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Dear Forensic Colleagues & Friends,

On behalf of the "Talking Mules" Speech & Debate Team and our tournament and coaching staff, I am delighted to extend this invitation to attend the 2020 Missouri Mule Invitational. This year's tournament will be hosted in an on-line, synchronous format, using the 8x8 videoconferencing platform. The attached tournament regs have extensive information about using this platform through the forensicstournament.net website.

Our tournament link is www.forensicstournament.net/MissouriMule/20

This year's tournament experience offers a unique set of challenges and opportunities. As such, there are a number of changes to this year's tournament regulations. Please read them carefully and email any questions you might have.

After careful consideration we have decided to host on Friday, Oct. 16th, and Saturday, October 17th. There will be no swing this year.

Friday's tournament will offer competitive debate in NFA-LD (Open, Junior, & Novice) and Public Forum (Open) on the fall, 2020 Resolution: Now is the time to eliminate intercollegiate athletics. On Saturday we will offer competition in all 11 AFA-NIET Individual Events.

We are committed to bringing you and your teams a quality, on-time, competitive experience. To that end, we have asked Jordan Compton to head up our virtual tabroom.

This year promises to be an interesting experience for all of us as we adapt both our competition and hosting to on-line formats. If you have students with special circumstances or needs, we will do everything in our power to make appropriate accommodations. Coaches, please email us your requests prior to 5:00 p.m. (CST), Wednesday, October 14th. Our goal is to create a safe and supportive environment for all competitors and judges.

If you have comments, questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 660-543-8646 or rogers@ucmo.edu.

We look forward to hosting you,

Dr. Jack E. Rogers
Director of Forensics
Tournament Host / Director

Dr. Nicole P.M. Freeman
Assistant Director of Forensics
Co-Host / Director

2020 Missouri Mule Tournament Schedule (All times are CST)

Friday, October 16th

Registration (TBA)

9:00-10:15a.m: Debate RD 1

10:30-11:30a.m: Debate RD 2

Lunch Break

12:15-1:15p.m: Debate RD 3

1:45-2:45p.m: Debate RD 4

3:15-4:30p.m: Elimination Round 1

4:45-6:00p.m. Elimination Round 2

Dinner Break

7:00-8:15 Elimination Round 3

8:30 Debate Awards (TBA)

Saturday, October 17th

Registration for IE only schools (TBA)

7:45a.m. Extemp Draw (TBA)

8:00-9:15a.m. Round 1 Pattern A (Extemp, Persuasion, DI, Poetry, Informative, Prose)

9:30.-10:45a.m. Round 1 Pattern B (Impromptu, POI, Duo, ADS, CA)

11:00a.m.-12:15p.m Round 2 Pattern B

Lunch Break

1:30p.m. Extemp Draw (TBA)

1:45-3:00p.m. Round 2 Pattern A

3:15-4:30p.m. Finals Pattern B

4:30p.m. Extemp Draw for Finals (TBA)

5:00-6:15p.m. Finals Pattern A

7:00p.m. Awards (TBA)

***Note: We reserve the right to make schedule changes as necessary to accommodate tournament size, judging needs, and other logistical considerations.**

Using the 8x8 Platform

The Mule will use 8x8 videoconferencing to transition to a synchronous, on-line tournament competition / administrative experience. The 8x8 platform works seamlessly with the forensicstournament.net registration website which we have used for the last decade to run the Mule. Danny Cantrell of San Antonio College has done a remarkable job of creating a synchronous platform site that sits atop the existing tournament registration website. He has assembled a very helpful collection of resources here:

<https://forensicstournament.net/online>

We encourage you to watch the resource videos for judges and students that he has created.

To access the coaches' video, go here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKH1sOKqOV08&list=PLqA6ZKvXfAxNRTlfbD0oYNSwVku0QQYEPb&index2>

This video details how to enter students' and judges' contact information into the system when you register for the tournament. Essentially, this video describes the process you use to enter the emails and or phone numbers of your competitors in your forensicstournament.net roster tool so that they can receive email or text notifications from the tournament. This does not make this information visible to the tournament administrators.

Participation in this sort of tournament requires several resources. Judges, coaches, and participants should plan to have...

