

By-Laws of the Georgia Forensic Coaches' Association

The Georgia Forensics Coaches Association recognizes that local schools, boards and/or governing bodies may place more stringent requirements as they deem appropriate. These rules establish the provisions governing student participation in forensics activities in Georgia and/or the GFCA State Tournament.

BY-LAW 1.00 – Student Participation

1.10 Certification of Eligibility

1.11 Students gain eligibility to practice or compete for the school in which they are enrolled after they have been certified by the principal of that school, after the eligibility forms have been processed by the GFCA executive board, and after the students have met the standards of:

- (a) academic requirements
- (b) age
- (c) semesters in high school
- (d) residence in the school's service area
- (e) transfer rules

Note: Students establishing eligibility as entering 9th graders are automatically eligible for the first semester.

1.12 The certification of eligibility shall be maintained by individual coaches and must be presented upon the request of the GFCA Executive Committee.

1.20 Enrollment and Team Membership

1.21 To be eligible to participate and/or try-out for a forensics activity, a student must be enrolled full time in grades 9-12 inclusive at the school seeking eligibility for that student.

(a) Enrollment is defined as follows:

- (1) Fall Semester: when the student participates in practice or contest before classes begin, or the student attends classes.
- (2) Spring Semester: when the student attends classes
- (3) A student may be enrolled in only one (1) high school at a time.

(b) The student must meet attendance requirements as designated by the student's school and/or District.

1.22 Students enrolled in grade nine (9) in a middle school or junior high school which is a feeder school to a member high school may participate in interscholastic activities for the parent school.

1.30 Age – To be eligible to participate in forensics activities, a student must not have reached her/his nineteenth (19th) birthday prior to May 1st, preceding her/his year of participation.

1.40 Limits of Participation

1.41 There is no physical examination requirement for participation in forensics activities. Schools may deem stricter physical health requirements for participation.

1.42 A student has eight (8) consecutive semesters or four (4) consecutive years of eligibility for varsity competition from the date of entry into the ninth (9th) grade to be eligible to compete.

(a) A student is not considered to have entered the 9th grade when a 9th grade course is taken if the student is regularly enrolled in a member's feeder school in a grade below the 9th, and the course is taken as an advanced course.

(b) Credits earned toward high school graduation which are taken below the ninth grade may be used when considering high school eligibility.

1.43 Sub-varsity competitors must meet all eligibility requirements with the exception of the migratory rule.

1.44 Students in grade nine (9) and higher may participate on both the varsity and sub-varsity teams in forensics activities.

1.45 Eighth (8th) grade students may participate on a sub-varsity team or a high school provided they attend a feeder school of that high school.

(a) Students in grade eight (8) are never eligible for a varsity event in any activity.

(b) Students in grade eight (8) who play on a team must meet all middle school requirements as put forth by the student's school, District and/or the bylaws set forth by the Georgia Forensic Coaches Association.

(c) Students in grade eight (8) who are declared ineligible at a middle school or retained for academic reasons is are considered ineligible for participation on a sub-varsity high school team.

(d) Students in grade eight (8) participating on a sub-varsity team may only participate in a maximum of six (6) in-state tournaments. Participation on a sub-varsity team in grade eight (8) does not use a semester of eligibility provided all other requirements are met. Coaches are highly discouraged from having eighth (8th) grade students participating above the middle-school level.

(e) Students below the eighth (8th) grade are not eligible to participate on any high school team.

(f) Students in grade eight (8) may participate in the open division of a tournament event.

1.46 The number of in-state contests, and starting and ending dates can be found listed in a calendar published annually by the Executive Committee (see by-law 2.4).

1.50 Scholastic Standing/Scholarship

1.51 To be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in forensics, a student must be academically eligible. A student is required to pass classes that count toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation. Exception: First semester ninth grade students.

(a) Passing for all member schools is a grade of seventy (70) on a one-hundred (100) point scale.

(b) Students participating in junior varsity must meet all scholastic requirements.

(c) Students must be passing in seventy-five percent (75%) of their classes that count toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation.

1.52 Students gain or lose eligibility on the first day of the subsequent semester.

(a) Exception: Students who successfully complete summer school to maintain eligibility become eligible on the last day of summer school. Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. Accreditation is recognized from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) or a regional accreditation agency (i.e. SACS) or the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC).

(b) A student enrolled in a joint-enrolled program between her/his parent school and a vocational-technical school, an alternative school, or a college, shall be eligible to represent the parent school in forensics activities provided s/he:

(1) is enrolled at the parent school and that school received state funds based on her/his enrollment. If in a private school, s/he must be a full tuition-paying student.

(2) must not compete in forensics activities in the vocational-technical school, alternative school, or college.

1.60 – School Service Areas/Transfer/Migrant Students/Migratory Waiver

1.61 School service areas for member public schools are those attendance boundaries established by local boards of education from which a school normally draws its students. The school service area for a member private school is the county in which the school is located.

1.62 A transfer student who has established eligibility at a former school in grades 9-12 shall be immediately eligible at the new school if

(a) The student moved simultaneously with the entire parental unit or persons s/he resided with at the former school, and the student and parent(s) or persons residing with the student live in the service area of the new school. This is known as a “bona fide move”.

(1) The student may choose the public or private school servicing that area.

(2) It must be apparent that the parent(s) or the persons residing with the student and the student have fully relinquished the residence in the former service area and have occupied a residence in the new service area.

(3) Relinquishment includes one or more of the following: selling the residence; having the residence listed with a real estate agent for sale at a fair market value; having a contract with a buyer; having a lease agreement at a fair market value; abandoning the house and shutting off unnecessary utilities. When a family

claims multiple residences, the residence for which they apply for a homestead exemption will be declared the primary residence.

(4) The bona fide move is validated when the student’s family maintains the new residence for at least one calendar year. A return to the previous residence within that year renders the student to be a migrant student. All hardship appeal processes are available.

(b) The student was enrolled in a private school or magnet school and has a bona fide move from one public school service area to another public school service area. A student in this situation may attend either the public school or a private school servicing her/his area of residence.

(c) The student is involved in a foreign exchange program that is approved and published on the “Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs” published by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) or any similarly recognized foreign exchange program. The student shall be considered eligible for a maximum period of one calendar year. The student may not be a graduate of a secondary school in her/his home country. The student must maintain eligibility requirements at the member school.

(d) The student has one of the following family-related situations that produce a waiver of the bona fide move rule:

(1) There is a Superior Court or Juvenile Court awarded change of permanent custody and the student moves to the residence of the parent receiving custody. The student must attend the member school servicing that area of residence. A copy of the court order must be available upon request of the GFCA Executive Committee to establish eligibility.

(2) There is a Superior Court or Juvenile Court final order awarding permanent joint custody to the parents and the student moves to a residence or her/his parent outside the service area of the previous school. The waiver may be made one time during a calendar year. A copy of the court order must be shown to school officials available upon request of the GFCA Executive Committee to establish eligibility.

(3) There is a death of a custodial parent and the student moves to live with the other natural parent in a new school service area. A copy of the death certificate must be shown to school officials to establish eligibility. (Are we really going to require a copy of the death certificate?)

(4) There is a military transfer of one or both custodial parents that creates a change of residence that is not a bona fide move. A copy of the deployment order must be shown to school officials available upon request of the GFCA Executive Committee to establish eligibility.

(e) Students who are United States citizens returning from a foreign country shall be eligible as long as they meet all other requirements of eligibility.

