

General Instructions for Contest Directors of Speaking Events

Selecting and Training Judges

Using a panel of judges rather than a single judge in each round is highly recommended whenever possible, and especially in final rounds. Panels must be an odd number of judges.

- Regardless of the number, it is important that all judges be well prepared, competent and preferably trained in evaluating speaking events.
- Provide judges with the guidelines and evaluation sheets prior to the contest so they can be prepared to evaluate and rank students following the contest rules and using the appropriate evaluation criteria.
- Judges should not be coaches or parents of any students involved in the event, nor have any vested interest in the outcome of the events they are judging.
- As far as possible, judges should not know the school each contestant is representing.
- Avoid assigning a judge to both preliminary and final rounds of the same event, as they would have to judge at least some competitors twice.
- Judges should be instructed not to discuss their decisions with other individuals or judges while judging a contest. The responsibility of the judge is to rank the speaker, evaluate the performance and give constructive suggestions for the benefit of the speaker.
- Judges may never disqualify any contestant. Any questions or concerns about violation of rules or procedures should be reported to the contest director.

Retired teachers, members of groups such as Toast Masters or community theatre, professionals in the community and former high school or collegiate speech competitors are often excellent judges and willing to contribute their time. Any interested adult can be trained to be an effective judge, although you might need to provide a training workshop with demonstrations and practice evaluations if they have never judged or worked with performance events before.

Determining Placement in Sections for Preliminary Rounds

If more than eight students are entered in an event, preliminary rounds must be held. The contest director must divide students, as equally as possible, into preliminary sections of no more than eight contestants. For elementary and junior high speaking events, preliminary rounds may contain fewer contestants if sufficient rooms and judges are available. Each preliminary section requires a separate room and at least one judge.

Unless smaller sections are created, the following chart should be used to determine the number of sections and finalists in each section:

No. Entries	Preliminaries	Participants Advancing to Final Round
1- 8	None	Final Round
9-16	2 Sections	1st, 2nd, 3rd from each section
15-24	3 Sections	1st, 2nd from each section
20-32	4 Sections	1st, 2nd from each section
32-39	8 Sections	1st from each section

When placing students into sections, use the following guidelines, which are listed in order of importance:

1. Whenever possible, avoid placing two students from the same school in the same preliminary round. If there are only two sections, and a school has three entries, this cannot be avoided. In that case, put contestants listed first and third on the entry form in one prelim round, and the contestant listed second in the other.
2. Avoid placing all contestants listed first on schools' entry forms (who are likely the strongest competitors from their respective schools) into the same prelim round. Instead, randomly place each of those contestants listed first into a different prelim round until you must place two or more in the same prelim. Follow the same process for contestants listed second and for those listed third.

Determining Speaker Order

Speaking order in each section may be determined in advance by the contest director, or may be determined by having contestants draw for speaking order in each section before the contest begins. If determined in advance (which saves time the day of the meet and allows master ballots for judges to be filled out in advance) use the following guidelines:

1. Assign the contestants listed first on schools' entry forms to a variety of speaker positions. For example, place one contestant listed first in an early speaking position (speaker number 1, or 2) in one prelim, another to a middle position (speaker number 3,4 or 5) in another, and the third a late position (6, 7 or 8) in another. This prevents what are likely to be the strongest contestants beginning every round.
2. Assign contestants from any one school to different speaker positions so that they are not all early, all middle or all late.

Determining Places in Speaking Events

When a panel of judges is used rather than a single judge, the contest director must take the rankings of all three judges and determine final places of the contestants. The easiest way to be certain that all contestants are ranked accurately is to purchase and use the computer program developed for tabulating UIL speaking events.

Computer Program for Tabulation of UIL Speech Events

PC-TalkTab is available as a free download here: <http://www.uiltexas.org/speech/info/talktab-speech-tabulation-software>

This computer program will determine contestant placements for UIL speaking events according to current *Constitution & Contest Rules*. The software includes instruction messages, a help menu, flexible editing, and methods to mark no-show or tag disqualified contestants.

Version 3 is a Windows-native application and will work with Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8. Version 3 is NOT compatible with older versions of Windows. For any operating system prior to Windows XP, please download version 2, which is the older DOS version of the program. Either version will do correct tabulation.