- A reliable laptop or desktop that can accommodate the Google Chrome browser.
- A reliable internet connection of at least 6 MBPS (megabytes per second) download/upload speed.
- Access to a space where they can (hopefully) perform without interruption.
- You may also wish to have headphones.

The tournament will create a series of virtual rooms in which the rounds will occur. Competitors scheduled to compete in that round will get a text or email (coaches will indicate what the competitor's preference is when they add the individual and their contact information to their team roster) with a link to get into the virtual room. You are not required to get an 8x8 account or download any software in order to participate. Once you are in a virtual room, it will look and feel very much like a Zoom meeting. We recommend that you look at the handy infographic below to acquaint yourself with the different features of the 8x8 competition rooms. This graphic is also available in a PDF at the <https://forensicstournament.net/online> link embedded here and above. We will also post it on the tournament website.

We anticipate that you will have many questions about using 8x8. As the tournament approaches we post additional resources and notify you about new things we learn about it.

Best Practices for Online Tournaments

Online tournaments are different from face to face tournaments. Although they have been around for a while, this season will be the first time they have been so widely adopted. To that end, we will ask everyone at the Mule to follow what we think are some of the "best practices" for online tournaments. Of course, we realize that some of these may change over time as the community gains more experience with this endeavor.

Some best practices for judges...

We request that judges avoid penalizing directly or indirectly a student for video quality issues. These issues are rarely the student's fault. Please focus on the performance and not the video itself.

- Students may decide to sit to perform. Again, we believe that should be up to the student to determine what works best for them in their situation.
- A student may need to perform their selection from a tight space in an office, classroom, dorm, or even from their home. Please be understanding of this even if you believe that the background isn't sufficiently "professional." Please be understanding if competitors in your round are using headphones.
- In interp events, we allow the students to forego the use of the traditional black interp books if they so choose. Please do not penalize students who decide not to use black books in their performances.
- Judges please mute your email or applications you may be using while judging. This can be distracting for the performers. Please also mute your microphone whenever you are not speaking.
- In speech rounds, it is wise to let the competitors "sign in" using the chat function. As you would in a face to face round, please allow those who are double or triple-entered to perform first so they can be excused to go into their next virtual room.
- You may find it useful to have some paper with you to make a few notes about performances.
- On your e-ballots, please do your very best to provide constructive feedback for the performers or debaters. As best you are able, please also provide a rationale for your ranking or decisions.
- You can find some excellent video resources which cover other best judging practices here.

Some best practices for competitors...

- Please have a reliable laptop or other device at the ready and make sure it is near a reliable power source.
- Try to be in a place where you can have at least 6 MBPS internet speed.
- You may wish to use headphones or a microphone.
- As best you can, try to set up in a distraction-free environment for each of your rounds.
- In speech rounds, feel free to use 8x8's chat function to "sign in" just like you would in a face to face round. After your performance, please ask to be excused to your next virtual room.
- You should receive an email (or text) from the tournament with your e-postings. This should happen about 10 minutes prior to the round. You may need to monitor your junk or spam email folder as some email programs might not recognize it initially.
- Please keep your microphone muted when you are not speaking.
- Try to be a good audience member. If you keep your video on during somebody else's performance, feel free to give them positive nonverbal feedback.

We plan to have a "help" room set up. We will tell you what the specific link is for that as the tournament approaches. Feel free to reach out to us there if you have questions. Additionally, feel free to email the tournament director Dr. Jack Rogers at rogers@ucmo.edu or for tournament specific issues Dr. Nikki Freeman at nfreeman@ucmo.edu or Mr. Jordan Compton at jcompton@sbuniv.edu .

Tournament Specific Regulations

Individual Events –

I.E.'s will be conducted in accordance with the AFA-NIET guidelines. The conflict patterns are: Pattern A: Extemp, Informative, Dramatic Interp, Poetry, Prose; Pattern B: Impromptu, POI, DUO, ADS, CA. A student may enter up to three events in both conflict patterns. We will follow AFA tabulation procedures.

In impromptu, judges will be instructed to use the chat function to provide the prompts. Each student will receive a different set of quotations. Quotation topics will be drawn from philosophical quotations, song lyrics, and quotations from popular films.

In interp events students may perform with a book as usual in face to face tournaments, or they may elect not to use one. This adaptation is left to the students. Judges are instructed not to penalize students for not using books.

In duo interpretation, we strongly recommend that duo partners not perform in front of the same device due to social distancing.

