

PARLIAMENTARIANS ROLE:

Each chamber of Student Congress must have a Parliamentarian who acts as a final source of information and authority on Parliamentary Procedure. Parliamentarians should have a reasonable good understanding of parliamentary procedure and the rules of Student Congress. Parliamentarians are often required to do some teaching. Inexperienced groups will occasionally need some instruction in the basic procedures of Student Congress, and experienced group may need help understanding the proper and ethical use of procedure. Additionally, the Parliamentarian is expected to perform various administrative duties including starting the proceedings, keeping time, recording the actions of the chamber, and holding various elections.

This is a series of rules that the Congress follows to get the work completed. It is particularly made up of motion, and rules of precedence.

In order to speak once in session you must be recognized by the Presiding Officer.

Each House and Senate elects a presiding officer to fairly and efficiently run each session according to the rules of Parliamentary procedure

Students should become familiar with parliamentary procedures and the rules for debate as outlined in the NFL handbook, and Robert's Rules of Order.

In the morning four people are elected to be Presiding Officer for 30 minutes each. Right before lunch a vote is taken with the Parliamentarian over seeing who will be the Presiding Officer for the afternoon session?

Begin Proceedings

- a. Focus attention on the group.
- b. Offer introductory comments if there is one issue that needs to be addressed.
- c. Establish initial Presiding Officers (P.O.). Generally four students will each volunteer to serve for 30 minutes during the morning session. The chamber will subsequently vote for the student they would like to see as P.O. during the afternoon session.
- d. At this point the presiding officer is responsible for running the Congress. Inexperienced Presiding Officers may require more guidance.

Keep Time or Locate a Timekeeper

- a. Student Congress **must** be in session for five (5) hours in order to qualify as an NFL event. Recesses, setting the docket do not count. Committee time does count. See Congress Manual for details.
- b. **Schedule for debate:**
 - Gather in chamber, take attendance, and take nominations for Presiding officer
 - Presiding officer begins by having everyone say the oath.
 - Set the docket for the day
 - 3 hrs. Debate in the am
 - Lunch =1/2hour to an 1 hour (this will depend on how much more time needs to be put of debate after lunch
 - 2hr debate in the pm
 - Judges and parliamentarians meet in tab room
 - Awards ceremony
- c. Student's speeches may be no longer than three minutes long. Every student now has a one minute mandatory cross-examination time

Record Keeping

- a. The Parliamentarian should keep a record of the number of speeches made.
- b. Parliamentarian keeps track of precedent of students speaking
- c. The Parliamentarian must keep a record of proceedings that take place including: motions made, bills and resolutions offered, amendments made, and votes taken.
- d. The Parliamentarian should communicate the outcome of bills and resolutions to the other chamber(s). Bills and resolutions must pass in all chambers in order to become a law.

Insure that the proceedings follow parliamentary procedure

If necessary, teach parliamentary procedure:

Rule on contested points

- a. The Parliamentarian is the final authority on all parliamentary matters occurring within a chamber.
- b. Contested points may be brought to the attention of the Congress Moderator at the end of the day's proceedings.
- c. Trouble shooting issues will be referred to the MFA Congress Moderator who, in consultation with the coaches of participating schools, will work to clarify the issue for future Student Congresses.

Run elections for presiding officer

- a. This is done after all those who had an opportunity (no more than four students) to be Presiding Officer for thirty minutes.
- b. Students vote by paper on who they would like to run the rest of the session as their Presiding Officer.

Procedure for voting for Presiding Officer

- a. Students vote by paper for **ONE** nominee at a time. After each vote conducted, unless **ONE** candidate has received a **MAJORITY** of the votes cast, follows this priority:
- b. Separate the ballots into piles by candidate. Void ballots not containing names of candidates, or containing more than one name
- c. The one candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped.
- d. If the **COMBINED VOTES** of the **TWO LOWEST** candidates to **NOT EQUAL** all votes of the **NEXT** lowest candidate, **BOTH** are eliminated
- e. If a tie exists for the lowest candidates and their total votes **EXCEEDS** those of the candidate above them, have the chamber vote for the tied candidates (called a run – off election). If the chamber is still tied, keep voting. After three votes, ask the candidates to briefly address the chamber with reasons why they should be considered.
- f. If after casting five votes, the chamber still cannot break a tie, have the parliamentarian complete a preferential ballot, ranking all candidates nominated at the beginning of the election
 - g. A single ballot election can only determine one winner at a time, if subsequent places need to be determined, a new election process must begin, considering the remaining candidate (otherwise their vote for majority is skewed because of the earlier winners' share in the previous election).

