

UIL CONGRESS RULES & PROCEDURES 2023-2024

1 **PURPOSE OF THE CONTEST.** The purpose of this contest is to encourage the student to
2 understand real-world social and political policies debated within the framework of a legislative
3 body modeled after the United States Congress, with formal discourse guided by parliamentary
4 procedure.

5 **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** Contestants will formulate legislative bills and resolutions,
6 debate them, and adopt or reject them by casting votes. Speaking in legislative congress is
7 conducted within a structured environment of specific procedural rules.

8 **STRUCTURE.** Congress will be organized into regions according to the twenty educational
9 service centers (ESC) designated by the Texas Education Agency. All schools, regardless of UIL
10 conference, will compete with each other within their school's Region ESC unless conference
11 entry numbers warrant separate chambers. Regardless, each conference competing in the
12 Congressional region will be eligible to advance a minimum of three representatives to the State
13 Congressional competition.

14 **CONGRESSIONAL REGION CONTEST DIRECTORSHIP.** A directorship of five for each
15 Congressional region contest within their Education Service Center region will conduct the
16 region contest. A Congressional Region Clerk appointed by the UIL State Office will chair the
17 directorship. The Congressional Region Clerk shall be the final authority until the Congressional
18 Region competition is completed.

19 **ENTRIES:**

20 **REPRESENTATION.** Each school desiring to participate in UIL Congress should file an Intent
21 to Participate form on the UIL website no later than date posted on UIL Congress webpage for
22 the current school year. Failure to submit intent shall require regional committee approval in
23 order for school to participate. Each school in all conferences may enter three competitors in the
24 Congressional Region competition. Two alternates may be registered. Entries shall be submitted
25 at least ten calendar days prior to the Congressional Region competition via the UIL website. In
26 the event ten or less total contestants per conference are competing in a Congressional Region,
27 both alternates from each school with a full entry in that conference may be seated. Only one
28 alternate may be seated if there are 11-15 entries within the conference.

29 Entries submitted after the 10-day deadline, require majority consent of the Regional congress
30 committee.

31 **ELIGIBILITY.** Each contestant shall be eligible under subchapter M of the *UIL Constitution &*
32 *Contest Rules*. Only students in high school are eligible for this contest. Speech plan, section
33 1000 of the *UIL Constitution & Contest Rules*, regarding specific speech eligibility shall not
34 apply to this contest. Entering the Congress competition does not impact a student's eligibility to
35 enter any other UIL high school academic event. (i.e., CX Debate, LD Debate)

36 **SUBSTITUTIONS.** An eligible student may be substituted for any name on the official region
37 entry form by providing the contest director with a letter or official substitution form signed by
38 the superintendent or designated administrator certifying the student's eligibility. The letter shall
39 be presented to the contest director before the contest begins.

40 **LIMIT ON SUBSTITUTIONS.** After a given competition has begun, no substitutions shall be
41 allowed.

42 **PLANNING THE REGIONAL CONTEST.** In order to maximize participation by all schools
43 and provide equal opportunity to all students to enter regardless of the existing academic conflict
44 pattern, the congressional competition will be held during the fall/winter. The Congressional
45 Regional Directorship, with input from all participating schools, shall schedule Congressional

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46 Region competition during the first two designated region weeks of November. Location and
47 entry fees will be determined by the Directorship.

48 **SIZE OF CHAMBERS.** The optimum size is 20 legislators per chamber for a three-hour
49 session; otherwise, a session should be lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional student
50 beyond 20. If a conference has fewer than fifteen competitors, see *combining conferences at*
51 *Congressional Region* below.

52 If a school has more than one entry and there are multiple chambers at Congressional Region
53 school entries should be assigned to separate chambers, whenever possible.

54 **NUMBER OF CONGRESSIONAL REGIONAL CHAMBERS:**

55 **24 or less entries** – There shall be one chamber, which will conduct morning and
56 afternoon sessions. Each session should be three hours of debate time, lengthened by 10 minutes
57 per each additional congressional contestant beyond 20.

