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NDC-IE 2010

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Rhetorical Criticism in the Classroom vs. in Competition:
A Consideration of the Impact of Context on Student Scholarship

Richard E. Paine
North Central College

Abstract

A battle has long waged in forensics between those who would define it as an "educational activity" and those who see it first and foremost as a "competitive game." Others have asserted that this dichotomy is a false one, and responded to the question by conflating the two concepts, arguing that competition automatically produces learning while learning paves the road to success. This paper argues that both of these perspectives are flawed, and asserts instead the image of a continuum of choice which is anchored at one end by "pure competition" and at the other by "pure learning." This view considers both ends of the continuum to be chimerical illusions, "pure constructs" which are (virtually) never really embraced in their absolute forms by coaches and students whose actual behaviors fall somewhere on the wide range of positions running across the center of the continuum – but yet also recognizes the constructs of "competition" and "education" as distinct and meaningfully different influences. Understanding this, it is the responsibility of each forensics programs (and the leaders thereof) to develop, in this age of "educational accountability," student learning objectives which consciously make choices among educational/competitive goals as they fashion for themselves a learning profile which serves the best interests of each individual program, the school it represents, the forensics community, and broader civic cultures. This paper applies these general ideas specifically to the competitive event variously titled "Rhetorical Criticism" or "Communication Analysis." Noting the differences between rhetorical criticism as it is practiced by academic scholars and "Rhetorical Criticism" as it is enacted by student competitors, this paper argues that they diverge from each other in terms of such elements as: (1) the artifacts they study, (2) the chronological order in which the steps of scholarship are pursued (and thus also the basis upon which the rhetorical constructs included in the analysis are selected), and (3) the "weighting" accorded to each of the basic elements of the critical essay/speech. As a result of these points of divergence, it is suggested that the forensics community closely examine and consider modifying the ways in which competitive Rhetorical Criticism is practiced.

General Background
Education and Competition as Philosophic Influences

"Is forensics in essence an educational activity, or a competitive activity?" This is perhaps the most basic and essential question that all of us are ultimately forced to confront when we step back and analyze our activity. The controversy has raged for decades, continues to burn bright, and shows no sign of being resolved anytime soon. As often phrased, the question at hand appears to make the prima facie assumption that education and competition are dichotomous categories, thus forcing forensics practitioners to align themselves with one position *or* the other. Historically, many have defended forensics based on the idea that it is above all else an "educational laboratory" (McBath, 1975; Ulrich, 1984; Whitney, 1997) while others claim that the shibboleth of "education" should be set aside and the reality of "competition" honestly embraced (Burnett, Brand and Meister, 2003). Either way, the dichotomization of education and competition creates a tension-filled reality. Some view education and competition as mutually threatening opponents, at war for the control of the hearts and hands of forensicators. If the competitive paradigm "wins," then ("educators" argue) the activity will become hollow, vapid, ethically vulnerable, and lose any justification it might have for continued support by academic departments and educational funding. On the other hand, if the educational paradigm "wins," then ("competitors" argue), we can expect to see quality decline, mediocrity rewarded, and work ethics lost.

Yet, as many have observed over the years, the original question itself is essentially flawed. Those who challenge this dichotomy as false rightly argue that students learn many things from the experience of competing. Therefore, they say, it is impossible (and needless) to separate the two concepts from each other. Competition inevitably produces learning. Education is an automatic by-product of engagement in the competitive arena. Students who work hard to learn will inevitably experience competitive success. Thus, when we try to separate competition from education, we become an animal feeding on itself, ripping out its own guts in an attempt to separate the inseparable.

Unfortunately, while this stance has much to recommend it, it is itself deeply flawed. By too completely conflating the concepts of "education" and "competition," some seem to imply that detailed discussion of the general topic is not only misguided but also downright unnecessary and perhaps even impossible. The unstated assumption overshadowing this position seems to say: "Since education and competition cannot really be separated from each other, since students learn a lot from competing, let's skip over this whole question and get back to the work of preparing and presenting high-quality products." The impact of simply conflating "educational" and "competitive" goals is clearly expressed by Richardson and Kelly (2008):

> ...competition in speech may reference a variety of activities. The compelling question that demands our attention is at what are we competing? Unfortunately, through the years, the question has been answered with brief event descriptions, minimal rules, educational and enlightening convention panels, and tournament practices that tend to enhance the "playing of the game" while ignoring the pedagogical concerns of forensic ed-

ucators. Athletics exists within the game, which is exactly the way that forensics has been treated. Regardless of what is being taught, the game and the competition, in and of itself, is seen as a worthy endeavor: What wins is good, and what is good, wins. Thus, from a Burkeian (1945) perspective, the forensic drama that ideally features the purpose of education through the agency of competition is upstaged by a drama whose purpose is winning (p. 115)

The dismaying products of this conflation are legion. One of particular concern is the operationalization of forensics as an "insular community...[in which] students are being prepared for the next competition, not for public speaking in natural world contexts" (Richardson and Kelly, 2008, p. 116).

So if education and competition are not dichotomous opponents, but are also not conflatable synonyms, where does that leave us? I will argue that there is real value in viewing them as the end-points on a wide continuum – polar anchors which delimit a widely varying range of intermediate points. While it is possible to imagine "pure competition" and "pure education" as points on a line, it is much easier to imagine practices that lie somewhere between these two pure extremes. Thus, while any given practice is informed to some degree or another by both competition and education, elements of both are usually identifiable. Any given coaching strategy, any given performance choice, any given student's goals, any given program's orientation, can be located somewhere on the continuum. And, of course, both individuals and programs can vary across this range at any given point in time. Student "A" may choose to approach her Impromptu Speeches primarily as a competitor seeking to "win," but approach her Prose Interpretation as a lover of literature who simply wants to "learn more" about how to interpret texts, express her feelings, appreciate the texture of language, and so on. Alternatively, she may devote herself primarily to educational goals while preparing for her first tournament in Rhetorical Criticism, but focus on "winning" in that same event when she prepares for Nationals. Any given person or program may well have a "normative" approach (a tendency to seek educational and/or competitive goals to a certain degree), but norms are nothing but statistical averages that can incorporate wildly diverse responses at any given point in time. Some learning outcomes may be sought in order to simultaneously achieve *both* educational and competitive learning objectives. Other learning outcomes may be connected more narrowly to "purely" competitive vs. "purely" educational objectives.

If we buy into this view of a continuum, what can or should we *do* with it as forensics professionals? In order to attempt an answer to this question, I will begin by noting the basic process by which teachers are encouraged to develop and implement their learning objectives.

Educational Learning Objectives and Learning Outcomes (Overview)

According to classic practice, the first step in the process of developing educational (learning) objectives and the learning outcomes related to them is to note that Bloom's taxonomy of learning highlights the importance of three learning domains: the cognitive, the affective, and the psychomotor. To clarify this discussion, we can hypothetically develop a set of learning modules for an introductory debate course. In relation to the cognitive domain, we might decide that it is important for our students to "understand" (know about) such topics as terminology, organization, research, critical thinking, and case construction. But it is also important to us what our students "feel." Thus, we might develop objectives primarily operative in the affective domain associated with ethics, social relations, self-concept, academic attitude, and staying informed. Finally, due to our concern with psychomotor skills, we might spell out objectives focused on speaking, listening, and argumentation performance. As we develop these various learning (educational) objectives, we might wish to develop objectives which (among other things): (1) teach students general abilities/perspectives considered valuable within the liberal arts and/or professional/technical traditions, (2) teach students general abilities/perspectives considered valuable by one academic field or another (most likely, but not necessarily, the field of speech communication), (3) teach students general abilities/perspectives which we believe will contribute to their roles as citizens, professionals, and/or "members of the human family" in the years to come, and/or (4) teach students general abilities/perspectives which tend to produce competitive success (within the insular community of forensics and/or within broader competitive contexts).

In recent years, the pressure applied to educators at all levels has been to consciously think through, develop, refine, implement, and defend the accomplishment of the educational (learning) objectives they strive to help their students attain. Thus, the necessary first step in the implementation of educational objectives is the conscious act of *identifying* those objectives. Sometimes this is done by a group (an entire department or school system), and sometimes it is done by an individual. In most cases, even when a collection of objectives is designed by a group, individuals are inevitably called on to modify, expand, or select among the group-supported pool of goals. In any case, the process is a *conscious and deliberate* one. It is typical for teachers to reveal to their students at least some of the objectives being sought, often very overtly (perhaps on the first page of a course syllabus, for example). The basic philosophy behind this approach is obvious: we can't get anywhere in particular unless we know where we're trying to go. Educational learning objectives provide us with a road map for the educational journey. By following certain strategies (taking certain routes), and connecting those strategies to other strategies and building them on top of each other, we anticipate our ultimate arrival at a particular "place" (goal).

Thus we arrive back at our original question: in developing the philosophies of the programs we lead, in guiding our students on their forensics journeys, should we select educational learning objectives which frame our activity as "competition" or "education?" I would argue that, if we wish to be responsible members of our profession, we cannot escape acting on several levels. First, we must make some conscious choices. We should not ignore the ideological tension which exists here, and we should not just "go along with the crowd" and "play the game" in a non-theoretical way. We cannot avoid committing ourselves to a set of values (objectives). If we ignore the responsibility to choose, we will have chosen by default. We will, with careless and unthinking abandon, have opted for the (often unstated and unidentified) learning objectives which underlie current forensics practices – objectives chosen by who-knows-who and implemented by unclear means in order to achieve unidentified outcomes. As Larry Schnoor is famous for saying, each forensics program has the freedom to choose its own course. And with freedom comes responsibility. We can do what everybody else does, or we can strike out on our own path. But ultimately, we will (consciously or unconsciously) make a choice of *some* path. Thus, my first claim is that the path we take should be deliberately selected and not simply a lock-step march to the music of default. Second, as we make these conscious choices, we should take multiple constituencies into account. As employees of educational institutions, we have responsibilities (whether we like it or not) to multiple masters: our students, our academic discipline, our departments, our administrators, our schools, our society/culture, and our world. We must think about who and what will be "best served" by the objectives we choose to pursue. These choices often will be very difficult ones, because what is "best" for one of the groups we serve may not be "best" for another of them. As the leaders of our programs, we must be aware of the eyes that are watching us, the expectations they have for us, and the responsibilities we have to them. Third, we must recognize and respect the difference between "program-based" and "circuit-endorsed" objectives. It is true that each of us heads a particular program with its own particular needs and its own right to make its own choices. It is also true that each of our programs operates as a member of community – a community in which the choices of any one program influence and delimit the opportunities available to other programs. Fourth, we must recognize that we can and are choosing between (theoretically) purely competitive, (theoretically) purely educational, and (practically) education/competition-mingling goals. We must recognize that our choices have consequences, and be ready to explain to ourselves, our community, our students, our departments, our administrators, and our world what choices we are making and why.

Specific Application
Scholarly vs. Competitive Communication Analysis

One of the many arenas in which we can see the philosophical struggles noted above being played out is our community's approach to the teaching and evaluation of the event variously labeled "Communication Analysis" or "Rhetorical

Criticism." This event is often held up as an example of forensics at its theoretical best. Students are introduced to core concepts in our (arguably) home discipline of rhetoric/communication, asked to think like scholars, and told that the work they do here will serve them well if they choose to go on to graduate school. The general image of this event is that it is particularly challenging to the intellectual acumen of competitors and judges alike, and at times we may think of it as perhaps the most "scholarly" of all public address events. One primary justification often mentioned for the inclusion of Rhetorical Criticism (Communication Analysis) within the pantheon of forensics events argues that contest rhetorical criticism is intended to teach students about the nature and function of the scholarly endeavor of rhetorical criticism.

