

AFA-NIET District VII By-Laws

1. Guidelines:

The District will adhere to the procedures established by the N.I.E.T. Committee and the A.F.A. Code of Ethics. Robert's Rules of Order will be followed.

2. Membership:

All two and four year institutions of higher learning within the states of Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio University, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia are eligible for membership in District VII. In order to participate in the District Tournament, a school must have paid the annual membership dues. In addition, any school which has not paid in full all previous debts to the District VII will not be allowed to compete at the District Tournament.

3. District Committee:

A: Chairperson

The District Chairperson shall be elected at the District NIET Qualifier on every odd-numbered year. The Chairperson will be elected by a plurality vote of the member school present at the District NIET Qualifier. If a vacancy occurs at any time other than the end of a two-year term, a new election will be held at the earliest possible convenience. The Chairperson must hold a full position at a member school within the District.

B: Duties of Chairperson

1. The District Chair is responsible for convening, running, and officiating over all District meetings.
2. The Chair will serve as Tournament Director for the District's annual NIET Qualifier.
3. The Chair will serve as the District's representative to the AFA-NIET national committee, performing all duties indicated by said committee.
4. The Chair will perform all other duties as necessary in fulfilling the leadership and advancement of the District.
5. The District Chair must be a member of the A.F.A.

C: District Committee:

The District committee shall consist of up to five district members in addition to the District Chairperson and one student member. The election for the following year will take place at the District meeting. Committee members will serve two-year terms with half of the committee coming up for election every year. Nominating shall be open and election shall be by plurality. District members need not be present to be elected, but prior consent must be obtained to place their names in nomination. All nominees (excluding the student member) must have

coached individual events during the past year. The one student member on the District Committee will serve as outlined in the “Student Representative” section below.

1. A District Secretary will be appointed from the District Committee membership (excluding the student member). The District Secretary will be responsible for recording and sending out the minutes of District Meetings and other responsibilities as delegated by the committee.
2. The position of Chair Emeritus will be a member of the District Committee.

D. Student Representative

The Student Representative to the AFA-NIET for District VII will be elected each year at the District Tournament for service through the following year. A nominee should expect to attend the NIET that year (as incoming representative) and the following year (as outgoing representative), and be able to attend the national meetings held the day prior to the start of the NIET. Attendance at the District Workshop, as well as the District Tournament, will be expected of the student representative as part of their service to the District. Any eligible student may run, and can be elected by a majority vote of students attending the District Qualifier.

4. Eligibility

All full-time and part-time undergraduate students attending a member institution are eligible to compete. The AFA-NIET guidelines define an undergraduate student as one who has not yet received a bachelor’s degree. A student who graduates in mid-year but has already qualified to attend the NIET may do so, but may not attend the District Qualifier. Any student is awarded only 8 semesters of forensics competition, regardless of degree standing. Under no circumstances may a student attend more than 4 NIET tournaments or more than 4 District Qualifiers. Under unusual circumstances, students will be allowed to compete if procedures under the AFA-NIET By-Laws section IIIIE have been fulfilled.

5. District Qualifier

A: Summary

District VII will hold a tournament each year to determine event qualification for those students who have not yet qualified for the AFA-NIET. This tournament will follow all rules and procedures established in the AFA-NIET Constitution and By-Laws.

B: District Business Meeting:

A meeting open to all district members will be held during the District Tournament. Changes adopted by vote of member schools present will not take effect until the following year’s tournament. To be a voting member of the district, a school must have paid the A.F.A.-N.I.E.T. fee for the current year. All

current member schools in the district are entitled to one vote. A member from that school must be present to vote unless a mail ballot is specified. The by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote.

C: Tournament Site and Date:

The site of the District Tournament will be determined one year in advance of the District Business Meeting. The District Tournament will be held in March on a weekend preferably not conflicting with any forensic tournament within the district. The attempt should be made to rotate the site of the District Tournament. The District Committee will select the specific weekend (either Friday and Saturday, or Saturday and Sunday) in consultation with the tournament host. If for any reason the site selected must be changed, the District Committee will select a new site for the tournament.

6. Tournament Responsibilities and Procedures:

During the fall semester, the District Chair is responsible for sending out information concerning district dues to all schools in the district known to have intercollegiate forensic programs. After consultation with the District Committee and the tournament host, the District Chair is responsible for sending out the information on the District Tournament as well as receiving all entries for the tournament. The District Chair will notify the tournament host of all pertinent tournament figures as soon as possible. The District Chair will send to all district-member schools the results of the District Tournament. The District Chair will verify all at-large method qualifiers from the district except his/her own. The District Chair will appoint a member of the District Committee to verify his/her school's at-large qualifications.

