Details for competing in WACFL Student Congress

The fifth and final WACFL Student Congress preliminary tournament of the 2025-26 season will be virtual! The deadline for coaches to register students and upload legislation in Tabroom.com is Tuesday, February 17 at 9 pm. Although students write the legislation, the team coach assigns numbers, reviews formatting and uploads individual PDFs to Tabroom.com. Please read the following instructions closely.

Schools should submit one piece of legislation for every two students registered (or increment thereof). As Student Congress grows, this keeps the packet to a reasonable size. For each school, legislation must be balanced across the 3 topic categories: Domestic, International and Economic. Here's some examples of how this works:

- If you have 1-2 students registered, students can choose any of the topic areas. You will need to upload just one piece of legislation.
- If you have 5-6 students registered, you would upload 3 pieces of legislation, one in each category.
- If you have 9-10 students registered, 5 pieces of legislation should be uploaded. There should be two pieces in two different categories and one piece in the remaining category.

Congress topics for the February 21, 2026 tournament

Domestic

- Voting Integrity
- Department of Justice
- Gun Control

International

- Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- Iran
- Indo Pacific Strategy

Economic

- Housing Affordability
- Federal Reserve Board
- Online Gambling

Templates for writing and formatting Bills and Resolutions

Student legislation can either be a Bill or a Resolution. Here's the difference:

- **Bills** enumerate specific provisions which, if enacted, will have the force of law.
- **Resolutions** express a conviction or idea, used when Congress does not have jurisdiction to legislate. Debate on a resolution generally centers on broad principles about the concept presented.

Here are templates students can use to format their legislation correctly. Each piece of legislation should fit on a single page. To see examples of legislation, the packets from all previous WACFL tournaments are available on the Tabroom.com web page for each tournament.

Numbering and submitting legislation

For legislation packets to be created quickly and accurately, it's important that students and coaches closely follow the formatting rules for file naming and uploading.

- Ensure the author titles the legislation appropriately, using a number within the range assigned to your school. (Contact us if your school doesn't have a number range).
- Prior to uploading, the coach should save each document individually as a PDF with the bill/resolution number **only** as the file name. Remember that each number must have a D, E or I prefix, which corresponds to the legislation category Domestic, Economic or International. An example file name is **E401.pdf.**
- Upload each PDF in Tabroom.com by clicking on the **Legislation** tab. In Tabroom, you will provide the bill/resolution number, a colon and the full title of the legislation. For example: **E401: A Bill to Fix the Universe**. Legislation not formatted correctly will be sent to the end of the packet.
- The deadline to upload legislation in Tabroom is the same as the student entry deadline: **9 pm the Tuesday before the tournament**. This is an important deadline, since legislation packets are created soon after this deadline. Only the coach or designated adult may upload legislation. Students should not be doing this.
- Consolidated legislation packets will be uploaded toTabroom.com by 12 noon the Wednesday before each tournament. We will notify coaches by email when legislation packets are available. Please distribute the packets to your students and judges. Students can also access them from the tournament website. Printed legislation packets will not be available at the tournament.

Following these guidelines is crucial for tournament officials to quickly consolidate work from multiple schools and create a legislation packet quickly. If you have any questions please contact Sheryl Gusman at SGusman@wacfl.org or Kelsey Bass at kelsey.bass@lcps.org.

Here's how tournament day will go

At each tournament, students will be split into chambers of 15-20 students. They will remain in that chamber for the entire tournament. Each chamber will have three sessions, one in the morning and two after lunch. Each session will last approx. 90 minutes.

At the beginning of the legislative day, in each chamber, students break into committees, Domestic, Economic, International, to plan the agenda (docket) for the day. If the student authored a bill, they go to that committee. Students who didn't submit a bill will join committees of their choice.

In committee, the students review the bills in their category and choose which ones are to be debated. The docket is created in DEI sequence. For the entire day, we plan 4-6 DEI cycles. If the committee has an author, they will use the author's bill. If not, they will use one of the other bills in their category. Note that students who would like to serve as Presiding Officers during one of the sessions do not participate in the committees. They will be asked to step out briefly, and they may discuss among themselves their preferences for which session they would like to preside.

After the committees meet, the chamber will nominate and elect a presiding officer (PO) for session 1. The election is done by the parliamentarian. The elected PO will serve for the duration of session 1. A new PO will be elected before the start of each session, or at the end of the previous session, depending on the best use of time. (Note that if the number of students who want to be a PO equals the number of sessions, and the students work out which session they want to PO in, no election is needed.)

Debate begins with the first bill on the docket. If there is an author for that bill in the chamber, they give the authorship speech. If not, the Presiding Officer will call for a sponsor. Any student may sponsor the bill. The purpose of the author/sponsor is to introduce the bill to the chamber. A good authorship / sponsorship speech will define the problem, with some compelling rhetoric, citing evidence to support their position. They then explain what the bill does and conclude with how implementation of the bill solves the problem.

Debate continues with a negation speech, alternating with affirmation speeches. One sided debate occurs when there are no speakers on the alternating side. This is permissible, but not preferable.

When debate is exhausted, the chamber will move to the previous question and vote. At times, the chamber wants to debate the bill further, but they need time to prepare. In this case, they will move to table the legislation and come back to it at a later time.