

AFA-NIET
AMERICAN FORENSIC ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL EVENTS TOURNAMENT
CHARTER BY-LAWS
(last revised November 2011)

I. Purpose

The intent of the By-laws is to help further define the operational concerns of the AFA-NIET and clarify matters not explicit in the AFA-NIET Charter. Provisions included in the By-laws shall not undermine requirements and standards provided for in the Charter.

II. Ethical Concerns

- A. The standard of ethics for schools and individual participants involved in the AFA NIET shall be consistent with those provided for in the American Forensic Association's Code of Ethics and those provided for in the AFA-NIET Charter and its By-laws as well as AFA-NIET Tournament Letters.
- B. Competitor Practices
NIET Competitors are expected to adhere to the "AFA Code of Forensics Program and Forensics Tournament Standards for Colleges and Universities" concerning preparation and performance of competitive events. Specific standards include the following:
 - 1. In individual events which involve original student speech compositions (oratory/persuasion, informative/expository, after-dinner/epideictic, rhetorical criticism, impromptu, extemporaneous, or other similar speaking contests) the speaker shall not commit plagiarism.
 - a. Plagiarism is defined as claiming another's written or spoken words as one's own, or claiming as one's own a significant portion of the creative work of another.
 - b. A speech in individual events competition is considered plagiarized when the student presenting it was not the principal person responsible for researching, drafting, organizing, composing, refining, and generally constructing the speech in question.
 - 2. In interpretation events (prose, poetry, dramatic duo, program oral interpretation, etc.) the speaker(s)' cutting shall be "in agreement with" the original text. Competitors are expected to indicate if modifications have been made in the original text. Competitors are expected to bring to tournaments a copy of the original inclusive text along with the student's script.
 - 3. Forensics competitors are expected to do their own research.
 - a. Persons other than competitor (undergraduate students, graduate students, or instructors/coaches) are not to be charged with the responsibility of doing a forensics competitor's research.
 - b. This provision shall not be construed to prevent coaches or assistants from engaging in limited research designed to:
 - (1) Teach research techniques

- (2) Provide examples of high quality research
- (3) Identify areas of research for students
- (4) Provide the coach with the working knowledge necessary to function as an effective critic with respect to the debate or speech topics being investigated by his or her students.

4. All forensics participants are expected to compete honestly and fairly. Students are not to intentionally perform badly in individual events rounds for the purpose of allowing other competitors to benefit as a result. Directors of Forensics, judges, and coaches are not to encourage dishonesty in competition by asking students to purposely do poorly in rounds of forensics competition.

C. Copyrighted Material - Statement of AFA Guidelines:

The American Forensic Association endorses the concept of the "face-to-face teaching exemption" for performance of copyrighted materials as specified in The Copyright Law of the United States (Public Law 94-553-1976). Section 110 of the Act states that it is not a copyright infringement for instructors or pupils "in the course of face-to-face teaching activities of a nonprofit educational institution, in a classroom or similar place devoted to instruction" to perform any genre of copyrighted material. Subsection 4 of Section 110 also permits performance of non-dramatic literary works if there is either no admission charge or proceeds, after deducting reasonable production costs, are used exclusively for educational purposes.

The American Forensic Association supports the notion that competitive forensics (e.g., speech/individual events/debate) tournaments/festivals are an extension of the educational classroom and qualify as nonprofit educational activities. Thus, forensics event categories such as oral interpretation of literature, readers' theater, oratorical speaking, and debate, performed in the context of a forensic tournament/festival, are exempt from copyright infringements. As the Law also states, instructors and pupils need not be present in the actual classroom, but be in the same general vicinity for the exemption to be in effect.

Forensics tournaments hosted by the American Forensic Association (AFA) or acknowledged as AFA-sanctioned tournaments/festivals in the annual AFA Calendar are considered exempt from copyright infringement if they meet the aforementioned criteria.

D. AFA-NIET Ethical Use of Literature Policy:

1. Contestants may not rewrite a prose, a poem, or a dramatic text so the work differs from the original text.
2. 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.
3. Contestants may not rewrite the ending of a work.

4. Contestants may not rewrite lines to change the gender or person of a character.
 5. Contestants may not perform a text in a genre for which it has not been written.
 6. Protests should be filed according to AFA-NIET Charter and By-laws Section X.
- E. Individual judges should not make ethical judgments when ranking/rating contestants. If an ethical question arises, the judge should contact the Tournament Director to explain his/her concern. The Tournament Director will then call the matter of the ethical concern to the attention of the NIET Chair for disposition of the matter by the NIET Committee.
- F. To assist the NIET Committee in accurately assessing ethical disputes, the AFA-NIET recommends that coaches keep a file of student speeches and interpretation programs used at NIET for one year after the NIET in which it is performed.
- G. Harassment of Coaches and Students
1. The AFA-NIET deplores the harassment of coaches or students by others after a student has already qualified an at-large event and continues to compete with that event in tournaments.
 2. Individual member schools of the AFA-NIET should determine when and under what circumstances individual competitors should compete, without verbal or nonverbal intimidation from others.
 3. The AFA-NIET upholds the right of the individual coach and student competitor to continue to compete in qualified events as often as they see fit, prior to the National Tournament.
- H. Alcohol and Tobacco Policy: While at the host school, participants in the AFA-NIET are expected to respect the rules and regulations of the host institution pertaining to alcohol consumption and tobacco use.

III. School and Student Eligibility

- A. To participate in AFA-NIET sanctioned activities a school must:
1. Be an accredited (or pursuing accreditation) two or four-year college or university.
 2. Be in good financial standing with the financial requirements established by the AFA-NIET Committee and the Board of Trustees.
 3. Submit a \$30 subscription fee to the District Chair by the December 1st deadline. Fees increase to \$50 after December 1. All fees must be paid no later than registration for the District Tournament.
 4. Pay appropriate registration fees for the District Tournament and NIET entries.

- B. Schools that have not paid all fees encumbered from previous participation in the AFA-NIET shall not be permitted to participate at the District Qualifier or the NIET until such past due accounts are paid.
- C. To participate in AFA-NIET sanctioned activities a student must be a full or part-time undergraduate student enrolled for a minimum of six hours. The minimum of six hours of required academic work must be taken at the institution the student is representing at the NIET. A student must be pursuing a program of study or an associate or baccalaureate degree at the institution they represent at the NIET.
1. A part-time student at an institution may not represent that institution at the NIET if they are also pursuing an associate or baccalaureate degree at another institution.
 2. A student who has completed the requirements for an associate degree at an institution is no longer eligible to compete for that institution. A person is considered as possessing an associate degree upon his/her completion of requirements toward that degree and having been approved for graduation by his/her respective school.
 3. An appeal for a waiver of these provisions may be made using the same procedures as outlined in the By-laws (IIIE) for students who have received bachelor degrees.
 4. In determining the time of graduation, a student is considered as possessing a baccalaureate degree upon his/her completion of requirements toward that degree and having been approved for graduation by his/her respective school.
- D. Students must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA based on a 4.0 scale to be eligible for NIET competition.
- E. Under unusual circumstances, involving valid educational or professional justifications, students who have received bachelor degrees may participate if:
1. The student has never competed in forensics as an undergraduate.
 2. The coach who desires to let the student compete informs the chair of the NIET Committee of this decision and the reasons for it, and he/she agrees that the student has valid educational or professional reasons for participating. If there is a question concerning the student's reasons, the chair will consult with the student's District Chair and Regional Representative. The decision will be decided by a consensus of the three people.
 3. Such students may participate for a maximum of two time blocks.
 4. The above eligibility rules shall not restrict additional eligibility requirements established by the NIET Committee or by individual Tournament Directors.
- F. Mid-year graduates may not compete at District Qualifiers. A student may not pursue at-large qualification status after the final day of the term in which he/she has met the

requirements for graduation and has been approved for graduation by the student's respective school.

