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**Unified manual for member schools**

The **Georgia Forensic Coaches Association** …..

MISSION STATEMENT

Executive Committee

# CONSTITUTION of the association

Revision Date – August 15, 2015

## ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

The purpose of the organization shall be to foster, promote and regulate forensic activities in the State of Georgia.

## ARTICLE II – membership

Section 1. Qualifications. Any person officially in a sponsoring or coaching capacity with high school debate or forensic activities in the State of Georgia shall be eligible to become a member of the association. Any such individual shall become a member with their school upon satisfying the dues requirements of the association. Any person supporting high school debate or forensic activities shall be eligible to become an Associate Member of the Association. Any such individual shall become an Associate Member upon satisfying the lifetime dues requirement of the association.

Section 2. Dues. The dues of the association shall be established for each year at the annual meeting of the members of the association. Membership shall run from September 1 to August 31.

Section 3. Vote. Each member in the association shall have one vote, provided, however, that all members who are associated or affiliated with the same school or institution shall collectively only have one vote.

## ARTICLE III – meetings

Section 1. Meetings. The bi-annual meetings of the association shall be held each August and each April at a site to be determined by the Executive Committee of the association or at such other time and place designated by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings shall be held at such place and time as shall be designated in the notice of said meetings, upon call of the Executive Committee of the association.

Section 3. Notices. Notices of all meetings shall be given either personally, by email, by mail, by telephone, not less than ten (10) days nor more than ninety (90) days before the meeting, to each member of the record in good standing. If mailed or emailed, such notice shall be directed to each member at his address as it appears upon the records of the association unless s/he shall have provided the Director of Communications of the association with a written request, prior to the mailing of such notice, that notices intended for her/him be mailed to some other address, in which case it shall be mailed to the address so designated.

Section 4. Quorum. A quorum at all meetings of the members of the association shall consist of members of record in good standing, which represent not fewer than fifty-one percent (51%) of the schools or institutions who have affiliated or associated individuals as members of the association, and a majority of the primary and secondary officers of the Executive Committee. Action may be taken on behalf of the association by a majority vote of the members present and entitled to vote at any duly constituted meetings.

Section 5. Records. All recorded meeting minutes will be made available to all members in good standing with the organization no more than ten (10) days following an annual, special or executive meeting by the Director of Finance.

## ARTICLE IV – Leadership

Section 1. Number. The leadership of the association shall consist of a Chair of the Committee, four directors and five coordinators. The primary officers shall consist of the Chair of the Committee, Director of Operations, Director of Programs, Director of Communications and Director of Finance. The secondary officers of the association shall consist of the Online Presence Coordinator, Coach Development Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, and Awards Coordinator, representing each area. In addition, there may be such other subordinate officers, as the association may deem advisable from time to time. No multiple offices may be held simultaneously by the same person, or persons representing the same school.

Section 2. Term of Office. Each officer shall serve for the ensuing year or until her/his successors shall have been elected and qualified, or until her/his death, resignation, or removal. All officers are limited to four consecutive terms in each office.

Section 3. Removal. Any officer may be removed from office at any time by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the association present and entitled to vote at any duly constituted meeting.

Section 4. Vacancies. Any vacancy in any office resulting from any cause may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term thereof by the Executive Committee or the association by vote at any duly constituted meeting.

Section 5. Executive Committee. The executive committee shall consist of the five primary officers of the association. The Executive Committee shall have and may exercise all powers of the association in the management and direction of its affairs when members of the association are not meeting.

(a) Action. A majority of the members of the Executive Committee may determine its action by vote of the full membership of the Executive Committee. Any proposed changes to the constitution and/or by laws must be set forth for vote to all members in good standing of the association at any duly constituted meeting.

(b) Meetings. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at such times and places at the call of the Chair of the Committee or any two members of the primary officers by written, email, telephone or personal notice duly given or served to each member of the Executive Committee by not less than ten (10) days before a meeting. A meeting of the Executive Committee may be held without notice if all members of the Executive Committee are present.

(c) Qualification. All members of the Executive Committee must be at least twenty-two (22) years of age and hold an official sponsoring or coaching position with a Georgia high school forensics program, and in good standing with the association. Any member-elect who does not meet these qualifications by the start of their term, will be disqualified from their elected office.

Section 6. Committees. The association, by resolution or resolutions duly adopted, may appoint such committee as it may deem appropriate, or the Executive Committee, by resolution or resolutions duly adopted, may appoint such committees, as it may deem appropriate. Such committees shall have the powers and authority conferred upon them by the association or the Executive Committee, as the case may be.

Section 7. Powers and Duties of Officers. The primary and secondary officers of the association shall each have such powers and duties as generally pertain to her/his respective office, as well as such powers and duties as from time to time may be conferred by the association.

