

Minutes NFC Meeting
Friday, Sept. 5 and Saturday, Sept. 6, 2014
On campus of UW Bothell
Hosted by Denise Vaughan
9 a.m. to 12:59 p.m.

Overview of Changes Approved at the Meeting:

- **Aspiration:** That the NFC president in conjunction with the tournament host appoint equity advocates to serve at each Designated tournament. The Equity advocates will be announced in the tournament invitation. Passed.
- Charles Kincy will assist in development of an NFC Website. (206) 931 3533.
- Korry was congratulated for receiving a service award for promoting equity at Western Washington University.
- Mike Ingram discussed standardizing patterns for Individual Events at the regional tournaments. An aspiration was passed:
“All tournaments aspire to follow a standardized pattern of Individual Events:
Pattern A: extemp, persuasion, ADS, Prose, POI, DI
Pattern B: Impromptu, Inform, CA, Poetry, Duo”
- **Committees Formed for Equity Work:**
- **Data Collection and Management**
- -- Joe Gantt, Brent Northup, Dan Schabot, Denise Vaughan
- -- Coordination/dissemination of existing data and promotion of additional research projects
-
- **Equity Officers**
- -- Liz Kinnaman
- -- Research legal implications/guidelines and make recommendations for implementation
-
- **Judge Training**
- --Malynda Bjerragaard, Beth Hughes
- --Training resources for judges (video and print) aimed at improving student-judge interactions
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- **Statement of Ethics Revision**
- --Trond Jacobsen, Kevin Kuswa, Brent Northup, Steve Woods
- --Revision and updating of the Statement of Ethics and recommendations for revisions of the bylaws
-
- **Student Group**
- --Korry Harvey, Chris Pierini, Kristen Stevens
- --Coordination and guidance to student representatives; promotion of student participation
-
- **Tool Kit/Guidelines**
- --David Airne, Kyle Cheesewright, Korry Harvey
- --Creation of resources for various circumstances and roles (both reactionary and preventive; for students, judges, coaches, tournament directors, etc.)

Minutes

1. Thank you to Denise for hosting

2. Introductions of all coaches: David Mooney, PLU; Justin Ecstein, PLU; Jacob Witt, Northwest (Seattle); Kyle Cheesewright, College of Idaho, Chris Pierini, University of Washington; Joe Gantt, Lewis & Clark; Greg Young, Humboldt State; Liz K, Clark College; Shannon Valdivia, Mt. Hood; Mark Porrovecchio, Oregon State University; Beth Hewes, CSI; Dan Schabot, Lower Columbia; Brooke Adamson, Northwest Nazarene; Leitha Quinn, Northwest Nazarene; Denise Vaughan, Bellevue CC & UW Bothell; Malynda Bjerregaard, Linfield (sabbatical replacement for Jackson) & Snow; Gerry Philipson, Seattle Pacific University; Jennifer Conner, Pacific University; Dan Broyles, Pacific University; Mike Ingram, Whitworth University; Calvin Horn, PLU; Trond Jacobson, University of Oregon; David Airne, University of Montana; Korry Harvey, Western Washington University; Steve Woods, Western Washington; Jim Hanson, Bellevue Community College; Manda Hicks, Boise State University, Brent Northup, Carroll.

3. Introduction of officers

President, Brent (May 2015)

At Large: Mike Ingram, Whitworth (May 2015)

Community College: Dan Schabot, Lower Columbia (May 2015)

NIET: Joe Gantt, L&C

IPDA: Mark Porrovecchio, OSU and/or Mike Ingram, Whitworth

BP: Jackson Miller, Linfield & Jacob Witt, NWU

Policy/Parli: Joe Gantt, Steve Woods, WWU

4. Budget Report: \$6340.52

5. Calendar updates. After a long discussion and vote, the Western Washington Designated will remain on the Jan 30 date which conflicts with Lewis & Clark's high school tournament. Community colleges said an early date would make their participation difficult/impossible. The final vote was 9 programs preferring January 30 and 6 programs preferring Jan 23.