Macintosh users must have Windows compatibility, through virtualization, emulation or Apple Boot Camp software, in order to run TalkTab.

A printer is not required but highly recommended for making two hard copies, one to retain for records and the other for posting results.

Tabulating Results without the Computer Program

Tabulating results of panel judging without the computer program is somewhat complicated and must be done very carefully. The system is designed to prevent any one judge's ranking from having more influence than the other two judges' opinions combined.

The basic process is reasonably straightforward, however, and most ranks can be determined by using the first two or three. Additional criteria are available to use when breaking more difficult ties.

Many of the following examples of rankings are taken from Section 1003 of the *Constitution and Contest Rules*. You may print the entire section from the UIL web site for high school speech events at <http://www.uil.utexas.edu/aca/hsrule/1003.html> or you may refer to the Constitution itself.

In the case of panel judging, you must use the following criteria, in the following order, to determine all ranks: (1) majority or BETTER of ranks for the place to be determined; (2) lowest sum of total ranks; (3) judges' preference; (4) decimal value; (5) judges' preference to break decimal ties; (6) blind draw. SPECIAL NOTE: When a place has been determined, the contest director must revert back to the first criteria (majority or BETTER) to determine the next rank, unless there is a tie. All contestants who are tied must be awarded a place before going on to another contestant or place.

Step 1: Any student with a majority of first place ranks receives first place. In the following example, Contestant Three is awarded first place because two of three judges (a majority) ranked him thatway.

Contestant	Judge A	Judge B	Judge C
One	3	2	2
Two	2	1	3
Three	1	5	1

In the following example, Contest One is ranked first, even though one judged ranked this student muchlower.

Contestant	Judge A	Judge B	Judge C
One	1	1	6
Two	2	2	1

Step 2: If no student receives a majority for first place ranks, the student with the **lowest total of all ranks** wins first place.

Contestant	Judge A	Judge B	Judge C	Total	Rank
One	1	2	2	5	1st
Two	3	4	1	8	
Three	2	1	3	6	

Step 3: If two or more students remained tied with the same low total of ranks, that tie must be broken with **judges' preference**.

In the following example, first place was awarded to a contestant with a majority of firsts, and no contestant had a majority of seconds OR BETTER (i.e., 2 and 2 or 1 and 2). Contestants 1 and 2 have the same sum of total ranks, so the tie for second must be determined by **judges' preference**. Any tie between only two contestants can be broken by judges' preference.

Contestant	Judge A	Judge B	Judge C	Total	Preference	Rank
One	2	5	3	10	+	2nd
Two	4	2	4	10	-	3rd

Contestant 1 is ranked higher (or receives higher preference) than contestant 2 by two of the three judges (A & C), and is awarded second place. Contestant 2 must be awarded third place before any other contestant or place is considered.

Many three-way ties can also be broken by determining judges' preference. Please see additional ranking instructions on our web site at <http://www.uil.utexas.edu/aca/hsrule/1003.html>

Remember: If there is a tie for first place, the contestant who was tied for first would be awarded second place before any other contestant or place is considered. All contestants who are tied for any place must be awarded a place before going on to another contestant or place.

Step 4: When a tie occurs among three or more contestants that cannot be broken by judges' preference, the ranks of *only* the tied contestants must be converted to **decimal equivalents** on the following scale:

Rank of first	=	1.00
Rank of second	=	.50
Rank of third	=	.33
Rank of fourth	=	.25
Rank of fifth	=	.20
Rank of sixth	=	.17
Rank of seventh	=	.14
Rank of eighth	=	.13

In the following example, contestant #2 has a majority of firsts and is awarded first place. No unranked contestant has a majority of seconds or better, and contestants #1, #3, and #5 have the same low total of ranks.

