AMERICAN FORENSIC ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL SPEECH TOURNAMENT
CHARTER BY-LAWS
(last revised October 2022)

I. Purpose

The intent of the By-laws is to help further define the operational concerns of the AFA-NST and clarify matters not explicit in the AFA-NST Charter. Provisions included in the By-laws shall not undermine requirements and standards provided for in the Charter.

II. Ethical Concerns

A. The standard of ethics for schools and individual participants involved in the AFA-NST shall be consistent with those provided for in the American Forensic Association's Code of Ethics and those provided for in the AFA-NST Charter and its By-laws as well as AFA-NST Tournament Letters.

B. Competitor Practices
NST Competitors are expected to adhere to the "AFA Code of Forensics Program and Forensics Tournament Standards for Colleges and Universities" concerning preparation and performance of competitive events. Specific standards include the following:

1. In events which involve original student speech compositions (oratory/persuasion, informative/expository, after-dinner/epideictic, rhetorical criticism, impromptu, extemporaneous, or other similar speaking contests) the speaker shall not commit plagiarism.
   a. Plagiarism is defined as claiming another's written or spoken words as one's own, or claiming as one's own a significant portion of the creative work of another.
   b. A speech in competition is considered plagiarized when the student presenting it was not the principal person responsible for researching, drafting, organizing, composing, refining, and generally constructing the speech in question.

2. In interpretation events (prose, poetry, dramatic duo, program oral interpretation, etc.) the speaker(s)' cutting shall be "in agreement with" the original text. Competitors are expected to indicate if modifications have been made in the original text. Competitors are expected to bring to tournaments a copy of the original inclusive text along with the student's script.

3. Forensics competitors are expected to do their own research.
   a. Persons other than competitor (undergraduate students, graduate students, or instructors/coaches) are not to be charged with the responsibility of doing a forensics competitor's research.
   b. This provision shall not be construed to prevent coaches or assistants from engaging in limited research designed to:
      (1) Teach research techniques
      (2) Provide examples of high quality research

      (3) Identify areas of research for students
      (4) Provide the coach with the working knowledge necessary to function as an effective critic with respect to the debate or speech topics being investigated by his or her students.

4. All forensics participants are expected to compete honestly and fairly. Students are not to intentionally perform badly in speech rounds for the purpose of allowing other competitors to

benefit as a result. Directors of Forensics, judges, and coaches are not to encourage dishonesty in competition by asking students to purposely do poorly in rounds of forensics competition.

C. Copyrighted Material - Statement of AFA Guidelines:

The American Forensic Association endorses the concept of the "face-to-face teaching exemption" for performance of copyrighted materials as specified in The Copyright Law of the United States (Public Law 94-553-1976). Section 110 of the Act states that it is not a copyright infringement for instructors or pupils "in the course of face-to-face teaching activities of a nonprofit educational institution, in a classroom or similar place devoted to instruction" to perform any genre of copyrighted material. Subsection 4 of Section 110 also permits performance of non-dramatic literary works if there is either no admission charge or proceeds, after deducting reasonable production costs, are used exclusively for educational purposes.

The American Forensic Association supports the notion that competitive forensics (e.g., speech/debate) tournaments/festivals are an extension of the educational classroom and qualify as nonprofit educational activities. Thus, forensics event categories such as oral interpretation of literature, readers' theater, oratorical speaking, and debate, performed in the context of a forensic tournament/festival, are exempt from copyright infringements. As the Law also states, instructors and pupils need not be present in the actual classroom, but be in the same general vicinity for the exemption to be in effect.

Forensics tournaments hosted by the American Forensic Association (AFA) or acknowledged as AFA-sanctioned tournaments/festivals in the annual AFA Calendar are considered exempt from copyright infringement if they meet the aforementioned criteria.

D. AFA-NST Ethical Use of Literature Policy:

1. Contestants may not rewrite a prose, a poem, or a dramatic text so the work differs from the original text.
2. Contestants may not add or reassign scenes or lines to the performed cutting. Although an occasional line might be added, especially if a character has been deleted, this practice should be discouraged.
3. Contestants may not rewrite the ending of a work.
4. Contestants may not rewrite lines to change the gender or person of a character.
5. Contestants may not perform a text in a genre for which it has not been written.
6. Protests should be filed according to AFA-NST Charter and By-laws Section X.

E. Individual judges should not make ethical judgments when ranking/rating contestants. If an ethical question arises, the judge should contact the Tournament Director to explain his/her concern. The Tournament Director will then call the matter of the ethical concern to the attention of the NST Chair for disposition of the matter by the NST Committee.

F. To assist the NST Committee in accurately assessing ethical disputes, the AFA-NST recommends that coaches keep a file of student speeches and interpretation programs used at NST for one year after the NST in which it is performed.

G. Harassment of Coaches and Students

1. The AFA-NST deplores the harassment of coaches or students by others after a student has already qualified an at-large event and continues to compete with that event in tournaments.
2. Individual member schools of the AFA-NST should determine when and under what circumstances individual competitors should compete, without verbal or nonverbal intimidation from others.

3. The AFA-NST upholds the right of the individual coach and student competitor to continue to compete in qualified events as often as they see fit, prior to the National Tournament.

H. Alcohol and Tobacco Policy: While at the host school, participants in the AFA-NST are expected to respect the rules and regulations of the host institution pertaining to alcohol consumption and tobacco use.

I. **Participants in the AFA-NST and district tournaments are required to abide by the principles of two-party consent to recording, regardless of the location or style of the tournament. No participant may record any other participant without their express consent.**

III. School and Student Eligibility

A. To participate in AFA-NST sanctioned activities a school must:
   1. Be an accredited (or pursuing accreditation) two or four-year college or university.
   2. Be in good financial standing with the financial requirements established by the AFA-NST Committee and the Board of Trustees.
   3. Submit a $30 subscription fee to the District Chair by the December 1st deadline. Fees increase to $50 after December 1. All fees must be paid no later than registration for the District Tournament.
   4. Pay appropriate registration fees for the District Tournament and NST entries
   5. Provide documentation verifying that students, coaches and judges representing their institution have participated in sexual harassment/violence awareness and prevention training. This documentation must be provided to the district chair prior to the District tournament. District Chairs must submit this documentation to the Sexual Harassment Officer of the NST Committee NO LATER than seven days after their district qualifying tournament.

B. Schools that have not paid all fees encumbered from previous participation in the AFA-NST shall not be permitted to participate at the District Qualifier or the NST until such past due accounts are paid.

C. To participate in AFA-NST sanctioned activities a student must be a full or part-time undergraduate student enrolled for a minimum of six hours. The minimum of six hours of required academic work must be taken at the institution the student is representing at the NST. A student must be pursuing a program of study or an associate or baccalaureate degree at the institution they represent at the NST.
   1. A part-time student at an institution may not represent that institution at the NST if they are also pursuing an associate or baccalaureate degree at another institution.
   2. A student who has completed the requirements for an associate degree at an institution is no longer eligible to compete for that institution. A person is considered as possessing an associate degree upon his/her completion of requirements toward that degree and having been approved for graduation by his/her respective school.
   3. An appeal for a waiver of these provisions may be made using the same procedures as outlined in the By-laws (IIIE) for students who have received bachelor degrees.
   4. In determining the time of graduation, a student is considered as possessing a baccalaureate degree upon his/her completion of requirements toward that degree and having been approved for graduation by his/her respective school.

D. Students must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA based on a 4.0 scale to be eligible for NST competition.

E. Under unusual circumstances, involving valid educational or professional justifications, students who have received bachelor degrees may participate if:
   1. The student has never competed in forensics as an undergraduate.
   2. The student is in an advanced/accelerated/combined Bachelor's/Master's program, has completed their bachelor's degree, and is finishing their master's degree at the same institution.
   3. The student obtained their bachelor's degree within a three-year time frame and is continuing on with their masters at the same school.
   4. The coach who desires to let the student compete informs the chair of the NST Committee of this decision and the reasons for it, and he/she agrees that the student has valid educational or professional reasons for participating. If there is a question concerning the student's reasons, the chair will consult with the student's District Chair and Regional Representative. The decision will be decided by a consensus of the three people.
   5. Such students may participate for a maximum of two consecutive time blocks.

F. No person shall be allowed to participate in more than four AFA-NSTs as a contestant.
   1. In addition, contestants are limited to four national tournament years. A national tournament year is one in which a student competes in a national tournament of Pi Kappa Delta, Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha, Interstate Oratorical Contest, Phi Rho Pi, AFA-NST, NFA, National Novice Tournaments, or any other national competition added to this list by the AFA-NST Committee.
   2. This rule is meant to exclude contestants who participate in speech events for more than four years at the national level from competing in the AFA-NST.

G. No student who has competed in eight or more six-month periods (July 1-December 25, or December 26-June 30) in three or more tournaments per period of time will be eligible to compete in the AFA-NST.

