

# **Northwest Forensics Conference**

**Current Bylaws**

**Code of Ethics 2017**

**Code of Ethics 1985**

**Sept. 7, 2019**

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# NFC BYLAWS

As of Sept. 7, 2019

## **Procedure for revising bylaws:**

All major changes in these Bylaws approved at the fall coaches' meeting will take effect beginning one year from the date of passage. Major changes would include but not be limited to all changes to tournament designating that would have an impact on the travel schedule of conference schools.

Aspirations are included in appropriate sections of the bylaws, but aspirations do not have the legal standings of bylaws. Dictionaries say an aspiration is a "goal or objective that is strongly desired."

## **I. Definitions**

### **a. Fall meeting**

The Northwest Forensics Conference sponsors an annual association meeting to discuss NFC issues pertaining to schedules, rules, tournaments, and similar issues as discussed in this document.

### **b. NFC**

The NFC is the association of all Northwest colleges and universities. A school is considered a member of the conference if it lies within the Northwest region and either competes at any Northwest Designated tournament or sends a representative to the fall coaches' meeting.

### **c. NFC championship**

The officers of the conference maintain a cumulative sweepstakes record of member school participation in NFC Designated tournaments. The sweepstakes records are used to calculate year-end NFC awards. (See Section V: NFC Awards and Best Practices Handbook)

### **d. NFC region and beyond**

The Northwest region is defined as the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Washington. Any college or university within these five states is considered, for purposes of this document, a Northwest institution.

Schools in neighboring states may apply for membership in the NFC. Membership will be granted at the fall meeting by majority vote, effective immediately after the vote.

### **e. NFC Designated tournaments**

Any Northwest school may apply to the NFC committee to host a Designated tournament. Designated tournaments are selected by the executive committee. A Designated tournament must abide by the requirements described in this document.

## II. Organization

### a. NFC membership

Any Northwest school, *and all NFC member schools*, competing at any Designated tournament or attending the fall coaches' meeting will be considered a member of the Northwest Forensics Conference and will be eligible for awards and organizational programs.

### b. Officers

The Northwest Forensics Conference will be directed by the NFC President and a seven-person steering committee. The President will serve a two-year term and steering committee members will serve one-year terms.

The steering committee will consist of three elected representatives, and four appointed representatives:

1. NFC president, elected each spring for a two-year term.
2. At-large representative, elected each spring for a one-year term
3. Community College representative elected each spring for a one-year term
4. NIET representative, appointed. The NIET District 2 chair will serve unless holding another NFC office, in which case the NFC president will appoint a person from an NIET school after consulting with NIET programs.
5. Policy representative for NDT and CEDA, appointed: District CEDA/NDT officer or national CEDA/NDT officer will serve unless holding another NFC office. In that case, the NFC president will appoint a person from an NDT/CEDA school after consulting with NDT/CEDA programs.
6. NPDA representative, appointed: District NPDA representative or national NPDA officer will serve unless holding another NFC office. In that case, the NFC president will appoint a person from an NPDA school after consulting with NPDA programs.
7. IPDA representative, appointed: District IPDA representative or national IPDA officer will serve unless holding another NFC office. In that case, the NFC president will appoint a person from an IPDA school after consulting with IPDA programs.

In addition, the NFC president will appoint an Executive Secretary who shall be a non-voting member of the committee charged with the task of collecting and disseminating regional tournament results, NFC newsletter, and other tasks as deemed appropriate by the steering committee. The president will serve as NFC treasurer. The Executive Secretary shall be paid a stipend from the membership fees collected by the Conference.

### c. Duties

The President will be responsible for (1) conducting the meetings for the membership or steering committee, (2) presenting regional awards at the last Designated tournament, and (3) organizing and conducting the fall coaches' meeting.

The President and/or the steering committee can form Ad Hoc temporary committees which serve until the next fall meeting;

Standing committees, with members appointed by the president, are ongoing committees whose charges are reviewed at each fall meeting. Standing committee members serve a term that expires at each fall meeting where and new appointments may be made, if necessary.

The steering committee and executive secretary will be responsible for (1) compiling the sweepstakes results and mailing out results of the sweepstakes competitions after each Designated tournament, (2) collecting the membership fees and purchasing the sweepstakes trophies,

(3) completing any other public relations activities directed by the President or steering committee, (4) make any necessary rules or procedural interpretation, (5) designate tournaments, and (6) oversee the production and dissemination of the tournament calendar and directory of member schools.

**d. Elections**

The president shall appoint a nominating committee each year charged with the task of nominating the next year's officers and conducting the election. Election to office requires a majority of NFC membership and, therefore, run-off elections may be needed. The first ballot should be sent to NFC membership by March 30 and the election results should be sent to the membership by May 15.

### **III. Philosophy and Goals**

The Northwest Forensics Conference is designed to accomplish a number of objectives shared by the forensics programs in this region.

**a. Pedagogical goals**

Many forensics educators would like to see innovations such as: more emphasis on oral critiques in debate and individual events rounds; opportunities for innovative forensics events; open seminars to discuss important issues in the activity; a broader variety of important issues in the activity; and a broader variety of judges. The Northwest Designated Tournaments are an attempt to try these as well as other ideas not currently emphasized through many existing tournaments. There are some things, however, that Northwest Designated Tournaments are **NOT** intended to do. NFC Designated Tournaments:

- i. **Should Not** preclude the existence of other college tournaments in the Northwest. Hosting a tournament frequently provides a chance for good public relations on campus, a chance to give students the opportunity to compete in tournaments that might otherwise be denied, as well as giving students from other universities the opportunity for a greater number of quality competitive experiences.
- ii. **Should Not** seek to impose a uniform philosophy for all programs in the Northwest. Not all programs have nor should have the same goals or philosophy. The Northwest benefits from the diversity of experience provided by its programs. While there are many different approaches for accomplishing the objective of education, the NFC is intended to provide a "common ground" for many of the diverse philosophies and programs in our region.

**b. Enhance support for NW programs**

Support for forensics is frequently a product of success and visibility. The Northwest Forensics Conference and Championship should provide a tangible measure of competitive success for programs.

Dividing the sweepstakes awards into various categories insures that a number of schools will receive awards that could be used to justify continued and increased institutional support.

At the same time, the Northwest Forensics Conference recognizes the importance of forensics educators and seeks to provide professional support for its members.

**c. Create alternative ways to compete**

A Northwest regional championship ought to provide a realistic and meaningful goal for all forensics programs in our region. Many programs lack the financial resources or interest in attending the national championships in debate and individual events. No program has the resources necessary to send every qualified or interested student to these national tournaments.

A Northwest regional championship series of tournaments would provide support for students who do not aspire to national competition by providing a realistic competitive goal.

The series should also help qualify more students for "at large" berths to the American Forensics Association National Individual Events Tournament; accentuate the traditional strength

of Northwest Debate teams by providing more tournament rounds that are translated into sweepstakes points; and provide competition for community college students who strive for success at either Phi Rho Pi or the Northwest Community College Championship.

**d. Provide large and diverse tournaments.**

While we recognize and appreciate the intimate, friendly atmosphere of our tournaments that gives our students a chance to improve their skills absent the constraints of becoming “lost in the crowd,” we also understand the need for larger tournaments in the Northwest. Larger forensics tournaments provide for greater diversity in competition and evaluation; insure the presence of a larger number of appropriate role models for inexperienced students; and heighten the intellectual and personal challenge of competition in the tournament setting.

- e. **Education first, competition second:** Philosophical Aspiration on NFC guiding philosophy: The Northwest Forensics Conference believes forensics competitions are one of the most educationally beneficial activities in which students can participate. As a community, we have attempted to create a competitive atmosphere that is above all, a unique and rewarding educational experience for students. We also believe that those best suited to make certain educational decisions for students are their instructors. Therefore, when establishing guidelines for coaches as they prepare to enter their students into competition, and when establishing guidelines for schools that host forensics competitions, we must always keep in mind that, when in conflict, decisions should be based on educational success first, and competitive success second.

## IV. Designated Tournaments

**a. *Intent of the Designated requirements: Rights of the Tournament Host***

Nothing in the following rules should be misconstrued to take away the rights and responsibilities of the tournament host. The tournament host has the responsibility for overseeing the administration of the tournament; setting and collecting fees; and determining the makeup of the tab room. If necessary, the tournament host is allowed to change administration procedures at the tournament to ensure smooth and efficient operation. The tournament host will make all decisions about tournament management, disqualification of contestants, etc., not specified in the bylaws.

**b. *Which Tournaments May Be Designated***

Any Northwest tournament may apply to be a Designated tournament by the Northwest Forensics Conference and have its sweepstakes points counted toward the regional sweepstakes provided that it follows the guidelines discussed in this document.

**c. *General Designation Requirements***

***i. NFC Submission Deadlines***

The host must submit the application for designation to the NFC steering committee (or its designated subcommittee) no later than January 31 in the forensics year preceding the one in which that tournament will occur.

***ii. Prospectus Info Required***

The prospectus will indicate the dates and schedule of the tournament, anticipated entry fees, and proposed events, divisions, and patterns.