Role of the Presiding Officer

1. Runs the session according to Robert's Rules of Order
2. They are responsible for the general well being of the congress
3. They need to keep the congress running smoothly and efficiently, so as to make the best use of everyone's time
4. It is best to follow the rules of Parliamentary Procedure and to maintain a sense of fairness in the congress
5. They need to keep records on precedence of each person in congress. An example of how to do this would be:

List Congress Members	Speech 1	Speech 2	Speech 3	Speech 4	etc.
Rep. Bush	2	5	8		
Rep. Jones	3	6	9		
Rep. Smith	1	4	7		

AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments must be presented to the presiding officer in writing (an official form needs to be used), with specific references to lines and clauses that change. This must be done in advance of moving to amend.
2. The parliamentarian will recommend whether the amendment is "germane"- that is, it upholds the original intent of the legislation – otherwise, it is considered "dilatatory." The title of the legislation may be changed.
3. A legislator can only move to amend between floor speeches. Once that motion is made, the presiding officer will read the proposed amendment aloud and call for a second by one-third of those members present, unless he/she rules it dilatatory.
4. Should students wish to speak on the proposed amendment, the presiding officer will recognize them as per the standing precedence in the chamber, and the speech will be counted toward their total, accordingly.
5. Simply proposing an amendment does NOT guarantee an "authorship/sponsor" speech, and any speeches on amendments are followed by the normal ONE minute of questioning.
6. Amendments are considered neutral and do not constitute an affirmative or negative speech on the original legislation.
7. If there are no speakers or the previous question is moved, the chamber may vote on a proposed amendment without debating it.

Evidence and Use of Electronic Devices

1. Visual aids are permitted in Student Congress provided they do not require electronic retrieval devices in the chamber.
2. All evidence used is subject to verification. Honesty and integrity are of utmost important in legislative debate. Falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence may result in the legislator being suspended by tournament officials.
3. Computers, cell phones, music players and games are not to be used in the chamber during a session. Traditional timing devices are permitted.

Run elections for Outstanding and Most Outstanding Congresspersons

- a. At the end of the afternoon session the Parliamentarian and each judge independently and without consultation rank the top six students in their chamber.
- b. The names are then presented to the Moderator who will add and determine the placement of each student selected. The student with the most points is Most Outstanding for the chamber and Outstanding is the next student with the most points.

Please note that during NFL qualifiers none of the rules can be suspended.

Typical Session & the Role of the Presiding Officer

Should use a calm, controlled and caring voice to show a genuine interest in the chamber's business

1. Calling to order by the presiding officer
2. PO say, "This session will come to order."
3. **State that you will use your best effort to recognize speakers around the chamber in a fair and balanced manner**
4. Invocation and /or opening comments
5. Roll call of members and confirmation of seating charts
6. Oath of Office

I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter, so help me God.

7. Special orders

- a. Review of special rules

b. Review of congress procedures

- * Explain your knocking system. Example would be "1 knock for 1 min. left, 2 knocks for 30sec. Left, and 3 knocks over
- * At the end of each speech I will let you know how long you spoke for
- * At the end of a speech if you would like to ask questions you need to stand and wait to be recognized
- * I will notify everyone when the questioning period is over for each speech
- * When I have called on the last person to speak on each bill I will say, "The questioning period has concluded, and the speaker may be seated.
- * NFL Qualifier (You will need to say that if you are interested in speaking you will need to stand and wait to be called upon)
- * Voting will be done by standing
- * All voting is done only by members present at the time the vote is taken
- * **Negative votes and abstentions ARE** counted for majority votes; votes taken where a fraction of members are needed are based on those seated in the chamber at the beginning of the session, **so counting nay votes and abstentions is unnecessary**
- * **Representative/Senators need to rise to vote**

