



You are cordially invited to the **2026 Asynchronous Speech Championship!** We know that some students cannot participate in national tournaments requiring multiple days of travel and competition. ASC exists for everyone to participate, but especially those students who want to see where they land on the national scale in a championship competition but who may not be able to travel or compete in synchronous tournaments. With a sustainable model and a focus on equity and inclusion, the ASC aims to provide students with a learning and competition space. For the past four years, over 550 entries from 30+ schools competed in each ASC tournament, and we look forward to a continuation of this type of robust competition again this year!

Highlights

- ASC Competition will be fully asynchronous
- ASC All 11 IE categories will be offered, with Octofinals, Quarterfinals, Semifinals, and Finals (based on number of entries)
- ASC LP students will submit 2 total links; Impromptu prompts will be released March 1; Extemp prompts will be released March 12
- ASC Content warnings are encouraged to give adequate warning to judges/competitors
- ASC No late adds are allowed
- ASC Tiered, equity-focused fee structure (additional fees for uncovered slots and dropped judges)
- ASC Payments accepted by Venmo, PayPal, or by check
- ASC 2026 Video submission date: Wednesday, March 25 @ noon CST
- ASC Teams are responsible for providing working video links. Judges will be instructed to rank any nonworking links at the bottom of the round.
- ASC We encourage all novice team members to apply for the National Novice Team
- ASC Researchers wishing to conduct research at the ASC should contact tournaments staff
- ASC Any use of AI in the judging process is strictly prohibited

Full information about competition and fees are listed below. If you have questions feel free to contact Julie Walker by phone (call/text 706-844-2773) or email (outspokenculture@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Julie Walker
ASC Tournament Director
Outspoken Culture, Executive Director

Asynchronous Speech Championship Schedule

March 1 st @ noon CST:	Impromptu Prompts released on Speechwire
March 2 nd @ midnight CST:	National Novice Team student applications due
March 5 th @ noon CST:	National Novice Team coach/team contact recommendation requests sent
March 11 th @ noon CST:	Extemp Prompts released on Speechwire
March 25 th @ noon CST:	Entries and videos due to Speechwire; NNT Coach/team recommendations due
March 25 th @ 2 p.m. CST:	Entries without video links will be dropped from the tournament
March 25 th @ 3 p.m. CST:	Fees will be assessed and distributed to teams
March 25 th @ 3 p.m. CST:	Judging assignments go live on Speechwire
March 27 th @ 4 p.m. CST:	Preliminary Round judging feedback/scores due
March 27 th @ 7 p.m. CST:	Quarterfinal Rounds announced/released on Speechwire/via live Zoom and Facebook
March 28 th @ Noon CST:	QF judging feedback/scores due
March 28 th @ 1 p.m. CST:	Semifinal Rounds announced/released on Speechwire/via live Zoom and Facebook
March 28 th @ 8 p.m. CST:	SF judging feedback/scores due
March 28 th @ 10 p.m. CST:	Final Rounds announced/released on Speechwire/via live Zoom and Facebook
March 29 th @ 4 p.m. CST:	Final Round and Novice Final Round judging feedback/scores due
March 29 th @ 6 p.m. CST:	Live awards ceremony stream via Zoom and Facebook
March 29 th @ Evening:	Feedback released to coaches via Speechwire

The tournament will break to Quarterfinals if there are 60 or more entries in an event. In the case where there are over 120 entries in an event, the tournament will release an updated schedule to include information related to Octofinal rounds (top 48).

Outround video links will be available to those who complete the ASC Integrity Pledge. Students will be given the opportunity to opt out of their videos being included in the video link list.

Entries

A student can enter as many events as they wish, but only once per category. A student may have two Duos, as long as they have different partners. You are encouraged to get your entries in early. All entries are accepted as submitted. Tournament staff will spot check to see if video links are working. It is the team's responsibility to make sure the video links are working. Entries with no video links (including outround LP links) will be dropped from the tournament. Judges will be instructed to rank any nonworking links at the bottom of the round.

Novice Entries

Teams should make sure to mark their first-year competitors as novices in the entry form. A novice is defined as a competitor who is within their first 2 semesters of collegiate competition. Novice entries will be competing in the open rounds.

National Novice Team

The Asynchronous Speech Championship wants to celebrate the top novice competitors from across the country through the National Novice Team. Intended to highlight the newer team members whose accomplishments might not yet manifest in competitive success, this team shines light on the novice members who show passion for speech and make up the heart of the team.

