

BQCFL By-Laws

(as amended on 9/1/17)

Article I. Fees

A. Annual Membership Dues

Member schools shall pay annual membership dues according to the following schedule: first-year members - \$25, second-year members - \$50, and third-year (or longer) members - \$75. These dues may be waived at the discretion of the President.

B. Tournament Entry Fees

There will be a \$10 registration fee per school and a \$7 entry fee per student for BQCFL members, and a \$10 registration fee per school and a \$__ entry fee per student for non-BQCFL members.

Article II. Tournament Specifications and Registration

A. Events and Levels of Competition

The BQCFL will offer competition from among the following events: policy debate (varsity, intermediate and novice levels), Lincoln-Douglas debate (varsity, intermediate and novice levels), public forum debate (varsity, intermediate and novice levels) declamation, dramatic performance, duo interpretation, extemporaneous speaking (varsity and junior varsity levels), original oratory, oral interpretation of literature (varsity and junior varsity levels), program oral interpretation and student congress.

B. Definitions and Rules

The BQCFL shall observe the definitions of the New York State Forensic League (NYSFL) regarding levels of competition ("varsity" and "junior varsity" in speech, and "varsity", "intermediate" and "novice" in debate), and shall enforce the rules and regulations of the National Catholic Forensic League governing all events, unless otherwise specified

C. Tournament Schedule

The Executive Council shall prepare a tentative tournament schedule for each upcoming season for presentation to the BQCFL moderators at the spring moderators' meeting. This schedule should offer at least 5 opportunities to compete for students in all categories on all levels, and may include "specialty" tournaments, i.e. non-varsity only, abbreviated (preliminary rounds only), open (invitations to non-BQCFL members), interleague, and "Grand". The schedule must be approved by the BQCFL moderators.

D. Notification and Registration

1. BQCFL member schools will be notified of upcoming tournaments approximately two weeks in advance via mail, e-mail, fax or website posting.

2. Moderators must register on www.tabroom.com with final registration numbers and names of judges by the designated deadline (usually 8:00 PM of the Wednesday preceding the tournament). Failure to meet this deadline may prevent the school from competing in the tournament.

E. Limitations on Registration

There will be no limit to the number of students who may be registered by their schools, except in cases where space limitations require it. Under such circumstances, the President will determine what limitations will be necessary and notify all affected schools.

F. Substitutions, Lateness and Forfeiture

1. Within a tournament, no substitutions may be made in paired events (policy debate, public forum debate, duo interpretation). If one member drops, the pair drops.

2. A contestant who is not present at the scheduled starting time of a round will be given 10 minutes of grace to report. After that time has elapsed, the contestant will forfeit the round. The President may overrule this in cases of extenuating circumstances.

3. Forfeiture of any round will disqualify a contestant from advancement and/or receipt of awards.

G. Judges

1. Judges at BQCFL tournaments must be high school graduates who have been properly trained by their school's moderators, and who have observed an entire BQCFL tournament under the tutelage of an experienced judge before they will be permitted to judge. This observation requirement may be waived by the President for high school graduates with sufficient previous experience in forensics.

2. High school seniors who are experienced competitors in forensics may be permitted to judge at designated tournaments only in the area in which they have competed (speech, L-D debate, policy debate, public forum debate or student congress). They may judge only the following events: JV extemp, JV oral interpretation, declamation, novice L-D debate, novice public forum debate and novice policy debate.

3. Unless otherwise specified, the quotas for judging at BQCFL tournaments shall be as follows:

- a. 1 judge for every 5 entries (or fraction thereof) in speech and student congress (this is a combined judging pool)
- b. 1 judge for every 3 entries (or fraction thereof) in Lincoln-Douglas debate and public forum debate
- c. 1 judge for every 2 entries (or fraction thereof) in policy debate

4. Each school is required to provide the number of judges it originally registered for a tournament, regardless of the number of subsequent student drops. Failure to meet this judging quota will result in a fine of \$25 per dropped judge. Schools will not be permitted to register their students for future tournaments until this fine is paid.

Article III. Speech Tournament Management and Tabulation

A. Appropriateness of Material

No student may use an oration, reading or cutting that he/she used in a previous high school forensic season. However, an entirely different cutting (with no overlapping lines) from the same play, poem or prose selection may be used.

B. Levels of Competition

There shall be no mixing of varsity and JV speakers in speech events that are offered on these two levels.

