

October 6, 2020



Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Mt. San Antonio College is excited to invite you to the “October Surprise” Free Invitational on October 24-25th, 2020. Help us kick off spooky season with our full-service, 100 percent virtual tournament, which will be held synchronously through 8x8. We are happy to host this tournament in lieu of the traditional *Watson-Lancer* which was cancelled this year.

This tournament is **free!** This means that it is especially important that we have no uncovered entries. Please make sure you have enough judges.

To get into the holiday spirit, this tournament will feature a costume contest where your students can submit a picture of their DIY costumes for the chance to win a special surprise! Please stay tuned...more information on the tournament homepage!

This tournament is a great point in the middle of the semester to have your students showcase their events. This tournament will have three prelim rounds for IE's, giving you ample opportunity to get even more great feedback from judges. Hosted the weekend before Halloween, we will have plenty of tricks and treats for judges and competitors alike. Join us for a fun weekend; with NPDA, NFA-LD, and IPDA on Saturday and Individual Events on Sunday.

KEY POINTS:

- **Registration is due by Tuesday, October 20th at 6:00 PM Pacific time on ForensicsTournament.net**
- **All university and community college students are welcome to attend.**
- Because this is an online tournament, slow internet speeds can cause issues for speakers, judges, and tournament staff. Test your internet speed on SpeakEasy.net. Anything less than 6 mbps upload/download will cause video/audio problems.
- We strongly recommend each school has judges on standby who are familiar with internet tournaments in case there are internet issues for their originally registered judges.
- We will offer four (4) prelim rounds of Open and Novice (divisions might be collapsed due to lack of entries) and the potential for two (2) outrounds of NFA-LD, NPDA and IPDA debate on Saturday. Sunday will offer three (3) rounds of all individual events for Open and Novice competitors and one (1) potential outround.
- The awards ceremony will be live-streamed on YouTube.

Join us for some great competition and even better memories.

Hope to virtually see you there!

The Coaching Staff at Mt. San Antonio College

(Please contact Tournament Director Thuy Pham at tpham91@mtsac.edu for questions!)

PLEASE BE FAMILIAR WITH THE PSCFA RULE CHANGES FOR ONLINE COMPETITION:

All rules and guidelines for the October Surprise Invitational will follow those set by PSCFA.

1. Internet Loss/ Connection During Competition:
 - a. IE's Competitors who are giving a speech and lose their internet connection are allowed 3 minutes to reconnect before they forfeit their opportunity to finish the speech. They will then be judged on what was presented before they lost internet.
 - b. Debate Competitors who have their internet disconnect during their speech, the judge will start a running clock until they return to the round then that amount of time over 3 minutes will be deducted from their speech time. If the time for the speech has expired then the debate round will continue with the following speech. Note: In partnered debate, partners cannot finish the speech for the person who dropped.
2. Restrict competitors to the use of a "single camera setup" during the performance.
3. Physical audiences are prohibited from being present for the performance, with the exception of: involuntary audiences (ex: individuals/families who happen to be in the same room), and assistants/aids for individuals with disabilities. Enforcement is up to the discretion of the TD.
4. Prohibit competitors in Duo and RT from competing together in the same physical space in accordance with AFA rules.
5. Prohibit practices that would not be possible in a face-to-face environment (such as motion, video transitions, or audio manipulation) while allowing for the use of screen sharing and virtual visual aids in Individual Events.
6. No persons should participate or contribute to students who are competing during the course of the round.
7. Partners in debate rounds are allowed to communicate with their partner through other lines of communication such as chats, phone calls, other video conferencing platforms, etc.
8. In accordance with NPDA Bylaws; Electronic/laptop flowing by debaters in a round is also acceptable for the coming season. This excludes cutting and pasting previously prepared material as well as flowing done by anyone not in the round on a shared spreadsheet. As with the previous interpretations, this is only for the coming season (2020-2021)

JUDGING

Because this is a free tournament each school must cover its judging commitment. Please bring your coaches to judge or contact any judges you know & trust who are available for hire. In order for this tournament to succeed we need to have plenty of prepared judges. Also, remind your judges of proper protocol in rounds. If you know of any judges available for hire, please send me their contact information.

Debate Commitment: All schools must provide one judge for every two (2) team debate entries or fraction thereof. Penalty fees will be accepted at the discretion of the Tournament Director (If there is sufficient pool of Hired Judges).

Individual Events Commitment: All schools must provide one judge for every five individual event slots per conflict pattern or fraction thereof. **Coaches shall insure the competency of all judges covering your commitment.**

Judges must remain available to judge one round beyond the elimination of their last participant. (All judges are committed to judge the first elimination round).

