

# **Constitution of the Southern Forensics Championship Tournament**

(Adopted 1/30/10)

## **Article I – Name**

The name of this tournament shall be the Southern Forensics Championship Tournament, abbreviated SFCT.

## **Article II – Purpose**

It shall be the purpose of the SFCT to stimulate interest in and promote the progress of forensics in the region in the hopes of furthering competitive, educational, and social experiences that reflect forensics as a laboratory for the development of communicative, advocacy, and leadership skills.

## **Article III – Organization**

### **Section 1 – Membership**

The SFCT shall be open to all interested individuals and institutions. Specific memberships shall be full and associate.

#### **Section 1A – Full Membership**

Full membership shall be open to all forensics programs and their staff at Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi institutions of higher learning. Full members and their professional staff may hold SFCT offices and retain voting rights (one vote per school). Unless otherwise provided, references to “states” in this Constitution shall refer only to Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

#### **Section 1B – Associate Membership**

Associate membership shall be open to all forensics programs and their professional staff, and/or individuals with an interest in forensic activities. Neither residency in a “full membership” state nor affiliation is a requirement. Associate members do not retain voting rights except as provided in Section 2A.

### **Section 2 – Officers**

The officers of the association shall include a Governing Board, a Tournament Director, and a Student Board. For purposes of “terms of office,” one year shall consist of the time from the conclusion of the annual SFCT tournament to the conclusion of the following annual SFCT tournament.

#### **Section 2A – Governing Board**

The Governing Board will function as the legislative body of the SFCT, deliberating over policies, rules and procedures which affect the tournament. Each state, by majority vote of current “full member” programs within that state, shall elect two Governing Board members to serve a two-year term of office. Terms of office shall be staggered such that each state elects one Board member each year. Additionally, the Associate Membership shall elect two members to serve as “at large” members of the Governing Board. (Voting for “at large” members shall be similar to voting for the other Governing Board members except that Associate Members shall operate as a single “state” for purposes of voting and representation.) Furthermore, the host school of the forthcoming SFCT shall have a representative to the Governing Board from the conclusion of the SFCT tournament immediately preceding the tournament that will be hosted at their institution through the conclusion of the SFCT held at their institution. Vacancies of seats on the Governing Board will be filled by special election of current “full member” programs from the state represented by the vacant position.

## **Section 2B – Tournament Director**

The Tournament Director shall be an executive-type position elected by a majority vote of the full membership. The Tournament Director shall serve a three-year term of office. If a Tournament Director resigns or is otherwise unable to complete a three-year term of office, the Governing Board shall appoint an interim Tournament Director, who shall serve until the next SFCT, at which point a new Tournament Director will be elected by the full membership.

The Tournament Director's duties shall be as follows:

1. The Tournament Director shall ensure that the SFCT is scheduled and sanctioned with appropriate regional and national organizations.
2. The Tournament Director shall be responsible for distributing invitations to the annual tournament.
3. The Tournament Director shall be responsible for the preparation of the tournament schematics, tabulation, and other materials necessary for tournament operation.
4. The Tournament Director shall resolve disputes that arise during the SFCT. The Tournament Director may delegate this authority to one or more members of the Governing Board when necessary to avoid a conflict of interest.

## **Section 2C – Student Board**

The Student Board shall be non-voting members of the Governing Board. Each state, by majority vote of the "full member" programs in that state, shall elect a student to serve a one-year term of office.

The Student Board's duties shall be as follows:

1. The Student Board shall run the student meeting(s) at the SFCT.
2. The Student Board shall be responsible for operating a service project at the SFCT and facilitating the selection of the SFCT Coach of the Year.
3. The Student Board shall perform tasks as assigned by the Governing Board.

## **Section 3 – Elections/Voting**

All elections for the SFCT officers shall take place at the annual SFCT Championship Tournament. Nominations shall be accepted and solicited up to and during the tournament. Only one vote per member school is considered in SFCT voting. Proxy votes must be written and signed by the voter, signed by the proxy, and explanatory of the voting directive given to the proxy.

## **Section 4- Regular Meetings**

The SFCT shall hold at least one regular meeting each year at the annual championship tournament. Other meetings may be called by the Governing Board as issues warrant. General membership meetings must be announced to all SFCT members no less than 30 days prior to the meeting date. A quorum will be the majority of those members in good standing attending an officially announced meeting.

## **Article IV – Amendments**

This constitution can be amended upon a two-thirds majority of full members at a regular SFCT meeting. Amendments must be made available to the membership no less than 30 days prior to the meeting at which the proposal is considered.

# **Bylaws of the Southern Forensics Championship Tournament**

(Adopted 3/22/10, Last Amended 12/17/2025)

## **1: General**

These bylaws shall govern the Southern Forensics Championship Tournament. Any provision that is set forth herein that is in conflict with those established by the Constitution of the Southern Forensics Championship Tournament shall be invalid.