(f) Students who are transferred from one school attendance area to another school attendance area by a mandate of the local board of education maintain their eligibility.

(g) Students who transfer because one or more of the parents/custodians have become employed with a new school district and that school district allows the student to attend the schools within the district even though residence remains in a different district.

1.63 A migrant student is a student who transfers into a school without a bona fide move or without one of the exceptions listed in by-law 1.62. The student may practice or compete at the sub-varsity level, but may not compete at the varsity level for one calendar year from the date of entry into the new school.

(a) All appeals for family and/or religious exceptions are to be handled by the Executive Committee.

(b) All appeals must be submitted in writing to the President of the GFCA.

1.64 A student who is not eligible at one school because of suspension or expulsion and then transfers to another member school cannot regain eligibility by such a transfer, for the length of the suspension or one (1) calendar year, whichever is less.

1.65 Hardship applications may be filed to attempt to establish eligibility in the following situations:

(a) change in family marital or child custody status.

(b) undue family financial hardship.

(c) academic pursuit.

(d) religious exceptions.

(e) All other appeals will be submitted to the Executive Committee for review.

1.66 When a new school opens, student eligibility shall be determined when a school mandates an attendance area for a new school for all grades at the new school and/or when a school district mandates some students to attend the new school, allows some to stay at the present school, and permits some students to transfer to the new school.

1.70 Recruiting/Undue Influence

1.71 Recruiting and Undue Influence is defined as the use of influence by any person connected directly or indirectly with a GFCA member school to induce a student of any age to transfer from one school to another, or to enter the ninth (9th) grade at a member school for competition purposes, whether or not the school presently attended by the student is a member of the GFCA. The use of undue influence to secure or retain a student shall lead to penalties assessed to either school and may cause the student to forfeit eligibility for one year from the date of enrollment.

(a) Evidence of undue influence includes, but is not limited to: personal contact by coaches, sponsors, parents or other school stakeholders in an attempt to persuade transfer, gifts of money, jobs, supplies, clothing, free transportation, admission to contests, invitation to attend practices and/or competition, or free tuition.

BY-LAW 2.00 – SCHOOL

2.10 Financial Obligations

2.11 The amount of the dues for membership is set annually by the Executive Committee of the GFCFA. Dues must be paid in accordance with the Georgia Forensics Coaches' Constitution.

(a) Dues must be paid ten (10) days prior to the first (1st) day of competition of the Area Qualification Tournament or the First/Second Year State Speech and Debate Tournament or the Varsity State Speech and Debate Tournament, whichever is the earliest tournament the school wishes to participate.

2.12 If a member school initiates litigation against the association and the court rules in favor of the association, the school or school system shall be responsible for paying all court costs and attorneys' fees.

2.20 Eligibility Reports

2.21 Eligibility reports are required for all contestants in any GFCFA activity once yearly. They are to be kept in record by schools unless requested by the Executive Committee. If requested, the information in by-law 1.11 must be submitted immediately.

2.22 Schools are responsible for the verification of eligibility information prior to the approval of eligibility reports. If a school discovers that incorrect information has been submitted for eligibility, the Executive Committee must be contacted immediately.

2.23 If a student loses eligibility and regains it during the school year, a new eligibility report should be filed for that student.

2.24 To correct errors in an eligibility report, submit a new eligibility form which has "Corrected Copy" written on the top. Be sure to indicate the date of the original eligibility submission.

2.30 Qualifications to Coach

2.31 A forensics coach or sponsor must be a professional teacher meeting the teaching requirements and be employed by only one board of education or similar governing authority regardless of whether or not they are paid for their coaching. These coaches and/or sponsors must

(a) be employed on a regular basis in a professional, contracted position OR

(b) be assigned as a student intern in a practice teaching situation under the guidance of a college or university teacher training program

2.32 Member schools may employ persons who are not professionally certified teachers as a coach or sponsor in their forensics programs given the following:

(a) Licensed para-professionals and full-time substitute teachers must be officially approved by school administrative officials to be eligible to coach.

(b) May only coach for one board of education annually, regardless of whether they are paid for their services.

(c) Must be approved by the school principal in their role as a coach or sponsor of a forensics program at that school.

2.40 Interscholastic Contests and Practices

2.41 No meetings, practices, scrimmages, and/or competitions may occur prior to August 1st of each school year.

(a) Students may attend summer workshops and institutes between officially sanctioned season dates so long as they voluntarily attend and is not a requirement for participation.

(b) Student(s) may receive information about their teams prior to the start date, so long as a meeting, practice, scrimmage, and/or competition does not occur prior to August 1st of each school year.

2.42 Meetings, practices, scrimmages, and/or competitions must be completed no later than July 1st of each school year.

(a) Students may attend summer workshops and institutes between officially sanctioned season dates so long as they voluntarily attend and is not a requirement for participation.

(b) Student(s) may receive information about their teams after the end date, so long as a meeting, practice, scrimmage, and/or competition does not occur after July 1st of each school year.

2.43 Event competitions for preliminary rounds may not be scheduled for later than 9:00pm or begin later than 10:00pm.

2.44 Elimination and/or final rounds of competition for the state tournament may be postponed with the approval of at least three (3) members of the Executive Committee.

(a) Tournament directors are discouraged from postponing competitions except under dire circumstances and with the acceptance of all coaches of all competing members involved. A time and location should be set before adjourning the original competition. Tournament directors should alert the GFCFA Secretary of such postponement for the purpose of state-qualification records.

2.45 In some cases a "bye" may be granted to the competitor(s). This counts in positive standing towards the competitor(s) record.

2.46 Availability of Evidence: It is the philosophy of the GFCA that cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable in all events. Contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. Printers may be used. Evidence may be printed in the round or produced electronically, but must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team/competitor and the judge. If students do not use computers and utilize hard copies of, any evidence requested by the judge must be presented at the time of request. If a competitor/team is unable to produce evidence under question or refuses to provide the evidence, the competitor refusing such action could receive an automatic loss for or other actions deemed necessary by the GFCA officers.

2.50 Tournament Approval

2.51 Tournaments other than Area or State elimination series must be approved (sanctioned) by the GFCA Secretary via application at least thirty (30) days in advance of the first day of competition of a tournament via email or mail. Schools placed on the official GFCA Tournament calendar are officially sanctioned by the Association.

(a) Competitions at different school locations hosted by different schools are permitted to be scheduled on the same date(s).

(b) The GFCA is not required to sanction an out-of-state tournament or competitive forensic event.

(c) Bids to the state tournament may only be awarded at sanctioned tournaments and competitions.

2.52 Area or State elimination series tournaments must be approved (sanctioned) by the GFCA Executive Committee at least ten (10) days prior to the first day of competition.

2.53 Tournament Directors and/or Sponsors are required to send a copy of the full competitive results to the GFCA Secretary within ten (10) days following the last day of competition of the tournament. Failure to send results could result in a school losing its sanctioned event status in the following school year and/or loss of current qualification bids to the GFCA state tournament earned at that tournament.

2.60 Sportsmanship

2.61 GFCA member schools are required to conduct all relationships with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship.

2.62 It shall be the responsibility of a member school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon faculty, students, team members, coaches, and spectators the values of sportsmanship in preparation for the management of forensics contests.

2.63 It shall be the responsibility of the home or host school to take steps to insure the comfort and security of all students, coaches and spectators.

