

## 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 be a two-day event which includes three sessions of not less than two hours each. The event will culminate in a 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. In order to compete, each student must have qualified at either a local sanctioned Student Congress – according to the ratio used in other individual events OR at the Regional Qualifying Tournament which is conducted by each Regional Director.

G. 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.

H. 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.

I. 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.

J. 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. This will be especially necessary when the presiding officer is weak. 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.

3. Conduct a random draw for agenda and oversee a bill preparation period as specified in the tournament schedule.

4. Use a watch and time cards to time speakers and call "time" at the expiration of three minutes.

K. 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.

L. 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.

M. Members shall claim the floor in debate only if they wish to oppose the views of the preceding speaker so that debate will alternate.

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

O. 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. However, only a question may be asked. No statement or exposition is permitted.

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. P. Only three speeches from any one senator during any one session may be counted in evaluation.

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

S. 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.) and assign each a percentage from 70 to 100 (with the latter being considered the highest possible). Percentage points should reflect ranks with the highest number of points being given to the first rank, etc. Judges may not tie speakers in rank but may give more than one student the same percentage. All non-listed speakers will receive a rank of 9 and points of 65. At the end of the preliminary sessions of Student Congress, each student’s “worst” rank and rating will be dropped and shall not be used again during the tournament. The remaining ranks shall be totaled, and those speakers with the lowest total ranks shall advance to a Super Session. While the number of students advancing to the Super Session (no more than 30) should reflect an equal distribution from each chamber (6 per chamber if, for example, the event includes five chambers), advancement shall be based on lowest total ranks in the event as a whole. Ties in ranks shall be broken by adding total number of first ranks, then the total number of second ranks, etc. If this does not break the tie, total rating points shall be used. If ties are still unbreakable, all tied speakers will advance.

T. 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. All ranks (excluding, of course, the preliminary session dropped rank/rating) will then 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.

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