- G. A student having qualified at-large in an event shall not be eligible to compete in that event at the District Qualifying Tournament.
- H. No person shall be allowed to participate in more than four AFA-NIETs as a contestant.
 - 1. In addition, contestants are limited to four national tournament years. A national tournament year is one in which a student competes in a national tournament of Pi Kappa Delta, Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha, Interstate Oratorical Contest, Phi Rho Pi, AFA-NIET, NFA, National Novice Tournaments, or any other national competition added to this list by the AFA-NIET Committee.
 - 2. This rule is meant to exclude contestants who participate in individual events for more than four years at the national level from competing in the AFA-NIET.
- I. No student who has competed in eight or more six-month periods (July 1-December 25, or December 26-June 30) in three or more tournaments per period of time will be eligible to compete in the AFA-NIET.
- J. If a participant qualifies for the AFA-NIET while eligible under the preceding requirements and then graduates during the academic year, he/she will be permitted to compete in the NIET for that year. (Midyear graduates may not compete at District Tournaments.)
- K. An undergraduate who judges in the open division of a forensics tournament (a division which qualifies for AFA- NIET at-large legs), permanently forfeits his/her eligibility to compete at the AFA-NIET District or National Tournaments.
- L. Protests of eligibility must be made in writing and presented to the District Chairperson. Decisions concerning the protest shall be made by a vote of the District Committee. Unresolved cases shall be referred to the National Committee.

IV. Event Description and Guidelines

- A. The AFA-NIET will offer competition in the following events and conflict patterns.

A EVENTS

Impromptu Speaking: An impromptu speech, substantive in nature, with topic selections varied by round and by section. Topics will be derived from quotations. Speakers will have a total of 7 minutes for both preparation and speaking. Timing commences with the acceptance of the topics sheet. Limited notes are permitted.

Informative Speaking: An original, factual speech by the student on a realist subject to fulfill the general aim to inform the audience. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

Prose Interpretation: An original or selections of prose material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event is on the development of the narrative/story. Play cuttings and poetry are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

B EVENTS

Dramatic Duo: A cutting from one or more texts of literary merit, humorous or serious, involving the portrayal of two or more characters presented by two individuals. The material may be drawn from any genre of literature. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc., are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Extemporaneous Speaking: Contestants will be given three topics in the general area of current event, choose one, and have 30 minutes to prepare a speech that is the original work of the student. Maximum time limit for the speech is 7 minutes. Limited notes are permitted. Student will speak in listed order. Postings of topics will be staggered.

***Extemporaneous Speaking final round will feature an open cross-examination period of 2 minutes. Each speaker will be questioned by the previous speaker, with the last speaker questioning the first speaker. Contestants who will cross-examine the speaker are required to watch the speech and are permitted to take notes during the speech. We ask that all finalists report to draw first so that speaker order can be assigned to accommodate multiple entries and the questioning period. It is at the judges' discretion to include or not to include the cross-examination period in their ranking of the round.*

Persuasive Speaking: An original speech by the student designed to inspire, reinforce, or change the beliefs, attitudes, values or actions of the audience. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources should be used and cited in the development of the speech. Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Program Oral Interpretation: A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from two or three recognized genres of competitive interpretation (prose/poetry/drama). A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme through the use of narrative/story, language, and/or characterization. A substantial portion of the total time must be devoted to each of

the genres used in the program. Different genre means the material must appear in separate pieces of literature (e.g., A poem included in a short story that appears only in that short story does not constitute a poetry genre.) Only one selection may be original. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

C EVENTS

After Dinner Speaking: An original, humorous speech by the student, designed to exhibit sound speech composition, thematic, coherence, direct communicative public speaking skills, and good taste. The speech should not resemble a night club act, an impersonation, or comic dialogue. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforced the message. Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Communication Analysis: An original speech by the student designed to offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a communication event such as a speech, speaker, movement, poem, poster, film, campaign, etc., through the use of rhetorical principles. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Manuscripts are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Drama Interpretation: A cutting that represents one or more characters from a play or plays of literary merit. A primary focus of this event is on the development of characterization. This material may be drawn from stage, screen, or radio. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Poetry Interpretation: A selection or selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of language. Play cuttings and prose works are prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

B. Special Rules:

1. Duet Poetry will not be accepted as a qualifying event for Poetry.
2. Duet Acting will not be accepted as a qualifying event for Dramatic Duo Interpretation.
3. Program-on-a-Theme will be accepted as a qualifying event if the program was entirely of one genre (all prose, all poetry, or all drama).
4. At the AFA-NIET a student may be entered in two Dramatic Duos if both have qualified. The student, however, may not enter another event in that conflict block. Two duos will count as two events.
5. A contestant may not use the same cutting/content or any portion of that cutting/content in more than one prepared event at any given tournament.
6. All materials used in competition shall not have been used by the student in any competition prior to September 1 of the current academic year.

7. All rounds of Impromptu and Extemporaneous Speaking will be timed by the judge or the chair of the judge panel, and time signals will be given to contestants unless otherwise specifically requested.
8. In Extemporaneous Speaking the following rules shall apply:
 - a. Different topic areas will be used for each round.
 - b. The use of electronic information retrieval systems during any part of preparation time, is strictly prohibited. The Tournament Director will consider requests for exemptions because of handicaps, etc.
 - c. Attendance in the Extemporaneous Speaking Preparation Room is restricted to monitors appointed by the Tournament Director and contestants in the event.
 - d. Because Extemporaneous Speaking is an Individual event, contestants are expected to prepare speeches on their own without consultation with others.
9. The AFA-NIET Committee recommends that minor time infractions should not be a major criteria in judge rankings or ratings.
 - a. Judges may use their own discretion in determining whether or not audience reaction was influential in the time limit violation.
 - b. Coaches and students should consider audience reaction in preparing the event.
10. Coaches and/or students must have available at the district and NIET, copies of all interpretive and original events used at the tournament.
 - a. For interpretive events a copy of the complete original work must be brought to district and the NIET.
 - b. For all prepared public address, a copy of the complete script shall be brought to district and the NIET, including a bibliography of all cited sources.

C. Description of Experimental Events:

The NIET National Committee "may" at its November meeting, select an "experimental" event to be included among the events offered at the NIET of the subsequent academic year.

1. The event shall be scheduled in the tournament pattern so as to best balance events, best balance number of competitors, and/or best facilitate operation of the event.
2. The event shall be announced at the NIET of the year prior to its inclusion, at a seminar scheduled during that NIET.
 - a. The seminar shall be scheduled at a time when maximum attendance might be expected.
 - b. The seminar shall feature a faculty presentation regarding the nature and purpose of the event, two or three sample presentations, and one or two judge critiques of the presentations.
3. Rules regarding procedures for at-large qualification shall apply to this event during the academic years of the NIET at which it will be included.
 - a. No "nuance" events shall be substitutable for at-large qualification for a regular NIET event by competing in the "experimental" event.
 - b. A competitor cannot gain at-large qualification for a regular NIET event by competing in the "experimental" event.