***iii. Tournament Dates***

The host must set the date for fall Designated tournaments so that it occurs prior to Thanksgiving. Hosts for spring Designated tournaments must set the date so that it occurs prior to the second weekend in March.

***iv. Diverse tab rooms***

The host agrees to include outside members in the tab room so that the host school may participate in the tournament and be eligible for sweepstakes recognition.

**v. Securing Judges**

The host agrees to make a reasonable effort to secure guest judges from the community to listen to rounds. These guest judges might include legal practitioners from the community. Guest judges may or may not be reimbursed and should be instructed in the contest rules. Undergraduate student judges are not preferred, but may be used at the discretion of the tournament director. The host must also provide adequate judges to cover their school's entry in addition to guest judges to operate the tournament.

**vi. Tab Is Closed to Students**

The host agrees not to allow students competing for the host school to have access to tab room information, as is true for any students competing in the tournament.

**vii. Submission of Results**

The host agrees to submit tournament results on the Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results (ISTR) form, at the conclusion of the tournament, to the NFC Executive Secretary, who will forward them to the NFC President and ISTR Editor. The NFC will not count sweepstakes points until the Executive Secretary has received tournament results.

**viii. NFC fees**

The host agrees to pay a fee of \$4.50 for each NFC student entered into the tournament. The host may charge this amount besides regular tournament fees or absorb the cost through existing tournament revenues. The fees will be used to purchase suitable sweepstakes awards, pay secretarial record-keeping expenses and handle incidental organizational expenses as needed.

**d. Designation decisions**

1. The decisions to Designate a tournament will be made by the steering committee in accordance with this section (Section 4) of the NFC constitution.
2. Designated tournaments will be announced at the final NFC tournament of the prior season. Designated tournaments will distribute their invitation at the fall meeting.
3. If four Designated tournaments are held: Two Designated tournaments will be held in the fall term, prior to Thanksgiving. Two Designated tournaments will be held in the spring term, prior to the second weekend in March. If fewer than four are held, they will be divided as evenly as possible between semesters.
4. One tournament in the fall and one tournament in the spring will include CEDA debate in senior, junior and novice division. One additional tournament in the fall and one additional tournament in the spring will include CEDA debate in senior, junior and novice division and an additional type of debate. In selecting tournaments to be designated, preference will be given to tournaments which offer more than one form of debate.
5. One tournament in the fall and one tournament in the spring will include all AFA-NIET events. One additional tournament in the fall and one additional tournament in the spring will include the greatest number of these events in the greatest diversity of the primary genres of individual events: limited preparation, prepared, and interpretation. The steering committee may also consider experimental events in the decision to designate a tournament.
6. If fewer than the number needed applications are received, the steering committee will solicit additional applications.
7. The tournament directors will submit dates of these tournaments to the appropriate calendars (e.g. CEDA, AFA, NPDA, BP, IPDA, etc.)
8. In the event that fewer than four tournaments apply, there will be only three Designated tournaments, with awards based on the top two Designated tournaments. If the NFC offers four Designated tournaments, awards will still be based on performances on the best two Designated achievements.



**e. Debate requirements**

In selecting tournaments to be designated, preference will be given to tournaments which offer more than one form of debate. In selecting tournaments to be designated, preference will be given to all tournaments which offer more than one form of debate. The tournament will assure that debate adheres to the following guidelines:

**i. Rounds and Formats**

The host agrees to offer at least 4 preliminary rounds of debate and at least 3 elimination rounds." Passed unanimously, Sept. 10, 2011.

Formats for the various debate styles are as follows:

NPDA: 7-8-8-8-4-5

BP: 7-7-7-7-7-7-7

IPDA: 5-2-6-2-3-5-3

LD: 6-3-7-3-6-6-3 format with 4 minutes of prep time

CEDA/NDT: 9-3-6 format with 10 minutes of prep time

**ii. Divisions**

The host agrees to offer each debate format in at least one of the three divisions (novice, junior, senior) noting that class standing is irrelevant to divisions, that teams should enter the division of the most advanced student, and that student may be in different divisions for debate, interpretation and public speaking events. The NFC Aspirations on Divisions, adopted in September 2002, are included at the end of the bylaws. (added Fall 2011)

**Junior Division:** The NFC feels that junior division in policy debate should be reserved for students who have had a small to a significant amount of high school or college experience in policy debate. Students who have been in quarterfinal or higher five or more times in college policy debate or in Tournament of Champion policy qualifying divisions at high school tournaments should enter senior division (parliamentary debate and LD debate do not count in determining whether a student should advance to senior division of policy debate).

**Senior Division:** The NFC feels that students should be moved to or entered in senior division of policy debate after they have had significant success in college policy debate or Tournament of Champion policy divisions at high school tournaments especially after being in quarterfinals or higher five or more times at those tournaments.

The host agrees to offer six preliminary rounds using times of at least the following: CEDA-NDT, 8-3-5- with 8 minutes of prep. Parli: 7-8-8-8-4-5

**iii. Collapsing Divisions**

A debate division may be collapsed at the discretion of the tournament director if there are six or fewer entries in NPDA, IPDA, LD, CEDA/NDT or twelve or fewer entries in BP. If a novice division of debate is collapsed, the tournament should try to have teams in that division debate each other at the tournament.

**iv. Pairing Debate Rounds**

Debate rounds should be matched on the basis of the following as much as possible:

- a. An even number of rounds should be power matched (either 2 or 4 rounds in a 6 round tournament).
- b. Side constraints should be honored such that a team will have an equal number of affirmative and negative rounds by the end of the tournament. A bye is counted as either aff. or neg.
- c. High-high or high-low matching may be used at the discretion of the tournament director but should be decided before the beginning of the tournament.
- d. Other issues, such as geographic matching are at the discretion of the tournament director.

v. ***Advancing Teams to Elimination Rounds***

The tournament will advance to the following first elimination round as follows: Bi-octafinals for 59 or more teams; Octafinals for 29 or more teams; Quarterfinals for 15 or more teams; Semifinals for 9 or more teams; Finals for 5 or more teams. Debate teams will advance to elimination rounds based on the following hierarchy:

- a. Win-loss record
- b. Total speaker points dropping the highest and lowest points
- c. Total speaker points
- d. Quality of competition (win-loss record of opposing teams)

vi. ***Pairing elimination rounds***

The host agrees to the following rules for matching elimination rounds of debate

- a. Bi-Octafinals are mathematical matches totaling 33.
- b. Octafinals breaks are mathematical matches totaling 17.
- c. Quarterfinals breaks are mathematical matches totaling 9.
- d. Semifinals breaks are mathematical matches totaling 5.
- e. Brackets will be broken if a school would meet itself, with the closest nearly equal match being substituted.

vii. ***Pre-round debate instructions***

The host agrees to allow pre-round debate instruction in all debate events.

viii. ***Central debate announcement***

Parliamentary debate topics will be released at a central location – where competing teams can receive the topic simultaneously. Teams will have 20 minutes to prepare, including time needed to walk to the round.

ix. ***Additional debate requirements***

**Collapsing divisions:** A debate division may be collapsed at the discretion of the tournament director if there are six or fewer entries in NPDA, IPDA, LD, CEDA/NDT or 12 or fewer entries in BP.

**Pre-round debate instruction:** The host agrees to allow pre-round debate instruction in all debate events except where the rules and regulations of national or international organizations prohibit such practices (as is the case with BP).

**Internet Access:** Hosts are not required to provide Internet access, but when it is available participants can use it during debate preparation time. Access to locally stored electronic files is also permitted during preparation time. The tournament will publicize the availability or un-availability of Internet access at the time their tournament is certified as a Designated, no later than May of the preceding academic year.

**Debate events:** Designated tournaments will include, at least, CEDA-NDT debate in senior and junior division and parliamentary debate in senior, junior and novice division.

**British Parliamentary:** Designated tournaments will offer a division of British Parliamentary “World” debate with four rounds, including time for a pre-tournament judge briefing. September 2007 amendment.

**Novice Policy:** Designated tournaments will offer a division of Novice Policy debate with at least four rounds.

(Presidential note, September 2007: The requirement for open/junior policy has not been officially removed from the bylaws, but Designated tournaments have not been regularly offering open/junior policy recently, for numerous reasons.)

**f. Individual Events requirements**

One tournament each semester agrees to offer all American Forensic Association National Individual Events, using AFA rules.

Designated Tournaments must explicitly allow the use of Internet during Extemp preparation, but the Designated Tournament is not required to guarantee Internet access on its campus. Passed, Sept. 10, 2011.

The other tournament each semester agrees to offer at least the greatest number of divisions within those events, and the greatest diversity of the primary genres of individual events: limited preparation, prepared, and interpretation. The steering committee may also consider experimental events in the decision to designate a tournament. The tournament will assure that these NIET events adhere to the following guidelines:

**i. Conflict Patterns and Rounds**

The host agrees to offer at least two conflict patterns with at least two preliminary rounds of individual events. Passed, Sept. 10, 2011

**Aspiration on standardized IE patterns (Sept. 2014):**

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

**ii. Collapsing Divisions – adopted 2006**

Novice and open division will be collapsed if there are fewer than 9 contestants entered in the division. Lower divisions will always be moved up.

