



Qualification System

2025-2026

 **NCFCAL**
CHRISTIAN SPEECH & DEBATE



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Version History

2026.01 - published 4 November 2025

2026.02 - published March 17, 2026 - Clarification of debate speaker points and ranks, reformatting of spacing and alignment for some tables, and page-break adjustments..



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.

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)
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*
Regional Championship	Eligible competitors within the region who have qualified through a Regional or District Qualifier or National Open	- 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.

Championship Tournaments (Table 2)

Tournaments Offered	Who can compete?	What can be earned?	Events Offered	
			Policy & Value Debate	Speech (10 Events)
Regional Championship	Eligible competitors within a region who have qualified through a Regional or District Qualifier or a National Open	- 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	- National Honors	X	X

Regional Championship Invitations

Invitations to a Regional Championship are extended to students from within that region who qualify at a Regional or District Qualifier 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)
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

National Championship Invitations

National Championship slots will be allocated to National Opens, 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 within the same tournament or has earned National At-Large Points at least twice.

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)
Number of Designated Slots	140	800

Allocation of National Championship Slots (Table 5)

Awarded through:	Debate (TP / LD)	Speech (10 Events)
National Opens	1 st place TP teams 1 st place LD teams	1 st place competitors in each event
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
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

Regional Championship Slot Allocation

Distribution of Slots Between Events

After all the National Championship slots to be awarded through the National Opens 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.



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. 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 Opens and Regional Championships have been accepted, the remaining 25% of the National Championship debate slots will be offered to top-scoring competitors or teams who did 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.
- **Speech Slots.** After all the National Championship invitations to be awarded through the National Opens and Regional Championships, the remaining 25% of the National Championship speech slots will be awarded to top-scoring competitors or teams 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									
	Policy and Value Debate						Speech		
Final Placing	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 Opens (Table 7)

National At-Large Points Awarded at National Open Tournaments										
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	80.000	60.000	40.000	20.000	10.000	5.000		40.000	20.000	10.000
3	40.000	30.000	20.000	10.000	5.000			20.000	10.000	5.000
4	26.667	20.000	13.333	6.667	3.333			13.333	6.667	3.333
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.

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 the 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 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 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 and will be awarded to all teams with winning records.

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 and Ranks.** Each competitor's individual speaker points and rank are recorded. Team speaker points and ranks are determined by adding the speaker points or ranks from both team partners for each round. Beginning in the 2025-2026 season, speaker rank is determined by the judge, independent of the judge's assignment of speaker points.
- **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.
- **Forfeits.** In the rare occasion that a team forfeits, a win will be recorded for the opposing team. The forfeiting team will receive zero for speaker points and the lowest possible rank. The opposing team's speaker ranks and points 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.

Determining Seeds

- **Seeding.** Teams will be seeded 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:
 - **Win Index** - The average of Quality Wins and Strength of Schedule. (Strength of Schedule is the sum of wins of all the six opponents. This is omitted as a tie breaker because it is mathematically impossible to have an equal Win Index and Quality Wins without an equal Strength of Schedule.) The team with the higher Win Index wins the tie-breaker.
 - **Quality Wins** - The sum of opponent wins in the rounds a team won. The team with the highest Quality Win Score wins the tie-breaker.
 - **Adjusted High-Low Speaker Ranks** - the sum of speaker ranks excluding the highest and lowest scoring ballots. The team with the best adjusted speaker rank wins the tie-breaker.

- **Total Speaker Ranks** - The sum of room ranks for all six rounds. The team with the best Room Rank wins the tie-breaker.
- **Adjusted High-Low Team Speaker Points.** The sum of Team Speaker Points excluding the highest and lowest scoring ballots. The team with the highest Adjusted Speaker Points wins the tie-breaker minus any penalties.
- **Total Team Speaker Points.** The sum of team speaker points from all preliminary rounds. The team with the highest Team Speaker Points wins the tie-breaker minus any penalties
- **Adjusted Double High-Low Team Speaker Points.** The sum of Team Speaker Points excluding the two highest and two lowest scoring ballots. The team with the highest total adjusted Team Speaker Points wins the tie-breaker.
- **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.
- **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 seeded teams from the preliminary rounds will advance to the elimination rounds. The prescribed bracket is filled starting with the highest seeded teams. Break-even teams will advance, if necessary, to fill the bracket. Teams with losing records will not advance.
- **Regional Championships.** The highest seeded teams from the preliminary rounds will advance to the elimination rounds. The prescribed bracket is filled beginning with the highest seeded teams. Break-even teams are allowed to advance, 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** 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 to the Regional Championship or earn 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

- **Seeding.** Elimination round pairings are established in accordance with each team's preliminary seed. The highest seeded team is matched with the lowest seeded 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 will be decided by an odd-numbered panel of judges with a minimum of three.
- **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 that lose in the semifinal rounds will be awarded 3rd and 4th places. The final ranking between them will be determined by their preliminary standings: the team with the higher preliminary seed will be awarded 3rd place, and the other team will be awarded 4th place.
- **Any Remaining Elimination Round Teams.** Follow the above procedure until all teams who advanced to the elimination rounds will be placed.

Debate Speaker Awards

- **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 Ranking Ties.** If the Speaker Ranking 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. The individual with the highest Total Speaker Points places higher.
- **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 Lead. Penalties imposed for an infraction of the rules may include loss of the round, a reduction in speaker points, ineligibility for a Speaker Award, disqualification, or other penalty as imposed by the National Adjudication Team.