For those interested in applying, novice competitors should complete the simple application through the link provided by March 2nd, 2026. These applications will undergo an initial screening process. No more than two members of any given team will be considered in the final screening process, though we encourage all interested first year competitors to apply. Up to 20 novice competitors will earn a spot on the National Novice Team.

For more information, contact tournament director Julie Walker (706-844-2773 or Julie.walker@smsu.edu).

Limited Preparation

For Limited Preparation events, students will submit two videos. Impromptu prompts will be quotations from individuals from underrepresented groups. Extemp questions will be US-Political (Prelim R1 + R2 + SF), International-Political (Prelim R3 + OF + QF +F),

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). All Impromptu judges will be reminded to allow an initial 15 seconds for competitors to read the quotations, before beginning time.

*Special Note for Extemporaneous Speaking entries: Extemporaneous speaking as a category relies on timely questions and timely answers. Asynchronous competition adds a layer of complexity. In an effort to balance the timeliness of questions with the nature of recording speeches, we will release Extemp Prompts by two weeks prior to the tournament. We also encourage students to note in the video title and/or description the date the speech was recorded to give judges context for why an answer may have been given if subsequent news cycles may have impacted the way a question was answered. Judges will be reminded of this on all extemporaneous speaking ballots to take into account the timing of recording with the way the questions are answered.

Video Submission

Videos of performances should be one take with a single camera without “special effects” (e.g., filters), although visual aids may be presented virtually. Audiences may be present during the filming of speeches. Any edited video will be automatically disqualified.

All video submission links must be put forward through some sort of streaming platform. 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” after the awards ceremony.

Teams should submit a fresh, unique performance video made exclusively for this tournament. Videos should not have been uploaded prior to March 1st, 2026.

Judging

Judges should check in to Speechwire for judging assignments, but efforts will be made to alert judges of their responsibilities if possible. Judges should double-check their email inboxes for notifications from Speechwire. Judges are not allowed to judge for more than one team at the tournament.

Any use of AI in the judging process is strictly prohibited. If the tournament staff feels there is sufficient evidence, the offending judge will be banned from the current and all future OATS, ASC, and Outspoken Culture-hosted tournaments. If tournament staff determines AI was used in the judging process during the tournament, a \$50 dropped judge fee will be assessed to the team.

All ballots and scores must be completed by the deadlines, or schools will be charged a dropped/no show judge fee (\$50). Judges who have not started judging 1 hour prior to the round being due, will be dropped and fees will be assigned to their team. If the judge is from a specific team, students from that team cannot advance into the next out-round until payment plans are made with the Tournament Director.

Each preliminary round will have one judge. All OF, QF, and SF will have a panel of 3 judges. Final Rounds will have 5 judges.

*A note on hired judges: Based on the nature of the asynchronous speech tournament, we are able to invite in judges who offer incredible knowledge and speech experience in their ballots. This expertise offers a different level of ballot to the students in the round. As such, a round's judge panel makeup might include three hired judges, but one judge may have judged for decades and another was a national champion in that category, yet the panel makeup may not reflect the level of thought that would go into each ballot. Therefore, tournament staff will denote expert judges (ZE) to differentiate the level of experience compared to a more typical hired judge (Z).

Tiebreakers

To clarify the tabbing procedures, primary tiebreakers will be as follows:

Preliminary Tiebreakers: Ranks, number of 1s, speaker points, head-to-head

Outround Tiebreakers: Ranks, number of 1s, head-to-head outrounds, number of 1s in prelims, head-to-head prelims

Fees and Payment

Fees will be determined by the size of your entry. There are 2 Divisions: Lake (1-15 entries), and Ocean (open to all). One judge covers 6 entries; there is an Uncovered fee for each entry not covered by a judge (\$15).

Division	Size	Fee	Uncovered Entries
Division 1: Ocean	Open	\$200	\$15
Division 2: Lake	1-15 entries	\$100	\$15

If a judge fails to judge any of their assigned rounds, there is a \$50 fee. See the Judging section of this invitation for more details.

No team with outstanding bills to Outspoken Culture may enter the 2026 Asynchronous Speech Championship. This includes any unpaid invoices from the OATS.

Payment Options		
Check	Venmo	Paypal
Outspoken Culture Attn: Julie Walker 609 South 1 st Street Marshall MN 56258	@outspokenculture	OutspokenCulture@gmail.com

Awards

Awards will be given to all Octo-Finalists, Quarter-Finalists, Semi-Finalists, and Finalists in each Event.

