

## RESOLUTIONS

### What are Our Goals as Forensics Educators for the Public Speaking Events?

RESOLVED: National organizations and individual programs need to embrace assessment criteria relevant to institutional and accrediting agency requirements in forensics. National organizations should devise assessment infrastructure that will inform their constituencies based on pedagogical goals and values. Assessment criteria should be fashioned to address disciplinary, generic and individual event learning outcomes. While the structure of this conference is insufficient to develop official documents and content related institutional assessment, we strongly support the content that has been supported by the body that provides starting points for the development of assessment criteria.

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\*\*The PUBLIC ADDRESS panel began a discussion on the operationalization of assessment criteria for public address events with informative speaking. Noting the limitations of time and scholarly resources at the conference, we agreed to include a list of starting points for the developmental process that emerged from our discussion. A review of the general themes appears below.

#### INFORMATIVE SPEAKING:

- Justifies the importance and relevance of the topic or subject for the audience.
- Emphasizes description and clarification, over position and or support.
- To create understanding by relaying information on a significant topic
- Technical information
- Utilizing a variety of stylistic devices and rhetorical strategies to synthesize and clarify information for the audience
- Meet the audience's informational needs and expectations that seeks to improve quality of life

RESOLVED: Real-world speech contexts often require the use of personal narrative to humanize the speaker and endear her/him to the audience (in alignment with Aristotle's notion of goodwill). Additionally, communication theorists have long contended that narrative is an essential sense-making mechanism in human communication. Since this is an attribute of rhetorical situations subsequent collegiate forensics education, forensics pedagogy should embrace its inclusion in public address. Teaching of personal narrative and its topical and ethical use in public address events is strongly encouraged.

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\*\*In order to promote this effort, two experimental event outlines are provided below.

#### A. Experimental Event: **public narrative**

Rationale for the experimental event is identified in Escaping the "Uncanny Valley": Humanizing Forensic Address Through Public Narrative by Randy Richardson (Berry College) included in the proceedings for this conference.

Event Description: Students will share a personal narrative designed to inspire social or political belief and/or invite social or political action. The speech will develop a student's personal story, enhance audience identification with an issue or set of issues, and characterize the urgency of the moment. The speech may be delivered from manuscript, notes, memory or any combination thereof. Maximum time limit: 10 minutes.

#### B. Experimental Event: **personal narrative**

Rationale for the experimental event is identified in Escaping the "Uncanny Valley": Humanizing Forensic Address Through Public Narrative by Randy Richardson (Berry College) included in the proceedings for this conference.

Event Description: Students will articulate an important personal value or belief and share a narrative that inspired this conviction. Notes are optional. Maximum time limit: 5 minutes.

While individual tournament hosts are encouraged to devise and implement experimental events in order to provide students unique speech and performance opportunities, all tournament hosts that affiliate with a particular national/state organization are strongly encouraged to host the experimental events sponsored by said organization during invitational tournaments. If a national association is not sponsoring an experimental event, individual tournament hosts are encouraged to champion experimental events at their discretion (i.e. hosting editorial impromptu sponsored by NFA in 2009 and 2011 every year).

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RESOLVED: Without compromising the value of originality, we encourage more process oriented teaching techniques. Reconceptualize normative performance approaches as technical training and mastery of foundational principles in public address. Performance conventions can be useful teaching mechanisms when accompanied by explanation from coaches that establish the theoretical and pedagogical justification for students.

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\*\*A quick reference guide of teaching suggestions submitted by panel attendees:

- Recognize the utility of imitation in speech writing and delivery training (i.e. rhetorical traditions of declamation and amplification)

- Coach transparency: coaches should articulate pedagogical choice making to students in the context of forensics training
- *An illustration in the area of public address*: Forensics educators should dedicate themselves to emphasizing the foundational principles of rhetoric. For instance, emphasize the links between the rhetorical tradition and speaker choice making related to argumentative models in persuasion (i.e. linking the choice to parameters of events (time), audience, context and topic).
- Adjudicator transparency: adjudicators should articulate pedagogical choice making to students in the context of competition (i.e. ballots).
- Provide reference guides for forensics students in order to reinforce the relationship between forensics activities and foundational principles in communication. These guides may provide information related to the speech training and development process, as well as, theoretical foundations.

RESOLVED: Rhetorical criticism: Forensic educators are encouraged to strongly consider the pedagogical goals of contest rhetorical criticism, with particular regard to the consideration of the mission of analytic education in the event. Specifically, educators should address the space between analytical approaches utilized in scholarly and contest rhetorical criticisms.