Report on Equity Conference: Korry summarized the equity conference.

One aspiration was passed: That the NFC president in conjunction with the tournament host appoint equity advocates to serve at each Designated tournament. The Equity advocates will be announced in the tournament invitation. Passed.

6. Tournament reports:

Designateds:

Lewis & Clark, Oct. 10-12: Joe. Invite available at Forensics Tournament dot Net. Because L&C hosts NIET, their IE tournament may include NIET schools from the east coast. L&C will host IEs on Friday, with two divisions of Extemp: An NIET version, not allowing Internet; and an NFC version, allowing Internet. ON Saturday, Mt. Hood will host an IE tournament, forming a Portland IE Swing; L&C will host debate on Saturday & Sunday.

Linfield, Nov. 14-16. Jackson & Malynda. Invite available.

Western Washington University, January 30-31-1. Steven Woods; IEs will be hosted Friday & Saturday; Debate on Saturday & Sunday.

Community College members of the NFC reminded/encouraged. Designateds to include a CC person as part of the administrative team.

7. Other regional announcements:

- **Oregon hopes to build the annual Oregon tournament into a major Northwest event; Oregon prefers the late February date and is willing to consider a number of Oregon options including a full service tournament with Parli, Policy and IPDA plus individual events.**
- **Boise State is hosting IPDA nationals; Lewis & Clark hosts NIET nationals.**

8. Special reports

CEDA, March.

NDT. Iowa, April 2-6.

BP – U.S.U. Nationals at Alaska April 10-13

NFA – Brent. April 17-19 in Ohio.

NPDA – Joe Gantt. March 21-23, Kansas City Kansas Community College (March 14-17, round one Sunday, Awards Tuesday Night)

NPDA Journal ...Marty Birkholt of Creighton. If you are interested in publishing in a special assessment issue, contact Derek at UPS.

Climb the Mountain Speech and Debate Foundation. Jim Hanson. Oct. 3-4 a coach/student clinic. The foundation, aimed at high school students, works to promote best practices for speech and debate.

NIET qualifier. At Oregon State on Saturday, Feb. 7, with Sunday IPDA tournament. Both in Corvallis.

NIET Nationals at Lewis & Clark, April 3-6. Need judges at \$200 for the first two days. Joe Gantt.

PKD – March in Ohio.

Oregon State Prison Tournament: Handout. Oct. 3 in Salem Oregon. Robert Trapp and Jackson Miller.

Western States—Contact Bob Becker. [Robert.Becker@northwestcollege.edu]. At Gonzaga.

Interstate Oratory – In Georgia, April 24, 25. Top two persuasions from each state. Contact Brent if interested in sending a student.

Phi Rho Pi – April 6-11; Dan Schabot

NPTE – Jim Hanson, William Jewell, March 20-23.

Seattle. Chris Pierini discussed “debatable” a program for elementary school kids. Pierini seeking backfiles of research to share with young students. Click: Debateablekids.com

Portland Debate League. Dan Schabot.

IFA: Barcelona, handout. Spring 2015.

Novice Nationals March 14-16

IPDA: Boise State, March 26-29

New Business:

Aspiration: That the NFC president in conjunction with the tournament host appoint equity advocates to serve at each Designated tournament. The Equity advocates will be announced in the tournament invitation. Passed.

Charles Kincy will assist in development of an NFC Website. (206) 931-3533.

Korry was congratulated for receiving a service award for promoting equity at Western Washington University.

Mike Ingram discussed standardizing patterns for Individual Events at the regional tournaments. An aspiration was passed 16-0.

