

ICDA – Tournament of Champions Congressional Debate Qualifier Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Tournament of Champions?

The TOC serves as a competitive forum for the nation's very best Congressional, LD, Public Forum, and Policy debaters. A public service of the University of Kentucky Student Forum and Henry Clay Debate Council, the TOC strives to offer the national high school debate community the highest quality judging, impartial tournament officials, and a friendly, congenial atmosphere. The tournament will occur on April 26-28, 2025.

What does an ICDA-TOC Qualifier earn?

The top six students at the qualifying portion of the ICDA-TOC qualifying tournament will receive one bid to the TOC in Kentucky. Debaters must have two bids to qualify for the TOC. Please find information about the TOC and other bid tournaments at: <https://ci.uky.edu/debate/>

Who is eligible for the ICDA-TOC Qualifying chambers?

ICDA debaters who have accumulated the most number of nominations during the ICDA invitational season will automatically enter the TOC Qualifier. The ICDA Oversight Committee will make this determination as soon as ICDA 5 registration is complete. Debaters do not have the option of opting out of the TOC chambers if they are qualified.

What are the judging requirements?

Each school will be required to provide one (1) coach, or very experienced judge if any of their students qualify for a TOC chamber.

Example 1: I have 9 debaters in the tournament. One or more qualify for TOC. ***I need 2 judges, one for TOC and one for the Invitational.***

Example 2: I have 10 debaters in the tournament. ***Per ICDA rules I need 2 judges (since my team exceeds the 1:9 judge to debater ratio) regardless if any of my debaters qualify for TOC.***

Example 3: I have 11 debaters in the tournament. Exactly one qualifies for TOC. ***I need 3 judges (two for the Invitational since my team exceeds the 1:9 judge to debater ratio, and one for TOC).***

What do ICDA-TOC Semi-Final Chambers look like?

Three chambers will be TOC qualifier semi-final chambers. An attempt will be made to equally distribute students from the same school in semi-final chambers. ICDA invitational rules will apply in these chambers. Two (2) highly qualified judges will score all speeches in semi-final chambers. Approximately six (6) debaters will advance to the Final Chamber from each semi-final chamber. THERE ARE NO AUTHORSHIP SPEECHES IN ANY TOC CHAMBERS.

Which legislation will be debated in Semi-Finals and Finals?

Prior to the beginning of semi-final session 1, three (3) topics will be identified as Finals-only Legislation. The remaining six (6) topics will be eligible for debate in the Semi-Finals.

Who breaks to the TOC Final Round?

At the end of each semi-final session, the judges will rank all debaters, including the P.O., by preferential ballot. That will provide four (4) judges' ballots. The students who break will be

determined by a numerical ranking of the debaters. Ties will be broken using judges' preference followed by speech scores.

What happens to a TOC Debater who does not advance to TOC Finals?

Those debaters who do not break to the final chamber will be redistributed to two non-qualifying chambers to continue debating during the third session. The rules and point calculations will continue as per ICDA rules. Each of these chambers will elect a presiding officer. They will debate the three TOC Finals bills selected by the oversight committee. These debaters are encouraged to continue to do their best because a) they represent their school, b) they represent high integrity as Congressional debaters, and c) they still have a chance to win a sweepstakes award. Coaches should instruct their debaters to take TOC consolation chambers seriously.

What does the TOC Final Chamber look like?

The final chamber will consist of eighteen (18) debaters advancing from the semi-final chambers. The posting of these students will be made as soon as possible after the conclusion of the second semi-final session. ICDA invitational rules apply to the final chamber. A coach will serve as the presiding officer and choose speakers based on a predetermined, randomized order of debaters. They will debate the three TOC Finals bills selected by the oversight committee. Five (5) judges who are head coaches (or extremely experienced judges) will be assigned to the chamber and will rank debaters during the session. The top six (6) debaters will be determined by a numerical ranking of the debaters by the judges with the highest and lowest scores being dropped, leaving each debater with three scores. Each of the top six (6) qualifiers will receive one bid for the Tournament of Champions in Kentucky. They will be announced at the awards ceremony.

Who wins an award?

All of the debaters who participate in the ICDA-TOC Final Chamber will earn an award. The top six (6) students will receive an additional award to recognize their achievement. Schools will also compete for two separate Sweepstakes Awards (Invitational and TOC)

How does a school win a Sweepstakes Award?

A Sweepstakes award (1st-3rd) will be calculated for the ICDA-TOC tournament. The average number of points per team will determine the top three schools and will include all speakers in all three chambers, for all three sessions, with a minimum of three debater scores to be considered. A separate sweepstakes award (1st-3rd) will be given for the ICDA Invitational tournament based on the top four (4) debaters from each school. There will be only one school category for these awards.

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