2.70 Media and Filming Regulations

2.71 All forensic competitions may be recorded, filmed or otherwise electronically documents with the expressed written permission of the tournament director, coaches of involved participant(s), the involved participant(s) and sanctioned by member school and/or District policy.

(a) Students may record only their speech(es), without expressed written permission. This does not include recording commentary or feedback about said speech(es). Other competitors and the judge(s) must be informed of said recording.

2.72 Flash photography is prohibited at GFCA sanctioned competitive events during competition(s).

2.80 Regulations of Competitions

2.81 Cross Examination/Policy Debate

(a) Cross Examination/Policy Debate is defined as a two-person team event where students debate the yearly resolution chosen by the National Federation of High Schools (as published on nflonline.org). One team is affirmative, which proposes a plan supporting the yearly resolution. The opposing team is negative, which opposes the plan and/or upholds the status quo.

(b) The order and time limits of the speeches are as follows:

First Affirmative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-Examination of the First Affirmative – 3 minutes

First Negative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-Examination of the First Negative – 3 minutes

Second Affirmative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-Examination of the Second Affirmative – 3 minutes

Second Negative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-Examination of the Second Negative – 3 minutes

First Negative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

First Affirmative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

Second Negative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

Second Affirmative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

- (c) Maximum allowed preparation time during debates for each team shall be determined by individual tournaments. Preparation time shall be eight (8) minutes at all GFCA State and Area Tournaments.
- (d) **Novice Policy Debate:** All first-year competitors (i.e. novice) will only be allowed to use the approved novice evidence packet in competitions.
 - (1) Novice students may not modify the plan texts.
 - (2) Novice students will be allowed to update arguments on their own so long as the content of the argument does not change. If any major argument becomes non-unique the GFCA Executive Committee will release a new argument to take its place.
 - (3) Novice students will be allowed to run topicality arguments, but not theory arguments or specification arguments. Extra topicality and effects topicality arguments will be considered theory and will not be allowed in the novice division.
 - (4) Novice students may rearrange the organization of evidence but may not add and/or change the content of the arguments in the packet. This means students may find new evidence but not change the fundamental intent of the argument.
 - (5) Novice policy teams may not run counterplans or kritiks.
 - (6) A student who has competed in a different forensic activity but is in their first resolution of policy debate is considered a novice.
- (e) A student is no longer eligible for competition in the first-year/novice division once they have reached competition in their second year resolution.
- (f) There is only one winner in each debate. Judges determine the winner based on argumentation ability, speaking technique, case development, and evidence. Judges score competitors with speaker ranks and points. The team with the higher speaker point total wins the debate, unless indicated by the judge as a low-point win.
- (g) Each debater is awarded a maximum of thirty (30) speaker points.

2.82 Legislative Debate

- (a) Legislative Debate is defined as individual debate in a large group setting. Legislative debaters research and write pieces of Congressional legislation that they determine to be in the best interest of society.
- (b) Debaters will speak on the legislation while using proper and sanctioned parliamentary procedure. The State Student Congress will utilize parliamentary procedure as determined by the National Forensic League.
- (c) Judges score each competitor based on argumentation ability, speaking technique, knowledge of parliamentary procedure and overall participation.
- (d) The GFCA will follow all National Forensic League rules outlined in their league manual for Legislative Debate.

2.83 Lincoln Douglas Debate

- (a) Lincoln Douglas Debate is defined as individual debate focused on proposition of a value which concerns itself with what ought to be rather than what is. The debate topic changes on a bimonthly basis as determined by the National Forensic League, available at www.nflonline.org.
- (b) The order and time limits of the speeches are as follows:
 - Affirmative Constructive – 6 minutes
 - Negative Cross-Examines Affirmative – 3 minutes
 - Negative Constructive – 7 minutes
 - Affirmative Cross-Examines Negative – 3 minutes
 - Affirmative Rebuttal – 4 minutes
 - Negative Rebuttal – 6 minutes
 - Affirmative Rebuttal – 3 minutes
- (c) Maximum allowed preparation time during debates for each competitor is set for four (4) minutes.
- (d) A student is no longer eligible for competition in the first-year/novice division once they have competed in the event in the previous school year.
- (e) There is only one winner in each debate. Judges determine the winner based on argumentation ability, speaking technique, case development, and evidence. The debater with the higher speaker point total wins the debate, unless indicated by the judge as a low-point win.

2.84 Public Forum Debate

- (a) Public Forum Debate is defined as a two-person team event where students debate a monthly topic designated by the National Forensic League or by invitational tournaments, focusing on advocacy of a position derived from the issues presented in the resolution, not a prescribed set of burdens.

(b) Prior to every round, and in the presence of the judge(s), a coin is tossed by one team and called by the other. The team that wins the coin flip may choose one of the options: either the side of the topic they wish to debate or the speaking order position they wish to have in the debate. The remaining option is given to the team who does not win the coin flip.

(c) Once sides and speaking positions have been decided the order and time limits of the speeches are as follows:

Team A First Speaker – 4 minutes

Team B First Speaker – 4 minutes

Crossfire (First question presented by Team A First Speaker) – 3 minutes

Team A Second Speaker – 4 minutes

Team B Second Speaker – 4 minutes

Crossfire (First question presented by Team A Second Speaker) – 3 minutes

Team A First Speaker Summary – 2 minutes

Team B First Speaker Summary – 2 minutes

Grand Crossfire – 3 minutes

Team A Second Speaker Final Focus – 2 minutes

Team B Second Speaker Final Focus – 2 minutes

(d) Maximum allowed preparation time during debates for each team is set for two (2) minutes.

(e) The GFCFA will refer to all National Forensic League guidelines as laid out in their league manual for Public Forum Debate.

(f) There is only one winner in each debate. Judges score competitors on argumentation ability, speaking technique, case development, and reasonableness of position. The GFCFA recommends the usage of community judges for this event.

2.85 Extemporaneous Commentary

(a) Extemporaneous Commentary is defined as an individual event where an original synthesis of the speaker is presented with current fact and opinion on a designated current event topic, usually presented in conjunction with numerous sources.

(b) The current event topic shall be phrased in a question format and include topics of both domestic and international issues of concern. Topics shall be from current events discussed in standard periodicals of the current school year.

(c) Thirty minutes before the contest is to begin, the first speaker shall draw three (3) topics, choose one (1), and return the other two (2). The other contestants shall draw in like manner, in their speaking order, at seven (7) minute intervals. Topics should not be repeated from one round to another to prevent a speaker from drawing a topic previously selected.

(d) After the contestant has chosen a topic, s/he shall withdraw to the preparation area and plan her/his speech without conferring or exchanging information with anyone. No prepared notes or outlines will be allowed in the preparation room. Contestants may refer to files containing books, book excerpts, periodicals, online retrievals from mass media publications, and/or photocopies of any of the above. Information retrieved from Internet websites must include the URL citation. Once a contestant has chosen a topic, s/he may neither change from, nor alter that topic. No visual aids may be used in the delivery of the speech. Violation shall result in ranking down in the round in which the violation occurred.

(e) The time limit is seven (7) minutes maximum with a thirty (30) second grace period.

(f) At the State Tournament, the final round will include a cross-examination period, as described below. Though not mandatory, Invitational Qualifying Tournaments are urged to use the cross-examination format in the final round.

(1) Cross-Examination Procedure: Each speaker shall be assigned a position in the speaking order.