1. The Chair of the Committee shall be the chief executive officer of the association, shall preside at all meetings of the members and of the Executive Committee and shall have general supervision of the association. The chair shall serve the organization’s chief spokesperson, promoting it through special events, competitions, face-to-face conversations, and in the media. The chair shall drive discussion about the vision, purpose, and goals of speech and debate, encourages involvement, and teaches others to take on leadership responsibilities.

(b) The Director of Operations shall be responsible for organizing, coordinating, and managing the State Championship tournaments. The Director shall create roles in the tournament to include all members of the Executive Committee and to increase volunteer participating from the Association membership..

(c) The Director of Programs shall be responsible for maintaining, assessing and creating resources to help fill needs for member schools. The director shall strategize and coordinate an assessment to determine and fill needs, programs team roles could include tasks such as but not limited to judge training and recruitment, curriculum, and workshops. The Director of Programs will oversee the development of the Novice Policy Debate Packet.

(d) The Director of Communications shall perform such duties as are incident to her/his office including recording minutes of all meetings, sending appropriate communications to the membership including a monthly newsletter.

(e) The Director of Finance shall perform duties as are incident to her/his office (i.e. collect dues and disburse funds). The Director of Finance will maintain official financial records. The Director of Finance shall be responsible for securing any additional funds from third party organizations. The Director of Finance is responsible for releasing an annual report every August.

(f) The secondary officers shall be Area Coordinators, only areas can vote for representatives. The secondary officers shall serve as the At Large Committee. The Area Coordinators will be assigned a title once they have been selected by the Chair of the Executive Committee.

1. The Online Presence Coordinator shall assist the Director of Communications with the online image of the Association including its social media accounts, website management, and any other online material.

2. The Coach Development Coordinator shall assist the Director of Programs by assisting with the planning for the annual Fall Workshops. The Coordinator shall ensure that the content would continue to be emphasized throughout the season with potential follow up workshops at tournaments.

3. The Curriculum Coordinator shall assist the Director of Programs by assisting with the development of resources. The Curriculum Coordinator shall develop an online inventory of resources for all events.

4. The Membership Coordinator shall assist the Director of Finance and Director of Communications with the tracking of student and coach involvement in association events.

5. The Awards Coordinator shall assist the Director of Operations with the ordering of awards for all State championships. The Awards Coordinator shall oversee any voting process for any Association awards including but not limited to Coach of the Year, Hall of Fame, and Principal of the Year.

(g) Other subordinate officers appointed by the association shall exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be delegated to them by the resolution appointing them, or by subsequent resolutions adopted by the association from time to time.

(h) In case of the disability of any officer of the association, the Executive Committee may temporarily delegate those duties to any other member of the organization, including members of the Executive Committee, by a vote of all other members of the Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE V – Amendments

The constitution and by-laws of the association shall be subject to alteration, amendment or repeal, and any new provision may be made by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the members of the association entitled to vote at any annual or special meeting of the association. All amendments shall be attached in the following section for written record.

# Member school manual

Revision Date – August 15, 2015

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

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

1.13 Academic Requirements -- 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 and academically in good standing.

(a) “Enrolled” 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.

(4) A school shall be defined as a member school under the Georgia Independent School Association and/or Georgia High School Association.

(5) 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.

(b) To be “academically in good standing”, a student is required to pass classes that count toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation and must meet attendance requirements as designated by the student’s school and/or District.

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

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

(3) First semester ninth grade students automatically receive eligibility.

1.14 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.

1.15 Semesters in High School -- 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.

(c) 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).

(d) 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.

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

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

(a) A student is no longer eligible for competition in any first-year/novice division once they have competed in any event in the previous school year.

1.19 Eighth (8th) grade students may participate on a sub-varsity team of 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 compete 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) Participation in rookie, novice (first year) or junior varsity (second year) tournaments in grade eight (8) does not use a semester of eligibility provided all other requirements are met.

(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.

1.20 The number of in-state contests, and starting and ending dates can be found listed in a calendar published annually by the Executive Committee.

### 1.30 – School Service Areas/Transfer/Migrant Students/Migratory Waiver

1.31 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.

1.32 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.

(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.

(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.

(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.

(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.

1.33 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 Director of Operations.

1.34 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.

1.35 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.

1.36 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.

### 1.40 Recruiting/Undue Influence

1.41 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 GFCA. 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 First/Second Year State Speech and Debate Tournament or the Varsity State Speech and Debate Tournament, whichever is the earliest tournament in which 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 Qualifications to Coach

2.21 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

2.22 Member schools may employ persons who are not professionally certified teachers as a coach or sponsor in their forensics programs given s/he is approved by the school principal in their role as a coach or sponsor of a forensics program at that school.