The decision to add semi-final rounds for events with more than 50 entries will be at the discretion of the tab room director and will depend on logistics and time constraints.

Pentathlon -

Any student who enters a minimum of **five events in two genres** - unprepared platform event (EXT or IMP) prepared platform event (ADS, PER, INF, CA) and/or interpretive event (DUO, POE, POI, DI, PRO) will be eligible for Pentathlon.

Top Novice –

To be eligible for a Top Novice Award, the student must be in their first year of collegiate competition and have NO high school experience in forensics of any kind.

Debate –

Open Public Forum (Fall 2020, resolution 'Now is the time to eliminate intercollegiate athletics'), and Novice, Junior, and Open LD (2020-2021 NFA-LD topic). If a Debate Division has fewer than seven teams entered it will be collapsed with the next higher division (e.g. Novice into Junior, Junior into Open); All divisions and formats of debate will be conducted as much as is practical in accordance with the appropriate governing organizations' rules and procedures.

Divisions:

Novice – competitors will be in their first two semesters of intercollegiate debate regardless of format and/or high school experience; Junior – first two years of intercollegiate debate regardless of format and/or high school experience; Open – open to any debater.

Judges –

As always, we anticipate having a limited number of judges for hire. The on-line tournament format is somewhat new and while locating judges **should be** easier, it remains to be seen as we write these regs whether that will prove to be the case in practice. Therefore, an individual events judges covers 8 entries total regardless of conflict pattern (e.g 6 in A and 2 in B, or 3 in A and 5 in B, 8b TOTAL). A debate judge covers 2 LD entries **OR** 2 teams.

This year we will require that you cover at least 75% of your entry, We reserve the right to limit entries if you cannot cover them.

ALL judges are obligated to one round **AFTER** their last competitor(s) has been eliminated.

Awards –

Another difficult decision, but due to the prohibitive cost of shipping most awards will be paper certificates. Exceptions – 1st through 3rd Place in IE Sweepstakes, 1st through 3rd in Debate Sweepstakes, 1st through 3rd in Overall Sweepstakes, E. Sam Cox Pi Kappa Delta Top School Award, Top 2 year School, and 1st Place in all I.E.s, all Divisions of Debate, Top Debate Speakers in all Divisions of debate, and Pentathlon. All other awards will be paper certificates. Awards will be mailed to address provided by coaches at the close of the tournament.

As a result, . . .

Fees –

We have lowered fees this year to reflect the change to awards, the need to ship awards, and the need to encourage judge coverage.

I.E.'s will be assessed at \$8.00 per entry – uncovered I.E.s will be assessed \$12.00 in addition to the base fee (e.g. each uncovered I.E. entry is \$20).

L.D. entries will be assessed at \$25.00 per entry – uncovered L.D. entries will be assessed \$75.00 in addition to base fees (e.g. uncovered L.D. entries will be \$100 each).

Team debate entries will be assessed \$40.00 per team – uncovered Teams will be assessed \$75.00 in addition to the base fee (e.g. uncovered teams will be \$115 each).

Changes after the entry deadline will be assessed at \$20 each in addition to the base fees.

Dropped judges will be assessed at \$150 each plus base fees.

Sweepstakes Formula –

While there is no limit to the number of entries a school may enter, only the school's top 4 entries per division of debate format and IE event will count towards Sweepstakes awards. The tabroom will automatically advance your top competitors. Points for debate prelim wins will be: Debate team win or bye = 5 points; LD = 2.5 points. Debate speakers will be awarded 6 points for 1st Speaker; 5 points for 2nd Speaker; 4 points for 3rd Speaker; 3 points for 4th Speaker; 2 points for 5th Speaker and 1 point for 6th Speaker. I.E.'s will earn 3 points for a ranking of 1 in prelim rounds; 2 points for a ranking of 2; and 1 point for a ranking of 3. Competitors in the finals will be awarded 6 points for 1st Place; 5 points for 2nd place; 4 points for 3rd Place; 3 points for 4th Place; 2 points for 5th Place and 1 point for 6th Place. Points will be awarded for the top 5 finishers in pentathlon using the same formula as the finals of IE's.

