

Dear Forensics Friends

You are invited to attend the **2026 McHenry County College Gabel Gabfest**, named after former Director of Forensics Bonnie Gabel. We are hosting it as a swing with NIU, who will be hosting the debate tournament half. Our half of the tournament will be held in person **Saturday, October 10th**.

We will offer 11 individual events following Phi Rho Pi guidelines and one experimental event. We are also opening the tournament to **all** levels of competitors. Because of this, there are additional changes to the tournament. **Please read the invite carefully.**

NIU is hosting the parliamentary debate portion of this swing on Friday, October 9th. We encourage everyone who has the ability to travel to come to NIU's M. Jack Parker/LPDL #1, *even if they know little to nothing about parliamentary debate*. Lincoln Parliamentary Debate League has a website available [here](#) with resources so no one has to go in blind. Guidelines and rules for the debate portion will follow LPDL guidelines, which are summarized on the home page of the debate tournament [FTN page](#).

If you are unsure about entering students in parliamentary debate due lack of coaching or knowledge about the event, please reach out to Matt DuPuis, NIU's Director of Debate and President of LPDL, or Liz Fritz, MCC's Co-Coach and Vice President of LPDL. We are more than willing to provide additional information. Matt can be reached at mdupuisl@niu.edu.

All other important contact information is on the [Tournament Schedule page below](#). Click the outline button on the top right of the page to go directly to it.

Please pay attention to the Phi Rho Pi event descriptions for individual events, which do not always directly correspond with AFA or NFA guidelines.

There will be no finals to ensure everyone receives 3 rounds of competition and feedback. We will award the top 6 competitors in each event and the top 2 next-out novice competitors. If an event has 8 or fewer entries, all will receive an award and there will be no top novice specific awards. At registration, we will ask you to identify your novice competitors, which for this tournament **are students in their very first semester of competition**. Our goal is to award as many students as possible to get the season off to a good start!

Sincerely,

Liz Fritz, Co-Coach of Speech and Debate

Sarah Metivier-Schadt, Co-Coach of Speech and Debate

Jay Geller, Director of Forensics

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHANGES: There are several changes to this year's tournament compared to prior years, including who can compete and events. We have made these changes to provide an opening tournament for all while still encouraging new students to get their footing in the activity. Please read the entire document for all changes.

ENTRIES: Register your entry by **Tuesday, October 6th at 5 PM.**

1. Go to forensictournament.net to complete your entry
2. Click Login (if you have never used this site before, it will ask you to register)
3. Go through each tab and register your team
4. Please call or text Liz Fritz (630) 277-0515 if you have any problems

See deadlines for additional information

FEES:

Individual Events: \$10 per individual event slot. One judge for every six individual event slots must be provided. Uncovered slots are \$15.

Payment: **We can only accept cash or checks.** Please make checks payable to "McHenry County College Speech and Debate". If you want to confirm entry fees ahead of time, please contact Liz Fritz.

DEADLINES: The deadline for receiving entries is 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 6th. We know this is a day earlier than most tournaments.

Changes/Drops can be made by the coach through forensictournament.net until Thursday, October 8th at 3 PM.

Changes made after 3 PM on Thursday will incur a \$10.00 charge. A \$25.00 fee per slot will be charged for any drop made day of the tournament.

*A \$30 fee per dropped judge will be assessed for any judges dropped **after 9 p.m. on Wednesday, October 7th**. A \$60.00 fee per dropped judge will be assessed for judges dropped the day of. ***We need your judges, not your money!***

PARTICIPATION: Any regularly enrolled student is eligible to enter as many as six events; however, the participant may not enter more than three events from each grouping (one person may enter two duos in Group A as two of their three events).

<u>Group A</u>	<u>Group B</u>
Duo	Extemp
Informative	CA
Impromptu	STE
DI	POE
POI	Prose
Persuasion	Impromptu Sales

There is one limit to event entry: a student cannot be in both extemp and impromptu sales to make sure the tournament does not run behind.

There is no limit on entries per event; however, if a school enters more students than there are sections in any one event, the tournament director may place more than one student from the same school in the same section. **Triple entered students (TE) must sign in to all three events prior to the round. Judges will not be required to wait for students that have not signed in.**

EVENTS and EVENTS RULES: We have added one experimental event back to the schedule. Overview and guidelines for our experimental event, impromptu sales, appear on a separate page in this invitation. **All other events follow Phi Rho Pi guidelines.** For complete information on rules, visit <http://www.phirhopi.org>

Three additional rules also govern events:

1. All platform events must be the original work of the contestant.
2. No speech or program, in part or in its entirety, may have been used in competition by the contestant prior to September 2026.

3. McHenry County College will not be responsible for providing audiovisual or any other equipment or power sources for use during the tournament. You may plug in your devices to outlets at the school, but we are not responsible if they do not work or other similar issues.

AI USAGE CLARIFICATION: Aligning with new Phi Rho Pi rules, and to maintain the integrity of limited preparation events, no generative AI may be used in prep time for Extemporaneous Speaking. This includes Google AI overview and any other built-in browser AI or summary tool. Proven usage of AI by a student will result in disqualification from Extemporaneous Speaking.