C. Time Limitations

There are no minimum time lengths in any speech event. All speech events employ a maximum time length of 10 minutes, except extemp speaking, which has a maximum time length of 7 minutes. Students shall be granted a 30-second grace period over the time limit. If a student is between 30 seconds and 1 minute overtime, he/she may not be ranked first in the round. If a student runs more than 1 minute overtime, he/she must be ranked last in the round.

D. Format and Tabulations

1. BQCFL speech tournaments shall consist of 3 preliminary rounds, in which all speakers shall participate, and shall receive both a rank and a percentage score in each round.
2. In events with at least 16 competitors, the top 8 speakers shall advance to a final round. If there are fewer than 16 competitors, the top half shall advance to the final round. In events where there is an odd number of competitors fewer than 16, the final student shall be advanced if his total number of preliminary round ranks is closer to the student ahead of him than to the student behind him, or equidistant between the two.
3. Students shall advance to the final round based on the following tabulation criteria from the preliminary rounds:
 - a. the first determinant shall be the lowest total number of ranks.
 - b. the second determinant shall be the highest number of ranks of "1", then "2", then "3", etc.
 - c. the third determinant shall be the highest total of percentage points.
 - d. if students have identical scores after all 3 determinants have been employed, then all tied students shall advance to the final round.
4. There shall be 3 judges to judge each final round. The total ranks of final round judges shall determine each speaker's placement in the final round. Ties for final round placement shall be broken on the basis of judges' preference in the final round (when 2 speakers are tied) or reciprocals (when 3 or more speakers are tied).
5. Speaker placement for the day shall be determined by adding each speaker's 3 preliminary round ranks to his/her 3 final round ranks. Ties shall be broken on the basis of speaker placement in the final round. In the event that speakers who are tied for placement for the day also have an unbreakable tie in final round placement, then the tie should be broken on the basis of total percentage points in preliminary rounds.
6. Speech tournament tabulation shall be conducted by the members of the Executive Council assigned to this task by the President. The President may invite additional personnel to assist in tabulations, if he/she feels this will be expedient. If additional tabulation personnel are used, invitations should first be extended (if possible) to moderators of BQCFL member schools.

7. If necessary, the Executive Council shall have the authority to make alterations in speech tournament formats and/or tabulations. When the Executive Council is unable to arrive at a consensus in determining the necessary alterations, the President is empowered to decide unilaterally.

Article IV. Lincoln-Douglas Debate and Public Forum Tournament Management and Tabulation

A. Selection of Resolution

.At tournaments offering Lincoln-Douglas debate and public forum debate ,the current resolutions developed by the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) shall be used, unless a consensus of debate moderators petition for a substitute resolution.

B. Levels of Competition

There shall be no mixing of varsity, intermediate and novice debaters in preliminary or elimination rounds.

C. Pairings, Constraints, Sides and Byes

1. Preliminary round pairings (where possible) should observe constraints on schools and previous contact, i.e. debaters should not compete against students from their own schools, nor should they compete against any one student more than once in preliminary rounds.

2. Preliminary round pairings must provide each debater with at least 1 affirmative and 1 negative round. If possible, debaters should be able to flip for sides in the third preliminary round.

3. When there is an odd number of debaters, in each preliminary round 1 unpaired debater may be given a “bye” victory. If possible, the recipient of each bye victory should be selected randomly, but should come from a different competing school each round. The speaker points awarded in a bye victory should be the average of the speaker points earned by the debater in his other 2 preliminary rounds of competition.

D. Format and Tabulations

1. Novice and Intermediate Levels

- a. The standard format shall be 3 randomly pre-set double-flighted preliminary rounds.
- b. All debaters with winning records will receive awards.

2. Varsity Level

- a. The standard format shall be 3 randomly pre-set single-flighted preliminary rounds, followed by elimination rounds according to the following schedule:
 - 1) If there are 7 or fewer debaters, the top 2 debaters will advance to a final round of competition
 - 2) If there are between 8 and 14 debaters, the top 4 debaters will advance to a semi-final round with the 2 semi-finalist winners advancing to a final round.
 - 3) If there are 15 or more debaters, the top 8 debaters will advance to a quarter-final round of competition, with the 4 quarter-finalist winners advancing to a semi-final round, and the 2 semi-finalist winners advancing to a final round.
- b. Debaters who advance to elimination rounds will be paired on the basis of “seeding” status. In other words, the debater who completes the preliminary rounds with the best overall record is seeded “1” ,

the debater with the second-best overall record is seeded “2”, etc. In quarter-finals, the pairings shall be 1 vs 8, 2 vs 7, 3 vs 6, and 4 vs 5. In semi-finals, the winner of 1 vs 8 debates against the winner of 4 vs 5, and the winner of 2 vs 7 debates against the winner of 3 vs 6. The semi-finals winners advance to the finals. If the semi-final round is the first elimination round, then the first seed debates against the fourth seed, and the second seed debates against the third seed. The two winners advance to the finals.