But does it really? Does Communication Analysis as practiced on the forensics circuit truly reflect the way rhetorical scholars pursue their work? While it would certainly be possible to identify many ways in which competitive and scholarly criticisms reflect each other, it is also apparent that some basic and essential differences distinguish the two styles from each other. I will argue that the analytic frameworks that are currently favored in the event are inconsistent with the scholarly criticisms of the communication discipline. While far from constituting an exhaustive list of the distinctions which divide these styles, at least three key points of separation deserve to be noted. The observations here build on those offered in a previous essay which I presented at the 2008 National Developmental Conference on Individual Events, and thus some issues which are examined in some detail there are touched on more lightly here. For the sake of clarity, I will refer to the two approaches to writing communication analyses as "the forensics style" and "the scholarly style." These labels do <u>not</u> intend to suggest that the "forensics style" is completely devoid of scholarly work, or that forensics students are not "scholars" in a very real sense (because in many respects, they certainly are).

Point of Distinction #1: Type of Topic Selected for Study
A clear contrast exists between the type of rhetorical artifacts being examined by forensics competitors and publishing scholars. The artifacts studied in our published literature vary widely in type. In comparison to the artifacts which tend to be examined by forensics competitors, however, the artifacts considered in our professional journals are relatively more likely to consider: (1) older artifacts (there is no expectation that published essays must consider artifacts currently "in the news" – in fact, the artifacts examined in our journals are often decades or centuries old), (2) acts of rhetoric drawn from the realm of politics, and (3) broad rhetorical movements. Other points of difference could also be noted, but these three serve as a starting point for discussion. Meanwhile, as Andy Billings noted a few years ago in a paper he presented at NCA, successful forensics competitors tend to choose "sexy topics." The prevalence of online artifacts, contemporary artifacts, "unusual and striking artifacts that the average person probably has not heard of," and so on is apparent to judges who frequently adjudicate rounds

of Communication Analysis. While I cannot document this claim, it is my sense that forensic rounds are disproportionately more likely to consider rhetorical artifacts which are in essence the ephemera of pop culture (and less likely to examine the major rhetorical acts which receive wide media coverage). As judges of the event, how many times lately have we heard a previously unheard of website examined? In contrast, how many times have we heard a major speech by President Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton analyzed?

As a result, forensic students are being pushed to look at ephemera more than at topics possessing long-term significance, to look at topics that are relatively narrow (a single artifact) rather than comparatively broad (a movement or multiple related artifacts) in nature, and to select artifacts tailored to appeal to jaded audiences/judges who too often find Rhetorical Criticism to be a comparatively difficult or boring event rather than reach out to a scholarly audience who wants to see big principles in action. Granted, this oversimplifies the situation and "paints with a broad brush" a diverse collection of forensics adjudicators (many of whom do not fit the preceding profile at all). But on the whole, the types of artifacts selected by scholars vs. competitors – and the differences in the challenges and opportunities that essay writers in each arena consequently face when asked to dissect the artifacts they have selected – clearly separate the scholarly and competitive venues.

Point of Distinction #2
The Order in Which the Steps of the Work are Conducted (and the Consequent Process by which the Rhetorical Constructs to be Studied are Selected)
As I have previously noted (Paine, 2008), the chronological order in which work done in the scholarly style proceeds markedly differs from the step-by-step ordering used in the forensics style. As outlined by Foss (1996), rhetorical scholars follow this sequence:

(1) *formulate a research question and select an artifact* (either may appear first, or they may appear simultaneously).

(2) *select a unit [or units] of analysis.* As explained by Foss, here "the critic must decide on the aspects of the artifact to which to attend in order to answer the research question. The critic cannot possibly examine all of the rhetorical features of any artifact, so a unit of analysis on which to focus must be selected (p. 15)." Note that the term "unit of analysis" is **not** synonymous with the term "rhetorical method." A "rhetorical method" is a broad perspective toward criticism. Feminism, cluster criticism and genre criticism are examples of "methods." Meanwhile, a "unit of analysis" is a particular rhetorical construct such as word choice, alliteration, constraints, situational details, and so on. Critics pursuing any given method may be relatively more likely to study some units of analysis than they are others, but the units of analysis which can be studied under any given method constitute a "pool of possibilities" rather than a narrow and prescriptive "list of requirements." Meanwhile, any given unit of analysis may be of interest to scholars approaching arti-

facts through muliple methods. For example, both feminist criticism and narrative criticism might be interested in examining the "stock character" known as "the damsel in distress." Foss goes on to explain that "[i]n some cases, more than one unit of analysis is needed to allow a research question to be answered. ....Many different   kinds of units may seem to be appropriate and useful...rhetorical theory provides an infinite number of constructs that may function as units of analysis (p. 15)." According to Foss, it is often the case that the units of analysis which the scholar finds most interesting have not previously been noted by other researchers, and/or connected to each other within the perspective of any extant method. Foss explains that "[i]n such cases, the critic needs to generate or create units of analysis – ones not found in formal methods of criticism....This kind of criticism is *generative* in that the critic generates units of analysis rather than selecting them from previously developed, formal methods of criticism (pp. 15, 483-484)."

Ott (1998) likewise highlights the distinction between rhetorical "methods" and what he calls "controlling terms" or "rhetorical tenets" (p. 62). Like Foss, he emphasizes that the selection of a general method of approach does **not** "lock the scholar into" the use of a narrowly prescribed list of tenets (units of analysis). As he notes, "methods are unified, not by a set of narrow rhetorical tenets, but by a general outlook...All of these methods exist, not as a narrow set of controlling terms, but as a general perspective on discourse...there is no single, prescribed way to do feminist [or any other methodological type] of criticism (p. 62)."

(3) *analyze the artifact.*

(4) *write the critical essay.* According to Foss, this essay "should include five major components: (1) an introduction; (2) description of the artifact and its context; (3) description of the unit of analysis; (4) report of the findings of the analysis.

(5) Discussion of the contribution the analysis makes to answering the research question.

Our immediate interest is with the ordering of the first two steps. As described above, scholarly research begins with the critic's absolute freedom to formulate a research question. This question may be provoked by intriguing aspects of a particular artifact, or arise separate from the consideration of such an artifact, but in any case the critic is free to ask any question she/he wishes. After this, the critic then decides how this question can best be answered. He/she chooses a rhetorical method and/or individual theoretical constructs which appear useful. Crucially, the choice of a method does not force the critic to use a delimited "list" of constructs. Nor does the selection of a viable set of constructs compel the critic to select an existing "method." Indeed, the critic retains immense freedom to shape their own "version" of a method's approach or to develop a new "method" of their own.

Meanwhile, forensics students proceed along a somewhat different path. This may be described as:

(1) *select a rhetorical artifact.*

(2) *discover a scholarly work (article, book, or paper) which has previously analyzed a relatively similar type of artifact.* Note that steps one and two are potentially reversible.

(3) *read the scholarly work in order to identify the list of individual constructs which the scholar used to dissect the rhetorical artifact they were interested in.*

(4) *look for exactly this set of rhetorical constructs in the rhetorical artifact the student has selected*

(5) *write up the speech.*

Somewhere along the way, following contemporary practice, the student will have to create a "research question." However, this step may potentially arise at any point in the process. Because the student is locked into using the rhetorical constructs selected by the original author, the student's choice of a research question is narrowly proscribed. Because it must be a question which the previously-selected constructs can "answer," the student's research question is likely to be the same as (or highly similar to) the research question posed by the original scholar in their original work. The more the forensics student diverges from the original scholar's question, the more likely it is that the list of constructs examined will prove to be unable to adequately "answer" the "new" question.

Clearly, then, the scholarly style differs significantly from the forensics style. Scholars are free to ask any research question they choose. Forensics students are essentially compelled to duplicate the questions asked by a previous scholar. Scholars are free to choose from among a vast array of units of analysis (theoretical constructs), while forensics students are limited to the use of constructs chosen by others. Scholars are obligated to choose constructs which, in their judgment, ideally unlock the mysteries of a particular artifact. Forensics students are obligated to apply to a new artifact the list of constructs used to unlock a somehow "similar" but yet obviously "different" artifact. Scholars are free to create new "methods" whenever they choose. Forensics students are generally expected to demonstrate that they are using a method whose credibility is "certified" by its previous use in publication by an established scholar.

The impact of this on the learning objectives which can be pursued by forensics students seems fairly obvious. Since the challenges they can face are severely delimited compared to those available to other scholars, so too the learning objectives they can seek to pursue are delimited. Constrained in the areas of creativity and original thought, forensics students often find themselves doing "cookie cutter criticism." While there are undoubtedly many learning ob-jectives being pursued by forensics students, these objectives *do not* and *cannot* fully parallel the types of learning objectives which can be pursued by rhetorical scholars in other contexts. In an insidious way, forensics students may in fact be learning misinformation. Confusion concerning the meaning of the technical term "rhetorical method" is one point of concern. Another is the fact that forensics short-circuits the learning process by denying students the opportunity (and the obligation) to either ask genuine and original research questions or conceptualize, consider, and sort through vast arrays of "units of analysis" as options in relation to any given "method."

Point of Distinction #3
Weighting of Essay/Speech Components
As noted above, Foss (1996) identifies five major components which should be included in an essay of criticism: "(1) an introduction; (2) description of the artifact and its context; (3) description of the unit of analysis; (4) report of the findings of the analysis; and (5) discussion of the contribution the analysis makes to answering the research question (p. 16)." However, nothing that Foss says asserts or even implies that an essentially equal amount of time or attention should be devoted to each of these components. In fact, an examination of the "sample student essays" she includes in her book instead demonstrates that she does not expect a "balanced time allocation" in essays of criticism written by undergraduate students. This lack of balance is similarly evident in the essays published in our field's scholarly journals. A quick examination of published articles immediately reveals that scholars typically spend far more time on Foss' fourth component than they do on any of the other components – and that Foss' fifth component is typically touched on relatively briefly (and/or woven indistinguishably into the fourth component).

The forensics style adheres to a different pattern. Perhaps informed by the typical wisdom which demands that "all main points in a speech should be relatively equal" (have a balanced amount of time allocated to them), the national forensics circuit tends to: (1) skip Foss' second component (or insert it forcibly into either the introduction or the early stages of component three), (2) define Foss' third, fourth and fifth components as "the main points in the speech," and (3) require that an approximately equal amount of time be allocated to these "main points." The impact of this is a radical skewing of the pattern normally found in scholarly articles. The significance of components two and four are severely reduced (in comparison to the approach of the scholarly style), while the importance of component five is massively inflated.

This impacts the work of forensics students in several ways. For example, the prevailing competitive style actively discourages them from conducting detailed analysis of the artifact under component four. In addition to the severe time restrictions already imposed by the dominant 10-minute time limit competitive speeches operate under, the demand that students apply multiple theoretical constructs to their

artifacts within only about two-and-a-quarter minutes of speaking time means that students seldom have time to do more than name a tenet, identify or assert a simple instance of it's appearance in the artifact, and then move on. The "big picture" of what is happening in the artifact at large becomes less important than the need to identify single exemplars. While these examples may or may not be equally important or frequent in the original artifact, the forensics style "levels the playing field" and implies an equality of significance among them. Meanwhile, students are pressured to respond to component five by coming up with apparently new and insightful answers to research questions shaped by the interests of other scholars (as well, in many cases, as methodological and/or rhetorical and/or social implications connected to those answers). Whereas the typical journal article may or may not do any of these things, the forensics competitor is pressured to attempt them. In a convoluted way, the methodological "freedom of choice" granted to scholars <u>prior</u> to the initiation of their analysis is offered to forensics students <u>after they have completed</u> their work. Essentially, when offering methodological conclusions, the competitor may be encouraged to say "here are the units of analysis I would have liked to have used if I had been allowed to create my own version of this 'method' of criticism – I hope somebody else will have the chance to make use of these concepts in the future." Such methodological conclusions assume that the original scholar "missed something" – whereas in fact, the likely scenario is that two different researchers (the original scholar and the forensics student) studying two different artifacts found a reason to consider different units of analysis within a shared approach/method/school-of-criticism.