Junior division will be collapsed if there are fewer than 12 contestants in the division.

(Clarification: If entries are 9 novice, 11 junior, 10 open – then the divisions will be collapsed to 9 novice and 21 open <because junior is below 12>; if entries are 6 novice; 10 junior; 12 open – then collapse to 16 junior; 12 open (after the novice collapse, which happens first, there are 12 or more in junior.) If entries are 9 novice; 13 junior; 7 open – collapse to 9 novice, 20 open – because open is below 9: If entries are 9 novice, 12 junior, 9 open then no division is collapsed because all have meet the minimums needed to be a stand-alone division.)

A division of an individual event will be collapsed if there are fewer than nine contestants entered in the division. Lower divisions will always be moved up.

**iii. *Pairing Individual Event Rounds***

Individual Events shall be randomly paired except that students from the same school should not meet one another if possible.

**iv. *Rankings for IE ballots***

Individual Events Ballots shall have rankings of 1 through 5.

**v. *Advancing to elim rounds***

In open/senior divisions of individual events, the number of students advanced to final round in each event must be greater than or equal to the number of AFA-NIET legs available in that event. Students will advance in individual events based on the following hierarchy:

- a. Total rank in prelims. If a tie continues to exist, then:
- b. Total rating points in prelims. If a tie continues to exist, then:
- c. Adjusted prelim rank, dropping lowest rank. If a tie continues to exist, then:
- d. Adjusted prelim rate, dropping lowest rating.

**vi. *Determining winners of IE***

The tournament will use a clean slate approach to determine winners from finals rounds of individual events. When a tie on total ranks exists in the final round of individual events, the tie will be broken using this hierarchy:

- a. If two contestants are tied on ranks, then judges' preference will be used if there is an odd number of judges.
- b. If three or more contestants are tied on ranks -or if judges' preference cannot be used to break a tie - final round ratings will be used.
- c. If still tied, use ranks from prelims
- d. If still tied, use ratings from prelims
- e. If still tied, use final round, but drop low rate and low rank, not necessarily from the same ballot.
- f. If still tied, drop low rank and rate from prelims, not necessarily from the same ballot.

g. *Chris Bragg Aspiration on Divisions for NFC Tournaments*

*Crafted by Chris Bragg*  
Passed by NFC on September 7, 2002

**PHILOSOPHICAL GUIDELINES on DIVISIONS**

The Northwest Forensics Conference believes forensics competitions are one of the most educationally beneficial activities in which students can participate. As a community, we have attempted to create a competitive atmosphere that is above all, a unique and rewarding educational experience for students. We also believe that those best suited to make certain educational decisions for students are their instructors. Therefore, when establishing guidelines for coaches as they prepare to enter their students into competition, and when establishing guidelines for schools that host forensics competitions, we advocate the following, always keeping in mind that, when in conflict, decisions should be based on educational success first, and competitive success second.

(A note regarding evaluation of past experience: When evaluating a student's past competitive experience, coaches may wish to consider the size of tournaments attended, the level of competition at those tournaments, the number of competitors at those tournaments, etc.)

**GUIDELINES FOR DIVISIONS ON INDIVIDUAL EVENTS**

The NFC believes that, whenever possible, novice, junior and senior divisions should be offered in Individual Events. Students should be evaluated and entered based on their experience in Platform Events, Draw Events and Interp Events separately. However, the guidelines that follow apply to each genre. In general, entries in duo interpretation should be made according to the division of the most experienced competitor.

**NOVICE:** The NFC feels that novice divisions in individual events should be reserved for students with little or no experience. This is the place for students to gain experience in college forensics and to learn what the activity is about. In general, a novice divisions competitor will be in his or her first full year in collegiate forensics, and will not have won more than three first, second or third place trophies in that genre in collegiate competition. Coaches should refrain from placing students with significant high school experience in novice divisions.

**JUNIOR:** The NFC feels that junior division should be reserved for students who have a significant amount of high school experience in competitive forensics or have had significant success at the novice levels of college forensics. In general, a junior competitor will be in his or her first or second full year of collegiate forensics and will not have advanced to finals more than eight times in that genre in collegiate competition.

**SENIOR/OPEN:** The NFC feels that students should be entered in senior divisions after they have demonstrated consistent success at the junior level. In general, a senior division competitor will be in his or her third or fourth full year of collegiate competition and/or will have demonstrated the consistent ability to be successful at the junior level. However, senior division is open to any competitor who wishes to enter it.

**GUIDELINES FOR DIVISIONS IN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE**

The NFC believes that, whenever possible, novice, junior and senior divisions should be offered in parliamentary debate. In general, debate teams should be entered at the level of the most experienced competitor.

**NOVICE:** The NFC feels that novice divisions in parliamentary debate should be reserved for students with little or no experience. This is the place for students to gain experience in debate and to learn what the activity is about. In general, a novice division competitor will be in his or her first full year of collegiate forensics, and will not have advanced to semi-finals at more than three tournaments in collegiate competition. Coaches should refrain from placing students with significant high school experience in novice divisions.

**JUNIOR:** The NFC feels that junior division should be reserved for students who have a significant amount of high school experience in debate or have had significant success at the novice levels of parliamentary debate. In general, a junior competitor will be in his or her first or second full year of collegiate forensics and will not have advanced to quarterfinals more than eight times in collegiate competition.

**SENIOR:** The NFC feels that students should be entered in senior divisions after they have demonstrated consistent success at the junior level. In general, a senior division competitor will be in his or her third or fourth full year of collegiate competition and/or will have demonstrated the consistent ability to be successful at the junior level. However, senior division is open to any competitor who wishes to enter it.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR DIVISIONS IN POLICY DEBATE**

**Junior Division:** The NFC feels that junior division in policy debate should be reserved for students who have had a small to a significant amount of high school or college experience in policy debate. Students who have been in quarterfinal or higher five or more times in college policy debate or in Tournament of Champion policy qualifying divisions at high school tournaments should enter senior division (parliamentary debate and LD debate do not count in determining whether a student should advance to senior division of policy debate).

**Senior Division:** The NFC feels that students should be moved to or entered in senior division of policy debate after they have had significant success in college policy debate or Tournament of Champion policy divisions at high school tournaments especially after being in quarterfinals or higher five or more times at those tournaments.

**(IPDA AND BP WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS INITIAL ASPIRATION, BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT OFFERED REGULARLY IN 2002 AT NORTHWEST TOURNAMENTS)**

## ***h. Additional aspirations for Designated Tournaments***

### **Aspiration on Extemp preparation**

Passed on September 11, 2004

The NFC aspires to encourage original work in extemporaneous speaking. The NFC encourages tournaments, when possible, to set aside a quiet preparation space for all extempers. The NFC encourages extemporaneous speakers not to consult with coaches or other contestants during the preparation of speeches.

### **Aspiration on NFC rule deviation by Designated Hosts:**

Passed on September 11, 2004

NFC tournaments shall aspire to follow all NFC, NPDA and NIET rules, guidelines and aspirations. If a tournament desires an exception to an NFC rule, the tournament director should consult with the NFC executive committee before enacting the change.

If changes to NFC/NIET/NPDA rules at a Designated tournament are approved by the NFC board, those changes will be announced to all entered schools before the tournament commences.

### **Aspiration on Equity officers at Designated Tournaments**

Passed Sept. 2014

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.

### **Aspiration on Tab Room Composition**

Passed Sept. 9, 1995

1. The conference aspires to use a community college coach in tab rooms at NFC tournaments.
2. The conference aspires to provide sweepstakes awards for community colleges at each NFC tournament.
3. The conference aspires to offer a generous slate of novice events at NFC tournaments.

### **Aspiration on Events offered at Designated Tournaments**

Passed Sept. 10, 2011

Designated tournaments have, as their first obligation, to offer events valued by NFC members – and by “valued” we mean those types preferred by significant numbers of NFC students and schools.

Passed unanimously.

Aspiration on  
**Distribution of parliamentary debate topics:**

Passed on September 8, 2001

The Northwest Forensics Conference aspires to guarantee fairness in the distribution of topics to parliamentary debate teams. The community encourages hosts of NFC tournaments to take steps to ensure such fairness by:

- 1) announcing the topic at a common assembly and/or
- 2) distributing the topic in sealed envelopes not to be opened until both teams are present and/or
- 3) informing judges in writing that revealing the topics prematurely to any team is unethical

NFC hosts are encouraged to take any or all of these steps to insure fairness in the distribution of topics at tournaments.

***END OF ASPIRATIONS***



## V. NFC Awards - principles

### Awards divisions will include:

**Division I:** Four-year colleges attending more than eight tournaments during the preceding forensics season.

**Division II:** Four-year colleges attending eight or fewer tournaments during the preceding forensics season.

**Division III:** Community Colleges.

There will be separate but equal awards for each division.