### 2.30 Tournament regulations

2.31 Tournaments must be approved by the Director of Communications and Online Presence Coordinator via application at least thirty (30) days in advance of the first day of competition of the tournament via email or mail. Schools placed on the official GFCA Tournament calendar are officially sanctioned by the Association. No tournament may occur prior to August 15th of each school year.

(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.

2.32 Tournament Directors and/or Sponsors are required to send a copy of the full competitive results to the Membership Coordinator 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.

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

2.34 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 Membership Coordinator of such postponement for the purpose of state-qualification records.

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

2.36 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.

2.37 Use of Electronic Devices

(a) Debate Events

(1) Computers or electronic devices may not be used to receive in round coaching from any source inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs.

(2) Students electing to use electronic devices have the responsibility to provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent upon request. 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.

(3) Students can access the internet for evidence retrieval during the round.

(b) Extemporaneous Speaking

(1) Students may use computers or electronic devices to store and retrieve their subject files to read, but cannot write speeches or organize their thoughts on the computers. Cell phones or smart phones are not to be used in speeches except for timing purposes.

(2) 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 provided:

(a) There are no notations made within or on the saved article other than citation information.

(b) 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.

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

(3) Prewritten Extemporaneous speeches, handbooks, briefs or outlines are prohibited from the prep room, whether stored electronically or present in hard copy form.

(4) Computers or electronic devices may not be used to receive in round coaching from any source inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs.

(5) Students can access the internet for evidence retrieval during the round.

(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. Students and judges should not unplug any anything from classrooms to gain access.

(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.

(f) Students in violation will receive a forfeit for the debate.

2.38 All forensic competitions may be recorded, filmed or otherwise electronically documented 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.

2.39 The GFCA encourages all Georgia tournament directors to use the standardized GFCA ballots for each event as published on the GFCA website.

(a) 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.

(b) Ballots results are to audited and released to head coaches in a separate check room during State Tournaments by the tabulation coordinator. Ballots will be distributed to coaches at the conclusion of State Tournaments.

### 2.40 Sportsmanship

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

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

2.43 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.

2.44 Official protests of sportsmanship at the State Tournaments should be brought to the attention of the GFCA Executive Committee in writing before the start of the next round following the incident. The GFCA Executive Committee shall investigate the protest and take steps to insure future incidents not happen, including but not limited to a discussion with the individual, a discussion with the head coach, forfeiture of the judge bond, and/or removing the person from the tournament. If the action is egregious enough for bond forfeiture and/or removing the person from the tournament, the principal of the school(s) involved will be formally notified by the Chair of the Executive Committee or her/his designee.

2.45 The GFCA reserves the right to contact outside organizations to assist with the health and safety of all participants.

## By-LAW 3.00 – EVENT REGULATIONS

### 3.10 Regulations of debate Competitions

3.11 Policy Debate

(a) Policy Debate is defined as a two-person team event where students debate the yearly resolution chosen by the National Federation of High Schools. 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 Tournaments.

(d) First Year Policy Debate: All first-year competitors (i.e. novice) will only be allowed to use the approved novice evidence packet in competitions throughout the regular season.

(1) The GFCA Executive Committee will release the approved novice evidence packet by August 15 each year.

(2) Accompanying the packet each year, the GFCA Executive Committee will release the rules for use of the packet and the release schedule of the arguments.

3.12 Congressional Debate

(a) Congressional Debate is defined as individual debate in a large group setting. Congressional 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 Congressional Debate will utilize parliamentary procedure as determined by the National Speech & Debate Association.

(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 Speech & Debate Association rules outlined in their league manual for Congressional Debate.

3.13 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 Speech & Debate Association.

(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.

3.14 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 Speech & Debate Association 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) – 3minutes

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.

### 3.20 Regulations of speech Competitions

3.21 Extemporaneous Speaking

(a) Extemporaneous Speaking 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 internationals 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) As soon as a question is chosen, the contestant will prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles. No other material will be allowed in the Extemp prep room other than stated above. Extemp speeches, handbooks, briefs and outlines are prohibited from the Extemp prep room. Underlining or highlighting in Extemp will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. Contestants may make notes during the preparation time, but the use of notes, cards, briefs or other aids is prohibited during the speech

(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.

3.22 Original Oratory

(a) Original 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. Any appropriate subject may be used, but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, must be so identified.

(c) Visual aids are not permitted in this event.

(d) The contestant may not use an oration which s/he used in any GFCA 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.

3.23 Interpretation

(a) This includes categories of individual (solo) performance of dramatic (serious) and humorous literature, as well as duo performance of either emotive appeal, with selections drawn from published, printed: novels, short stories, plays, poetry, or other printed, published works as well as limited online works as provided for in the rules below. Contests are conducted in Dramatic, Humorous, and Duo Interpretation.

(1) 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.

(2) 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.