“All tournaments aspire to follow a standardized pattern of Individual Events:

Pattern A: extemp, persuasion, ADS, Prose, POI, DI

Northwest Forensics Conference Report

An Overview of the NFC Equity Project

October 2014

In this Report:

- Background/History of the Equity Project
- Framing of the Equity Project
- Goals and Objectives
- Current “Task Groups”
- Encouragement of Participation

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

At the 2013 NFC business meeting, held in September at Spokane Falls Community College, there was significant discussion about growing concerns in our community over issues of inequity, exclusion, and outright harassment. As part of an effort to address these concerns, an ad hoc “Ethics and Equity Committee” was created: co-chaired by Denise Vaughan (Bellevue College/University of Washington-Bothell) and Korry Harvey (Western Washington University), and including Brent Northup (Carroll College), Malynda Bjerregaard (Snow College), Kevin Kuswa (Whitman College), Melissa Franke (Seattle University), Mark Porrovecchio (Oregon State University), Shannon Valdivia (Mt. Hood Community College), and Trond Jacobsen (University of Oregon).

This committee was charged with gathering relevant information, raising awareness, taking short-term remedial actions where possible, and making recommendations for longer-term structural reforms. As expected, the committee experienced both positive developments as well as struggles along the way. Overall, it was a meaningful step in the right direction and helped open up the conversation for greater efforts toward the end of making our forensics community a safer and more welcoming place for any and all participants.

At the 2014 NFC business meeting, held in September at the University of Washington-Bothell, we reviewed our progress and took the next steps in coordinating and refining our efforts. The day prior to the official business meeting, we convened an Ethics and Equity Conference, attended by nearly twenty coaches from a variety of programs across the region, and carried that conversation over to the following day’s business meeting with representatives from another 8-10 programs. The conference/seminar was lively and energetic, with an emphasis

placed on moving beyond mere words and discussion to implementing functional steps aimed at actively addressing the concerns of our community. While the conversation was generally quite productive, at least one notable concern was raised regarding the absence of students at the gathering. Increasing student representation in these efforts is a core focus as the project moves forward.

A REFRAMING

Recognizing that words truly are meaningful, part of the discussion has involved reframing our efforts to break from some of the limitations of “committee work”. It was observed that when a *committee* is formed, it often results in some unintended negative consequences: those not officially on the committee become somewhat shut out of the process, and it also serves as an excuse/justification for not being more actively involved in the effort (“I don’t need to do anything, there’s a *committee* for that”). This tends to create conditions wherein too much responsibility falls on too few sets of shoulders, which is not only unsustainable in the long-term but also makes the achievement of even limited successes far more challenging in the short-term. These are extremely complicated and deep-seated issues—more than a small handful of individuals can realistically address. Such an organizational approach further seems to favor the kind of top-down bureaucratic method which has historically struggled to make progress toward inclusion and equity in any number of fields. Ultimately, when undertaking efforts at increasing inclusivity, there is a fundamental need for the *process itself* to be as inclusive as possible.

An additional concern was that perceptions of the effort had become somewhat limited in scope in that it was viewed by many as an effort to specifically address *gender* inequality. Gender, to be sure, is a central focus of these efforts, but not exclusively so. Concerns in our region (and elsewhere) go beyond gender to include issues of inclusion and equity related to race, ethnicity, class, disAbility, age, sexual orientation, ideology, religion, ESL/EFL, and any number of other arbitrary sources of identity. Moreover, we are also concerned with the dynamics of power relationships between coaches and students, judges and students, between 2-year and 4-year programs, and across different formats of competition. We are interested in promoting student leadership and diversity promotion within the judging and coaching ranks. We are interested in challenging oppressive behavior and policy in any and all forms in our activity.

As a result, we have moved away from the framing of an “Ethics and Equity Committee” and toward what is hopefully a more inclusive, collaborative, and democratic “Equity Project”, in the hopes of sending the message that equity and inclusion in our activity is the responsibility of *every* competitor, *every* judge, *every* coach, *every* tournament director/tab room staff member, and *every* leader of a forensics organization. We have already experienced a much wider degree of participation, which is a very positive sign.

