the tabulation room to execute the software and tabulate the tournament should follow the rules presented in this document. In the event that a situation requires clarification or is not addressed by the rules, a determination will be reached by the National Adjudication Team or Qualification Committee, as appropriate.

Debate Tabulation Rules

Teams

- **Policy Team.** A Policy Debate Team will consist of two people.
- **Lincoln-Douglas Value Team.** A Lincoln-Douglas Value Debate Team will consist of one person.

Number of Preliminary and Elimination Rounds

- **Preliminary Rounds.** Each team will debate six preliminary rounds in the tournament. In the event that an odd number of debate teams are competing, one team per round will receive a bye, which is recorded as a win.
- **Elimination Rounds.** The number of prescribed elimination rounds will be determined by the number of teams competing in that style of debate and by tournament type.

Prescribed Rounds

Number of Teams	Prescribed Rounds
4 to 6 teams	Finals
7 to 14 teams	SemiFinals
15 to 27 teams	QuarterFinals
28 to 55 teams	OctaFinals*
56 -111 teams	Double OctaFinals*
112+ teams	Triple OctaFinals*

Regional and District Qualifiers will qualify competitors equal to the Prescribed Rounds table but will be limited to a maximum of QuarterFinals for elimination rounds. Competitors whose preliminary placing is 1-8 will proceed directly to the QuarterFinal round. Competitors whose preliminary placing is 9th through the prescribed limit or have winning records beyond prescribed limit will be awarded regional invitations and at-large points based on the prescribed rounds.

Regional Championships will hold rounds equal to the Prescribed Rounds table above OR elimination rounds sufficient for advancing all teams with winning records, whichever advances the greater number of teams. At-large points are earned based on prescribed rounds.

National Mixers, National Opens, and the National Championship will hold elimination rounds sufficient to advance all teams with winning records to a maximum of 64 teams. At-large points are earned based on prescribed rounds.

Matching Debate Teams in Preliminary Rounds

Aff/Neg Constraints

- **Side Balance.** Side balance is normally accomplished by each team having the same number of rounds on each side (affirmative and negative) at each even-numbered round. (i.e. at the end of Round Two, every team without a bye should have had one affirmative and one negative round. At the end of Round 4, every team without a bye should have had two affirmative rounds and two negative rounds, etc.)
- **Same Side Prohibition.** A team will not debate the same opponent on the same side more than once in preliminary competition unless it is mathematically impossible to avoid.

Matching

- **Random Rounds.** The initial round of the tournament will be randomly paired.
- **Power Matched Rounds.** Based on tournament size, power matching usually begins as early as round 2 and continues for the remainder of the preliminary competition. Each round is paired based on the results of the previous round(s), taking into consideration the constraints of the tournament.
- **Random within brackets.** The method of power matching is random within each win/loss bracket. (i.e., at the end of Round 2, each team with a 2/0 record will debate one of the other teams with a 2/0 record.)
- **Unmatched teams within a bracket.** In the event that an odd number of teams fills a win/loss bracket, or as needed to preserve side balance, a team(s) may be promoted from a lower bracket to debate within a higher bracket. When possible, a team will not be promoted more than one time in a tournament, nor will a team debate more than one promoted team in a tournament.
- The same steps, beginning with the top bracket, will be followed with each win/loss bracket.

Byes

In the event that an odd number of debate teams are competing in the tournament, one team will receive a bye each round. A team will not receive more than one bye during a tournament unless it is mathematically impossible to avoid. During a pre-set round, the bye will be randomly determined. During power-matched rounds, the debate team with the lowest record that remains

unmatched once the power-matching has been completed will receive the bye for that round, taking into consideration the constraints of the tournament. Other constraints of the brackets and sides may result in a team with a higher record receiving the bye.

Preliminary Round Tabulation

Recording Ballots

- **Recording Win/Loss.** A win or loss is recorded for each team.
- **Speaker Points.** Each competitor's individual speaker points and rank are recorded. Team speaker points and ranks are determined by adding the speaker points and ranks from both team partners for each round.
- **Recording Byes.** If there is a bye in the round, a win is recorded for the team that received a bye. The speaker points and ranks for the team assigned the bye will be automatically re-calculated by the software each round as the tournament progresses by determining the average of all other rounds completed. At the end of the preliminary rounds, the final speaker points and ranks for the bye round will be determined by the average of the other rounds.