H. An undergraduate who judges in the open division of a forensics tournament (a division which qualifies for AFA- NST at-large legs), permanently forfeits his/her eligibility to compete at the AFA-NST District or National Tournaments.

I. Protests of eligibility must be made in writing and presented to the District Chairperson. Decisions concerning the protest shall be made by a vote of the District Committee. Unresolved cases shall be referred to the National Committee.

IV. Event Description and Guidelines

A. The 2020 and 2021 AFA-NST will offer competition in the following events and conflict patterns.

A EVENTS

Informative Speaking: An original, factual speech by the student on a realist subject to fulfill the general aim to inform the audience. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

Impromptu Speaking: An impromptu speech, substantive in nature, with topic selections varied by round and by section. Topics will be derived from quotations. Speakers will

have a total of 7 minutes for both preparation and speaking. Timing commences with the acceptance of the topics sheet. Limited notes are permitted.

Prose Interpretation: An original or selections of prose material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event is on the development of the narrative/story. Play cuttings and poetry are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

B EVENTS

Dramatic Duo: A cutting from one or more texts of literary merit, humorous or serious, involving the portrayal of two or more characters presented by two individuals. The material may be drawn from any genre of literature. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc., are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Extemporaneous Speaking: Contestants will be given three topics in the general area of current events, choose one, and have 30 minutes to prepare a speech that is the original work of the student. Maximum time limit for the speech is 7 minutes. Limited notes are permitted. Students will speak in listed order. Postings of topics will be staggered.

Persuasive Speaking: An original speech by the student designed to inspire, reinforce, or change the beliefs, attitudes, values or actions of the audience. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Program Oral Interpretation: A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from two or three recognized genres of competitive interpretation (prose/poetry/drama). A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme through the use of narrative/story, language, and/or characterization. A substantial portion of the total time must be devoted to each of the genres used in the program. Different genre means the material must appear in separate pieces of literature (e.g., A poem included in a short story that appears only in that short story does not constitute a poetry genre.) Only one selection may be original. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

C EVENTS

After Dinner Speaking: An original, humorous speech by the student, designed to exhibit sound speech composition, thematic, coherence, direct communicative public speaking skills, and good taste. The speech should not resemble a night club act, an impersonation, or comic dialogue. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforced the message. Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Communication Analysis: An original speech by the student designed to offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a communication event such as a speech, speaker, movement, poem, poster, film, campaign, etc., through the use of rhetorical principles. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Manuscripts are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Drama Interpretation: A cutting that represents one or more characters from a play or plays of literary merit. A primary focus of this event is on the development of characterization. This material may be drawn from stage, screen, or radio. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Poetry Interpretation: A selection or selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of language. Play cuttings and prose works are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

B. Special Rules:

1. Duet Poetry will not be accepted as a qualifying event for Poetry.
2. Duet Acting will not be accepted as a qualifying event for Dramatic Duo Interpretation.
3. Program-on-a-Theme will be accepted as a qualifying event if the program was entirely of one genre (all prose, all poetry, or all drama).
4. At the AFA-NST a student may be entered in two Dramatic Duos, with separate partners, if both have qualified. The student, however, may not enter another event in that conflict block. Two duos will count as two events.
5. A contestant may not use the same cutting/content or any portion of that cutting/content in more than one prepared event at any given tournament.
6. All materials used in competition shall not have been used by the student in any competition prior to September 1 of the current academic year.
7. All rounds of Impromptu and Extemporaneous Speaking will be timed by the judge or the chair of the judge panel, and time signals will be given to contestants unless otherwise specifically requested.
8. In all rounds of Impromptu, judges will allow for a 15 second grace period for the competitor to read the given quotations. Competitors may not write during this 15 second period, which begins as soon as the paper is flipped over by the student to reveal the quotations. Once the 15 second period is complete, time begins, and students can start to prepare for their speech. Time signals will be given as usual after this grace period.
9. In Extemporaneous Speaking the following rules shall apply:
    a. Different topic areas will be used for each round.
    b. The use of electronic information retrieval systems during preparation time is allowed. At district tournaments and the AFA-NST, tournament hosts may provide internet access to contestants but are not required to do so.
    c. Attendance in the Extemporaneous Speaking Preparation Room is restricted to monitors appointed by the Tournament Director and contestants in the event.
    d. Because Extemporaneous Speaking is an Individual event, contestants are expected to prepare speeches on their own without consultation with others.
10. The AFA-NST Committee recommends that minor time infractions should not be a major criterion in judge rankings or ratings.
    a. Judges may use their own discretion in determining whether or not audience reaction was influential in the time limit violation.
    b. Coaches and students should consider audience reaction in preparing the event.
11. Coaches and/or students must have available at the district and NST, copies of all interpretive and original events used at the tournament.
    a. For interpretive events a copy of the complete original work must be brought to district and the NST.

b. For all prepared public address, a copy of the complete script shall be brought to district and the NST, including a bibliography of all cited sources.

C. Description of Experimental Events:
The NST National Committee "may" at its November meeting, select an "experimental" event to be included among the events offered at the NST of the subsequent academic year.
1. The event shall be scheduled in the tournament pattern so as to best balance events, best balance number of competitors, and/or best facilitate operation of the event.
2. The event shall be announced at the NST of the year prior to its inclusion, at a seminar scheduled during that NST.
a. The seminar shall be scheduled at a time when maximum attendance might be expected.
b. The seminar shall feature a faculty presentation regarding the nature and purpose of the event, two or three sample presentations, and one or two judge critiques of the presentations.
3. Rules regarding procedures for at-large qualification shall apply to this event during the academic years of the NST at which it will be included.
a. No "nuance" events shall be substitutable for at- large qualification for a regular NST event by competing in the "experimental" event.
b. A competitor cannot gain at-large qualification for a regular NST event by competing in the "experimental" event.

V. At-Large Qualification Process

A. One may advance to the National Tournament by superior performance in two tournaments during the regular tournament season within the following provisions:
1. Each of the tournaments must have had the equivalent of at least seven schools competing in speech events.
a. Schools qualify for competition if they are an accredited (or pursuing accreditation) two or four-year college or university.
b. Mileage Bonus: One school travelling more than 400 miles for a tournament may be counted as two toward the total number of schools, but only one school may qualify for this bonus per tournament. Tournament directors must identify which school will count as two schools and present proof of that school traveling more than 400 miles when they provide results from their tournament to their district chair.
c. **Despite Section V.A.1.b., the mileage bonus will not count if a tournament is held virtually.**

2. When a tournament has six schools competing at the start of the tournament, the Tournament Director may apply for a waiver of the "seven schools" requirement if (1) at least seven schools had officially entered the tournament and (2) the "seventh school" failed to give 24-hour notice of their withdrawal before the start of competition.
a. The Tournament Director or the representative of an attending school is responsible for petitioning the NST Chair within two weeks of completion of the tournament. The petition must include.
(1) A letter from the Tournament Director explaining the circumstances relevant to the petition and formally asking for waiver consideration.
(2) A letter from the "seventh school" stating the reason(s) for withdrawal from the tournament.

(3) The registration materials for the seventh school including unaltered schematics and student code sheets (where applicable).
(4) The Chair of the NST has the right to request any additional material.

b. The NST Chair in consultation with the Tournament Director's District Chair and the Regional Representative will rule on the appeal within two weeks of receiving the material.

c. The following conditions will apply to waivers:
(1) A team is allowed to use only one tournament in which a waiver has been approved for student legs. In other words, students from a team cannot use legs received from two separate tournaments for which waivers have been granted.
(2) Only one waiver will be approved to dismiss any one particular school. In other words, if a team withdraws from two or more tournaments within a competition year, only one petition using that school will be approved.

3. The two tournament placements used for qualification may not exceed a cumulative total of five (5), based on the following formula:

# of entries in the event	# of legs earned	Places that earn legs
1	0	0
2-3	1	1st
4-5	2	1st, 2nd
6-7	3	1st, 2nd, 3rd
8-9	4	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th
10-11	5	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th
12-13+	6	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th

4. When determining the number of students entered in an event, for purposes of computing the numbers of students who qualify, the number must be based on the total number of participants competing in ALL preliminary rounds of competition in the given event.
a. If a student does not actually compete in a round, but the Tournament Director determines this was due to circumstances beyond the student's control and therefore averages the score, that student shall be deemed to have competed in all preliminary rounds.
b. When students from a host school participate in a tournament in order for their numbers to count for at-large qualification totals, they must be eligible for open final placing and must advance if they earn the right to do so.
c. In a tournament where more than one division occurs, only the non-restrictive varsity division, open to any undergraduate participant, will count as a qualifier under the at-large qualification system.
d. Students competing in a collapsed division must be eligible for and advance if they earn the right to do so, to the open division final before the numbers in a collapsed division may be counted for the at-large process.

