

On behalf of the Missouri Association of Forensic Activities (MAFA), it is my pleasure to invite you to the 2026 MAFA State Championship Tournament. This year's MAFA Tournament will be hosted by Webster University. Thank you, our Gaggle of Gorloks, for graciously hosting our state tournament. While this is the Missouri State Tournament, we also welcome our friends from other states.

While the invitation outlines the specifics of the tournament, highlights include:

- Four rounds of NFA-LD, IPDA, TIPDA, or PF with novice divisions where entries warrant
- A full slate of AFA-NST individual events.
- Dinner on Friday and Lunch on Saturday.
- Awards for ALL elimination round competitors in all events.
- Affordable fees.
- An experienced tab staff.

As has become our tradition, the top Missouri student in each event will receive a special award as the State Champion in that event. We will award individual event, debate, and combined sweepstakes for both the overall tournament, as well as entry-based divisions; we will also recognize the top school in quality performance. We also award a Top Forensic award to our top students who participate in both individual events and debate. Additionally, the top two Missouri students in Oratory will qualify to the Interstate Oratorical Contest. We will also recognize all graduating MAFA seniors at our awards ceremony.

Beyond student and school recognition, we encourage you to nominate individuals for the two awards we present annually to professionals in our activity—Coach of the Year Award and Distinguished Service Award. Information for each of these awards is included in this invitation.

Tournament entries are to be made on forensicstournament.net. Entries should be made by no later than 5:00pm Tuesday, February 10th. Fees will be assessed at 7:00 Tuesday, February 10th. Detailed and updated tournament information (links to registration, help desk, extemp draw, etc.) will be emailed with confirmations once fees are assessed Tuesday night.

On behalf of MAFA and its officers, we hope to see you in February!

John Wallis
MAFA President/Tournament Director
Director of Speech and Debate | Assistant Professor
Newberry College
john.wallis@newberry.edu

Gina Jensen
Director of Forensics
Webster University
jensen@webster.edu

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Assistant Director of Forensics
Webster University
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General Tournament Notes

Names and their pronunciation are important; please include pronunciations for participant entries so that we announce names correctly at awards.

All participants will be addressed by their preferred name. Any student who feels theirs is or will be misrepresented—or wishes to change theirs independently—is encouraged to do so by reaching out to MAFA President John Wallis at john.wallis@newberry.edu

If students, judges or general participants have concerns about accessibility at the tournament, we encourage them to reach out to MAFA President John Wallis at john.wallis@newberry.edu for accommodations.

Statement of Support for the Ethical Treatment of Others:

MAFA is committed to ensuring equal opportunity to all persons, regardless of race, color, religious creed, national origin, physical ability status, age, economic status, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. As such, our tournament is opposed to all forms of discrimination and seeks to establish a tolerant atmosphere in which every individual is accorded respect. While we respect the importance of First Amendment freedoms, we respectfully remind tournament participants that with rights come responsibilities. Please refrain from disrespectful or derogatory speech. Our tournament practices a policy of zero tolerance for violations of Title IX. If you wish to register a complaint, please begin with the Tournament Director, John Wallis at john.wallis@newberry.edu, 803-321-5202. All complaints will maintain the confidentiality of all persons involved to the maximum extent possible. However, please remember that the Tournament Director and your coach are identified as mandatory reporters by Federal law. Webster University's Title IX compliance office may become involved. Ms. Kimberly Bynum-Smith is Webster University's Director for the Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Title IX Coordinator, as the Title IX Coordinator, Ms. Bynum-Smith may be contacted at kimberleybynumsmith@webster.edu, 314-246-7780. The Title IX tournament coordinator and Webster University's compliance officer will ensure that appropriate Title IX officer(s) at your home institutions are contacted. (Adapted from Pi Kappa Delta's website.)

The tournament will also be supporting the NFA's working "Open Door" Policy

MAFA is committed to providing safe performance spaces for all competitors. We acknowledge the art of performance may be a healing process and/or opportunity to speak on important issues. As a performer, it is impossible to know all the ways in which content or a performance may unintentionally harm our peers. To better serve our competitors, we will be honoring the NFA's open door practice during rounds this

weekend. Meaning, competitors may choose when they feel comfortable being present in the room, which includes choosing only to be present in the room when performing. Competitors may also discreetly leave the room, even when not double-entered without question or penalty.

