



Dear Forensics Colleague,

On behalf of the Berry College Forensics Union and the Novice National Forensic Association, we invite you to join us for the 43rd annual Novice National Individual Events & Debate Tournament. This year's tournament will be held in-person at Berry College in Rome Ga on Feb 27th - March 1st, 2026.

Novice Nationals is a collegial event with quality competition that advances forensic education for first-year competitors. Historically, competitors from Novice Nationals have continued on to qualify for elimination rounds at AFA, NFA, NPDA, and Interstate Oratory. More than 230 different colleges and universities have attended at least one Novice Nationals Tournament.

The tournament this year will offer:

- Convenient online registration, updates, and changes available at speechwire.com
- Traditional events as well as Impromptu Sales, Slam Poetry, and Public Narrative
- Parliamentary and IPDA Debate

We hope that you will join us for the 43rd Novice Nationals. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Matt Delzer
Director of Forensics
Berry College
Executive Director, NNFA



43rd Novice Nationals: Tentative Tournament Schedule

We will adjust this schedule if we need octafinals in Parli or IPDA, or if we have more than 5 IE semifinals. We'll also condense the schedule whenever possible.

- Flight A: Extemporaneous, Prose, Rhetorical Criticism, Impromptu Sales
- Flight B: Dramatic Duo, Impromptu, Informative, Program Oral Interpretation, Slam Poetry
- Flight C: After Dinner Speaking, Drama Interpretation, Persuasion, Poetry, Public Narrative

Friday, February 27	
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	Registration
2:00 p.m.	Parli, Rd. 1, IPDA Rd. 1
3:15 p.m.	Parli Rd. 2, IPDA Rd. 2
4:30 p.m.	Parli Rd. 3, IPDA Rd. 3
5:45 p.m.	Parli Rd. 4, IPDA Rd. 4
7:00 p.m.	Parli/IPDA Quarterfinals

Saturday, February 28	
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	IE Registration
8:00 a.m.	Parli/IPDA Semifinals
9:15 a.m.	Extemp Prep
9:30 a.m.	IE Flight A, Rd. 1
10:45 a.m.	IE Flight B, Rd. 1
12:00 p.m.	Lunch Break
12:30 p.m.	Parli/ IPDA Finals
1:45 p.m.	IE Flight C, Rd. 1
3:00 p.m.	Extemp Prep
3:15 p.m.	IE Flight A, Rd. 2
4:30 p.m.	IE Flight B, Rd. 2
5:45 p.m.	IE Flight C, Rd. 2

Sunday, March 1	
8:00 a.m.	Extemp Prep
8:30 a.m.	IE Flight A, Rd. 3
9:45 a.m.	IE Flight B, Rd. 3
11:00 a.m.	IE Flight C, Rd. 3
12:00 p.m.	Lunch Break
1:30 p.m.	IE Flight A & B Finals
2:45 p.m.	IE Flight B & C Finals
4:30 p.m. or ASAP	Awards



Entry Details

What is a novice?

A novice is defined as a student in their first or second semester or equivalent of intercollegiate competition. Three tournaments shall constitute a semester of eligibility. If a student has competed at a national collegiate tournament (PRP, CEDA, NDT, AFA, NFA etc.), then a student will not have eligibility in that genre (individual events/debate).

1. If a student has never competed in individual events on the intercollegiate level, the student may compete in any individual event, provided she/he has 2 or less semesters or equivalents of competition in individual events.
2. If a student has never competed in debate on the intercollegiate level, the student may compete in parliamentary, provided she/he has 2 or less semesters of competition in parliamentary debate.
3. If a student has competed during portions of at least 4 semesters – no matter how many tournaments that student has competed in – the student will not be eligible in the 5th semester. This applies separately to debate and individual events.
4. Violation of these rules will result in disqualification of the student with a forfeiture of all points earned.

Entries

Judging Requirements

- One judge for every 6 IE slots
- One judge for every 2 Parli teams
- One judge for every 2 IPDA competitors
- Judges can be mixed & matched. For example, a judge can cover 6 IE entries and either 2 Parli teams or 2 IPDA entries.

If you have additional eligible judges interested in serving as hired judges, please contact Matt Delzer.

Entry Deadline

The entry deadline is Monday, February 23, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. Eastern Time on speechwire.com.

Entry Fees

Membership Fees

School membership fee of \$40, included in entry fees for Novice Nationals.

Individuals / teams not attending Novice Nationals may make an individual membership payment of \$10 to maintain membership status, voting privileges, etc.