C. Special announcements and/or questions

1. Committee meetings (optional) and consideration of the agenda
2. Ask someone to make a motion to suspend the rules for ten minutes to set the docket
3. Have someone make a motion to accept the docket as stated
4. Ask someone to make a motion to consider the first bill
5. Is it the wish of the chamber that I read the bill?
6. When you are ready to begin say, "Who **would like to sponsor the first item of legislation?**" *** When you recognize speakers, use the third person: **The chair recognizes.....**
7. **When a speaker concludes, say** "Time of that speech was ___ minutes and ___ seconds. **Questioners, please rise,**" Call on one legislator at a time, until the questioning period is over. You should keep track of questions to allow a fair distribution.
8. **Authorship speech has precedence (definition of authorship is, "a student from the school who wrote the legislation gets the privilege of recognition (called authorship), regardless of precedence: otherwise the presiding officer may recognize a "sponsor" from the chamber, provided this recognition follows the precedence guidelines. Regardless, this speech of introduction must be followed by two minutes of questions.") This requires a 3 minute speech with a 2 minute mandatory question period.**
9. Affirmative must go first in order to debate the bill/resolution
10. After the affirmation speech you say, "Those wishing to speak in opposition please rise, and continue back and forth **11. When you call on the last person seeking recognition to speak on a bill/resolution, say, "Since this is the last senator/representative who wishes to speak on this issue, if no one objects following his/her speech, we will mover to the immediate previous question following his/her speech." (That way, a separate vote to call "previous question" is unnecessary).**
12. VOTING ON A BILL/RESOLUTION
13. After one complete round you then ask if there are any motions
14. **To vote on a bill and stop debate a person must say, "I move to previous questions." You must have 2/3 for the motion to pass**
15. Adjournment **QUESTIONS = they must be for clarifying only**

3 minute speeches = If they do not use all of their time ask them how they yield the rest either by questions or to the chair.

Second an amendment: 1/3 Previous Question: 2/3, Pass main motion or amendment: Majority (PO breaks the tie)

Rescind a previous action: 2/3, Suspend the rules: 2/3

Total	1/3	2/3
6	2	4
7	3	5
8 or 9	3	6
10	4	7
11 or 12	4	8
13	5	9

Total	1/3	2/3
14 or 15	5	10
16	6	11
17 or 18	6	12
19	7	13
20 & 21	7	14

NFL Points can be earned in the following ways:

- All students who participate in Congress earn 2 points as long as they have spoken at least once on a bill/or resolution..
- The Parliamentarian can award presiding officers up to eight points per hour.
- Students earn up to eight points for the first five speeches they give at each meet. Two judges score each speech.
- At the end of the day they conference and reach a consensus on the appropriate score (must be a whole number) for each speech.
- At the end of the day the judges complete a score sheet for each student in their chamber that documents their NFL points and comments.
- A student who presides in the morning for ½ an hour can not be awarded any NFL points

Judges are responsible for evaluating student speeches, awarding NFL point and providing nominations for the outstanding and most outstanding congress people in their chamber.

Preparation

- Locate a seat chart.
- Review scoring criteria and judging rules.
- Understand what constitutes a scored speech.

Score Student Speeches

- This should be done independently, without consultation with the other judges or parliamentarian.
- Record comments for each speech. Judges are expected to provide comments on the ballots that are returned to each student at the end of the day.
- Periodically check with the other judges or the Parliamentarian to make sure that you have recorded the same number of speeches for each student.

Provide nominations for outstanding participants

- Individually and without consultation, rank the top six (6) Congress people in your chamber at the end of the session. Be sure to consider effective use of parliamentary procedures, and collegiality in addition to pure speaking ability. **The presiding officer may be nominated.**
- Nominations are then given to the Moderator or person who is over seeing Student Congress.

Calculate NFL point for each participant

- The judges must prepare a final ballot for each participant that indicates a single score for each of their speeches, and the total number of NFL points earned.
- Judges must wait until the end of the afternoon session to begin this process.
- All scores must be a whole number.
- When the two judges award different scores for a given speech they must come to agreement on a single score.
- The judges must review the NFL points earned by each participant to be sure that no more than two students may earn the same number of NFL points. The judges must collaboratively adjust scores to break these ties.
- Results need to be given to the appropriate people for distribution to the participating schools.

Scoring and Awards Procedures

Student Congress participants are recognized in two ways:

- National Forensic League Points to students based on their level of participation and the quality of their

speeches.

- b. Awards presented at each event for the “Most Outstanding” and “Outstanding” congressperson in each chamber.

Student Congress Points Description

8 pts. = Phenomenal (All of the speech criteria are demonstrated with mastery. This score is rarely awarded).