### a. Awards

- i. An awards committee will award sweepstakes recognition to Gold Medal Schools, Silver Medal Schools and Bronze Medal Schools in Divisions I, II and III. Awards will be based on each school's best two Designated tournaments, with each tournament factored to exactly 1000 points. Points will be calculated using the NFC point scale, with events with fewer than 10 entries being reduced: Eight entries would mean each winner received 80 percent of the possible points; with five entries, 50 percent, and so forth.

(See Best Practices handbook for the Best Practices Guidelines and an explanation of historically awarding Gold/Silver/Bronze recognition.)

- ii. The awards committee will determine the number of schools honored in each category, which is governed by the NFC awards principle of recognizing multiple deserving programs to provide justification for continued and increased institutional support.
- iii. The awards committee can offer other special awards, with the goal of highlighting the success of diverse programs. For example, the presidential debate awards in BP, NPDA, IPDA and Policy acknowledge debate achievements; and the presidential "Best in the Northwest" awards for interp, short prep and platform acknowledge achievement in specific types of events.
- iv. The awards recognizing top speech and debate programs will be calculated by points earned at each school's best two Designated tournaments, using the NFC Sweepstakes Points Formula. The awards will be given at the conclusion of each NFC season.  
NFC championship awards will be given at the last of the Designated tournaments each year. All Conference Honors will be announced by mail at the conclusion of the forensics season.

**b. Individual tournament sweepstakes**

An individual tournament may use any sweepstakes formula it wishes, but for purposes of NFC sweepstakes, the NFC sweepstakes formula will be used when so legislated.

**c. NFC sweepstakes point formula  
Updated June 2019**

<i>1st CEDA/NDT/Policy</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>2nd CEDA/NDT/Policy</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Semi-finalist CEDA/NDT/Policy</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Quarter-finalist CEDA/NDT/Policy</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Octa-finalist CEDA/NDT/Policy</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Double-Octs CEDA/NDT/Policy</i>	<i>6</i>

<i>1st individual events</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>2nd individual events</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>3rd individual events</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Finalist individual Events</i>	<i>4</i>

<i>1<sup>st</sup> LD/IPDA</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>2<sup>nd</sup> LD/IPDA</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>LD &amp; IPDA semi finalist</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>LD &amp; IPDA quarterfinalist</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>LD &amp; IPDA octa-finalist</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>LD &amp; IPDA double-octa-finalist</i>	<i>1</i>

<i>1st Parli</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>2nd Parli</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Semifinalist Parli</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Quarterfinalist Parli</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Octafinalist Parli</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Double-Octafinalist Parli</i>	<i>5</i>

<i>1st BP</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>2nd BP</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Finalist BP</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Semi-Finalist BP</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Quarterfinalist BP</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Octafinalist BP</i>	<i>5</i>

**d. Entry adjustment**

Points will be calculated using the NFC Sweepstakes formula, except that when there are fewer than 10 contestants or teams, 10% of sweepstakes points will be deducted for each contestant or team under 10. (In a 5-person event, the winner earns 5 NFC points, rather than the usual 10.)

**e. Publication of results**

After each month of competition in which an NFC tournament was Designated, the current sweepstakes will be published by the NFC and mailed to all member schools.

## VI. NFC Awards – specific honors

### a. *Coaches Commemorative and Orv Iverson (mandated by bylaws)*

These awards recognize the top NFC students during the NFC season.

The Coaches' Commemorative Award honors the top three students in senior/open division. Students count their best two of three (or two of four) Designated tournaments, with only points earned in senior/open counting.

The Orv Iverson Award honors the top three students junior/novice division. Students count their best two of three (or three of four) Designated tournaments, with only points earned in junior/novice counting.

Points are tabulated using the current NFC sweepstakes formula. All points earned by the student are counted - individual events and debate. Points are adjusted according to the number entered in an event, following the NFC sweepstakes guidelines. (See Best Practices)

### b. *Judge Educator Award (First Awarded in Spring 1993) (mandated by bylaws)*

This award recognizes one or more forensics educators as for outstanding judging in a given year. Nominations are submitted in writing by Directors of Forensics on behalf of their teams prior to the last NFC tournament of the year. Recipients are selected by an awards committee named by the NFC president.

Criteria for the award include:

- (1) Commitment to judging across a variety of forensics events.
- (2) Commitment to writing constructive ballots that are educational for students and their coaches.
- (3) Ability to articulate expectations clearly for student competitors and to render decisions consistent with those expectations.
- (4) Support of diversity of points of view and of styles of learning.
- (5) Commitment to high ethical standards for forensics education and competition.
- (6) Being a good role model for student competitors.

### c. *Debate Program Awards and Speech Program Awards (mandated by bylaws)*

The Northwest Forensics Conference will recognize the top three schools in Division I, Division II and Division III in two championship categories:

**Speech** (Speaking events: the NIET events & experimental events)

**Debate** (IPDA, Policy, IPDA, NPDA, BP)

### d. *All Conference Honors (mandated by bylaws)*

These awards recognize approximately the top 10% of students. (See Best Practices handbook)

### d. *Gold-Silver-Bronze Program Awards (mandated by bylaws)* – An awards committee will award sweepstakes recognition to Gold Medal Programs, Silver Medal Programs and Bronze Medal Programs in Divisions I, II and III. (See Best Practices document for historical implementation practices in past 10 years.)

### e. *Presidential Awards (since 2008-2009) ...not mandated, by permitted, by bylaws*

- i. **Presidential Debate Awards** honoring the best NFC debate programs by genre in Parli, IPDA, BP, Policy (See Best Practices Handbook for explanation of method used for awarding Presidential Debate Awards.) (This award is not mandated, but permitted.)
- ii. **Presidential Best in the Northwest Awards** recognition in platform, short prep, interpretation, and in each genre of debate. (See Best Practices handbook for explanation of the method used for awarding Best in the Northwest recognition.) (Not a mandated, but permitted.)

### f. *Dates*

NFC championship awards will be given at the last of the Designated tournaments each year. All Conference Honors will be announced by mail at the conclusion of the forensics season.

## **VII. Equity in the Northwest Forensics Conference**

### **Bylaw on adherence, passed at Sept. 9, 2017 NFC meeting. Part of the bylaws, but related directly to the code of ethics**

NFC Commitment to ethics and equity Addition to NFC Bylaws, Section IV Designated Tournaments, B. General designation requirements; paragraph 9:

All NFC programs should provide its students with a review of the NFC Code of Ethics and provide some Title IX training to all of their students prior to participation in forensics activities.

To be eligible to receive sweepstakes awards, the directors of programs must sign a form that attests students and educators in their program have read, understand, and will comply with the NFC Statement of Ethics, as well as participated in sexual harassment/violence awareness and prevention training utilizing their Title IX coordinator and/or other appropriate resources.

The NFC should provide a variety of educational resources, including appointment of an NFC ethics and equity educator. The ethics and equity educator will assist programs educating their students about ethics and Title IX.

Tournament directors should clearly identify and widely publicize individuals responsible for handling complaints at their tournament, and should make a variety of reporting options available.

## VIII: Code of Ethics

### *a. Adoption*

A code of Ethics (appendix C) was adopted at the August 19, 1985 meeting of the organization.

A revised code of ethics was adopted in 2017 (appendix B).

The code of ethics is a stand-alone document, not part of the bylaws.

### *b. Function*

Directors of forensics programs should provide copies of the by-laws and code of ethics to student competitors and program assistants, discuss the content with them, and strive to see that all participants abide by the provisions of those two documents.

### *c. Ethical Use of Literature*

#### **Policy for the Ethical Use of Literature**

(passed September 9, 1995):

- Contestants may not rewrite a prose, a poem, or a dramatic text so that the work differs from the original text.
- 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.
- Contestants may not rewrite the ending of a work.
- Contestants may not rewrite lines to change the gender or persona of a character.
- Contestants may not perform a text in a genre for which it has not been written.
- Protests should be filed according to AFA-NIET Charter Bylaws Sections X and XI.

# **Appendix A: NFC Committees**

## **Active NFC Committees**

**As of June 2019**

### **Standing committee for recruitment and outreach to new members and programs, redefined Sept. 7, 2019**

Lauran Schaefer, Whitman; Baker Weilert, Whitman;

Original Charge in 2006 (mission will be redefined and rewritten by 2019-2020 committee):  
Sept. 9, 2006: To help foster two-year students to transfer to four-year schools; to support new programs; help high schools discover NFC schools and their programs, possibly using our new Web site; provide resources to high schools and high school students for investigating speech and debate in the Northwest. The committee will submit an annual report, in writing, to the NFC president no later than August 20<sup>th</sup> of each year and reiterate the details of this report in written and verbal form at the annual NFC coaches meeting.

### **Standing committee on awards, reestablished Sept. 7, 2019. Includes shepherding of the Megan Gaffney Award.**

Chair: Brent Northup; Members Joe Gantt, Lewis & Clark; Mike Ingram; Brooke Adamson  
Charges: The Awards committee will distribute Sweepstakes and other special awards based on applications from NFC schools. The committee will determine deadline for applications. The bylaws define the specific awards handled by this committee. The new sweepstakes awards system begins in Fall 2008.