c. Where possible, panels of 3 judges shall be used to judge all debates in elimination rounds.

3. Advancement and Awards

- a. All debaters shall earn awards and/or advance to elimination rounds based on the following tabulation criteria from the preliminary rounds:
- 1) The first determinant shall be the highest number of victories
 - 2) The second determinant shall be the highest total of speaker points
 - 3) The third determinant shall be the result of head-to-head competition
 - 4) The fourth determinant shall be highest number of victories of defeated opponents
- b. All debaters with winning records shall receive awards.

Article V. Policy Debate Tournament Management and Tabulation

A. Selection of Resolution

The annual policy debate resolution shall be the resolution selected for use by the National Speech and Debate Association.

B. Levels of Competition

There shall be no mixing of varsity, intermediate and novice debaters in rounds of competition. However, insufficient registration may require the collapse of a level or levels, as is necessary. This decision will be made by the President, in consultation with the Vice President for Debate.

C. Pairings, Constraints, Sides and Byes

1. Preliminary round pairings (where possible) should observe constraints on schools and previous contact, i.e. debate teams should not compete against teams from their own schools, nor should they compete against the same team more than once in preliminary rounds.
2. Preliminary round pairings must provide each debate team with at least 1 affirmative and 1 negative round. If possible, debate teams should be able to flip for sides in the third preliminary round. The coin flip will be conducted by the judge, with the winners of the flip choosing the side they wish to defend.
3. When there is an odd number of debate teams, in each preliminary round 1 unpaired team may be given a “bye” victory. If possible, the recipient of each bye victory should be selected randomly, but should come from a different competing school each round. The speaker points awarded in a bye victory should be the average of the speaker points earned by the debate team in their other 2 preliminary rounds of competition.
4. Teams given “bye” victories are permitted to observe other competitors during their bye off-rounds.

D. Format, Disclosure, Tabulation and Awards

1. The standard format for all levels shall be 3 randomly pre-set single-flighted preliminary rounds.
2. Teams may opt to disclose their cases and/or arguments to their opponents prior to a round of competition, at their own discretion.
3. All teams with winning records will receive awards.
4. All debate teams shall earn awards based on the following tabulation criteria:
 - a) the first determinant shall be the highest number of victories
 - b) the second determinant shall be the highest total of team speaker points
 - c) the third determinant shall be the lowest total of team speaker ranks
 - d) the fourth determinant shall be the result of head-to-head competition
 - e) the fifth determinant shall be the highest number of victories of defeated opponents

Article VI. Student Congress Tournament Management and Tabulation

A. Submission of Legislation

1. By the deadline determined by the Vice President for Student Congress, each school must submit the legislation it wishes to place on the agenda. Submission must be made directly to the BQCFL website, unless otherwise specified. Generally, schools are required to submit legislation at least one week prior to the date of the Congress.
2. Each school may submit a maximum of 4 pieces of legislation for each Student Congress: 1 for use in SuperSession, and 3 for use in preliminary sessions. Of the 3 preliminary session pieces of legislation, 1 must be designated as "priority" legislation, to be given preference in placement on the agenda. If a school does not label its legislation as either "priority" or "for SuperSession", the Vice President for Student Congress may place it wherever he/she deems appropriate.
3. Schools are not required to submit legislation in order to compete in Student Congress, but are encouraged to do so.
4. All legislation (i.e. bills, resolutions and amendments) must conform to the format approved by the National Catholic Forensic League. The Vice President for Student Congress is empowered to reject all legislation from placement on the agenda that does not so conform.