Entry Responsibilities

ENTRY DEADLINE: All entries are due by 6:00 PM on Tuesday, October 20th.

You can register for the October Surprise Invitational using www.forensicstournament.net.

You may make changes to your entry before Wednesday, October 21st at 6:00 PM. Drops are free if reported by the Wednesday deadline.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24th, 2020			
PARLI Topic Announce: https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseParliTopics		IPDA & NFA-LD IPDA Topic Announce will be in-room with your judge	
10:00 am	Topic announce Rd 1	10:00 am	Strike for Round 1
10:20 am	Round 1	10:30 am	Round 1
11:30 am	Topic Announce Round 2	11:30 am	Strike for Round 2
11:50 am	Round 2	12:00 pm	Round 2
1:00 pm	Topic Announce Round 3	1:00 pm	Strike for Round 3
1:20 pm	Round 3	1:30 pm	Round 3
2:30 pm	Topic Announce Round 4	2:30 pm	Strike for Round 4
2:50 pm	Round 4	3:00 pm	Round 4
4:30 pm	Topic Announce Elim 1	4:30 pm	Strike for Elim 1
4:50 pm	Elim 1 (Bronze Round)	5:00 pm	Elim 1 (Bronze Round)
6:00 pm	Topic Announce Elim 2	6:00 pm	Strike for Elim 2
6:20 pm	Elim 2 (Gold Round)	6:30 pm	Elim 2 (Gold Round)
7:45 pm	AWARDS	7:45 pm	AWARDS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25th, 2020	
9:00 am	Extemp Draw - Round 1 (ext draw: https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseExtempRoom)
9:00 am	Pattern A - Round 1
10:15 am	Pattern B - Round 1
11:30 pm	Extemp Draw - Round 2 (ext draw: https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseExtempRoom)
11:30 pm	Pattern A - Round 2
12:45 pm	Pattern B - Round 2
2:00 pm	Extemp Draw - Round 3 (ext draw: https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseExtempRoom)
2:00 pm	Pattern A - Round 3
3:15 pm	Pattern B - Round 3
4:30 pm	Finals of Round A (ext draw: https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseExtempRoom)
5:45	Finals of Round B
7:45 pm	AWARDS
Pattern A: EXT, PRO, POE, INFO, STE Pattern B: IMP, PERS, DUO, POI, CA, DI Impromptu topics will be distributed in-room with your judge.	

DEBATE (Saturday)

- There will be four prelim rounds and two elim rounds on Saturday, October 24th, 2020.
- Students may only choose **ONE** format of debate to compete in on Saturday.
- 1 Judge is required for every 2 debate entries.
- A 5 minute forfeit rule will be put in place for all debate rounds.
- In accordance with NPDA Bylaws; Electronic/laptop flowing by debaters in a round is also acceptable for the coming season. This excludes cutting and pasting previously prepared material as well as flowing done by anyone not in the round on a shared spreadsheet. As with the previous interpretations, this is only for the coming season (2020-2021)

NPDA:

- Students will receive the topic in the NPDA Live Video Room:
<https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseParliTopics>
- Partners in debate rounds are allowed to communicate with their partner through other lines of communication such as chats, phone calls, other video conferencing platforms, etc.

IPDA:

- Students will conduct topic strikes in their Live Video Competition Room with their judge. Students and judges should be in the Live Video room at the strike time on the provided schedule.
- Judges will have the prompts available on the eBallot and should copy paste it into the chat window.
- Standard striking procedures will then be followed.
- No speaker awards will be given.

NFA-LD:

- Evidence sharing can be facilitated through posting links in the chat window.
- Standard NFA-LD procedures will be followed unless noted.
- Case disclosure is not required by the tournament nor will be facilitated by tournament staff.
- No speaker awards will be given.

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS (Sunday)

- All 11 IE events will be offered (Informative, After Dinner, Comm Analysis, Persuasive, Extemp, Impromptu, Prose, Poetry, Drama, POI, Duo)
- 1 judge is required for every 5 IE entries.
- Students may enter a maximum of two events per pattern.
- Judges are encouraged to adapt their judging paradigms to the new online tournament model and allow for students to sit, wear headphones, etc...

Limited Prep Events:

- Impromptu topics will be provided to each student in the Live Video Competition Room chat box. Judges will need to copy/paste the topics (provided on the eBallots) in the chat window for the students.
- Each student will receive a different set of impromptu topics.
- Extemp questions will be provided for all speakers in a separate Extemp Prep Live Video Room: <https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseExtempRoom>. Students do not need to stay in that room after receiving the questions. The extemp proctor will copy/paste the questions into the chat window at the specified time.
- Extemp Questions in finals will be... surprising...
- This is, admittedly, not the same as a face-to-face tournament. We appreciate your patience and willingness to adapt!

