



January 14, 2025

Dear FFL Coaches,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to provide the following information regarding the 2025 FFL OPEN STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT. The Florida Forensic League Member Schools and their students who choose to attend this event will compete on SAT. MARCH 1 & SUN. MARCH 2nd at the University of Central Florida Campus. Our Board of Directors is excited to be hosting the first open State Championship!

This year, there will be no Regional Qualifying Tournament. Enjoy a debate-free weekend.

Please read the information in this invitation carefully. You must adhere to ALL deadlines—failure to do so will result in the penalties listed. We are committed to running an efficient and on-time event, but we will only be successful if all member schools follow the published requirements.

Good luck to your students in their preparations for the tournament. I look forward to seeing you in March!

Yours very truly,

Carol Lynne Cecil
President, Florida Forensic League, Inc.
2025 State Championship Tournament Director

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Questions on Competition, Rules, Judges

Tournament Director: Carol Cecil

florensicleague@gmail.com

G. Holmes Braddock

3601 SW 147th Ave

Miami, Florida 33185

*****Email is the preferred method of contact for all questions and concerns.*****

*****Only Coaches Should Contact The Executive Board Members or the Host.*****

INFORMATION FROM FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE, INC.

EVENT REMINDERS

The *By Laws* and *Standing Rules* of Florida Forensic League, Inc. shall govern the operation of this event. All coaches and students are responsible for reviewing the rules in the *Governing Documents*. Questions about rules should be addressed to the President, who serves as the Tournament Director for the State Championship.

All Events:

Laptop Computers

The use of laptop computers shall be permitted in all debate events at all FFL-sanctioned Events during the 2024-2025 season. During debate rounds, access to or use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside the "competition room" are prohibited. (This does not prohibit non-electronic communication between debate partners during prep time.) Contestants found to have violated the provisions above may face the following actions: forfeit the round of competition and receive zero points or disqualification from the tournament and forfeiture of all rounds.

Availability of Evidence: The FFL will be following the NSDA Rules regarding evidence in debate events.

Rules in A Nutshell – Regarding Evidence

- Debaters are responsible for the validity of all evidence they introduce in the debate.
- Evidence must be provided orally or written and must include the primary author(s) and year of publication. Any other information, such as qualifications, etc. may be given but not required.
- Judges are responsible for resolving disputes between debaters – both oral and written sources.
- Judge decisions may not be appealed unless – the judge misapplied, misinterpreted, or ignored the rule.
- EVIDENCE CHALLENGES DO NOT GUARANTEE A DECISION REVERSAL
- If you need further clarification, please see the NSDA Evidence Rule as posted on FFL.

Extemporaneous speaking competitors will be permitted to use the internet at all FFL-sanctioned tournaments when internet access is publicly available. Publicly available is defined as Wi-Fi internet access being available to all students competing, or all competitors will have access to desktop computers with internet availability. In the event that internet access cannot be made available to all competitors, contestants shall be prohibited from the use of any electronic retrieval system (recording or information retrieval system) now known or to be invented during any round in any event at any FFL-sanctioned tournament including the Extemporaneous Speaking preparation room(s), except that electric or electronic devices that are incapable of sending or receiving information between persons may be used for the sole purpose of keeping time.

The League will make accommodations for students with disabilities regarding the use of technology. Documentation of the disability must be provided ten days before the Regional Tournament and State Tournaments. The documentation must be available for review by the Executive Board.

Policy Debate: Prep time is 8 minutes per team. The tournament will use the 2024-2025 National Topic.

Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly strengthen its protection of domestic intellectual property rights in copyrights, patents, and/or trademarks.

Lincoln Douglas: Prep time is 4 minutes per debater. The tournament will use the NSDA March/April topic.

Resolved: TBD

Public Forum: Prep time is 3 minutes per team. The tournament will use the NSDA March topic.