Ranking Teams

- **Rankings.** Teams will be ranked by win/loss record.
- **Breaking Ties.** When two or more teams have the same win/loss record, the following methods will be used, in the order listed, to break the tie:
- **Adjusted High-Low Team Speaker Points.** The ballot with the highest total team speaker points and the ballot with the lowest total team speaker points are omitted. The points from the remaining ballots are totaled, and the team with the highest total wins the tie break.
 - **Total Speaker Points.** Team speaker points from all preliminary rounds are totaled. The team with the highest total wins the tie break.
 - **Adjusted Double High-Low Team Speaker Points.** The ballots from the rounds with the two highest and the two lowest team speaker points are omitted, and the remaining ballots, if any, are totaled. The team with the highest total wins the tie break.
 - **Speaker Rank.** Team speaker ranks from all preliminary rounds are totaled. The team with the best (lowest) total wins the tie break.
 - **Head-to-Head.** If two teams faced each other in preliminary competition before this point, the team who won the round wins the tie break.
 - **Schedule Difficulty – Opponent Wins.** The team whose opponents won the most rounds up to this point wins the tie break.
 - **Schedule Difficulty – Opponent Speaker Points.** The team whose opponents earned the highest total team speaker points up to this point wins the tie break.
 - **Adjusted High-Low Speaker Rank.** The rounds with the highest and lowest team speaker rank are omitted and the team speaker

ranks from the remaining rounds are totaled. The team with the best (lowest) total wins the tie break.

- o **Coin Toss.** When all the above methods fail to resolve the tie, an electronic coin toss is used to determine which team wins the tie break.

Determining Which Teams Advance

- **Regional or District Qualifiers.** The highest-ranking teams from the preliminary rounds will advance to the elimination rounds as determined by [Ranking Teams](#). The prescribed bracket is filled starting with the highest ranked teams. Break-even teams will advance, if necessary, to fill the bracket. Teams with losing records will not advance.

Number of Teams Competing	Teams to advance
4 to 6 teams	2 teams advance
7 to 14 teams	4 teams advance
15 to 27 teams	8 teams advance
28 to 55 teams	16 teams advance*
56 -111 teams	32 teams advance*

*Regional and District Qualifiers will not hold Octa(or Double OctaFinal) rounds but will award regional invitations and at-large points to students whose preliminary placings are 9-16 (or 32) and will include winning records beyond that if necessary. Competitors whose preliminary placings are 1–8 will proceed directly to the QuarterFinal round.

- **Regional Championships.** The highest-ranking teams from the preliminary rounds will advance to the elimination rounds as determined in [Ranking Teams](#). The prescribed bracket is filled beginning with the highest ranked teams. Break-even teams are allowed to clear, if necessary, to fill the bracket. Teams with losing records will not advance. If the number of winning records exceeds the number of teams needed to fill the prescribed bracket, all winning records must be advanced using a partial bracket, if necessary.
- **National Opens and National Mixers**All teams with winning records will qualify to the Regional Championship and earn at-large points. Elimination rounds will be held sufficient to advance all teams with winning records to a maximum of 64 teams. Teams with break-even or losing records will not advance or qualify for regional invitations or at-large points. Brackets are established based on the number of teams advancing to the elimination rounds. A partial bracket is acceptable.
- **National Championship**
All teams with winning records will advance to the elimination rounds. Teams with break-even or losing records will not advance. Brackets are established based on the number of teams advancing to the elimination rounds. A partial bracket is acceptable.



Elimination Round Matching and Tabulation

Matching Teams

- **Ranking and Seeding.** Elimination round pairings are established in accordance with each team's preliminary ranking. The highest-ranking team is matched with the lowest ranking team, the second highest is matched with the second lowest, etc.
- **Locked Sides.** If the two teams have faced each other once in preliminary rounds, the teams switch sides for elimination competition.
- **Flip for Sides.** If the two teams have faced each other twice in the preliminary rounds or have never met, an electronic coin toss determines the side each team will take.