V. At-Large Qualification Process

A. One may advance to the National Tournament by superior performance in three tournaments during the regular tournament season within the following provisions:

1. Each of the tournaments must have had at least nine schools competing in individual events.
2. When a tournament has eight schools competing at the start of the tournament, the Tournament Director may apply for a waiver of the "nine-schools" requirement if (1) at least nine schools had officially entered the tournament and (2) the "ninth school" failed to give 24 hours notice of their withdrawal before the start of competition.
 - a. The Tournament Director or the representative of an attending school is responsible for petitioning the NIET Chair within two weeks of completion of the tournament. The petition must include.
 - (1) A letter from the Tournament Director explaining the circumstances relevant to the petition and formally asking for waiver consideration.
 - (2) A letter from the "ninth school" stating the reason(s) for withdrawal from the tournament.
 - (3) The registration materials for the ninth school including unaltered schematics and student code sheets (where applicable).
 - (4) The Chair of the NIET has the right to request any additional material.
 - b. The NIET Chair in consultation with the Tournament Director's District Chair and the Regional Representative will rule on the appeal within two weeks of receiving the material.
 - c. The following conditions will apply to waivers:
 - (1) A team is allowed to use only one tournament in which a waiver has been approved for student legs. In other words, students from a team cannot use legs received from two separate tournaments for which waivers have been granted.
 - (2) Only one waiver will be approved to dismiss any one particular school. In other words, if a team withdraws from two or more tournaments within a competition year, only one petition using that school will be approved.
3. The three tournament placements used for qualification may not exceed a cumulative total of eight (8), based on the following formula:

# of entries in the event	# of legs earned	Places that earn legs
1	0	0
2-4	1	1 st
5-8	2	1 st , 2 nd
9-12	3	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd
13-16	4	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th
17-20	5	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th
20+	6	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th

4. When determining the number of students entered in an event, for purposes of computing the numbers of students who qualify, the number must be based on the total number of participants competing in ALL preliminary rounds of competition in the given event.
 - a. If a student does not actually compete in a round, but the Tournament Director determines this was due to circumstances beyond the student's control and therefore averages the score, that student shall be deemed to have competed in all preliminary rounds.
 - b. When students from a host school participate in a tournament in order for their numbers to count for at-large qualification totals, they must be eligible for open final placing and must advance if they earn the right to do so.
 - c. In a tournament where more than one division occurs, only the non-restrictive varsity division, open to any undergraduate participant, will count as a qualifier under the at-large qualification system.
 - d. Students competing in a collapsed division must be eligible for and advance if they earn the right to do so, to the open division final before the numbers in a collapsed division may be counted for the at-large process.
5. When determining at-large qualifiers, the AFA-NIET will accept tournament results as submitted by the host without adjustment in ranks due to NIET ineligible students competing in the invitational.
6. No more than one student may be designated for the first through sixth AFA legs in any qualifying event at an individual tournament. If a tournament chooses to split their entries in an event into multiple groups and hold multiple finals, the District Chair will be responsible for determining which one individual is assigned each of the qualifying legs.
7. For purposes of determining qualification legs, the District Chair will use the AFA-NIET criteria for assigning final position for competitors at those tournaments which fail to distinguish the top six individuals in each event.
8. If a student has met two of the three at-large qualification steps and was excluded from an elimination round at a tournament because of a tournament tabulation error, the coach of that student may petition the National Committee to have the tournament in question count as a third qualifier. Each case will be judged on its own set of circumstances. In such cases, the Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee along with the District Chair and the Regional Representative shall reach a consensus on the case and either approve or disapprove the appeal.
 - a. Appeals should be made only after two at-large "legs" have been earned. When a student is not advanced to elimination rounds due to a tabulation error, the competitor's coach/program must notify the District Chair of the appeal no later than March 1st or the District Tournament, whichever is later. The competitor's coach/program is responsible for providing written evidence of the error to the NIET Chair and the District Chair. The NIET Chair in consultation with the

contestant's District Chair and the Regional Representative will rule on the appeal within two weeks of receiving the material.

- b. When an error is made in final round rankings the steps listed above under 8a. must be followed. A successful appeal will allow the appellant to use the corrected rank. The student who received the higher rank incorrectly will be allowed to retain his/her originally established rank for purposes of at-large qualification.
- B. All tournaments used for at-large qualification must meet the standards described in the at-large qualification section.
- C. A nuance event may earn at-large qualification legs only if the corresponding AFA-NIET event is not offered at the tournament in question. (Corresponding event is explained as an event with generically identical descriptions and/or titles.)
- D. In no instance can a student accrue more than one qualifying leg in a particular event at a particular tournament. Additionally swing tournaments consisting of more than two sets of event placings do not qualify for at-large legs for the AFA-NIET.
- E. If the District Qualifying Tournament has at least nine schools participating and fulfills the entry requirements specified above, then it can be used as a qualifier tournament under the at-large system. The student would qualify under the at-large system, thus allowing the District to advance another contestant to the National Tournament. Announcement of an alternate advancement will be made only after the District Chair confirms at-large results.
- F. Qualification legs for an individual student cannot be earned at more than one tournament in the same day. Qualification legs must be earned at a tournament that occurs in a face to face encounter (no virtual tournaments).
- G. Students may not earn qualification legs at tournaments that do not offer a minimum of three rounds (e.g. two prelims/plus a final round) of competition. The exception to this rule will be single section events (e.g. 6 entries in Communication Analysis has one section, one round with 3 judges to determine top places).
- H. Tournaments must be announced in good faith 10 days prior to the date of the tournament. A school will have met this good faith effort if it has communicated to the District Chair of the District in which the tournament will be held, has posted the tournament on the IE-L 10 days prior to the tournament, or if it has sent out a mailer to schools in the region 10 days in advance.
- I. Closed Leagues or Associations
 1. Leagues or associations that host multiple restricted institutional tournaments (a closed league) may designate only one of those as an at-large qualifier. The designated tournament must meet all other AFA-NIET requirements. Tournaments restricted exclusively to novice competition, junior varsity competition, and/or junior or community college competition may not be used for at-large qualification.

2. If a District Chair verifies a tournament as having an open status (any tournament that does not restrict entry from any school that wishes to enter the tournament, then that tournament will be considered valid for earning at-large legs even if it is later learned that the tournament was restricted. The tournament will, however, be placed on the restricted list for future years.
3. Tournaments which exclude any schools from participating based on the size of the forensic program, size of the school, number of coaches, number of tournaments attended, amount of budget, or quality/strength of competitors DO NOT qualify as at-large qualifying tournaments. Exception: Entry may be denied for cause: School has outstanding entry fees which have not been paid [bad check, for instance.] This denial of entry for cause must be communicated in writing to the Director of Forensics of the team wishing to enter the tournament.
4. Responsibility lies with the individual school to verify the open status of any tournament being used for AFA qualifying legs. Some tournament invitations may contain this information; however, if it does not, the NIET recommends that the open status of a tournament be verified with the District Chair from the tournament's district.
5. State tournaments must have at least 7 tournaments to count as a qualifying tournament. When a tournament has 7 schools competing at the start of the tournament, the Tournament Director may apply for a waiver of the "nine-schools" requirement if (1) at least 7 schools had officially entered the tournament and (2) the "seventh school" failed to give 24 hours notice of their withdrawal before the start of competition.
 - a. The Tournament Director or the representative of an attending school is responsible for petitioning the NIET Chair within two weeks of completion of the tournament. The petition must include.
 - (1) A letter from the Tournament Director explaining the circumstances relevant to the petition and formally asking for waiver consideration.
 - (2) A letter from the "seventh school" stating the reason(s) for withdrawal from the tournament.
 - (3) The registration materials for the seventh school including unaltered schematics and student code sheets (where applicable).
 - (4) The Chair of the NIET has the right to request any additional material.
 - b. The NIET Chair in consultation with the Tournament Director's District Chair and the Regional Representative will rule on the appeal within two weeks of receiving the material.
 - c. The following conditions will apply to waivers:
 - (1) A team is allowed to use only one tournament in which a waiver has been approved for student legs. In other words, students from a team cannot use legs received from two separate tournaments for which waivers have been granted.