Resolved: TBD

Student Congress: Each participant to the State Championship may submit one (1) piece of legislation for the agenda. Legislation must follow FFL format (see *FFL Congress Manual*, Appendix B for details) and emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment to Chris Sprouse thechairhighlyfrowns@gmail.com). *Legislation that is not properly formatted, not submitted as a Microsoft Word attachment, or not received by the deadline will not be placed on the agenda.* Bills are due by 4 pm Friday, February 7th, and legislation will be released to schools via LINK - <https://tinyurl.com/FFLVarsityCongress>

Speech Events: Please remember that a copy of each student's script/oration and proof of publication, when applicable, should be brought to the tournament in case of protest. Script information must be available on www.speechwire.com.

TENTATIVE TOPIC AREAS - IF ANYTHING CHANGES, WE WILL LET THE MEMBERSHIP KNOW

USX:

Round 1- Trump's First 100 Days

Round 2- Judicial Concerns

Round 3- Education and Healthcare

Round 4- Immigration Policy

Round 5- Science, Technology, and the Environment

Quarters- US Foreign Policy

Semis- State and Local Politics*

Finals- Economics, Business, and Industry

*The semifinal round will be specific to Florida and its major urban areas.

FX:

Round 1- Africa

Round 2- Asia (including the Middle East)

Round 3- Europe

Round 4- South America

Round 5- North America (excluding the US)

Quarters- US Foreign Policy

Semis- International Headlines*

Finals- International Relations

*Speakers will draw three headlines from major international papers. They will then write their own question based on that headline.

IMP:

Round 1- Quotes from Oscar-Winning Films

Round 2- Games Shows and Reality Television

Round 3- Dream Vacations

Round 4- High School Concerns

Round 5- Words of the Day

Quarters- What Would You Do?

Semis- Recently in Stuff

Finals- Quotations

WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATE MOTIONS

WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATE - Please vote and encourage your students to vote for the World Schools Debate - Florida Topic. Coaches and students can vote as many times as they like.

WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATE - Will have 6 preliminary rounds

Round 1 – Impromptu

Round 2 – Prepared

Round 3 – Impromptu

Round 4 – Prepared -

Round 5 – Prepared

Round 6 - Impromptu

Quarters – Prepared

Semis – Impromptu

Finals – Prepared (Florida motion)

Round 2 - - Resolved: This House regrets giving the president of the United States the power of the pardon.

Round 4 - Resolved: This House believes the United States federal government should assume a Chinese attack on Taiwan is imminent.

Round 5 - Resolved: This House regrets the withdrawal of France from West Africa.

Quarters - Resolved: This House believes that governments of struggling economies should embrace cryptocurrencies.

COACH ATTENDANCE RULE

The *Head Coach* or *Assistant Coach* of a member school (as designated by the principal on the membership authorization form) must attend the State Championship with their students. If neither designated individual can attend the tournament, a letter from the principal (signed and printed on school stationery) must specify the adult in charge and be submitted to the Tournament Director no later than Wednesday, February 12th. See the *Standing Rules* of the League for more information. Please send via email to League President, Carol Cecil flforensicleague@gmail.com

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Monday, January 27: | SpeechWire opens and member schools should begin submitting entries. <u>Schools must cover all judge obligations NO JUDGES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR HIRE</u> |
| Friday, February 7: | Student Congress legislation deadline – send bills to Chris Sprouse (thechairhighlyfrowns@gmail.com) by 4pm.
Last day to drop without penalty beyond forfeiture of entry fees |
| Friday, February 14: | Last Day To Enter Students For The State Championship -
SpeechWire changes to view only - no new entries will be permitted. |
| Friday, February 21: | Last day to drop without double drop fee
Last day to submit TD/LD judge philosophies to SpeechWire.
Last day to change judge names without penalty
SpeechWire changes to view only – no further changes permitted by coaches. Changes must be emailed to League President Carol Cecil – flforensicleague@gmail.com |
| Wednesday, February 26: | Judge strikes will be released. Strikes must be completed on Speechwire. |