(3) 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 used in these contests must be cuttings from a single work of literature—from one short story or one play, or one novel, or one or more poems—as described in the following subsections:

(1) Print Publications: includes novels, short stories, plays or poetry, published in print. If a *treatment* of a movie script is ordered from a company that provides printed movie scripts, keep the original treatment, receipt, and proof of mailing (envelope). Please note that text of the treatment may differ from the actual film, so students are advised against transcribing directly from the film.

(2) Digital (Online) Publications: Material is only allowed from pre-approved online publishing sources listed at National Speech & Debate Association website. Online material must meet the web page standards outlined below:

(a) If the website offers online material in a variety of formats, only material that can be printed directly from the web page is allowed. Downloaded files will NOT be accepted.

(b) The National Speech & Debate Association defines a web page as a document coded with hypertext markup language (HTML), displayed in a web browser. The Association defines a downloaded file as a specific non-hypertext format, such as PDFs or word processing documents.

(c) These guidelines determined digital (online) publication sources selected:

(1) The literary material is from a website with strict editorial submission standards that include editorial review and acceptance. Unacceptable sites include:

a) Personal sites (social network profiles, blogs)

b) Personal professional sites (those where a writer who has their own site and can place their works for sale or view)

c) Publish it sites (those with one click upload or that accept submissions without a selection process)

2) Texts must come from a verifiable website that can be accessed universally by any user. The site and literary text needs to be verifiable on the web if challenged.

a) Unmarked or casual sites where individuals can easily post work either for performance or criticism will not be accepted.

b) The website has been in existence for a minimum of two years prior to submission for consideration by the National Speech & Debate Association for the upcoming school year (several online tools allow for verification of the existence of a website).

(3) Prohibited Material: not published in print or allowable online material as per above, including:

(a) Recorded material (videotape, DVDs, audio tape, CDs, MP3s, or phonograph recordings).

(b) Original material published in a high school publication such as a newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook.

(4) Source Verification: Interp source material must be available at all State tournament contests in the event of a protest. It is the affirmative duty of each coach and each student entered in Interpretation contests to determine absolutely that the cutting being performed meets all rules for material.

(a) Print Publications: The original published source of any selection used must be immediately available at the tournament as well as a complete script of the cutting used. A complete script of the cutting includes:

1) A photocopy of every page from which any line of the cutting is taken; pages are to be in the order in which they are performed.

2) All words used from the script should be highlighted (any words/lines not used should be left unmarked).

3) Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink.

(b) Digital (Online) Publications: The material the competitor performs must presently appear on the website if questions arise in competition, additionally, a printed manuscript must be available:

1) Manuscript items to be printed directly from the screen:

a. The first page in the website (the home page)

b. All other linked pages needed to navigate to the literary text selected for competition shall be printed out and the link must be highlighted in the manuscript

c. All web pages upon which the cutting appears

2) Each page must have printed in the header and/or footer:

a. Date the page was printed

b. Web address

3) Only the printed manuscript shall be considered adequate proof of authenticity. In other words, the student or coach must provide printed pages or an identical copy for examination.

4) The highlighted manuscript submitted for material verification will follow the same rules designated for printed publications.

5) The website and online version of the digital publication need to be available for comparison if challenged. Online access is the fundamental responsibility of tournament officials and/or individual filing the protest. NOTE: If tournament officials cannot gain online access and the above requirements have been met, the piece is considered legal for use.

(c) The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. During the presentation the contestant/team must name the author and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made. Additionally:

(1) Adaptations to material may only be used for the purpose of transition. The gender stated by the author must be honored. However, a female contestant may play a male role, and a male contestant may play a female role.

(2) Humorous, Dramatic, and Duo Interpretation selections must be presented from memory at the State Tournament.

(3) In Duo Interpretation each of the two performers may play one or more characters so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible.

(4) Monologues are acceptable in Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation. If the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.

(5) Videos of previous performances are intended to provide educational examples for coaches and students. They are not intended to serve as a model to directly imitate or duplicate in performance. The wholesale impersonation of final round performances may not result in a ranking of 1st place.

(d) In Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation, use of focal points and/or direct contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted. In Duo Interpretation, focus may be direct during the introduction [the performers may look at each other] but must be indirect [off-stage] during the performance itself.

(e) 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.

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

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

3.24 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 phrased 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.

3.25 Program of Oral Interpretation

(a) Program of Oral Interpretation is defined as a program of thematically-linked selections chosen from two or three genres: prose, poetry, drama (plays). At least two pieces of literature that represent at least two separate genres must be used. All selections must be verbally identified by title and author. Competitors are encouraged to devote approximately equal times to each of the genres used in the program. This distinction pertains to these two or three genres as a whole, not types of literature within a genre (such as fiction/nonfiction).