5. When determining at-large qualifiers, the AFA-NST will accept tournament results as submitted by the host without adjustment in ranks due to NST ineligible students competing in the invitational.

6. No more than one student may be designated for the first through sixth AFA legs in any qualifying event at an individual tournament. If a tournament chooses to split their entries in an event into multiple groups and hold multiple finals, the District Chair will be responsible for determining which one individual is assigned each of the qualifying legs.

7. For purposes of determining qualification legs, the District Chair will use the AFA-NST criteria for assigning final position for competitors at those tournaments which fail to distinguish the top six individuals in each event.
8. If a student has met two of the three at-large qualification steps and was excluded from an elimination round at a tournament because of a tournament tabulation error, the coach of that student may petition the National Committee to have the tournament in question count as a third qualifier. Each case will be judged on its own set of circumstances. In such cases, the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee along with the District Chair and the Regional Representative shall reach a consensus on the case and either approve or disapprove the appeal.
    a. Appeals should be made only after two at-large "legs" have been earned. When a student is not advanced to elimination rounds due to a tabulation error, the competitor's coach/program must notify the District Chair of the appeal no later than March 1st or the District Tournament, whichever is later. The competitor's coach/program is responsible for providing both written evidence of the error and a letter of admission of the tab error from the tournament director to the NST Chair and the District Chair. The NST Chair in consultation with the contestant's District Chair and the Regional Representative will rule on the appeal within two weeks of receiving the material.
    b. When an error is made in final round rankings the steps listed above under 8a. must be followed. A successful appeal will allow the appellant to use the corrected rank. The student who received the higher rank incorrectly will be allowed to retain his/her originally established rank for purposes of at-large qualification.

B. All tournaments used for at-large qualification must meet the standards described in the at-large qualification section.

C. A nuance event may earn at-large qualification legs only if the corresponding AFA-NST event is not offered at the tournament in question. (Corresponding event is explained as an event with generically identical descriptions and/or titles.)

D. In no instance can a student accrue more than one qualifying leg in a particular event at a particular tournament. Additionally, swing tournaments consisting of more than two sets of event placings do not qualify for at-large legs for the AFA-NST.

E. If the District Qualifying Tournament has at least seven schools participating and fulfills the entry requirements specified above, then it can be used as a qualifier tournament under the at-large system. The student would qualify under the at-large system, thus allowing the District to advance another contestant to the National Tournament. Announcement of an alternate advancement will be made only after the District Chair confirms at-large results.

F. Qualification legs for an individual student cannot be earned at more than one tournament in the same day. Qualification legs of an individual student cannot be earned at more than one tournament in the same day. Qualification legs must be earned at a tournament that occurs in a face-to-face encounter, or with the exception of a nationwide circumstance in which the NST deems that virtual tournaments are necessary and vital to students' health and safety.

1. Whether held in-person or virtually, tournaments should, at a minimum, follow Centers for Disease Control guidelines as well as state, local, and institutional policies.

a. Audiences may attend performances, provided that their attendance is consistent with CDC guidelines and state, local and institutional policies.

b. Participants in Duo interpretation may perform in the same room, provided that their interaction is consistent with CDC guidelines and state, local and institutional policies.

2. In order to count for qualification legs, tournaments that are held virtually under the NST health and safety provision must:

a. Restrict competitors to the use of a single camera and single microphone during a performance. Duo performers may use a single camera and single microphone for each performer if competing in separate physical locations.

b. Promote editing practices that allow for simulation of a face-to-face environment (such as the use of visual aids and content warnings) while discouraging editing practices that would not be possible in a face-to-face environment (such as motion, video transitions, or audio manipulation)

3. Programs are discouraged from entering students in more than two tournaments that count for qualification legs during a single week (Monday-Sunday).

G. Students may not earn qualification legs at tournaments that do not offer a minimum of three rounds (e.g. two prelims/plus a final round) of competition. The exception to this rule will be single section events. Single section events must be seen by at least three judges to determine places (e.g. three rounds/1 judge, two rounds/1 judge round 1 and 2 judges round 2, one round/3 judges).

H. Tournaments must be announced in good faith 10 days prior to the date of the tournament. A school will have met this good faith effort if it has communicated to the District Chair of the District in which the tournament will be held, has posted the tournament on the IE-L 10 days prior to the tournament, or if it has sent out a mailer to schools in the region 10 days in advance.

I. Closed Leagues or Associations

1. Leagues or associations that host multiple restricted institutional tournaments (a closed league) may designate only one of those as an at-large qualifier. The designated tournament must meet all other AFA-NST requirements. Tournaments restricted exclusively to novice competition, junior varsity competition, and/or junior or community college competition may not be used for at-large qualification.
2. If a District Chair verifies a tournament as having an open status (any tournament that does not restrict entry from any school that wishes to enter the tournament, then that tournament will be considered valid for earning at-large legs even if it is later learned that the tournament was restricted. The tournament will, however, be placed on the restricted list for future years.
3. Tournaments which exclude any schools from participating based on the size of the forensic program, size of the school, number of coaches, number of tournaments attended, amount of budget, or quality/strength of competitors DO NOT qualify as at-large qualifying tournaments. Exception: Entry may be denied for cause: School has outstanding entry fees which have not been paid [bad check, for instance.] This denial of entry for cause must be

communicated in writing to the Director of Forensics of the team wishing to enter the tournament. A tournament that restricts entry to vaccinated participants (including competitors, judges, staff, and observers) only DOES count as a qualifying tournament. Tournament directors MUST INCLUDE such restrictions on their tournament invitation.

4. Responsibility lies with the individual school to verify the open status of any tournament being used for AFA qualifying legs. Some tournament invitations may contain this information; however, if it does not, the NST recommends that the open status of a tournament be verified with the District Chair from the tournament's district.
5. State tournaments must have at least 5 schools to count as a qualifying tournament. When a tournament has 4 schools competing at the start of the tournament, the Tournament Director may apply for a waiver of the "five-schools" requirement if (1) at least 5 schools had officially entered the tournament and (2) the "fifth school" failed to give 24 hour notice of their withdrawal before the start of competition.
    a. The Tournament Director or the representative of an attending school is responsible for petitioning the NST Chair within two weeks of completion of the tournament. The petition must include:
        1. A letter from the Tournament Director explaining the circumstances relevant to the petition and formally asking for waiver consideration.
        2. A letter from the "fifth school" stating the reason(s) for withdrawal from the tournament.
        3. The registration materials for the fifth school including unaltered schematics and student code sheets (where applicable).
        4. The Chair of the NST has the right to request any additional material.
    b. The NST Chair in consultation with the Tournament Director's District Chair and the Regional Representative will rule on the appeal within two weeks of receiving the material.
    c. The following conditions will apply to waivers:
        1. A team is allowed to use only one tournament in which a waiver has been approved for student legs. In other words, students from a team cannot use legs received from two separate tournaments for which waivers have been granted.
        2. Only one waiver will be approved to dismiss any one particular school. In other words, if a team withdraws from two or more tournaments within a competition year, only one petition using that school will be approved

J. The editor of the AFA calendar is encouraged to work proactively to verify the open status of all tournaments listed in the AFA calendar, and tournaments which are known to be restricted will be listed in the fall calendar. It is recognized, however, that this list may not be exhaustive and that the status of tournaments needs to be reviewed yearly.

K. Two tournaments hosted by the same school on the same weekend, for the purpose of gaining additional legs for nationals, is discouraged by the NST Committee.

L. Tournament Directors are requested to submit a copy of their respective tournament results sheets to the District Chairs of participating schools.

M. Tournament Directors are requested to submit tournament tabulation and results sheets to each participating school. Verification of at-large qualification from tournaments that do not provide tabulation and results sheets cannot be guaranteed.

N. District Chairs shall publish a list of tournament results they have received at the time of their respective qualifying District Tournament. At-large entries using qualifying legs earned at

tournaments not on the District Chair's list must submit results of proof of the number of schools in attendance, the number of entries, the final placement of entrants, and other pertinent at-large qualifying information.

O. At-large qualifications legs cannot be earned after the first full weekend of March except for the District Tournaments. Exceptions for this rule include legs earned at the PKD and DSR-TKA National Tournaments; however, qualification legs may not be earned at recognized national tournaments that are held after the third weekend in March.

P. The AFA-NST At-Large Qualification Form for the student must be postmarked by the date on the At-Large Qualification Form and be sent to the respective District Chairperson.

Q. A student may be confirmed as having qualified at-large in an event only after an official at-large form has been completed and verified by the District Chair. No confirmations can take place without this step.

R. All standards for at-large qualification must be determined and regulated by the NST Committee. Any changes or exceptions must be approved by the NST Committee.