The tournament host will be responsible for all on-site arrangements such as securing hired judges, motel rates, providing rooms for competition, tournament supplies and equipment, and making food reservations.

A school may enter up to five contestants per event, with no contestant entering in more than two events in any conflict pattern. Students already having satisfied the requirements for at-large qualifications in an event or events are ineligible to compete in that event or events at the District Tournament. This rule applies whether or not the student plans to attend the National Tournament. The entry deadline will be one week prior to the District Tournament and only schools that have paid their A.F.A.-N.I.E.T. fees may compete.

Under no circumstances may a school add slots after the entry deadline. All drops of contestants and/or judges are to be phoned into the District Chair. Emergency, last-minute drops must be phoned to the tournament host prior to the departure of that school from its home base. The entry fee, judging fees, and drop fees will be determined by the District Committee.

The District Committee will meet on the day prior to the District Tournament for the purposes of putting together the schematics and assigning judges; or the District Committee may allow faxing/emailing the schematics for the purpose of checking prior to the District Tournament. All schematics will use a coding system which does not disclose which contestants come from which school(s). As far as possible, the committee will schedule students with different contestants each round, schedule contestants from the same school in different sections, rotate speaking order, and randomly assign judges.

The control room will be staffed by members of the District Committee as requested, as well as the tournament host if requested and others as designated by the District Committee. Persons involved in putting together the schematics and those working in the control room will not also serve as District Tournament judges. All tabulations will be double-checked for accuracy and no results are to be revealed by control room personnel until the conclusion of the tournament.

There will be two preliminary rounds of competition in each event with two judges per section. The lowest rank and rating will be dropped for each contestant in each event before determining the six finalists in each event. Advancement to the final round will be based on lowest cumulative ranks (best three). Should rank ties occur in selecting six finalists, ties will be broken on the basis of the best three ratings. If ties still exist, all tied contestants will advance to finals. When only one section of an event is necessary (seven or less contestants), no final round will be held and final standings will be determined by the best three ranks and ratings from the preliminary rounds.

Three judges will be used in final rounds. As far as possible, judges will not be assigned to hear an event in which they have judged any of the contestants during preliminary rounds of that event. Finalists will be posted in random order and contestants must speak in the assigned order whenever possible. Contestants in more than one final will have their order staggered whenever possible. Final standings in each event will be determined by the following system: (1) majority of first place rankings; (2) best three ranks; (3) judges' preference; (4) best three ratings; (5) number of first place ballots; (6) number of second place ballots; etc.

Trophies will be awarded to all finalists as well as the top six in team sweepstakes. Team sweepstakes will be based on the results in finals: 6 points for a first; 5 points for a second, etc. Finalist points in one section events will be awarded on the same basis as multi-section events.

According to the A.F.A.-N.I.E.T., first, second, and third place finalists (or the top 10%, whichever is higher) advance to the national tournament. The District Tournament can count toward at-large qualification if the District Tournament meets the qualifications established for any other tournament. Any contestants fulfilling both qualification methods must use the at-large qualification thus advancing as many contestants from the district as possible. The District Chair

must be informed at the conclusion of the awards assembly at the District tournament of any contestants unable to attend the N.I.E.T. so that the next eligible contestant who can attend may be advanced. Should a contestant discover at a later date that he/she cannot attend the N.I.E.T., the District Chair must be notified immediately. Where a contestant is eligible for the national tournament in more than two events in a conflict pattern, the District Chair must be notified within four days as to which two events the contestant will enter at the N.I.E.T. if the decision affects the advancement of another district contestant.

7. Judge Eligibility:

Non-hired judges must be non-undergraduate coaches at the school they are to represent and must have judged in at least two individual events tournaments during the past year. Non-coaches who wish to judge for a school must have judged in at least two individual events tournaments during the past year.

Hired judges must have judged in a minimum of one individual events tournament during the past year and/or the tournament host will provide a training session for judges prior to the district tournament. Exceptions will be left to the discretion of the district committee. All district schools and particularly the host school should submit the names and credentials of potential hired judges to the District Chair at least six weeks prior to the District Tournament. In the case that more hired judges are recommended than are needed, the District Committee should rank order those suggested.

No judges (non-hired or hired) will judge any contestants they have previously coached, nor judge contestants from any school at which they have coached within the past two years, nor judge contestants from any school with which they are currently affiliated, nor judge contestants from any school in which they were enrolled as undergraduates within the past two years.

8. Exceptions to the above rules may be granted by the District Committee by at least a two-thirds vote.