

UIL CONGRESS RULES & PROCEDURES 2024-2025

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

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

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

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

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

41 **PLANNING THE REGIONAL CONTEST.** In order to maximize participation by all schools
42 and provide equal opportunity to all students to enter regardless of the existing academic conflict
43 pattern, the congressional competition will be held during the fall/winter. The Congressional
44 Regional Directorship, with input from all participating schools, shall schedule Congressional
45 Region competition during the first two designated region weeks of November. Location and
46 entry fees will be determined by the Directorship.

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

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

53 **NUMBER OF CONGRESSIONAL REGIONAL CHAMBERS:**

54 **24 or less entries** – There shall be one chamber, which will conduct morning and
55 afternoon sessions. Each session should be three hours of debate time, lengthened by 10 minutes
56 per each additional congressional contestant beyond 20.

57 **25 to 48 entries** – There shall be at least two chambers, which will conduct a preliminary
58 session consisting of three hours and should be lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
59 student beyond 20. The top half of each chamber (or whole number closest to that percentage)
60 will advance to a final congress session. The final session shall not be less than three hours, and
61 shall be lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional student beyond 20.

62 **49 to 72 entries** – There shall be at least three chambers, which will conduct a
63 preliminary session consisting of three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
64 student beyond 20. A Proportionately equal number of students shall be selected to advance from
65 each preliminary chamber resulting in a final chamber of no less than 18 and no more than 24
66 students. The final session shall be three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
67 student beyond 20.

68 **73 to 96 entries** – There shall be at least four chambers, which will conduct a preliminary
69 session consisting of three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional student
70 beyond 20. A Proportionately equal number of students shall be selected to advance from each
71 preliminary chamber resulting in a final chamber of no less than 18 and no more than 24
72 students. The final session shall be three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
73 student beyond 20.

74 **97 to 120 entries** – There shall be at least five chambers, which will conduct a
75 preliminary session consisting of three hours and lengthened by 10 minutes per each additional
76 student beyond 20. The top one fifth of each chamber (or whole number closest to that
77 percentage) will advance to the final session that will be three hours and lengthened by 10
78 minutes per each additional student beyond 20.

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

86 **LEGISLATION.** Participating Regional schools are encouraged to author and submit bills,
87 constitutional amendments, and/or resolutions for debate and are encouraged to author legislation
88 that has an impact on the state of Texas. However, schools should assume members of the
89 chamber to be United States Congress representatives. All legislation submitted shall meet UIL
90 formatting and shall be the original product of the school. Plagiarism includes: submitting
91 legislation that was not authored by the student or school. Direct quotation from a published
92 source shall not be allowed in submitted legislation. Students should paraphrase from published

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93 sources in submitted legislation. Plagiarism is unacceptable and shall result in the legislation
94 being ineligible for inclusion on the agenda, and the school shall lose authorship speeches for
95 any additional legislation they have in the docket. It shall be the duty of the coach to affirm that
96 the legislation submitted is original. Legislation must be submitted to the regional clerk by the
97 date posted on the UIL Congress webpage to be eligible for review by the clerk and regional
98 committee, which will determine the legislation. A maximum of 20 pieces (10 for prelims, 10 for
99 finals) will be debated at the regional contest but less is permissible. The clerk shall then forward
100 the regional legislation to the UIL state director for final approval and posting on the official UIL
101 website.

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

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

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

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

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

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

136 Ties in cumulative ranks shall be broken by:

- 137 1) Judge preference (using Parliamentarian ranks adjusted to 9)
- 138 2) Reciprocal fractions (using Parliamentarian ranks adjusted to 9)

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139 3) Actual Parliamentarian rank (non-adjusted)

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

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

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

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

163 **THE STATE MEET:**

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

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

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

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

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

183 **ADVANCEMENT/PLACEMENT.** Final rankings in each chamber shall be determined on the
184 basis of cumulative ranks of all scorers and the Parliamentarian. Scorers should rank only the top

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185 8 competitors from 1st (best) to 8th at the end of each session (with all others considered as 9th for
186 purposes of cumulative rank). The Parliamentarian should rank each competitor from 1st (best)
187 through the total number of members in the chamber at the end of the last session. In determining
188 cumulative rank totals, the Parliamentarian ranks greater than 9 shall be adjusted to 9 (thus
189 giving equal weight to each scorer and Parliamentarian).

190 Ties in cumulative ranks shall be broken by:

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

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

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

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

212 **UIL COMPETITION RULES**

213 **ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

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

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

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

221 **Conducting the business of the chamber**

222 **Vote on Presiding Officer**

223 **Conducting the business of the chamber**

224 **Chamber adjourns at the established time**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

266 • Questions shall be recognized on recency.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

353 **VOTING BY THE CONGRESS:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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