Again, we find that the learning objectives which can be pursued in the classroom may overlap with but are necessarily not equivalent to those learning objectives which can be pursued in forensics (at least as it is currently normatively practiced). Students working in the two contexts are pursuing divergent paths of learning – and therefore, a simple equivalency between conducting rhetorical criticism in the classroom and on the circuit cannot be assumed.

Learning Objectives and the Criticism of Rhetoric

As part of an online conversation about "new ideas in forensics" (conducted via the IE-L in the summer of 2010), Dave Nelson of Northwest Missouri State University expressed his opinion (in an e-mail dated July 28, 2010) that "[s]tudents are just doing what brings them success which brings up the elephant in the room is this activity about education or winning?" In response, Brendan Kelly of the University of West Florida stated (in an e-mail dated July 28, 2010):

> You raise an important question, although the answer is not one or the other. From my perspective, the question our community must answer is "what are we trying to teach?" What theory or foundations inform pedagogical practice. Are the products of forensics pedagogy aligned with pedagogical goals (rooted in the rhetorical

tradition of the discipline)? At NFA 2010, the membership received a technical report authored by the Committee on Pedagogy (commissioned by the NFA Executive Council in fall 2008)....it attempts to prod the collective conversation past the theme of competition v. education and embrace the realities of the 21st century in higher education. The fact is that forensics pedagogy is a resource intensive mode of teaching...The survival on (sic) this form of pedagogy (or any for that matter) will increasingly be based on proving efficacy and demonstrating "value-added" programmatic outcomes in relationship to institutional assessment."

Kelly stresses in his e-mail that this document absolutely does not end the conversation about this topic. But it does provide us with useful information to consider at this juncture. The introduction to this document notes that:

> For decades the assessment of what constitutes "quality performance" in collegiate forensics has been rooted in a mysterious and unsupported collective conception of unwritten rules and performance practices related to a very narrow and instinctive set of standards. This casual system for documenting the efficacy of teaching practice in collegiate forensics is insufficient to meet the standards and expectations for higher education *assessment* in the 21st century. What was formerly a trend toward considerations of assessment in higher education has become the dominant model demonstrating the relationship between teaching and learning outcomes. This document marks a concerted attempt by the National Forensic Association to move away from assessment standards that reflect the tapered view of a specific community, and toward pedagogical prerogatives fully relevant and strongly tied to the foundations of the Communication discipline (p. 2).

Clearly, this document decisively rejects the idea of forensics as a self-contained or "insular" community. In essence, it contends that the scholarly style and the forensics style (as those terms have been used in this paper) must demonstrate substantial overlap in terms of the educational objectives they pursue. It identifies three "tier one" comprehensive learning objectives that it argues should apply to all forensics events (including, but not only, Communication Analysis).

The first tier one learning objective asserted in the document is "praxis founded in disciplinary principles: comprehensive performance evaluation as 'best practice' in forensics pedagogy (p. 5)." Here, the NFA Committee on Pedagogy argues that "speech and performance critics should guard against the tendency to let any one learning objective – the desire to stay 'in time,' the desire to see students speak 'without notes,' etc. – dominate the judging decision to the exclusion of other important learning objectives (p. 5)."

Next, the committee holds that "the audience must always be taken into account (p. 9)." However, when discussing

this objective, the report notes that a student's ability to demonstrate the accomplishment of this objective is profoundly influenced by the classroom (or real world) vs. tournament context in which she/he performs:

> Unfortunately, the challenge to develop audience analysis skills is severely constrained by the current nature of forensics tournaments, where students are challenged to speak to basically the same amorphously defined audience of professional forensics coaches mixed with widely assorted lay judges week after week. This constraint is made still more daunting by the fact that contest rules generally require public address speeches to be fully researched, composed, and memorized in advance. The ability of students to make on-the-spot audience adjustments mid-presentation is thus somewhat limited. This draws our attention to a consideration of the similarities and differences between "the audience of the moment" (the particular judge or judges in the room) and the larger more extended community or audience who the critic is being asked to represent, and reminds us of the responsibility of adjudicators to prioritize the targeting of audiences-as-groups over the targeting of audiences-as-individuals. This also suggests that tournament organizers and judges can promote the educational needs of students in this area by looking for innovative ways to confront students with diverse audiences (mock or real in nature) (p. 9).

Finally, the third tier one learning objective promoted by the document states that "the specific occasion must always be taken into account." While the speaking situations in which forensics competitors find themselves tend to be repetitive in many ways, each is also typified by unique twists or characteristics. Thus, the Committee on Pedagogy argues that "a demonstration of a speaker's consideration of occasion must be reflected in all performance choices (topic choice, physical and vocal performance variables, etc.).

Going beyond these three general "tier one" learning objectives, the NFA committee's report also offers nine learning objectives linked specifically to the realm of public address. These learning objectives consider: (1) audience analysis, (2) analysis of the occasion, (3) topic selection, (4) research, (5) organization, (6) language (style), (7) vocal delivery, (8) physical delivery, and (9) memorization (pp. 12-19).
To date, the NFA has not yet developed or adopted a set of learning objectives uniquely specific to Communication Analysis itself. The ideas considered previously in this paper suggest that any attempt to develop such learning objectives will necessarily prove to be time-consuming, difficult, and controversial. The organization's avowed intention to "move away from assessment standards that reflect the tapered view of a specific community, and toward pedagogical prerogatives fully relevant and strongly tied to the foundations of the Communication discipline" provide the trigger to this struggle. To date, the forensics community appears to be attempting a delicate theoretical juggling act. We view ourselves as "grounded in communication" – but also consider ourselves to be a "unique form" of communication. "Rules" and "expectations" that apply in other contexts simply do not apply in the forensics world – and vice versa. For example, the forensics community expects Communication Analysis speeches to stay strictly within a 10-minute time limit. While classroom speeches do typically impose time limits on speakers, the exact amount of available time varies, and relatively few "speech classes" expect students to "perform" rhetorical criticisms aloud. More typically, classroom students write out their rhetorical criticisms, as do advanced scholars who attempt to get their work published. These written essays, if read aloud, would consume far more than ten minutes of reading time. Meanwhile, competitive speeches are expected to be memorized word-for-word. As others have noted, this often causes classroom students to find forensic speeches stilted and artificial when they watch them on tape. When rhetorical criticisms are written on paper, of course, the whole issue of "memorization" evaporates. Thus, when it comes to the category of Communication Analysis (Rhetorical Criticism) specifically, it will not prove to be easy to decide which learning objectives to pursue. As we attempt to be "realistic" about what can and cannot be done in this venue, as we attempt to establish clear and shared learning objectives that yet allow adequate room for individual and programmatic diversity, we will face substantial challenges.

For the present, the current paper offers several suggestions.

First, we must accept the fact that the classroom and the competition room are indeed related and yet distinct performance venues. Whenever possible, we should develop learning objectives that are the same as those we might pursue in the general communication classroom. Beyond such objectives, we should also develop learning objectives which take advantage of the unique learning environment provided by forensics tournaments. At no time should we develop or enact learning objectives which run counter to essential tenets or foundational principles of our (historic) home discipline. For example, we should never develop learning objectives which violate codes of ethics generally accepted by the field of communication. Finally, we need to consider developing objectives aimed to serve the needs of the other primary constituencies we are responsible to – our schools, our cultures, our world, and so on.

Second, recognizing that competition and education are interwoven constructs which interact along a continuum, we should develop learning objectives only after carefully considering the educational "vs." competitive components of those objectives. In general terms, I will argue that objectives which tend toward the "educational" side of the continuum should be heavily preferred over those which edge toward the "competitive" pole. A much fuller discussion of our role as educators vs. "coaches" is relevant at this point.

Third, we must take advantage of the opportunity the development of these objectives will offer us in terms of review-

ing, reconceptualizing, and redesigning our approach to competitive Communication Analysis. We need to spell out the "unwritten rules" we play by and decide which of those rules are viable and desirable – which of those expectations further the cause of effective pedagogy – and which do not. For example, as I have argued elsewhere (Paine, 2008), I am convinced that we must eliminate the use of research questions in this event. As noted in the present paper, issues related to such concerns as topic selection patterns, time allocation, the emphasis on and the types of "conclusions" expected, and so on all need to be deliberately examined.

Much work remains to be done. And at this juncture in the history of American education, we must accept the fact that this work can no longer be avoided. In a time of shrinking budgets and increasingly insistent calls for "accountability," we must develop clear connections between what we "do" as a community and what we therefore have the right to say our students "learn." We are fully capable of pursuing these questions. And what is more, we *should* do so in order to view ourselves as fully responsible educators.

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Escaping the "Uncanny Valley":
Humanizing Forensic Address through Public Narrative

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There's no point in dissecting the words he said, because they have been vetted a thousand times over. It's how he said them that matters. He was nervous at the beginning and angry in the middle, but he never seemed, well, human, at anytime. . . . Where was the real person behind the corporate logo that has become "Tiger"? All we got today was a robot.
- *Dan Levy,* Sporting News

The negative reaction of sports writers to Tiger Woods' February 19, 2010 comeback press conference echoed three terms: "insincere," "coached" and "robotic." In fact, the latter criticism caught on with the on-line public to the extent that a "Tiger Woods is a Robot" fan page is featured on Facebook, while an episode of "Tiger Woods Robot Theatre" can be viewed on Youtube. Tiger's press conference media accounts, a performance analysis of Al Gore's 2000 presidential campaign, and an overview of the latest business presentational texts suggest that nothing will disengage an audience more quickly than a robotic delivery style. Perhaps the only character that audiences find more appalling than a robotic human is a nearly-human robot.

The "uncanny valley" is a place where movies go to die. Films like "Beowulf," "Final Fantasy," and "The Polar Express" all bombed, at least in part, because of the uncomfortable feeling erected by characters that are nearly human, but not quite. Japanese roboticist, Masahiro Mori, coined the term "uncanny valley," borrowing from Freud's notion of the uncanny and referring to the valley created when one plots a character's believability (or realism) on a graph with audience acceptance. When a character appears to be almost real, but not quite, audiences find them to be disturbing, unsettling and unnatural. This revulsion referred to as "the uncanny valley" has also been demonstrated in Macaque monkeys ("The Uncanny Valley," 2010). So robots, avatars, zombies, video games characters, animated personae and Hollywood creative blends share the same fate as Tiger Woods and Al Gore, for a similar reason, audiences find what is not quite real to be "creepy."

Forensic public address risks falling into an uncanny valley of its own creation. The distance between public address and forensic public address is confounding and disturbing. Students of public speaking exposed to forensic public address for the first time invariably notice the difference between contest speaking and effective public speech in other contexts. And while some of this gap can be explained by pedagogical goals and methods, much of it appears to be rooted in insular, unsubstantiated performance norms and fads. When college students respond to national final round speakers, arguably the nation's brightest and best, with phrases resembling the sports writers' criticism of Tiger

Woods—"insincere," "coached" and "robotic"—then it is time to both explain the nature of "the uncanny valley" and explore methods for bridging the gap between what forensic educators are teaching and what forensics educators should be teaching in public address events.

Gaps in Public Address Pedagogy

The value of public speech training offered by a forensic education is immense. Forensic public address not only expands the borders of the communication classroom, but it potentially provides a rich, comprehensive, in-depth educational experience that frustrates, challenges, rewards and celebrates students beyond another grade in the book, another brick in the wall of the classroom. The numerous social, political, educational, artistic, intellectual and humane contributions made by forensic students does more to dispel the myth of Burnett, Brand and Meister's (2003) "education as myth in forensics," than any adopted resolution or compiled document. However, a document produced by the National Forensic Association's Pedagogy Committee, "What Are We Trying to Teach" (2010) spells out a litany of lessons learned in public address events including ones related to: analysis of audience and occasion, topic selection, research, organization, language use, vocal delivery, physical delivery and memorization. These general areas of analysis take on more meaning when viewed specifically in the context of Rhetorical Criticism, After-Dinner, Informative and Persuasive Speaking. There is little reasonable doubt that forensic public address competition has taught great numbers of students valuable lessons through the years. The questions confronting forensic educators today include: how can this activity better prepare students for public speaking beyond the forensic context? and to what extent do current competitive practices enhance or diminish this preparation?