- Covered IE Entries \$8/Slot



- Covered RT Entries \$25/Slot
- Covered IPDA Entries \$30/Slot
- Covered Parli Entries \$30/Team
- Uncovered IE Entries \$20/Slot
- Uncovered RT Entries \$40/Slot
- Uncovered IPDA Entries \$60/Slot
- Uncovered Parli Entries \$60/Team

Add/Drop Fees

In addition, if your school must drop from the tournament, you are still responsible for paying the appropriate drop fees mentioned below. Schools dropping well after the deadline have affected the tournament in the past.

- Drop Fees after February 28, 2024 \$10/Slot
- Drop Fees after February 29, 2024 \$20/Slot
- Drops at registration or in round \$40/Slot

Late drop changes should come to the attention of Matt Delzer at mdelzer@berry.edu or 706.378.2919.

Entry Options

All entries must be made via www.speechwire.com

Team Sweepstakes & Pentathlon Awards

Prelim / Elim Points

Points are awarded based on preliminary and elimination rounds. A school's top 4 entries in each event earn preliminary round sweepstakes points, while all elimination round contestants earn points for their schools. The formula for awarding points are as follows:

- Debate Prelims: 3 points for each win (maximum of 4 teams per school per division)
- IE Prelims: 3 points for each first place finish, 2 points for each second place finish, and 1 point for each third place finish (up to 4 entries).
- IE Elims:
 - 3 points for non-advancing semi-finalists
 - 12-10-8-7-5-4-3 points will be award for 1st – 7th finishes
- Debate Elims:
 - 3 points for non-advancing octo-finalists
 - 5 points for non-advancing quarter-finalists
 - 8 points for non-advancing semi-finalists
 - 10 points for second place
 - 12 points for first place



Pentathlon Awards

- Pentathlon entries will be scored in the same way as Team Sweepstakes, with a student's top 5 events counting.
 - Students must enter at least 1 platform event (limited prep or public address), 1 interpretation event, and 1 non-traditional event.
- Ties in pentathlon will be resolved using the following system:
 - Number of 1st place finishes
 - Number of total events in finals
 - Number of 2nd places in finals
- For the purposes of equating debate with individual events, semis count as a 3rd place finish and quarters count as a 5th place finish. Octos do not count for purposes of breaking pentath ties.

Team Awards

- We will award team awards in three divisions based on entry sizes.
- We will also award a quality award, which will be based on the average number of points earned per entry. In order to be eligible for the quality award, a school must have a minimum of 2 students and 4 entries.

General Rules: Individual Events

Platform Events

- All speeches should be original, constructed and delivered by the student.
- Speeches should adhere to the NFA Code of Ethics, Rules and Procedures. Plagiarism in any form is prohibited.
- Source citation should be specific, accurate and honest.
- Contestants may not use the same cutting/content or any portion of that cutting/content in more than one event.
- Although limited notes are permitted, speeches should be delivered from memory. Audio-visual aids are permitted.
- Computers & Internet Use in Extemporaneous Speaking: Novice Nationals will allow the use of computers and Internet use during extemp prep. Hosts are not responsible for providing Internet access, but will accommodate Internet access whenever feasible. Thus, students may use cell technology, hotspot enabling, etc. during prep time. The safety of computers is strictly the responsibility of students & teams. Host institutions cannot guarantee safety of equipment and students should not leave computers and other electronic devices unattended in extemp prep rooms.
- Maximum time limit of 10 minutes for prepared speeches, 7 minutes for Extemporaneous with 30 minutes of prep time, 7 minutes for Impromptu, and 9 minutes for Impromptu Sales.



Interpretation Events

- Use of manuscript is required.
- Contestants may not use the same cutting/content of any portion of that cutting/content in more than one event.
- Maximum time is 10 minutes, 5 minutes for Slam Poetry, including any introductory and/or transitional comments.*
- *Unlike other event rules, minimum and maximum time limits provided for ALL events are enforced at the discretion of the individual judge rather than the association.

General Rules: Debate

Parliamentary debate will follow the NPDA guidelines and will have the following time limits: 7-8-8-8-4-5, with 15 minutes of prep time. Exceptions from NPDA guidelines: *Flex time will not be used, Warm room will not be provided.*

IPDA will follow IPDA guidelines and will have the following time limits: 5-2-6-2-3-5-3, with 30 minutes of prep time. Exceptions from IPDA guidelines: *No coaches review, competitors will not enter the judging pool, and no professional division.*

Students competing at Novice Nationals may work with each other during prep time. Coaches and varsity team members may coach. Prep rooms will not be guaranteed. Judges must pick up their ballots before topic announcement and attend their round on time.