If one of your competitors needs to be coded to avoid competing against or being judged by a competitor or judge due to a previous or current difficulty outlined in the aforementioned policies, PLEASE contact the Tournament Director with your request prior to Wednesday, February 11. We will do everything in our power to ensure a safe and supportive competitive experience for all.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

It is important for MAFA to recognize that while we are hosting at Webster University it is incumbent upon us, in alignment with our mission to enrich lives and build community through communication, to acknowledge that the land beneath us owes its vitality to generations who have come before us. In the spirit of making erased and silenced histories visible, MAFA chooses to learn about, come to terms with, and share the truth of Westward Expansion. We acknowledge our community spaces rest on the traditional land of Indigenous People that have stewarded and cared for this land for centuries. We acknowledge that, while at Webster University, we are standing on the ancestral and occupied lands of the Illini Confederacy, Osage Nation and the Myaamia, Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, O-ga-xpa Ma-zho (Quapaw), Kaskaskia, Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), and Missouri tribes. They are the peoples to whom we pay our respects. We acknowledge that this land was stolen and acquired through a history of violence. While Webster remains on these lands, we will attempt to do honor to their histories and ask you to join us in uncovering such histories at any and all public in person and virtual events. We encourage you to learn more about Indigenous communities and land where you live and to honor those who made their homes on this land before us. To learn more about the Indigenous people whose land you occupy, please visit <https://native-land.ca/> or <https://www.whose.land/en/>.

Ethics Challenges During or Post Round:

From time to time, challenges are made both in or after the round to a competitor's ethical behavior (e.g. pre-printed evidence in IPDA rounds, misquoted or misrepresented evidence, etc.). In these cases, judges are directed to make up their own mind to the challenge, resume the round, and note both their decision and if the decision affected the outcome of the round on the ballot. If one of the competitors is dissatisfied with the judge's decision, they may appeal the decision to the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director will gather the facts and make a decision, which is final. The tournament will NOT be stopped or delayed due to this type of challenge.

Entry Guidelines/ Tab Policies

This policy seeks to maintain independent sweepstakes calculations for two parts (debate and individual events) of the tournament and then to arithmetically equalize the value. This policy maintains independent sweepstakes for the two parts of the overall sweepstakes. Sweepstakes will be calculated through the following formula: 6 points per TIPDA debate prelim win, 3 points per LD/IPDA debate prelim win, and individual events as 3-2-1 for prelims and 12-10-8-6-4-2-1 for finals. Should a semi-final round be held, all competitors in that round will receive 1 point. After sweepstakes points are computed, each team's score is calculated as a percentage of the total sweepstakes "pot" in each sweepstakes competition. Hence, there will be forced equality of 100 possible points for debate and 100 points for individual events. The percentage scores of each team will be added together to calculate sweepstakes for the overall category. Overall sweepstakes awards will be presented to the top three schools entered in both individual events and debate. An award will also be presented to the top point-earning two-year school; the winner of this award does not need to be entered in both individual events and debate. The tie-breaking formula for individual events and debate will be as follows:

Individual Event Sweepstakes

1. Total individual events points earned
2. Number of events in finals
3. Comparative ranks of events in finals (Comparative ranks examines the number of 1st place finishes, if tied, then number of 2nd place finishes, etc.)

Debate Sweepstakes

1. Total debate points earned
2. Number of debate entries in elimination rounds
3. Highest placing of debate entries in elimination rounds
4. Comparative finishes in debate entries in elimination rounds (Compare number of finalists, if ties, then number of semifinalists, etc.)

Three additional sweepstakes awards will be presented, in addition to those for overall, individual events, debate in the open division, and two-year school competitions.

Quality Award

The Quality Award is determined by dividing the total sweepstakes points earned by a school by the number of slots that school entered. The school with the highest points earned per slot entered at the tournament will win this award.

President's Division

MAFA shall award Team Sweepstakes Awards in both an Open division and a President's division for Individual Events, Debate and Overall Team Sweepstakes Awards. Divisions will be determined by the median entry for the tournament as determined at the close of registration for the tournament. All schools entered at the tournament will be eligible for the Open division. Schools with entries at or below the median will be entered in the President's division.

Director's Award

The Director's Award is a traveling trophy that tracks a school's sweepstakes points earned over subsequent MAFA Championship Tournaments. For this award, the sweepstakes points earned at previous MAFA Championship tournaments are added to the current year's points. The school with the highest cumulative total points is named the champion until the next MAFA Championship Tournament. Once a school wins this award, their sweepstakes point total is reset to zero.