Platform Events:

- Screen sharing to show a PowerPoint or image as a visual aid is now permitted.
- In accordance with PSCFA rules for online tournaments, however, “practices that would not be possible in a face-to-face environment (such as motion, video transitions, or audio manipulation)” are prohibited.

Interp Events:

- Students may, if they desire, stand up while performing to showcase blocking, but are not required.
- Competitors in Duo are prohibited from competing together in the same physical space in accordance with AFA rules

FEES

- NONE!
- But this does mean you must cover all your entries.

Trophies/Awards

- All finalists will receive PDF certificates.

Competitor Logistics / Best Practices

- All competitors must have a verified text number or email saved on ForensicsTournament.net. **Email is preferred.**
- Coaches can save those (& verify) from the Student Roster page.
- Competitors will receive a text/email with their ePostings information. That message will have a link to view all postings for a particular round.
- The ePostings will have a link to a Live Video Room where they will present. Click that link to go to your round. No logins or passwords are required. Judges will be in the same Live Video Room to listen and rank the round. The tournament will be using the [8x8 video conference room software](#).
- Please do not immediately start to talk when entering a Live Video Room. Another student may be already performing. Please wait to be recognized by the judge.
- Students should remain in the Live Video Room as audience members with both video and audio on to the extent possible. Due to audio feedback loops or bandwidth issues, you may need to mute your audio or video feeds. But ideally, react to the performances like in a face-to-face round.
- Students can, if it fits their particular setup, sit while performing. Judges are instructed *not* to penalize students for sitting while speaking since the particular tech setup may work better while sitting.
- Students are also encouraged to use a mic/headphones since audio quality is much better than with an external mic. Judges are instructed *not* to penalize students for having mics/headphones on.
- We recognize this creates some challenges for certain events. But we trust in the ingenuity of the forensics community to adapt to this new environment. Some students may also have better quality video, lighting, sound, etc. We will all try our best.
- **If a student's internet connection drops or audio quality is poor**, they will be encouraged to call into the video conference room and give their speech with audio only. While not ideal, it will ensure all student's speeches are listened to by a judge. You can get the dial-in information from the info icon in the bottom right of the screen.

Judge Logistics / Best Practices

- All judges must have a verified phone or email saved on ForensicsTournament.net
- Coaches can save those (& verify) from the Judge Roster Page
- Judges will receive a text/email with their eBallot link. Judges should click on that link within 5 minutes of receiving it to indicate that they have “picked up” their ballot.
- On your eBallot you will have all of the competitors in that round along with a link to a live video room. Click that link to go to your video conference room.
- Your eBallot will then have a feedback form where you can type your feedback to the student while they are performing or afterwards. The eBallot also has a timer to make it easy to time each speaker.
- If a judge’s keyboard is loud they are encouraged to mute their audio during performances but please leave the video feed on so competitors can receive your visual feedback.
- Judges are instructed *not* to penalize students for sitting while speaking since the student’s particular tech setup may work better while sitting.
- Judges are also instructed *not* to penalize students for having mics/headphones on since audio quality is usually much better using a mic/headset.
- Judges are also instructed *not* to penalize students for lighting, video/audio quality, video background to the extent possible.
- **If a judge's internet connection drops or audio quality is poor**, they will be encouraged to call into the video conference room and listen to speeches with audio only. While not ideal, it will ensure all student’s speeches are listened to by a judge. You can get the dial-in information from the info icon in the bottom right of the screen.
- For Impromptu/Extemp, the eBallot will have the quotations/questions listed on it.

FAQ

- **Where is the Extemp Prep/NPDA Topic announce Room?** Please inform your students to go to the Live Video Rooms for their topic.
 - Parli Topics: <https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseWarmupParliTopics>
 - Extemp Topics: <https://8x8.vc/OctoberSurpriseExtempRoom>
- **How will I get my impromptu quotation?** The judge will have the impromptu quotations on their eBallot. When it's your turn to speak your judge will copy/paste the prompts into the chat window in the Live Video Room.
- **How will we strike IPDA topics?** The judge will have all five IPDA topics on their eBallot. At the start of the round go to your Live Video Room. The judge will copy/paste the resolutions into the chat window. Each team will strike as normal. Turn off your audio/visual feeds in the room during prep. 30 minutes later the round will commence.
- **Where will we prep for NPDA?** Each school has access to practice rooms through ForensicsTournament.net. Please use those rooms. You can also setup separate rooms on zoom, 8x8, google meet, etc...

Please let us know if you have any questions!