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Hello Coaches, Competitors, and Judges!

Welcome again to another speech season! We are pleased to announce the Online Asynchronous Tournament Series (or the OATS as we like to call them) is back! As long as these tournaments continue to provide value to the community, we will continue to host them. Last year over 85 teams competed at the six regular season tournaments, and we look forward to seeing so many of our friends again this season.

As you may have noted last year, we shifted the OATS from being housed specifically with one university to being housed under a newly-founded nonprofit organization called Outspoken Culture. Because the OATS finances were housed within the same account as all other speech functions of the SMSU Forensics Team, the moneys were indistinguishable from the regular functioning of our team (at least in the eyes of the institution). The OATS funds jeopardized the long-term funding of the speech team, which meant we needed to facilitate a separate location to house the OATS funds. We believe in full transparency, and this is the best way to maintain that for our amazing community.

The OATS financial situation is looking strong this year, so we are happy to announce that we are able to decrease the tournament series fee to \$200 for the 22-23 season. We will maintain a \$10/uncovered slot fee, and we will continue the fee waivers for student-run teams or those experiencing financial hardship. Look for a financial report from the 2021-22 season coming soon on the Outspoken Culture website.

The dates for video submission for the OATS include:

Mon, Oct 3	Mon, Oct 24	Mon, Nov 14	Mon, Dec 5	Mon, Jan 23	Mon, Feb 27
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We look forward to continuing to support student advocacy, accessibility, and health/wellness this 22-23 Season. Full information is available on the OATS Invite (available on Speechwire and the [Outspoken Culture website](#)). If you have questions feel free to contact Julie Walker by phone (call or text 706-844-2773) or email (julie.walker@smsu.edu).

Sincerely,

Julie Walker
Southwest Minnesota State University
Assistant Director of Forensics
Series Tournament Director

TL:DR Details

- ≡ Tournaments will be fully asynchronous, including finals
- ≡ Entries and video links are due to Speechwire on Monday @ 8 p.m. CST
- ≡ Content warnings are encouraged to give adequate warning to judges/competitors
- ≡ No late adds are allowed
- ≡ Preliminary rounds will be judged from Tuesday through Thursday @ 4 p.m. CST; Final rounds will be judged from Thursday 6 p.m. through Friday @ 2 p.m. CST
- ≡ Postings will go live on Thursdays at 6 p.m. CST (or ASAP depending on ballot completion)
- ≡ All 11 categories will be offered per [ASC/OATS guidelines](#)
- ≡ The \$200 Series Fee pays for all “covered-slot” entries for all OATS tournaments
- ≡ Uncovered slots will incur an additional \$10 fee
- ≡ Payments accepted by Venmo, PayPal, or by check
- ≡ The dates for video submission for the OATS include:

Mon, Oct 3	Mon, Oct 24	Mon, Nov 14	Mon, Dec 5	Mon, Jan 23	Mon, Feb 27
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Fully Asynchronous Tournament Week Schedule

Friday prior @ noon CST:	LP Prompts released on Speechwire
Monday @ 8 p.m. CST:	Entries and videos due to Speechwire
Monday @ 10 p.m. CST:	Fees will be assessed and distributed to teams
Monday @ 10 p.m. CST:	Judge dance cards go live on Speechwire
Thursday @ 4 p.m. CST:	Preliminary Round judging feedback/scores due
Thursday @ 6 p.m. CST:	Final Rounds are Posted on Speechwire and on the OATS Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/groups/oatsforensics
Friday @ 2 p.m. CST:	Final Round judging feedback/scores due
Friday @ 4 p.m. CST:	Live awards ceremony stream on OATS Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/groups/oatsforensics
Friday @ Evening:	Feedback released to coaches via Speechwire

Entries and Links Due to Speechwire by Monday of Tournament Week @ 8 p.m. CST
OATS tournaments will be hosted exclusively on Speechwire. All entries must be submitted by 8 p.m. CST on Monday of the tournament week. The entry must include the video for the student competing in the event, including both required videos for LP competitors.

Judges will evaluate events from 10 p.m. CST Monday of tournament week through 4 p.m. CST on Thursday of tournament week. Postings for final rounds will be made on the OATS Facebook page (www.facebook.com/oatsforensics) and on Speechwire at 6 p.m. CST (barring any late submissions of ballots). Judges should check in to Speechwire for judging assignments, but efforts will be made to alert judges of their responsibilities if possible.

Final round judging will take place from Thursday at 6 p.m. CST until ballots are due on Friday at 2 p.m. CST when all scores and feedback must be submitted. A live awards ceremony will stream on the OATS Facebook page (www.facebook.com/oatsforensics).

Video Submission

We require all video submission links be put forward through some sort of streaming platform like YouTube. Set the video to “unlisted” for the duration of the tournament. Following judging, we want students to have control over the visibility of the performances, so students may turn the videos to “private” or delete the videos from the platform after the awards ceremony on Friday.

We ask that each submitted performance video recording has not been entered into a previous asynchronous tournament. We believe teams will act honorably and submit a fresh, unique performance video made exclusively for that tournament.

Content Warnings

To continue work done regionally and nationally, we will continue providing a space to input content warnings for pieces. If a student's performance includes sensitive topic areas they anticipate may be triggering for audience members or judges, we ask you to enter those topics into the content warning space on Speechwire at the time you submit your entries.