Recording Ballots

- **Number of ballots per match.** Each elimination round held will be at least triple-paneled and will be decided by an odd-numbered panel of judges.
- **Recording win/loss.** A win is recorded for the team who receives the majority of judge votes in the match.
- **Speaker Points.** Speaker points and ranks are not used in tabulation for elimination rounds.

Advancing through Elimination Rounds

- **Advancing.** Teams will continue to advance through the bracket until they lose a round.
- **Partial Brackets.** In the case of a partially filled bracket, the top seeded team(s) which does not have an opponent in the round will advance to the next elimination round without debating.

Determining Final Standing and Awards

Final Standings

- **Finalists.** The team who wins the final round wins the tournament. The team who loses the final round finishes in 2nd place.
- **SemiFinalists.** The teams who lose in the semifinal rounds will take 3rd and 4th places. The final placing will be determined by which team had the higher placing in preliminary standings. (i.e., the team that placed higher in the preliminary competition will take 3rd place and the remaining team will take 4th place.)
- **Any Remaining Elimination Round Teams.** Follow the above procedure until all teams who advanced to the elimination rounds have been placed.

Debate Speakers

- **Speaker Awards.** The top 20% individual competitors in each style of debate, with a maximum of 20, will be recognized.
- **Speaker Ranking.** Adjusted high-low speaker points will be used to determine individual speaker ranking. This is calculated by omitting the ballots with the highest and lowest speaker points and totaling the scores from the remaining ballots. The speakers with the highest adjusted speaker point totals receive the highest awards.

- **Breaking Speaker Point Ties.** If the high-low speaker point calculation results in a tie between one or more speakers, the following methods will be used, in the order listed, to determine which speaker will be ranked higher:
 - **Total Speaker Points.** Individual speaker points from all preliminary round ballots are totaled.
 - **Adjusted Double High-Low Speaker Points.** The ballots from the rounds with the two highest and the two lowest individual speaker points are omitted, and the remaining ballots, if any, are totaled.
 - **Speaker Rank.** Individual speaker ranks from all preliminary ballots are totaled. The speaker with the best (lowest) speaker rank total places higher.
 - **Adjusted High-Low Speaker Rank.** The ballots from the rounds with the highest and the lowest individual speaker points are omitted, and the remaining ballots are totaled. The speaker with the best (lowest) speaker rank total places higher.
 - **Head-to-Head.** If two speakers met in the preliminary rounds, the speaker with the higher ranking in that round shall receive the higher speaker award.
 - **Teams remain tied.** If the competitors did not meet in preliminary rounds, both competitors will receive the same ranking.

Compliance Adjustments

Occasionally there is a need to make adjustments in the tabulation due to issues such as a rule violation or disqualification. These actions only take place at the direction of the National Adjudication Team with the oversight of the Tab Director. Penalties imposed for an infraction of the rules may include loss of the round, a reduction in speaker points, the loss of a single ballot, disqualification, or other penalty as imposed by the National Adjudication Team.



Speech Tabulation Rules

Number of Prescribed Rounds

All tournament types will hold three preliminary rounds of speech competition. Elimination rounds are determined by the number of competitors in each event.

Qualifying Tournaments

Number of Competitors	Number of Rooms	Elimination Rounds
8 or fewer	1	None
9 to 17	2 to 3	Finals
18 to 61	3 to 8	SemiFinals
62 or more	8 or more	Modified SemiFinals

National Championship

Number of Competitors	Number of Rooms	Elimination Rounds
8 or fewer	1	None
9 to 17	2 to 3	Finals
18 to 47	3 to 6	SemiFinals
48 or more	6 or more	QuarterFinals

Grouping Speech Competitors

- **Single Room Events.** In an event with a single room of competitors, all competitors shall perform in the same room for three preliminary rounds.
- **Multi Room Events**
 - **Divided among rooms.** Rooms will be divided as evenly as possible.
 - **Regrouping.** Competitors are regrouped for each preliminary round.
 - **Paneling.** Preliminary rounds are paneled to optimize the number of instances that each competitor performs against the other competitors in the event. The goal is that each competitor will be evaluated against as many other competitors in the event as possible.
 - **Speaker Position.** Speaker position will be varied for each new judging panel when possible.