58 **25 to 48 entries** – There shall be at least two chambers, which will conduct a preliminary
59 session consisting of three hours and should be lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
60 student beyond 20. The top half of each chamber (or whole number closest to that percentage)
61 will advance to a final congress session. The final session shall not be less than three hours, and
62 shall be lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional student beyond 20.

63 **49 to 72 entries** – There shall be at least three chambers, which will conduct a
64 preliminary session consisting of three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
65 student beyond 20. A Proportionately equal number of students shall be selected to advance from
66 each preliminary chamber resulting in a final chamber of no less than 18 and no more than 24
67 students. The final session shall be three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
68 student beyond 20.

69 **73 to 96 entries** – There shall be at least four chambers, which will conduct a preliminary
70 session consisting of three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional student
71 beyond 20. A Proportionately equal number of students shall be selected to advance from each
72 preliminary chamber resulting in a final chamber of no less than 18 and no more than 24
73 students. The final session shall be three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
74 student beyond 20.

75 **97 to 120 entries** – There shall be at least five chambers, which will conduct a
76 preliminary session consisting of three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
77 student beyond 20. The top one fifth of each chamber (or whole number closest to that
78 percentage) will advance to the final session that will be three hours and lengthened by 10
79 minutes per each additional student beyond 20.

80 **COMBINING CONFERENCES AT CONGRESSIONAL REGIONALS.** In the event there
81 are an insufficient number of competitors in some conferences to constitute a chamber,
82 Congressional Regions will combine conferences to achieve the desired chamber(s) size(s). The
83 Region clerk and/or Directorship committee should do this in a fashion as determined by the
84 Region Directorship committee. Those advancing from preliminary to final chambers must be
85 proportionate to the conferences represented. If a conference is represented by only one school,
86 then all of that school's members shall advance to the final chamber and to State.

87 **LEGISLATION.** Participating Regional schools are encouraged to author and submit bills,
88 constitutional amendments, and/or resolutions for debate and are encouraged to author legislation
89 that has an impact on the state of Texas. However, schools should assume members of the
90 chamber to be United States Congress representatives. All legislation submitted shall meet UIL
91 formatting and shall be the original product of the school. Plagiarism includes: submitting

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92 legislation that was not authored by the student or school. Direct quotation from a published
93 source shall not be allowed in submitted legislation. Students should paraphrase from published
94 sources in submitted legislation. Plagiarism is unacceptable and shall result in the legislation
95 being ineligible for inclusion on the agenda, and the school shall lose authorship speeches for
96 any additional legislation they have in the docket. It shall be the duty of the coach to affirm that
97 the legislation submitted is original. Legislation must be submitted to the regional clerk by the
98 date posted on the UIL Congress webpage to be eligible for review by the clerk and regional
99 committee, which will determine the legislation. A maximum of 20 pieces (10 for prelims, 10 for
100 finals) will be debated at the regional contest but less is permissible. The clerk shall then forward
101 the regional legislation to the UIL state director for final approval and posting on the official UIL
102 website.

103 **SCORERS/PARLIAMENTARIANS.** The congressional regional directorship will determine
104 requirements for providing scorers and Parliamentarians for the region competition. Upon
105 request from the regional clerk and committee, in emergency situations, regions may receive a
106 waiver from the UIL state debate director to use one scorer in preliminary sessions.

107 **SCORING CHAMBERS.** A Parliamentarian and a minimum of two scorers shall score each
108 chamber, unless a waiver is granted. In regions with fewer than 24 competitors, there will be two
109 sessions with a single chamber. The scorers shall rank students at the end of each session. The
110 Parliamentarian shall rank students only at the end of the second session, ranking all contestants
111 from 1st through the total number of members in the chamber. In regions with more than 24
112 competitors, there will be one preliminary session with multiple chambers and one final session.

113 **ASSIGNING RANKS.** Scorers shall rank students at the end of each session. Scorers will rank
114 only the top 8 students from 1ST (best) through 8TH (all unranked students receive a 9 for
115 purposes of tabulation). Parliamentarians shall only rank students at the end of their last session.
116 Parliamentarians shall rank all contestants from 1ST (best) through the total number of members
117 in the chamber.