1. The use of manuscript is required. The intact manuscript may be used by the contestant as a prop, so long as it remains in the contestant's control at all times. No costumes or props other than the manuscript are permitted. The contestant must address the script; however, introduction and transitional material may be memorized.

(c) All literature performed must meet the publication rules above in the interpretation section. Adaptations may be used only for the purpose of transition.

(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(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.

(e) 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.

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

## BY-LAW 4.00 – STATE TOURNAMENT

### 4.10 State Tournament Logistics

4.11 The GFCA 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 tournaments shall be decided by the GFCA Executive Committee no later than October 15th of each school year.

4.13 An official coach and/or sponsor must accompany their students throughout the duration of the State Tournament(s). Students attending without a coach or sponsor will be disqualified.

### 4.20 State Tournament Qualification

4.21 To attend the First & Second Year State Tournament, students must meet two criteria.

(a) First Year students are defined as students competing in their first year of high school speech and debate activities. Second Year students are defined as students competing in their second year of high school speech and debate.

(b) Students receive qualification to the First & Second Year tournament by attending two in-state invitationals in that event for that school year prior to the State Tournament.

4.22 To attend the Varsity State Tournament, students must earn qualifying bids.

(a) Debate and Speech Regular Season Qualifier: A bid to the Varsity State Tournament awarded to the finalists in a single event as follows:

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

(2) Twelve (12) or more speech entries, the top six (6) competitors.

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

(4) Eight (8) to eleven (11) speech entries, the top three (3) competitors.

(5) Four (4) to seven (7) debate and speech entries, the top one (1) competitor.

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

(7) There are no exceptions to the entry rules above.

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

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

(c) In order to be qualify entries in a speech or debate event to the State Tournament, a minimum of three (3) schools, excluding the host school, must have entries that participate in the event.

(d) Host school entries will not count towards qualification level for the Varsity State Tournament.

(e) Non-Georgia participants may not qualify for the GFCA Varsity State Tournament.

(b) Congressional Debate Regular Season Qualifier

(1) For a Congressional Session to be counted as a GFCA qualifying tournament, it must meet the following regulations

1) At least three (3) schools (excluding the host school) must be represented

2) A session is defined as at least two hours of floor debate.

3) The session should follow the rules in outlined in by law 4.45

(2) A bid to the Congressional State tournament awarded to students in a Congressional Session as follows:

(a) Sixty (60) or more entries, the top eighteen (18) competitors.

(b) Thirty (30) to sixty (60) entries, the top twelve (12) competitors.

(c) Twenty-one (21) to twenty nine (29) entries, the top six (6) competitors.

(d) Ten (10) to twenty (20) entries, the top three (3) competitor.

(e) Nine (9) or less entries will have no qualifiers.

(f) 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.

(g) Competitors receiving a qualifying bid through an invitational tournament must attend two in state invitationals in Congressional Debate.

(2) Each member schools receive two (2) automatic entries for the Senate chamber.

(a) Competitors receiving a bid through this method must have attended a minimum of two (2) in state invitationals.

(3) For every two (2) fully qualified students to the Varsity State Championship, each member school may receive one (1) entry to the House of Representatives up to ten (10)

(c) At Large Qualification. Each GFCA member school in good standing will be eligible to apply for At Large bids. The following regulations govern submission of at large applications:

(1) The Director of Operations shall provide each member school appropriate instructions and model applications by February 1 of each year.

(2) Schools may enter competitors that are eligible to advance to the GFCA 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) GFCA sanctioned tournaments during the regular season.

(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.

(d) Students may not apply for an At Large bid if they have previously qualified to advance to the GFCA 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 apply entries in that event to the State Tournament.

(f) Member schools may apply as many eligible entries in each event in the At Large process for consideration. However, selection by the Selection Committee cannot result in more than four (4) total entries qualified to the State Tournament. In the occurrence that a school has entries in the final rankings that would put that school above the four entry limit, the higher rankings will qualify to the State Tournament.

(3) The next two lower teams that do not qualify for At-Large bids will be designated as first and second alternate.

(4) The following regulations govern awarding of At Large bids:

(a) Selection of At Large participants shall be determined by the At Large Selection Committee. The Selection Committee shall rank for At Large selection a number of teams (excluding their own teams and teams containing a student they have previously coached). On an agreed date all voting members of the Selection Committee will email the Director of Operations and inform her/him of their rankings.

(b) The Director of Operations will sum each team’s total after dropping high and low ranks (using the average of all other ranks for a member’s own team) and award the bids to the lowest ranked teams. If a tie results among the top positions (i.e., the last bid in the given event), the Director of Operations shall drop an additional high and low ranks for the teams involved. If a tie still exists, the Director of Operations shall re-rank the teams involved in the tie based on the original ranked relationships of each committee member (except the member(s) with teams involved). If a tie still exists, then each member shall be telephoned and given the opportunity to re-rank the tied teams after re-evaluating the respective credentials.