Drawing shall take place at twelve (12) minute intervals. Thirty (30) minutes after Speaker 1 has drawn, Speaker last shall enter the contest room. Speaker 1 shall give her/his speech and Speaker last shall take notes and/or listen. At the conclusion of Speaker 1's speech, Speaker last shall cross-examine Speaker 1 for a time period not to exceed three (3) minutes. The cross-examination will be an open format. Speaker last shall return to the prep room and Speaker 1 shall stay to listen to and question Speaker 2. Speaker 2 will question Speaker 3, etc. until the all speakers have spoken and questioned.

2.86 Original Oratory

(a) Oratory is defined as an individual event where the student writes, memorizes, and then delivers a persuasive speech arising from her/his personal feelings, convictions, or a source of concern. regarding their community, beliefs and/or the larger world.

- (b) Topics for the original oration may be selected by the student and with the aid of the coach or teacher, but the oration itself must be the product of the contestant alone and not her/his coach or teacher. The oration may simply alert the audience to a threatening danger, strengthen its devotion to an accepted cause, or eulogize a person.
- (c) Visual aids are not permitted in this event.
- (d) The contestant may not use an oration which s/he used in any GFCFA contest prior to the current school year. The same oration shall be used for the duration of the tournament.
- (e) Not more than one-hundred-and-fifty (150) words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing, and such quotations shall be identified in the written copy of the speech. Extensive paraphrasing of any source is prohibited. Violation shall result in disqualification from the tournament.
- (e) A written copy of the oration must be available to the tournament director upon request. Failure to present a written copy of the oration upon request will result in the ranking-down of said contestant in one (1) round.
- (f) The time limit is ten (10) minutes maximum with a thirty (30) second grace period.

2.87 Dramatic Performance

- (a) The Dramatic Interpretation contest is defined as an individual event where the student memorizes and then delivers a dramatic cutting arising from dramatic literature suitable to the contestant's personality and maturity to convey orally the meaning of that dramatic literature through characterization and narration.
- (b) Selections used in Dramatic shall be cuttings from a single source from published printed novels, short stories, plays, poems, or screenplays. Coaches and/or student must have the original source available to the tournament director upon request. Photocopies are accepted for presentation. Failure to present a copy of the source upon request will result in the disqualification of said contestant in one (1) round.
- (c) Presentation shall be from memory and without the use of physical objects or costumes (d) The contestant may not use a cutting from the same single source which s/he used in any contest prior to the current school year or during the current school year in another forensic event. The same selection shall be used for the duration of the tournament, but may not be used for another event at the same tournament. Violation of this rule could result in disqualification.
- (e) The contestant shall name the author and the title of the selection being presented during her/his performance.
- (f) For the purpose of continuity of the cutting from a large piece of literature, it may be necessary for transitions to be added to the cutting. However, at no time may the cutting change gender of any character or change the original intent of the author's work.
- (f) The time limit is ten (10) minutes with a thirty (30) second grace period.

2.88 Humorous Interpretation

- (a) The Humorous Interpretation contest is defined as an individual event where the student delivers a humorous cutting arising from literature suitable to the contestant's personality and maturity to convey orally the humor of that literature through characterization and narration.
- (b) Selections used in Humorous shall be cuttings from a single source from published printed novels, short stories, plays, poems, or screenplays. Coaches and/or student must have the original source available to the tournament director upon request. Photocopies are accepted for presentation. Failure to present a copy of the source upon request will result in the disqualification of said contestant in one (1) round.
- (c) Presentation shall be from memory and without the use of physical objects or costumes
- (d) The contestant may not use a cutting from the same source which s/he used in any contest prior to the current school year or during the current school year in another forensic event. The same selection shall be used for the duration of the tournament, but may not be used for another event at the same tournament. Violation of this rule could result in disqualification.
- (e) The contestant shall name the author and the title of the selection being presented during her/his performance.
- (f) For the purpose of continuity of the cutting from a large piece of literature, it may be necessary for transitions to be added to the cutting. However, at no time may the cutting change gender of any character or change the original intent of the author's work.
- (f) The time limit is ten (10) minutes with a thirty (30) second grace period.

2.89 Duo Interpretation

- (a) The Duo Interpretation contest is defined as a two-person event where the students memorize and deliver a cutting arising from literature suitable to the contestants' personality and maturity to convey orally the dramatic meaning or humor of that literature through dual and/or multiple characterization and narration.
- (b) Selections in Duo shall be cuttings from a single source from published printed novels, short stories, plays, poems, or screenplays. Coaches and/or students must have the original source available to the tournament director

upon request. Photocopies are accepted for presentation. Failure to present a copy of the source upon request will result in the disqualification of said contestants in one (1) round.

(c) The selection may be serious or humorous work, or any combination thereof.

(d) Focus from contestant(s) may be direct during the introduction. Contestants may look at each other during the event, but must be indirect (off-stage) during the performance itself.

(e) Each contestant may play one (1) or more characters, as long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible. If the selection is prose or poetry and/or contains narration, either or both of the contestants may present the narration.

(f) The contestant may not use a cutting from the same source which s/he used in any contest prior to the current school year or during the current school year in another forensic event. The same selection shall be used for the duration of the tournament, but may not be used for another event at the same tournament. Violation of this rule could result in disqualification.

(g) The contestant shall name the author and the title of the selection being presented during her/his performance.

(g) For the purpose of continuity of the cutting from a large piece of literature, it may be necessary for transitions to be added to the cutting. However, at no time may the cutting change gender of any character or change the original intent of the author's work.

(h) A student shall compete with the same partner and same selection at the State Tournament.

(i) The time limit is ten (10) minutes with a thirty (30) second grace period.

2.891 Impromptu Speaking

(a) Impromptu Speaking is defined as an individual event where an original synthesis of the speaker is presented with current fact and opinion on a designated topic of general knowledge. This speech is usually presented as an informative speech with possible evidence of personal or educational experience, regional and national common knowledge, and/or generally accepted information from sources of broadcast news or programming, Internet or other published media.

(b) The topic may be phrases as a question, event, literary phrase, philosophical or metaphorical word or statement, abstract word or idea, or other statement that could generate several supported points of developed speech. Topics shall not be from specific current events that would require prior research or study, but rather from appropriate age-level general knowledge.

(c) The first speaker shall draw three (3) topics, chose one (1), and then return the other two (2). The other contestants shall draw in a like manner, in their speaking order, at seven (7) minute intervals or as soon as the previous speaker has finished (with a slight delay in order for the judge to finish writing each ballot). Topics shall not be repeated from one (1) round to another to prevent a speaker from drawing on a topic previously selected.

(d) After the contestant has chosen a topic s/he shall quickly plan her/his speech without conferring or exchanging information with anyone. No prepared notes or outlines may be used in the speaking time, although the student may use a note card or paper to develop her/his thoughts. Contestants may not refer to files containing books, book excerpts, periodicals, online retrievals from mass media publications, and/or other published media and/or photocopies of any of the referenced sources. Once a contestant has chosen a topic s/he may neither change nor alter that topic. Failure to abide by this rule shall result in the ranking-down of said contestant in that round.

(e) No visual aids may be used in the delivery of the speech.

(f) The time limit is seven (7) minutes maximum with a thirty (30) second grace period inclusive of preparation and speaking time. Students may take as much preparation time as desire of the time limit, but may be ranked lower for extensive use of planning rather than speaking.

2.892 Prose and Poetry Interpretation

(a) Prose and Poetry Interpretation is defined as an individual event where the speaker selects and condenses worthy mixed genre literature suitable to the contestant's personality and maturity to convey orally the meaning of that literature through interpreted narration and poetry.