VI. District Qualification

A. District Alignment shall be as follows:

District	Geographic Area
1	California, Nevada, Hawaii
2	Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Alaska California State University Humboldt
3	Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, Missouri, Louisiana, Arkansas
4	North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska
5	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Truman State (MO), Louisiana State University
6	Georgia, Tennessee, Florida, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Kentucky
7	Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Staten Island, N.Y., Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Ohio University, University of Akron (OH), University of North Carolina-Charlotte
*8	* The option for District 8 to re-establish itself is available when the number of schools in the District shows sustainability.
9	Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, University of Texas-El Paso, Eastern Montana College, Western Nebraska Community College

B. In order to hold a District Qualifying Tournament, a minimum of five schools must participate.

C. A student participant may qualify for the AFA-NST if she/he finishes in the top ten percent (10%) of a particular event at the District Qualifier.

D. The total number of persons in an event at the District Qualifier will be rounded off to the next highest interval of ten so as to advance the maximum percentage possible from the district

(example: if 31 students compete, 4 students would be advanced to nationals under the 10% provision).

E. Regardless of total entries in the District Qualifier, the top three individuals in each event will be advanced to the national tournament.

F. When an error is discovered at the District Qualifying Tournament, it should be corrected. Decisions concerning qualification and advancement should be made on the basis of the corrected results; and the student advanced by the error should be allowed to compete at the national tournament in the event.

G. Fall District Qualifying Tournaments shall be held after October 1st and no later than December 15th. Spring District Qualifying Tournaments shall be held after January 15 and no later than the third weekend in March.

H. Each school participating in the District Qualifying Tournament may enter a maximum of five students in each of the events. A student who has qualified in an event by means of the at-large system shall not be eligible to compete in that event at the District Qualifying Tournament. Protests of eligibility must be made in writing and presented to the District Chairperson before the completion of the District Qualifying Tournament. Decisions concerning the protest shall be made by a vote of the District Committee.

I. It is expected that those qualifying to attend the National Tournament via the District Qualifier will do so. If for some reason a school or student intends not to advance to the National Tournament, that intention should be communicated to the District Chair as soon as possible and in no instance later than 16 days prior to the registration of the AFA-NST in order to allow sufficient time to notify alternates from the respective District Qualifier. No alternative slots will be awarded at the Fall District Qualifying Tournament.

J. The District Committee shall decide on the number of rounds for the District Qualifier, awards, and the location and date of the tournament. In so far as possible, the District Tournament should parallel the administration of the AFA-NST.

VII. District Governance

A. Each district shall have a Charter that provides for the governance of the district. A current Charter should be made available to each subscribing school. Current copies should be made available to the National Chair of the AFA-NST and shall be posted on the NST website.

B. Each district shall advertise the date and site of their respective qualifying tournament in the AFA Newsletter/Calendar and in the NST Invitation.
   1. Each District Committee shall decide on the number of rounds for the District Qualifier, the awards, the location and the date of the District Tournament.
   2. In so far as possible, the administration of the District Qualifying Tournament should parallel the administration of the AFA-NST.

   3. The District Qualifying Tournament must have at least seven (7) schools participating before it can be used as a tournament for at-large qualification purposes. The requirement for seven (7) schools may be waived under certain conditions. An appeal must be made to the NST Chair as per procedures outlines in the By-laws.

C. Each District Chair shall verify the at-large qualification status of students from their respective district. Each Chair shall appoint a member of the District Committee to verify his/her students' "at-large" entries.

D. Each District Chair shall be responsible for providing the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee with a current mailing list of active forensic programs in the district. Mailing lists shall be submitted by August 1 of each year.

E. Each District Chair shall be responsible for providing the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee, National Tournament Director, and the Board of Trustees Chair with a list of subscribing schools by December 10 of each year.

F. Each District Chair shall be responsible for collecting subscription fees from those in their respective District. Subscription fees shall be sent to the Chair of the AFA-NST's Board of Trustees by December 10th of each year.

G. Each district shall select a District Committee consisting of coaches and a Student Representative. Committee structure and selection shall be determined by each district and this information shall be outlined in the individual District By-laws.

H. Each District Chair shall be responsible to send the NST National Chair by March 31 the names/descriptions of events used at tournaments in the Districts indicating which were and were not allowed as qualifying legs.

I. There will be a Student Representative position on each District Committee. The student shall have full voting privileges. Election of the Student Representative should parallel current election procedures in each district.
   1. By the AFA-NST entry deadline, a student election will be held to select one non-graduating student to represent the district on the NST Student Committee for the following year.
   2. District Chairs are responsible for providing the NST Vice-Chair with the name, address, and phone numbers (home and school) of the student elected.
   3. The National Student Co-Chairs in conjunction with the NST Vice-Chair shall insure that both the current Student Representative and the Student Representative-elect are informed of the date and time for the Student Committee meeting at the NST.

J. Each district will hold a fall and a spring District Committee meeting.

K. Each district must schedule an open meeting during the course of the District Tournament. During this meeting, election matters, concerns regarding the tournament, dates, and sites of future District Tournaments should be considered. The AFA-NST Committee also encourages each district to hold District Committee meetings and an open meeting for member schools during the early part of the tournament season.

L. If schools are unhappy with their current district assignment, the AFA-NST Committee has established the following procedure for changing one's affiliation:
   1. Petition current District Committee to leave the district.
   2. Petition the proposed District's Committee for permission to join the district.
   3. Petition the AFA-NST Committee for acceptance of the proposed shift.
   4. Petitions for shifts in district alignment must follow the sequence above and receive acceptance at all levels before the re-alignment will be approved.

VIII. Protests at the District Level

A. Protests at the District level shall be handled by the District Committee.

B. The following procedures should be followed:

1. Protests must be submitted in writing to the District Chair. Supporting materials must accompany the protest. Protests will not be reviewed and considered until complete documentation has been provided by the person filing the protest.
2. The District Committee will request and review appropriate materials.
   a. Any committee member directly involved in the protest is excused from this action.
   b. Student representatives to the committee should be excused from the protest proceedings.
3. The protest will be confirmed by a vote with no more than one dissenting vote.
4. Appeals of the district decision must be made in writing to the NST Chair within 72 hours of notification of the decision.
   a. Appeals will be reviewed by a subcommittee consisting of at least three of the following: the NST Chair, NST Tournament Director, NST Vice- Chair, and the NST Chair Emeritus.
   b. The review committee may reverse a district decision with a vote in which there is no more than one dissenting vote.

IX. National Tournament

A. The National Tournament will be held on the first weekend of April in which the first Saturday falls.

B. Number of Rounds. There shall be three preliminary rounds; followed by quarter-finals, semifinals, and final rounds in each of the events.

C. Scheduling: In preliminary rounds, a mechanical pairing system will be used so that as far as possible, contestants from the same school will not meet each other. The elimination rounds will be paired on a seeded system.

D. The 2020 and 2021 American Forensic Association National Speech Tournament will have the following events and conflict patterns:

Group A Events: Impromptu Speaking, Prose Interpretation, and Informative Speaking,
Group B Events: Dramatic Duo Interpretation, Extemporaneous Speaking, Persuasive Speaking, Program Oral Interpretation
Group C Events: After-Dinner Speaking, Communication Analysis, Drama Interpretation, and Poetry Interpretation.

E. A student may enter up to a maximum of six slots with no more than two slots in any one-conflict pattern. No exceptions. (If a student is in two Dramatic Duos; that will count as two events, and no additional events may be entered in that particular conflict block.)

F. The total number of entries per school at the AFA-NST is capped at 66 slots. All schools that enter the AFA-NST shall be limited to the number of (full-time equivalent) judges to cover their entry.

G. Ballots and Ranking Procedure

1. The ballots shall use a Rating Scale graduated from 1 to 25 points; with 1 being the lowest rating and 25 being the highest rating. The points will be grouped as follows: 25-21 Superior, 20-16 Excellent, 15-11 Average, 10-6 Fair, 5-1 Poor. In preliminary rounds the ballots shall also use a ranking system from 1 to 5; with 5 being the worst rank a contestant may receive,

and 1 being the best rank a contestant may receive. Judges must rank and rate all speakers in a round.

2. Two judges shall be used per section, per round in the preliminary rounds; multi-panel judges of five will be employed in the elimination rounds. In preliminary rounds to determine elimination round contestants, the lowest rank and rating (not necessarily on the same ballot), will be dropped from the cumulative total of prelim scores.
3. Ranks shall be used to qualify for elimination rounds. In cases of ties for those advancing to quarter-final rounds, the dropped rank shall be reinserted in an attempt to break the tie. Up to 28 competitors will advance to the quarter final round based on rank. If more than 28 competitors would advance to a quarter final round, ratings shall be used to break the tie. First by dropping the lowest rating. If the tie remains the lowest rating will be added back in to the competitor's total.
   a. Once the aforementioned criteria are used, if a tie remains for a given seed, those involved remain tied.
   b. Among the tied students, shifts in quarterfinal sections may only be used to eliminate multiple entries from a given school from speaking/performing in the same section.
4. During the elimination rounds judges will rank competitors 1st through 6th. In elimination rounds judges may NOT record ties in rating points for sixth and beyond.