B. Format and Tabulation

1. Prior to the Student Congress, the Executive Council shall determine the number of chambers to be used, based on the total number of students registered. Where possible, chambers will include no more than 25 students. Where possible, the Executive Council will also assign a Parliamentarian to organize and supervise each chamber.
2. A panel of at least 3 judges shall be assigned to each chamber, with each judge given a comparably sized list of students to judge. No judge shall be assigned to judge a student from his/her own school.

3. BQCFL Student Congresses shall consist of 2 preliminary sessions, in which all students shall participate, and shall receive a rank from at least 2 judges assigned to each session. Each student shall have a total of at least 4 ranks upon completion of the 2 preliminary sessions.
4. At Congresses with at least 24 students, the top 12 shall advance to a final round SuperSession. If there are fewer than 24 students, the top half shall advance to the SuperSession. If there is an odd number of students fewer than 24, the Executive Council shall determine how many will advance (see III.D.2 above).
5. Where possible, an equal number of students from each chamber shall advance to the SuperSession:
 - a. if there is 1 chamber, the top 12 shall advance to the SuperSession
 - b. if there are 2 chambers, the top 6 in each shall advance to the SuperSession
 - c. if there are 3 chambers, the top 4 in each shall advance to the SuperSession.
6. The Executive Council is empowered to increase the number of advancing students if it seems appropriate to do so, and will modify the number of students who advance from each chamber when the number is other than 12.
7. Students shall advance to the SuperSession based on the following tabulation criteria from the preliminary sessions:
 - a. the first determinant shall be the lowest total number of ranks.
 - b. the second determinant shall be the highest number of ranks of "1", then "2", then "3", etc. .
 - c. if students have identical scores after both determinants have been employed, then all tied students shall advance to the final round.
8. There shall be 3 judges to judge each SuperSession, with each judge judging all students. The total ranks of SuperSession judges shall determine each student's placement in the SuperSession. Ties for SuperSession placement shall be broken on the basis of judges' preference (when 2 speakers are tied) or reciprocals (when 3 or more students are tied).
9. Speaker placement for the day shall be determined by adding each speaker's 4 preliminary round ranks to his/her 3 Final round ranks. Ties shall be broken on the basis of speaker placement in the final round.
10. Student Congress tournament tabulation shall be conducted by the members of the Executive Council assigned to this task by the President. The President may invite additional personnel to assist in tabulations, if he feels this will be expedient. If additional tabulation personnel are used, invitations should first be extended (if possible) to moderators of BQCFL member schools.
11. If necessary, the Executive Council shall have the authority to make alterations in Student Congress formats and/or tabulations. When the Executive Council is unable to arrive at a consensus in determining the necessary alterations, the President is empowered to decide unilaterally.
12. The administration of each Student Congress chamber shall conform to the rules and regulations employed by the National Catholic Forensic League to the greatest extent possible.

Article VII. Sweepstakes Awards

A. Individual Tournament Team Sweepstakes Awards

At BQCFL tournaments, team sweepstakes awards will be presented in speech, Student Congress and debate.

1. Speech Sweepstakes

- a. Sweepstakes will be determined by the top 2 speakers from a school in each category, including both varsity and JV levels.
- b. Individual speaker points will be calculated as follows: each rank of 1 will earn 5 points, each rank of 2 will earn 4 points, each rank of 3 will earn 3 points, each rank of 4 will earn 2 points, and each rank of 5-8 will earn 1 point. Speakers will earn points in final rounds (where there are 3 judges) based on the combined re-ranking of the panel of judges to arrive at one composite rank score.
- c. Ties in team sweepstakes points will be broken by totaling the number of ranks of 1 earned by the eligible speakers from each of the tied schools. If both schools are tied here, then total the number of ranks of 2, etc.
- d. Team awards shall be presented to the top 5 schools.

2. Student Congress Sweepstakes

- a. Sweepstakes will be determined by the top 4 students from each school, according to the following point scale:
 - 1) Non-Finalists ranked by: 4 judges shall earn 8 points, 3 judges shall earn 7 points, 2 judges shall earn 6 points, 1 judge shall earn 5 points and 0 judges shall earn 3 points.
 - 2) Finalists shall earn points based on their placement in the SuperSession according to the following point scale: 1st place = 20 points, 2nd = 19, 3rd = 18, 4th = 17, 5th = 16, 6th = 15, 7th = 14, 8th = 13, 9th = 12, 10th-12th = 10.
- b. Ties in team ranks will be broken by totaling the number of ranks of 1 earned by the eligible students from each school (see A.1.c. above)
- c. Team awards shall be presented to the top 5 schools.