- 1) **Speaks for 2 ¾ to 3 minutes**
- 2) **Briefly glancing at notes – does not read from prepared speech**; strong eye contact to entire chamber
- 3) Clearly states their opinion at the beginning of their speech; closing statement is clear & strong
- 4) **Speaks with conviction**, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses gesture in context
- 5) Presents many instances of documented research to support points of view
- 6) Advances the debate by raising new points and referencing prior speakers’ points either affirmatively or in negation (if they are not the first speaker on either side)
- 7) If there are cross examination questions he/she is prepared to answer the questions with informative and authoritative responses; handles questioning with professional demeanor and tone.
- 8) Presents persuasive speech in a well organized manner.

7 pts. = Superior (Most of the speech criteria are demonstrated with mastery. Very minor suggestions for improvement)

- 1) **Speaks for 2 ½ to 3 minutes**
- 2) **Occasionally glancing at notes – reads occasionally from prepared speech**; strong eye contact to entire chamber
- 3) Clearly states their opinion at the beginning of their speech; closing statement is clear & strong
- 4) Speaks **occasionally** with conviction, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses gesture **occasionally** in context
- 5) Presents many instances of documented research to support points of view
- 6) Advances the debate by raising new points and referencing prior speakers’ points either affirmatively or in negation (if they are not the first speaker on either side)
- 7) If there are cross examination questions he/she is prepared to answer the questions with informative and authoritative responses; handles questioning with professional demeanor and tone.
- 8) Presents persuasive speech in a well organized manner.

6pts= Excellent (Most of the speech criteria are demonstrated with proficiency. Some suggestions for improvement)

- 1) **Speaks for 2 ½ to 3 minutes**
- 2) **Frequently reads from prepared speech or notes; frequent eye contact** to entire chamber
- 3) Clearly states their opinion at the beginning of their speech; closing statement is clear & strong
- 4) Speaks **frequently** with conviction, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses gesture **frequently** in context
- 5) Presents many instances of documented research to support points of view
- 6) Advances the debate by raising new points and referencing prior speakers’ points either affirmatively or in negation (if they are not the first speaker on either side)
- 7) If there are cross examination questions he/she is prepared to answer the questions with informative and authoritative responses; handles questioning with professional demeanor and tone.
- 8) Presents persuasive speech in a well organized manner

5pts. = Very Good (Most of the speech criteria are demonstrated with proficiency. Some suggestions for improvement)

- 1) **Speaks for 2 to 3 minutes**
- 2) **Quite frequently read from prepared speech or notes; some eye contact** to entire chamber
- 3) Clearly states their opinion at the beginning of their speech; closing statement is clear
- 4) Speaks **frequently** with conviction, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses gesture **frequently** in context
- 5) Presents many instances of documented research to support points of view
- 6) Advances the debate by raising new points and referencing prior speakers’ points either affirmatively or in negation (if they are not the first speaker on either side)
- 7) If there are cross examination questions he/she is prepared to answer the questions with informative and authoritative responses; handles questioning with professional demeanor and tone.
- 8) Presents persuasive speech in a well organized manner

4pts.=Average (Speech is persuasive, well-organized, advances debate and shows knowledge of the subject)

- 1) **Speaks for 1 ½ to 3 minutes**
- 2) **Mostly reads from prepared speech or notes; some eye contact** to entire chamber
- 3) Clearly states their opinion at the beginning of their speech; closing statement is clear
- 4) Speaks with **some** conviction, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses **some** gesture in context
- 5) Presents many instances of documented research to support points of view

- 6) Advances the debate by raising new points and referencing prior speakers' points either affirmatively or in negation (if they are not the first speaker on either side)
- 7) If there are cross examination questions he/she is prepared to answer the questions with informative and authoritative responses; handles questioning with professional demeanor and tone.
- 8) Presents persuasive speech in a well organized manner

3 pts. = Fair (Some criteria partially met. Speech shows effort to contribute to the debate)

- 1) **Speaks for ½ to 3 minutes**
- 2) **Mostly reads from prepared speech or notes**; minimal eye contact to entire chamber
- 3) **States** their opinion at the beginning of their speech; closing statement is **unclear**
- 4) Speaks with **some** conviction, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses **some** gesture in context
- 5) Presents **minimal** instances of documented research to support points of view
- 6) **Is unable to advance the debate**
- 7) If there are cross examination questions he/she is **minimally** prepared to answer the questions with **minimal** informative and authoritative responses; handles questioning with **minimal** professional demeanor and tone.
- 8) Presents persuasive speech in a **minimal** organized manner

2 pt. = Weak (Overall presentation weak; score recognizes an effort to contribute)

- 1) **Speaks for ½ to 3 minutes**

In some respect the speech did not meet minimum requirements (for example the speech may have been extremely short, or included poor taste). However, a minimal effort to contribute was made.