(2) Only one waiver will be approved to dismiss any one particular school. In other words, if a team withdraws from two or more tournaments within a competition year, only one petition using that school will be approved

- J. The editor of the AFA calendar is encouraged to work proactively to verify the open status of all tournaments listed in the AFA calendar, and tournaments which are known to be restricted will be listed in the fall calendar. It is recognized, however, that this list may not be exhaustive and that the status of tournaments needs to be reviewed yearly.
- K. Two tournaments hosted by the same school on the same Weekend, for the purpose of gaining additional legs for nationals, is discouraged by the NIET Committee. In addition, the schools will physically host a tournament at a designated site (no virtual tournaments).
- L. Tournament Directors are requested to submit a copy of their respective tournament results sheets to the District Chairs of participating schools.
- M. Tournament Directors are requested to submit tournament tabulation and results sheets to each participating school. Verification of at-large qualification from tournaments that do not provide tabulation and results sheets cannot be guaranteed.
- N. District Chairs shall publish a list of tournament results they have received at the time of their respective qualifying District Tournament. At-large entries using qualifying legs earned at tournaments not on the District Chair's list must submit results of proof of the number of schools in attendance, the number of entries, the final placement of entrants, and other pertinent at-large qualifying information.
- O. At-large qualifications legs cannot be earned after the first full weekend of March except for the District Tournaments. Exceptions for this rule include legs earned at the PKD and DSR-TKA National Tournaments; however, qualification legs may not be earned at recognized national tournaments that are held after the third weekend in March.
- P. The AFA-NIET At-Large Qualification Form for the student must be postmarked by the date on the At-Large Qualification Form and be sent to the respective District Chairperson.
- Q. A student may be confirmed as having qualified at-large in an event only after an official at-large form has been completed and verified by the District Chair. No confirmations can take place without this step.
- R. All standards for at-large qualification must be determined and regulated by the NIET Committee. Any changes or exceptions must be approved by the NIET Committee.

VI. District Qualification

A. District Alignment shall be as follows:

District	Geographic Area
1	California, Nevada, Hawaii
2	Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Alaska California State University Humboldt
3	Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, Missouri, Louisiana, Arkansas
4	North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska
5	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Truman State, MO
6	Georgia, Tennessee, Florida, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Kentucky
7	Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, District of Columbia, Ohio University, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Staten Island, N.Y., Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont
*8	* The option for District 8 to re-establish itself is an option when the number of schools in the District shows sustainability.
9	Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, El Paso, Texas, and Eastern Montana College

- B. In order to hold a District Qualifying Tournament, a minimum of five schools must participate.
- C. A student participant may qualify for the AFA-NIET if she/he finishes in the top ten percent (10%) of a particular event at the District Qualifier.
- D. The total number of persons in an event at the District Qualifier will be rounded off to the next highest interval of ten so as to advance the maximum percentage possible from the district (example: if 31 students compete, 4 students would be advanced to nationals under the 10% provision).
- E. Regardless of total entries in the District Qualifier, the top three individuals in each event will be advanced to the national tournament.
- F. When an error is discovered at the District Qualifying Tournament, it should be corrected. Decisions concerning qualification and advancement should be made on the basis of the corrected results; and the student advanced by the error should be allowed to compete at the national tournament in the event.
- G. District Qualifying Tournaments shall be held after January 15 and no later than the third weekend in March.

- H. Each school participating in the District Qualifying Tournament may enter a maximum of five students in each of the events. A student who has qualified in an event by means of the at-large system shall not be eligible to compete in that event at the District Qualifying Tournament. Protests of eligibility must be made in writing and presented to the District Chairperson before the completion of the District Qualifying Tournament. Decisions concerning the protest shall be made by a vote of the District Committee.
- I. It is expected that those qualifying to attend the National Tournament via the District Qualifier will do so. If for some reason a school or student intends not to advance to the National Tournament, that intention should be communicated to the District Chair as soon as possible and in no instance later than 16 days prior to the registration of the AFA-NIET in order to allow sufficient time to notify alternates from the respective District Qualifier.
- J. The District Committee shall decide on the number of rounds for the District Qualifier, awards, and the location and date of the tournament. In so far as possible, the District Tournament should parallel the administration of the AFA-NIET.

VII. District Governance

- A. Each district shall have a Charter that provides for the governance of the district. A current Charter should be made available to each subscribing school. Current copies should be made available to the National Chair of the AFA-NIET and shall be posted on the NIET website.
- B. Each district shall advertise the date and site of their respective qualifying tournament in the AFA Newsletter/Calendar and in the NIET Invitation.
 - 1. Each District Committee shall decide on the number of rounds for the District Qualifier, the awards, the location and the date of the District Tournament.
 - 2. In so far as possible, the administration of the District Qualifying Tournament should parallel the administration of the AFA-NIET.
 - 3. The District Qualifying Tournament must have at least nine (9) schools participating before it can be used as a tournament for at-large qualification purposes. The requirement for nine (9) schools may be waived under certain conditions. An appeal must be made to the NIET Chair as per procedures outlines in the By-laws.
- C. Each District Chair shall verify the at-large qualification status of students from their respective district. Each Chair shall appoint a member of the District Committee to verify his/her students' "at-large" entries.
- D. Each District Chair shall be responsible for providing the Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee with a current mailing list of active forensic programs in the district. Mailing lists shall be submitted by August 1 of each year.

- E. Each District Chair shall be responsible for providing the Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee, National Tournament Director, and the Board of Trustees Chair with a list of subscribing schools by December 10 of each year.
- F. Each District Chair shall be responsible for collecting subscription fees from those in their respective District. Subscription fees shall be sent to the Chair of the AFA-NIET's Board of Trustees by December 10th of each year.
- G. Each district shall select a District Committee consisting of coaches and a Student Representative. Committee structure and selection shall be determined by each district and this information shall be outlined in the individual District By-laws.
- H. Each District Chair shall be responsible to send the NIET National Chair by March 31 the names/descriptions of events used at tournaments in the Districts indicating which were and were not allowed as qualifying legs.
- I. There will be a Student Representative position on each District Committee. The student shall have full voting privileges. Election of the Student Representative should parallel current election procedures in each district.
1. By the AFA-NIET entry deadline, a student election will be held to select one- non-graduating student to represent the district on the NIET Student Committee for the following year.
 2. District Chairs are responsible for providing the NIET Vice-Chair with the name, address, and phone numbers (home and school) of the student elected.
 3. The National Student Co-Chairs in conjunction with the NIET Vice-Chair shall insure that both the current Student Representative and the Student Representative-elect are informed of the date and time for the Student Committee meeting at the NIET.
- J. Each district will hold a fall and a spring District Committee meeting.
- K. Each district must schedule an open meeting during the course of the District Tournament. During this meeting, election matters, concerns regarding the tournament, dates, and sites of future District Tournaments should be considered. The AFA-NIET Committee also encourages each district to hold District Committee meetings and an open meeting for member schools during the early part of the tournament season.
- L. If schools are unhappy with their current district assignment, the AFA-NIET Committee has established the following procedure for changing one's affiliation:
1. Petition current District Committee to leave the district.
 2. Petition the proposed District's Committee for permission to join the district.
 3. Petition the AFA-NIET Committee for acceptance of the proposed shift.
 4. Petitions for shifts in district alignment must follow the sequence above and receive acceptance at all levels before the re-alignment will be approved.