118 Legislators may be scored on up to five speeches per session. They may deliver more
119 than five speeches, but only the initial five shall be scored. Each speech shall be rated 1- 6, with
120 1 being worst and 6 being the best. Ratings should be based on originality of thought,
121 organization and unity, evidence and logic, and overall delivery. An evaluation sheet should be
122 completed for all members of congress whether they spoke during the session or not. Ratings are
123 not used for advancement purposes but provide feedback to students as to the quality of each
124 speech.

125 **PLACEMENT.** The cumulative ranks of the Parliamentarian and each scorer in the chamber
126 shall determine placements using the established tie-breaking rules. The lowest rank of the
127 scorers and Parliamentarians shall be first in the chamber, the second lowest shall be second in
128 the chamber, and like manner. The congressional regional directorship shall conduct the
129 tabulation.

130 **ADVANCEMENT/PLACEMENT.** Final rankings in each chamber shall be determined on the
131 basis of cumulative ranks of all scorers and the Parliamentarian. Scorers should rank only the top
132 8 competitors from 1st (best) to 8th at the end of each session (with all others considered as 9th for
133 purposes of cumulative rank). The Parliamentarian should rank each competitor from 1st (best)
134 through the total number of members in the chamber at the end of the last session. In determining
135 cumulative rank totals. The Parliamentarian ranks greater than 9 shall be adjusted to 9 (thus
136 giving equal weight to each scorer and Parliamentarian).

137 Ties in cumulative ranks shall be broken by:

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- 138 1) Judge preference (using Parliamentary ranks adjusted to 9)
- 139 2) Reciprocal fractions (using Parliamentary ranks adjusted to 9)
- 140 3) Actual Parliamentary rank (non-adjusted)

141 **BALLOT VERIFICATION PERIOD.** After the preliminary and final rounds (excluding final
142 round at state) and the announcement of unofficial rankings, the individual evaluation sheets
143 shall be made available to each contestant and/or coach. It then becomes the responsibility of the
144 students and/or coach to question any tabulation error before the official results of those
145 advancing to the final round or being awarded medals is announced. Students and/or coaches
146 who are not present for this announced ballot verification period forfeit their opportunity to
147 verify tabulation. Approximately 15 minutes should be allotted for this verification period. This
148 is designed as time to verify tabulation, not a time to question the decision or ranking that a
149 judge has given the student.

150 From the final regional chamber, each congressional region shall advance the top three
151 candidates from each conference to state. Congressional regions with more than 40 entries within
152 a conference will advance the top candidates from each conference based on a ratio of one
153 student advancing for every 10 entries in a given conference (40 – 49 entries = 4 students
154 advancing to state; 50 – 59 entries = 5 students advancing to state). The ratio applies to all
155 students entered per conference at the congressional regional tournament. Conference entries
156 shall not be combined for the purpose of determining the ratio qualifying for state.

157 **REGION AWARDS.** Each regional competitor should be recognized for participation. Each
158 state-advancing congress competitor and state alternates shall receive an award for their
159 accomplishment. Further, each final chamber will vote, using the same method employed for
160 selecting a Presiding Officer for the outstanding Presiding Officer of that chamber. Outstanding
161 Presiding Officers shall receive an award for his/her accomplishment.

162 **ALTERNATES.** A first alternate and second alternate to State should be named from each
163 conference in each Congressional Region, if possible.

164 **THE STATE MEET:**

165 In order to participate, each Congressional Region and each school qualifying a contestant to the
166 Congressional State Meet shall be required to provide the following:

167 **LEGISLATION.** At the completion of Congressional Region competition, those students for
168 each conference advancing to State competition shall select one resolution or one bill to be
169 submitted to the State Clerk to be considered as legislation for the State Meet.

170 **STATE PARLIAMENTARIAN/CLERKS/SCORERS.** Each Congressional Region (ESC)
171 advancing competitors to State shall provide one qualified Parliamentarian for the duration of the
172 Congressional State competition. Deadline for submission of state Parliamentarian by the
173 Regional Clerk is the deadline posted on the UIL Congress website. Each school qualifying a
174 legislator shall provide one individual qualified to serve as a scorer/clerk for the duration of the
175 Congressional State competition. Deadline for submission of state scorer/clerk by each
176 qualifying school is the deadline on the UIL Congress website.