### **Standing Committee for Letters of Support, Formed sept. 7, 2013**

Members: Joe Gantt, Brent Northup  
Charges: Write letters for programs in need of support.

### **Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaw Review, Formed Sept. 8, 2018**

Members: Kyle Cheesewright (chair), Jacob Witt, Jennifer Conner, Lauren Schaefer, Andy Christensen, Brent.  
Charges: to review the bylaws and make recommendations to change at the next fall meeting.

## Inactive NFC Committees

### **Standing Committee on Equity Works, Formed Sept. 7, 2013**

Members: Joe Gantt, Brent Northup, Dan Schabot, Denise Vaughan

Charges: Coordination/dissemination of existing data and promotion of additional research projects.

Equity officers

Liz Kinnaman

Charges: Research legal implications/guidelines and make recommendation for implementation

Judge Training

Malynda Bjerragaard, Beth Hughes

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

Statement of Ethics Revision

Trond Jacobsen, Kevin Kuswa, Brent Northup, Steve Woods

Charges: Revision and updating of the Statement of Ethics and recommendation for revisions of the bylaws

Student Group

Korry Harvey, Chris Pierini, Kristen Stevens

Charges: Coordination and guidance to student representatives; promotion of student participation

Tool Kit/Guidelines

David Airne, Kyle Cheesewright, Korry Harvey

Charges: Creation of resources for various circumstances and roles (both Reactionary and preventive; for students, judges, coaches, tournament directors, etc.)

### **Standing Committee for Work on Ethics Document, Formed Sept. 10, 2016**

Chair: Steven Woods

Members: Kyle Cheesewright, Beth Hewes, Manda Hicks, Brent Northup

Charges: A committee was formed to continue working on the Ethics document, including assembly of a best practices tool kit, continuing work on the ethics code, continuing work on addressing equity in the region, continuing work on how to ensure trained judges at tournaments and consideration of enforcement/accountability/adherence issues connected to all such issues of ethics and equity.

### **Ad hoc committee on Awards formed September 9, 2006.**

Awards committee will be chaired by Mack Sermon. No other current members. Report at Pacific or next fall. Investigate all types of awards including sweepstakes, all conference, divisions I, II and III, commemorative awards, novice awards, special "open division only" awards, Orv Iverson awards, the specific "hardware" of awards relative to program needs and tournament costs. The committee will initiate and direct appropriate discussions of these and other related issues at Mt. Hood 2007 fall meeting.

### **Ad hoc committee on Tournament Structure, formed September 9, 2006.**

Ad hoc committee on "tournament structure" to study possible reform to tournament structure, investigating two-day versus three-day, special workshops, wellness, adding novice policy, add worlds style debate, add other debate formats. Develop topics for Friday discussion at Mt. Hood meeting in Fall 2007. Chair: Derek Buescher Members: Robert Trapp, Willamette; Paul Hood, U of Oregon; Steve Johnson, Alaska.

**Committee on novice policy and worlds BP debate from Sept. 8, 2007:**

To supervise the addition of Worlds and Novice Policy to NFC Designated tournaments beginning Fall 2008.

**Standing committee on NFC Website/ list serve, formed September 9, 2006.**

Chair and only member: Christi Siver, University of Washington. The committee creates and maintains an NFC Web site and list serve to facilitate the sharing of useful information with forensics programs. The committee will report on the Web site at each fall meeting.

**Standing committee on Membership and Support, formed September 9, 2006.**

Chair: Jackson Miller, Linfield. Members: Steve Hunt, Shannon Valdivia, Lucas Roebuck. The standing Membership and Support committee is charged with supporting both existing and new NFC programs and directors. The specifics include, but are not limited to, the following. The committee will develop a packet of information from which program directors may turn for information on working within their institutions to negotiate budgets, public relations, etc. The committee will maintain an active program of writing letters of programmatic and director support to chairs, deans, presidents, and boards and will avail itself to the needs of NFC members to solicit such support in times of crises and review. The committee will assist directors in developing guidelines for evaluation suitable to the particulars of their job description and institutional demands. The committee will submit an annual report, in writing, to the NFC president no later than August 20<sup>th</sup> of each year and reiterate the details of this report in written and verbal form at the annual NFC coaches meeting.



# Appendix B

## 2017 NFC Code of Ethics

*Stand-alone document; not part of bylaws*

The Northwest Forensics Conference (NFC) is a voluntary association of Northwest colleges and universities formed to promote and foster excellence in forensics education.

The NFC was founded in the early 1980s. In a 1984 paper presented at the Western Speech Communication Association conference in Seattle Michael Bartanen of PLU recounted the formation of the Northwest Forensics Association.

“The Northwest Forensics Conference was created to respond to some immediate and sometimes challenging concerns facing forensics teachers in the Northwest,” wrote Bartanen.

Those concerns included “shrinking tournament sizes,” a problem addressed by the creation of a system of “Designated Tournaments” initially held four times per year.

The seeds of the NFC may have been planted at an informal July 1982 “highly a hoc” committee meeting between three Northwest coaches: Kevin Twohy of Carroll College; David Frank of the University of Oregon; and Bartanen. They drew up a “working set of procedures and bylaws” that was subsequently presented to a gathering of coaches in Tacoma.

The “NFC experiment” resulted in four Designate tournaments that were, as hoped, larger than other local tournaments, drawing between 17 and 31 schools in the 1982-1983 school year.

From the beginning the founders saw the emergence of the NFC organization and its system of Designated tournaments as a classic “compromise” where individual programs put the good of the region before their own interests.

“The Designated tournament format demonstrates the willingness of forensics educators to ‘light a single candle’ rather than ‘forever cursing the darkness,’ wrote Bartanen in 1982. “The vitality of any activity is shown through the willingness of its participants to adapt to changing conditions and change to fit the times. The greatest success of the Northwest Forensic Conference comes from the ability of highly diverse forensic programs to compromise their individual interests in deference to the common good of their neighbors. Northwest forensic programs each reap something different from their participation in the association, preserving the uniqueness and individuality of these programs.”

These NFC founders joined with other coaches to draft the original NFC “statement of ethics” published in 1985. That document was signed by Northwest six forensics educators: Larry Richardson of Western Washington University; Dave Sterns of Oregon State University; Don Swanson of Willamette University; Kevin Twohy of Carroll College; Dennis Waller of Northwest College; and Bob Withycombe of Whitman College.

The preamble to that 1985 ethics code established guiding moral principles that the NFC still affirms in 2017.

“Recognizing the important role played by communication in society, the forensics community of the Pacific Northwest should strive to promote ethical rhetorical behavior. Members of the community should be guided by a moral vision which highlights educational benefits that are to be gained through forensics. This vision should reflect the community’s highest standards regarding what is good, proper and ideal.

Since all people in society are ultimately affected by the form and content of communication transactions, all members of the forensics community bear responsibility of maintaining a consistent and coherent ethical system. They should consider the moral consequences of their behavior and reflect upon why and how they communicate in a particular way. For forensic to promote educational goals, the vitality of human interaction and socially responsible actions, communication should be guided by a robust moral vision. Such a vision includes not only minimum standards of conduct, but also higher goals to which people should aspire. Our moral standards should be rigorous, exemplary and far sighted.”

Now 32 years later, the forensics educators of the NFC have joined together to build upon the vision of the founders of the NFC to reaffirm moral standards that are “rigorous, exemplary and far sighted.”

All NFC members – including institutions, educators and students - are both individually and collectively committed to ethical standards that foster a rich educational experience in an environment of inclusion, equity, justice, opportunity, and fairness.

Consistent with the intent and purpose of higher education, we in the forensics community seek to teach students the spirit, art and science of scholarship.

The conference has two missions, service and competition. The founders of the NFC saw both missions as co-equal and simultaneously developed a set of Designated Tournaments to promote exceptional competitive opportunities while simultaneously writing a “statement of ethics” to ensure that the competitors and coaches were guided by moral principles.

The benefits of competition are many, but there is always a corresponding need to build and establish the ethical foundations and boundaries within which the student competes and educators instruct.

We celebrate diverse pedagogical goals in our community even as we are united by a desire for student enrichment within a safe and inviting learning environment.

### **Purpose of the Code of Ethics:**

The educational landscape is changing as colleges and universities are called upon to address historical inequities within higher education. No longer can these inequities within the academy, as well as within our activity, be ignored.

The NFC should reinvigorate our tradition of leadership within the national forensics community and this document is an important milestone. As a product of significant and substantive discussions in our community from 2014-2016, this document codifies important aspirations and identifies steps our community will take to address attitudes and behaviors that serve as barriers to forensics participation. While this document codifies a baseline for expectations and action, we see it also serving as a springboard for ongoing discussions and initiatives building upon the principles outlined herein.

This document presents aspirational goals for the NFC related to issues of education, equity, tournaments, and adherence. This code is intended to be used in conjunction with “toolkits” that will provide resources to achieve these goals.