The gap between effective, natural public speech delivery and what is often rewarded in forensic competition is perceived and clearly articulated by college students who view national final round competition recordings. In recent years, student reaction to these performances has grown increasingly negative. To a forensic educator of many years, this response is disturbing to say the least. A study was designed in June of 2010 to measure student reaction. A total of 25 students from two separate sections of our college's basic public speaking class entitled, "Rhetoric and Public Address," were provided with questionnaires that included the following open-ended instructions. After having viewed several NFA 2007 final round Informative and Persuasive speeches:
1) List five words that come to mind when you consider the delivery of the speeches.
2) List five words that come to mind when you consider the content of the speeches.

It should be noted that the students had viewed seven speeches, five persuasive and two informative from beginning to end. They viewed the introductions of the remaining five speeches. The viewing occurred during the first and second weeks of class, and great care was taken by the instructor not to influence the reaction in any way. Full discussions of the speeches occurred later in the term.

The students displayed creativity and variety in their answers, producing 76 separate delivery terms and 74 individual content words. Nineteen delivery terms were repeated by more than a single student, and fifteen content words were repeated. A chart of the words mentioned more than once follows.

Table 1: Repeated Delivery Terms

Word	Number of References	Percent
robots	9	36
fast	8	32
fake	7	28
dorky/nerdy	5	20
confident	5	20
overly enthusiastic	3	12
emotional	3	12
rehearsed	3	12
good	3	12
vocal	3	12
memorized	2	8
polished	2	8
practiced	2	8
purposeful	2	8
annoying	2	8
interesting	2	8
funny	2	8
visual aids	2	8
nonconversational	2	8

Total number of terms	76
Positive or positively leaning terms	28
Negative or negatively leaning terms	29
Neutral terms	19

Table 1 demonstrates clearly a slightly negative audience response to forensic speech delivery. Of the top five most often occurring terms, four reflect negative connotations. The most often occurring term, "robots" or "robot" or "robotic" is expressed by more than one third of the respondents, followed closely by "fast" and "fake." And while 20% of viewers are reminded of "dorks" or "dorky," slight solace can be taken that the same percentage find the speakers to be "confident." Overall, the numbers of positive descriptors and negative descriptors are almost equal.

Table 2 shows that audience members are more positively predisposed to speech content. Three of the top four terms are obviously positive, including "interesting" at 36%, "well-researched" at 32% and "well-supported" at 16%.

"Boring" leads the negative list at 16%. Only four of the fifteen repeated terms possess clearly negative connotations. Overall, positive descriptors outnumber negative ones by a wide margin, 37 to 21.

Table 2: Repeated Content Terms

Word	Number of References	Percent
interesting	9	36
well-researched	8	32
well-supported	4	16
boring	4	16
informative	3	12
sources	3	12
significant	3	12
weird	2	8
new	2	8
documented	2	8
organized	2	8
misleading	2	8
relevant	2	8
attention-getting	2	8
not well-researched	2	8

Total number of terms	74
Positive or positively leaning terms	37
Negative or negatively leaning terms	21
Neutral terms	16

Table 3 depicts the pronounced contrast between attitudes toward delivery and content. Of the 25 student responses, 15 (60%) could be characterized as totally negative or more negative than positive regarding speech delivery. Conversely, when content is considered, the same number (60%) are totally positive or more positive than negative. While 28% of the students use terms that are totally positive in relation to content, not a single respondent could be classified as totally positive regarding delivery.

Table 3: Term Analysis

DELIVERY TERMS
(N=25)

	Totally Negative	More Negative Than Positive	Neutral	More Positive Than Negative	Totally Positive
# of terms	4	11	2	8	0
% Total	16%	44%	8%	32%	0

CONTENT TERMS
(N=25)

	Totally Negative	More Negative Than Positive	Neutral	More Positive Than Negative	Totally Positive
# of terms	1	5	4	8	7
% Total	4%	20%	16%	32%	28%

The standard for delivery excellence in forensic public address differs from expectations in other contexts. For forensic educators, this gap is important to understand. Does delivery polish that results in audience perceptions of "robotic," "fast" and "fake" serve educational ends, or does it more accurately reflect competitive norms, the simplest form of "count-the-stumbles" judging criteria, and/or a return to the formulaic, stylized prescriptions of the elocutionary movement? What are we teaching?

The descent of forensic public address into the uncanny valley cannot be adequately explained by examining delivery alone. Several factors more closely related to speech content separate forensic public address from most contemporary public speeches. Certainly the frequency and detail of source citations (VerLinden, 1996), the presence of three main points of analysis with its accompanying transitional dance (Gaer, 2002), and similarity in structure within events, based on prescribed (and enforced) areas of analysis (Ballinger & Brand, 1987; Billings, 1997; Sellnow & Ziegelmueller, 1988) add to the perception of "sameness," or formula. The cumulative effect of watching numerous presenters making the exact same rhetorical choices no doubt leads to the robotic vision. A strict adherence to the unwritten rules (Paine, 2005; VerLinden, 1997), prevailing fads and competition norms of forensic public address stifles innovation while encouraging conformity (Ribarsky, 2005). The resulting Stepford speakers appear "robotic, fast, fake" etc., flashing insincere smiles all the way through national final rounds.

The enhancement of communication education in forensic public address requires amending the pedagogy of practice. However, current practice, even the imitative style, teaches valuable lessons in clarity of organization, credibility of documentation and important analytical processes in informative, persuasive and rhetorical genres. The forensic community, professional organizations and individual programs need to weigh the value of invention and innovation against the value of presently prescribed practices to determine the future direction of forensic public address. Regardless of the outcome of such discussions, the gap between human public speech and not-quite-human forensic public address persists. One means of escaping the uncanny valley without a major overhaul or paradigm shift in existing events is through public narrative.

Public Narrative and Forensic Practice

New media and new technology have blurred the line between public and private communication. And while public speakers have been quick to adapt to the stylistic demands of new technology, forensic public address has changed little, if at all. Increasingly, speakers are called on to "tell their own story" on public platforms. The formality that once pervaded public speaking settings is giving way to a more personal, public rhetoric. And while business and professional presentational "gurus" expound on the benefits of personal branding through storytelling, forensic judges and coaches seem to be headed back to the era of polished elo-

cution. One should not misinterpret the nature of this criticism. In a time when far too many public speakers display the attitude that it is, in fact, "all about them," forensic professionals should not be reaffirming this misplaced emphasis. Personal stories should not replace hard evidence in persuasive speaking, or anywhere else. As a forensic professional who has recently repeatedly cringed in public speaking settings where speakers have made inappropriate self-references and totally ignored audiences, while pushing their own personal agendas, it is with great trepidation that the subject of public narrative is approached—which is precisely the point. Speakers are called upon to meet the personal/public demands of new public contexts. Forensic educators can lead the way in developing meaningful theory and practice for 2010 and beyond, or we can crucify our students on the elocutionary "cross of gold" of the last century. Public speaking pedagogy is far too important to leave up to the purveyors of personal branding.

Personal narratives, or even personal examples, have largely been pushed from the forensic stage. Three decades ago it was quite common to hear personal examples used in impromptu, or even at times, in extemporaneous speaking. Occasionally, a persuasive speaker will make a passing, personal reference, but with the exception of after-dinner speaking, personal narratives are generally, and sometimes quite forcefully, discouraged on critiques. While Fisher's narrative paradigm (1984) caught the attention of many communication scholars in the 1980s, it went largely ignored in the forensic community outside of an occasional round of rhetorical criticism. In the intervening decades, the narrative paradigm has made its mark across disciplines, particularly in the area of literary studies (McClure, 2009).

Fisher's basic notion that humans are essentially storytelling animals places narrative at the heart of communication. Fisher's conception that narratives are inherently rhetorical represents an attempt to rescue rhetoric from the stranglehold of the rational paradigm. Fisher (1984) explains:

> The narrative paradigm challenges the notion that human communication—if it is to be considered rhetorical—must be an argumentative form, that reason is to be attributed only to discourse marked by clearly identifiable modes of inference and/or implication, and that the norms for evaluation of rhetorical communication must be rational standards taken essentially from informal or formal logic. The narrative paradigm does not deny reason and rationality; it reconstitutes them, making them amenable to all forms of human communication. (2)

In defense of contest oral interpretation, forensic educators have argued for decades that argumentation can take the form of prose, poetry and drama. Fisher contends that all human communication is essentially narrative. From his perspective, narrative speaking deserves a place at the center of public address. At a time when the rigors of the rational paradigm seem to have edged forensic public address to-

ward the uncanny valley, the humanizing rhetoric of narrative offers an escape that is both logical and personal.

Public Narrative in Forensics Practice
Two Possible Approaches

Event Description: Public Narrative
Students will share a personal narrative designed to inspire social or political belief and/or invite social or political action. The speech will develop a student's personal story, enhance audience identification with an issue or set of issues, and characterize the urgency of the moment. The speech may be delivered from manuscript, notes, memory or any combination thereof. Maximum time limit: 10 minutes.

This event grows directly from the work of Harvard University professor and leadership expert, Dr. Marshall Ganz. *The Boston Globe* refers to Ganz as a "legendary political organizer" who worked alongside Cesar Chavez in the United Farm Workers and served as an organizer and consultant to political candidates from Robert Kennedy to Barack Obama (Guerrieri, 2009). Ganz is largely credited with building the grassroots organizing structure that was instrumental in electing President Obama. In an article from *Argumentation and Advocacy*, Kephart and Rafferty note the rhetorical influence, most notably the phrase "Yes we can," wielded by Ganz in the campaign (2009). In his courses at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, Ganz formulates an approach to leadership built entirely around public narrative (Ganz, 2008).

Ganz's article, "What is Public Narrative," (2008) outlines three essential considerations for the development of effective public narrative: "the story of self," "the story of us" and "the story of now." These stories are directly reflected in the event description. Ganz (2008) emphasizes several important ideas related to telling "the story of self."

> Telling one's story is a way to share the values that define who you are—not as abstract principles, but as lived experience.

> We construct stories of self around choice points—moments when we faced a challenge, made a choice, experienced an outcome, and learned a moral.

> We construct our identity … as our story. What is utterly unique about each of us is not a combination of categories that include us, but rather, our journey, our way through life, our personal text from which each of us can teach.

> A story is like a poem. It moves not by how long it is, nor how eloquent or complicated it is. It moves by offering an experience or moment through which we grasp the feeling or insight the poet communicates. The more specific the details we choose to recount, the more we can move our listeners …

The development of one's story not only provides a valuable, engaging experience for listeners, but it also requires potentially enlightening self-reflection by speakers.

Beyond the development of "the story of self," lies "the story of us." Ganz's explanation of this trope brings to mind Burke's rhetorical concept of identification (Burke, 1950). "The story of us" connects the speaker's personal experience to the audience in a meaningful way, transforming personal experience into public issue. "The story of us" fosters a collective identity. Ganz (2008) explains:

> For a collection of people to become an "us" requires a storyteller, an interpreter of shared experience. In a workplace, for example, people who work beside one another but interact little … never develop a story of us. In a social movement, the interpretation of the movement's new experience is a critical leadership function.

Success in developing "the story of us" is what moves the narrative from an exercise in personal recognition to a significant moment of shared consciousness.

Finally, "the story of now" develops the urgency of the moment. Ganz (2008) describes it as follows:

> A story of now articulates an urgent challenge—or threat—to the values that we share that demands action now. What choice must we make? What is the risk? And where's the hope?