177 **CHAMBER DIVISION.** State-qualifying competitors shall be assigned to a chamber within
178 their own conference at the state meet. Preliminary chambers will be evenly divided, in so much
179 as possible, and shall conduct debate for a morning and an afternoon session.

180 **STATE SCORING.** During preliminary and final sessions, Parliamentarians will remain the
181 same in each chamber, but the scorers will be rotated from that chamber after each session.
182 Thus, there should be four scorers and one Parliamentarian who have scored the chamber during
183 state preliminary sessions.

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184 **ADVANCEMENT/PLACEMENT.** Final rankings in each chamber shall be determined on the
185 basis of cumulative ranks of all scorers and the Parliamentarian. Scorers should rank only the top
186 8 competitors from 1st (best) to 8th at the end of each session (with all others considered as 9th for
187 purposes of cumulative rank). The Parliamentarian should rank each competitor from 1st (best)
188 through the total number of members in the chamber at the end of the last session. In determining
189 cumulative rank totals, the Parliamentarian ranks greater than 9 shall be adjusted to 9 (thus
190 giving equal weight to each scorer and Parliamentarian).

191 Ties in cumulative ranks shall be broken by:

- 192 1) Judge preference (using Parliamentarian ranks adjusted to 9)
- 193 2) Reciprocal fractions (using Parliamentarian ranks adjusted to 9)
- 194 3) Actual Parliamentarian rank (non-adjusted)

195 **ADVANCING FROM PRELIMINARY TO FINALS AT STATE:** both the preliminary and
196 final chambers shall be scored in the fashion herein specified. The number of legislators
197 advancing from each conference chamber must be proportionate to providing 18-20 in the final
198 chamber.

199 **BALLOT VERIFICATION PERIOD.** After the preliminary and final rounds (excluding
200 Super Congress final round at State) and the announcement of unofficial rankings, the individual
201 evaluation sheets shall be made available to each contestant and/or coach. It then becomes the
202 responsibility of the student and/or coach to question any tabulation error before the official
203 results of those advancing to the final round or being awarded medals is announced. Students
204 and/or coaches who are not present for this announced ballot verification period forfeit their
205 opportunity to verify tabulation. Approximately 15 minutes should be allotted for this
206 verification period. This is designed as time to verify tabulation, not a time to question the
207 decision or ranking that a judge has given the student.

208 **STATE AWARDS:** Each student advancing and participating in Congressional State will
209 receive recognition. Competitors in the final chamber ranked 1 – 6 in each conference will
210 receive medals respective to their rank. Each chamber shall vote for the best Presiding Officer of
211 that chamber using the same method employed for selecting a Presiding Officer. Each
212 outstanding Presiding Officer shall receive an award for his/her accomplishment.

213 **UIL COMPETITION RULES**

214 **ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

215 **Oath of office** (collectively or by chamber)

216 **Audition of Presiding Officer candidates** (order should be drawn by lots)

- 217 ■ The first candidate's obligation shall include the consideration of "rules of
218 the day," which will remain binding for the duration of the session, unless
219 amended as allowed.
- 220 ■ Candidates shall NOT be scored during their candidacy, nor shall their
221 candidacy be a consideration for precedence or recency.

222 **Conducting the business of the chamber**

223 **Vote on Presiding Officer**

224 **Conducting the business of the chamber**

225 **Chamber adjourns at the established time**

226 **ORDERING THE DOCKET:** Chambers may set their own agenda.

227 At Region and State, all legislation intended for that portion of Congress may be altered by a
228 two-thirds vote, but no new legislation (beyond a resolution of appreciation) may be introduced
229 to the chamber.

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230 Invitational tournament hosts are allowed to use UIL Region and State legislation at their meets.