This document establishes expectations for all participants from NFC member schools during forensics activities. This document also establishes expectations for students and educators from other schools attending tournaments hosted by NFC member schools.

## **1. EQUITY**

### **What does equity mean?**

All students and educators should be able to fully benefit from their participation in forensics. The NFC recognizes not all participants enter the activity with the same access to forensics opportunities.

The NFC is committed to addressing these inequities and to creating a forensics community in which every student and educator has the opportunity to realize their full potential regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex, ability, age, institutional affiliation, religion, immigration status, socioeconomic status, language status, veteran status, political affiliation, forensics activity format or forensics experience.

### **What are our aspirations on equity?**

#### **Access to competitive experience- Empowerment**

We should respect participants with different talents, goals, and perspectives, and conduct ourselves in a manner that fosters respect for other individuals and encourages their participation. An activity such as forensics that is designed to empower individuals must take progressive steps to achieve equity and justice for all participants.

This can be achieved through activities including but not limited to: Recruiting individuals from a variety of backgrounds; ensuring diverse perspectives are represented among students, coaches, and judges; sponsoring mentorship programs; remaining committed to novice and JV debate; and engaging in community-building educational activities.

#### **Access to inclusive and safe environment- Accountability**

Competitive equity is important, but cannot be achieved if participants in our community do not feel safe or supported. In order for this to happen, an organization must raise awareness about equity and take steps to ensure equity for all its members – students, coaches, judges.

The NFC is committed to raising awareness and encouraging education on issues of inclusivity. Members schools, educators and students should hold each other accountable when individuals, programs or tournaments are not equitable or inclusive.

People are not often intentionally unethical, but ethical people must be willing to acknowledge the impact of their actions, even if unintended, and alter such behaviors.

Participants should recognize and reflect upon the ways privilege and power inform access and outcomes in the community.

NFC member teams should provide, and individuals should seek, training on equity. The NFC should provide resources to prevent actions that may make participants feel excluded or unsafe. All of us in the NFC should support those who feel excluded and unsafe by listening to their concerns and taking action to address those concerns.

When any one of us is not safe, none of us is safe.

To maintain a safe and inclusive environment, the NFC must hold individuals accountable for discrimination, harassment, violence, sexual violence or any other abusive behavior in order to maintain and strengthen an inclusive environment.

Fair play and collegiality:

The NFC believes that equity also involves fair play and collegiality which, at its simplest level, means winning humbly and losing graciously.

## **2. EDUCATION**

The NFC believes education is the cornerstone of forensics participation.

Faculty, coaches, judges, tournament staff, and students have both individual and shared roles to play in the forensics education process.

Competitive outcomes must always be secondary to learning and personal development.

Forensics education exists to promote the growth and transformation of students. Competition is only a means towards the end of educating students, not an end in itself.

**Educator obligations to learners:**

Coaches and judges are first and foremost, educators, and all interactions with students should reflect this role

Educators should recognize and respect the differences between students and provide equitable opportunities for all.

Educators should make certain that student spaces are free from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety.

Educators should not restrain or limit the independence of students in their performance choices in the pursuit of learning. While the influence of educators in helping students construct argument or performances is exceptionally valuable, coaches should encourage students to cultivate their own original ideas rather than to rely on ideas, strategies or materials produced by others.

Educators have a special obligation to ensure an environment conducive to learning. They should offer constructive evaluations of both good performances and poor performances with the goal of improving students' abilities.

Educators should refrain from disparaging comments or harsh criticism of students, while remaining transparent and honest in their evaluations of student performances.

Educators have responsibility for monitoring and promoting the academic good standing of their students related to classes in which the student is enrolled. Educators have a responsibility to ensure that forensics competition and practice does not imperil academic progress.

Educators should avoid participating in romantic or sexual relationships with students and should recognize and respect the power dynamics inherent within the activity.

**Educator obligations to the activity:**

The obligation of educators goes beyond their relationship with students, and extends to the activity at large. Educators should treat colleagues as fellow professionals and maintain civility when differences arise. They should also collaborate to promote the best interests of students.

Educators have an obligation to continue their ongoing professional development and growth. More experienced educators should help newer colleagues by sharing knowledge and information. Experienced educators should be willing to mentor new colleagues as they begin their careers in forensics education.

**Students obligation to education:**

Students should respect their fellow students' desires to learn, and engage in behaviors that are encouraging to others' intellectual abilities.

Students should mentor beginning students to help them learn the rules and expectations of the activity, along with collaborating and providing opportunities to learn together.

Students should commit themselves to academics and demonstrate this by ensuring that they stay in good standing within the guidelines of their institution. Forensics students should continue to make progress toward a degree.

### **3. TOURNAMENTS**

Forensics tournaments play a pivotal role in our activity. The NFC believes that having a positive tournament experience is a vital and constructive part of students' forensics education.

Tournaments are multi-faceted, taking a lot of time and effort to coordinate and host

Tournaments and participants alike must jointly assume responsibility for creating an environment conducive to wellness for everyone.

Tournaments must do their best to ensure the best possible experience for all those who attend: students, coaches, judges and observers.

#### **Guiding principles for tournament administration**

Tournament directors have a responsibility to provide participants with reasonable accommodation in response to requests related to equity and ability. Tournament directors should also identify tournament administrators who will be designated to handle equity issues and complaints. Tournament directors should share this information about how issues of equity will be handled with all participants so that they know who to contact, if need be.

Tournament directors have a responsibility to be transparent. Tournament invitations should specify and the manner in which topic selection and tabulation will be conducted, and to the greatest extent possible the tournament should not violate those expectations.

Tournament directors should recognize that different forensics events have disparate expectations and practices. Tournaments should be cognizant of these differences when preparing for the event, honoring the traditions and rules of each forensics culture as much as is possible.

Tournament directors should also provide training and materials to judges to ensure their competency.

#### **Guiding Principles for tournament wellness**

The health and wellness of participants at tournaments is of paramount importance.

Tournaments should be structured and conducted in order to maintain the health and well-being of all participants. Competitive environments can sometimes create incentives to overlook important wellness factors such as adequate food and sleep. Tournaments should develop a schedule that takes wellness into account including opportunities to eat

and time to rest. Tournaments should be aware of distances traveled and attempt, when feasible, to create schedules that accommodate such travel.

Tournament directors should take affirmative steps to help students and educators maintain health and wellness.

Tournaments should aim to provide safe and healthy socializing options outside competition. In an era of private prep rooms and private team meeting rooms, tournaments should seek to find ways to foster a sense of community among competing schools.

### **Alcohol and drugs:**

Ultimately, state laws and host school policies will govern alcohol and drug use during tournaments.

While acknowledging the right of schools to establish their own policies regarding drugs and alcohol, the NFC believes that the misuse of drugs or alcohol during a tournament weekend neither promotes wellness nor contributes to improving the tournament experience. The NFC also believes that excessive consumption of alcohol and drugs could harm individuals and could erode our commitment to equity.

The NFC believes in wellness, and we believe that, in the spirit of wellness, that the misuse of drugs and alcohol should be discouraged during tournaments

### **Guiding principles for ethical participation at tournaments**

Participants should uphold standards of integrity and honesty, in and out of debate rounds while at tournaments.

Judges are responsible for making fair decisions based on argumentative or performative content presented by students. As educators, judges have a special obligation to interact with competitors in a respectful manner at all times, and deliver feedback in a way that fosters inclusion and participation in the activity.

The primary role of a judge is to serve as an educator while recognizing their position of power and encouraging the continued participation of students. Additionally, the judge should serve as a role model of respectful communication and work to ensure that all participants treat each other with respect and dignity.

Students should know and follow the guidelines of the event they are participating in regarding intellectual integrity and honesty. Students are not discouraged from disagreement, but are called upon to show respect and understanding of intellectual differences. Students should respect the efforts of coaches and judges to evaluate and provide feedback, even if the student does not agree with the judge decision.

Students should address their concerns about the actions of coaches, judges, or other competitors, in ways provided by the tournament. Students should share such concerns in such a way that protects themselves while initiating a process to resolve their concerns.

#### 4. ADHERENCE

The NFC is committed to achieving the goals outlined in this document by encouraging both social and institutional accountability amongst NFC participants that prioritizes support for those marginalized in forensics.

The 1985 NFC Statement of Ethics described important ethical aspirations for the community but explicitly declined to create formal enforcement provisions.

While the purpose of the code of ethics is not to prescribe specific enforcement, we believe the NFC should adopt appropriate measures to ensure that students, coaches and judges are guaranteed a safe, healthy and ethical tournament environment.

The NFC is fully committed to helping participants achieve greater awareness of the consequences of their actions, and encouraging them to make ethical choices while participating in forensics

The NFC is committed to developing a set of “best practices” assembled in an “ethics toolkit” that outlines ways in which ethical behaviors can be encouraged. This toolkit will be an ongoing “living” document filled with diverse suggestions on ways in which schools, coaches, students and administrators might encourage ethical behaviors in all forensics-related activities.