(c) The top eight (8) entries in each event will receive At Large bids to the GFCA Varsity State Tournament.

(5) The following regulations govern announcement of At Large bids:

(a) All schools submitting At Large applications shall be notified immediately after completion of the selection process concerning their own acceptance or rejection and the names of all the schools and their teams who were selected.

(b) Information concerning the voting of the Selection Committee on At Large bids shall be disseminated by the Director of Operations to all involved parties following the Varsity State Tournament.

(6) There is no hardship appeal process for the At Large qualifying process.

(d) Member School Qualifier: Each GFCA member school in good standing will be given one (1) Member School entry to the state tournament. The Member School entry must have met the minimum number of required tournaments of two (2) in that event prior to the Varsity State Tournament. Member schools may either:

(1) use Member School Entry as long as it is the sole entry for that school in that event at the State Tournament

(2) use Member School Entry to create an even number of qualifiers in team events

4.23 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 apply entries in that event for the At Large bids.

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

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

4.25 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; If a student has qualified in more than one (1) debate event, the student must chose just one (1) in which they will participate for purposes of determining a State Champion.

4.26 The GFCA Varsity State Tournament will use the National Speech & Debate Association March/April topic in the Lincoln Douglas debate event and the March topic in the Public Forum debate event. The GFCA First and Second Year Tournament will use the National Speech & Debate Association January/February topic in the Lincoln Douglas debate event and the February topic in the Public Forum debate event.

4.27 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) Participation may take place at GFCA sanctioned Speech and Debate Tournaments to meet qualification requirements.

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

4.28 Any hardship appeals must be made in writing to the GFCA 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.

4.29 Students who are fully qualified to the Varsity State Tournament but cannot attend due to external reasons shall be allowed to forfeit their qualification to the State Tournament. The coach will need to complete the forfeiture form by a date annually set by the Director of Operations. Schools forfeiting their entries may apply to replace the entries through the At Large system, so that their total number of qualifiers in that event does not exceed the Entry Limits rule.

### 4.30 State Tournament Competition specific rules

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, who 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 Director of Operations 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 and/or every six (6) entries in speech.

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

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

(a) Debate preliminary rounds

(1) At least five preliminary rounds should be held at the GFCA State Tournaments.

When the tournament schedule is released, additional preliminary rounds may be added at the discretion of the Executive Committee following consideration of students’ interests and welfare. However, additional preliminary rounds can only be utilized if it still allows the final round to reasonably be able to start by 10:00 pm on the final night of the tournament.  The ability to complete the tournament in the allotted time shall take precedence.

(2) The first two rounds will be randomly paired. Subsequent rounds will be paired using High-low speaker points within brackets. Debate tabulation software will be utilized for these pairings.

(3) Debate judges for the Varsity State tournament will be determined by a mutual preference system to be determined by the Executive Committee of the GFCA 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 Varsity State Tournament.  All judges must fill out an event specific updated judge philosophy form 7 days prior to the Varsity State Tournament for a school’s entry to be considered complete and the school’s students to be eligible to compete. Consequences begin if they are not completed 5 days prior to the 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 GFCA 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.

(c) Congressional Debate preliminary rounds: The Congressional Debate State Championship will be split into two divisions: House of Representatives and Senate. The Senate division should be collapsed if fewer than eight schools are represented.

(1) Schools can enter up to twelve (12) students in the House of Representatives and Senate chambers as follows:

(a) Schools can choose to enter zero (0), one (1), or two (2) students to participate in the Senate.

(b) Schools can choose to enter up to ten (10) students in the House of Representatives.

(2) Each qualifying school will be required to submit at least two (2) bills or resolutions no later than ten (10) days prior to the scheduled Congress.

(3) All legislation presented shall meet required formatting criteria as set by the invitation, and must be original work of students from the submitting school.

(4) The GFCA Executive Committee will attempt to accept at least one bill or resolution from each school submitting legislation. The GFCA Executive Committee may deny bills or resolutions from being offered from the floor at the State Tournament.

(5) The Director of Communications will send a copy of the bills and resolutions at least one (1) week before the official Congress date. The Legislation will include no more than ten (10) bills or resolutions so that no more than two (2) bills or resolutions from any single school.

(6) If necessary, bills or resolutions may be obtained from outside sources or written by the GFCA Executive Committee in order to fill the legislation. Authorship privilege will be waived for these bills or resolutions.

(7) Each qualifying school will be required to bring one (1) judge per division entered.

(8) Pairing the Congressional Debate Tournament

(a) There will be at least two (2) preliminary sessions and at least one (1) elimination session.

(1) Each chamber must have a minimum of ten (10) students to be seated and no more than thirty (30) students.