ROUNDS: Preliminary rounds for individual events will be randomly paired. There are no final rounds to ensure every competitor receives three rounds of feedback. Placings are based on lowest cumulative rank by the end of the 3 rounds.

POINTS: If there are 8 or fewer entries in an event, all competitors will receive an award and there will be no next-out awards given. Because there are no divisions, all points are assigned as follows:

1st. Place	12
2nd Place	10
3rd Place	8
4th Place	6
5th Place	4
6th Place	2
7th or Later Place	1
Top next-out novices*	1

**Novice is defined as a student in their first semester of competition. If they competed in the spring, even*

for only one tournament, they are not a novice at this tournament!

INDIVIDUAL SWEEPSTAKES AWARD: There will be no minimum of events to qualify. Awards will be given to the top six overall students and the top two next-out novice students. First place will win the Lauryn Lugo Individual Sweepstakes Award, named after alumnus Lauryn Lugo. The winners will be determined by the largest number of sweepstakes points earned for their team according to the listed point system above.

TEAM SWEEPSTAKES: Awards will be given to the top six teams based on the total number of points earned by the team. First place will receive the Bonnie Gabel Team Sweepstakes Award, named after former Director of Forensics and founder of the MCC team Bonnie Gabel. There will be no novice awards for team sweepstakes. We will make an honorable mention of which team had the most novice events get points!

TIES: We will break ties by using the following, in order: speaker points, number of firsts. We will not be using judges' preference at this tournament.

If a tie cannot be broken, both students will receive the placing and the same number of points.

FOOD: We will be bringing back pizza for the students and coaches! We will be ordering from Papa Saverio's in Crystal Lake as they have a gluten free option. **We will do our best to accommodate food restrictions** (please text Liz Fritz with any by Wednesday, October 7th at midnight) and if for some reason we are unable to, Liz will respond to you by Thursday, October 8th.

Donuts and coffee will also be available for everyone in the morning.

HIRED JUDGES: We will be utilizing hired judges for this tournament. This will include professors and other academic professionals from McHenry County College and potentially community members. Judges without a forensics background will be prioritized to judge the experimental event, but may be used for other events if need be. We will assign them to events as close to their background as possible so they can still provide thorough feedback. We cannot guarantee this, however, so some lay-judges may be used for judging events they are not well-versed in. All hired judges will be given information about the events they are judging.

If you know someone interested in being a hired judge, please have them fill out [this form](#). The pay will be \$15 per round judged.

TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE:

Park in lot A and enter through the A bldg. atrium, registration will be in front of A205:

[Map](#)

All rooms will be in Building A, except awards, which will be hosted in our new Engagement Hall.

8:00-8:30 Registration (A205) and Breakfast (outside A211)
8:45 Round 1 of Group A (**Duo, Imp, Info, DI, POI, Pers**)
10:00 Round 2 of Group A
11:15 Round 3 of Group A
12:30 Lunch
 1:00 Extemp Draw A215C
1:15 Round 1 of Group B (**Extemp, CA, POE, Prose, STE, Imp Sales**)
 2:15 Extemp Draw A215C
2:30 Round 2 of Group B
 3:30 Extemp Draw A215C
3:45 Round 3 of Group B

ASAP Awards (Engagement Hall)

Judges Lounge - A213B

Student Lounge - A211A

Contacts

Primary for the tournament: Liz Fritz - 630-277-0515, efritz@mchenry.edu

Sarah Metivier Schadt - 815-482-7051, smetivierschadt@mchenry.edu

Jay Geller - (Office) 815-455-8746, (Cell) 847-602-5622, jgeller@mchenry.edu

Sarah, Liz, and Jay will be available to contact day-of, but pre-tournament concerns should be fielded to Liz first.

Impromptu Sales

In the interest of providing new students with the experience of competition and returners a warm up, we are bringing back an experimental event. We are no longer doing interviewing due to the scheduling issues and excessive work it created. Instead, we are doing a fun, light-hearted event to get students ready for the season: Impromptu Sales.

OVERVIEW:

RULES: We will be following the same overarching rules as impromptu: Students will have a total of 7 minutes for preparation and speaking combined. Time signals will be provided, following the impromptu standard of 30 second verbals and hand signals afterwards. A notecard of up to 8x5 inches may be used. Students may not refer to any notes or materials while prepping.

Unlike community college impromptu, all students will be selling the same thing each round. Because of this, students will wait in the hallway until it is their turn to perform (like AFA does for impromptu).

Each round will be a different kind of sales pitch related to the Crystal Lake area:

Round #1 - Item

Round #2 - Business

Round #3 - Experience

ADDITIONAL NOTES: This event is intended to be low-stress and is ideal for new students who may not have an event ready (or do, and want to try their luck at a second!). Non-first years are absolutely encouraged to also enter this event as well.

Judges will not be given specific qualifications to judge on, only the overarching paradigm of “who sold the thing to you most effectively”.