This code of ethics will not prescribe the ways in which the NFC community might promote ethical behavior, nor will the code suggest possible punishments for violations. Such policies must be part of the NFC bylaws, not part of the ethics code itself.

The NFC endorses the following principles for ethical behavior by all people connected to forensics in the Northwest:

1. We believe students should read and discuss this code of ethics.
2. We believe the NFC should develop resources and training to promote ethics in forensics.
3. Finally, we believe all coaches and administrators should reaffirm that the Northwest Forensics Conference’s most fundamental mission is an ethical one, as stated in the preamble to this code:

“All NFC members – including institutions, educators and students - are both individually and collectively committed to ethical standards that foster a rich educational experience in an environment of inclusion, equity, justice, opportunity, and fairness.”

The NFC is built upon this ethical foundation.

**END of 2017 Code of Ethics**



## **Appendix C**

**NFC**

# **Statement of Ethics**

**Adopted by the NFC, August 19, 1985 at the University  
of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA**

Larry Richardson  
Western Wash. Univ.

Dave Stearns  
Oregon State Univ.

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### Legislative History

This document was accepted as a statement of ethics for the Northwest Forensic Conference at the August 19, 1985 meeting of Pacific Northwest Directors of Forensics. This statement should serve as a foundation for further discussion and dialogue. The conferees often spoke of the statement as an establishment of ethical and behavioral aspirations rather than of broad laws or rules. While enforcement was a topic of discussion, most of the educators present expressed a desire for informal as opposed to formal resolution of ethical questions. As such, no judicial body was established to deal with such conflict.

Much discussion focused on transfer policies. Some argued that there should be no restrictions on transfer, others argued in favor of a blanket restriction, finally others attempted to forge a middle ground. The transfer issue was sent back to the primary author and will be on the agenda at future NFC meetings.

## Statement of Ethics for the Northwest Forensics Conference

### (1) PREAMBLE

Recognizing the important role played by communication in society, the forensics community of the Pacific Northwest should strive to promote ethical behavioral behavior. Members of the community should be guided by a moral vision which highlights educational benefits that are to be gained through forensics. This vision should reflect the community's highest standards regarding what is good, proper and ideal.

Since all people in society are ultimately affected by the form and content of communication transactions, all members of the forensics community bear responsibility of maintaining a consistent and coherent ethical system. They should consider the moral consequences of their behavior and reflect upon why and how they communicate in a particular way. For forensics to promote educational goals, the vitality of human interaction, and socially responsible actions, communication should be guided by a robust moral vision. Such a vision includes not only minimum standards of conduct, but also higher goals to which people should aspire. Our moral standards should be rigorous, exemplary and far sighted.

The Northwest Forensics Conference was formed to promote and foster excellence in forensics education. Participants in the four conference tournaments have committed themselves to a series of behavioral objectives consistent with the intent of intercollegiate forensics. Such objectives include the improvement of the speaking, research, and thinking skills of the college student. Consistent with these objectives is the creation of a competitive environment designed to reinforce those behavioral objectives. The benefits of competition are many, but there does appear to be a need to build and establish the ethical foundations and boundaries within which the student competes and educator instructs.

### (2) TOWARD A DEFINITION OF THE FORENSICS ACTIVITY

This document does take an ethical position. However, the document does not intend to provide for a set of moral laws. Rather, an attempt is made here to establish some moral principles which would help to guide rather than bind the behavior of educators and students. Above all, the goal is to promote and provide moral reflection, interaction and participation. With the eventual establishment of shared ethical guidelines, new members of the community can be educated and socialized, participants' ethical choices can be supported, unethical behavior can be discouraged, and the ethical system itself can be further accessed and refined. Ultimately, by taking an ethical position, the community contributes to its own health; respect from those outside the community is enhanced; the activity itself is perpetuated; and, with a better vision of what is good and right for forensics, we are in a stronger position to improve forensics forensics.

Particular spheres of human activity give rise to specific and often unique ethical and moral questions. Therefore, an ethic of forensics should account for the essential nature of forensics itself. The central purpose of forensics is that it serve educational ends. This purpose is clear in the philosophy expressed at the Sodala conference (1974), the Evanston Conference (1984) and is required to justify the continued support for the activity by academic institutions. Consistent with the definition of forensics adopted at the Evanston conference, we believe forensics should be considered a form of rhetorical scholarship. The metaphor of rhetorical scholarship is carefully selected. Forensics activities are supported by speech departments, which are in turn, established within institutions of higher learning.

Consistent with the intent and purpose of higher education, we in the forensics community seek to teach students the spirit, art and science of scholarship. Student scholars, involved in the forensics activity, are taught to carefully collect and rigorously interpret data and to present and defend arguments in rhetorical situations. Rhetorical scholarship takes various forms, including debate, public address and the interpretation of literature. In the forensics activity, the student learns by engaging in a consensuative, interactive process of influence aimed at critical decision making. Whether the rhetorical objective be primarily beauty, truth, or both, forensics operates through the full, intellectual and scholarly exchange of ideas. Since critical perspectives should flow from the intent and purpose of a given human activity, we agree that the sphere of educational activity labeled forensics should be guided by the morality of the community of scholars.

### (3) ON MAKING MORAL JUDGMENTS

When making moral judgments, participants should be judicious and cautious. We should respect participants with different talents, goals, perspectives, and conduct ourselves in a manner which fosters respect for those other individuals and encourages their participation. We should refrain from posturing and prejudicial condemnation of practices as "unethical." Recognizing that individual motivation, circumstance and consequence are relevant to determinations of right and wrong, we should conscientiously consider such factors when making ethical judgments. We should respect diversity and innovation in ideas and strategies, and promote the sound critical testing of these new approaches to forensics. We should be willing to question the extant norms as we are to cast blame upon individuals. Finally, we should presume that people are innocent of intentionally committing unethical behavior and assume that many acts of ethically questionable behavior are not gratuitous but are rooted in ignorance of the scholarly method. Further, we believe that students and educators, in the heat of competition, make mistakes which they, upon reflection, may come to regret. We should be willing to forgive and to recognize that our ethical views should not be discredited in spirit nor ruthlessly imposed.

#### (4) ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATORS

The forensics educator has the responsibility for maximizing the opportunity for ethical development and behavior among all participants. Because the educator assumes a variety of roles, including those of coach, judge and tournament administrator, it is important to consider separately the ethical responsibilities that each of these roles imply.

#### (5) EDUCATORS AS COACH

Because most students can benefit from forensics experience at some level, and because students at whatever level, require and deserve, whenever possible, the educator's attention and efforts, educators should strive to treat all students fairly. The educator as a coach should strive to promote equality of opportunity for appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

#### (5A) Argument Invention

Because forensics is primarily an educational activity, educators in their capacities as coaches should emphasize learning before competitive success, and teach this view to their students. The main goal of forensics education is to teach the student the art and science of rhetorical scholarship so that the student can, ultimately, independently utilize the tools of rhetorical scholarship. Because students differ in talent, experience, motivation, and purpose, pedagogical methods should be adapted to student needs and situations. At the same time, coaching efforts should supplement not substitute for student efforts. Obviously, the novice speaker might need, in some situations, for the forensics educator to perform a great deal of the invention in order for the student to learn about argument creation and construction. For example, the educator might produce as an example for the novice speaker, a model brief or speech. The advanced student should need comparatively less assistance. Ideally, the primary act of argument invention should be performed by the student. If students are to emerge as independent scholars, then certain actions appear to be either unprofessional, unethical or both. First, forensics educators should not intervene during the course of a round to assist their student competitors. Second, forensics educators (including graduate assistants and staff) should not systematically research and create briefs, speeches, literary programs or serve as primary creator of argument for their students.

#### (5B) Student Transfer

In recruiting students, the educator should be cautious, open and forthright. Recognizing that students are free to attend the school of their choice and are free to transfer, educators nevertheless should not recruit students under such conditions that the learning experiences of existing students would be compromised, and should be

honest in evaluating the relative strengths and weaknesses of the programs and institutions in question.

#### (6) Educator as Critic

Judges and critics are an integral part of the educational process in forensics; they are contributing participants in a process which seeks the full and free testing of ideas. Judges reinforce student behavior with their critiques. As such, judges balance two considerations in their attempt to promote healthy conversation behavior. First, they should attempt through ballots, critiques and other formal and informal avenues to guide student behavior in socially responsible ways. By nature, all judging is interventionary to some degree; hence, all judges are ethically obligated to balance these needs and to apply their expertise as judges in good faith. The following guidelines are intended to assist judges in their determinations.

#### (7) JUDGE AS A CRITIC OF RHETORICAL SCHOLARSHIP

##### (7A) Position of a Critic

Judges should act to promote and protect the process of intellectual exchange. Student creativity in the selection and construction of discourse is to be affirmed for the purpose of promoting scholarship and the sound testing of ideas. Intervention by judges on the basis of prejudice or rhetorical scholarship should attempt to adopt what John Rawls calls the "Original Position." Simply put, the critic is ethically bound to judge arguments and base decisions on the rhetorical attempts presented in the judgment and should not allow political interest to impinge upon the decision making process. The moral health of the activity depends on the scholarly and academic integrity of the critic.