VIII. Protests at the District Level

- A. Protests at the District level shall be handled by the District Committee.
- B. The following procedures should be followed:
 - 1. Protests must be submitted in writing to the District Chair. Supporting materials must accompany the protest. Protests will not be reviewed and considered until complete documentation has been provided by the person filing the protest.
 - 2. The District Committee will request and review appropriate materials.
 - a. Any committee member directly involved in the protest is excused from this action.
 - b. Student representatives to the committee should be excused from the protest proceedings.
 - 3. The protest will be confirmed by a vote with no more than one dissenting vote.
 - 4. Appeals of the district decision must be made in writing to the NIET Chair within 72 hours of notification of the decision.
 - a. Appeals will be reviewed by a subcommittee consisting of at least three of the following: the NIET Chair, NIET Tournament Director, NIET Vice- Chair, and the NIET Chair Emeritus.
 - b. The review committee may reverse a district decision with a vote in which there is no more than one dissenting vote.

IX. National Tournament

- A. The National Tournament will be held on the first weekend of April in which the first Saturday falls.
- B. Number of Rounds. There shall be three preliminary rounds; followed by quarter-finals, semifinals, and final rounds in each of the events.
- C. Scheduling: In preliminary rounds, a mechanical pairing system will be used so that as far as possible, contestants from the same school will not meet each other. The elimination rounds will be paired on a seeded system.
- D. The American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament will have the following events and conflict patterns:
 - Group A Events: Impromptu Speaking, Informative Speaking and Prose Interpretation
 - Group B Events: Dramatic Duo Interpretation, Extemporaneous Speaking, Persuasive Speaking, and Program Oral Interpretation
 - Group C Events: After-Dinner Speaking, Communication Analysis, Drama Interpretation, and Poetry Interpretation.
- E. A student may enter up to a maximum of six slots with no more than two slots in any one-conflict pattern. No exceptions. (If a student is in two Dramatic Duos, that will count as two events, and no additional events may be entered in that particular conflict block.)

F. The total number of entries per school at the AFA-NIET is capped at 66 slots. All schools that enter the AFA-NIET shall be limited to the number of (full-time equivalent) judges to cover their entry.

G. Ballots and Ranking Procedure

1. The ballots shall use a Rating Scale graduated from 1 to 25 points; with 1 being the lowest rating and 25 being the highest rating. The points will be grouped as follows: 25-21 Superior, 20-16 Excellent, 15-11 Average, 10-6 Fair, 5-1 Poor. In preliminary rounds the ballots shall also use a ranking system from 1 to 5; with 5 being the worst rank a contestant may receive, and 1 being the best rank a contestant may receive. Judges must rank and rate all speakers in a round.
2. Two judges shall be used per section, per round in the preliminary rounds; multi-panel judges of five will be employed in the elimination rounds. In preliminary rounds to determine elimination round contestants, the lowest rank and rating (not necessarily on the same ballot), will be dropped from the cumulative total of prelim scores.
3. Ranks shall be used to qualify for elimination rounds. In cases of ties for those advancing to quarter-final rounds, the dropped rank shall be reinserted in an attempt to break the tie. If a tie still exists, ratings shall be used to break the tie. This procedure will also be used to break ties in seeding.
 - a. Once the aforementioned criteria are used, if a tie remains for a given seed, those involved remain tied.
 - b. Among the tied students, shifts in quarterfinal sections may only be used to eliminate multiple entries from a given school from speaking/performing in the same section.
4. During the elimination rounds judges will rank competitors 1st through 6th. In elimination rounds judges may NOT record ties in rating points for sixth and beyond.
5. Ties
 - a. In preliminary rounds, when ties in both total ranks and total ratings exist for the last qualifying spot, all speakers will advance to the quarter-finals.
 - b. In five judge elimination rounds the following criteria will be used to determine placements:
 - (1) Majority of first place rankings
 - (2) Cumulative of best four ranks
 - (3) Judges' preference based on five ballots
 - (4) Cumulative ranks of all judges
 - (5) Cumulative of best four ratings
 - (6) Cumulative ratings of all judges.

- c. Ties among competitors for Individual Sweepstakes will be broken on the following formula:
 - (1) Comparative ranks in final rounds*
 - (2) Number of final rounds
 - (3) Comparative ranks in semifinal rounds*
 - (4) Number of semifinal rounds
 - (5) Comparative ranks in quarterfinal rounds*
 - (6) Number of quarterfinal rounds

* NOTE: Comparative ranks looks at number of 1st place finishes, if tied, then the number of 2nd place finishes is considered etc.,
- d. Ties among schools for Team Sweepstakes will be broken based on the following formula:
 - (1) Number of final rounds by team
 - (2) Comparative ranks in finals*
 - (3) Number of semifinal rounds by team
 - (4) Comparative ranks in semifinals*
 - (5) Number of quarter-final rounds by team
 - (6) Comparative ranks in quarterfinals*

*NOTE: Comparative ranks looks at number of 1st place finishes, if tied the number of 2nd place finishes etc.,

6. A "reason for decision" section will be included on the ballot for the NIET.

H. Judges

1. Judges will be randomly assigned at the AFA-NIET with the following criteria and constraints:
 - a. Judges will not judge students from their own school.
 - b. Whenever possible, two hired judges will not be used in the same round.
 - c. Judges should not judge an event they self identify as "not qualified to judge."
 - d. Judges should not judge contestant(s) or school(s) that the judge specified they cannot judge.
 - e. Judges may judge the same event more than once.
 - f. Judges should not judge the same person in the same event more than once.
 - g. Judges would/could be assigned to judge students from their own district.
 - h. Two judges from the same district are not assigned to judge the same section whenever possible.
 - i. Judges from the host district would/could be placed in the same section with hired judges (even from their own districts).
 - j. Hired judges are considered to have no district affiliation.
 - k. Judges will be placed in specific sections by a specific geographical rotation.
2. Efforts are made to secure a judging pool that is 50% larger than the number of judges needed at any one time during the preliminary rounds. The host school for the tournament is expected to assemble a group of hired judges from the local area. In addition, guest judges are solicited from non-host districts [by the Tournament Director] to increase the geographical diversity of the judging pool.

3. All non-hired judges attending the tournament are treated equally regarding judging commitment the assignment of judges for preliminary rounds. If the judging pool is 50% larger than needed at any one time, all non-hired judges are assigned to judge seven of the nine preliminary rounds. Minor deviations from this ideal of seven may occur because the need for judges will vary from one event grouping to another, because of time constraints on specific judges (i.e., judges who will be arriving late to the tournament, or the need to free members of the National Committee or tournament staff who may be in the judging pool at specific times during the tournament), or because of event constraints on specific judges (e.g., events which judges indicate they are not qualified to judge). All full-time hired judges will be used during every preliminary round whenever possible. Part-time hired judges will be used as needed.
4. The same criteria apply in assignment of elimination round judges. All judges are considered available for assignment to any quarterfinal round section. All judges from a school are considered available for semifinal rounds if any of their contestants competed in quarterfinals, or for finals if any of their contestants competed in semifinals. Geographical diversity is again sought in assigning elimination round judges. Judges frequently must judge events that they judged in preliminary rounds, but they will not be assigned to judge the same contestant in the same event (whenever possible). Whenever possible, coaches will be assigned to judge each elimination round. No more than one hired judge will be assigned to each section of an elimination round. At registration, judges will be asked if they would be willing to judge elimination rounds beyond their obligation and to indicate the one or two events they are most qualified to judge.
5. Many of these constraints and criteria must frequently be abandoned when standby judges must be assigned to judge rounds for scheduled judges who failed to appear for their rounds. In these instances, every effort is made to observe as many of the criteria and constraints as possible, given the limited pool of standby judges and the demands of schedule integrity.
6. All judges must pick up their ballots within a reasonable amount of time, or their ballots will be assigned to another judge. A fee of \$25.00 will be assessed to the school for any reassigned ballots.