Individual Sweepstakes Awards will be awarded to the Top 10 students plus the top novice. Team Sweepstakes Awards will be awarded to the Top 10 Teams in each divisions based on entry size.

Sweepstakes awards are earned using the following point system:

- ASC Prelim Rounds: Rank of 1 = 3 points, Rank of 2 = 2 points, Rank of 3 = 1 point
- ASC Octo-Finalist (non-advancing): 1 points
- ASC Quarter-Finalists (non-advancing): 2 points
- ASC Semi-Finalist (non-advancing): 3 points
- ASC Finalists: 1st = 15 points, 2nd = 12 points, 3rd = 10 points, 4th = 8 points, 5th = 6 points, 6th = 4 points

Individual Awards for placing in an event will be shipped to each team to distribute to students. All Sweepstakes Award winners (Individual and Team) will be shipped a token honoring their accomplishment. Each outrounder and sweepstakes award winners will also be honored by a donation to a nature-based sustainability project to be announced at the awards ceremony.

Sustainability, Equity, and Inclusion

The ASC hopes to promote more sustainable, equitable, and inclusive practices in forensics. Nationally, the forensic community (students, coaches, and judges) have called for safer tournaments where student and judge wellness is built into the tournament structures. Also, we must realize forensics cannot be sustained by following the models of the past. The ASC uses the following policies.

Content Warnings

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.

Open Door Policy

We 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. **No drop fees will be assigned to judges utilizing the open door policy.**

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

Outround Integrity Pledge

One of the biggest things we miss from asynchronous tournaments is getting to watch other performances. OATS tournaments will allow individuals to watch final round videos after signing an Integrity Pledge. The Integrity Pledge declaring that the individual watching the video will act in an ethical manner. After signing the Pledge, the individual will receive video links to the final rounds when finals are posted. A link to the Integrity Pledge will be posted on Speechwire and distributed through coaches.

Students will be given the opportunity to opt out of their video links being included in the list of outround videos. Students are encouraged to limit access to their video links following the 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.

Reminder, the judging process must be completed without the assistance of AI. See judging section above for full policy.

Research at the ASC

Researchers wishing to conduct data collection at the ASC should contact tournaments staff prior to February 25th (one month before the tournament begins).

Category Rules

Public Address Events

After Dinner Speaking: An original speech written and performed by the student designed to use humor to assist in developing the thesis of the speech. Audio-visual aids are permitted. Manuscripts or notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Communication Analysis: An original speech written and performed 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 are permitted. Manuscripts or notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Informative Speaking: An original speech written and performed by the student designed to fulfill the general aim to inform the audience. Audio-visual aids are permitted. Manuscripts or notes are permitted. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

Persuasive Speaking: An original speech written and performed by the student designed to change the beliefs, attitudes, values or actions of the audience. Audio-visual aids are permitted. Manuscripts or notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Interpretation Events

Drama Interpretation: A performance of a selection of drama, which is defined as a non-poetic text that has been created to be consumed through performance. The focus of this event is on the development of characterization. This material may be drawn from places such as stage, screen, podcast or other performance realm. No costumes or props are allowed. Presence of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Duo Interpretation: A performance by two individuals of a selection of material from any genre of text. Performance text may be drawn from more than one source. No costumes or props are allowed. Presence of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Poetry Interpretation: A performance of a selection of poetry, which may be drawn from more than one source. Focus of this event should be on the art of language use. No costumes or props are allowed. Presence of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Program Oral Interpretation: A performance of a program of thematically-linked selections chosen from at least two of the three recognized genres of competitive interpretation (prose/poetry/drama). Focus of this event should be on the development of the theme. No costumes or props are allowed. Presence of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Prose Interpretation: A performance of a selection of prose material, which is defined as a non-poetic text that has been created to be consumed through reading. Focus of this event is on the development of the narrative/story. No costumes or props are allowed. Presence of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

Limited Preparation Events

Extemporaneous Speaking: An original speech written and performed by the student within a limited time period related to current events. For each round, students will be given three current event prompts. Students

will have 30 minutes to select one prompt and prepare a speech in response to the prompt. Speaking notes are permitted. Maximum time limit for the speech is 7 minutes.

Impromptu Speaking: An original speech written and performed by the student within a limited time period related to a broad variety of topics. For each round, students will be given one to two prompts which may include quotations, comics, a single word, or other prompts. Students will have 7 minutes to see, select, prepare, and deliver a speech in response to the prompt. Speaking notes are permitted. Students will have a total of 7 minutes for both preparation and speaking. A 15 second grace period will be given to read the prompts prior to preparation time beginning.