Event Descriptions: Traditional Platform Events

After Dinner Speaking

- **PURPOSE:** A speech designed to entertain by advancing a relevant point through the use of humor.
- **DESCRIPTION:** After-Dinner speeches are characterized by humorous content development, creativity, uniqueness, timeliness, clear organization, significance, credible sources, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose and express respect of the audience.
- **RULES:** See general rules listed above.

Informative

- **PURPOSE:** A speech designed to clarify and/or explain a significant topic.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Informative speeches are characterized by in-depth content development that likely enhances audience understanding beyond what was previously



known, well-established topic relevance, clear organization, credible sources, timeliness, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose.

- **RULES:** See general rules listed above.

Persuasion

- **PURPOSE:** A speech designed to influence audience attitudes and/or actions.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Persuasive speeches are characterized by sound rhetorical strategy, well-supported arguments, credible sources, effective organization, timeliness, significance, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose.
- **RULES:** See general rules listed above.

Rhetorical Criticism

- **PURPOSE:** A criticism designed to describe, analyze and evaluate the rhetorical dynamics related to a significant rhetorical artifact.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Rhetorical Criticisms are characterized by enlightening critical insight, in-depth analysis, description and application of rhetorical principles or a theoretical framework, topic significance, credible sources, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose.
- **RULES:** See general rules listed above.

Extemporaneous Speaking

- **PURPOSE:** An argument designed to motivate audience consideration of a significant topic related to a current domestic, international, or economic issue or event.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Extemporaneous speeches are characterized by content that is directly and specifically topical, clearly stated and well-supported arguments, demonstration of a knowledge of current events, credible sources, timeliness, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose.
- **RULES:**
 - Speakers will choose from three questions during extemp draw.
 - Topics will be drawn from the general area of current events after September 1, 2019. One round will be foreign affairs, one round will be domestic affairs, and one round will be economic. Semis and finals will be a mixture of questions.
 - A notecard is permitted.
 - Extemporaneous speeches must be original works of the speaker. Consultation with coaches, colleagues, or any other individual during draw is strictly prohibited.
 - Speakers may consult newspapers, magazines, journals, books, websites, and blogs as long as the materials are void of notation and/or deliberate alteration.
 - Electronic storage of materials is permitted.
 - Computers and Internet use is allowed during extemp prep. Speakers are responsible for providing a laptop and maintaining its safety. Cell technology, hotspot enabling, etc. may also be used during preparation, but communication with anyone inside or outside of the draw room is strictly prohibited.
 - All material should be immediately retrievable upon the judges' request.



- While speakers are encouraged to draw from their own knowledge of current events, under no circumstances may prepared outlines or materials be used. The speech must be written after the questions have been drawn.
- Maximum of 30 minutes for preparation.
- Speakers shall have 5-7 minutes to present.

Impromptu

- **PURPOSE:** A speech designed to motivate audience engagement of a significant topic.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Impromptu speeches are characterized by a clearly articulated argument comprising a specific, direct response to the given prompt, well-supported claims, clear structure, uniqueness, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose.
- **RULES:**
 - Speakers will construct and deliver an original argument in response to a prompt.
 - Topics may be historical, cultural, or fictional in nature.
 - Combined time limit for speech preparation and delivery is 7 minutes. The speech itself may last no longer than 5 minutes.
 - Notecards are permitted.
 - Standard time signals denoting the end of preparation time, conclusion of each minute thereafter, and 30-second warnings should be given verbally. The last 30 seconds and closing 5-second marks should be given nonverbally.
 - Students who have yet to speak are not permitted to watch their preceding competitors.
 - Each judge per section will receive the prompt and their ballots and is responsible for distributing the prompt to the contestants.

Event Descriptions: Traditional Interpretation

Drama Interpretation

- **PURPOSE:** An interpretive performance of literature by individuals designed to engage the audience through a rendering of the literature in its intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic entirety.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Students choose, excerpt and/or cut (with due respect paid to issues of literary integrity), and perform a selection or selections of dramatic material of literary merit.
- **RULES:**
 - Acceptable material includes plays, stage/screen/radio material, character-centered news media, and documentaries.
 - If news media is used, it should be referenced against the original source to ensure the piece is not prose.
 - Material that is not genre specific is permissible if the performance focuses on character development.



Dramatic Duo

- **PURPOSE:** An interpretive performance by two individuals designed to engage the audience through the interaction of multiple characters and through a rendering of the literature in its intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic entirety.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Students choose, excerpt and/or cut (with due respect paid to issues of literary integrity), and perform a selection or selections of original and/or published material of literary merit. This is not an acting event. Selected literature must present the perspectives of multiple characters, representing those different characters using voice and/or body. The focus of this event is the interaction of multiple and related voices.
- **RULES:**
 - As long as the piece emphasizes character interaction, any material of literary merit may be incorporated.
 - Use of manuscript is required.
 - No physical contact is permitted between performers.
 - Off-stage focus is required.
 - Costumes, props, etc. are not allowed.