5. Ties
   a. In preliminary rounds, when ties in both total ranks and total ratings exist for the last qualifying spot, all speakers will advance to the quarter-finals.
   b. In five judge elimination rounds the following criteria will be used to determine placements:
      (1) Majority of first place rankings
      (2) Cumulative of best four ranks
      (3) Judges' preference based on five ballots
      (4) Cumulative ranks of all judges
      (5) Cumulative of best four ratings
      (6) Cumulative ratings of all judges.
   c. Ties among competitors for Individual Sweepstakes will be broken on the following formula:
      (1) Comparative ranks in final rounds*
      (2) Number of final rounds
      (3) Comparative ranks in semifinal rounds*
      (4) Number of semifinal rounds
      (5) Comparative ranks in quarterfinal rounds*
      (6) Number of quarterfinal rounds
         * NOTE: Comparative ranks looks at number of 1st place finishes, if tied, then the number of 2nd place finishes is considered etc.,
   d. Ties among schools for Team Sweepstakes will be broken based on the following formula:
      (1) Number of final rounds by team
      (2) Comparative ranks in finals*
      (3) Number of semifinal rounds by team
      (4) Comparative ranks in semifinals*
      (5) Number of quarter-final rounds by team
      (6) Comparative ranks in quarterfinals*
         *NOTE: Comparative ranks looks at number of 1st place finishes, if tied the number of 2nd place finishes etc.,
6. A "reason for decision" section will be included on the ballot for the NST.

H. Judges

1. Judges will be randomly assigned at the AFA-NST with the following criteria and constraints:
    a. Judges will not judge students from their own school.
    b. Whenever possible, two hired judges will not be used in the same round.
    c. Judges should not judge an event they self-identify as "not qualified to judge."
    d. Judges should not judge contestant(s) or school(s) that the judge specified they cannot judge.
    e. Judges may judge the same event more than once.
    f. Judges should not judge the same person in the same event more than once.
    g. Judges would/could be assigned to judge students from their own district.
    h. Two judges from the same district are not assigned to judge the same section whenever possible.
    i. Judges from the host district would/could be placed in the same section with hired judges (even from their own districts).
    j. Hired judges are considered to have no district affiliation.
    k. Judges will be placed in specific sections by a specific geographical rotation.
2. Efforts are made to secure a judging pool that is 50% larger than the number of judges needed at any one time during the preliminary rounds. The host school for the tournament is expected to assemble a group of hired judges from the local area. In addition, guest judges are solicited from non-host districts [by the Tournament Director] to increase the geographical diversity of the judging pool.
3. All non-hired judges attending the tournament are treated equally regarding judging commitment the assignment of judges for preliminary rounds. If the judging pool is 50% larger than needed at any one time, all non-hired judges are assigned to judge seven of the nine preliminary rounds. Minor deviations from this ideal of seven may occur because the need for judges will vary from one event grouping to another, because of time constraints on specific judges (i.e., judges who will be arriving late to the tournament, or the need to free members of the National Committee or tournament staff who may be in the judging pool at specific times during the tournament), or because of event constraints on specific judges (e.g., events which judges indicate they are not qualified to judge). All full-time hired judges will be used during every preliminary round whenever possible. Part-time hired judges will be used as needed.
4. The same criteria apply in assignment of elimination round judges. All judges are considered available for assignment to any quarterfinal round section. All judges from a school are considered available for semifinal rounds if any of their contestants competed in quarterfinals, or for finals if any of their contestants competed in semifinals. Geographical diversity is again sought in assigning elimination round judges. Judges frequently must judge events that they judged in preliminary rounds, but they will not be assigned to judge the same contestant in the same event (whenever possible). Whenever possible, coaches will be assigned to judge each elimination round. No more than one hired judge will be assigned to each section of an elimination round. At registration, judges will be asked if they would be willing to judge elimination rounds beyond their obligation and to indicate the one or two events they are most qualified to judge.
5. Many of these constraints and criteria must frequently be abandoned when standby judges must be assigned to judge rounds for scheduled judges who failed to appear for their rounds. In these instances, every effort is made to observe as many of the criteria and constraints as possible, given the limited pool of standby judges and the demands of schedule integrity.
6. All judges must pick up their ballots within a reasonable amount of time, or their ballots will be assigned to another judge. A fee of $25.00 will be assessed to the school for any reassigned ballots.

7. Judges will be randomly assigned at the AFA-NST and shall not judge speakers where a conflict of interest exists, such as:
    a. The judge has previously had a significant coaching or affinity relationship with a speaker they are to hear,
    b. The judge was, within the last two years, the coach of the school whose team or speaker they are to hear,
    c. The judge was, within the last two years, an undergraduate forensics competitor at the school whose team or speaker they are to hear.
    d. The judge and competitor have personal history that prevent a fair adjudication of the round.
    e. Prior to the start of the tournament, all judges shall have an opportunity to declare themselves ineligible to hear specific debate teams, speakers, or events.
    f. Prior to the start of the start of the tournament, all competitors shall have an opportunity to declare conflict of interest with a potential judge.
8. Judges Standards
    a. Judges should act professionally and demonstrate respect for academic freedom when engaged in the critique, ranking and rating of students. The American Forensics Association is a community based on inclusion and therefore judges shall not include on ballots any comments which alienates, marginalizes, attacks, threatens, or insults a person or group on the basis of national origin, ethnicity, color, religion, creed, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.
    b. Competitors with disabilities may not be able to adhere to performance conventions and may require practical adjustments of time requirements or other event requirements in order to compete. In such cases, a judge shall not a) critique or rank a student based upon their disability, b) object to the notification of a physical limitation by the competitor or their coach, or c) refuse to make adaptations in order to accommodate the student's limitations.
    c. Judges should remain impartial regarding students' appearance; physical, environmental, or attire. Judges should never comment on a student's appearance.
    d. Judges must be committed to remaining impartial and employ the highest ethical standards when evaluating students.

I. Awards
1. Individual awards will be presented in each event to those contestants advancing to the elimination rounds.
2. There will be 20 Individual Sweepstakes awards based on preliminary and elimination rounds, using the following point system: 3 points for each 1st, 2 points for each 2nd, and 1 point for each 3rd place ballot in preliminary rounds. Contestants in elimination rounds will receive points according to the following scheme: 6 for a 1st, 5 for a 2nd, 4 for a 3rd, 3 for a 4th, 2 for a 5th, 1 for a 6th and all others. The students must be eligible and compete in four AFA-NST events for the Individual Sweepstakes awards.
3. There shall be 20 School Sweepstakes awards based on the following criteria:
    a. Preliminary round sweepstakes points will be given for the top three students from each school in each event using the following scheme: 3 points for each 1st, 2 points for each 2nd, and 1 point for each 3rd. These preliminary round points shall be halved before tabulating the elimination round points.
    b. All contestants in all elimination rounds will receive points according to the following scheme: 6 for a 1st, 5 for a 2nd, 4 for a 3rd, 3 for a 4th, 2 for a 5th, 1 for a 6th and all others. Maximum total per student per event would be 18 for elimination points (6 points each for 1st in a quarterfinal section, 1st in a semifinal section, 1st in finals); maximum total per student would be 108

(18 times six events) in elimination rounds; maximum total per school is infinite.

4. Other Awards
   a. Traveling Trophy for School Sweepstakes.
   b. Traveling Trophy for the Zenobia Harris Bivens Individual Sweepstakes Award.
   c. Top Community College Sweepstakes Award (a minimum of five community colleges must compete).
   d. Limited Entry Sweepstakes award will be given to the top five schools having fifteen (15) entries or less.
   e. There will be an NST-NDT award given each year to the school that has the highest combined scores in these two National Tournaments.
5. Dr. Larry Schnoor Distinguished Service Award
   a. The Dr. Larry Schnoor Distinguished Service Award may be presented annually at the NST. Whenever possible the presentation for the Dr. Larry Schnoor Distinguished Service Award will be done at the banquet during the NST.
   b. The following are the criteria to be considered for nominees:
      (1) Present or past association with the AFA-NST is required.
      (2) Contributions to the advancement and development of the NST.
      (3) Leadership in innovations in forensics.
      (4) Scholarly investigation of forensics (not necessarily publications per se, but a scholarly approach to development).
      (5) Qualities as a forensics educator.
   c. District Chairs shall canvas their districts for nominations for the award and the nominations shall be forwarded to the Chair of the Distinguished Service Award Committee. The deadline for submission of nominations is October 1st.
   d. The Distinguished Service Award Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-Chair of the NST. The committee shall include the four Regional Representatives and any other individual(s) appointed by the NST Chair.
   e. The committee shall meet prior to the general meeting of the NST at the NCA in order to finalize recommendations for the award.
6. AFA-NST All-American Team Awards
   a. An AFA-NST All-American Team will be named annually. Awards will be given to those individuals chosen for the All-American Team.
   b. This award is designed with the intent to recognize students beyond the area of competition. While achievement in the forensic activity is taken into account, equal weight should be given to scholarship and service. This award should serve as a crowning touch to those seniors who have demonstrated outstanding qualities in all three areas.
   c. Nominees should have demonstrated personal qualities that show their understanding of the role of intercollegiate forensic competition in a liberal education. They should show evidence of success and good conduct in the forensic activity, excellence in their classroom studies as evidenced not only by grade-point average, but by the range and challenge of study, and show a commitment to the betterment of their community through their activities.
   d. Specific Criteria for Nomination:
      (1) The nominee(s) must be designated as a senior at their four-year institution and attending their last AFA-NST as a competitor.
      (2) The nominee(s) must be competing at the NST during the year they are nominated.
      (3) The nominee(s) must have at least an overall 'B' GPA in college coursework. The nomination must include a copy of the student's college transcript of grades.
      (4) The nominee(s) must provide documentation of forensic success including a resume of awards earned during the nominee's forensic competition. Also, there should be

letters of support that convey the value the individual has added to the forensic activity in general such as mentoring, good sportsmanship, etc.

