
NATIONAL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR THE 2010-11 SEASON

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PLEASE submit qualification information electronically (email)

SUMMARY

In the spirit of joy and inspiration that generally marks the beginning of the collegiate forensics season, I wanted to connect with every program interested in, and/or planning to attend, the *2011 National Forensic Association National Championship*. As you are engaging in strategic planning and event development for the season, I thought it would be helpful if I passed along some important notes about this year's national championship tournament.

Depending on your circumstances this information will be 1) new to you, 2) a reminder of facts of which you are well familiar, and/or 3) a clarification of items with which you believed you were familiar, but have now (due to this friendly reminder) come to know otherwise. In any event, I hope you find the information helpful and informative as we move forward into another exceptional season.

HOST

I am pleased to remind you that Professor Megan Koch and the Illinois State University Forensics team are hard at work preparing to host the 2011 NFA Championship.

Megan has established a website dedicated to the tournament to assist you in planning:

<http://www.communication.illinoisstate.edu/forensics/speech/nfa2011/index.shtml>

NFA RULES

While a great number of events on the national collegiate forensics circuit share common event descriptions, the NFA does have several events that possess unique enough requirements that they are worth emphasizing in this summary. I would encourage you to review all the rules, policies and procedures for the NFA, however I have selected a few events with some unique characteristics for this message.

Entrants to the NFA National Championship tournament are required to adhere to event rules as stated in the NFA governing documents (constitution and bylaws). The documents are available on the NFA website:

LINK: www.nationalforensics.org

Rhetorical Criticism:

An original speech by the student designed to offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a rhetorical event. Any legitimate critical methodology is permissible. Audiovisual aids may be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Limited notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

Duo Interpretation:

A cutting from a play, humorous or serious, involving the portrayal of two or more characters presented by two individuals. This is not an acting event; Thus, no costumes, props, etc., are to be used. Presentation is from manuscript and focus should be off-stage. Maximum time is 10 minutes including original introduction.

QUALIFICATION PROCEDURES

The NFA adheres to unique qualification procedures. For your convenience, I have included the specific text from Article III of the bylaws.

Please note section C: **Each qualification application must be submitted to the Tournament Director with written proof of meeting the requirements stated above.**

Available on the NFA website is the TOURNAMENT RESULTS REPORTING FORM (<http://cas.bethel.edu/dept/comm/nfa/nationals.html>). In an effort to make the qualification processing procedure substantially more efficient, I would like to strongly encourage the following:

1. Tournament Directors: Please send along a copy of tournament results as a regular concluding procedure for a tournament host. I will plan on celebrating your consideration, kindness and high degree of other-centeredness accordingly.
2. Program Directors: Please complete the tournament results reporting form once you have qualified a slot and send it along. This will allow for the qualification processing procedure to be efficiently addressed over the course of the season and present less confusion and record searching as the NFA entry deadline draws near.

III. QUALIFICATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

- A. A student may qualify for any of the events in Section II (except L-D) of the By-laws by being in a final round or in the top 10% of that event at a tournament that had at least seven schools participating. The tournament must have had at least two preliminary rounds and at least 12 contestants in the event. When an event has less than 12 contestants in preliminary rounds, the top 50% (rounding up) of the finalists will qualify for I. E. Nationals.
- B. In Lincoln-Douglas Debate, tournaments, which employ the NFA L-D topic and rules, will qualify for nationals. There must be a minimum of 3 schools in attendance and a minimum of four preliminary rounds. Elimination rounds are encouraged but are optional. Students qualify for nationals based on their placement according to the following formula:

Entrants	Qualifiers
5-8	2

9-16	4
17-32	8
33+	16

- C. Each qualification application must be submitted to the Tournament Director with written proof of meeting the requirements stated above.**
- D. Regardless of event size, only one set of finalists per event may qualify for the National Championship Tournament.
- E. Events that restrict entry to only those who have not yet qualified for the National Championship Tournament shall not be accepted as qualifying events.**
- F. Students who graduate during the academic year may compete in those events in which they qualified between September and the date of graduation.
- G. The third Monday prior to the beginning of the National Championship Tournament shall be the tournament qualification deadline. The third Wednesday prior to the beginning of the National Championship Tournament shall be the mail entry deadline.

EXPERIMENTAL EVENT

Back by popular demand, the NFA will be featuring EDITORIAL IMPROMPTU as the experimental event this year. I would strongly encourage host schools to feature this event throughout the season.

EDITORIAL IMPROMPTU: Students will be given a short editorial (ideally 3 to 5 paragraphs) to which they will develop an argumentative response. Students will be allowed nine minutes to divide between preparation and speech time. Speakers must speak for at least five minutes. Limited notes, prepared in the round, are permitted.

Event Description as passed by the NFA: Editorial Impromptu represents an attempt to return “impromptu” to impromptu speaking. The speech should involve the development of an argument in response to the thesis developed or opinion shared in a given editorial. The event resembles typical impromptu speaking in many ways, with the following important exceptions.

1. Topicality is more obviously inherent in the editorial format.
2. The development of argumentation is featured over pre-planned

exemplification.

3. Social issues often ignored in other formats are fair game.
4. Historical editorials might also add a dimension to the event.
5. The sharing of opinion, as well as a consideration of the opinions of audience members may play a more central role,
6. The event more closely resembles real-life discussion than existing limited preparation formats.
7. Students are rewarded for possessing and articulating a wider breadth of knowledge than existing formats.
8. This format also encourages the development of skills related to evaluating arguments and analyzing rhetoric.

Event Rationale: Several of the advantages listed above also serve as a rationale for the event. Students should be allowed to develop more impromptu argumentative skills in an impromptu speaking event. Also, NFA has featured experimental events derived primarily from prepared speaking and interpretive genres to the exclusion of limited preparation. These valuable speaking skills already represent the smallest piece of the forensic pie. The argumentative nature of the event, from the perspective of both analysis and development, seem to directly reflect the argumentative perspective defined by the national developmental conferences on forensics.

Beyond this, students and judges who have participated in the event expressed a positive regard toward it.

EVENT PATTERNS

For the sake of efficiency and balance in tournament arrangement, the event patterns for the 2011 NFA Championship follow:

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| PATTERN A: | Prose Interpretation
Extemporaneous |
| PATTERN B: | Dramatic Interpretation
After Dinner Speaking
Rhetorical Criticism |
| PATTERN C: | Informative Speaking

Poetry Interpretation
Persuasion |
| PATTERN D: | Duo Interpretation
Impromptu Speaking |