Poetry

- **PURPOSE:** An interpretive performance of poetry designed to engage the audience through a rendering of the literature in its intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic entirety.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Students choose, excerpt and/or cut (with due respect paid to issues of literary integrity), and perform a selection or selections poetry of literary merit.
- **RULES:** Acceptable material includes poems, lyrics, and any other selections with poetic elements.

Program of Oral Interpretation

- **PURPOSE:** An interpretive performance of literature and other selections of literary merit that develops a central, meritorious theme.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Students choose, excerpt, and/or cut (with due respect paid to issues of literary merit) from the genres of prose, poetry, and/or drama and perform a thematic selection.
- **RULES:**
 - Genres of prose, poetry, and/or drama may be incorporated into the program.
 - A central, meritorious theme must be distinguishable.
 - Characters should be distinct through the use of verbal and non-verbal rhetorical choices.

Prose

- **PURPOSE:** An interpretive performance of prose designed to engage the audience through a rendering of the literature in its intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic entirety.



- **DESCRIPTION:** Students choose, excerpt and/or cut (with due respect paid to issues of literary integrity), and perform a selection or selections of prose material of literary merit.
- **RULES:**
 - Short stories, novels, essays, and story-centered news media are permitted in prose interpretation.
 - News media material should be referenced against the original source to ensure it is not drama.
 - If the source is not specific to a genre, material in which the development of a story is the focus is acceptable.

Non-Traditional Event Descriptions

Impromptu Sales

- **PURPOSE:** A speech designed to motivate the audience to purchase or invest in a product or corporation.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Impromptu sales speeches are characterized by articulate argument, clear response to the object/service/investment/slogan, creativity, strong structure, convincing claims, individuality, and delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose while respecting the audience.
- **RULES:**
 - A standard notecard may be consulted, but all other notebooks and sources of information are prohibited.
 - Maximum time to prepare and present is 9 minutes total.
 - Round 1: Object – Students will be given an object, and their goal is to sell that object to an audience. Students should take the object as it stands. The student may choose to elaborate upon the object, but may not take the object on the metaphorical level. Students may endow the object with qualities, but cannot transform the object into something else (thus, a pen can have special qualities, but a pen cannot turn into a ball).
 - Round 2: Sell a service. Students will be given a description of a service, including a short “fact sheet” of this particular service (for example, you are the proprietor of a dog walking service). Their goal is to sell that service to the audience.
 - Round 3: Sell an intangible object. Students will be given an object to sell that they can't physically hold in their hands (for example, a car). They will be given a picture and/or some information about the object. Their goal is to sell that object to the audience.
 - Semifinals: “Shark Tank” round. Students will be given either a product or service, and the goal is to convince the audience to invest in that product or service. The round is designed similar to the television show “Shark Tank.” The impromptu sales speech would be the initial presentation to the panel. Unlike the show, the judges won't be negotiating with the contestants for the actual investment. Students, however, may decide what investment they would like the judges to commit to. Note. In this round only, judges may ask 1 clarifying question of each contestant at the conclusion of her/his speech. Students may take approximately 30 seconds to respond to the judge.



- Finals: Slogan, loosely based on the tournament's location. For example: "Nebraska Beef: It's what's for dinner" or "Dell's Lemonade: Rhode Island's Finest." Students will create a speech based on that slogan.

Public Narrative

- **PURPOSE:** A narrative speech designed to inspire audience belief or action through the sharing of a student's personal experience.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Public Narratives are marked by clear development of the speaker's personal story, enhancement of identification between the audience and issue or set of issues, emphasis of urgency, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose. (For guidance on developing a public narrative, see Marshall Ganz work.)
- **RULES:**
 - Maximum time is 10 minutes.
 - Speeches should be delivered from a manuscript.
 - The presence of a manuscript is not optional.
 - Narrative speeches should not be expected to display a 3-point structure with previews and other overt organizational devices.
 - The story should serve as the primary organizational factor.

Slam Poetry

- **PURPOSE:** A performance of original slam poetry designed to engage and/or confront the audience with a creative, poetic, performative response to a significant social problem or issue.
- **DESCRIPTION:** Students compose, develop, and perform original works of slam poetry.
- **RULES:**
 - Use of manuscript is permitted.
 - Selections must be original pieces developed by the student.
 - Introductory remarks are not necessary.
 - Maximum time is 5 minutes.