I. Awards

1. Individual awards will be presented in each event to those contestants advancing to the elimination rounds.
2. There will be 20 Individual Sweepstakes awards based on preliminary and elimination rounds, using the following point system: 3 points for each 1st, 2 points for each 2nd, and 1 point for each 3rd place ballot in preliminary rounds. Contestants in elimination rounds will receive points according to the following scheme: 6 for a 1st, 5 for a 2nd, 4 for a 3rd, 3 for a 4th, 2 for a 5th, 1 for a 6th and all others. The students must be eligible and compete in four AFA-NIET events for the Individual Sweepstakes awards.

3. There shall be 20 School Sweepstakes awards based on the following criteria:
 - a. Preliminary round sweepstakes points will be given for the top three students from each school in each event using the following scheme: 3 points for each 1st, 2 points for each 2nd, and 1 point for each 3rd. These preliminary round points shall be halved before tabulating the elimination round points.
 - b. All contestants in all elimination rounds will receive points according to the following scheme: 6 for a 1st, 5 for a 2nd, 4 for a 3rd, 3 for a 4th, 2 for a 5th, 1 for a 6th and all others. Maximum total per student per event would be 18 for elimination points (6 points each for 1st in a quarterfinal section, 1st in a semifinal section, 1st in finals); maximum total per student would be 108 (18 times six events) in elimination rounds; maximum total per school is infinite.

4. Other Awards
 - a. Traveling Trophy for School Sweepstakes.
 - b. Traveling Trophy for Individual Sweepstakes.
 - c. Top Community College Sweepstakes Award (a minimum of five community colleges must compete).
 - d. There will be an NIET-NDT award given each year to the school that has the highest combined scores in these two National Tournaments.

5. Distinguished Service Award
 - a. A Distinguished Service Award may be presented annually at the NIET. Whenever possible the presentation for the Distinguished Service Award will be done at the banquet during the NIET.
 - b. The following are the criteria to be considered for nominees:
 - (1) Present or past association with the AFA-NIET is required.
 - (2) Contributions to the advancement and development of the NIET.
 - (3) Leadership in innovations in forensics.
 - (4) Scholarly investigation of forensics (not necessarily publications per se, but a scholarly approach to development).
 - (5) Qualities as a forensics educator.
 - c. District Chairs shall canvas their districts for nominations for the award and the nominations shall be forwarded to the Chair of the Distinguished Service Award Committee. The deadline for submission of nominations is October 1st.
 - d. The Distinguished Service Award Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-Chair of the NIET. The committee shall include the four Regional Representatives and any other individual(s) appointed by the NIET Chair.
 - e. The committee shall meet prior to the general meeting of the NIET at the NCA in order to finalize recommendations for the award.

6. AFA-NIET All-American Individual Events Team Awards
 - a. An AFA-NIET All-American Individual Events Team will be named annually. Awards and team photographs will be given to those individuals chosen for the All American Individual Events Team.

- b. This award is designed with the intent to recognize students beyond the area of competition. While achievement in the forensic activity is taken into account, equal weight should be given to scholarship and service. This award should serve as a crowning touch to those seniors who have demonstrated outstanding qualities in all three areas.
- c. Nominees should have demonstrated personal qualities that show their understanding of the role of intercollegiate forensic competition in a liberal education. They should show evidence of success and good conduct in the forensic activity, excellence in their classroom studies as evidenced not only by grade-point average, but by the range and challenge of study, and show a commitment to the betterment of their community through their activities.
- d. Specific Criteria for Nomination:
 - (1) The nominee must be designated as a senior at their four-year institution and attending their last AFA-NIET as a competitor.
 - (2) The nominee must be competing at the NIET during the year they are nominated.
 - (3) The nominee must have at least an overall 'B' GPA in college coursework. The nomination must include a copy of the student's college transcript of grades.
 - (4) The nominee must provide documentation of forensic success including a resume of awards earned during the nominee's forensic competition. Also, there should be letters of support that convey the value the individual has added to the forensic activity in general such as mentoring, good sportsmanship, etc.
 - (5) The nominee must provide documentation of service work. This can include forensic related service. Service outside of the forensics community will also be a significant criterion. Non-forensic service venues may include the community, civic organizations, the school, etc. The nomination must include a letter of support that addresses the student's work in providing community service to their university and the community at large.
 - (6) The nominee should also provide a cover letter addressing their forensic philosophy statement. This is limited to one page.
- e. Nominations must come from a program director/coach and be submitted to the District Chair. District Chairs will inform member schools of deadlines for submission. Each District Committee will select one recipient from their respective district, and forward up to five additional nominations from their district to the Chair of the Selection Committee. A school can submit at most two nominations to their district, but only one nomination from each school can be forwarded to the Chair of the All-American Team Selection Committee. There will be at least one recipient from each of the AFA-NIET districts and at-large recipients who may come from any district to total no more than thirty. District Chairs must submit all nominations and required nomination materials to the Chair of All-American Team Committee by the dates specified by the Selection Committee.

7. The Dr. Bruce B. Manchester Scholar Series

- a. The purpose of the Dr. Bruce B. Manchester Scholar Series is to annually provide funding for a communication scholar(s) per year to undertake one scholarship project that would involve intense study and research on evolving public communication issues(s).
- b. The recipient(s) of the grant shall be recognized by the AFA-NIET as NIET Scholar(s).
- c. The NIET Scholar shall receive an honorarium from the AFA-NIET for the purposes of conducting intensive study and/or research on a public communication issue. The honorarium may be used for a variety of purposes: for study/research materials; to fund release time from the Scholar's home institution; for necessary travel to conduct the study/research; or in other ways as best fits the needs of the Scholar(s) to conduct the study/research. The amount of the honorarium shall be significant in order to attract quality scholars and projects.
- d. Funding of the honorarium is initially provided by a yearly donation by Dr. Bruce Manchester. Other funding options will continue to be explored.
- e. Applicants will submit a written statement indicating the public communication issue(s) they wish to investigate. The submission should indicate the applicant's background and interest in the subject; and relevancy of the public communication issue as a worthwhile avenue of scholarly study. The NIET Scholar(s) will be selected by a committee composed of the Vice-Chair of the NIET and the four Regional Representatives to the NIET National Committee. The Selection Committee shall solicit submissions at the beginning of each school year. Submissions will be due no later than October 1st. The submissions will be reviewed during the NIET meetings held during the National Communication Association national convention. The Selection Committee shall announce the recipients in January. (Note: If the project involves research at the NIET, the Scholar(s) must follow the appropriate procedures for conducting the research at the NIET as described in the AFA-NIET By-laws and invitation.)
- f. NIET Scholar(s) must be a full-time faculty/staff member from an accredited college/university. Graduate and undergraduate student involvement may only be conducted under the direct supervision of a full-time faculty/staff member. The full-time faculty/staff member shall be responsible for completion of the project.
- g. The NIET Scholar(s) shall submit the manuscript for publication in an appropriate journal following the public presentation based on the manuscript at the AFA-NIET. A copy of the submitted manuscript shall be filed with the Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee. The NIET Scholar(s) shall present their research project and results to the AFA-NIET during the subsequent National Tournament.

8. Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award

- a. The Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award is designed to recognize outstanding new forensics coaches in the AFA-NIET. The award may be presented annually at the AFA-NIET.
- b. The criteria used by the NIET Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award Committee in making its recommendation to the NIET Committee are:

- (1) A graduate student, assistant coach, or team director of an AFA-NIET affiliated team who is in his/her first seven years of coaching.
- (2) Leadership in innovations in forensics.
- (3) Qualities as a forensics educator.
- c. The format for all nominations is a one-page summary/outline of the nominee's contributions. The deadline for nominations is October 1st.
- d. The NIET Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award Selection Committee is comprised of the AFA-NIET Vice-Chair(chair)and the four NIET Regional Representatives. The committee is encouraged to solicit input from current and/or former competitors which were officially coached by the nominee. The purpose of the committee is to recommend to the entire NIET Committee each year the coach(es) deserving of this recognition.