Reduced speaker points reflecting a compliance adjustment will not be dropped for a competitor's Adjusted High-Low Speaker Points or Adjusted Double High-Low Speaker Points. Speaker points of 0 due to a forfeit can be dropped in these calculations.

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

Preliminary Round Set-up and Tabulation

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.
 - **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.

Ranking Speech Competitors

Calculated Rank Values

Judge ranks and room ranks are given a weighted value to maintain fairness when the number of competitors varies between rooms of an event. (e.g. One room in the event has eight competitors and the other two rooms have only seven competitors.)

If a competitor in a room does not compete during a round, the rank values used are based on the number of speakers that presented.

A standard multiplier is used to calculate values, see below. Weighted ranks are calculated as follows:

Rank Values

		Competitors per room						
		8	7	6	5	4	3	2
Judge's Rank	1	.8400	.9450	1.0800	1.2600	1.5120	1.8900	2.5200
	2	1.6800	1.8900	2.1600	2.5200	3.0240	3.7800	5.0400
	3	2.5200	2.8350	3.2400	3.7800	4.5360	5.6700	7.5600
	4	3.3600	3.7800	4.3200	5.0400	6.0480	7.5600	
	5	4.2000	4.7250	5.4000	6.3000	7.5600		
	6	5.0400	5.6700	6.4800	7.5600			
	7	5.8800	6.6150	7.5600				
	8	6.7200	7.5600					
	7.5600							

Rank Value is determined by taking the judge's rank and multiplying it by a scale factor which results in a terminating decimal.

$$\text{Rank Value} = \text{Judge's Rank} \times \text{Scale Factor}$$

The scale factor is dependent on the number of competitors in a given room, according to the following formula, where N = Number of Competitors in the Room:

$$\text{Scale Factor} = 7.56 / (N + 1)$$

Using this formula a room with 8 competitors would have a scale factor of $7.56 / 9$ (i.e., 0.84), a room of 7 would have a scale factor of $7.56 / 8$ (i.e., 0.945), and so on.

Example 1: For a room of 8 competitors, receiving a judge's rank of 3 results in a Rank Value of 2.52.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Rank Value} &= 3 \times \text{Scale Factor} \\ \text{Scale Factor} &= 7.56 / (8 + 1) = 0.84 \\ \text{Rank Value} &= 3 \times 0.84 \\ \text{Rank Value} &= 2.52\end{aligned}$$

Example 2: For a room of 5 competitors, receiving a judge's rank of 2 also results in a Rank Value of 2.52.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Rank Value} &= 2 \times \text{Scale Factor} \\ \text{Scale Factor} &= 7.56 / (5 + 1) = 1.26 \\ \text{Rank Value} &= 2 \times 1.26 \\ \text{Rank Value} &= 2.52\end{aligned}$$

Determining Preliminary Room Ranks

Each competitor's Final Rank is determined by the sum of three weighted rank values assigned by each judge. The lowest total value receives the first place rank in the room, the next highest second, and so on. Each room of competitors is ranked independently.

Note: Category points (i.e., for content, organization, etc.) are not scoring points but a tool to assist judges as they rank speakers.

In the event of a tie in total rank value, the tie is broken by using the following methods in this order:

- **Judges' Preference.** The competitor who receives the better final 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 each of the three judges' rank values and adding those three decimals together.
- **Middle Rank.** If the tie cannot be broken, all three students receive the same middle rank.

Determining Preliminary Standings

- **Total Rank Value.** Each competitor in an event is ranked by adding all nine rank values from the preliminary rounds for that event. The competitor with the lowest total value will receive first seed and so on until all the competitors have been seeded into preliminary standings.
- **Breaking Ties.** If there is a tie in the Total Rank Values, the following methods will be used in this order to break the tie:

- **Sum of Final Rank Value from Preliminary Rooms.** The Final Rank is a competitor's ultimate standing in a room and is also given a Rank Value as described above. These three Final Rank Values from each of the preliminary rounds are added together and the competitor with the lowest sum of Final Rank Values is seeded 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 total sum of decimal conversion scores from preliminary judges' rank values receives the higher seed.
- **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 Set-up and Tabulation

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.



Advancing from Preliminary Rounds

Regional or District Qualifying Tournaments and National Opens

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

Elimination Round Set-up and Tabulation

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.
 - **For QuarterFinals (National Championship only).** QuarterFinals will follow the same snaking procedure as above. Following QuarterFinals, each of the SemiFinals rooms will have two placings from each of the QuarterFinals rooms.
- **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. The lowest cumulative score receives the higher 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 final ranking from the highest number of judges in the SemiFinal Round should be ranked higher.
 - **Preliminary Placing.**

Grouping Finalists

Speaker order in the final round is randomly determined.

Tabulating the Final Round

- Each competitor's final rank is determined by the sum of three weighted rank values assigned by each judge. The lowest total value receives the first place rank in the room, the next highest second, and so on.
- 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 final 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 room rank. A SemiFinal round has two of each rank (two 5th places, two 6th places, etc.), one from each room. The preliminary standing is used to break the tie between two of the same room ranks. The competitor with the better preliminary standing receives the higher place 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 Lead. Penalties imposed for an infraction of the rules may be a 2, 4, or 8-rank penalty, disqualification, or other penalty as imposed by the National Adjudication Team.

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.

Special Achievement Recognition

Recognition at all Tournaments

All-Around Award

Each competitor that advances to elimination rounds in debate and each of the three main speech styles (Limited Prep, Interpretation, Platform) will be recognized.

Recognition at Regional Championships

Marathon Award

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

Ironman Award

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

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

Ironman Award

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