Debate Guidelines

General

A school may enter up to 18 debate entries, with no more than 12 debaters per school per debate format, (12 individual debaters or 6 debate teams of two debaters). A debate team counts as 2 entries. An LD entry counts as 1. Take the number of teams and multiply by 2 and add the number of LD/IPDA entries. This number may not exceed 18. (e.g. 5 debate teams and 8 LD/IPDA entries, or 6 debate teams and 6 LD/IPDA entries). In any case, a school's entry must not exceed 6 TIPDA/PF teams OR 12 LD debaters OR 12 IPDA debaters. A student may enter both TIPDA and LD or TIPDA and IPDA. A student may enter both PF and LD or PF and IPDA. A student may **NOT** enter PF and TIPDA. A student entered in two debate formats will be counted as two entries towards the 18 cap. There will be both open and novice divisions if numbers allow. Any student competing in his/her first two semesters of college debate may be classified as a novice. All divisions will debate four (4) preliminary rounds and break to their appropriate elimination round. **If the number of entries in a format requires a school to hit its own entries or for entries to hit one another more than once in preliminary rounds, that format may be eliminated from the tournament. This will be at the discretion of the Tournament Director.** If a format of debate is cancelled, the Tournament Director will inform coaches so that they may enter those debaters in another format. Lincoln-Douglas debaters may enter one event in flight B of individual events. Please contact MAFA President John Wallis at john.wallis@newberry.edu if you have questions about debate entry limitations.

Debate awards will be presented to all open quarterfinalists. The top six speakers in each division will receive speaker awards. The top three schools who earn the most total points across all divisions will receive team sweepstakes awards.

Debate sweepstakes calculations will be made using the preliminary records of the top twelve debaters across the three debate genres. A TIPDA team is two debaters. An LD or IPDA debater is one. Six points will be assigned for each preliminary round win in TIPDA, and three will be assigned to the same in LD or IPDA. **Elimination round wins will not count toward sweepstakes.**

Individual Events Guidelines & Conflict Patterns

Pattern A: Extemp, Oratory, DI, Poetry, Informative, Prose

Pattern B: Imp, POI, Duo, ADS, CA, Persuasive

Schools may enter up to 44 slots in individual events, distributed across all events.

Awards will be presented to the top six contestants in each event. There will be three individual events sweepstakes trophies. A top novice award will also be given for each event. Novices are defined as students in their first year of competition at the collegiate level. All individual events will follow the description, rules and guidelines of the American Forensic Association. Only a school's top six entrants in any one event will count toward sweepstakes.

AFA rules will be followed for all individual events. Students should not enter material that has been used in competition before September 1, 2025. The tournament will follow AFA tabulation procedures. Extemp topics will cover issues pertinent to the socio-political realm with emphasis upon: international affairs, domestic affairs, and the economy. Impromptu participants will choose between two topics that will vary by round and section. Topics may be drawn from philosophical quotations, song lyrics, and/or quotations from popular films.

MAFA traditionally does not restrict the number of individual events a competitor can enter in a given flight, so students are free to enter as many as they wish. HOWEVER, we strongly suggest that competitors and their coaches limit themselves to only three individual events per pattern per student out of respect for the tournament schedule and staff. Do your part to make sure the tournament runs on time. Competitors will be responsible for making it to each of their events within the time allotted for each round.

Eligibility

Eligibility will follow the AFA guidelines. A student must be enrolled in at least six hours of classes at the school they are representing. The student must also not have used more than eight semesters of eligibility (3 or more tournaments of competition constitutes a semester) as defined by the AFA, and must not have had more than four national tournament years (completed in four years in which a national tournament-NFA, AFA, NSC, NPDA, NDT, CEDA, Phi Rho Pi, PKD, DSR, etc. was attended by the student). The expectation is that the Director of Forensics for the entries will enforce these rules.

Interstate Oratory

Interstate oratory will be offered in addition to Persuasive Speaking.

- a) Interstate Oratory, referred to as Original Oratory henceforth, will only be open to students representing a MAFA program in good standing. Persuasive Speaking will be open to all students, both MAFA and Non-MAFA programs. A student may **NOT** enter both events. They must choose one or the other.
- b) The winner of Original Oratory will be the MAFA State Champion. The highest placing student representing a MAFA program entered in persuasion will be the MAFA State Persuasion Champion.
- c) Sweepstakes points may be earned in both events, but in no case will alter the sweepstakes formula of a program maximum of 100 points in IE's.
- d) Two critics will be used in preliminary rounds with the lowest ranking and rating and highest rating and ranking disregarded when deciding finalists.
- e) A copy of each contestant's speech is required upon registration. Words and quoted materials will be verified as per event description in (IV). Students will be disqualified if there is an infraction concerning the number of words or percentage of quoted material. Coaches may email copies to MAFA President John Wallis at john.wallis@newberry.edu
- f) Should either of the winning orations not be able to attend the Interstate Oratory contest, the President shall assign alternates from MAFA member schools based upon their placement in the MAFA Championship Tournament.