231 **LENGTH OF DEBATE:** The length of debate on each piece of legislation may be set in the
232 rules of the day. When no one seeks the floor for debate, the Parliamentarian may prompt the
233 Presiding Officer to ask the chamber if they are “ready for the question,” at which point, if there
234 is no objection, voting may commence on the legislation itself.

235 **TIME:** Times are absolute in Congress. They can neither be diminished, nor increased by a
236 vote of the chamber.

237 • Thus, the first affirmative (author/sponsor) has three minutes to speak on the question,
238 followed by a two-minute question and answer period. If, for instance, the speaker only
239 uses 2 minutes and 30 seconds of his/her speaking time, the remaining 30 seconds does
240 **NOT** accrue to his/her question-and-answer period – the first affirmative and negative
241 speaker receives only those two minutes.

242 ○ After the first affirmative and negative speakers have spoken, subsequent
243 speakers will have 3 minutes to speak on the topic and a 1 - minute question and
244 answer period.

245 ○ One legislator may **NOT** yield any portion of his/her time to another legislator,
246 except to ask a question as provided above.

247 **RECOGNIZING MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER:** Members must speak only after being
248 recognized by the Presiding Officer. Members should be addressed formally as Representative
249 when addressing another member of the chamber. At Region and State Contests, pre-set speech
250 precedence charts may be used. At the regional level, use of such shall be approved by the
251 Regional Congress committee. At the state level, approval shall be by State Tournament
252 officials.

253 • At the Region and State Contests, when legislation is first placed in order by a main
254 motion, the Presiding Officer will call for the author of the legislation. Until precedence
255 and recency (defined below) can be established, s/he may choose whomsoever s/he
256 pleases, giving attention to geography of the chamber. That is, s/he should not choose
257 only from one location of the chamber or from one school known to him/her or from one
258 conference known to him/her.

259 If two or more contestants wish to speak that have previously spoken, the precedence
260 rules below will apply in selecting the contestant that has precedence:

261 • As speakers are recognized, the Presiding Officer shall record that the legislator has
262 spoken and in what order. Once a portion of the chamber has spoken, the Presiding
263 Officer, when recognizing speakers, shall recognize those who have not spoken or who
264 have spoken the fewest times (precedence). If all legislators seeking to speak have the
265 same number of speeches previously, that legislator who has spoken earliest shall be
266 recognized first (recency).

267 • Questions shall be recognized on recency.

268 • During any session, precedence/recency should not reset, to ensure that all students in a
269 chamber have an equal opportunity to speak. Precedence/Recency will be reset when a
270 new session begins.

271 • A member of the chamber speaking on the wrong side, that is, speaking on the
272 affirmative when they should have spoken on the negative or who speaks on the wrong
273 legislation shall receive no points for that speech, but the speech will be recorded for the
274 purpose of precedence and recency.

275 **PRO-CON BLOCK:** The pro-con block does **NOT** exist.

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- 276 • The affirmative shall be followed by a negative speech, if one is offered. In like manner,
277 the negative shall be followed by an affirmative speech, if one is offered. If, however,
278 there is no negative after the affirmative or affirmative after the negative, it is permissible
279 to hear two or more affirmatives or negatives in a row.

280 **QUESTIONING:** Thirty second questioning blocks shall be employed in all sessions of
281 Congress. There shall be two minutes of questioning time after the first affirmative and first
282 negative speeches on an item. All other speeches shall have a questioning time of one minute. If
283 pre-set speech precedence charts are used, Presiding Officers are encouraged to select
284 representatives that are lower on the chart to ask questions first while maintaining recency.
285 Members shall have only one questioning block per questioning time, unless no other members
286 seek recognition.

287 **DECISIONS OF THE CHAIR:** A member may appeal the decision of the chair, which
288 requires a second and a majority vote.

- 289 • As a rule, this is discouraged. Members elected the chair and should have confidence in
290 that individual's decisions. This action should be reserved for only the most egregious
291 acts, and should always be preceded with the motion "point of order" to allow the chair
292 the opportunity to reconsider on their own.

