

## V. RULES OF STUDENT CONGRESS

- A. The New York State Student Congress shall follow the rules below and Robert's Rules of Order.
- B. The Congress shall include three preliminary sessions of not less than two hours each. The event will culminate in a semifinal and final session of nominated senators.
- C. The Congress shall be divided into chambers of equal and reasonable size (25-30 students) in order to encourage maximum senatorial participation.
- D. The Congress shall simulate the United States Congress and shall consider legislative matters pertinent to the Federal level of Government.
- E. There will be no committee sessions.
- F. Any bills to be debated at the Student Congress must be submitted to the State's website [www.nysfl.org](http://www.nysfl.org) by the announced date. All bills must be in the proper format. Bills that are submitted after the deadline, or that are not in the proper format will not be posted. The school will not be informed of the infraction; rather, the bill will not be included. If more than the preset number of bills is received from a school, the earliest received bills will be included.
- G. All bills submitted will be posted on the League's website: [www.nysfl.org](http://www.nysfl.org). Coaches of students participating in Student Congress are responsible for downloading the bills for their Congress persons from the computer site.
- H. The Tournament Director shall act as the Director of the Congress or will appoint a Director of Congress. The Director of Congress shall appoint persons to serve as parliamentarians and will assign judges to each chamber and each session. The parliamentarian shall also serve as a judge.
- I. The duties of the parliamentarian shall be to:
1. Guide the group in case a student officer becomes too deeply involved in parliamentary rules, to correct gross errors in procedure, and to record actions taken. Ordinarily, the parliamentarian should remain in the background; but he/she should step forward firmly when necessary. The presiding officer is in charge, and members of the Congress should not be permitted to argue with him/her. The purpose of the Congress is to debate legislation, and it is the parliamentarian's duty to see that this gets done.
  2. See that a seating chart and roll are established.

J. Bills and resolutions shall be considered in the order in which they appear on the agenda, unless the rules are suspended by a two-thirds vote. Debate on a bill will be limited to 1/3 of the session time. At the end of 1/3 of the time, an immediate vote will be taken, unless in the opinion of the parliamentarian, the debate still has more worthwhile debate. If the Parliamentarian has judged that the debate has become repetitive, the rules may not be suspended to add additional time.

K. The author of the bill or resolution, or someone appointed by him/her, shall be recognized to open the debate, but thereafter he/she shall take his/her chances with the rest of the members for further speaking opportunity. He/she does not have special privilege to close the debate.

L. Members shall claim the floor in debate only if they wish to oppose the views of the preceding speaker so that debate will alternate. If no one wishes to speak on the opposing side of the legislation, the chair will entertain a second speaker on the same side. After the third speaker on the same side, an immediate vote shall be taken, with no possibility to suspend the rules and continue one-sided debate.

M. A member may speak more than once on the same question.

N. All speeches are limited to three minutes in length. A member may not yield any portion of his/her speaking time to another except for a question. For the authorship speech and the first opposing speech, there will be a mandatory 2-minute question period. For all other speeches, there will be a mandatory 1-minute question period. The rules may not be suspended to allow more questioning. The chamber may choose to allow direct questioning.

O. Debaters may use a computer to store information and retrieve information from the internet. They may not, however, communicate with anyone outside of the debate round. Any debater who communicates with someone outside the round will be disqualified from the tournament. Debaters may not use power outlets in the chamber

P. Amendments must be in writing and state exactly the words to be added or stricken. They will be considered only if they receive a second from one-third of the members.

Q. Judges will write an individual ballot for each senator who has played an active role (delivered at least one speech) in the chamber group.

R. At the close of each session, each judge (without consultation with any other judge and/or parliamentarian) will list on the summary ballot, in rank order, the top 8 speakers from that session (best receiving the "1," etc.) All non-listed speakers will receive a rank of 9. At the end of the preliminary sessions of Student Congress, each student's best and worst rank and rating will be dropped, and shall

not be used again during the tournament. The Parliamentarian shall rank all the speakers in the chamber. Speakers ranked below 8 will receive a rank of 9.

S. Speakers will advance to elimination rounds based on the total ranks from all judges, less the best and worst scores. In case of a tie, the Parliamentarian's rankings will count as the tie breaker.

T. Once students advance to the Semifinals, their preliminary scores shall be discarded.

U. At the close of the Super Station, each judge in the session (without consultation with any other judge and/or parliamentarian) will list on the summary ballot, in rank order, the top 8 speakers from that session in the manner described above. Semifinal and Supersession ranks will be totaled. The speaker with the lowest total wins the contest, etc. Ties in ranks shall be broken by adding total number of firsts, then seconds, etc. If this does not break the tie, placement in the Super Session will be used to break the tie.