The "story of now" places the significant belief or issue in an immediate context. Burke's pentadic element of scene offers further rhetorical grounding for the "story of now" (Burke, 1945). These three areas of narrative articulation, along with more traditional notions of character, plot and moral shape Ganz's approach to public narrative.

The danger of sharing three areas of analysis is that it can so easily, and inappropriately, be formulated into a preview statement. Ganz (2008) argues that these areas naturally overlap and that a linear development of them is missing the point. Public narrative requires no preview or explicitly articulated organizational pattern because the structure of the narrative itself is the prevailing structure. While these three "stories" may follow a natural flow within the speech, calling attention to the rhetorical strategy of identification with phrases like "Now we will move to the story of us" defeats the purpose.

Event Description: Personal Narrative
Students will articulate an important personal value or belief and share a narrative that inspired this conviction. Notes are optional. Maximum time limit: 5 minutes.

This event is based on Edward R. Murrow's radio series, "This I Believe," and National Public Radio's recent revival of the program, in which individuals share their personal statements of belief in essay form. A forensic approach to

this event would emphasize both the oral nature of the experience and the centrality of narrative to the essay development. Because the nature of the radio format translates so well to the forensic experience, little is needed by way of explanation. The website, www.npr.org/thisbelieve, offers access to numerous examples as well as the following useful advice:

> Tell a story: Be specific. Take your belief out of the ether and ground it in the events of your life. Consider moments when belief was formed or tested or changed. Your story … should be *real*.

> Name your belief: If you can't name it in a sentence or two, your essay might not be about belief.

> Be positive: Please avoid preaching or editorializing. Tell us what you do believe, not what you don't believe. Avoid speaking in the editorial "we." Make your essay about you. Speak in the first person.

This last idea is particularly important in order to avoid the inclination to sermonize. In their statement of the project's goal, the aim of evangelizing or preaching is discouraged further:

> The goal of "This I Believe" is not to persuade Americans to agree on the same beliefs; the goal is to encourage Americans to begin the much more difficult task of developing respect for and reaching a deeper understanding of beliefs different from their own.

When added to the speaker-centered goals associated with the development of a personal narrative, the stated purpose serves the forensic community well.

These events encourage the development of public address criteria that differ significantly from those currently in place. The breadth of rhetorical choices currently present in contemporary public speech reveals the narrow scope of forensic public address. The inclusion of narrative speaking challenges paradigms and requires forensic educators to listen and learn. Escaping the uncanny valley may actually require genuine human interaction.

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Arrangement: Understanding the Ubiquity of Problem, Cause, Solution in the Persuasive Speech

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Introduction

There is, in certain Christian circles, an old joke. In a Sunday morning Sunday School class the teacher asks the following question: "What has short fur, a long bushy tail, climbs trees, and collects nuts?" The students immediately answer: "Jesus!"

Of course, this answer is ridiculous. Immediately following the question the class may think "squirrel!" or perhaps – the creative ones, "chipmunk!" However, before they can convince themselves to speak up and correctly answer the question, they think of the context. This is church; the answer must be "Jesus!"

Now, this paper is about Individual Events Competition, more specifically, "Arrangement: Understanding the Ubiquity of Problem, Cause, Solution in the Persuasive Speech."

Here is the link: The problem in both the theoretical Sunday School classroom and the real Forensics Tournament is a lack of creativity, or a lack of freedom to think creatively, based on the students' surroundings and context.

This paper will examine the current state of the persuasive speech as practiced at competitive Individual Events tournaments before looking, historically, at how our predecessors in the rhetorical tradition - including Aristotle, Thomas Wilson, Cicero and Geoffrey of Vinsauf – viewed creativity. This creativity will be framed by the Canon of Arrangement. Finally, some suggestions will be made for alternatives to the current standard of Persuasive Speech giving - with the hope of spurring a meaningful conversation amongst the educators that will lead to a change in how our students approach this educational activity.

Current Situation

It has been noted recently on the Individual Events List-Serv that at certain tournaments the only notable difference in the final round of platform speeches is the topic. Otherwise the introduction, body arrangement, and conclusion are identical. In persuasive speaking, in this author's experience, the Problem, Cause, Solution pattern is ubiquitous. What, one may ask, is wrong with that? The formula, obviously, works when success is defined as winning.

One question to ask, is winning a tool that reinforces best practices in persuasive speech giving? Or is winning a tool that simply reinforces the norms that win. In a landmark article, which I hope we've all read – at least once – Daniel Cronn-Mills and Alfred Golden wrote about "The Unwritten Rules in Oral Interpretation." The write, "A problem develops when the practices move beyond possibilities a student may decide to incorporate into a performance and become standardized expectations of coaches-competitors-judges"

(Cronn-Mills, 3). A problem has developed, based on my observations –in the persuasive platform speech. Our community has reached a point where the problem, cause, solution pattern, or the similar cause, effect, solution pattern, is a standardized expectation in delivering the persuasive speech.

Hopefully at this conference we can make progress that moves away from the narrow box of expectations and norms that holds us solely to the problem, cause, solution paradigm in persuasive speeches.

Aristotle, perhaps, could help us reach that point. He defines Rhetoric, as I teach all of my students, as "The art of discovering all available means of persuasion." It would behoove us to link Aristotle's definition of rhetoric to an appropriate definition of critical thinking as we address the ubiquitous question: What are we trying to teach?

This author suggests that a critical goal of forensics pedagogy and education is teaching our students critical thinking. For my team I define critical thinking in public speaking as being able to recognize the unique context of each communication situation and recognize and act on the situation in a way that best communicates with each given audience. Or, in my own parlance, I want my students to be able to walk into any situation and be able to communicate effectively and efficiently, regardless of context or audience. This, by its very definition, excludes canned speeches and rote, formulaic arrangement – i.e., using Problem, Cause, Solution for *every* persuasive speaking situation. By revisiting "discovering all available means of persuasion" one can see that Aristotle practically defined critical thinking in public speaking.

Arrangement in History

Arrangement is defined by Bizzell and Herzberg as "ordering the parts of a discourse according to the rhetor's audience and purpose" and is discussed in *Rhetoric*, Book III, Chapter 13. Aristotle summarizes arrangement:

> A speech has two parts. You must state your case, and you must prove it. […] Again, introduction, comparison of conflicting arguments, and recapitulation are only found in political speeches when there is a struggle between two policies. They may occur then; so may even accusation and defense, often enough; but they form no essential part of a political speech. Even forensic speeches do not always need epilogues; not, for instance, a short speech, nor one in which the facts are easy to remember, the effect of an epilogue being always a reduction in the apparent length. It follows, then, that the only necessary parts of a speech are the Statement and the Argument. These are the essential features of a speech; and it cannot in any case have

more than Introduction, Statement, Argument, and Epilogue.

In essence, he says there is no set formula. One can imagine Aristotle in the 21st century as a forensics educator talking about persuasive speaking, "The Problem, Cause, Solution pattern may occur then, but they form no essential part of a persuasive speech. Even persuasive speeches do not always need a cause section; not for instance, an obvious social ill, in which the cause is self-explanatory.

He also mentions in Chapter 5, "It is a general rule that a written composition should be easy to read and therefore easy to deliver."

In sum, we have two very simple paradigms for arrangement 1.) It need only contain a Statement (which can be taken to mean a thesis) and an Argument. And 2.) It should be easy to understand.

From the beginning of our rhetorical tradition, then, each speech has been dependent on context. To Aristotle, beyond the Statement and Argument, anything else is superfluous and is to be added only when needed, whether it is a narrative or even a conclusion.

With a foundation understood now we move to the seminal work on Rhetoric in English, Thomas Wilson's The Art of Rhetorique. Wilson refers to Arrangement ad "deuision," or division. He writes eloquently on how to divide a sermon when persuasion is necessarily a part of it. That is, when your audience and you are at odds. He says:

> Haue a deuision to be made, of, or aboue three partes at the moste, nor yet lesse then three neither, if neede so require. For if we haue three chiefe groundes, wherevpon to rest, applying all our arguments therevnto, we shall both haue matter enough to speake of, the hearers shall with ease vnderstande our meaning, and the whole Oration shall sone bee at an ende. Notwithstanding, this lesson must not so curiously bee kept, as though it were sinne to make the deuision of fower, or fiue partes: but it was spoken for this end, that the deuision should be made of as fewe as may be possible, that men may the better carie it away, and the reporter with more ease, may remember what he hath to saie. (Bizzel, 507)

Interestingly, he echoes Aristotle, in summarizing that in terms of number of parts of a speech there should be no more than three, but the use of four or five main points should not be thought of us a sin. Generally, Wilson recommends not following a hard and fast rule, rather, using the minimum number of points to be clear. On clarity, in his own words, he says: "laie them out to be knowen: that the hearers may plainly see, what wee will say, and perceiue at a worde the substaunce of our meaning."

Of course, after Aristotle, Wilson's primary influence was Cicero, who we will address next. In Rhetorica Ad Herenium, Book III, which in Wilson's day was attributed to Cicero, he evidently guided Wilson's thinking on Arrangement:

> But there is also another Arrangement, which, when we must depart from the order imposed by the rules of the art, is accommodated to circumstance in accordance with the speaker's judgment; for example, if we should begin our speech with the Statement of Facts, or with some very strong argument, or the reading of some documents; or if straightway after the Introduction we should use the Proof and then the Statement of Facts; or if we should make some other change of this kind in the order. […] It is often necessary to employ such changes and transpositions when the cause itself obliges us to modify with art the Arrangement prescribed by the rules of the art.

Without sounding like a broken record, which is difficult, Cicero here is saying the same thing. It is often necessary to change the typical speech structure to suit a particular topic or context, based on the "speaker's judgment" or critical thinking analysis, of a given situation.

Finally, on creativity, and to answer the question asked above: if the current formula is winning, what is wrong with the status quo? By taking a closer look at Geoffrey of Vinsauf's work *Poetria Nova*. Before analyzing his works, one may ask why reference poetry? As Bizzel and Herzberg write:

> Calling treatises like Geoffrey's "arts of poetry" is somewhat misleading, for these works usually also discuss prose that uses figures or rhythmic patterns. Poetry and Prose were not as sharply distinguished in the Middle Ages as they were today; both were intended to persuade, and the important distinction was whether the persuasion was to be undertaken orally or in writing.

Geoffrey does recognize, as does Cicero, that there is an acceptable pattern, generally, for arranging a speech. However, like Cicero, who recommends the speaker using their own judgment to make changes to the standard style, Geoffrey suggests using art. First, he delineates two forms of arrangement, alluding to the standard norm, and the artistic role in arrangement, "Arrangement's road is forked: on the one hand, it may labor up the footpath of art; on the other, it may follow nature's main street." However, he prefers one to the other. "Skillful art so inverts the material that id does no pervert it; art transposes, in order that it may make the arrangement of the material better. More sophisticated than natural order is artistic order, and far preferable, however much permuted the arrangement be."

Geoffrey trusted his students, evidently, enough to follow their own creativity down a path that he believed would make their poetry, their spoken persuasion, and their letter writing (as *Poetria Nova* addresses all of these) better than

following a standard form per Quintilian's recommendations. Can we, as forensics educators, trust our students to use their creativity in platform speeches? As Geoffrey says, "The mass of the subject matter, like a lump of wax, is at first resistant to handling; but if diligent application kindles the intellect, suddenly the material softens under this fire of the intellect and follows your hand wherever it leads, docile to anything." Can we let our students intellect kindle the persuasive speech, rather than teaching rote formulaic – sometimes refreed to as robotic – speech giving?