Contestant	Judge A	Judge B	Judge C	Total	Preference
One	1	6	4	11	+ -
Two	2	1	1	N/A	
Three	3	2	6	11	- +
Four	6	3	5	14	
Five	4	5	2	11	- +
Six	5	4	3	12	

Judges' preference cannot be determined because no contestant is given preference over both others. Convert *only* the ranks of the tied contestants to their decimal equivalent as follows:

Contestant #1	Contestant #3	Contestant #5
1st = 1.00	3rd = .33	4th = .25
6th = .17	2nd = .50	5th = .20
<u>4th = .25</u>	<u>6th = .17</u>	<u>2nd = .50</u>
1.42	1.00	.95

Contestant #1 has the *highest* decimal value, and is awarded second place. Contestant #3 has the next highest total, and is awarded third place, and contestant #5 is awarded fourth place. Both remaining unranked contestants have a majority of fifths OR BETTER. Therefore, contestant #6, with the lowest sum of total ranks, is awarded fifth place and contestant #4 is awarded sixth.

Contestant	Judge A	Judge B	Judge C	Total	Pref	Decimal	Rank
One	1	6	4	11	- +	1.42	2 nd
Two	2	1	1	N/A			1 st
Three	3	2	6	11	- +	1.00	3 rd
Four	6	3	5	14			6 th
Five	4	5	2	11	- +	.95	4 th
Six	5	4	3	12			5 th

Summary of Ranking Criteria

- Any contestant who receives a majority of firsts (two or more from a panel of three judges) must be awarded first place.
- If no contestant receives a majority of firsts, the contestant with the lowest sum of total ranks is awarded first place.
- If, at this point, two or more contestants tie with the same low sum of total ranks, the tie must be broken by the use of judges' preference. (See instructions for determining judges' preference.)
- In any case where there is a tie, all contestants who are tied must be awarded a place before going on to another contestant or place.
- When a tie among three or more contestants that cannot be broken by judges' preference, the ranks of *only* the tied contestants must be converted to decimal equivalents on the following scale:

Rank of first	=	1.00
Rank of second	=	.50
Rank of third	=	.33
Rank of fourth	=	.25
Rank of fifth	=	.20
Rank of sixth	=	.17
Rank of seventh	=	.14
Rank of eighth	=	.13

The contestant with the *highest sum total* of the decimal value of ranks would be awarded first place.

- If two contestants remain tied with equal decimal values, this tie must be broken by judges' preference.
- When a tie among three or more contestants occurs that cannot be broken by these methods, it must be broken by a blind draw.
- The order of this procedure must be followed to determine all ranks. When determining second place, a majority of second place ranks OR BETTER is the first criterion. When determining third place, a majority of third place ranks OR BETTER is the first criterion, etc.

Timekeepers

Because students in Oral Reading and Impromptu Speaking are penalized a rank for going over the allotted time, and students in Modern Oratory are penalized for going either over or under the time limits, it is important to provide trained timekeepers for these events.

You might recruit timekeepers from student service organizations or clubs, or ask for adult volunteers from your school's parent/teacher organization or community groups. If you cannot provide stopwatches, timekeepers should be notified to bring their own stopwatch or watch with a secondhand.

If you do not recruit timekeepers, judges in the rounds must keep time, and this distracts from their ability to give their full attention to the contestants' performances.

Time Signals

Time signals may be given by hand or by timecards. The timekeeper should indicate to the contestant the time REMAINING of the allotted time. If timecards are available, when the speaker begins in Modern Oratory, the card marked "6" should be held so that the speaker can see it. When the speaker has talked for one minute, the card marked "5", should be held so the speaker can see it, which indicates five minutes remaining, etc. When the speaker has talked for five minutes the timekeeper should raise the card marked "1" above his/her head. When only 30 seconds remain, the timekeeper should raise the "1/2" card (preferably a yellow card) above their head. At the end of six minutes, the timekeeper should hold the "stop" card (preferably a red card) above the head, or otherwise indicate that the total allotted time has been consumed.

If time cards are not available, in oral reading, with a maximum time of six minutes, when one minute has elapsed from when the speaker started, the timekeeper would hold up five fingers to show the contestant that five minutes remain. Four fingers held so the contestant could see them would indicate that four minutes remain, etc. When the total time has elapsed, the timekeeper should stand or hold a closed fist above their head to indicate so.

If timecards are used, which is recommended, make certain timekeepers have the correct cards for each event.

For **Impromptu Speaking**, cards should begin with **five**.

For **Oral Reading**, cards should begin with **six**.

For **Modern Oratory**, cards should begin with **six**.