

Introduction to UIL Student Congress

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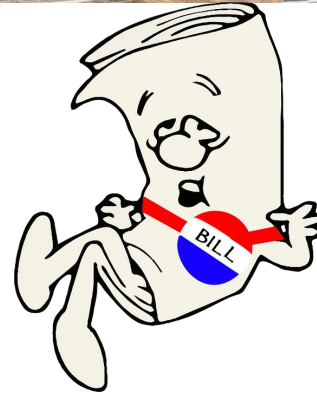
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Basics of Congress

1. What is debated in Congress - the Docket
 - a. An assortment of Bills & Resolutions
 - i. Bill - proposed law
 - ii. Resolution - proposed course of action
 - iii. Constitutional amendment - change to the US Constitution
 - b. Authored by students in your region
 - i. Templates available to help you with formatting
 - ii. September - deadline to submit to your Region Clerk
 - iii. Selected by a committee of regional coaches
 - c. About timely topics of concern in the United States or affecting our allies
 - i. Within the jurisdiction of the US federal government
 - ii. Newsworthy
 - iii. Debatable - topics must have debatable/defensible arguments on both sides



Basics of Congress



2. Who debates

- a. Schools are guaranteed 3 spots at the District meet
 - i. Depending upon participation, you may compete up to 2 alternates
 - ii. 10 or less competitors – 2 alternates may be seated
 - iii. 11-15 competitors – 1 alternate may be seated
- b. Districts are determined geographically by Educational Service Center
 - i. All participating schools are divided by conference (1A, 2A, etc.)
 - ii. Students compete against members from the same conference
 - iii. May compete with but not against members of another conference
- c. Students compete in rooms of 24 or less

Basics of Congress

3. How Do They Debate?

- a. Students give speeches for and against items of legislation
 - i. Speeches are 3 minutes long
 - ii. Speeches are followed by a questioning period
 1. 2 minutes for the first PRO and first CON on an item
 2. 1 minute for all subsequent speeches on an item
- b. Order of items debated
 - i. Determined by the chamber members
 - ii. Students debate on an item until speeches are exhausted and then vote on it
 - iii. Limits on time spent debating an item may be set in the orders of the day.
- c. Each item must be introduced by an author or sponsor (PRO speech)
 - i. Speeches typically alternate sides
 - ii. Up to 3 speeches on the same side may be given in succession, then the vote must be taken.



Basics of Congress

4. How are they scored/ranked?

- a. Speaking Skills
 - i. Logic - the speech is well-organized and makes sense
 - ii. Supporting Material - well-researched, cited sources
 - iii. Delivery - They speak with confidence & poise
- b. Debate Skills
 - i. Speeches are responsive to the debate that is occurring
 - ii. Answers to arguments are well-constructed and supported
 - iii. Students aren't tied to a manuscript, they have extemporaneous skills
 - iv. Students are prepared to answer questions
- c. Activity in the Chamber
 - i. Use of Parliamentary Procedure
 - ii. Participation in cross examination of speakers
 - iii. Voting
- d. Presiding Officer
 - i. Runs an efficient chamber
 - ii. Prioritizes debate
 - iii. Fair and consistent gaveling procedures
 - iv. Narrates activity



Teaching Congress Effectively

1. Introduce them to a Docket
2. Teach them to write legislation
3. Teach them how to research
4. Teach them how to write speeches
 - a. Edits and revision of speeches
 - b. Speech Jenga...
5. Teach them how to evaluate speeches
6. Teach them the order and rules of the activity



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Dockets

1. TFA Fall docket (usually posted by July) –
<https://txfa.org/documents/2022-23/Congress%20Docket%20Fall%202022.pdf>
2. Past NSDA Dockets –
<https://www.speechanddebate.org/resources/?tag=congress>
3. I start with the TFA fall docket and allow students to write their own legislation if they so desire to add to it for class.

Writing Legislation

1. Topic Selection
2. Debatability
3. Formatting
 - a. Templates – <https://www.uiltexas.org/speech/congress>
 - b. More templates – <https://txfa.org/resources.asp?t=2>



A Bill to [Action Word] [article] [Object] to [Summarize the Solution Specifically]

- 1 BE IT ENACTED BY THIS UIL CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:
- 2 **SECTION 1.** State the new policy in a brief declarative sentence, or in as few
- 3 sentences as possible.
- 4 **SECTION 2.** Define any ambiguous terms inherent in the first section.
- 5 **SECTION 3.** Name the government agency that will oversee the enforcement of the
- 6 bill along with the specific enforcement mechanism.
- 7 A. Go into further details if necessary.
- 8 B. Go into further details if necessary.
- 9 **SECTION 4.** Indicate the implementation date/timeframe.
- 10 **SECTION 5.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.
Introduced for UIL Congressional Debate by _____(school name).