Preliminary Round Tabulation

Determination of Cumulative Scores

At the end of a round, the ranks given to a speaker by each of the three judges in an event will be added to determine the competitor's cumulative score for that round (e.g. a speaker receiving a 3, 4, and 7 will have a cumulative score of 14).

The competitor's cumulative score for all preliminary rounds in an event determines the competitor's preliminary standing in the event.

Category points are not scoring points but a tool to assist judges as they rank speakers.

Determination of Room Rank

Room rank is used for breaking ties.

Room Rank is determined by sorting the cumulative scores from lowest to highest (lowest cumulative score receives the top rank) in each room of each round. Each room of competitors is ranked independently.

In the event of a tie in cumulative scores, the tie is broken by using the following methods in this order:

- **Judges' preference.** The competitor who receives the better ranking from the greatest number of judges will be ranked higher.
- **Decimal Conversion.** The competitor who has the higher decimal conversion receives the better rank. Decimal conversion is determined by dividing 1 by the judge's rank (i.e. a third place ranking would be $1/3 = 0.333$).
- **Middle Rank.** If the tie cannot be broken, all three students receive the same middle rank.

Weighted Ranks

Judge ranks and room ranks are weighted to maintain fairness when the number of competitors varies between rooms of an event. (e.g. If one room in the event has eight competitors and the other two rooms have only seven competitors, the ranks in the eight competitor room are weighted with the lowest rank in the long room equal to the lowest rank in the shortest room and the best rank in the long room equal to the best rank in the shortest room.) If a competitor in a room does not compete during a round, the ranks in the longer rooms for the event in that round will be weighted accordingly. Weighted ranks are calculated as follows:

$$\text{Weighted Rank} = \text{Original Rank} - \frac{(\text{Original Rank} - 1)}{(\# \text{ Comps in long room} - 1)(\# \text{ Comps in long room} - \# \text{ Comps in short room})}$$

Determining Preliminary Standings

- **Cumulative Score.** Each competitor in an event is ranked by calculating the total weighted cumulative scores from all preliminary rounds in that event. The competitor with the lowest total weighted cumulative score will receive first place and so on until all the competitors have been ranked into preliminary standings.
- **Breaking Ties.** If there is a tie in the weighted cumulative scores, break the tie using the following methods in this order:
 - **Room Rank.** The competitor with the lowest total weighted room rank is ranked higher.
 - **Judge's Preference in Head-to-Head Competition.** If the tied speakers were in the same room in any preliminary round, the tie-break is given to the competitor who won in head-to-head competition. If the competitors in question went head-to-head in more than one round, every affected round is factored individually. (For example, if Student A and Student B met in both Round 1 and Round 2, determine the winner of the head-to-head competition in round 1 and then determine the winner of the head-to-head competition in Round 2. If a competitor won both rounds, give that competitor the tie-break. If the competitors remain tied, proceed to the next tie-break.)
 - **Decimal Conversion.** The competitor with the highest weighted cumulative decimal conversion score receives the higher ranking.
 - **Coin Toss.** When all of the above methods fail to resolve the tie, an electronic coin toss is used to determine the speaker who wins the tie break.

Elimination Round Tabulation and Set-Up

Number of Competitors

The number of competitors advancing into elimination rounds or receiving an award is determined by the number of participants in the event at the conclusion of round 1. Please see the tables below.