(b) Selected used in Prose and Poetry may be cuttings from a single source from published printed novels, short stories, plays, poems or screenplays. Selections may also be a program of several selections developing a specific theme, each with enough specific introductory material to inform the listener of title and author as well as how it relates to the theme of the program. Coaches and/or students must have the source available to the State Tournament director upon request. Photocopies are accepted for presentation. Failure to present a printed copy of the source upon request will result in the disqualification of said contestants in one (1) round.

(c) Presentations may be from memory, but students must use a manuscript giving the impression that they refer to it throughout the presentation. Students may not use any physical objects other than the manuscript cover

- (d) Students should concentrate on the literature being presented and avoid gestures or physical movement that distracts from rather than enhances his/her performance.
- (e) Students may not be dressed or costumed in any way that intentionally reflects character, intent, or theme of the presentation. Violation of the rule shall result in the ranking-down of the contestant in said round.
- (f) The prose and poetry events will alternate rounds with an equal number of presentations in preliminary rounds, with prose as first (1st) and third (3rd) rounds, and poetry as second (2nd) and fourth (4th) rounds. Additional rounds will continue in this alternating pattern, maintain an equal number of each presentation. Elimination rounds will also alternate starting with the program that would naturally follow the last preliminary round to the final round.
- (g) The contestant may not use a cutting from the same source which s/he used in any contest prior to the current school year or during the current school year in another forensic event. The same selection(s) shall be used for the duration of the tournament, but may not be used for another event at the same tournament. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.
- (h) The contestant shall name the author and the title of the selection being presented, and briefly discuss any theme that is being developed during her/his performance.
- (i) The time limit is ten (10) minutes maximum with a thirty (30) second grace period.

2.90 Ballots

- 2.91 The GFCFA encourages all Georgia tournament directors to use the standardized GFCFA ballots for each event as published on the GFCFA website.
- 2.92 Ballots must be collected for each round of each competition for every competitor and serve as the official record of ranks, ratings, win/loss and points for those entries.
- 2.93 Ballots results are to be kept confidential during Area and State Tournaments by the tabulation coordinator. Ballots will be distributed to coaches at the conclusion of Area and/or State Tournaments.
- 2.94 A results summary of each event at any sanctioned tournament must be completed and forwarded by the Tournament Director or official designee to the GFCFA Secretary within ten (10) days following the tournament. (See by-law 2.53.)

BY-LAW 3.00 – AREAS

3.10 Area Authority

- 3.11 Each area's physical boundaries shall be determined by a committee put forth by the Executive Committee every two years.
- 3.12 Each Area, through its Area Coordinator, shall be responsible for certifying the winners in all events for qualification to the state tournament.

3.20 Area Qualification Tournaments

- 3.21 All events hosted at the GFCFA State Tournament will be offered for qualification at an area tournament. In order to count toward qualification for the GFCFA Varsity State Tournament, all competitions must take place prior to February 1st of each school year.
- 3.22 Area tournament dates will be determined by the GFCFA Executive Committee as published on the officially released calendar.

- (a) The Executive Committee will work with Area Coordinators to determine dates and locations for area tournaments.

- (b) Area tournaments may not begin prior to February 1st of each school year and must be completed ten (10) days prior to the first day of competition for the GFCFA Varsity State Tournament.

3.23 Schools may enter competitors that are eligible to advance to the GFCFA State Tournament. The following restrictions/guidelines apply to the Varsity State Tournament:

- (a) Students may only be entered in events in which they have previously competed in at a minimum of two (2) GFCFA sanctioned tournaments prior to the area tournament.

- (b) Students may double enter in any speech event in which they meet the above requirement.

- (c) Students may not double enter in any debate event. Students may double-enter in one debate event and one individual event provided all other qualification requirements are met.

- (d) Students may not enter the Area Tournament if they have previously qualified to advance to the GFCFA State Tournament in that event.

- (e) If a school has already qualified four (4) or more entries in any event, they will not be allowed to send entries in that event to the Area Tournament.

- (g) Member schools may enter up to four entries in each event at the Area Tournament. However, participation in the Area Tournament cannot result in more than four (4) total entries qualified to the State Tournament. In the occurrence that a school has entries in seedings/final rounds that would put that school above the four entry limit, the higher seeds will qualify to the State Tournament.

3.24 State qualifying bids will be given by the Area Coordinator in conjunction with the Executive Committee in accordance with the qualification rules in by-law 4.00. Note: In two-person events bids are assigned to individuals, not pairs.

3.25 Entry fees and the number of awards distributed for each event will be determined by the Area Coordinator at the direction of the GFC Executive Committee.

3.26 There is no hardship appeal process for the Area Tournament.

3.30 Area Qualification Event Competitions

3.31 Coaches may not coach or interact with any competitor, whether or not the student is from the coach's school that is involved in a round in process. This includes any electronic communication, direct contact while competitor is in preparation (such as extemporaneous speaking prep time or debate round prep time), prompting or any hand or body signaling during a round.

3.32 Each qualifying school will be required to bring one (1) judge per four (4) competitors or two (2) teams (or part thereof) for debate events and for every six (6) individual event/duo entries.

3.33 Each event will follow the official GFC event rules as outlined in the GFC by-laws.

3.34 Each event will at minimum award a champion and a runner-up.

BY-LAW 4.00 – STATE

4.10 State Tournament Logistics

4.11 The GFC shall determine the forensics activities in which a state tournament are to be held annually. The qualification procedures are only in effect for the varsity and/or open divisions of each event.

4.12 The location and date of the state tournament shall be decided by the GFC Executive Committee no later than October 15th of each school year.

4.13 The State Tournament may not begin preliminary competition rounds later than 10:00pm

4.20 State Tournament Qualification

4.21 Qualification to the State Tournament can be achieved through one or more of the following:

(a) A bid to the state tournament awarded at a sanctioned area tournament OR

(b) A bid to the state tournament awarded to the finalists in a single event as follows

(1) Twelve (12) or more entries, the top four (4) competitors.

(2) Eight (8) to eleven (11) entries, the top two (2) competitors.

(3) Four (4) to seven (7) entries, the top one (1) competitor.

(4) If the event has three (3) or fewer entries, no competitors from the event will qualify to the GFC State Tournament.

(5) If an entry already has a bid to the state tournament and meets the qualifications a second time, the bid does not defer to the next entry not yet qualified.

(c) Competitors for two-person events count each pair as one competitor (see by-law 4.21b).

(d) If the GFC-sanctioned invitational tournament holds elimination rounds, the elimination rounds take precedence over preliminary seeding.

(e) Student(s) must be from a GFC member school in good standing in order to receive a qualification bid.

(1) Qualifiers in two-person events must attend the same school.

(2) Non-Georgia participants may not qualify for the GFC state tournament.

(f) Schools cannot receive a qualifier from their own invitational tournaments. Area Tournaments shall not be considered an invitational.

(g) Each GFC member school in good standing will be given one (1) at-large entry to the state tournament. This at-large entry may only be used for an event in which it is the sole entry for that school in that event at the State Tournament. The at-large entry must have met the minimum number of required tournaments of two (2) in that event prior to the State Tournament.

4.22 Student(s) may only enter an event in which they have qualified for the State Tournament.

(a) If schools qualify four (4) or more entries through the regular season process, they will not be allowed to send entries in that event to the area tournament.