## **2: Membership & Revenue**

### **Section 1 – Full membership**

Annual dues for full membership shall be determined by the individual states of Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Any school from Arkansas, Louisiana or Mississippi shall be required to pay the annual dues assigned by their state in order to be eligible to compete at the SFCT. If no annual dues are required by a member state, then full membership shall be granted for the following year to those schools from Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi in attendance at an annual SFCT.

### **Section 2 – Associate Membership**

Associate membership is granted for the following year to any program outside of Arkansas, Louisiana or Mississippi that is in attendance at an annual SFCT, and there shall be no membership fee for these programs.

### **Section 3 – Tournament Revenue and Expenses**

All revenue generated from “full membership” dues shall be returned to the state forensics association of the respective states from which the revenue was generated. All other revenue from the tournament shall go to the tournament host and the tournament host shall be responsible for all expenses of hosting the SFCT.

## **3: The Annual Tournament**

The SFCT shall be administered according to the limits stated herein.

### **Section 1 – General Information**

- a. The date and site for the annual tournament shall be determined by the SFCT Governing Board. Traditionally, the date for the SFCT has been the last full weekend in January, and the site has rotated between institutions in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. However, the SFCT is not bound by this tradition.
- b. For sweepstakes calculations, only the scores of a program’s top four (4) entries in any individual event, top three (3) entries in each division of individual debate, and top (2) entries in team debate will be counted. Only currently enrolled undergraduate students shall be counted for sweepstakes calculations.

### **Section 2 – Events and Rules**

The Governing Board shall, by majority vote, determine the events to be offered at each annual SFCT. The Tournament Director is responsible for notifying the SFCT membership of any changes from the original tournament invitation. In the event that an offered event/division does not have sufficient entries to “make,” the Tournament Director has the authority to cancel and/or collapse divisions at that year’s tournament.

#### **Section 2A – Debate**

1. All formats and divisions of debate shall run in accordance with the current rules of their respective sanctioning organization.

#### **Section 2B – Individual Events**

1. Rules and descriptions for individual events that are established and followed by the American Forensics Association, with the exception of persuasive speaking, will be used at the SFCT unless otherwise determined by the Governing Board and noted in the tournament invitation. These rules are inclusive of the AFA-NIET Ethical Use of Literature Policy as well as Article 1 (Competitor Standards), Article 2 (Competitor Practices) and Article 3 (Tournament Practices) of the AFA Code of Forensics Program and Forensics Tournament Standards for Colleges and Universities; all persons are urged to be familiar with these documents.
2. Persuasive speeches should adhere to the rules of the Interstate Oratorical Association. These rules outline that speeches must not exceed 1800 words, with no more than 20% of the total number of words in the speech being words directly quoted from a source other than the student. These rules also ask that all quoted material shall be documented, and that no time limit shall be assigned to persuasive speeches. It is the responsibility of each participant and their respective program to insure that the manuscripts submitted to the Interstate Oratorical Association adhere to that tournament’s national guidelines. For member states who otherwise do not offer a state competition to determine their IOA representatives, competitor rankings from that state may be separated from the field during this competition to determine the IOA representatives – the discretion of whether to use the SFCT tournament for IOA qualification shall lie with each respective state.
3. The Governing Board may, by majority vote, approve the offering of individual events not established by the American Forensics Association. Rules and descriptions for such non-standard events must be clearly specified in the tournament invitation and made available to the membership no less than 30 days prior to the tournament. Such events shall count toward individual events sweepstakes using the same point formula specified in Section 4B(a).

#### **Section 3 – Awards**

Awards shall be presented to all elimination round participants in all events. Awards shall be presented to the top five quadrathlon participants, the top five individual performers, and top five speakers in each debate division. Additionally, the top three schools in debate, individual events, and overall sweepstakes competitions will receive awards. Finally, in every event and sweepstakes category, the state champions for Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi will receive awards.

#### **Section 4 – Team Sweepstakes**

##### **Section 4A – General information**

- a. No minimum number of entries is required for schools to count toward debate or individual events sweepstakes awards.
- b. Schools must be entered in both debate and individual events in order to be eligible for the overall sweepstakes competition.

#### **Section 4B – Points formula**

- a. Individual events points will be awarded according to the following formula:
  - in preliminary rounds, 3 points for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2 points for 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 1 point for 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - in semifinals, all semi-finalists will receive 1 point
  - in final rounds, 6 points for 1<sup>st</sup>, 5 points for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4 points for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3 points for 4<sup>th</sup>, 2 points for 5<sup>th</sup>, and 1 point for 6<sup>th</sup> and below

- b. Team Debate points will be awarded according to the following formula:
  - 6

points for each preliminary round win

- 6 points for breaking to elimination rounds

- 6 points for 1<sup>st</sup> speaker

- 5 points for 2<sup>nd</sup> speaker

- 4 points for 3<sup>rd</sup> speaker

- 3 points for 4<sup>th</sup> speaker

- 2 points for 5<sup>th</sup> speaker

- Points for individual formats of debate will be halved, with the exception of speaker awards.