293 **DECISIONS OF THE PARLIAMENTARIAN:** If the Parliamentarian and clerk are not the
294 same person, a member or the chair may appeal to the Clerk a decision of the Parliamentarian.
295 Such appeals must be made in writing, must be accompanied by a two-thirds vote of the
296 chamber's members, and no appeal will stop the proceedings of the congress.

297 **DISCUSSION WITH THE PARLIAMENTARIAN.** Prior to an appeal of the decision of the
298 Parliamentarian, two members in opposition, one for the decision and one opposed, may seek to
299 discuss their positions in conference with the Parliamentarian. These are non-scored speeches,
300 and may not be considered by either the Parliamentarian or judges in ranking the student. They
301 are intended only to allow a brief period of time for advocacy.

- 302 • A two-thirds vote to appeal the decision of the Parliamentarian is necessary to appeal.

303 **DECISIONS OF THE CLERK:** The decisions of the Clerk of Congress are final. There is no
304 other authority to which a legislator may appeal.

305 **RIGHT TO IMPEACH:** The members and officers of the congress may not be impeached;
306 however, the Parliamentarian of the chamber may request a member be removed for cause.

307 **PREVIOUS QUESTION:** The motion to previous question should be used sparingly and only
308 when debate has lagged, evidence of which is no new or extended arguments are being made.

- 309 • It should **NOT** be entertained by the chair, nor allowed by the Parliamentarian, merely to
310 dispatch legislation in order to debate a different piece of legislation.

311 **TABLING LEGISLATION:** As with a motion to previous question, tabling legislation should
312 be used for very limited purposes and not to deny legislators the opportunity to speak on the
313 legislation.

- 314 • It should **NOT** be entertained by the chair, nor allowed by the Parliamentarian, merely to
315 dispatch legislation in order to debate a different piece of legislation.

316 **OWNERSHIP OF LEGISLATION:** Legislation does **NOT** belong to the chamber until it has
317 been first introduced by the author/sponsor.

- 318 • Objecting to the consideration of a question will not supersede the right of the
319 author/sponsor to introduce the legislation to the chamber before any other motions may
320 be made on the legislation.

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321 **AMENDMENTS:** Amendments and amendments to amendments must be presented, written on
322 the appropriate form, to the Parliamentarian first, who shall solely determine the appropriateness
323 of the amendment offered. After the Parliamentarian either approves or disapproves the
324 amendment, they will pass the amendment to the chair, who shall recognize the author of the
325 amendment at the earliest possible time for his/her motion to amend.

- 326 • No amendment shall seek to alter the fundamental intent of the legislation.
- 327 • There is no guarantee of a speech. Upon a one-third vote of the chamber, a delegate may
328 move the question, or the Presiding Officer may call for speeches in affirmation of the
329 amendment. The amending legislator is not guaranteed this privilege; it is based on
330 precedence and recency.
- 331 • Amendment speeches shall count toward precedence and recency.

332 **SCORED SPEECHES:** Speeches will only be scored when the member of the chamber has
333 been recognized to give a speech for or against the legislation or amendment at hand.

- 334 • Scorers and the Parliamentarian shall rate each speech on a 6-point scale with 1 being
335 worst and 6 being best.
- 336 • Motions or a member offering “floor debate” shall **NOT** be a scored speech.

337 **RANKING LEGISLATORS:** At the end of the preliminary session, the scorers will rank the
338 members of the chamber 1-8 (1 = best, 2 = 2nd best, etc. for that session and only that session).
339 All other members will receive a rank of 9. The Parliamentarian shall only rank students at the
340 end of their last session. Parliamentarians shall rank all contestants from 1st (best) through the
341 total number of members in the chamber.

- 342 • The cumulative sum of the scorers and Parliamentarian will determine members’ final
343 rank. (In order from lowest cumulative rank (1st) to highest cumulative rank.)
344 For example, Legislator A receives a 2 from scorer 1, a 3 from scorer 2 and a 1
345 from the Parliamentarian. The legislator’s cumulative score would be 6.

346 If a tie occurs, the tiebreaking procedures shall be implemented. For State competition, ties shall
347 be broken by: 1) Judges preference (**adjusted**) 2) Reciprocal fractions (**adjusted**) 3) Rank by
348 Parliamentarian (raw score) UIL State Officials shall conduct the tabulation.