(b) In two-person events, bids are assigned to individuals, not pairs.

4.23 Entered students who have not met the qualification requirements will not be allowed to participate in the State Tournament.

4.24 Double entering

(a) A student may only double enter in a speech event if they are qualified in both events to the State Tournament.

(b) Students may not double enter in a debate event; they may double-enter in a debate event and an individual event/Duo Interpretation if all other qualification requirements are met. If a student has qualified in more than

one (1) debate event, the student must choose just one (1) in which they will participate for purposes of determining a State Champion.

4.25 The GFCFA State Tournament will use the National Forensic League January/February topic in the Lincoln-Douglas debate event and the February topic in the Public Forum debate event.

4.26 All participants at the State Tournament must have participated in two (2) in-state invitational tournaments in that event for that school year prior to the State Tournament.

(a) Schools will not be able to use their own invitational tournament as one (1) of their two (2) required in-state invitational tournaments.

(b) Schools will not be able to use the Area Tournament as one (1) of their two (2) required in-state invitational tournaments.

(c) Participation may take place at GFCFA sanctioned Speech and Debate Tournaments to meet qualification requirements.

(d) For Atlanta Urban Debate League schools at least one (1) of their required participatory tournaments must be a non-Urban Debate League, GFCFA sanctioned tournament.

(e) Students must be at least in the ninth (9th) grade or above to participate in the Varsity State Tournament.

4.27 Any hardship appeals must be made in writing to the GFCFA Executive Committee at least ten (10) days prior to the first day of competition of the State Tournament.

(a) The hardship process will be applied for two-person events only.

(b) Member schools will be permitted one hardship process per event.

(c) The hardship process can only replace one (1) person in the two-person entry.

(d) The hardship student(s) must have met the minimum number of required tournaments in that event.

4.30 State Tournament Event Competitions

4.31 No speaker shall be interrupted during the main speech or rebuttal in any event during competition.

4.32 Coaches may not coach or interact with any competitor, whether or not the student is from the coach's school that is involved in a round in process. This includes any electronic communication, direct contact while competitor is in preparation (such as extemporaneous speaking prep time or debate round prep time), prompting or any hand or body signaling during a round.

4.33 Any school entering the State Tournament and dropping out without giving notice to the GFCFA Secretary at least two (2) days prior to the first (1st) day of competition will be assessed the original entry fees plus a ten (10) percent nuisance fee. Such fees must be paid by the member school in order to compete in the following year's State Tournament.

4.34 Each qualifying school will be required to bring one (1) judge per four (4) debaters or two (2) debate teams (or part thereof) and/or every six (6) entries in individual events/Duo Interpretation (or part thereof).

4.35 Each event will follow the GFCFA event rules as outlined in the GFCFA by-laws.

4.36 In preliminary rounds, schools should not hit themselves unless unavoidable.

(a) Debate preliminary rounds

(1) Five preliminary rounds are held at the GFCFA State Tournaments.

(2) The first two rounds will be randomly paired. Subsequent rounds will be paired using High-low speaker points within brackets. Rich Edwards program Tab Room for the PC will be utilized for these pairings.

(3) Judges for the State tournament will be determined by a mutual preference system to be determined by the Executive Committee of the GFCFA prior to each year's tournament. The preference system and preference sheet must be sent to all competing schools a minimum of 3 days prior to the State Tournament. This preference system will NOT be utilized at the 1st and 2nd year state tournament. Judges will have the option of disclosing their decision at the end of each round.

(b) Individual Events/Duo Interpretation preliminary rounds:

(1) Five preliminary rounds are held at the GFCFA State Tournaments.

(2) Preliminary rounds are determined randomly and should not be seeded from round to round.

(3) As possible, parity of competition should be of high importance.

(4) A "no-show" shall be marked as a rank of "9" unless the entry was kept from competing as a direct result of tournament logistics. If such a case is determined by the Executive Committee as a result of an official protest, the score for the missing round will be averaged from the other four preliminary rounds.

(5) A student may not have more than one round averaged and still be eligible to advance to elimination rounds.

4.37 Advancement to elimination rounds

(a) In debate events, at least eight (8) entries will require advancing to a final round; 8-15 entries requires a quarterfinal round; 16-40 entries requires a quarterfinal round; Over 40 entries requires an octofinal round. This formula will only be utilized if it still allows the final round to reasonably be able to start by 10:00 pm on the Saturday night of the tournament. The ability to complete the tournament in 2 days shall take precedence over this formula.

(1) Advancement of teams/debaters shall be determined by seedings after preliminary rounds are complete. Seeding for elimination rounds will be determined based on preliminary records. In case of ties the tiebreakers shall be in the following order:

- [a] High-Low Speaker Points
- [b] Total Speaker points
- [c] Ranks
- [d] Double High-Low Speaker Points
- [e] Opposition Wins
- [f] Judge Variance
- [g] Random Number (as determined by Tab Room for the PC)

(2) No team shall be able to advance to elimination rounds without having more preliminary wins than losses. If a team without a winning record is seeded high enough to advance to elimination rounds, than the team that they are scheduled to face would automatically advance to the next elimination round.

(3) If the teams debating in a given elimination round debated one another in the preliminary rounds, then they will debate the opposite side of the resolution in the elimination round. If the teams have not previously debated at the tournament, then sides for elimination rounds will be determined by coin flip. The winner of the coin flip will be able to choose which side of the resolution that they will defend.

(4) All elimination rounds shall have a minimum of 3 judges. The team receiving the majority of ballots in an elimination round will advance to the next elimination round.

(5) Brackets shall NOT be broken in out-rounds.

(b) In individual events/Duo Interpretation, at least twelve (12) entries require a final round (6 competitors); 18-32 entries require a semifinal round (12 competitors); 33+ entries require a quarterfinal round (18 competitors).

(1) In a quarter-final round of individual events/Duo Interpretation, each section should have between 4-7 entries per section for a total of no more than twenty entries but not more than half of the total entries in the event. Entries advance to the semi-final round based upon the total of ALL scores (including individual judge scores), dropping the low score.

(2) Twelve entries should ideally advance to the semi-final round. In the event of a tie either from preliminary rounds or a quarter-final round, the tie should NOT be broken if the total number in semi-finals does not exceed fourteen (14). If not breaking from quarter-finals, and a tie resulting from preliminary rounds advances more than 14, the tie shall be broken by using, in order:

- [a] total judge scores if advancing from a quarter-final round;
- [b] total of ALL scores from preliminary rounds;
- [c] total number of 1's, total number of 2's, etc. until tie is broken
- [d] if the two entries met previously, the entry that placed above the other;
- [e] if the entries have not previously met, use reciprocal fractions;
- [f] coin flip with coaches from concerned schools present.

The semi-final round of individual events/Duo Interpretation must have at least nine (9) entries. Entries advance to the final round based upon the total of ALL scores (including individual judge scores), dropping the low score.

(3) At least four (4) entries must be in the final round of an Individual Event/Duo Interpretation; the goal should be six (6). Advancement of entries is determined from all previous scores, including all individual judge scores if quarter-final and/or semi-finals are held. The low-score is dropped in determining advancement to the final round. Advancement of six entries is ideal. Ties are not to be broken to advance to the final round unless the tie causes fewer than four or more than eight entries to be in the final round. For the final round, if the choice is between five and seven entries, seven shall advance. If the choice is between four or eight entries, the choice is four. In the event that a tie does not allow criteria of number of participants in the final round to be met, the following tie-break system should be used TO DETERMINE FINALISTS IN INDIVIDUAL EVENTS/DUO INTERPRETATION, continuing until the tie is broken:

- [a] add up ALL scores from all judges;

- [b] total number of 1's, total number of 2's, etc.
- [c] entry with higher score of previously met in competition at the State Tournament
- [d] conversion of scores to reciprocal fractions;
- [c] coin flip with coaches from concerned schools present.