ENTRY FEES

Make All Fees Payable To: FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE

Student Fee	= <u>\$50.00 per student</u> (includes awards ceremony meal)
	(TD/PF/Duo count as 2; WSD = # of students in group; double entries only count as 1)
Judge/Coach/Observer Awards Ceremony Meal	= \$20.00 per person - entrance tickets will be required for the Awards Ceremony & Dinner in the Pegasus Ballroom

PENALTY FEES

Drops until 5pm on Friday, February 21st	forfeiture of entry fee
Drops 5pm Friday, Feb. 21st - 5pm Wednesday, Feb. 26th:	forfeiture of entry fee + \$20.00 drop fee

From 5pm Wednesday, February 26th to the start of the tournament, NO CHANGES will be accepted. This window will be used for travel, e-registration, and fee re-calculation. Any changes submitted during this window will be IGNORED and must be reported via e-registration on Thursday, February 27th.

Drops after 5pm Wednesday, February 26th –10am Thursday, February 27th:	forfeiture of entry fee + \$40.00 drop fee
Drops made after 10am Thursday, February 27th:	forfeiture of entry fee + \$50.00 drop fee
Unreported drop discovered at the tournament:	forfeiture of entry fee + \$75.00 drop fee

Yes, these drop fees are punitive. Drops, especially those just before the tournament, interfere with our ability to run an on-time event.

Judge changes after 5pm on Wednesday, February 26 th	\$25.00	per change
Missed judge calls:	\$50.00	per instance

At the State Championship Tournament, judge drops at registration will require the requisite number of students dropped from the tournament. Hidden judge drops at the State Championship Tournament will incur a \$1000.00 fine plus the \$50 fine per round they were assigned and missed.

SCHOOLS MUST COVER THEIR JUDGE OBLIGATIONS - THERE WILL BE NO OFFER OF HIRED JUDGES AT THE TOURNAMENT THIS YEAR

DEBATE JUDGE CHANGES

In the event that a school changes or drops a judge after the strike sheet for debate has been published, the school making the change shall be required to pay a FINE of \$1000 OR DROP THE REQUISITE NUMBER OF STUDENTS/TEAMS. We cannot run a tournament without judges.

JUDGES - This Is TBD - We are consulting Ben from SpeechWire on the feasibility of integrating the Google Forms we used last year into Speech

Coaches will be required to complete a judge ranking form for every judge representing their team. We already have a Google Form set up for the Speech Pool and Debate will soon follow. You may revisit the form and edit it as needed. You can currently complete up to 3 judge ratings per form,

Speech Judge Link -

Debate Judge Link -

Failure to complete the judge rating forms will result in \$25 fine per instance.

JUDGING - FFL will not offer any judge hires for schools - schools must cover all obligations

JUDGE OBLIGATIONS

<i>Policy Debate:</i>	1 judge for every 2 teams or fraction thereof; Policy judges must submit a judge philosophy via SpeechWire website by Friday, February 23rd
<i>Lincoln Douglas Debate:</i>	1 judge for every 2 debaters or fraction thereof; LD judges must submit a judge philosophy via SpeechWire website by Friday, February 23rd
<i>Public Forum Debate:</i>	1 judge for every 2 teams or fraction thereof; PFD judges must submit a judge philosophy via SpeechWire website by Friday, February 23rd
<i>Speech/IE/Congress</i>	1 judge for every 5 entries or fraction thereof; A Duo team counts as 1 entry; double-entered students count as 2. All schools are required to designate 1 judge who can judge Student Congress, even if the school has no Congress Entries.

ALL SCHOOLS MUST DESIGNATE 1 JUDGE THAT CAN JUDGE WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATE, EVEN IF THE SCHOOL DOES NOT QUALIFY A WORLD SCHOOLS TEAM. THE SAME APPLIES FOR STUDENT CONGRESS.