- 349 • This method is used regardless of the number of scorers.
- 350 • If there is more than one preliminary session, the cumulative ranks will determine final
351 ranking for the purposes of recognition or advancement to a final chamber.
- 352 • Scorers may be changed after a session (and it is recommended they are changed), but the
353 Parliamentarian remains with the chamber until it stands adjourned.

354 **VOTING BY THE CONGRESS:**

355 **VOTING IN CHAMBER:** Only those members present at the time of a vote shall have their
356 vote counted for all matters before the chamber, including but not limited to motions,
357 amendments and to pass legislation.

358 **QUORUM:** The chamber must have a quorum of 50% plus one member to conduct business.
359 This is based on the original number of legislators seated at the beginning of the session.

360 **ADVANCEMENT BY THE CONGRESS:** Ranking in the chamber for advancement to a final
361 round will be done by the cumulative ranks of the scorer and Parliamentarian, not the members
362 of the chamber.

363 **VOTING FOR PRESIDING OFFICER:** The nominees for Presiding Officer should have an
364 audition period, which should not last more than a total of one hour irrespective of the number of
365 auditions in the chamber. The Parliamentarian will divide this time equally. At the end of the
366 audition period, the Parliamentarian with the assistance of the chamber clerk shall ballot the

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367 membership of the chamber. Voting shall be done by preferential balloting until a clear majority
368 is established.

- 369 • In each balloting, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be removed from the next
370 round of balloting.
- 371 • If the total number of ballots received by multiple candidates is less than the next highest
372 candidate, all the lower candidates shall be removed from the next round of balloting.
- 373 • If there is a tie among the lowest candidates and the total number of votes received is
374 greater than the next lowest candidate, a separate ballot between those candidates must be
375 conducted.
- 376 • Repeat this process until only two candidates remain. Conduct a ballot between the two
377 remaining candidates. The candidate who receives the greatest number of votes will have
378 the choice of serving as Presiding Officer in the morning session or the afternoon session
379 and the other candidate will serve as Presiding Officer in the other session.
- 380 • Only those members elected in a preliminary session may offer their candidacy in the
381 final legislative session. If no preliminary Presiding Officers advance, open auditions
382 will be conducted.
- 383 • In any consolation congress, any member may offer himself or herself for the position of
384 Presiding Officer.

385 **ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CHAMBER:** The use of laptop and tablet computers and other
386 electronic retrieval devices by competitors in UIL Congress is allowed so long as wired or
387 wireless connections are disabled and remain disabled throughout the contest. It is the
388 responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment. Contestants electing to use computers
389 are responsible for providing their own computers and extra batteries. Tournament hosts shall not
390 be responsible for providing computers for contestants. Contestants who choose to use laptop
391 computers accept the risk of equipment failure. Should equipment failure occur, no special
392 considerations or accommodations, including additional preparation time or speech time, will be
393 given by judges, contest directors or tournament hosts. Contestants accept full responsibility for
394 the safety and security of their electronic retrieval devices throughout the entirety of all UIL
395 tournaments. Contestants, parents and coaches should be aware that contestants are bringing and
396 using the computers at their own risk. UIL is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken
397 computers. Cell phones, smart phones and smart watches are prohibited in the chamber.
398 Traditional timing devices are permitted.

399 **VISUAL AIDS:** If any member uses visual aids, the visual aids shall be left before the chamber
400 and shall be available for use by all members.

401 **OPEN CHAMBER:** UIL Congress shall be an open chamber, but congress members shall
402 request and must receive permission from the Presiding Officer to leave the chamber. Members
403 are encouraged to limit time absent to a strict minimum. (i.e. 5-minute break)

404 **CONGRESS SHALL BE PUBLIC.** Congress is public discourse. Therefore, all congressional
405 chambers shall be open to the public. No coaching or cheering shall be permitted during the
406 contest.

407 **RECORDING:** Schools and/or individuals are prohibited from recording (audio and/or video)
408 region or State Congress sessions. The UIL reserves the right to record for educational purposes.