(4) Winners shall be determined by adding up all scores of ALL judges and dropping low score through the final round. The student with the lowest total will be named Champion; the students with the next lowest score will place 2nd, etc. Tie breaks broken by, in order,

- [a] rank in final round only; if tied, then by judge preference in the final round;
- [b] total of ALL scores
- [c] total number of 1's, total number of 2's, etc.
- [d] reciprocal fractions of all scores;
- [e] if unbreakable, then the tie shall stand and both entries will receive the placement. Placement shall remain in order; placement will not skip in order to accommodate the tie.

4.38 Awards:

(a) Each event will recognize all students advancing to out-rounds in their events, as well as a champion and runner-up in debate events and the top six (6) in Individual Events/Duo Interpretation, including Champions in those events.

(b) Debate events will award the top ten (10) in each division. Speaker awards will be awarded solely on the basis of performance in the preliminary rounds. Speaker awards will be determined based on High-Low Speaker points. In case of ties, the tiebreakers shall be in the following order:

- (1) Total Speaker points
- (2) Ranks
- (3) Double High-Low Speaker Points
- (4) Opposition Wins
- (5) Judge Variance
- (6) Random Number (as determined by Tab Room for the PC)

(c) Sweepstakes shall be awarded in three categories: Speech, Debate and Overall.

(1) Speech Sweepstakes include Dramatic Performance, Humorous Interpretation, Extemporaneous Commentary, Prose/Poetry, Impromptu and Duo Interpretation; Debate Sweepstakes include all divisions in Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate and Lincoln-Douglas Debate; Overall Sweepstakes includes all events sanctioned by the GFCA.

(2) Sweepstakes formula is determined as follows:

Debate: 20 points for Championship entry; 15 points for runner-up entry; 10 points for semi-finals (non-advancing); 5 points for quarter-finals (non-advancing); 2 points for octo-finals (non-advancing) 1 point for double octo-finals (non-advancing). Winner is determined by total points, the school with the highest point named Champion, the school with the second highest points named Runner-up, etc.

Individual Events/Duo Interpretation: 15 points for 1st Place, 10 points for 2nd place, 5 points for 3rd place, 3 points for finalists; 2 points for semi-finals (non-advancing) and 1 point for quarter-finals (non-advancing). Winner is determined by total points, the school with the highest point named Champion, the school with the second highest points named Runner-up, etc.

(3) The Overall Championship is determined by adding up both the Debate and Individual Event/Duo Interpretation sweepstakes categories.

(3) The top three schools in each category will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony. Schools may only win one Sweepstakes Award per category. They may win an award in each category.

(4) In the event of a tie in sweepstakes, the following serves as the tie-break formula, in order until tie is broken.

- [a] Total 1st places in the specific category, then total of 2nd places, etc.
- [b] If not determined by [a], ties in Sweepstakes IS allowed.

4.39 Judges in all rounds will be determined by GFCA officers working in the Tabulation Room of the State Speech and Debate Tournament. Judges may only be replaced by the Tab Room. Changes in judges without consent of the Tab Room may result in the round being re-run. This rule is for all rounds of the State Speech and Debate Tournament.

(a) Judge conflicts should be brought to the immediate attention of a GFCA officer.

- (b) Coaches may file a formal protest if a concern with a judge exists. The protest must happen at the State Tournament and be in writing, given to a GFCA Executive Committee member. At that point the Committee will meet to determine appropriate action if action is necessary.

4.40 Guidelines for Computer Usage

4.41 Debate Events:

- (a) Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited. (This does not prohibit non-electronic communication between debate partners during prep time if applicable.)
- (b) Availability of Evidence: Contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to provide promptly a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. Printers may be used. Evidence may be printed in the round or produced electronically, but must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team and the judge.
- (c) Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, batteries, extension cords, and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts will not be responsible for providing computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants.
- (d) Contestants choosing to use laptop computers and related equipment accept the risk of equipment failure. Judges and/or contest directors will give no special consideration or accommodation, including no additional speech time or prep time, should equipment failure occur.
- (e) By choosing to use laptop computers in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

4.42 Extemporaneous Commentary Evidence Retrieval:

- (a) Extemporaneous Commentary contestants may make use of electronic retrieval devices to store and to retrieve their subject files at invitational tournaments. Students can retrieve extemporaneous files to read, but cannot write speeches or organize their thoughts on the computers. This rule in no way prevents students from still utilizing traditional paper copy files to enable the competitor to successfully compete in Extemporaneous Speaking.
- (b) Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop computers, netbooks, iPads, or other portable electronic retrieval equipment. Secondary devices such as flash drives or external hard drives are allowed as well. Cell phones or smart phones are prohibited from being used while preparing or before speaking at invitational tournaments.
- (c) Source Materials: Students may consult published books, periodical articles, newspaper articles, think tank articles, government reports or journal articles saved on their electronic retrieval device or present in hard copy form provided:
- (1) There are no notations made within or on the saved article other than citation information.
 - (2) Any highlighting or underlining of the articles is done in only one color within each article. Bolding, italicizing, or any other manipulation of the original text of sources (other than highlighting or underlining as previously stipulated) is prohibited.
- (d) No other source materials will be allowed in the Extemporaneous prep room other than stated above. Prewritten Extemporaneous speeches, handbooks, briefs or outlines are prohibited from the prep room, whether stored electronically or present in hard copy form.
- (e) Power Source: Power strips may not be used in the prep room at any time. Extemp computers used in the prep room should be battery operated at all times.
- (f) Internet: Extemporaneous Commentary contestants shall not access the Internet or communicate electronically with any other individual while in the prep room at any invitational tournament (district or national). All computers must comply with the following provisions:
- (1) Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
 - (2) Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
- (g) Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
- (h) Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited.

(i) Liability: Extemporaneous Commentary competitors accept full responsibility for the safety and security of their electronic retrieval devices throughout the entire course of any invitational tournament. The GFCA may put stickers and/or tape on computers to ensure they are not opened or used, or to ensure appropriate owners take their own machines. The GFCA does not assume any liability for the computers. Students are welcome to use Kensington locks or other such devices to secure their computers in the prep room. Students, parents, and coaches should be aware that the students are bringing and using the computers at their own risk. The GFCA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken computers.

(j) File Monitoring: The GFCA retains the right to view and search any electronic retrieval devices to ensure compliance with any and all rules at any GFCA sanctioned tournament

(k) Students from the same school may share computers during preparation. However, communication among contestants during preparation time is strictly prohibited.

BY-LAW 5.00 – ORGANIZATION

5.10 Commitment to Membership Equity

5.11 The GFCA is committed to equity for its members.

5.12 Written complaints about discrimination should be made by letter or written communication to the Executive Committee. Each report shall cover the time period in which events happened. The association will not include any requests, inquiries or complaints in the association's meeting notes unless permission is granted in writing by originator of said complaint.

5.20 Open Meeting / Open Records

5.21 The GFCA shall comply with federal and state laws relating to the inspection of public records and/or open and public meetings with the exception that a record involves the sole subject of academic records or performance of an individual student or eligibility of a student to participate in a sponsored event.