Researching

1. Quality sources
2. Researching to increase knowledge base
3. Researching to provide support for arguments
4. Researching to answer predictable arguments
5. Citing competently and efficiently



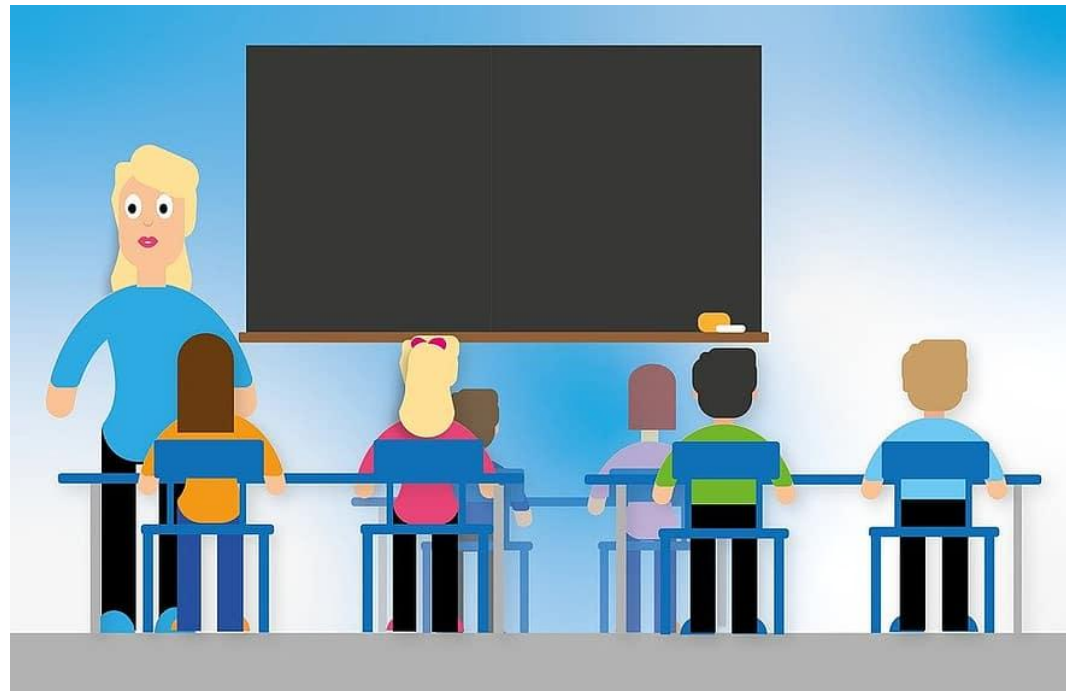
Writing Speeches

1. Basic outline format – intro, body, conclusion
2. Keep it flexible – the first speech on a topic will look different than the last speech
 - a. Constructive
 - b. Refutation
 - c. Rebuttal
3. Extemporaneous skills
4. Time limit – 3 minutes!



Doing Congress

1. Selection of P.O.
 - a. Auditions
 - b. Voting
 - c. Instatement
2. Calling chamber to order
 - a. Orders of the day
 - b. Open the chamber
3. Floor debate
4. Recesses - keep them short, typically every 45-60 minutes
5. Adjourn



Congress Tools

Presiding Officer Cheat Sheet

Motions Chart

Precedence Charts

- Speeches
- Questions

Speech outlines

Flow pad/pen

SDC 2022 - CONGRESS PRECEDENCE

	A	B	C	D	E
1	PRECEDENCE - Practice Session				
2					
3	NAME	S1	S2	S3	S4
4	Dos Santos	1-S-#6-2:35			
5	Fuentes	2-C-#6-2:49			
6	Henson	3-P-#6-3:00			
7	Stilson	4-C-#6-2:55			
8	Peebles	5-P-#6-3:00			
9	Doyle	6-C-#6-2:01			
10	French	7-C-#6-2:43			
11	Aliff	8-C-#6-3:01	14-C-#5-3:00	18-C-#10	
12	Barbosa	9-C-#6-3:00	10-C-#6-3:00	11-C-#6-3:00	

Congress

Precedence/Recency Table & Fractions of Parliamentary Voting

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

Congressional Debate Rubric: Presiding

This table of evaluation standards is provided for an judge who would like assistance in determining scores for a presiding officer (P.O.). Each scorer independently (without collaborating) awards 1-6 points for each hour of presiding. The primary job of a presiding officer is to efficiently run the meeting with the purpose of getting issues in the chamber the maximum opportunity to preside. An effective presiding officer does not draw negative attention to himself/herself and makes the smooth operation of the session as their highest priority. The position of presiding officer can be the effective means to a successful productive session and a session that accomplishes very little. If you feel the Presiding Officer was one of the most effective students in your chamber, it is appropriate for scorers to take into consideration rewarding excellent or superior performance by the presiding officer with one of the highest ratings in the session.