(2) Each session is at least two (2) hours and includes:

(a) Election of a presiding officer

(b) New seating chart (necessary accommodations for students with special needs may be made).

(c) Resetting of precedence

(d) New legislation that has not been debated in a previous session at the tournament

(b) Each preliminary and elimination session will have three judges

(1) The tab room should avoid using affiliated judges in chambers.

(a) If the tab room cannot avoid using affiliated judges, the affiliated judge will not score or rank their own students. Scores and ranks will be based on the average of the other scores and ranks given by the other two judges.

(2) The tab room should avoid using judges from the same school on the same panel.

(3) Each session can have different judges.

(4) One judge will serve as parliamentarian and scorer.

(c) The number of chambers for a single division should be divided as follows

(1) Twenty Nine (29) or fewer entries should have at least one (1) chamber.

(2) Thirty (30) to sixty (60) entries should have at least two (2) chambers.

(3) Sixty (60) to ninety (90) entries should have at least three (3) chambers.

(4) Ninety one (91) or more entries should have at least four (4) chambers.

(d) Chamber assignments shall be made by the Tournament Director at registration and are final.

(1) When registering for the House of Representatives, schools can determine the grouping of individual students from their schools as long as the number of entries in each house is approximately equal (i.e., three houses 3-3-2 or two houses 4-3)

(a) Placement of a schools groups into specific chambers will be done randomly by the computer, but the tournament director may adjust placement of individual school groupings so that chambers are approximately equal in size.

(2) Seating charts should be created using tabulation software.

(9) Tabulating Congressional Debate

(a) Each judge should assign up to eight (8) points per speech, considering answers to questions in the awarding of points.

(b) Presiding officers should receive not less than four (4) or more than eight (8) speaker credit points for each full hour of presiding.

(c) At the end of the each judge’s commitment in preliminary and elimination rounds, s/he should rank his/her top eight (8) preferred legislators (which may include presiding officers).

(d) The most mutually preferred congresspersons will advance to elimination rounds as per By Law 4.43. Ties will be broken as follows using all three judges scores:

(1) Drop Low

(2) High/Low Total Speech Points

(3) Total Speech Points

(4) Total Number of Speeches

(5) Random Draw

4.37 Advancement to elimination rounds

(a) Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum and Policy Debate: At least eight (8) entries will require advancing to a final round; 8-14 entries requires a semifinal round; 15-30 entries requires a quarterfinal round; 31-64 entries requires an octofinal round; more than 65 entries requires a double 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 final night of the tournament.  The ability to complete the tournament in the allotted time shall take precedence over this formula. Only entries with a winning record can advance to elimination rounds.

(1) Advancement of teams/debaters shall be determined by seeding 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] Double High-Low Speaker Points

[c] Total Speaker points

[d] Average Opposition Seed from Prelim Rounds

[e] Random Number (as determined by Tab Room software)

(2) If a team without a winning record is seeded high enough to advance to elimination rounds, then the team that they are scheduled to face would automatically advance to the next elimination round.

(3) If policy debate and Lincoln Douglas debate 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) Speech: At least twelve (12) entries require a final round (6 competitors, 1 section); 24-47 entries require a semifinal round (12 competitors, 2 sections); 48+ entries require a quarterfinal round (24 competitors, 4 sections).

(1) In a quarter-final round of speech, 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. The semi-final round of speech 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. 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.

(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;

[e] 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.

(c) Congressional Debate:

(1) If only one chamber is used in preliminary rounds, the top twelve (12) to advance should the Final Session.

(2) If more than one chamber is used in preliminary round, proceed as follows

(a) For two (2) chambers, the top eight (8) students should advance from each preliminary chamber.

(b) For three (3) chambers, the top six (6) students should advance from each preliminary chamber.

(c) For four (4) chambers, the top four (4) students should advance from each preliminary chamber.

(3) Each event will recognize all students placing in the top six (6) in the House of Representatives and Senate, including Champions in those events.

4.38 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.

1. 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.

4.39 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 two-person 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)      Double High-Low Speaker Points

  (2)      Total Speaker points

(3)      Opposition Wins

(4)      Judge Variance

(5)      Random Number (as determined by Tab Room software)

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

(1) Speech Sweepstakes include Dramatic Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Extemporaneous Speaking, Program Oral Interpretation, Impromptu and Duo Interpretation; Debate Sweepstakes include all divisions in Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate and all Congressional Debate divisions; Overall Sweepstakes includes all events sanctioned by the GFCA.

(2) Sweepstakes formula is determined as follows:

(a) Debate

(1) Policy/Public Forum/Lincoln Douglas: 25 points for Championship entry; 20 points for runner-up entry; 15 points for semi-finals (non-advancing); 10 points for quarter-finals (non-advancing); 5 points for octo-finals (non-advancing) 2 point for double octo-finals (non-advancing).