3. Debate Sweepstakes

- a. Sweepstakes will be determined by the top 2 entries from each school on the varsity, intermediate and novice levels of each type of debate on the basis of total wins, then ballots, then speaker points. Debate victories shall earn 6 points and losses will earn 2 points.
- b. Team awards shall be presented to the top 5 schools.

4. Overall Sweepstakes

- a. Sweepstakes will be determined by adding each school's sweepstakes points in speech, Student Congress and debate.
- b. This award shall be presented only to the school with the highest sweepstakes points. In the event of a tie, multiple awards shall be presented.

5. Exceptions

- a. Team sweepstakes awards will be presented only at tournaments offering varsity levels of competition and finals rounds.
- b. At the Grand Tournament, the scores of all competitors will be counted toward team sweepstakes awards.
- c. The Executive Council is empowered to modify the number of schools receiving team sweepstakes awards at each tournament, if it deems this to be appropriate.

B. Annual Cumulative Team Sweepstakes Awards

1. At the last BQCFL tournament each year, special team sweepstakes awards will be presented to the schools that have earned either the most cumulative points (in speech and Student Congress) or the highest total of victories (in Lincoln-Douglas and policy debate) throughout the year at BQCFL team sweepstakes tournaments.
 - a. In speech, the top school shall receive the “Dr Francis Giordano Award”
 - b. In Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum debate, the top school shall receive the “Robert Prior Award”
 - c. In Student Congress, the top school shall receive the “Msgr Sean Ogle Award”
 - d. In policy debate, the top school shall receive the “Dr John E. Sexton Award”
2. In the event that two schools are tied in total number of points (in speech or Student Congress) or total number of victories (in debate), duplicate awards will be presented.

Article VIII. Qualification for the NCFL Grand National Tournament

A. Number of Qualifiers

The number of students who are eligible to qualify for the NCFL Grand National Tournament shall be based on the number of BQCFL member schools on record as of December 1st each season, as specified in the NCFL Constitution and By-Laws.

B. General Student Qualifications

1. In speech, Student Congress and debate, all NCFL national qualifiers shall be determined at the annual BQCFL “Grand Tournament”.
2. All students who qualify for the NCFL Grand National Tournament must qualify on the varsity level.
3. Only BQCFL member schools shall be permitted to qualify students for the NCFL Grand National Tournament.

C. The Grand Tournament

1. BQCFL member schools must have entered students in at least two (2) BQCFL tournaments during the present forensics season in order to participate in the Grand Tournament. A student must have entered at least one (1) BQCFL tournament in order to compete at the Grand. This means that the Grand cannot be the student’s first BQCFL tournament of the year.
2. In speech, member schools may register up to 14 entries (each duo team counts as 1 entry) for the Grand, with a maximum of 4 entries in any one category. All entries shall compete in four (4) preliminary rounds, with the weakest score dropped prior to further tabulations and advancement to elimination rounds. In student congress, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum and policy debate, member schools may register up to 4 entries (each Public Forum or policy team counts as 1 entry).
3. Speech tabulations and advancement of speakers to elimination rounds shall follow the same procedures as other BQCFL tournaments, except for the inclusion of the fourth preliminary round (see 2. above). Student

Congress, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum and policy debate tabulations and advancement of speakers to elimination rounds shall follow the same procedures as other BQCFL tournaments.

4. A member school may substitute at the NCFL Grand National Tournament for one member of a qualified team (in duo interpretation, Public Forum or policy debate) if the need arises, but may not substitute for both members of the team.

5. If any student who has qualified for the NCFL Grand National Tournament is unable to compete, the qualification will pass down to the student with the next-best individual score at the Grand Tournament.

D. Unfilled Qualifications for the NCFL Grand National Tournament

1. In the event that there are unfilled slots for the NCFL Grand National Tournament at the conclusion of the annual BQCFL Grand Tournament, these slots may be filled by petition by the student's coach to the President on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) the student should have competed in that event at a previous BQCFL tournament (or registered to compete in that event, if it had to be cancelled for insufficient registration),
- b) the student competed in a previous BQCFL tournament in a different event,
- c) the student competed in that event outside the BQCFL at another local or national tournament

2. If the number of eligible students (see above criteria in D.1) is greater than the number of available slots, the Executive Committee will create a lottery to determine the remaining qualifiers