Advancing from Preliminary Rounds

Regional or District Qualifying Tournaments and National Opens or Mixers

Number of Competitors	Advance to SemiFinals or Modified SemiFinals	Advance to Finals
9		5
10		5
11		6
12		6
13		7
14		7
15		8
16		8
17		8
18-21	10	6
22-25	12	6
26-29	14	8
30-61	16	8
62-77	24	8
78-93	28	8
94+	32	8

National Championship

Number of Competitors	Advance to QuarterFinals	Advance to SemiFinals	Advance to Finals
9			5
10			5
11			6
12			6
13			7
14			7
15			8
16			8
17			8
18-21		10	6
22-25		12	6
26-29		14	8
30-47		16	8
48-55	24	12	6
56-63	28	16	8
64+	32	16	8



SemiFinal Rounds

Grouping SemiFinalists

- **Room size.** For SemiFinals, competitors are placed in two equally balanced rooms of five to eight competitors. For Modified SemiFinals, competitors are placed in four equally balanced rooms of six to eight competitors. SemiFinal rooms must always be equal in size.
- **Balancing Rooms.** Each room is balanced by “snaking” competitors based on preliminary standings.
- **For SemiFinals.** The rooms are snaked as follows: speakers ranked 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13, and 16 are placed in Group A. Speakers ranked 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, and 15 are placed in Group B.
- **For Modified SemiFinals.** The same procedure used to snake SemiFinals is followed for Modified SemiFinals except the speakers will be distributed across 4 rooms of competition instead of two.
- **Speaker Order.** Speaker order in the SemiFinal Round is randomly determined.

Tabulating SemiFinals

- Use the cumulative score of the SemiFinal Round to determine the room rank (lowest cumulative score receives the better room rank.)
- If there is a tie, break the tie using the following methods in this order:
 - **Judges’ Preference.** The participant who receives the better ranking from the highest number of judges in the SemiFinal Round should be ranked higher.
 - **Preliminary Placing.**

Final Round

Speaker order in the Final Round is randomly determined.

Tabulating the Final Round

- Use the cumulative score from the Final Round to determine the Final placings (lowest cumulative score receives the better placing.)
- In the event that two or more competitors are tied, use the following methods for breaking ties, in the order listed:
 - **Judges’ Preference.** The participant who receives the better ranking from the highest number of judges in the Final Round should be ranked higher.
 - **Preliminary Placing.**



Final Event Standing

For Events with a Single Room of Competitors

In an event with only one room of competitors, three preliminary rounds will be held and the Final ranking will be determined by the preliminary standings in that event.

Recognition of Competitors – The number of competitors recognized at awards will be determined by the following chart:

Number of Competitors	Recognize
2 or 3	1
4	2
5	3
6	3
7	4
8	4

For Events with More Than One Room of Competitors

- **Finalists.** The final standings for the event are determined by the results of the Final Round.
- **SemiFinalists.** If there are SemiFinalists in the event, final standings are determined by the following process:
 - SemiFinalists are ordered by room rank. A SemiFinal round has two of each rank (two 5th places, two 6th places, etc.), one from each room. The preliminary ranking is used to break the tie between two of the same room ranks. The competitor with the better preliminary rank receives the higher ranking between the two. (i.e. the two 5th place SemiFinalists will receive the Final rankings of 9th and 10th place)

Compliance Adjustments

Occasionally there is a need to make adjustments in the tabulation due to issues such as a rule violation or disqualification. These actions only take place at the direction of the National Adjudication Team with the oversight of the Tab Director. The penalty imposed for an infraction of the rules may be to adjust the rank of the student with a 4-rank penalty or with a Non-Compliant Rank. A Non-Compliant Rank is equal to the room level plus one rank. In rarer situations, a student will need to be removed from the entire event or the tournament.

Re-ranking

A penalty is applied to the competitor’s rank for each judge in the room. All competitors in the room are re-ranked to account for the adjusted ranking of the penalized competitor.



Removing

If a competitor is removed from an entire event prior to elimination rounds, an NCR is issued in each room where the competitor has already performed and all competitors in the room are re-ranked to account for the adjusted ranking of the penalized competitor. The competitor should be removed from any remaining preliminary rounds.



Moot Court Tabulation Rules

Tournament Set-Up

Moot Court Team

A Moot Court Team will consist of two people.

Number of Preliminary and Elimination Rounds

- **Preliminary Rounds.** Each team will debate six preliminary rounds in the tournament. In the event that an odd number of Moot teams are competing, one team per round will receive a bye, which is recorded as a win.
- **Elimination Rounds.** Elimination rounds to be held are determined by the number of teams with winning records. A partial bracket should be used if necessary.