##### (7B) Ballots

Judges should strive at all times to render impartial decisions and to fully disclose their reasons for decision according to commonly accepted professional practices. Critics of rhetorical scholarship have an obligation to give substantive good reasons for their decisions. Ballots without such reasons and ballots which do not provide guidance for the student do not serve the purpose of the activity. Judges have professional and moral obligation to recognize the student competitors are young, and at times, either inexperienced or misguided. Critics should attempt to positively reinforce strong rhetorical efforts and exemplary moral behavior. That behavior which is judged to be less than desirable should be firmly, but honestly discouraged.

##### (7C) Evidence Considerations

Recognizing the central importance of the veracity and quality of evidence and forensic proof in the forensics activity, we believe student intent to be irrelevant to the evaluation of certain violations of evidence standards; judges should discuss the

probative force of material not conforming to the standards accepted by the community of scholars. That these standards should be part of the "original position" held by the judge is consistent with the academic traditions and institutions we represent. As a critic of rhetorical scholarship, the educator faces a most difficult task when faced with challenges of evidence distortion. In determining whether evidence has been distorted, the critic should ask if the evidence deviates from the quality, quantity, probability or degree of force of the author's position on the point in question. If such evidence is judged to be significantly or seriously distorted, the student should be awarded the lowest score possible and/or in a debate, a loss. The student's forensics director should be immediately contacted as well as the tournament director.

#### (7D) Relational Communication Standards

The critic also has a responsibility to deter and punish dehumanizing communication behavior. As a host of communication scholars have noted, the relationship dimension of communication is of crucial importance. People should not be treated as means to ends but as ends in and of themselves. A judge has a right and may have an ethical obligation to cast a ballot against individuals or debate teams because they may have, through their words or actions, dehumanized their opponents, their critics or other forensics programs.

#### (8) EDUCATOR AS ADMINISTRATOR

In administering tournaments, educators should strive to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to excel. Educators should be particularly cognizant of the issues involved in scheduling and judge assignment and should seek to promote fair and high quality experiences for all contestants. While school judging pools are desirable, students, regardless of their rank or ability, have the right to be heard by both expert and lay audiences. The tournament director should strive to ensure that such exposure is proportionately equitable.

#### (9) EDUCATOR AS ETHICAL EXEMPLAR

The forensics educator assumes additional ethical responsibilities regardless of specific role. In all capacities, educators function as role models to other educators, to graduate or other assistant educators, and to students; they therefore, should aspire to the highest ethical and scholarly obligation to respect the dignity and civil rights of students and they should not overburden students so that non-forensics educational aims and activities are seriously jeopardized. Educators also should inform participants about the ethical choices inherent in forensics competition and the nature and desirability of ethical conduct. They should assist students to develop the capacity for critical self-observation of motives and actions, to explore alternative ethical decisions and to make wise choices. In order to emphasize this importance of ethical conduct, positive reinforcements for proper and outstanding moral behavior should be devised. The Coaches Commemorative Award in Forensics given to outstanding four year competitors and the Senior Mentor Award given at the NIET

regional are two examples of such positive reinforcement. Appropriate sanctions for unethical behavior should also be applied where needed. Additionally, educators should examine ways in which tournament rules and formats foster or hinder ethical ideals. In short, the forensics educator should foster ethical attitudes and behavior through words and actions.

#### (10) ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS FOR THE STUDENT

Forensics students should consider the ethical obligations they have for promoting and protecting the moral health of the forensics activity. The student, as the forensics educator, assumes several roles in the forensics activity. Each requires ethical and moral reflection and thoughtful behavior.

#### (11) STUDENT AS COMPETITOR

Students participating in forensics are obligated to adhere to high ethical standards. Here we are concerned with the ethical choices students make for themselves. An ethical commitment by students is essential because the value of forensics is directly dependent upon the integrity of those involved. For that reason, it is the duty of each student to participate honestly, fairly, and in such a way as to avoid communication behavior which are deceptive, misleading or dishonest. Students should strive to place forensics competitions in a proper perspective as ethical decisions are pondered. The goal of winning should be evaluated within a framework which considers strategic choices in light of the educational value of such scholarly work.

Furthermore, student participants should remember forensics is an oral, interactive process. Students should seek to effective expression of ideas. The interactive dimension of forensics suggests that behaviors which belittle, degrade, demean, or otherwise demean others are not in the best interest of forensics.

(As of June 30, 1988) Students should be at least half time undergraduate students at the competing institution during the period and should not be on academic probation. No student may compete in more than eight five month periods (August 1- December 31, or January 1 to May 1). In any given period, any college forensics competition in which a student competes shall be counted toward the 8 periods.

#### (12) THE STUDENT AS RHETORICAL SCHOLAR

Forensics has been defined as a form of rhetorical scholarship. As such, students should compete with respect for the principles and objectives of reasoned discourse and should see themselves as members of the community of scholars. The community of scholars adheres to a set of principles which regulate scholarly discourse. These principles should guide the student in the presentation of evidence, the interpretation as in the invention of argument.



### (13) ETHICS AND EVIDENCE

Evidence plays an important role in forensic activity. Arguments can be no stronger than the evidence that supports them. If the evidence is misinterpreted, distorted, or fabricated, the integrity of the scholarly process is destroyed. In order to understand such implications, the advocate should be familiar with the role of evidence in critical decision making as well as with the methods of scholarship used in discovering and recording evidence. The contents of, and the situations for, evidence used by advocates should be open to inspection by opponents, audience members and members of the general public. Advocates should only use evidence which is in the public domain and, hence, open to critical evaluation by others. Private letters, all unpublished materials and documents not available through reasonable scholarly efforts should not be used.

Advocates should clearly identify, during their speeches, the source of all the evidence they use. Such identification should include information relevant to the credibility of the author and the source and date of the publication. Omitting the source of evidence denies the audience the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the information. Since the strength of the evidence depends on the qualifications of the individual being quoted, this information is critical to any evaluator of argument. Scholars are responsible for the integrity of all evidence they utilize even when the evidence is not researched by the individual advocate. An advocate should not introduce evidence that is distorted or fabricated. In determining whether evidence has been distorted, the advocate should ask if the evidence deviates from the quality, quantity, probability, or degree of force of the author's position on the point in question. Any such deviation should be avoided, because such alteration can give undue rhetorical force to an advocate's argument.

The arguments and evidence presented by the student should be, in large part, the original work of the student presenting it. This means that the student neither employs speeches written by others nor uses the ideas of authors without giving credit to the original source. The false assumption of authorship and the act of taking someone's ideas or work and presenting them as one's own is plagiarism; perhaps the most serious sin in scholarship. Student interpreters should maintain respect for the integrity of the literature. Because a piece of literature represents the personal expression of an author, students should not rewrite portions of an author's work and represent those alterations as if they were the product of the author.

### (14) EVIDENCE CHALLENGES

Evidence challenges should not be made lightly. If an advocate challenges the authenticity of an opponent's evidence and is found to be in the wrong, that advocate should suffer the same consequences suffered by the opponent if the challenge is found to be true. Since most problems with evidence can be traced to ignorance of the scholarly method, the student who chooses to challenge the integrity of an opponent's evidence should initially assume that the problem may be traceable to reasonably different interpretations or to sloppy recording habits. Assumption of

such an attitude does not excuse unethical procedures. Such an attitude does encourage the student challenger to give the opponent a presumption of innocence. A careful and judicious distinction should be made between by the student between clearly apparent acts of evidence fabrication/distortion and differences in interpretations of the same piece of evidence. Such differences are to be expected in the course of scholarly instruction. To suggest that an advocate has willfully distorted or fabricated evidence is to advance the most serious of charges against a scholar.

#### (15) STUDENT AS ETHICAL EXEMPLAR

Students competing in forensics contests share a unique opportunity to learn and to experience personal growth. The goals of forensics are best served when student participants recognize their responsibilities to preserve and promote opportunities for such a forensics education. Students should remember that forensics contests are often subject to scrutiny by parents, by other college students, by administrators and by high school students. Thus, students should carefully consider the values inherent in the claims they advance and the behaviors they display. Students should not descend other programs, contestants, fellow program members and forensics education. Communication which engenders ill will and disrespect for forensics ultimately reduces the utility of forensics for all who participate and may serve to doom the future of the activity.

#### (16) POSTLUDE: A SHARED VISION

As indicated at the outset, this document is intended to outline an ethic for the Northwest Forensics Conference and the Designated Tournaments. While it explicitly identifies certain direct participants in the activity, there are other, less centrally involved but nonetheless vitally important members of the community upon whom ethical responsibilities fall. Because forensics is an invaluable educational experience that can benefit all students, academic institutions may be ethically obligated to offer this experience and to commit resources and staff which will ensure its availability and quality. Similarly, alumni of forensics programs, having benefited themselves from this experience, may be ethically obligated to work for the continued availability of the experience for others. The future of forensics is dependent on a shared moral vision of all members of the community.

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