J. Entry Forms.

- 1. A separate at-large qualification form must be submitted for each student to the Chair of your District Committee.
- 2. The Official Entry Form
 - a. The official entry form shall be postmarked no later than 20 days or faxed no later than 17 days before the registration of the AFA-NIET Electronic submission of the official entry form is preferred. Specific deadline dates will be included in the NIET Invitation.
 - b. Entries submitted after the deadline will be assessed a late fee of \$50 in addition to their regular fees. The late fee will not apply to additional entries which result from completions of the at-large qualification process or additional entries which result from an alternate advancing from the District Qualifier.
 - c. Official entry forms which require reprocessing because of inaccurate or incomplete information shall be assessed a reprocessing fee of \$50.
 - d. Fee assessment will occur 16 days prior to the registration of the AFA-NIET.
 - e. No entries nor additional at-large qualification legs will be accepted after the date of fee assessment. Substitutions from the District Qualifier caused by the inability of duly registered schools or contestants to attend the AFA-NIET shall be an exception to the deadlines. Legs earned at Pi Kappa Delta and Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha are also exceptions.
 - f. A \$125.00 per judge fee will be assessed to schools that drop judges after the fee assessment deadline if they had committed themselves to provide that judge.
 - g. Copies of the official entry form must be sent to the National Tournament Director and to the District Chairperson. Appropriate NIET Verification Form(s) for each at-large qualifier must accompany the official entry form sent to the District Chair. Students who qualify through the District Qualification Tournament must also be listed on the official entry form. The Entry Form must indicate each entry as "At-Large" (an "A" designation) or by "District Qualifier" (a "D" designation).
 - h. Calendar dates of all deadlines shall be clearly communicated in the Tournament Invitation.
 - i. The entry form shall include an area to indicate schools that should not be judged by an individual.

- j. All fees for the AFA-NIET will be determined by the Tournament Director, Chair of the National Committee, and the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Any changes in the assessment of fees must be approved by the Board of Trustees and the National Committee.
- k. Each school's Forensic Director shall fill out and sign a form verifying student enrollment and, if student-run, the Registrar, Department Chair, or Director of Student Activities shall certify student enrollment by signing the form. That form should be submitted the district chair at the district tournament.
- l. All contestants competing at the NIET are expected to be available for competition in all out rounds. If it is determined by the Tournament Director that a student is not available for all out rounds of competition the student will at that point be ineligible for participation in out round competition.

K. Submission of Experimental Event Proposals

1. Any member of AFA-NIET may propose an "experimental" event for inclusion at an NIET by submitting a written proposal to his/her District Chair. The bid must include the following items:
 - a. Event description
 - b. Rules interpretation
 - c. Background historical data
 - d. Suggested event bracket placement
 - e. Examples of event such as video tape, transcript
 - f. District Committee endorsement
2. The District Chair will submit the proposal to the AFA-NIET Chair prior to the November meeting of the NIET National Committee.
3. Each approved "experimental" event will be offered in a two year cycle.

L. Research at the National Tournament

The AFA-NIET views its national tournament as a learning laboratory for the participants. While the competitive speech experience is most central to the tournament, the AFA-NIET also embraces research activities as a dimension of the tournament. Consequently, when sanctioned research activities are included in the tournament, the AFA-NIET committee encourages its tournament participants to actively participate in the research process. In some instances, the AFA-NIET committee may commission a particular research project at the tournament. In other instances, the AFA-NIET committee may choose to sanction research proposals submitted by academic scholars in the forensic community. Research projects utilizing materials in the public domain need not be submitted for review. All research projects administered in conjunction with the AFA-NIET must meet the following guidelines:

1. Research conducted at the AFA-NIET must be sanctioned by the AFA-NIET committee prior to the beginning of the tournament.
2. Researchers must submit copies of their research proposal on the request for research form provided by the AFA-NIET.
3. Sample copies of the research instrument must be attached to the request for research form.

4. All research proposals submitted for consideration to the AFA-NIET must have been previously approved by the principal investigator's home university's unit that is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal regulations governing research involving human subjects.
5. A copy of the principal investigator's approval for research form issued by the researcher's home university must accompany the AFA-NIET's request for research form.
6. Unsanctioned research at the AFA-NIET is not permitted.
7. If non-sanctioned research is discovered, the AFA-NIET Committee will report that violation to the principal investigator's home institution's research board for disciplinary action.
8. A research review committee will evaluate research requests. The committee will include the NIET Chair Emeritus (chair), NIET Chair and NIET Tournament Director. All requests must be received by the NIET Chair Emeritus by March 1st.
9. The principal investigator should be available to discuss the research proposal with the NIET Research Committee.
10. All research administered at the AFA-NIET must be coordinated with the Tournament Director.

Protests at the NIET

- A. Protests must be submitted in writing to the NIET Chair Emeritus.
 1. Protests should be presented as expeditiously as possible, but protests must be submitted to the NIET Chair Emeritus within 14 days of the completion of the NIET.
 2. Protests must include a statement of the specific concern.
 3. Protests must include any/all support for the claim. Protests will not be reviewed and considered until complete documentation has been provided.
 4. The Chair Emeritus will review the protest and advise the petitioner if the protest warrants further action.
- B. A forwarded protest will be reviewed by at least the NIET Chair, NIET Director, and NIET Vice-chair, and three other members of the NIET Committee appointed by the Chair.
 1. Any committee member directly involved in the protest action is excused from the protest decision.
 2. This subcommittee will review all material it considers appropriate including contacting the coach of the student.
 3. Confirmation of the protest will require a vote with no more than one dissenting vote.
- C. Consideration and investigation of protests will be conducted in a timely manner while respecting the competitive integrity of the student(s) in question. Primary concern is an appropriate and fair resolution of the protest. While the protest will be handled in a timely fashion, a compressed time frame decision is not the primary concern.

- D. The competitor(s) may continue to compete without prejudice during the review. The school's coach in attendance will decide if the student(s) will be informed of the protest.
- E. All final rounds of public address and limited preparation events will be videotaped and may be reviewed for possible ethical violations. All final rounds of oral interpretation will be audiotaped solely for the purpose of possible ethical use of literature violations. The audiotapes will be kept by the Chair Emeritus for a period not to exceed one year during which time only members of the Appeals Committee may have access in the case of a protest. NIET Committee members are considered part of the Appeals Committee if required.
- F. The subcommittee decision may be appealed to the entire NIET Committee.
1. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the NIET Chair within 14 days of notification of the protest decision.
 2. Reversal of the subcommittee decision requires a two-thirds majority of the entire NIET Committee.
- G. In the event of a confirmed protest, the NIET Chair will notify all parties involved.
1. Upon the completion of the protested appeal, adjustments will be made in the competition when possible.
 2. When possible final round finishes for affected competitors will be adjusted to reflect the results of the protest action.
 - a. If the disqualification affects a team in the top 20, the team is removed.
 - (1) The remaining teams in the top 20 below the disqualified team are moved up one position.
 - (2) The 21st team becomes the 20th team.
 - (3) A trophy will be given to any school that advances into the top twenty in school sweepstakes due to a disqualification of another school.
 - b. If the disqualification affects an individual in the top 20, the individual is removed.
 - (1) The remaining individuals in the top 20 below the disqualified individual are moved up one position.
 - (2) The 21st individual becomes the 20th individual.
 - (3) A trophy will be given to any individual that advances into the top twenty individual sweepstakes due to a disqualification of another student.
 - c. If the disqualification involves a student who was an individual event finalist:
 - (1) The individual is removed.
 - (2) The remaining finalists below the disqualified student are moved up one position.
 - d. If the disqualification involves a student who was a non-advancing semifinalist or quarterfinalist:
 - (1) The individual is removed (thus the event would have five non-advancing semifinalists or 11 non-advancing quarterfinalists).
 - (2) Individual and/or team sweepstakes for the person and school involved in the protest action will be adjusted to reflect the decision.