Discussion

This paper has suggested, and here will delineate, clear goals for the persuasive speech in Individual Events competition. We as forensics educators should be teaching Rhetoric. That is, Aristotle's definition of Rhetoric, the art of discovering all available means of persuasion. By teaching the theory and praxis of Aristotle's definition of rhetoric we in turn teach critical thinking, as each student takes it upon themselves to discover the means of persuasion in each communication context they encounter. It is my hope that, as a community, our students will be able to encounter any communication context and succeed in effectiveness of communication. It is my fear that our student's focus on the Problem, Cause, Solution pattern for persuasive speaking is moving our students away from that goal.

Further, it is the opinion of this author that a lack of creativity and variety on the competitive forensics circuit in the persuasive speaking event is a barrier to reaching our community's pedagocial goals. Above a brief historical examination of the Canon of Arrangement found that, in each case, from Aristotle to Wilson, from Geoffrey of Vinsauf to Cicero, the final arrangement focused on three things: 1.) The arrangement should be simple enough for an audience to easily absorb it, 2.) The focus of arrangement should be on the arguments themselves, not a particular appropriate pattern of organization, and 3.) Most importantly, that each context requires the judgment – and when appropriate the artistic creativity of – the student/rhetor to arrange each speech in such a way that suits both the topic at hand, the context, and the audience being addressed.

One hypothesis, beyond the obvious, of why this author sees incongruity between our goals and the praxis of our students is that in order for, as Cicero says, for our students to use their "judgment" on what arrangement is ideal our contexts must be unique. However, on the forensics circuit each context is virtually the same. We have monotony, or one could say homogeneity, in our tournaments. Each round is performed in front of 5 other college students and between 1 and 3 adjudicators – who are most likely to be college professors with expertise in theatre, rhetoric, communication, et. Al. Thus, this author sees a catch 22 inherent in the system. What reason does a student have for changing their arrangement from the expected standard when the context and audience is perpetually the same? The problem, cause, solution pattern works most of the time for most of the judges – who most of the time are homogenous.

Beyond this catch-22 we must ask, what can we do to encourage creativity in Persuasive speaking, in platform speaking, and across the activity in all 11 or 12 events. What can we do to reach the ideal, as Thomas Wilson puts it , "For euery matter hath a diuers beginning, neither al controuersies or matters of weight, should alwaies after one sort be rehearsed, nor like reasons vsed, nor one kinde of mouing affections, occupied before all men, in euery matter."

Solutions

This author is not so wise as to suggest a silver bullet for fixing the stagnation of creativity in the Canon of Arrangement in persuasive speaking. However, as a community of educators we could focus our teaching on how to develop and defend a thesis statement. By teaching this to novice competitors as a foundation for forensics competition and education the student will better be able to match an appropriate organizational pattern to their subject – rather than simply adapting their subject to an organizational pattern.

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Playing it Safe as Pedagogy: Finding the Conventional Wisdom in Convention

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Introduction

As forensic educators, I know we are supposed to love all events equally, but one event escapes my comprehension. Rhetorical criticism is like rhythmic gymnastics to me; I can appreciate its verbal dexterity but I always feel like I am missing something. So when a successful coach of the event let me in on a secret, I was grateful. Explain the tenets so people feel like they understand something; don't shy away from complicated terminology but relate it to concrete examples easily grasped. Explanation through comparison a la Aristotle, this made sense. Yet when I suggested this technique to a student in front of another coach, I was told that this is just a convention of the event and should be avoided. My confusion became compounded. Crafting a rhetorical criticism is still a mystery to me, but now I am unclear as to the relationship between the unwritten rules in public address, which should be avoided, and the techniques in rhetoric that comprise effective speech writing. Whatever they may be called—unwritten rules, conventions, norms, cookie cutters or formula—these patterns of behaviors have figured prominently in forensic discourse over the years. At their best, these norms are understandable, providing a uniform code for judging and standards for performance (Mills, 1983). At their worst, norms are nothing more than "unwritten formulas established by coaches, judges and students" used to ensure "winning" (Gaer, 2002, p. 54). Not surprisingly, forensic educators have differing views of these unwritten rules. Paine (2005) observes "new coaches" "tend to place more faith in the value of the unwritten rules" whereas more experienced coaches "seem to become less attached to the redundant patterns of standardization and grow more open to experimental choice" (p. 85). Many educators might find themselves faced with a "love them or leave them" choice, either accept the rules or fight against them.

Unfortunately, unwritten rules do not care if they are liked or not and do not seem to show any indication of leaving the activity in the near future. Therefore, an alternative framework to these pesky guests should be considered. Rather than villainizing conventions, we can look at them as an educational opportunity whereby students can explore elements of communication not strictly related to message construction. This is in no way a paper to defend their existence. But given the amount of time spent discussing the matter in journals, conferences, and even last Developmental Conference, the issue is becoming divisive enough that to take a side, either for or against them, is almost an unwritten rule itself. Perhaps, by examining our relationship with these unwritten rules, we can come to a more holistic understanding of message construction and, in effect, hold a mirror up to our own communication patterns. To explore the conventional wisdom in conventions, this paper will attempt to investigate the ways unwritten rules can hurt and help our overall educational goals as well as suggest some practical ways we can dialogue about them.

Pedagogical Perspectives

Perhaps many of the difficulties I have concerning convention come from my own educational path. As an art and film student, we were asked to examine successful works to ascertain their effectiveness. In film, borrowing a successful technique is called homage. In art, conventions and norms are considered technique, and assignments are structured to refine technique, such as painting with the pointillism style of George Seurat or integrating primary colors and line weight in the spirit of Piet Mondrian. This is line with the types of pedagogy utilized in rhetoric studies. Lauer (2004) outlines the four types of rhetoric pedagogy, including romantic (which avoids direct instruction), imitation, practice (daily exercises done without context), and artistic (provide students with strategies and give guidance through creation). The strategies range from the experimental to the rule governed. Current discussions about norms tend to rail against the later, especially in regards to stifling creativity. Yet, letting students write without direct instruction forces them to rely on native talent, which moves us away from the inclusionary aspect of forensics that is so commendable. And while letting students experiment each weekend would be ideal, it does raise issues of fiscal and temporal responsibility. Can we justify the time and money expenditures in relation to our administrations and to other members and events on the team? Thus, discussions regarding norms and conventions can reveal our own pedagogical approach and aspects of our own coaching philosophies

The dark side of convention

Those who find fault with convention do so for good reason. As Paine (2005) observes, "unwritten rules possess tremendous power, functioning to separate the 'in-group' who know and follow the rules from the 'out-group'" (79). To a group of individuals who choose to write speeches against inequality and abuses of power or in defense of marginalized groups, the idea of a power imbalance can be particularly offensive. Objections to conventions generally fall under several common themes.

Conventions encourage competition

Perhaps our greatest fear is that convention prioritizes competition at the expense of all else. The dichotomy between education and competition is one this community struggles with repeatedly. Burnett, Brand, and Meister (2003) openly critiqued forensics, suggesting that "while forensics typically has been promoted as an educational activity...forensics is, in reality, highly competitive" (p. 12). With the goal of a successful season in mind, many fear that students "tend to take the path of least resistance. If a competitor is able to model a 'winning' speech, it is assumed that the competitor

has what he/she needs to win" (Ribarsky, 2005, p. 21). Consequently, the norm becomes perpetuated as students copy what is done well rather than making choices appropriate to their own performance. Yet this may be a simplification of the competitive and educational process. Did the convention win because it was a convention or because it taps into a core communicative process? Do students imitate a norm because it is successful or because they personally experienced the effectiveness of the strategy? Could then the act of imitation be a conscious choice?

Conventions discourage innovation

Because conventions represent a pattern of behaviors prevalent in forensics, the resulting concern becomes the loss of innovation in the activity. Gaer (2002) observes, "When we talk education, we must not forget that creativity and open expression of ideas are the foundations of what creates new and innovative theory and advances our disciplines" (p. 55). Because convention represents an often imitated choice, the consequence must be a loss of creativity. "While some students may attempt to take minor performance risks within event norms to separate themselves from the competition, few students truly seek out innovative performances that challenge the unwritten rules of performance" (Ribarsky, 2005, p. 20). Yet could the imitated behavior be a stepping stone to a truly innovative idea? Could what is considered a minor risk represent major new skill acquisition for a student? How do find what's innovative without having norms to contrast it against?

Conventions hamper educational objectives

With our Aristotelian roots, we take pride in our educational role. In public speaking especially, the components of message construction—topic selection, research, and writing—all represent valuable skills that must be taught rather than relying on the presence of inherent skills. Yet the existence of norms represent short cuts, ones that chip away at a core educational beliefs, namely that knowledge must be earned. As Kay (1990) suggests, "we have lost sight of the fundamental goal upon which our activity is based – providing a laboratory in which students learn about human communication through experimentation and critique" (p. 63). Given that the conceptualization of forensics as a laboratory is common; could students be experimenting with norms? Do norms give students insight into the ways people process messages? Could use of some norms free students to experiment with other aspects of message construction?

Conventions lack real world application

Since graduation usually marks the end of a forensics career and the beginning of a "real" one, norms potential impact on the applicability of message construction in "real world" settings could be considerable. Ribarsky (2005) suggests that as forensics continues to rely on a limited set of presentational formats, we become unable to develop and utilize other equally acceptable formats. Consequently, the ability to adapt to more diverse audience is restricted. Kay (1990) goes a step further, critiquing the way individual event competitors and coaches have advanced the notion of a uni-

versal audience, where individuals in a round represent everyone and no one. "If we buy into the conclusions generated by argument fields research—that different fields involve different argument standards—then the universal audience concept is inadequate and fails to contribute to sound pedagogical experience" (Kay, 1990, 67). This sentiment is echoed in Hinck's 2003 article where he observes Swanson's concern that conventions "reflect a disconnection between the audiences in our tournaments who value unwritten rules and the audiences of our students' future communities who expect personalized responses to communication transactions" (p. 64). Yet could teaching students to recognize patterns of behaviors in forensics train them to look for communication norms in other settings? Is it even possible to prepare students for every "real world" speaking situation? Would they be better served by reimagining the idea of a universal audience?

Convention as an educational opportunity

Unfortunately, easy answers do not exist for any of the questions posed in the previous section. Not all norms can, or even should, be treated equally. For example, in the interpretation events, the first person perspective could be detrimental. Important aspects of performance are not being taught when the student veers away from other types of literature. Yet, in public address, specific techniques often get singled out as undesirable even though they represent solid technique. A pun in the preview demonstrates creative and vivid language attempts, but is rarely looked on favorably by judges. Yet, generic statements, as in "the problems are twofold"—which could belong in any speech in the room, seldom garner attention. Compounding the issue, public address is meant to be written by the student. Building upon what the student can see and experience gives the student more ownership, especially given the fact that many forensicators are not communication majors or budding rhetoric scholars. Yet, technique without a theoretical foundation is empty instruction. It is in the best interest of the student and the coaches to understand why conventions emerge if we are to utilize them as an educational opportunity.

Conventions can make competition manageable

As a subjective experience, competition can be frustrating. Message composition has many facets, and not every judge weights these components the same. Consequently, final round participants change from weekend to weekend. This uncertainty can take a toll on students and even coaches. Yet as Paine (2005) points out, "the more these decisions appear to abide by a mutually accepted body of rules or norms, the easier it is to make and accept the decisions that are made" (p. 81). While we, as educators, may take issue with the nature of the norm, they do provide a means for students to process tournament results, thereby enhancing their own self-efficacy. Borrowing a construct from Bandura's theory of social cognition dealing with people and control, DiRamio and Payne (2007) define self-efficacy as a "confidence in one's ability to organize and execute a course of action required to attain a goal" (p. 677). The more out of control an individual feels in a situation, the more likely they are to

experience a negative emotional state. Rather than feeling "not good enough to break", norms create order out of the confusion of competition and may even suggest courses of action for "next time".