(5) The nominee(s) must provide documentation of service work with a brief description of the work completed and number of hours served. This may include forensic and school-related service. However, service outside of the forensics community and school is a significant criterion. Such venues may include community or civic organizations but must indicate if required as part of any class or if payment was received.

(6) The nominee(s) should also provide a cover letter addressing their forensic philosophy statement. This is limited to one page and 500 words.

e. Nominations must come from a program director/coach and be submitted to the District Chair or Chair appointed District Representatives. District Chairs or their District Representative will inform member schools of deadlines for submission. Each District Committee will select one recipient from their respective district, and forward up to five additional nominations from their district to the Chair of the Selection Committee. A school can submit at most two nominations to their district. There will be at least one recipient from each of the AFA-NST districts and at-large recipients who may come from any district to total no more than thirty. District Chairs or their District Representative must submit all nominations and required nomination materials to the Chair of All-American Team Committee by March 15th.

7. The Dr. Bruce B. Manchester Scholar Series

a. The purpose of the Dr. Bruce B. Manchester Scholar Series is to annually provide funding for a communication scholar(s) per year to undertake one scholarship project that would involve intense study and research on evolving public communication issues(s).

b. The recipient(s) of the grant shall be recognized by the AFA-NST as NST Scholar(s).

c. The NST Scholar shall receive an honorarium from the AFA-NST for the purposes of conducting intensive study and/or research on a public communication issue. The honorarium may be used for a variety of purposes: for study/research materials; to fund release time from the Scholar's home institution; for necessary travel to conduct the study/research; or in other ways as best fits the needs of the Scholar(s) to conduct the study/research. The amount of the honorarium shall be significant in order to attract quality scholars and projects.

d. Funding of the honorarium is initially provided by a yearly donation by Dr. Bruce Manchester. Other funding options will continue to be explored.

e. Applicants will submit a written statement indicating the public communication issue(s) they wish to investigate. The submission should indicate the applicant's background and interest in the subject; and relevancy of the public communication issue as a worthwhile avenue of scholarly study. The NST Scholar(s) will be selected by a committee composed of the Vice-Chair of the NST and the four Regional Representatives to the NST National Committee. The Selection Committee shall solicit submissions at the beginning of each school year. Submissions will be due no later than October 1st. The submissions will be reviewed during the NST meetings held during the National Communication Association national convention. The Selection Committee shall announce the recipients in January. (Note: If the project involves research at the NST, the Scholar(s) must follow the appropriate procedures for conducting the research at the NST as described in the AFA-NST By-laws and invitation.)

f. NST Scholar(s) must be a full-time faculty/staff member from an accredited college/university. Graduate and undergraduate student involvement may only be conducted under the direct supervision of a full-time faculty/staff member. The full-time faculty/staff member shall be responsible for completion of the project.

g. The NST Scholar(s) shall submit the manuscript for publication in an appropriate journal following the public presentation based on the manuscript at the AFA-NST. A copy of the submitted manuscript shall be filed with the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee. The NST Scholar(s) shall present their research project and results to the AFA-NST during the subsequent National Tournament.

8. Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award

a. The Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award is designed to recognize outstanding new forensics coaches in the AFA-NST. The award may be presented annually at the AFA-NST and is limited to 2 per year.

b. The criteria used by the NST Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award Committee in making its recommendation to the NIS Committee are:

(1) A graduate student, assistant coach, or team director of an AFA-NST affiliated team who is in his/her first seven years of coaching.

(2) Leadership in innovations in forensics.

(3) Qualities as a forensics educator.

c. The format for all nominations:

(1) One page summary of nominees' contributions as a forensic leader and educator.

(2) A Curriculum Vitae

(3) Three signed letters of recommendation, including information on the nominee's contributions:

a. one from current/formerly coached students,

b. one from a current/former supervisor,

c. one from a Forensics colleague from another institution.

(4) Plus no more than one additional letter.

d. The NST Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award Selection Committee is comprised of the AFA-NST Vice-Chair (chair) and the four NST Regional Representatives. The committee is encouraged to solicit input from current and/or former competitors which were officially coached by the nominee. The purpose of the committee is to recommend to the entire NST Committee each year the coach(es) deserving of this recognition.

9. Distinguished Alumni Award

a. The Distinguished Alumni Award is designed to recognize a past AFA-NST participant who has made a significant contribution including one of the following:

(1) Significant presence or achievement in the arts or entertainment.

(2) Significant achievement or contributions to the advancement of a field of study.

(3) Significant writing as evidenced by media or awards.

(4) Significant achievement as a global citizen.

One Distinguished Alumni Award may be presented annually at the NST. Whenever possible the presentation for the Distinguished Alumni Award shall be done during the awards assembly of the NST.

b. The following are criteria used to be considered for nominees:

(1) The recipient must have qualified for and entered the NST as a competitor and must have competed at their last AFA-NST no less than 5 years prior to selection for the award.

(2) Ability of the nominee to appear in person at the NST to receive the award should also be a consideration.

c. District Chairs shall canvas their districts for nominations for the award and the nominations shall be forwarded to the Chair of the Distinguished Alumni Award Committee. The

committee retains the right to solicit additional nominations The deadline for submission of nominations is October 1st. Submissions should include:

(1) Name of nominee
(2) Name of school nominee competed for
(3) Years of AFA-NST attendance
(4) Explanation of significant contribution from above list
(5) Copy or link to professional vitae
(6) Contact information for Nominee and Nominator
(7) Confirmation of availability of Nominee during the AFA-NST

d. The NST Chair shall appoint annually a committee of 3 or more persons to select a single recipient of a Distinguished Alumni Award. If a recipient is chosen by the committee, then the name of the recipient shall be presented to the AFA-NST Committee at the November meeting for approval. Once the recipient has been approved by the AFA-NST committee, the nominator and nominee will be notified by the chair of the Distinguished Alumni Award Committee. The chair of this committee and the nominator will work together to arrange for the award to be given.

J. Entry Forms

1. A separate at-large qualification form must be submitted for each student to the Chair of your District Committee.
2. The Official Entry Form
   a. The official entry form shall be postmarked no later than 20 days or faxed no later than 17 days before the registration of the AFA-NST Electronic submission of the official entry form is preferred. Specific deadline dates will be included in the NST Invitation.
   b. Entries submitted after the deadline will be assessed a late fee of $50 in addition to their regular fees. The late fee will not apply to additional entries which result from completions of the at-large qualification process or additional entries which result from an alternate advancing from the District Qualifier.
   c. Official entry forms which require reprocessing because of inaccurate or incomplete information shall be assessed a reprocessing fee of $50.
   d. Fee assessment will occur 16 days prior to the registration of the AFA-NST.
   e. No entries nor additional at-large qualification legs will be accepted after the date of fee assessment. Substitutions from the District Qualifier caused by the inability of duly registered schools or contestants to attend the AFA-NST shall be an exception to the deadlines. Legs earned at Pi Kappa Delta and Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha are also exceptions.
   f. A $125.00 per judge fee will be assessed to schools that drop judges after the fee assessment deadline if they had committed themselves to provide that judge.
   g. Copies of the official entry form must be sent to the National Tournament Director and to the District Chairperson. Appropriate NST Verification Form(s) for each at-large qualifier must accompany the official entry form sent to the District Chair. Students who qualify through the District Qualification Tournament must also be listed on the official entry form. The Entry Form must indicate each entry as "At-Large" (an "A" designation) or by "District Qualifier" (a "D" designation).
   h. Calendar dates of all deadlines shall be clearly communicated in the Tournament Invitation.
   i. The entry form shall include an area to indicate schools that should not be judged by an individual.
   j. All fees for the AFA-NST will be determined by the Tournament Director, Chair of the National Committee, and the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Any changes in the

assessment of fees must be approved by the Board of Trustees and the National Committee.

k. Each school's Forensic Director shall fill out and sign a form verifying student enrollment and, if student-run, the Registrar, Department Chair, or Director of Student Activities shall certify student enrollment by signing the form. That form should be submitted the district chair at the district tournament.

l. All contestants competing at the NST are expected to be available for competition in all out rounds. If it is determined by the Tournament Director that a student is not available for all out rounds of competition the student will at that point be ineligible for participation in out round competition.