Each school's judge quota will be determined on the speechwire.com registration website. The Board of Directors asks that all coaches make themselves available to adjudicate out rounds.

Judges are obligated for the duration of the tournament. No judges will be dismissed early.

ENTOURAGE RULE

The Entourage Rule states that individuals who provide coaching or research support for participants in the Policy, PFD, LD, or Congressional Debate must fulfill certain obligations as judges. Specifically:

1. For Policy, PFD, LD: Coaches or research support individuals must be entered in the judge pool for a minimum of two rounds. They should also be available to judge elimination debates.
2. For Congressional Debate: Coaches or research support individuals must be entered as judges and be available for elimination debates.

Note - If there is a valid reason why someone requires an exception to these obligations, they should contact the tournament administrator before the tournament to seek approval (Brian McAninch - flforensicleaguecommunications@gmail.com)

The consequences for violating the Entourage Rule are as follows:

1. Policy, LD, and PFD: They will lose their strikes (if offered).
2. Schools with Congressional Debaters: They will be fined the fee for an uncovered judge (\$300).

NOTE: As a result of the 2006 voting, the governing documents now contain this under Rule 4 (Judging Responsibilities) – Letter L: Any coach in or out of the judge pool that refuses or fails to pick up an elimination round ballot, his/her school shall be fined \$50.00 and the school of the person who judges the round shall be credited \$25.00.

LEAGUE SEEKS DEBATE JUDGES FOR HIRE

FFL uses additional fees charged to Policy Debate teams for the purpose of hiring experienced judges who will enrich the quality of the TD judge pool. Interested parties should contact FFL Vice President Brian McAninch (flforensicleaguecommunications@gmail.com) before February 12th, 2025.

CONDUCT OF PARTICIPANTS

Coaches, judges, other observing adults, contestants, and student observers shall comply with the rules set forth in the *FFL Civility Code*, which is available for download at <https://floridaforensicsleague.com/>. Please review this document with all participants from your school. It was updated this calendar year and can be found on the FFL Website. Coaches will be asked to sign a form either prior to or at registration acknowledging the FFL Civility Code and attest that they understand and that they have shared the information with their students, judges, chaperones, and observers.

FFL PROPERTY PROTECTION POLICIES

In the fall of 2005, FFL member schools voted to establish anti-vandalism measures. All coaches should read Standing Rule 19 and share its contents with their students, which include:

1. No contestant or student observer shall enter or remain in a contest room without a judge present. The penalty for violation of this regulation shall be immediate disqualification.
2. Vandalism of property by any person at an FFL tournament shall result in immediate notification of school and/or local police authorities. The Board of Directors shall notify the principal of the school associated with the vandal(s) in writing and insist upon appropriate remuneration. In the case of vandalism by a contestant, the additional penalty of immediate disqualification from the tournament shall also apply.

FEE PAYMENT - Schools that have a five-year track record of prompt fee payments MAY be permitted to send fees in advance to speed up the registration process. Schools lacking a minimum five-year history of timely payments for all tournaments WILL NOT be permitted to pay by mail. If payment is mailed, a purchase order, proof of mailing, or another form of documentation must be provided to the treasurer for record-keeping at registration and electronically. Details regarding mailing and eligibility decisions will be managed by FFL Treasurer Grant Chmielewski, who can be contacted at Grant.Chmielewski@ocps.net.

In other words if you wish to mail your fees FFL Treasurer Grant Chmielewski must give you written approval. If your bookkeeper for example has mailed fees to Legacy HS or to Apopka or anywhere else other than to Grant at Dr. Phillips HS you will not qualify to mail your fees.

Please make sure that you put in your check request with enough time for your bookkeeper to cut your check.