#### **Section 4C – Comprehensive Sweepstakes Calculation**

Overall sweepstakes scores shall be calculated by normalizing debate and individual events points to ensure equivalent categorical weighting. The Tournament Director shall: (1) sum all debate points earned tournament-wide, (2) sum all individual events points earned tournament-wide, (3) multiply each school's points in whichever category has the lower tournament-wide total by the ratio of the higher total to the lower total, and (4) sum each school's debate and individual events points (after normalization) to determine comprehensive sweepstakes placing. *Example: If total debate points across all schools = 500, and total IE points = 300, then each school's IE points would be multiplied by 1.667 (500÷300) before adding to their debate points for comprehensive sweepstakes.*

### **Section 5 – Individual Sweepstakes**

#### **Section 5A – Quadrathon**

A quadrathon competition shall be held at the annual tournament. To be eligible, students must compete in (1) a minimum of four individual events (multiple entries in duo interpretation shall count as only one event for purposes of this minimum), and (2) in at least two of the three categories of individual events: limited preparation (extemp, impromptu, editorial impromptu, radio broadcast), public address (after-dinner, persuasive, informative, communication analysis), and interpretation (dramatic, poi, prose, poetry, duo). Points to determine quadrathon placing will be according to the individual events sweepstakes formula outlined herein. Only four events will be counted toward a student's final quadrathon placing (for students with multiple duo entries, only their one best duo may be counted among these four), with at least one event from two of the three categories being included in those four events.

#### **Section 5B – Top Individual Performer**

To be eligible, students must compete in at least one individual event and one form of debate. All of a student's events will count toward this total. Points shall be calculated using the sweepstakes formula outlined in Section 4C.

## **Section 6 – Scheduling, Elimination Rounds, and Placings**

### **Section 6A – Debate speaker awards**

- a. Individual Debate. Speaker awards shall be determined according to the following formula: (1) adjusted point totals without the high and low scores, (2) point totals, (3) adjusted point totals without the two high and low scores, (4) z-scores.
- b. Team Debate. Speaker awards shall be determined according to the following formula: (1) point totals, (2) point totals without the high and low points, (3) total ranks, (4) total ranks without the high and low ranks, and (5) z-scores.

### **Section 6B – Debate elimination round participants**

- a. Individual Debate. Elimination round participants shall be determined by (1) total number of wins, (2) total number of points without the high and low scores, (3) total number of points, (4) total number of points without the two high and two low scores, and (5) the best opposition record.
- b. Team Debate. Elimination round participants shall be determined by (1) total number of wins, (2) total number of points, (3) total number of points without high and low scores, and (4) the best opposition record.

### **Section 6C – Debate elimination seeding and pairing**

Debate elimination round seeding shall be determined by the formulae outlined in section 6B. The elimination rounds shall be scheduled within a seeded bracket that shall not be broken. The number of elimination rounds to be scheduled shall be determined for all debate divisions by the division's size and the formula outlined in the appropriate sanctioning organization's policies.

### **Section 6D – Individual events semifinals**

Semifinals for individual events shall be held in events with more than 35 entries. The order of students in semifinals shall be random with placement in respective sections being based on seeding. Seeds that are placed in various sections are as follows:

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| section 1 | section 2 |
| 1 seed    | 2 seed    |
| 4 seed    | 3 seed    |
| 5 seed    | 6 seed    |
| 8 seed    | 7 seed    |
| 9 seed    | 10 seed   |
| 12 seed   | 11 seed   |
| 13 seed   | 14 seed   |

### **Section 6F – Determination of elimination round individual event participants**

Determination of elimination round students shall be based on (1) total ranks, (2) total points, (3) judges' preference if the tied students met in a preliminary round section. In the case of ties, seven students shall advance to elimination rounds when the event is larger than 12 entries, and five will advance when the event is smaller than 12 entries.

Events with seven or fewer competitors shall be embedded as a “final round” during the schedule of competition (this may include being pre-scheduled into three single section rounds with no final round, a final round with a minimum of three judges, or two rounds with two judges during one round and one judge during a second round).

**Section 6G – Determination of final rankings in individual events**

Determination of final rankings in individual events shall be based on (1) majority of 1's awarded by the judging panel in finals, or the judges assigned for each round in the case of events with seven or fewer contestants, (2) total ranks, (3) judge's preference, (4) total points, and (5) seeding into the elimination round.

**4: Amendments**

These bylaws can be amended upon passage of amendment by a majority of the Governing Board and amendments shall take effect a minimum of 30 days after their passage.