



MFL Tournaments: A New User's Guide

Thank you for your hard work and dedication in starting or taking over an MFL Forensics Program. Our tournaments run according to a common method that is sometimes hard for people to get down at first, even if they've coached before in another part of the country. This guide is intended to help step you through the process of registering for, and getting yourself through, the nitty gritty of an MFL tournament. A lot of the rules and methods we've come up with are intended to make the day run smoother and faster; please let us know if you have any feedback.

REGISTERING FOR TOURNAMENTS

Registration is done online from the League website, at <http://www.massforensics.org>. Create yourself an account, and register your school as a chapter. If you are taking over from an old coach, check first with the League; there's probably an old chapter already in existence, and you can save yourself entering your students' names again if they're already in the system.

The Schedule link on the website will list the league's tournaments for each school year. You can click on each tournament's name to get more information, download the tournament invitation, and see what the registration deadlines are.

Your registration of students and judges must be in by the deadline. You need to bring one judge for a certain number of students; usually this is 1 judge per 5 for Speech and Congress, 1 per 3 for LD and PF debate, and 1 per 2 for Policy. There are no judges for hire at typical MFL tournaments, except for some debate tournaments; if you cannot bring judges you will not be able to enter students.

If a student drops out after the drop deadline (advertised in the invite), there will be a \$5 nuisance fee on top of the registration fee. You will therefore owe \$10 to the tournament. Dropping a judge after the deadline causes all kinds of chaos and problems. Therefore, *even if enough students drop out to lessen your judge burden, a*

judge dropped after the deadline, or one who leaves a tournament early, will result in a \$50 fine.

TOURNAMENT CALL IN

Remember to call the tournament phone number listed on the invitation the morning of the tournament before 8 AM. This applies whether or not you have drops. Checking in like this allows us to process changes and have registration ready by the time schools arrive on campus. If we have only one school not call in by 8:00, we cannot confirm our final schematics and the whole day gets delayed.

REGISTERING AT THE TOURNAMENT

When you arrive in the morning, the first thing to do is to register. There will be a registration table you see as soon as you walk in the front door of the school. We will have registration packets available in the morning that will list out your student codes, your judges' codes, and your invoice. Please note that last minute adds may not be possible in all events.

This is also where you pay. Please pay attention to the invitation as to who to make checks out to; most times it will be the host school, but sometimes the MFL itself runs tournaments, and you'd make the check out to them.

JUDGE BRIEFING & WHERE THEY GO

New judges should go to the judges' briefing, usually at 8:30 or so. This will help introduce them to the running of the day and how things work. In addition, if you have new judges, you should have them read the Judges Handbook for their event ahead of time. The handbooks are available for download from the Resources section of the MFL website.

There will be a master speech judge schematic in the judges' lounge so judges may see which events they are judging when. Debate judges will see their names listed on the debate schematics the students receive round by round. Judges will listen to students compete and return their ballots to the ballot table in front of the tab room after their rounds. Debate judges who judge two debates in flights should listen to both flights and return their ballots at the end of the entire round. Judges may pick up their ballots 15 minutes before each round at the ballot table.

WHERE DO STUDENTS GO

At some point in the early morning, we will post a few schematics of each event around the cafeteria; students will have to find their codes on the listing in each of their three rounds, their room, and the time of their rounds. When we first post, this area will look completely chaotic, but the chaos usually resolves itself in a few minutes.

Debate students and judges will not see their schematics for all rounds at once; later rounds will be released after earlier rounds are complete.

Please note that we are often run three rounds of each speech event in four timeslots, as we do not have room to run everything at once. Students should play careful attention to the times and rooms listed for each round on the schematic, as not everyone is competing in every time slot or in the same rooms. Students also should not compete in rooms where they are not listed; they may not get credit for speaking in the wrong room or under the wrong code.

FINALS

After the last prelim rounds have concluded, final rounds will be announced and/or posted in the cafeteria. Judges should attend and listen/watch for their code to be called to judge finals. *All judges must stay to judge final rounds.* Remind your judges of this, since new judges sometimes wander off, causing chaos and havoc. Any missing judges for finals seriously upset the working on the tournament, and schools of no-show judges will be fined \$50 for not attending their final round assignments.

At one-day tournaments, there are rarely final rounds in Debate, just four rounds for every student and then awards.

AWARDS

After all rounds conclude, awards will follow as soon as we have results. Ballot packets will not be available until after awards; schools leaving early may not pick up ballots.

If you have any questions about how the day works, please let us know in Tab. There are always MFL Board members in Tab who can answer any questions or provide advice to new coaches starting our activity.