Description: An oration written by the student, persuasive in nature and delivered without the aid of notes. No oration shall contain more than 1800 words. Although no minimum word limit is mandated, a 1500 word minimum is suggested. Quoted words are those written or spoken by a person other than the orator. Such quoted material should be limited to 20 percent of the total number of words in the oration. Direct disclosure, dialogue, or other stylistic devices within quotation marks created by the

orator shall not be included in the 20 percent total. All quoted material shall be documented. **There is NOT a time limit in this event.**

Multiple critics will be used in the preliminary rounds with the worst preliminary round rank and rating disregarded when deciding finalists. A copy of each contestant's speech is REQUIRED upon registration. (We recommend a cover/title page on which the number of words and the number of quoted words of listed along with the student's name and school.) Words and quoted material will be recounted at the tournament and students WILL BE DISQUALIFIED if there is an infraction concerning the number of words or percentage of quoted material.

It is important for our state to be well represented in this historic tournament. Therefore, if you have a student place in the top two but do not intend to attend Interstate for whatever reason, please inform the MAFA President at the tournament so we can assign an alternate in their place. Alternates will be the next best Missouri student in the event until two Missouri representatives are confirmed.

Judging Requirements

One judge covers two TIPDA or PF teams. One judge covers 10 individual events slots overall (not per flight). One judge covers two LD or IPDA debaters. (However, judges may be cross-assigned between the two divisions as needed to maximize the "cleanliness" of the pool.)

Hired judges will cost \$35 per uncovered LD and IPDA slot. Each hired TIPDA and PF judge will cost \$75 per uncovered team. A hired individual events judge will cost \$15 per uncovered IE slot. Please remember—judges are expected to be available one round after their students are eliminated. Coaches are responsible for the attendance of both themselves and their hired judges. Please make sure your hired judges meet their obligations.

Please make every effort to cover your entry and judging obligations so we can have qualified judges and a smooth schedule. **We would rather have your judges than your money.**

Awards

Pentathlon

For pentathlon, a student must be in five or more individual events. Students must compete in at least two genres (interpretation, limited preparation, public address), although greater breadth is certainly encouraged. The student's best five events will count toward pentathlon. Points will be awarded according to the same formula used for individual event sweepstakes.

Overall Forensic Award

To reward exceptional competition efforts in both individual events and debate, two (2) awards will be offered in the Overall Forensic competition. The top two students will be recognized who compete in five or more individual events and at least one format of debate. Points for this award shall include a maximum of five individual events and all forms of debate in which the student competes. Only preliminary round points will count for this award. No team sweepstakes points will be awarded for this event. Ties will be broken based on the following:

1. Total preliminary sweepstakes points earned in both individual events and debate.
Team debate points earned will be divided in half.
2. Number of events in elimination rounds.
3. Highest placing of events in elimination rounds.
4. If still tied, awards shall be given to the tied speakers.

Fees

MAFA Membership Dues \$50 per school (Missouri)

LD Entries \$25 each

Uncovered LD Entries \$35 Each

TIPDA/PF Entries \$50 Each

Uncovered TIPDA/PF Entries \$75 Each

IPDA Entries \$25 Each

Uncovered IPDA Entries \$35 Each

IE Entries \$10 Per slot

Uncovered IE Entries \$15 Per Slot

Participation Fee (Friday) \$15 Per Participant

Participation Fee (Saturday) \$15 Per Participant

Nuisance fees/Late Drops \$25 Per Drop

Make Checks Payable to: MAFA

Special Awards

Coach of the Year Award

The "MAFA Coach of the Year" award honors a coach who has demonstrated superior coaching and program directing ability in Intercollegiate Missouri speech and debate related activities throughout the last year's competitive season. The recipient must be a member of the Missouri Association of Forensics Activities for that year. This award is open to all with school-recognized coaching positions, including Directors and Assistant Directors of Forensics, Graduate Assistants, etc. Criteria for the award includes:

- Displays a strong rapport with students, coaches, and judges of the MAFA community;
- Models for our students' appropriate behaviors that prepare them for success both in and outside of forensics;
- Supports and attends regional tournaments. However, we fully recognize that some programs must travel a different circuit due to specific program foci, which makes it difficult to attend regional tournaments. In those cases, (particularly parliamentary and CEDA squads), this criterion will be waived;
- Is active in the support and advancement of speech related activities at various levels. Examples include, but are not limited to: Hosting tournaments, volunteering at tournaments, volunteering for other types of public speaking events (like FFA, 4-H, FBLA), publishing articles, presenting at conferences, holding regional/national offices in governing bodies, etc.;
- Exhibits knowledge of activity through understanding of rules and systems of play.