Judging

Judges will complete preliminary round evaluations from Tuesday morning through 4 p.m. CST Thursday. Judges will complete final round evaluations from 6 p.m. CST Thursday through 2 p.m. CST Friday. All ballots and scores must be completed by the deadlines, or schools will be charged a dropped/no show judge fee. Each event will be reviewed by at least three (3) judges (in accordance with AFA qualification bylaws).

In the event of a category going to semifinals, an altered schedule will be released to accommodate those particular categories.

The dropped/no show judge fee is \$50.

Late Adds and Drops

No slot adds will be allowed after the event registration closes. Considering the asynchronous format, we don't anticipate any drops or changes for Individual events, as the complete video will be uploaded with the slot registration by Monday at 8:00 CST (including LP).

Costs and Payment Options

\$200 Series Entry (paid 1 time)	1 judge covers 6 slots	\$10 per uncovered entry slot
\$50 per dropped judge	Payments accepted through Venmo, PayPal, or by check	
Venmo: @outspokenculture PayPal: outspokenculture@gmail.com	Check: Outspoken Culture Attn: Julie Walker 609 South 1st Street Marshall, MN 56258	

All 11 Categories Offered

All 11 categories will be offered using [ASC/OATS guidelines for competition](#). Videos must not be edited to enhance visual or audio quality for a competitive advantage; videos must be one take without "special effects". Audiences may be present during the filming of performances.

Limited Preparation

Prompts for LP will be posted on Speechwire at noon CST on the Friday before the tournament entry deadline. For instance, if entries to a tournament are due Monday, December 5, the LP Prompts will be released Friday, December 2 at noon CST.

Students will submit two videos: one for preliminary round judging and one for final round judging. Impromptu prompts will be quotations from marginalized groups. Extemp questions will be Prelim: Domestic, Finals: International.

We trust all students and coaches to adhere to Limited Prep guidelines and ethical competition choices for preparation. Extemp prep does not need to be included in the performance video. However, please include prep time in Impromptu videos (this can make starting the video camera easier for students, and assessing time allocation possible for judging).

Tournament Awards

OATS will livestream awards ceremony on the OATS Facebook page at 4 p.m. CST on Friday of tournament week: <https://www.facebook.com/OATSforensics>

Sweeps awards are earned using the following point system:

Prelim Sweeps Points		Finals Sweeps Points	
1 st Place: 3 points	*non-advancing	1 st Place: 10 points	4 th Place: 4 points
2 nd Place: 2 points	semi-finalists will	2 nd Place: 8 points	5 th Place: 3 points
3 rd Place: 1 point	earn 2 points	3 rd Place: 6 points	6 th Place: 2 points

*The only instance when an OATS tournament would go to semi-finals is in the event a category exceeded 50 entries. If a category exceeds 50 entries, an altered schedule will be released to coaches, judges, and competitors.

The awards ceremony will honor

- ≡ The top novice in each category (where applicable)
- ≡ Final round competitors
- ≡ Top 5 competitors in individual sweeps
- ≡ Top 5 teams in team sweeps

Teams will be forwarded a folder of award images suitable for printing or posting to social media platforms.

Name Pronunciation

Being called by your correctly pronounced name creates an inclusive, welcoming, respectful space. To aid judges and awards readers, please provide student name pronunciation through Speechwire.

Student Integrity Pledge

One of the biggest things we miss from asynchronous tournaments is students watching other performances. OATS tournaments will allow students to watch final round videos after signing a Student Integrity Pledge. The Student Integrity Pledge declaring that the student watching the video will act in an ethical manner. After signing the Pledge, students will receive video links to the final rounds when finals are posted. A link to the Student Integrity Pledge will be posted on Speechwire and sent to coaches. A new Pledge must be signed for each tournament.

Judge Integrity Pledge

Coaches and students value high-quality feedback. Therefore, we request all judges complete the Judge Integrity Pledge prior to completing judging responsibilities for the tournament. The Judge Integrity Pledge must be signed once during the OATS season.

Accessibility

Nationally, the forensic community (students, coaches, and judges) have called for safer tournaments where student and judge wellness is built into the tournament structures. At OATS tournaments, we hope to provide more accessible spaces, even in the online format.

Open Door Policy

OATS tournament staff acknowledge the art of performance may be a healing process and/or an opportunity to speak on important, personal topics. As a performer, it is impossible to know all the ways in which content or a performance may unintentionally harm or trigger members of your audience. To better serve the wellness of the forensic community, we will be using an open door practice for this tournament.

Judges will be evaluating potentially triggering performances within their home spaces. This means we need to take even more steps to protect their well-being. We strongly urge teams to include content warnings, and if a judge feels concerned about the triggering nature of performances in the assigned round, tournament staff will adjust the judging requirements.

Host Information

The tournament staff for OATS will include Assistant Director of Forensics Julie Walker of Southwest Minnesota State University and others appointed by the tournament director (most often Director of Forensics Ben Walker and at least one student from the host school). We welcome schools to step forward to host an OATS tournament. Please see the website for [Hosting Responsibilities](#).

OATS tournament hosts will provide judges for the tournament. Judges for OATS tournament will consist primarily of forensic alums and friends of the program. If a notable percentage of judges originate from an unexpected origin (e.g., a large contingent of graduate teaching assistants with limited speech experience), the tournament staff will alert participating teams.