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RESOLVED: Encourage the forensic community to reject the false dichotomy of education and competition.

Forensics educators should embrace a conceptualization of collegiate forensics as a mode of tutor-style teaching, which endeavors into multi-institutional learning spaces (i.e. intercollegiate contests). Competition is not a separate mission from education in that intercollegiate competition is a learning environment essential to forensics education. Intercollegiate competition provides students opportunities to experience student performances and performance evaluation.

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RESOLVED: How Does The Operation of the "Forensic Circuit" Address Our Goals as Forensic Educators: The End/Purpose of Forensics

As we envision and re-envision collegiate forensics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we caution all stakeholders to be cognizant of not getting caught up in the rules and structures of our activity. Instead, we recommend that all discussion and deliberation about forensics begin with a consideration of the "end" or purpose of forensics.

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#### **Overview of Director of Forensics and Burnout**

RESOLVED: Because the focus on the Health and Wellbeing of Forensics has successfully brought many productive changes for the student population, we encourage the Forensic Community to focus on the health and wellbeing of the

coaches. Because of the extensive burnout of coaches, each school should clearly identify the roles of the forensic staff.

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\*\*Some helpful ways the community could work together to decrease burnout would be by either looking into or adopting the following examples: providing a mentoring and or training program for new coaches, creating ways for the students on the team to take "ownership" via administrative roles, peer coaching etc.

#### **A Pedagogical Reframing of the Ballot**

RESOLVED: Because we believe the ballot is a valuable pedagogical tool, we encourage coaches to help students seek the validity in *all* ballots.

APPROVED

As the ballot is the primary vehicle for assessing a performance, we encourage judges to be mindful of the educational value of the feedback they provide.

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#### **Changing the structure of the ballot**

RESOLVED: In order to maximize the full pedagogical potential inherent in the judge-student relationship and assist all judges in writing more constructive and pedagogically sound ballots, we encourage tournament directors to consider alternate ballot formats.

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\*\*Examples may include, but are not limited to, incorporating Cicero's five canons of rhetoric and/or including the respective event descriptions.

#### **Scheduling Tournaments**

RESOLVED: In order to promote transparency, we encourage directors to describe their sectioning mechanisms, tabbing methods, and sweepstakes calculations in tournament invitations.

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In order to maximize parity in competitor assessment, we propose national tournaments adopt random scheduling methods for preliminary rounds of individual events.

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#### **Lincoln Douglas Scheduling**

Because the administration of Lincoln-Douglas debate at the NFA National Tournament demands a tremendous amount of resources from both the tournament administration and the community of teams competing, we recommend considering alternative scheduling systems that might condense the event.

\*\*Such systems may include but are not limited to four preliminary rounds, only presetting one round, and/or having more judges per round.

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### Redistricting the AFA-NIET

In order to provide a more accurate representation of the AFA-NIET membership, both democratically and competitively, we strongly encourage the AFA-NIET committee to consider options for redrawing districts.

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### Culture of Qualification for the AFA-NIET

Before making additional changes to the structure of their qualification process and/or tournament administration we encourage the AFA-NIET to reassess and define their purpose as an organization and as a national tournament. Upon completion of this examination, we encourage the AFA-NIET committee to align their qualification system to best meet that purpose, if necessary.

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## Forensics and Service Learning and Community

### Service Learning

1. As a best practice, teams should incorporate at least one service learning project each season.
  - a. Recommendations:
    - i. Forensics journals should devote at least one article, or an entire issue, to the implementation of service learning projects.
    - ii. Organizations should devote a section of their websites to possible service learning projects.
    - iii. Teams should publicize their squad's participation in service learning projects for public access.

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### Forensics/Assessment

2. As a best practice, each forensics program should provide admissions and administrators with a short description of forensics easily understandable to those unfamiliar with the activity.

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3. As a best practice, forensics directors should generate affective, behavioral and cognitive means for assessing their individual programs including more humanistic means of assessment.

- a. Recommendation:

- i. Each national organization should devote a section of their website to guidelines for learning outcomes.

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### Community

4. We encourage the efforts of the NFL and The Elementary and Secondary Education Section of NCA to do the following:
  - a. Lobby state education agencies to require speech communication as a high school graduation requirement.
  - b. Require said courses to be taught by teachers licensed/certified in communication.

- c. Collegiate institutions should aggressively recruit students to be licensed/certified as secondary teachers in communication.