1 pts. = The speech did not meet requirements in any respect, or included material that is frivolous or in poor taste

- 1) **Speaks for less than 30 second**

CODE OF SPEAKER CONDUCT REGULATIONS

The Maine Forensic Association believes that successful competition is dependent upon the students acting as ethical and responsible citizens. In order to underscore and clarify the value of these attributes, the following Maine Forensic Association's **Code of Ethics** has been adopted. The expectations of this code apply to every speaker, spectator, volunteer, judge and coach and extend to all forensic activities including the time a speaker is not in a round and any other situation in which the student's behavior directly affects the school discipline or the safety and welfare of others.

CODE OF ETHICS

An ethical person is defined by the MFA as:

Respectful of others and self,

Honest in all academic endeavors and interpersonal relationships,

Compassionate and tolerant in dealing with the limitations and suffering of others,

Responsible for personal actions as an individual and a member of the community,

Fair and equitable in their treatment toward others,

Courageous in the face of ethical challenges.

Respectful Conduct: People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly.

Mutual respect among students and adults in the learning environment is the standard.

Honest Conduct: Seek to speak the truth, respectfully. Education should be a cooperative, collaborative activity where process is as important as product.

Respect: *I will treat myself and others with respect at all times.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Use of profane language or gestures directed at other participants that are offensive and/or intimidating
- Unwanted physical contact
- Direct or indirect bullying behavior
- Damaging or defacing either school property or personal property of others
- Threatening or demeaning others by words or actions

Honesty: *I will not lie, cheat or steal and will discourage others from doing so.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Theft of intellectual materials or plagiarism
- Theft or unauthorized use of others' property
- Unauthorized operation of computer (or similar device), password or account of another user
- Unauthorized searching on the computer (or similar device)

Compassion: *I will treat others with kindness, understanding, and tolerance.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Dialogue directed at another participant, or actions that communicate intolerance of differences in the beliefs, opinions or appearance of others
- Dialogue directed at another participant, or actions that communicate intolerance of differences in abilities of others

Fairness: *I will treat others as I would like to be treated.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Inequitable treatment of others

Responsibility: *I will accept the responsibility for my actions.*

Offenses include but are not restricted to:

- Violation of MFA or school rules
- Withholding information that could harm individuals, the MFA or school property
- Inappropriate dress or behavior that interferes with competition
- Violation of the law (local, state and federal laws/statutes)

Courage: *I will strive for the courage to live by this code of ethics everyday.*

STUDENT CONGRESS BALLOT

Name: _____

Date: _____

School _____

Judge _____

Speech Scores from 1-8pts per speech

# 1	# 2	# 3	# 4	# 5	Total	P.O. Pts.	Participation	Total for the day
							2pts.	

Speech 1

	Weak	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Phenomenal
Length of time speaking							
Briefly glances at notes does not read from prepared speech							
Eye Contact during speech							
States their opinion at the beginning of speech, and has a closing statement							
Speaks with conviction, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses gesture in context							
Presents many instances of documented research to support points of view							
Advances the debate by raising new points and referencing prior speakers' points either affirmative or in negation							
Is prepared for cross examination questions with informative and authoritative responses: handles questioning with professional demeanor & tone, if questions are asked							
Presents persuasive speech in a well organized manner							

Speech 2

	Weak	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Superior	Phenomenal
Length of time speaking							
Briefly glances at notes does not read from prepared speech							
Eye Contact during speech							
States their opinion at the beginning of speech, and has a closing statement							
Speaks with conviction, varying tone/volume of delivery; uses gesture in context							
Presents many instances of documented research to support points of view							
Advances the debate by raising new points and referencing prior speakers' points either affirmative or in negation							
Is prepared for cross examination questions with informative and authoritative responses: handles questioning with professional demeanor & tone, if questions are asked							
Presents persuasive speech in a well organized manner							

Amendment Form

Legislation Title: _____

Legislation Author/
School/District _____

Amendment
submitted by _____ School/District _____

Lines affected _____ Reviewed by Parliamentarian
(Initial) _____

Specific wording _____

1/3 Second _____ Tally
votes Pass Fail

Chairperson notes _____

Amendment Form

Legislation Title: _____

Legislation Author/
School/District _____

Amendment
submitted by _____ School/District _____

Lines affected _____ Reviewed by Parliamentarian
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Specific wording _____

1/3 Second _____ Tally
votes Pass Fail

Chairperson notes _____