K. Submission of Experimental Event Proposals

1. Any member of AFA-NST may propose an "experimental" event for inclusion at an NST by submitting a written proposal to his/her District Chair. The bid must include the following items:

a. Event description
b. Rules interpretation
c. Background historical data
d. Suggested event bracket placement
e. Examples of event such as video tape, transcript
f. District Committee endorsement

2. The District Chair will submit the proposal to the AFA-NST Chair prior to the November meeting of the NST National Committee.

3. Each approved "experimental" event will be offered in a two-year cycle.

L. Research at the National Tournament

The AFA-NST views its national tournament as a learning laboratory for the participants. While the competitive speech experience is most central to the tournament, the AFA-NST also embraces research activities as a dimension of the tournament. Consequently, when sanctioned research activities are included in the tournament, the AFA-NST committee encourages its tournament participants to actively participate in the research process. In some instances, the AFA-NST committee may commission a particular research project at the tournament. In other instances, the AFA-NST committee may choose to sanction research proposals submitted by academic scholars in the forensic community. Research projects utilizing materials in the public domain need not be submitted for review. All research projects administered in conjunction with the AFA-NST must meet the following guidelines:

1. Research conducted at the AFA-NST must be sanctioned by the AFA-NST committee prior to the beginning of the tournament.
2. Researchers must submit copies of their research proposal on the request for research form provided by the AFA-NST.
3. Sample copies of the research instrument must be attached to the request for research form.
4. All research proposals submitted for consideration to the AFA-NST must have been previously approved by the principal investigator's home university's unit that is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal regulations governing research involving human subjects.
5. A copy of the principal investigator's approval for research form issued by the researcher's home university must accompany the AFA-NST's request for research form.
6. Unsanctioned research at the AFA-NST is not permitted.
7. If non-sanctioned research is discovered, the AFA-NST Committee will report that violation to the principal investigator's home institution's research board for disciplinary action.

8. A research review committee will evaluate research requests. The committee will include the NST Chair Emeritus (chair), NST Chair and NST Tournament Director. All requests must be received by the NST Chair Emeritus by March 1st.
9. The principal investigator should be available to discuss the research proposal with the NST Research Committee.
10. All research administered at the AFA-NST must be coordinated with the Tournament Director.

V. Protests at the NST

A. Protests must be submitted in writing to the NST Chair Emeritus.
1. Protests should be presented as expeditiously as possible, but protests must be submitted to the NST Chair Emeritus within 14 days of the completion of the NST.
2. Protests must include a statement of the specific concern.
3. Protests must include any/all support for the claim. Protests will not be reviewed and considered until complete documentation has been provided.
4. The Chair Emeritus will review the protest and advise the petitioner if the protest warrants further action.

B. A forwarded protest will be reviewed by at least the NST Chair, NST Director, and NST Vice-chair, and three other members of the NST Committee appointed by the Chair.
1. Any committee member directly involved in the protest action is excused from the protest decision.
2. This subcommittee will review all material it considers appropriate including contacting the coach of the student.
3. Confirmation of the protest will require a vote with no more than one dissenting vote.

C. Consideration and investigation of protests will be conducted in a timely manner while respecting the competitive integrity of the student(s) in question. Primary concern is an appropriate and fair resolution of the protest. While the protest will be handled in a timely fashion, a compressed time frame decision is not the primary concern.

D. The competitor(s) may continue to compete without prejudice during the review. The school's coach in attendance will decide if the student(s) will be informed of the protest.

E. All final rounds of public address and limited preparation events will be videotaped and may be reviewed for possible ethical violations. All final rounds of oral interpretation will be audio-taped solely for the purpose of possible ethical use of literature violations. The audiotapes will be kept by the Chair Emeritus for a period not to exceed one year during which time only members of the Appeals Committee may have access in the case of a protest. NST Committee members are considered part of the Appeals Committee if required.

F. The subcommittee decision may be appealed to the entire NST Committee.
1. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the NST Chair within 14 days of notification of the protest decision.
2. Reversal of the subcommittee decision requires a two-thirds majority of the entire NST Committee.

G. In the event of a confirmed protest, the NST Chair will notify all parties involved.
1. Upon the completion of the protested appeal, adjustments will be made in the competition when possible.

2. When possible final round finishes for affected competitors will be adjusted to reflect the results of the protest action.
    a. If the disqualification affects a team in the top 20, the team is removed.
        (1) The remaining teams in the top 20 below the disqualified team are moved up one position.
        (2) The 21st team becomes the 20th team.
        (3) A trophy will be given to any school that advances into the top twenty in school sweepstakes due to a disqualification of another school.
    b. If the disqualification affects an individual in the top 20, the individual is removed.
        (1) The remaining individuals in the top 20 below the disqualified individual are moved up one position.
        (2) The 21st individual becomes the 20th individual.
        (3) A trophy will be given to any individual that advances into the top twenty individual sweepstakes due to a disqualification of another student.
    c. If the disqualification involves a student who was an speech event finalist:
        (1) The individual is removed.
        (2) The remaining finalists below the disqualified student are moved up one position.
    d. If the disqualification involves a student who was a non-advancing semifinalist or quarterfinalist:
        (1) The individual is removed (thus the event would have five non-advancing semifinalists or 11 non-advancing quarterfinalists).
        (2) Individual and/or team sweepstakes for the person and school involved in the protest action will be adjusted to reflect the decision.
        (3) No other individual and/or team sweepstakes will be altered due to protest action.
        (4) Appropriate recognition for the next competitor will be provided.

H. Explanation of confirmed/validated protests may appear in the appropriate NST and/or AFA publications.

XI. Hosting the AFA-NST

A. The AFA-NST employs an open bid system for location of the national tournament. Each year the tournament is intended to rotate geographically.

B. Requirements of Host School

The AFA-NST shall maintain a document with hosting requirements on its website. The AFA-NST shall periodically review this document to ensure that the stated requirements meet the needs of the tournament.

C. AFA-NST will not accept NST hosting bids from schools within states that are listed on state travel bans for reasons of violations of civil or human rights. The AFA-NST will honor an already accepted bid if a host school's state is added to such a state travel ban list only under one of the following conditions:

- The AFA-NST would incur excessive cost as a result of relocating the NST or
- the host school would incur excessive cost as a result of relocating the NST or
- the AFA-NST is unable to find a new qualified host within a reasonable timeframe (at the beginning of the academic year prior to that year's NST).

XII. NST Committee

A. In order to vote on any issue before the AFA-NST Committee at its bi-annual meetings, committee members must be present for deliberations (no proxies allowed). If a voting member is unable

to attend an NST Committee meeting, he/she may choose to designate an alternate with full participation and voting rights upon prior notification to the NST Committee Chair. The only exception to this policy is that no single person may cast more than one vote.

B. The AFA-NST shall publish the minutes of the bi-annual AFA-NST Committee meetings on the official AFA-NST website after they have been verified and approved by the AFA-NST Committee through an email vote.

C. Election of the Student Co-chairs who serve on the NST Committee shall follow the following procedures. Student Co-chairs will be limited to two people. Student Co-chairs will be elected from the student representatives from each district. Each district will elect one student to serve on this committee to meet at the AFA-NST. Students wanting to be nominated for the position of the AFA-NST student representative should comprise the following criteria:

- MUST be a district representative
- MUST attend the AFA-NST student meeting
- MUST commit to attend NCA and fulfill other responsibilities
- MUST submit a personal statement, no longer than a page, describing how the nominated will make sure the integrity of their position will be fulfilled.
- MUST turn in a resume showing leadership both within and outside of forensics.
- MUST Post personal statement and resume to current National Student Representatives.

Finally, a contract must be signed and dated by the student and overseer of respective forensic team. Tie break shall be decided by the two sitting national representatives and the national student secretary. -A preliminary vote will take place before the student meeting BY THE STUDENTS to narrow the nominations to two. Each district gets two votes. All other proceedings (speech, vote, etc) will take place during the meeting. The liaison of-the student representatives that year will oversee the contract applicants and help enforce the aforementioned requirements.

D. If the elected national representative is seemingly unable to meet the following guidelines, a petition/protest can be made anonymously by any student or coach involved in the AFA-NST body that the district overseeing that representative can vote on a decision.