5.22 Meeting minutes from the annual Fall and Spring meetings will be published by the Executive Committee Secretary for all members in accordance with the GFCA constitution.

5.30 Codes of Conduct

5.31 Ethics Rule: Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to, disruption of school, theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of the law tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the GFCA and will not be tolerated.

(a) Use of tobacco is expressly prohibited at all GFCA sanctioned events.

(b) Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited at all GFCA sanctioned events and event sites.

5.32 The use of illegal and/or illicit drugs or substances not prescribed to the individual by a medical professional will not be tolerated.

5.33 Punishments for violating the ethics, drug and/or alcohol policies include but are not limited to: Ban of competition at the State Tournament; Communication with the administration of the school student attends; legal and/or police involvement. Coaches are encouraged, along with the schools and Districts, to establish further, appropriate rules to address such issues. Student possession of controlled substances under parent supervision for religious purposes will not be considered a violation of this policy.

5.40 Elections

5.41 Elections will be held on an annual basis after the annual spring meeting for the association.

5.42 Each election will be directed by two (2) Election Directors appointed by the Executive Committee each year. The Election Directors are not allowed to be considered for nomination or appointment to a primary or secondary office position for the GFCA.

5.43 The nomination process will begin the day of the annual spring meeting for the association and will be open for seven (7) days. All nominations are to be submitted and seconded to both Election Directors via email. All presented and seconded nominations are recorded by the Election Directors for balloting. Nominees must qualify under the guidelines of the GFCA constitution (section 2.30) including the following regulations: be a resident of the state of Georgia, be officially in a sponsoring or coaching position with a Georgia high school forensics program, and be in good standing with the Association.

5.44 Ballots will be sent to the membership via email within five (5) days of the close of the nomination period.

(a) One ballot per member school will be accepted by the Election Directors.

(b) All ballots will be kept secret by the Election Directors.

(c) Member schools will have seven (7) days from the distribution of ballots to submit their votes. Any votes received after seven (7) days from distribution will not be counted in the election.

(d) Member schools may vote for members representing their school for office.

(e) The Election Directors must announce to the membership via email the election results within ten (10) days of the distribution of ballots to the members. The current Executive Secretary shall post the results to the association website.
5.45 Each officer shall serve their term in accordance with the GFCA constitution beginning July 1st of each school year.
5.46 Voting members are defined by the following standards:

- (a) One (1) vote per current member school, regardless of the number of coaches associated with said member school.
- (b) Member school must be in good standing with the GFCA. Good-standing is defined by the following:
 - (1) membership dues are current and paid AND
 - (2) has not been prohibited a vote due to disciplinary decisions from the Executive Committee

5.47 Special elections

5.50 Liaisons

5.51 The Middle School Debate Liaison works jointly with the Atlanta Urban Debate League, the Middle School Debate League and the Georgia Forensic Coaches' Association.

- (a) During the election process, the GFCA membership will nominate a representative who is a member school of both the AUDL/MSDL and the GFCA. The liaison will serve a one-year term as a tertiary executive member.
- (b) The liaison will not have a vote for executive board matters, but will be granted access to the agenda.
- (c) The liaison is to foster commitment to forensic activities between middle school and high school programs in Georgia. The liaison will advocate for middle school forensic issues that might fall under GFCA governance.

5.52 The Urban Debate League Liaison works jointly with the Atlanta Urban Debate League and the Georgia Forensic Coaches' Association.

- (a) During the election process, the GFCA membership will nominate a representative who is a member school of both the AUDL and the GFCA. The liaison will serve a one-year term as a tertiary executive member.
- (b) The liaison will not have a vote for executive board matters, but will be granted access to the agenda.
- (c) The liaison is to foster community between the AUDL and GFCA and advocate for AUDL issues that might fall under GFCA governance.

5.53 The Georgia Independent School Association (GISA) Liaison works jointly with Georgia Independent School Association and the Georgia Forensic Coaches' Association.

- (a) During the election process, the GFCA membership will nominate a representative who is a member school of both the GISA and the GFCA. The liaison will serve a one-year term as a tertiary executive member.
- (b) The liaison will not have a vote for executive board matters, but will be granted access to the agenda.
- (c) The liaison is to foster community between the GISA and GFCA and advocate for GISA issues that might fall under GFCA governance.

5.60 Honors and Awards

5.61 The GFCA awards two (2) coaching honors each year to active forensic coaches.

- a) One will be dedicated to a coach of debate events (Legislative, Lincoln-Douglas, Policy and Public Forum).
- (b) One will be dedicated to a coach of speech events (Dramatic Performance, Duo Interpretation, Extemporaneous Commentary, Humorous Interpretation, Prose/Poetry, Impromptu and Original Oratory).
- (c) The honors will be presented by the Executive President at the GFCA State Tournament during the awards ceremony.
- (d) Recipients of the honors will be selected by nomination and vote by secret ballot. Nominations should be made to the Executive Committee members and be made no later than ten (10) days before the Varsity State Speech and Debate Tournament. Voting will take place at the tournament. Coaches not in attendance but still wanting to vote may do so by submitting their vote to the designated official.
- (e) Recipients are then selected based on the following criteria:
 - (1) The candidate is in good standing with the GFCA.
 - (2) The candidate demonstrates enthusiasm for forensic activities.
 - (3) The candidate has a high regard and respect for the students s/he works with.
 - (4) The candidate has a high regard and respect for fellow coaches.
 - (5) The candidate works toward the improvement of the GFCA and forensic activities in Georgia.
 - (6) The candidate promotes interest in interscholastic forensic activities through the strength of her/his program.
 - (7) The candidate has acquired the respect of the students s/he works with as well as other students in the community.

5.62 The GFCA maintains a Hall of Fame for forensic coaches in Georgia.

- (a) The award will be presented by the President at the GFCA State Tournament.

(b) Recipients of the honors will be selected by nomination and vote by secret ballot. Nominations should be made to the Executive Committee members by February 1st. Voting instructions will be sent out by the GFCA Secretary.

(c) Recipients are then selected based on the following criteria, but not limited to:

- (1) The candidate is in good standing with the GFCA.
- (2) The candidate demonstrates enthusiasm for forensic activities.
- (3) The candidate has a high regard and respect for the students s/he works with.
- (4) The candidate has a high regard and respect for fellow coaches.
- (5) The candidate works towards the improvement of the GFCA and forensic activities in Georgia.
- (6) The candidate promotes interest in interscholastic forensic activities through the strength of her/his program.
- (7) The candidate has acquired the respect of the students s/he works with as well as other students in the community.
- (8) The candidate has worked to foster the growth of forensic activities in Georgia.
- (9) The candidate has promoted speech and debate outside of the forensic community in Georgia as an effective educational and communicative tool.
- (10) The candidate has coached in Georgia for at least five (5) years.
- (11) The election for the Hall of Fame shall be held in odd-numbered years.

5.70 Abolishment and Amendment

5.71 The GFCA Constitution may be abolished with affirmative vote of at least seventy-five (75%) percent of voting members of its association.

5.72 All amendments to the GFCA Constitution may be made with the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members of its association. All approved amendments are to be attached to Article V of the GFCA Constitution for written record.

5.73 In the instance that the GFCA Constitution has been abolished, all GFCA By-Laws are rendered null and void.

5.74 All amendments to the GFCA By-Laws may be made with the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members of its association.