Candidates may be nominated by students or coaches by submitting a nomination letter to the President of MAFA John Wallis at john.wallis@newberry.edu. Nominations are due by Tuesday, February 3rd at 5 p.m. Schools are limited to one nomination in this category per year. A school is not required to nominate anyone. Schools may nominate individuals from other programs.

The MAFA President will appoint a committee to consider all nominations and pair the nominees down to a slate of two or three names. The committee will submit the panel of potential honorees along with nomination packet information to the MAFA membership for a vote. Each coaching staff is afforded one vote and each team of students is afforded one vote, resulting in two votes. The votes do not need to be the same. Previous winners may be considered for awards. If no suitable nominee can be found, the award should not be presented.

Distinguished Service Award

The "MAFA Distinguished Service" award honors those who continuously support forensic activities. Recipients can be former or retired members of MAFA that demonstrated superior coaching and program directing while in their tenure, or administrators that value forensics and continuously strive to support forensics at their institution. This award is not bound to the previous competitive year. Criteria for the award includes:

- Exceptionally meritorious performance in coaching, directing or administration;
- Continued support of speech and debate related activities;
- Significant achievements and contributions to the forensics community;
- Represents important creative effort or accomplishment with educational value.

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2026 MAFA Schedule

Friday, February 13th

7:15 Registration

7:45 TIPDA Topic Announcement

8:15 TIPDA Round 1

9:25 TIPDA Topic Announcement

9:55 TIPDA Round 2

11:00 Lunch break (on your own – insert options here)

11:30 IPDA Topic Announcement & LD Debate, Round 1

12:00 IPDA Round 1

12:45 IPDA Topic Announcement & LD Debate, Round 2

1:15 IPDA Round 2

1:55 TIPDA Topic Announcement

2:25 TIPDA Round 3

3:35 IPDA Topic Announcement & LD Debate, Round 3

4:05 IPDA Round 3

4:45 TIPDA Topic Announcement

5:15 TIPDA Round 4

5:00 Dinner, cost included in fees.

6:20 IPDA Topic Announcement & LD Debate, Round 4

6:50 IPDA Round 4

7:30 TIPDA Topic Announcement - Elim 1

8:00 TIPDA Elim 1

9:05 IPDA & NFA-LD - Elim 1

9:35 IPDA Elim 1

** debate schedule subject to change based on tournament debate entry**

Saturday, February 14th

7:15 Registration for IE only schools

7:30 Extemp Draw (internet accessible, but not guaranteed)

7:45 Individual Events, Round 1A (Extemp, Oratory, DI, Poetry, Informative, Prose)

9:15 Extemp Draw

9:30 Individual Events, Round 2A (Extemp, Oratory, DI, Poetry, Informative, Prose)

11:00 Individual Events, Round 1B (Imp, POI, Duo, ADS, CA, Persuasive)

12:00 Lunch, cost included in fees; Coaches Meeting

12:45 TIPDA Topic Announcement - Elim 2
1:15 TIPDA – Elim 2/PF Elim 2
2:00 Individual Events, Round 2B (Imp, POI, Duo, ADS, CA, Persuasive)
2:45 IPDA Topic Announcement & NFA-LD - Elim 2
3:15 IPDA – Elim 2
4:00 Extemp Draw
4:15 Individual Events, Finals-A
5:30 Individual Events, Finals- B
7:00 Awards
ASAP All Debate Elimination Rounds Continue

Hotels to Consider

Best Western Kirkwood Inn
1200 S Kirkwood Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63122
314-821-3950

Drury Inn & Suites St. Louis Brentwood
8700 Eager Rd
St Louis, MO 63144
314-968-3704

Holiday Inn St. Louis SW – Route 66
10709 Watson Rd
St Louis, MO 63127
314-821-6600

Courtyard by Marriott St. Louis Brentwood
8101 Dale Ave
Richmond Heights, MO 63117
314-647-2998

Comfort Suites St. Louis – Sunset Hills
3654 S Lindbergh Blvd
St Louis, MO 63127
314-403-7043

Springhill Suites by Marriott St. Louis Brentwood
1231 Strassner Dr
Brentwood, MO 63144
314-647-8400

La Quinta Inn & Suites St Louis Route 66
1580 Kirkwood Rd
St Louis, MO 63127
314-717-0101

TownePlace Suites by Marriott Brentwood
1695 Hanley Rd
Brentwood, MO 63144
314-274-1800