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Resolved: That forensic programs should be encouraged to gather and present qualitative/quantitative research which documents the potential benefits of student participation in forensics.

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Resolved: That forensic programs should develop educational mission statements which: A) connect them to the general mission statements/strategic plans of their home institutions; and B) articulate strategic goals to meet specific criteria for national accreditation standards, including but not limited to diversity, social responsibility, and intellectual inquiry.

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Resolved: That individual forensic programs should adopt a set of student learning objectives/outcomes.

APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following three educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to all competitive events: 1) The student should recognize the transferability of what they learn to other non-forensic contexts (e.g., professional, personal, and societal); 2) The student should demonstrate good audience participation skills which honor other speakers by evidencing the ideals of collegiality, professionalism, and civility; 3) The student should demonstrate an ability to face competitive situations with confidence, aplomb, and steadily maintained self-esteem.

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Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to both impromptu and extemp: The student should be able to develop a thesis, assert subordinate claims, and select evidence

which are all directly relevant to the original intent of the prompt.

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Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following five educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to impromptu speaking: 1) The student should effectively uphold a claim with support drawn from a wide array of evidentiary types and sources; 2) Whenever possible, the student should examine the interplay between the rhetoric (prompt) and the original rhetor (source); 3) With a minimal amount of time to prepare, the student should craft an original and prepared in-the-moment speech which is clear and well reasoned; 4) The student should synthesize and connect their own unique knowledge base to a prompt in support of a claim; 5) The student should demonstrate an understanding and analysis of the original prompt by providing an interpretation which fully accounts for all of its components.

APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following three educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to extemporaneous speaking: 1) The student should effectively uphold a claim which is primarily supported by externally sourced knowledge; 2) The student should ethically and skillfully craft, implement, and utilize an information database; 3) The student should demonstrate a nuanced and well-informed understanding of current world events.

APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to research, develop, and share assessment instruments with forensic organizations for national dissemination.

APPROVED

Resolved: That tournament directors should provide participants with a list (as complete as feasible) of the learning objectives associated with each event.

APPROVED

Resolved: That developmental conferences and national forensic organizations are encouraged to adopt and circulate educational learning objectives/outcomes for each event.

APPROVED

Resolved: That tournament directors should select varied, challenging, and educationally appropriate impromptu prompts that encourage creative analysis and speech development.

APPROVED

Resolved: That tournament directors should provide schools attending their tournaments with the event and prompt formats for limited preparation events.

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Resolved: That tournament directors should explore the use of online research during extemporaneous prep.

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Resolved: Unless tournament rules specify otherwise, tournament directors are encouraged to remind adjudicators that the effective use or non-use of notes in limited preparation events should not be a meaningful criterion for judging.

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Resolved: That the forensics community should encourage the steady development and pursuit of experimental events.

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Resolved: That the forensics community should recognize the use of invitational rhetoric as a legitimate mode of performance

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### What are Our Goals as Forensics Educators for the Oral Interpretation Events?

Resolved: In forensic practice “oral interpretation” shall be called “performance of literature”

Justification: More consistent with current practice and pedagogical objectives

APPROVED

Resolved: In performance of literature events, beyond providing title(s) and author(s) at some point during the performance, other identifiable original commentary is optional.

Justification: Recent bias toward argument/persuasion in performance of literature over other purposes such as informing or entertaining. This often manifests in extensive introductions.

APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic organizations should adopt the following ethical use of literature guidelines

*Ethical Use of Literature in Individual Events (as adapted from AFA-NIET Charter/Bylaws)*

A. Contestants may not rewrite a literary selection so the work differs from the original text. This includes:

1. adding scenes or lines to the performed cutting. (Although an occasional line might be added, especially if a character has been deleted, this practice should be discouraged.)
2. rewriting the ending of a work.

3. rewriting lines to change the gender of a person or a character.

B. Contestants should not deceitfully distort core known characteristics of a text.

C. Contestants may not perform a text in a category in which it does not meet the event description.

D. Contestants performing original literature should be held to the same standards as articulated in section A.

Justification: Rewording to reflect current practice.

APPROVED

**Resolved: The performance of literature events be re-categorized as follows:**

Justification: Growing difficulty in clear genre distinctions and lack of diversity of narrator perspectives performed.