Pairing Moot Teams in Preliminary Rounds

- **Petitioner/Respondent Constraints**
 - Side balance is normally accomplished by each team having the same number of rounds on each side (Petitioner and Respondent) at each even-numbered round. (i.e. at the end of Round Two, every team without a bye should have had one affirmative and one negative round. At the end of Round 4, every team without a bye should have had two affirmative rounds and two negative rounds, etc.)
 - Same Side Prohibition. A team will not debate the same opponent on the same side more than once in preliminary competition unless it is mathematically impossible to avoid.

Matching

- **Pre-set Rounds.** The initial round of the tournament will be randomly paired.
- **Power Matching.** Power matching normally begins in Round 2 and continues for the remainder of the preliminary competition. Each round is paired based on the results of the previous round(s), taking into consideration the constraints of the tournament.
- **Random within brackets.** The method of power matching is random within each win/loss bracket. (i.e., at the end of Round 2, each team with a 2/0 record will debate one of the other teams with a 2/0 record.)
- **Unmatched teams within a bracket.** In the event that an odd number of teams fills a win/loss bracket, or as needed to preserve side balance, a team(s) will be promoted from a lower bracket to debate within a higher bracket. When possible, a team will not be promoted more than one time in a tournament, nor will a team debate more than one promoted team in a tournament.

Byes

In the event that an odd number of teams are competing in the tournament, one team will receive a bye each round. A team will not receive more than one bye during a tournament unless it is mathematically impossible to avoid. During

the pre-set round, the bye will be randomly determined. During power-matched rounds, the team with the lowest record that remains unmatched once the power-matching has been completed will receive the bye for that round, taking into consideration the constraints of the tournament.

Judge Panels

All panels of judges in preliminary rounds will be made up of one judge.

Preliminary Round Tabulation

Recording Ballots

- **Ballot Recording.** Each ballot will be entered as a win or loss for each team and will include each competitor's individual speaker points and rank. The winning team must be the team that has earned the higher number of combined speaker points.
- **Team Speaker Points.** To determine the team speaker points and ranks, add the speaker points and ranks from both team partners for each round.

Recording Byes

If there is a bye in the round, record a win for the team that received a bye.

The speaker points and ranks for the team assigned the bye will be automatically re-calculated by the software each round as the tournament progresses by determining the average of all other rounds completed. At the end of the preliminary rounds, the final speaker points and ranks for the bye round will be determined by the average of the other rounds.

Ranking Teams

- **Rankings.** Teams will be ranked by win/loss record.
- **Breaking Ties.** When two or more teams have the same win/loss record, the following methods will be used, in the order listed, to break the tie:
 - **Adjusted High-Low Team Speaker Points.** The ballot with the highest total team speaker points and the ballot with the lowest total team speaker points are omitted. The points from the remaining ballots are totaled, and the team with the highest total wins the tie break.
 - **Total Speaker Points.** Team speaker points from all preliminary rounds are totaled. The team with the highest total wins the tie break.
 - **Adjusted Double High-Low Team Speaker Points.** The ballots from the rounds with the two highest and the two lowest team speaker points are omitted, and the remaining ballots, if any, are totaled. The team with the highest total wins the tie break.
 - **Speaker Rank.** Team speaker ranks from all preliminary rounds are totaled. The team with the best (lowest) total wins the tie break.
 - **Head-to-Head.** If two teams faced each other in preliminary competition before this point, the team who won the round wins the tie break.
 - **Schedule Difficulty – Opponent Wins.** The team whose opponents won the most rounds up to this point wins the tie break.

- **Schedule Difficulty – Opponent Speaker Points.** The team whose opponents earned the highest total team speaker points up to this point wins the tie break.
- **Adjusted High-Low Speaker Rank.** The rounds with the highest and lowest team speaker rank are omitted and the team speaker ranks from the remaining rounds are totaled. The team with the lowest total wins the tie break.
- **Coin Toss.** When all the above methods fail to resolve the tie, an electronic coin toss is used to determine which team wins the tie break.

Determining Which Teams Advance

Winning Records. All teams with winning records will advance to the elimination rounds. Teams with break-even or losing records will not advance. Brackets are established based on the number of teams advancing to the elimination rounds. A partial bracket is acceptable.