(2) House/Senate Chambers: 10 points for Championship entry; 8 points for runner-up entry; 5 for 3rd place; 3 points for finalists; 1 point for semi-finalists (non-advancing).

(3) Winner is determined by the summation of the total points, the school with the highest point named Champion, the school with the second highest points named Runner-up, etc.

(b) Speech:

(1) 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).

(3) Winner is determined by the summation of the 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 Debate and Speech sweepstakes categories.

(4) The top three schools in all categories will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony. Schools may only win one Sweepstakes Award per category.

(5) 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 ARE allowed.

## 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 Director of Communications 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 expressively 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 no 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 Directions for balloting. Nominees must qualify under the guidelines of the GFCA constitution 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 Director of Communications shall publish the results to the association mailing list. The current Online Presence Coordinator 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

(a) Area Coordinators shall be elected to serve on the At Large Selection Committee. The nomination and voting process will follow the general election procedure. Member schools will only vote for their Area Coordinator.

### 5.50 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 (Congressional, 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, Program of Oral Interpretation, Impromptu and Original Oratory).

(c) The honors will be presented by the Chair of the Executive Committee 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 Awards Coordinator 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 Chair of the Executive Committee at the GFCA State Tournament.

(b) Recipients of the honors will be selected by the nomination by the membership. Nominations should be made to the Awards Coordinator by February 1st. The Hall of Fame voting body should consist of the Executive Committee plus the current members of the Hall of Fame. Abstentions should not count against the nominee. Nominees must receive 75% of the votes cast.

(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.

5.63 Every year, the GFCA will honor an individual with a Service Award for service to the organization and community.

(a) The award will be presented by the Chair of the Executive Committee at the GFCA State Tournament.

(b) Recipients of the honor will be selected by the Executive Committee based on nominations from the membership. Nominations should be made to the Awards Coordinator by January 1st. The individual receiving the majority of the Executive Committee vote will receive the award.

(c) The award will be presented to an individual or organization that has provided exemplary professional service or support to the GFCA community.

5.64 Every year, the GFCA will honor a current middle school or high school principal and/or headmaster of a Georgia Forensic Coaches Association member school for their support of the organization and community.

(a) Recipients of the honor will be selected by the Executive Committee based on nominations from the membership. Nominations should be made to the Awards Coordinator by January 1st. The individual receiving the majority of the Executive Committee vote will receive the award.

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

(1) Encourage speech and debate education through active support of curricular and/or co-curricular programming.

(2) Foster cooperation between the speech and debate program and the rest of the school, showcasing students and their achievements with other administrators, school board members, and the community at-large.

(3) Lead a continuing dialogue with students, parents, faculty, and staff members to sustain and grow speech and debate participation.

(4) Encourage team spirit and play an active role in the speech and debate program.

(5) Demonstrate leadership and exemplify committed support to the speech and debate program’s livelihood.

(6) Advocate for speech and debate activities among other principals and the community at-large.

(c) The award will be presented by the Chair of the Executive Committee at the GFCA State Tournament.

### 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.

# Change history

8-18-15 Added: Program of Oral Interpretation

4-18-15 Updated: Changed Executive Committee Structure, Added new Fellows membership, added definition of a school, added Host School exclusion rules to Qualification formulas  
Added: Principal’s Award  
**Reference: Jeffrey Miller, Jonathan Waters**

8-16-14 Updated: Rebranded NFL to NSDA, removed TRPC, modified topic structure for State Tournaments, changed Service Award recognition policies.  
**Reference: Jeffrey Miller, Jonathan Waters**

5-10-14 Updated: First & Second Year Eligibility Rules, Reduced amount of At Large Bids given out, adopted new Congressional Debate tabulation formula, adopted Congressional Debate minimum entry rules  
**Reference: Jeffrey Miller, Bill Batterman**

8-17-13 Updated: Executive Committee Term Limits  
Added: Service Award  
**Reference: Jeffrey Miller, Bill Batterman**

4-20-13 Updated: Removed “By Laws” from Constitution Title, Removed Area Qualification, Removed websites, rebranded “Legislative Debate”, added eligibility rules for 1st/2nd Year, increased preliminary rounds at State Tournament, adopted a judge philosophy book for State Tournament, and modified the elimination debates formula.  
Added: Sportsmanship bylaw, Middle School eligibility rules, Congressional debate sweepstakes points  
**Reference: Jeffrey Miller, Maggie Berthiaume**

8-25-12 Updated: Hall of Fame Voting procedures, GFCA School Membership Term,   
Added: Electronic Device By-Laws, Congressional Debate Rules and Tabulation procedures,  
**Reference: Jeffrey Miller, Maggie Berthiaume**

5-7-12 Constitution and By Laws ratified.  
 **Reference: Mario Herrera, Jeffrey Miller**