



Online General Speech Rules

Modifications for online competition are noted in italics.

1. **Script Rules** and **Online Event Rules** must be followed in addition to these *Online General Speech Rules*.
2. **Internet access and a device with a microphone and a webcam** are required. *The camera and microphone may be integrated or external.*
3. **A single, stationary camera** must be used (e.g., no zooming or panning is permitted).
4. **Green screens, virtual backgrounds, or on-screen text** may not be used.
5. **Lighting may not be intentionally altered** during the speech.
6. *With the exception of permissible audio in Digital Presentation, only audio presented live from the competitor(s) is permitted (i.e., audio that is computer-generated, recorded, third-party, etc. is not permitted).*
7. **Speeches** must be prepared by the student and, with the exception of Apologetics, must be delivered during the current competitive season only.

NOTE: For the 2021 season only, a student may use his or her own platform or interpretation speech that was prepared and/or delivered during the 2020 season. The speech must comply with the 2021 General and Event rules and must qualify during the 2021 season to any higher level of competition.

8. **Plagiarism** is prohibited. In both content and delivery, the speaker(s) must either present original work or present the source(s) for all non-original work, per the Event Rules.
9. **Content** for all speeches must be in alignment with the NCFCA mission and the Competition Material Policy.
 - **Humor** is permitted as long as it is in good taste.
 - **Dark material** is permitted only if it includes a redemptive element.

- **Potentially intense or sensitive speeches** must always be preceded by the verbal disclaimer, "This speech contains potentially intense or sensitive material."
 - **Vulgarity** is never acceptable. Vulgarity includes explicit or implied language or gestures which are inappropriate, obscene, or profane.
 - **Opinions contrary to those of the judge** may be expressed.
10. **Gymnastics** are not permitted. Gymnastics include acrobatic-type blocking such as flips, cartwheels, leapfrogging, etc.
 11. **Only feet** are permitted to intentionally touch the floor at any time in all speech events except Biblical Thematic.
 12. **Costumes** are not permitted. Costumes include any item(s) worn in addition to the speaker's tournament attire.
 13. **Lecterns** may not be used.
 14. **Other individuals may be present** during the speech but *may not be visible on screen. Audience interaction (laughing, applause, prompting, etc.) is prohibited.*
 15. **Requesting participation from audience members, including judges,** is not permitted.
 16. **A pre-show** is not permitted. A pre-show refers to rehearsed blocking, synchronized movement, or additional performance prior to the beginning of the submitted, scripted speech.
 17. **Competitors may choose to stand or sit** at a desk or table while presenting but may not alternate between the two positions.
 - a. **For platform and limited preparation speeches,** a minimum of the competitor's head and shoulders must be visible throughout the speech.
 - b. **For interpretation speeches,** a minimum of the competitor's head and shoulders must be visible at the beginning and end of an interpretation speech. Some portion of the speaker must remain visible throughout the speech.
 18. **A timepiece must be provided by each speaker for all speech events.**
 - a. **The timepiece must** display minutes and seconds and have an audible alarm.

- i. For platform and interpretation events, the timepiece must have functionality to count up.
 - ii. For limited preparation events, the timepiece must have functionality to both count up and count down.
- b. **The speaker is responsible** for timing both the speech and preparation time, as applicable.
 - i. **For preparation time in Apologetics and Impromptu**, the speaker will set the timepiece to count down for the designated time, show it to the Head Judge for confirmation, and then start it immediately upon *clicking to view the topics*.
 - ii. **For preparation time in Extemporaneous**, the speaker will set the timepiece to count down for the designated time and start it immediately upon *clicking to view the topics at the assigned draw time*.
 - iii. **For speech time in all events**, the timepiece must be set to count up *and the speaker will start the timepiece at the beginning of the speech*. At the conclusion of the speech, the speaker will stop the timepiece and show it to the judges to record the exact time displayed on the timepiece.
- c. **Exceeding the maximum speech time** by more than 15 seconds for any speech category will result in a four-rank penalty at all levels of competition.
 - i. **Speech time** begins when the speaker starts the timepiece and ends when the speaker stops the timepiece.
 - ii. **The prescribed penalty** will be applied by tournament administration and should not be reflected in the judge's original rank.

19. **Scripts** for all platform and interpretation events must be submitted electronically prior to competition for each tournament per the Script Rules.

- a. **The submitted script** must be followed during all competition rounds.
- b. **Any script or notes used** during a speech must be visible to the judges.
- c. **Script or note use**, with the exception of Biblical Thematic, will result in a four-rank penalty at any tournament other than a Regional or National Championship.
 - i. **The prescribed penalty** will be applied by tournament administration and should not be reflected in the judge's original rank.
 - ii. **Script or note use** at a Regional or National Championship will result in disqualification from the event.

Online General Speech Protocols

1. **All rounds will be held live.**
 - a. **Competitors will be assigned speaking times** within the rounds. NCFCA software will account for multi-entered competitors to avoid conflicting times for each student.
 - b. **Competitors must be present** and ready to begin within one minute of their assigned speaking time or risk losing the opportunity to present the speech during that round. Adherence to assigned speaking times is critical due to the impact to other competitors.
2. **Competitors' cameras and microphones will be off when they enter** a competition room. Competitors may not turn on their camera or microphone while another competitor is presenting a speech.
3. **Speakers should turn on their camera and microphone** when it is their turn to speak, should introduce themselves by name to the judges, and begin promptly.
4. **Competitors must turn off their cameras and microphones** after thanking judges at the conclusion of their speech.
5. **The Head Judge may use discretion to extend any portion of a speech** for up to a total of one minute in the case of technical difficulties only.
6. **The Head Judge may give permission for a speaker to turn off his camera** if the speaker is experiencing technical difficulties.
7. **All questions regarding potential rule violations** should be submitted to the Compliance Staff immediately following the speech round.