Conventions can conceptualize innovation

Frequently cited as a forensics' goal, innovation remains a nebulous term for me. It implies invention, yet to create something new or novel that is also effective, ethical and educationally viable seems daunting, especially in public address, which has so many of its foundations in Classical Rhetoric. In 20 years of collegiate forensics, large scale innovation such as finding a new organizational structure or a novel form of proof has yet to manifest itself. The exciting innovations seem to occur in topic selection, or Invention as outlined in the Canons of Rhetoric. Ironically, experimenting with Invention is also considered a convention. As Burnett, Brand, and Meister (2003) suggest, "The unwritten rules for public address, such as having a timely but not-too-well-known topic and making each informative speech personally relevant to the judge" (p. 17) occur frequently. Yet, significance statements represent good ethos. Finding the "not-to-well-known" topic is a function of the Elaboration Likelihood Model, shortcutting central processors whose counterarguments would interfere with message comprehension. Perhaps this is the inherent dichotomy of innovation; change is not perceived the same by all. Discovering that humor can be an effective rhetorical device in a persuasion or getting to write a speech about taboo topics like sex and religion can be exciting to a student but mundane to an experienced judge. Innovation becomes harder to achieve the more immersed one is in the activity. If we can separate norms for solid speech writing, innovation may become easier to recognize.

Conventions enhance educational objectives

As Paine (2005) points out, "Very few of the unwritten rules are purely capricious - essentially all of them develop a worthwhile skill…Thus, learning the rules can promote the acquisition of an array of educational goals" (p. 82). While teachers and coaches of forensics generally have some background in communication, the same cannot be said for all forensics students who come from a variety of majors and disciplines. As such, understanding norms has repercussions in both a student's general skill acquisition and message construction.

First, learning through convention may be better suited to some learning styles. Burton (2007) suggests that the observation of successful speaking or writing needs to precede an individual's own speaking or writing if one is to improve those skills. As educators, we have the responsibility to move students through imitation to genesis. O'Rourke (1996) observes this practice was heavily utilized in early rhetoric studies. Through imitation, students can learn techniques they can employ elsewhere. Later, amplification, changing a speech's content while retaining its form or changing a speech's form while retaining its content would be applied. Through imitation, a student can investigate issues of invention, arrangement and style simultaneously. While this technique may not be suitable for everyone, imitation of norms could provide students a means to integrate abstract information taught in the classroom in a practical and meaningful way.

Conversely, decrying a norm without taking into account the reason for its existence could hamper educational goals. Discussions about convention usually boil down to the topics that get used (invention) and the organizational patterns that get used (arrangement). However, Burton (2007) suggests that when invention and arrangement are in competition, rhetoric can get reduced to style alone. The result is what Hauser (2004) terms "rhetrickery", or the practice of using rhetoric without regard to its ethical dimensions. As educators and judges, it becomes imperative that we remain focused on what students say and not just how they are choosing to say it. As Hauser (2004) argues, "The test of rhetoric is not its ideological commitments, but its consequences."

Conventions have real world application

While engaging in the forensics walk or a three point speech may lose effectiveness in the classroom, they do represent patterns that can be adapted in the "real world". Moving around a room can keep the whole audience engaged and not just those sitting in front of a speaker. Like telephone and social security numbers, people tend to remember complex info when it is grouped in three's. In this way, training students to look and explore norms prepares them to examine those that exist on the job and in society once they leave their institutions. LaMaster (2005) contextualizes conventions as "a set of discursive constraints that each speaker must discern and navigate, meeting the audience's expectations in some ways and exceeding those expectations in other ways" (p. 32). Teaching students that every situation has its own set of expectations and training them to look for those behavioral cues that go unnoticed by many fulfills a tenet put forth in experiential learning, "help students learn how to learn, rather than merely acquiring facts and procedures" (Sellnow, 1994, p. 9).

Putting the education into convention

Forensics is a culture unto itself, and convention is merely an implicit message system that allows us to identify ourselves. As such, it can be seen as a tool to carry out larger educational objectives, but first we need a pedagogical approach to dealing with these unwritten rules. Several options exist. First, as Hinck (2003), Paine (2005), and Ribarsky (2005) all suggest, we need to discuss the existence and limitations of norms with our students. However, research did not reveal how to conduct this conversation. When faced with situations requiring an individual to choose the skill best appropriate, Weaver (2007) suggests Strategic Flexibility. This process allows us to examine our "communication repertoire" or our "collection or stock of communication behaviors" to find the most appropriate (p. 29). The first step is to anticipate. Rather than react against an idea, realize potentials situations, or speeches, may need certain

components, including norms. Second, asses or take stock of the factors, elements, and conditions of a situation. We can discuss with students the demands of a topic, argument, or their own personal goals with the speech. The third step is to evaluate, determining fact based and realistic outcomes from choices made. Is the student prepared to move forward with a choice knowing that it could be negatively assessed by others? The fourth and fifth steps are selection and application, with an eye towards the impact of the choice, including any ethical ramifications. Is this a technique that if imitated by others, reflects sound speech writing and ethical concerns? Finally, outside judges and coaches help achieve the last step, reassess and reevaluate. Is this speech accomplishing its goal? If not, we can start the process over again. Strategic Flexibility allows us to examine all techniques in a student's arsenal, including norms, and gives them a voice in their implementation or exclusion.

Another popular suggestion to navigating norms centers on how we, as critics, compose our ballots. Hinck (2005) advises using a ballot to help a student improve by noting what was good and what may need improving, noting, "Choosing this orientation…is satisfying when the ballots written by judges fulfill our expectations for instructive comments; where the comments demystify the rankings and ratings, and provide students and coaches with suggestions for improving students' performances" (p. 68). Further, Paine (2005) observes, "Judges can only evaluate the performances they see" (p. 86). While the comment refers to the fact that norms must be challenged to be seen, it also could apply to judges who are trying to coach competitors to fulfill their own likes and dislikes because sometimes our expectations of norms can color our expectations. Last year, none of our After Dinner speeches used hypothetical situations as attention getting devices. Yet the expectation of the norm was enough that students still received ballots admonishing them for doing so. Granted, half a sheet of paper doesn't always give us enough time to fully explain ourselves, which is why I enjoyed a piece of history I discovered as a graduate student. In the late eighties, spiral bound books were put out that contained not only the winning speeches from various nationals but also the extended comments of the judges who ranked them. As a new coach, these were exceedingly educational, allowing me to see what choices represented solid technique and which were perceived as ineffective given the context. Perhaps such transparency could be made possible again.

Finally, we can recognize that imitation is an educational tool itself. Paine (2205) touches on this notion, suggesting an "apprentice" system is in place, where students must demonstrate they have certain skills before we "let" them break norms in competition. This system of imitation and amplification closely resembles the progymnasmata used in early rhetoric education. Progymnasmata is a set of exercises, escalating in difficulty, meant to gradually add skills to the repertoire of a speech writer. Sigrell (2003) observes an increased interest in the use of progymnasmata in today's rhetorical pedagogy because they stimulate "reflection over the impact of the language choice for our opinions and actions" and do "not wasting time and energy to reinvent the wheel" (p. 4). Corbett and Connors (1999) characterize the progymnasmata as "one of the most influential teaching methods to arise from the rhetorical tradition." As forensic educators, we are fortunate that we are not limited to twice a week classes to develop a student's skill; we can gradually introduce them to more complex ideas over time rather than trying to create a perfect product in a single semester. This might also lead us to reexamining the audience not as a blank universal slate but as a group of individuals trying to master a specific set of rhetorical skills. As a result, both students and educators would be forced to evaluate the speech as a whole to determine if it involves good use of reasoning and evidence as well as containing stylistic devices that others could imitate.

Conclusion

The dangers of conventions are irrefutable; they can be a barrier to education and creativity as well as cast unwanted emphasis on competition. But as with most elements of forensics, they are not quite clear cut villains on the verge of destroying our institution. Classical Greek and Roman rhetoricians taught students strategies to initiate discourse, to explore lines of argument, to gather supporting material and to created ethical and emotional appeals (Lauer, 2004). These are still worthy teaching objectives and demand us to look at the whole of the product as opposed to the part. After all, examining a painting only by its brush strokes diminishes its overall power. Perhaps this is true of our perspective on our students as well. Our time with them is really only a brushstroke, but capable of some amazing final product. Forensic students tend to be civically engaged, participate in politics, assume leader ship positions, and have higher self confidence, productivity, quality of life, self motivation, and emotional maturity (Billman, 2008). And I bet some of them even understand rhythmic gymnastics.

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Novice Competitors and Public Address Preparation

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Introduction

In a time when forensics is trying to maintain traditions while not getting stuck in a performance rut, teaching incoming students competition norms can be a very sticky situation. The community is being constantly criticized for crediting students who follow the spoken and unspoken rules of competition. This can leave little room for individuality and can also make it very difficult to prepare incoming students for competition. Prepping new students in college events becomes a balancing act, trying to teach events, norms, and policies in a short amount of time to help prepare the student to be "tournament ready." While students catch on to the rules they are asked to follow, more difficulty is found when trying to teach new students the unwritten norm they must follow.

This paper aims to discuss the balance in finding how to prepare students for competition in a manner that does not overwhelm yet adequately makes them tournament ready for competition. The goal of a coach is to make sure their students are comfortable and prepared for their first competition and their forensics career. A bad first tournament has the potential to cause a student to leave the competition for good.

The high school college transition

The transition of a competitor to college forensics can be difficult in many ways. Former high school competitors are asked to change their views about competition is rather drastic ways. From topic selection, memorization, examples, acronyms, sources and tournament dress, choices that had previously led to success may not provide the same results. With such a severe learning curve, there is difficulty in creating the transition without overwhelming the student and also making sure they are tournament ready during the start to the competition year. In actuality, helping a student to be fully ready is nearly impossible. With only a one or two month buffer to prepare new students (not to mention they are transitioning to college life), the time is short to prepare these students for competition. While many schools hold camps before the start of the semester, this quick education cannot cover everything.

According to LaMaster (2005), rules listed for the four public address events are pretty basic –a ten minute time limit, After Dinner should make a point and be funny, and Rhetorical Criticism should use a method to analyze an artifact. In formative should inform, Persuasion should persuade (32). However, if this is what our student's were sent out with, we would be setting them up for extreme failure. Instead, the extreme learning curve requires a whole new pattern of thought. An effective coach will create a situation of learning as well as fostering a chance for students to express themselves. Instead, we know that forensics unwritten rules expect certain types of humor, topics, and organizational patterns.

The argument of forensics lacking originality and success depending on how well students follow the rules must be examined in the context of teaching incoming competitors. While we typically examine "canned" (prepared in advance and used over again) in a limited prep context, the same can be said for Public Address. These events are written in a fashion that follows the format of set up, pattern, and signposts. By creating this very specific format and writing choices, it can be easily seen that learning and creativity can be lost.

Method and Results

In order to understand the process of educating incoming competitors, interviews were conducted with several students who had just finished their first year of competition. Questions surrounded issues of preparation for first tournament, student's observations from the first tournaments, etc.

Questions were asked specifically about students who were competing in PA events. All students but one had previous PA experience in high school competition in several different high school leagues.

One of the first questions asked was what were the general differences in competition you noticed? Answers ranged from behavior, dress, formality and topics choice. While the focus was on the difference in Public Address events, it is important to notice the differences in all realms to create a true perspective. One of the biggest differences all student's answered was in general the formality of the competition. This ranged from how "serious" competitors seemed to take competition to the formality of the topics. Students were surprised about the amount of events students carried and also the dress required in competition.

In terms of specifically relating to public address, topics, sources, and memorization were three key areas that came up over and over again as surprises when it came to competition. While most students agreed that these areas had all been discussed prior to their first tournament, what happened at the actual competition was still a surprise to them. The caliber of competition was much higher than expected.