Points	Weak-Mediocre	3-4 Good	5-6 Excellent-Superior
Parliamentary Procedure	The P.O.'s knowledge of parliamentary procedure is lacking, and he/she shows negligible effort to correct errors and/or consult written rules. Misses opportunities for others to debate by failing to adhere to time specified in a recess motion.	The P.O. demonstrates competency in procedure, but makes mistakes in determining the results of motions and votes, etc.	The P.O. has command of parliamentary procedure (motions) and uses this almost unconsciously to run a fair and efficient chamber, seldom consulting written rules and ruling immediately on whether motions pass or fail. Brings chamber back into session in a timely fashion following recess.
Recognition	Frequent errors are made in speaker recognition. Students in the chamber rise to a point of order to correct erroneous speaker recognition made by the P.O. The P.O. is slow in recognizing speakers and questioners. There are fewer than 10 speeches per hour in the chamber.	Presiding preferences are not clearly explained. Speaker recognition is somewhat inconsistent or biased. The P.O. is successful in achieving 10 speeches per hour in the chamber.	Presiding preferences are clearly explained at the beginning of the session. The P.O. is consistent in recognition distributing speeches throughout the room based on precedence. The P.O. recognizes speakers and questions in a timely

Congress

Speech Evaluation

Student Name: _____ Coder: _____

Session #: _____ Chamber: _____ Room: _____

Directions: Rate each speech 1-6 points, with six being the most, on being the best, providing comments to justify your rating, with maximum responses for improvement. [At the end of the session, you will debriefly and cooperatively rank students on a separate form.]

Criteria: When rating, consider the following elements and comment accordingly in the space provided.

- **Originality of Thought** (extent that speech advances debate or merely repeats ideas; whether speaker refutes opposing arguments)
- **Organization and Logic** (even though extemporaneous in nature, the speaker should attempt coherence)
- **Evidence and Logic** (uses credible sources and warrants claims accordingly)
- **Delivery** (extemporaneous vs. reading, articulation of purpose, style, and voice; how well the speaker answers questions)

Speech 1 - Topic: _____

Side: Sponsor Opp AFF NEG

High/Best (only paired ranking) Low →

6 5 4 3 2 1

Speech 2 - Topic: _____

Side: Sponsor Opp AFF NEG

High/Best (only paired ranking) Low →

6 5 4 3 2 1

Side: Sponsor Opp AFF NEG

Congress

Table of Frequently Used Parliamentary Motions

Type	Motion	Purpose	Second Required	Debatable	Amendable	Required by Chair	Majority
Presiding	24. Fix time for resuming	To arrange time of next meeting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	25. Adjourn	To terminate the meeting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	26. Recess	To terminate the meeting for a specific length of time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	27. Rise to a question of privilege	To make a personal request during debate	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
	28. Call for orders of the day	To bring consideration of a postponed motion	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
Moderator	10. Appeal a decision of the chair	To reverse a decision	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	16. Rise to a point of order or parliamentary procedure	To correct a parliamentary error or ask a question	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
	17. Division of the chamber	To divide a voice vote	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
	18. Object to the consideration of a question	To suppress action	No	No	No	2/3	Yes
	19. Divide a motion	To consider in parts separately	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Majority	14. Leave to modify or withdraw a motion	To modify or withdraw a motion	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	15. Suspend the rules	To enable action contrary to standing rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
	12. Recancel	To signal previous action	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	No
	11. Reconsider	To reconsider a defeated motion again	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	No
	9. Take from the table	To reconsider tabled motion	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Unanimous	3. Lay on the table	To defer action	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	8. Previous question	To raise an immediate vote	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes
	7. Limit or extend debate	To modify freedom of debate	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	No
	6. Prolong to a certain time	To defer action	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes



TFA Student Congress Amendment Form

Author of Amendment: _____

Title of Bill or Resolution: _____

Lines Affected: _____

Seconded (1/3 required): YES VOTES _____ NO VOTES _____ ABSTENTIONS _____

Chairperson Notes: _____

Amendment wording: _____

High/Best (only paired ranking) Low →

6 5 4 3 2 1

Side: Sponsor Opp AFF NEG

Benefits of Participation

- Debate is foundational to Democracy
- Understanding the United States governmental process better
- Civic Engagement
- Increased understanding of international events and how they may impact the United States (and how our actions may impact other countries and their citizens)
- Caucusing - Learn how to win friends and influence people!