#### *Performance of Monologue*

Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which use the first or second-person narrative voice. A minimal presence of dialogue, as filtered through the narrative voice, is allowed. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

1. Create immediacy between audience and single well developed character
2. Emphasis on internalization

#### *Performance of Dialogue*

Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which include third-person narration and/or dialogue between two or more characters. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

1. Showing the conflict and subtext found in interaction

2. Use of voice and body to differentiate between characters
3. Comfort with the versatility of the 3rd person voice
4. Ability to work within the "4<sup>th</sup> wall"

#### *Performance of Poetry*

Selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of language. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

1. Focus on rhythm of language
2. Ability to create vivid visual images through the use of a variety of literary devices

#### *Duo Performance*

Selections of material of literary merit, presented by two individuals, which may be drawn from more than one source. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc, are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

1. Interaction through listening and response to another performer
2. Nuanced pacing

#### *Performance of Literature Program*

A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from a balance of material from each of the other solo individual performance of literature events. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme. The material must be pulled from at least three separate pieces of literature. Only one selection may be original. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

1. Understand power of intertextuality
2. Exposure to multiple literature sources

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## FORENSIC LEADERSHIP

Resolved: Whereas, the rhetorical excesses of our time and our society demand scrutiny, and whereas social and technological developments in communication challenge the development of critical thinking and whereas a pervasive insularity is harmful to the forensic community and as forensic professionals we are first and foremost educators, be it resolved that civic engagement should be encouraged through forensic education.

APPROVED

Resolved: COFO should create a committee with web development expertise to assess and manage the online forensic presence.

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Resolved: The forensic community in general and national organizations in particular should develop a centralized online library to encourage coaches to contribute:

- a. Materials about coaching individual events.
- b. Materials on tournament management and tabulation practices to serve as a resource guide for tournament directors.
- c. Materials related to the training of judges.
- d. Materials related to promotion and tenure.
- e. Any additional materials pertaining to pedagogy, program or professional development.

APPROVED

Resolved: An online resource with regional and national contacts of individuals willing to provide advice or mentor-

ing to new forensic professionals should be created.

APPROVED

Resolved: The forensic community should be encouraged to consistently include applied sessions focusing specifically on forensic pedagogy, training & professional development at NCA specifically as well as other conferences.

APPROVED

Resolved: Forensics organizations should exhaust all avenues to inform and seek input from all members on potential changes that would impact school participation.

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Resolved: The national forensic organizations of AFA, NFA, DSR-TKA, Pi Kappa Delta, and Phi Rho Pi together should seek out and employ an external assessment organization to perform an individual events health audit.

APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic professionals should be encouraged to participate in joint research projects and professional development activities with undergraduate & graduate students.

APPROVED

Whereas, the leaders of the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, rediscovered the educational benefits of speech competition, founded several collegiate programs and professional organizations, and established numerous tournaments and perfected their management in a time of great technological change and challenge. And whereas they sacrificed inordinate amounts of time, money, often careers and professional standing, and more, for the benefit of forensic activity. And whereas, they deserve recognition, appreciation and honor, be it resolved that forensic organizations should establish leadership advisory boards for programs of benefit to the larger forensic community such as developing historical leadership narratives, preserving archival information, serving as advisors for new or endangered programs, and acting as mentors and ambassadors of the forensic community.

APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic organizations should develop campaigns to actively recruit new forensic programs.

APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic organizations should develop strategies and means of supporting retaining existing forensic programs.

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### POSSIBLE ASSESSMENT TOOLS

#### Activities throughout the year:

1. Student/Coach journals
2. Various worksheets students can complete to help guide tasks (i.e. cutting guide)
3. Compile yearly portfolios of student work
4. Coach performance reviews for each student
5. Track ballots

#### Formal Survey Questions:

- pre/post test
- administer end of each year
- administer when exit team

- I. Awareness of Disciplinary Influences:
  - a. What is the difference between performance of literature and acting?
  - b. What is the purpose of the presence of the book?
- II. Text selection
  - a. What characteristics constitute literary merit?
  - b. What specific characteristics translate into performance worthy literature?
- III. Textual analysis: structural and aesthetic
  - a. Outline the dramatic structure of one of your literature pieces.
  - b. What performance choices did you make to communicate this structure to the audience?

#### IV. Integrity of text

- a. Describe the process you used to cut your material?
- b. Justify how your final cutting upheld the integrity of the original text?

#### V. Effective and authentic vocal and physical performance

- a. What performance choices did you make to create authentic characters and/or narrative voice(s).
- b. What consistent ballot comments did you receive which helped identify your physical and vocal performance strengths and weaknesses?