Entry Deadline –

ALL entries must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. (CST), Monday, October 12th**. Fees will be assessed upon your entry as it stands at **5:00 p.m. (CST), Tuesday, October 13th**. All changes after that deadline will be assessed a nuisance fee **plus** original fees. To enter the tournament. Log In and enter your tournament information on **Forensictournament.net**. Please double check your entry if you have not received an email confirming your entry by Wednesday the 14th by 10:00 p.m. CST.

Tournament www.forensictournament.net/MissouriMule/20

Commented [D1]: If you have the tournament setup on forensictournament.net you should post the tournament link here.

Payment of Fees –

Please arrange to have your fees paid by a check made payable to **UCMO Forensics** within two weeks after the close of the tournament (November 2). Mail payment to:

Dr. Jack Rogers
Director of Forensics
The University of Central Missouri
Martin 136
Warrensburg, Missouri 64093

We cannot take credit cards. Checks made out to any other payee will be returned and you will have to process a new check. If your accounts payable department has questions, please have them contact Dr. Jack Rogers, rogers@ucmo.edu, (660) 543-8646. A copy of the W-9 is attached to this email.

I will attach a W-9 for your business office.

Addendum 1

General Policies Governing our Tournament –

Statement of Support for the Ethical Treatment of Others:

The Talking Mules Speech & Debate Team is committed to assuring equal opportunity to all persons, regardless of race, color, religious creed, national origin, physical ability status, age, economic status, gender, sex or sexual orientation. As such, our tournament is opposed to all forms of discrimination and seeks to establish a tolerant atmosphere in which every individual is accorded respect. While we respect the importance of First Amendment freedoms, we respectfully remind tournament participants that with rights come responsibilities. Please refrain from disrespectful or derogatory speech. Our tournament practices a policy of zero tolerance for violations of Title IX. If you wish to register a complaint, please begin with the Tournament Director, Dr. Jack Rogers, rogers@ucmo.edu, (660) 543-8646 (office) or (660)238-0674 (cell) or if he cannot be reached, Dr. Nikki Freeman at cell (660) 473-3316 or nfreeman@ucmo.edu. All complaints will maintain the confidentiality of all persons involved to the maximum extent possible. However, please remember that the Tournament Director and your coach are identified as mandatory reporters by Federal law. Our University's Title IX compliance office may become involved. Dr. Corey Bowman is the University's compliance officer and may be contacted at bowman@ucmo.edu, (660) 543-4114. The Title IX tournament coordinator and UCM's compliance officer will ensure that appropriate Title IX officers at your home institutions are contacted.

*Adapted from Pi Kappa Delta's website.

Judge Strikes:

We ask that if your students have any conflicts with judges for non-competitive reasons that you let us know so we can block that judge from judging the student. Examples of when this could happen might include: the student is a family member/close friend of the judge, a student was harassed/assaulted by a judge, a student was a teammate of the judge, a student was coached by the judge. We respect the privacy of these decisions. We hope that if a judge has participated in improper behavior that the tournament director will be notified so that, if necessary, the judge can be removed from the judging pool before interacting with students. Students can inform us through their coach or inform the tournament directors directly at rogers@ucmo.edu and nfreeman@ucmo.edu. The tournament directors will not ask for details and do not expect any; we trust in the decision of the student. We will provide a full list of judges to all coaches the week of the tournament.

The tournament will also be supporting the NFA's working "Open Door" Policy:

UCM Speech & Debate is committed to providing safe performance spaces for all competitors. We acknowledge the art of performance may be a healing process and/or opportunity to speak on important issues. As a performer, it is impossible to know all the ways in which content or a performance may unintentionally harm our peers. To better serve our competitors, we will be honoring the NFA's open door practice during rounds this weekend. Meaning, competitors may choose when they feel comfortable being present in the room, which includes choosing only to be present in the room when performing. Competitors may also discretely leave the room, even when not double-entered without question or penalty.

Updated ICE Activity in the Area:

The University of Central Missouri is committed to inclusiveness and welcomes students and coaches from all identities and social roles. In light of ongoing harassment and discrimination, and the current administration's actions regarding DACA, our program stands in solidarity with, and will continue to offer a safe, educational space for, our most vulnerable members. While we are not a sanctuary city, the city of Warrensburg strives to create a safe and inclusive community. We will send an update on any ICE activity as we get closer to October. We have found <https://www.mira-mo.org/> to be a useful resource