Elimination Round Matching and Tabulation

Matching Teams

- **Ranking and Seeding.** Elimination round pairings are established in accordance with each team's preliminary ranking. The highest-ranking team meets the lowest ranking team, the second highest meets the second lowest, etc.
- **Partial Brackets.** In the case of a partially filled bracket, the top team(s) which does not have an opponent in the round will advance to the next elimination round without debating.
- **Locked Sides.** If the two teams have faced each other once in preliminary rounds, the teams switch sides for elimination competition.
- **Flip for Sides.** If the two teams have faced each other twice in the preliminary rounds or have never met, an electronic coin toss determines the side each team will take.

Recording Ballots

Number of ballots per match

- Each elimination round will be at least triple-paneled.
- Each elimination round will be decided by an odd-numbered panel of judges.

Recording win/loss

- A win is recorded for the team who receives the majority of judge votes in the match by virtue of having the higher number of speaker points.
- Speaker points and ranks are not calculated in elimination rounds.

Advancing through Elimination Rounds

Advancing. Teams will continue to advance through the bracket until they lose a round.

Determining Final Standings and Awards

Placing Teams

- **Finalists.** The team that does not lose an elimination round wins the tournament. The team that loses the Final Round finishes in 2nd place.
- **SemiFinalists.** The teams that lose in the SemiFinal Round shall take 3rd and 4th places. The final placing shall be determined by which team had the higher placing in preliminary standings. (i.e., the team that placed higher in the preliminary competition shall take 3rd place and the remaining team shall take 4th place.)
- **Any Remaining Elimination Round Teams.** Follow the above until all teams who advanced to the elimination rounds have been placed.
- **Awards.** Each team which advances to the elimination rounds will be recognized.

Oral Advocacy Awards

- **Number of Awards.** The number of Oral Advocacy awards recognized at a tournament will be determined by the number of competitors in the tournament. The top 20% of competitors will be recognized.
- **Speaker Ranking.** Adjusted high-low speaker points from all preliminary ballots will be used to determine individual speaker ranking. This is calculated by omitting the ballots with the highest and lowest speaker points and totaling the scores from the remaining four ballots. The competitor with the highest adjusted speaker point total receives the highest award.
- **Breaking Speaker Point Ties.** If the high-low speaker points calculation results in a tie between one or more speakers, the following methods will be used, in the order listed, to determine which speaker will be ranked higher:
 - **Total Speaker Points.** Total the individual speaker points from all ballots.
 - **Adjusted Double High-Low Speaker Points.** The ballots from the rounds with the two highest and the two lowest individual speaker points are omitted, and the remaining ballots are totaled.
 - **Speaker Rank.** Total individual speaker ranks from all ballots. The speaker with the best (lowest) speaker rank total places higher.
 - **Adjusted High-Low Speaker Rank.** The highest and lowest speaker rank of each speaker is omitted and the remaining ballots are totaled. The best (lowest) speaker rank total places higher.
 - **Head-to-Head.** If two speakers met in the preliminary rounds, the speaker with the higher ranking in that round receives the higher speaker award.
 - **Teams remain tied.** If the competitors did not meet in preliminary rounds, both competitors will receive the same ranking.



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Special Achievement Recognition

Recognition at Regional Championships

Marathon Award

Award recognition. Each competitor who qualifies and competes in five or more speech events at the Regional Championship will be recognized.

Ironman Award

Award recognition. Each competitor who qualifies and competes in five or more speech events plus debate at the Regional Championship will be recognized.

Recognition at the National Championship

Marathon Award

Award recognition. Each competitor who qualifies to the National Championship and competes in five speech events will be recognized.

Ultra-Marathon Award

Award recognition. Each competitor who qualifies and competes in five speech events plus Moot Court at the National Championship will be recognized.

Ironman Award

Award recognition. Each competitor who qualifies and competes in five speech events plus debate at the National Championship will be recognized.

Ultra-Ironman Award

Award recognition. Each competitor who qualifies and competes in five speech events plus debate and Moot Court at the National Championship will be recognized.