ACTIVE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A guiding principle of this project is to put community on a more equal footing with competition. With that in mind, the NFC Ethics and Equity Committee, and now the NFC Equity Project, is working on the following elements:

Information-gathering

We have been and will continue to gather information and perspectives from NFC members (at all levels) in order to make formal suggestions for changes in NFC policy. This element has served as both an assessment of the current state of the conference with regard to ethics and equity issues as well as the identification of potential responses to perceived concerns. The effort has included surveys, interviews, consolidating existing data as well as compiling new sets of data, listening projects such as community dialogue forums at regional tournaments, gathering of best practices, etc.

Identification of possible short-term remedies

- Discussion and Action Forums

The discussion/dialogue/action forums have served multiple purposes: gathering information/ideas, raising awareness, and setting plans in motion, as well as a remedial function in creating space for people to express themselves and share their individual perspectives. Sometimes just being heard can create very healthy and positive results.

- Equity Toolkits

We have begun collecting “best practices” for teams, competitors, judges, coaches, tournament directors, and forensics organizations. This effort will eventually culminate in the creation of an “Equity Toolkit” with resources and guidelines for various situations and for various roles in the community (judge, competitor, DOF, etc.), to be made available both in print at tournaments and online.

- Training

We have encouraged each program in the region to conduct sexual harassment/equal opportunity/anti-oppression training for their students and staff, and to establish formal codes of conduct for their teams. Every school has these resources readily available, they just need to be utilized. We are exploring ways to standardize this practice, such as making it a requirement for participation at regional tournaments.

Identification of longer-term solutions

- Consciousness-raising

A general theme of this project is to “raise the bar on ignorance”. We understand that some instances of inequity and mistreatment take place without ill-intent, but rather are the result of a genuine lack of understanding and familiarity. We hope to counter the prevalence of such circumstances by educating the community about issues of equity and inclusion, power and privilege. This will be pursued through a number of means, such as those listed here.

- Student representation/leadership/participation

Student involvement has been identified as a critical element of the project. We talk a lot about how this activity is “for the students” yet provide precious few opportunities for their participation in the process of creating a more inclusive and equitable environment. This simply has to change if our efforts are to be successful and sustainable. We have taken the initial steps of creating a formal Equity Project Student Group in order to increase the volume and reach of the student voice. Students from numerous programs across the region will work collaboratively to identify solutions, to share ideas, to keep their programs involved, etc.

- Toolkits

We have heard from many that there are too few resources available. We have begun the process of gathering best practices and legal guidelines to create “toolkits” for various situations and roles in the community—e.g., victims of harassment/assault, observers of harassment/misconduct, being a mindful competitor/judge/coach, running an inclusive program/tournament, etc. Our aim is to make these resources readily available (online, in print at tournaments, etc.) in order to “raise the bar on ignorance”.

- Equity Officers

We have begun the process of figuring out how to create a set of “Equity Officers” at regional tournaments that would assist tournament directors in hearing complaints and/or offering guidance and suggesting resources (similar to the process at the national championship tournaments in various speech and debate formats). Once legal issues have been investigated we will look to formally incorporate this practice into the conference bylaws.

- Revision of Bylaws and the Statement on Ethics

We have begun the process of revising/updating the NFC’s official Statement on Ethics (drafted in the 1980s), as well as the bylaws, to more proactively address contemporary concerns. This document was very appropriate for its time, but the activity has changed, and so too must the document. This process involves looking at ways to structurally reform the organization in positive and lasting ways.

- Training

Greater training, of judges in particular, is also a longer-term part of the project. Instructional videos and written guidelines are being created that will encourage judges to be more thoughtful and equitable in their oral critiques, their interactions with students (both in rounds and out of rounds), and in social settings. The student-judge interaction can be one of the most productive and educational aspects of our activity, and yet it can also be one of the most challenging and problematic. We want our judges to be respectful and to act with integrity at all times. We are exploring ways to increase the number of judges that are exposed to these training

materials (perhaps even requiring programs to make sure their judges have viewed the materials before they can be “certified” to participate).