- (3) No other individual and/or team sweepstakes will be altered due to protest action.
- (4) Appropriate recognition for the next competitor will be provided.

H. Explanation of confirmed/validated protests may appear in the appropriate NIET and/or AFA publications.

XI. Hosting the AFA-NIET

A. The AFA-NIET employs an open bid system for location of the national tournament. Each year the tournament is intended to rotate geographically.

B. Requirements of Host School

1. Documents: a) A letter of invitation from the principal officer of the institution; b) A statement of any goals and/or services to be provided by the institution; c) A statement of any charges to be made for use and care of any facilities.

2. Supplies:

- _____ Rapid photocopy machine (2 preferably)
- _____ 5 IBM compatible computers with 2 high speed printers (5 preferably)
- _____ 35 reams of paper (for schedules/results, etc.)
- _____ Office supplies: pens, pencils, legal pads, markers, tape, scissors, paper clips
- _____ Large posting sheets (must be bigger than artist pad sheets)
- _____ 4 projectors for power point postings

3. Facilities:

- _____ Lecture Auditorium (750-800) (Auditorium needed for opening Session and Awards Ceremony)
- _____ 90-100 classrooms (Sat/Sun)
- _____ 16 Classrooms (as semifinals begin on Monday)
- _____ Appropriate rooms for tabulation
- All costs for campus security/room rental are to be borne by Host School.

4. Personnel:

- _____ 35 judges (full time equivalent)
- _____ 10-15 student helpers for the entire tournament

5. Services:

- _____ Ground transportation to and from headquarters motel to the school is NOT required, but may be offered at a host's option. (Hosts are not expected to finance the motel/school transportation.)

_____ Availability of ground transportation--bus,rental cars, taxi--from commercial transportation centers to the headquarters motel. (Hosts are not expected to provide for or finance such transportation.) General cost estimates should be provided on the following items: \$ _____ Taxi \$ _____ Bus \$ _____ Rental Cars

_____ Duplication costs for tournament program, ballots, schedule (Host schools are expected to provide for and finance duplication costs -- estimates on expense to host school can be approximately 15 pages x 700 programs = rough cost estimate for program and schedules + cost of ballots on 6" x 8" cards times [approximately 11,000-12,000])

_____ Visual Aid Check-in Station for competitors.

6. Meals:

_____ Meal package on campus Two options:

- 1) Provide a cost estimate for the following meal package options arranged via your campus food service: 2 continental breakfasts; 2 noon lunches; one evening banquet meal (may be buffet); or (2) Provide the one evening banquet with (indicated local restaurants or options for additional meals). Cost per person \$ _____ (Host school is not expected to pay for meals). Estimate number around 700 individuals.

7. Transportation:

_____ Availability of ground transportation (bus, rental cars, taxi) from commercial transportation centers to the headquarters motel. (Hosts are not expected to provide for or finance such transportation.) General cost estimates should be provided on possible expenses to be incurred for local transportation: \$ _____ taxi \$ _____ bus \$ _____ rental cars

_____ Optional: Ground transportation to and from headquarters motel to the school (Hosts are not expected to finance or provide the motel/school transportation.)

8. Lodging:

_____ Please provide a list of area motels within reasonably close distance to campus (include current rates for Singles/Quads and any additional services provided by the motel).

9. Amenities:

_____ Fringe benefits: Specify any add-on advantages which might be forthcoming should your school be selected as Host.

C. The Bid to Host Form shall be submitted to the Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee no later than the deadline specified in the NIET Invitation.

D. Host schools are exempt from the first five-hundred dollars of their school's registration fee for the NIET. Money collected from a surcharge levied on all NIET participating schools also goes to the NIET Host School.

XII. NIET Committee

- A. In order to vote on any issue before the AFA-NIET Committee at its bi-annual meetings, committee members must be present for deliberations (no proxies allowed). If a voting member is unable to attend an NIET Committee meeting, he/she may choose to designate an alternate with full participation and voting rights upon prior notification to the NIET Committee Chair. The only exception to this policy is that no single person may cast more than one vote.
- B. The AFA-NIET shall publish the minutes of the bi-annual AFA-NIET Committee meetings on the official AFA-NIET website after they have been verified and approved by the AFA-NIET Committee through an email vote.
- C. Election of the Student Co-chairs who serve on the NIET Committee shall follow the following procedures. Student Co-chairs will be limited to two people. Student Co-chairs will be elected from the student representatives from each district. Each district will elect one student to serve on this committee to meet at the AFA-NIET. Tie break shall be decided by the two sitting national representatives and the national student secretary.
- D. The NIET Committee will provide a total of \$300 monetary support for the Student Co-Chairs to attend the NIET meeting at the NCA Convention.
- E The NIET Committee formally recognizes the position of the NIET Webmaster.
 1. The NIET Webmaster is appointed by the Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee, in consultation with the AFA-NIET Committee. The AFA-NIET Webmaster does not serve as a member of the NIET Committee.
 2. An open call for self-nominations for the AFA-NIET Webmaster will be posted on the AFA-NIET website. The Webmaster position will be appointed for a two-year term at the spring meeting of the AFA-NIET Committee. There is no limit to the number of times a Webmaster may be reappointed.
 3. The responsibilities of the AFA-NIET Webmaster include:
 - a. Maintain the AFA-NIET website.
 - b. Convert and post documents to the AFA-NIET website as directed by the AFA-NIET Committee Chair.
 - c. If possible attend meetings of the AFA-NIET Committee so as to apprise members of developments on the site and consult with the committee about the construction and content of the website.
 - d. Maintain and update, as appropriate, the legislative and historical documents of the NIET.
 - e. Create and delete links to other forensic resources as directed by the AFA-NIET Committee Chair.

- f. Make recommendations about the AFA-NIET website to the Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee.
 - g. Maintain and update student-specific content in consultation with the national Student Co-chairs and the NIET Chair.
4. The Chair of the AFA-NIET Committee is responsible for communicating any concerns pertaining to the AFA-NIET website to the Webmaster.
 5. When a Webmaster exits the AFA-NIET Webmaster position, he/she will be expected to provide the extant content to the Webmaster-designate and to facilitate a smooth transition for the AFA-NIET website.
 6. Any expenses incurred by the NIET Webmaster will be the responsibility of the AFA-NIET, however, all expenses must have the prior approval of the AFA-NIET Committee Chair.

XIII. Sanctions

Should a contestant and/or school deliberately misrepresent qualification procedures or in some other manner deliberately violate the ethics implicit in the American Forensic Association and its National Individual Events Tournament, such contestant and/or school may be denied participation in the District and the National Tournament for one to three years. A decision to impose sanctions on a contestant and/or school shall be based on a recommendation of such action from the AFA Professional Practices Committee and by subsequent ratification of the recommendation by the AFA-NIET Committee.

XIV. Ratification of By-Laws

This document shall become effective when approved by a two-thirds vote of the AFA NIET Committee.

XIV. Amendment

The provisions of this document may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the AFA-NIET Committee or majority vote at two consecutive meetings of the AFA-NIET Committee.