REGISTRATION

Registration will be held at HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS & SUITES ORLANDO EAST – UCF on Friday, February 28th, 2025 after 4:15 PM until 10:00PM. Registration that occurs after this time will incur a fine of \$100 because it places an undue burden on getting competition started in the morning as we navigate Open State. Please note:

1. The purpose of this registration is to make final payment and confirm entries. It is not a place to change judge names. That information should be communicated via email to Carol Cecil at flforensicleague@gmail.com . There are still penalties for drops and name changes made via email, but they are less than the day of tournament changes.
2. Registration should be conducted by the Head Coach or Assistant Coach for the member school. If those individuals are not available, an adult proxy may complete registration. However, that person must be able to answer all questions about a school's entry. Students will not be permitted to register for a school or be present in the registration area.
3. Schools not registered by a time to be determined will be dropped from the tournament.
4. Make all fees payable to FLORIDA FORENSIC LEAGUE.

Tournament Hotels

FFL has secured hotel blocks at the following locations and more are forthcoming:

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS & SUITES ORLANDO EAST – UCF

12250 E. Colonial Drive | Orlando, FL 32826

1 King Bed Standard – \$149/Night

2 Queen Beds Standard – \$149/Night

2 Queen Beds Suite (Can Sleep 5) – \$165/Night

*Group rate will be honored 2 days prior & 2 days after the event based on availability

Reservations Cut-off Date: The Hotel agrees to hold the above-noted room block until January 31, 2025 (5:00 P.M. EST.). At that time,

rooms not covered by a rooming list shall be subject to the terms hereof concerning guarantees, deposits, and cancellation, be released from Your room block and the hotel shall have the right to resell any released rooms.

Each school will provide Angela Stafford with a rooming list and payment method. Email rooming list to astafford@prmhotels.com or call her directly for an invoice 386-286-5064

Concessions:

- Parking Fee of \$9 plus tax is waived (one vehicle per room)
- Complimentary Hot Breakfast
- Complimentary High-Speed Wireless Internet Service to all registered guests.
- Complimentary Use of our Fitness Center

Billing Instructions: Each school will pay for room, tax, and incidentals with a company credit card or check. The hotel does not accept checks upon arrival for payment. Checks must be received 3 weeks before the arrival date.

Cancellation: Cancellation must be received by 6 p.m., 3 days (s) before the day of arrival, or will result in a penalty of 1 night's room plus tax.

3 MARRIOTT PROPERTIES – 1 BOOKING LINK

- Courtyard Orlando East/UCF Area for 159.00 USD per night – Last Day to Book: Friday, February 07, 2025
- Residence Inn Orlando East/UCF Area for 169.00 USD – 199.00 USD per night – Last Day to Book: Friday, February 07, 2025
- TownePlace Suites Orlando East/UCF Area for 149.00 USD – 179.00 USD per night – Last Day to Book: Friday, February 07, 2025

BOOKING LINK -

<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1737041260156&key=GRP&guestreslink2=true&app=resvlink>

You May Also Contact Jaylee Hartman:

Jaylee.Hartman@marriott.com

ARRIVAL AT UCF

More Information Forthcoming

GUEST WIFI INFORMATION

Guest Wifi:

Name:

Password:

OVERVIEW OF SCHEDULE

We will do our best to provide a schedule ahead of time, but we are not obligated to do so. An updated schedule will be posted online at Speechwire.com. Please refer there for any updates. Also, keep in mind that the schedule is subject to change. Therefore, please make sure to check online frequently and/or read e-mails.

TOURNAMENT MEALS

All participants are responsible for their own meals on Saturday, March 1st, and Sunday, March 2nd with the exception of the meal to be provided at awards, March 2nd. UCF offers many diverse meal options in the Student Union and other locations on campus that can accommodate all students. The awards ceremony and dinner will be held in the Pegasus Ballroom.

IMPORTANT ROOMS TO KNOW - We Will Update As We Have More Information

Tabulation Room -

Judge Lounge -

Extemp Prep -

World Schools Prep -