- Data Collection and Management

We always need to continue assessing the situation in order to keep making progress. We are also trying to address issues that we do not fully understand. As such, we will continue to review existing data, as well as gather new data. Various surveys have been created to better identify the demographic make-up of the region, pinpoint concerns, and to point us toward possible solutions. Additional research projects are needed. An effort will be made to make findings as widely available as possible, and to use available data to inform our steps.

CURRENT TASK GROUPS (SUB-COMMITTEES)

Please note: these “task groups” were created at the Ethics and Equity Conference. **Please** feel free to contact any of these individuals with your interest to support that effort by joining the task group. As stated above, we need more people involved at every level of this project in order for it to genuinely move forward. Likewise, this is not an exhaustive list—if you have specific tasks that you would like to coordinate and have added to this list, please contact Korry Harvey (WWU), Denise Vaughan (Bellevue/UW-Bothell), or Brent Northup (Carroll College).

- Data Collection and Management

- Joe Gantt (L&C), Brent Northup (Carroll), Dan Schabot (Lower Columbia), Denise Vaughan (Bellevue/UWB)

- Coordination/dissemination of existing data and promotion of additional research projects

- Equity Officers

- Liz Kinnaman (Clark)

- Research legal implications/guidelines and make recommendations for implementation

- Judge Training

- Malynda Bjerragaard (Linfield/Snow), Beth Hughes (CSI)

- Training resources for judges (video and print) aimed at improving student-judge interactions

- Statement of Ethics Revision

- Trond Jacobsen (Oregon), Kevin Kuswa (Whitman), Brent Northup (Carroll), Steve Woods (WWU)

- Revision and updating of the Statement of Ethics and recommendations for revisions of the bylaws

- Student Group

--Korry Harvey (WWU), Chris Pierini (UW-Seattle), Kristen Stevens (WWU)
--Coordination and guidance to student representatives; promotion of student participation

- Tool Kit/Guidelines

--David Airne (Montana), Kyle Cheesewright (Cofl), Korry Harvey (WWU)
--Creation of resources for various circumstances and roles (both reactionary and preventive; for students, judges, coaches, tournament directors, etc.)

ENCOURAGEMENT OF PARTICIPATION

As has been noted, if we are to truly make progress toward inclusion and equity, the process itself needs to be more inclusive. All participants in forensics—regardless of categorical identification, experience, level of success, format/style, etc., are highly encouraged to share their thoughts and join the effort. We request that coaches encourage their students and judges to join the conversation. We request that students encourage their peers and their coaches to take steps on your own teams to address these issues. We encourage tournament directors to make time in their schedules for community-building. We encourage everyone to add their voice to the conversation. And we request that everyone help shoulder the load in making our activity one wherein everyone who is interested in what it has to offer is welcomed and respected.

If you have concerns, comments, or suggestions about this effort, please do not hesitate to contact someone involved in the Equity Project, your coach or a coach from another program, a tournament director, or the officers of the NFC.

In attendance at the Equity Conference: Jacob Witt, Northwest (Seattle); Kyle Cheesewright, College of Idaho; Greg Young, Humboldt State; Liz Kinnaman, Clark College; Shannon Valdivia, Mt. Hood; Mark Porrovecchio, Oregon State University; Beth Hewes, CSI; Dan Schabot, Lower Columbia; Denise Vaughan, Bellevue CC & UW Bothell; Charles Kincy, Bellevue Community College; Malynda Bjerregaard, Linfield (sabbatical replacement for Jackson) & Snow; Trond Jacobson, University of Oregon; David Airne, University of Montana; Korry Harvey, Western Washington University; Steve Woods, Western Washington; Jim Hanson, Bellevue Community College; Brent Northup, Carroll.

NFC Minutes by Brent Northup, Carroll College
Equity Report by Korry Harvey, Western Washington University

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