E. Guidelines for the conduct of Student National Representatives:

1. These guidelines are based on the general etiquette of AFA participants. All representatives will refrain from:
    a. verbally, or physically, attacking another individual from this committee or individuals in the AFA-NST body for any reason.
    b. Unacceptable social media posts such as providing an inappropriate critique of competitors, spamming/trolling, etc.
    c. Sexual harassment of another competitor, coach, and committee member as defined as unwelcome, sex-based, and gender-based harassment that can be verbal, written, online, and/or physical contact.
    d. Discriminatory comments or threats of violence towards any individual in the AFA-NST Body.
    e. Absence at the NCA meeting and unexcused absence at district meetings, as well as the choice to refrain from participating in the discourse surrounding the AFA-NST.

F. Protests must be submitted in writing to the AFA-NST Chair. Supporting materials must accompany the protest. Objections will not be reviewed and considered until the person filing the protest has provided complete documentation.

1. The AFA-NST Committee, as well as all-district student representatives, will request and review appropriate materials.
    a. Any committee member directly involved in the protest is excused from this action.
    b. A majority vote will confirm the protest.
2. Appeals of the decision must be made in writing to the AFA-NST Chair after the previous district tournament and before the upcoming district tournament.
    a. Appeals will be reviewed by a subcommittee consisting of at least three of the following: the NST Chair, NST Tournament Director, NST Vice-Chair, NST Secretary and the NST Chair Emeritus.
    b. The review committee may reverse a district decision with a vote in which there is no more than one dissenting vote.

G. The NST Committee will provide a total of $500 monetary support for the Student Co-Chairs to attend the NST meeting at the NCA Convention.

H. The NST Committee formally recognizes the position of the NST Webmaster.
1. The NST Webmaster is appointed by the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee, in consultation with the AFA-NST Committee. The AFA-NST Webmaster does not serve as a member of the NST Committee.
2. An open call for self-nominations for the AFA-NST Webmaster will be posted on the AFA-NST website. The Webmaster position will be appointed for a two- year term at the spring meeting of the AFA-NST Committee. There is no limit to the number of times a Webmaster may be reappointed.
3. The responsibilities of the AFA-NST Webmaster include:
    a. Maintain the AFA-NST website.
    b. Convert and post documents to the AFA-NST website as directed by the AFA-NST Committee Chair.
    c. If possible, attend meetings of the AFA-NST Committee so as to apprise members of developments on the site and consult with the committee about the construction and content of the website.
    d. Maintain and update, as appropriate, the legislative and historical documents of the NST.
    e. Create and delete links to other forensic resources as directed by the AFA-NST Committee Chair.
    f. Make recommendations about the AFA-NST website to the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee.
    g. Maintain and update student-specific content in consultation with the national Student Co-chairs and the NST Chair.
4. The Chair of the AFA-NST Committee is responsible for communicating any concerns pertaining to the AFA-NST website to the Webmaster.
5. When a Webmaster exits the AFA-NST Webmaster position, he/she will be expected to provide the extant content to the Webmaster-designate and to facilitate a smooth transition for the AFA-NST website.
6. Any expenses incurred by the NST Webmaster will be the responsibility of the AFA-NST, however, all expenses must have the prior approval of the AFA- NST Committee Chair.

I. The NST Committee formally recognizes the position of NST Social Media Coordinator.
1. The NST Social Media Coordinator is appointed by the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee, in consultation with the AFA-NST Committee. The AFA-NST Social Media Coordinator does not serve as a member of the NST Committee

2. An open call for self-nominations for the AFA-NST Social Media Coordinator will be posted on the AFA-NST website. The Social Media Coordinator position will be appointed for a two- year term at the spring meeting of the AFA-NST Committee. There is no limit to the number of times a Social Media Coordinator may be reappointed.

3. The responsibilities of the AFA-NST Social Media Coordinator include:
   a. Create the AFA-NST social media accounts which may include but is not limited to facebook, twitter, and instagram
   b. If possible, attend meetings of the AFA-NST Committee as to apprise members of developments related to social media
   c. Maintain and update, as appropriate, the social media accounts of the NST.
   d. The social media coordinator will work with the president to identify one person in each district to serve on a social media committee overseen by the coordinator. Committee members will aid the chair in creating and maintaining an active social media presence across multiple social media platforms.
   e. The social media coordinator will work to create a code of ethics and rules for the use of AFA-NST's social media account and present it to the AFA-NST National Committee.

4. The Chair of the AFA-NST Committee is responsible for communicating any concerns pertaining to the AFA-NST social media to the Social Media Coordinator.

5. When a Social Media Coordinator exits the AFA-NST Social Media Coordinator position, he/she will be expected to provide the extant content to the Social Media Coordinator-designate and to facilitate a smooth transition for all AFA-NST social media accounts.

6. Any expenses incurred by the NST Social Media Coordinator will be the responsibility of the AFA-NST, however, all expenses must have the prior approval of the AFA- NST Committee Chair.

J. The NST formally recognizes the Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Access (CDEA).

1. The chair of the CDEA will be a member of the NST Committee appointed by the NST Chair, in consultation with the NST Committee. The chair of the CDEA will serve a two -year term.

2. Appointments to the CDEA will be made by the Chair of the NST Committee, in consultation with the NST Committee. Although the chair of the CDEA will be a voting member of the NST Committee, other members do not serve as members of the NST Committee. Members of the NST Committee can serve on the CDEA. The CDEA is not to exceed five members.

3. An open call for self-nominations for the CDEA will be posted on the AFA-NST website. The NST Committee may also make recommendations and nominations. Membership on the CDEA will be appointed at the spring meeting of the AFA-NST Committee. Except for the chair, membership appointments are for one year. Students may serve on the CDEA.

4. The responsibilities of the CDEA include:
   a. To identify ways the NST can create a supportive competitive and learning environmental for all students, coaches, and judges with respect to race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, veteran status, disability, genetic information, military service, or other protected status.
   b. To identify problems with current competitive and organizational practices and policies with respect to the aforementioned protected statuses.

c. To identify and promote ways to increase recruitment and retention of underrepresented students at the NST and generally.

d. To create and support mentorship structures and initiatives for underrepresented students, graduate students, and coaches.

e. To create an annual self-assessment tool for identifying problems related to diversity, equity, and access as they pertain to the institutional mission, processes, and practices of the NST.

f. To create and maintain an updated Code of Conduct that promotes mutual respect, diversity, inclusivity, equity, and access.

g. To generate an annual report of recommendations and/or proposals to be presented to the NST National Committee.

5. Any expenses incurred by the CDEA will be the responsibility of the AFA-NST.

K. The NST formally recognizes a Sexual Harassment Officer (SHO) to handle and facilitate any instances of sexual harassment or misconduct that take place at the NST. 1. The Sexual Harassment Officer will be a university faculty member who participates in the forensics activities and organization of their respective institution.

a. The SHO will be an elected position that serves a term of two years and is subject to no term limit.

b. A SHO candidate is eligible for election under the following conditions, that their institution has attended the NST for the past three years, regularly receives sexual harassment training from their institution, and has no record of sexual misconduct to their name.

2. The responsibilities of the SHO include:

a. Facilitating Sexual Harassment Training to all hired judges for the NST at registration for the NST.

b. To keep records and documentation that all schools attending the NST have received sexual misconduct training from their respective institution at the beginning of the competitive season. (Fall semester)

c. Chair the Anti Sexual Harassment Resource Committee

d. To inform respective institutions of the accused and accuser of sexual misconduct so that the process of investigation can be sent to the involved parties conduct offices/Title IX offices.

3. The first SHO shall be elected from the NST Committee, from which the following elections can receive nominations one month prior to the NST from candidates who qualify from above listed qualifications.

L. The NST formally recognizes the position of NST Development Officer.

a. The NST Development Officer is appointed by the Chair of the AFA-NST Committee, in consultation with the AFA-NST Committee. The NST Development Officer does not serve as a member of the NST Committee.

b. The NST Development Officer will be appointed for a two- year term at the spring meeting of the AFA-NST Committee. There is no limit to the number of times a Development Officer may be reappointed.

c. The responsibilities of the Development Officer are to recruit members of the Ad Hoc Development Committee.

XIII. Sanctions

Should a contestant and/or school deliberately misrepresent qualification procedures, **record participants without consent** or in some other manner deliberately violate the ethics implicit in the American Forensic

Association and its National Speech Tournament, such contestant and/or school may be denied participation in the District and the National Tournament for one to three years. A decision to impose sanctions on a contestant and/or school shall be based on a recommendation of such action from the AFA Professional Practices Committee and by subsequent ratification of the recommendation by the AFA-NST Committee.

XIV. Ratification of By-Laws
This document shall become effective when approved by a two-thirds vote of the AFA-NST Committee.

XIV. Amendment
The provisions of this document may be amended by a two- thirds vote of the AFA-NST Committee or majority vote at two consecutive meetings of the AFA-NST Committee.