In terms of topics, students replied that after attending a tournament, they understood why so many topics had been "vetoed" or why coaches would not let them bring certain topics into competition. One student commented, " I was surprised as how obscure the topics were….they weren't as common as they were in high school." There were also comments addressing the actual writing of PA events, as a few students commented written speeches came straight from the coaches in the high school competitions. While

they had written speeches for class before, this was often the first attempt at writing a speech for competition. This also incorporates the sources discussion. One comment included " I actually didn't believe you when you said how many sources we needed and then told me that the ones I had found weren't good enough" This comments seems to incorporate the idea of needing to make sure we are specific about the research process not only from an ethical perspective but also from a quality standpoint. While quality of sources is always a concern when helping student's research, it is important to remember that researching for a speech is still different than researching for classes or anything else they have done.

A second main area of topic to come up was memorization. While most students commented they had to memorize speeches in high school, the precision of the memorization was much more specific in college competition. The memorization of multiple speeches was also a huge learning curve, as most students only carried one even in high school, and never more than one PA. One student even said she wished she had been able to attend a tournament to see what it was really like before she competed so she would have been better prepared to compete.

Discussion

A key argument to be asked out of these discussions regards how to best prepare students for their first competition. While each coach has a way to teach students, we may need to analyze where these students are coming from in order to better prepare them for the competition ahead. Knowing today's students have a different mentality than students from even five years ago, this requires coaches to think about these practices and decide how to best reach new students. Conclusion can be drawn in a several areas, including mentality and teaching of norms.

First, we need to make sure students understand the differences from high school to college public address. From learning acronyms, to structure, to the basics of prepping a speech for competition, students have a lot of concerns to contend with. Coaches must really consider what must be taught, as students often struggle themselves with coming up with the questions to ask, as they often assume it will be similar to previous competition. Learning about the style of previous coaches and explaining the role you will provide can be key. Simply letting a student know they are responsible for writing their speech and the role of the coach is to guide and provide assistance. Common knowledge of any previous speech writing may not apply to the student depending on their competition background.

Second, when teaching norms, we must think about what is essential for students to know. Disclosing an abundance of rules can take the fun out of the activity, but not sharing with students basic standards may leave them struggling in the activity and putting in effort that will not benefit their competitive success in the future. Our goal as coaches and

educators is to provide students a learning opportunity that allows them to grow as a competitor and a person.

Conclusion

In order to fully understand this topic, more research needs to be done on a larger scale and through all events, including Limited Prep, Interpretation, and Debate. Getting new students to their first tournament and having them tournament ready is key to their success and also with team retention. As educators, we must think about what these practices are and how to make them the most effective for our students.

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Ballots: A New, Comprehensive and Educational Approach for Evaluating Forensic Competitors

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Abstract

There has been much talk in the forensic community about frustration with events and progression of the activity. The National Forensic Association National Tournament student meeting discussed irritation with the Impromptu event saying that it has been stagnant and not providing the skills needed for application in a world outside forensics. I propose a new ballot that promotes the source and intention of the event while at the same time giving a basis for "real world" application. This would not only remind competitors and judges what the intent of the event is supposed to be but also with the constant reading of the description people will eventually have the event descriptions memorized. After a ballot analysis of every ballot that I have received from the past two years of competition, I have concluded that the notes given by most judges are certainly helpful but lack justification or reason which disregards the pedagogical value of this activity. In order to keep this activity alive we must be able to justify that this is an educational activity and this new ballot would give it additional validation. This ballot will serve as merely a guide and not a rubric.

For the two years that I have competed in collegiate forensics I have received such comments as, "Your teaser is too long," "Your argument seems weak," and "This is stupid." I look at other ballots and I am thrilled with comments such as, "You were funny" but with further inspection I come to realize that "You were funny" was the only comment made on my ballot. The previous comments and others alike came with little to no explanation or elaboration. How could so many tournaments produce so many poor ballots?

The problem of ballots with little useful feedback isn't new by any means. In fact, Kevin Jones's 1988 essay *The Individual Events Ballot: Pedagogical Tool or Narcissistic Soap Box?* discusses the problems and consequences that come from a "useless" or poor ballot. Seeing as Jones (1988) wrote his article over twenty years ago and the quality of ballots has not significantly improved, further discussion of effective ballot writing as well as a change to the ballot format is warranted. I believe that a ballot should not only give a competitor tips for a more successful round in the future, but it should also be used as a tool to teach students the communication concepts in which critiques are grounded. In addition, in order to keep the forensics activity alive and well funded, there must be evidence that students are not only competing to win but to learn as well. In order to keep to the task at hand, however, this paper will focus on improving the ballot rather than explaining the consequences of a poor ballot. I propose that a new standardized ballot format should be created in order to fully maximize the potential of collegiate forensics.

It is important to understand the reasoning behind my proposal so instead of just stating my idea, I will explain it to you. (See what I did there?) In order to do so, this paper will first discuss what exactly is considered a good and a poor ballot; second, the pedagogical reasoning for including the individual event description on each ballot; third, why Aristotle is still important; and finally, the appearance of the proposed ballot and what this ballot will provide for the future of forensics.

What do good and bad ballots look like?

For the six years that I have been competing in forensics, I have heard several variations of student complaints about some judges and the ballots written by those judges. The most colorful comment was, "The judges are on crack!" I think many judges are unaware that students do not find their ballots useful and according to Daniel Cronn-Mills's 1991 essay, *Interpreting the Oral Interpretation Judge: Content Analysis of Oral Interpretation Ballots*, he states "Judges may not have written as many comments simply because they were not sure *what* to write" (p. 38).

Before we can evaluate the quality of ballots, we must first understand what a ballot is supposed to accomplish. Jones (1988) states,

> …when a student enters a room to speak at a tournament, that student should be able to assume that the judge will engage in pedagogy. Upon receiving and reading their ballots, the students should experience some type of learning process. It therefore becomes necessary for the judge to assume the role of teacher in order for this process to transpire. (pg. 49)

Essentially, based on Jones's (1988) definition, a good ballot is one that teaches and instructs and a bad ballot is one that does neither. As forensics is first and foremost an educational activity, we can agree with Jones's (1988) definition. Cronn-Mills (1991) elaborates how most of the comments given on a ballot are positive or neutral in nature.

After completing a ballot analysis of every ballot I have received from my two years in collegiate forensics, I have discovered the pattern Cronn-Mills (1991) describes is extremely similar to my own collegiate forensic experience. Through my ballot analysis I discovered that nearly 60% of my ballots were ones that consisted of *only* positive and neutral comments. The other 40% contained negative or constructive comments. Though many of the comments on the ballots are positive in nature, there are very few critical comments meant to help improve the performance. Furthermore, many of the ballots with low ranks (4-5) contain mostly positive comments. For example one judge wrote, "Did a great job of changing characters." I would normally be happy that someone liked my character choices, however, I could see that they were not as please as they expressed

as I only received a 4-16 with this comment being the only comment.

Like Cronn-Mills (1991) stated, this judge may have not known what to say on a competitor's ballot. Through my personal ballot review, I also determined that not all, but many of the hired judges at tournaments are the ones writing poor ballots. Though the forensics activity would not be able to survive without the use of hired judges, these judges also must be aware that they are in control of a student's opportunity to attend a national tournament not to mention the deserved justification of the score for that student. At the 2010 Minnesota State Tournament I heard many complaints (admittedly some from myself) about the amount of hired judges judging the preliminary rounds. Of my ballots received from the State tournament, over half were from hired judges and most of the comments from those ballots were either extremely positive with little critique or were what Jones (1988) would consider a "useless" or bad ballot. Recognize that the goal is not to belittle these judges but rather to help them and students in the future.

Hired judges are not the only ones writing vague ballots. The problem is widespread among the inexperienced and the experienced, the old and the young, and what is considered the "good tournaments" and the "bad" ones. Comments such as, "Work to bring more depth into this speech" are common if not excessive. A comment such as this one is unfocused and gives no direction as to how to fix this problem in the future. An ideal ballot is one that is specific and explanatory giving the student a clear understanding of the judge's opinion. In order for every judge to write something useful and constructive for a student they must understand that the goal of the forensics activity is educational.

Event Descriptions Actually Matter

The CA that I performed my freshman year was definitely a learning experience. I spent hours upon hours trying to grasp the concept of "applying a method to an artifact." Once I finally realized that all one had to do take a theory that talked about a form of communication that matched something controversial, I wondered why more people didn't participate in CA. Then, one day, someone asked me if I knew what CA was. I told them, "You know, you talk about something cool and apply a theory to it." How very misinformed I was. Soon after I looked up the AFA-NIET description of Communication Analysis and I wondered how many other people knew the purpose of the event. Sadly, most other's descriptions of CA were only slightly better than my own. To clarify, I'm sure that my coaches informed me more than enough times what the purpose of CA was but because of my freshman ears and the desire to finish my speech rather than the desire to learn, their words of instruction slipped in one ear and out the other. This sort of mentality of the student is exactly why the opinion of the judge is so important. Students may hear the words of their coach but (as in my case) they may not listen. As a judge controls the rank and the possibility of a nationals qualification, their opinion means not necessarily something more than the coach's but clearly something different. For example, my friends have recently been asking me to cut my hair as I had been growing it out. When someone I respected but did not know as well told me to cut my hair as it showed off my "nice bone structure," I was immediately more inclined to cut my hair as I had a compelling argument from someone whom I respected not more but differently.

I propose that the ballots always include the event description on the ballot of the event that is being judged/ performed. Many in the forensics community could benefit from the included event description for two reasons. One, there is a common lack of awareness concerning the event descriptions and a ballot would be the most universal vehicle to inform the forensics community. Two, new and hired judges would have an accessible reference tool. The event description is not for limiting the possibilities for performances but rather the opposite. The event descriptions provide an "if it doesn't say you can't, than you can" mentality. There are few rules of "cant's" in order to provide many "cans." This sort of attitude would deter people from purely following norms or the status quo and instead broaden their perspectives of judging and performing. The lack of knowledge concerning the event descriptions in the forensics activity is evident. Students in the activity are performing Prose with virtually no narrative and presenting Impromptu as though they are following an unwritten rubric. It is at this point that I must use my own personal experience (or pathos) in order to explain myself. Aristotle declares the effectiveness of using one's personal experience in his Defense of Palamedes and I believe that Aristotle's opinion is a valid one. The following information results from conversations that I have had with teammates, students, and coaches from the past two years.

A senior teammate was shocked when he learned from me that the point of Dramatic Interpretation was to emphasize the character being presented. This teammate was not the only student surprised to learn the actual description of an event. After talking to students from schools around the nation, very few could accurately describe the purpose of Impromptu Speaking. It is interesting that the most of the students that I spoke to were in at least their third year competing and competed successfully in the events that they could not define. In fact, I believe that this lack of event description awareness can be explained by a 1990 NDC-IE paper. *What the Rules Mean: Using Defined Judging Guidelines to Augment Informal Training* by J.G Harrison Dow, Lohnes, and Albertson explains,

> At present, judges enter forensics in something of a state of nature. The overwhelming majority of new judges depend only on their pre-existing knowledge of forensics. In many cases, this knowledge is minimal. Even the expertise of experienced competitors most often limited to the events in which they excelled. (pg. 19)

If the event description is not known, than how can judges evaluate a student effectively? True, there are usually meetings before a tournament starts in order to inform the judges

of what their roll and responsibility is at the tournament, however, as we can see, these meetings have not been successful. An event description stated on the ballot will not only serve as a reference to experienced judges but will help as a guide for new or hired judges.

The Relevance of Aristotle

The teachings of Aristotle hold significant relevance in the forensics community as forensicators are not only arguing but speaking *truth*. The activity of forensics is merely a school organized version of the "gathering of people" and these people have the opportunity to share their minds, hearts, and souls for ten minutes without interruption. The discovery of truth in the realm of suits and classrooms presents an opportunity to be recognized. This arena is created in order for free speech and protest to occur to create a more enlightened world. However, we must ask ourselves, how can we discover truth and enlighten others, without an understanding of what makes a message effective? To be more precise, the organization of one's thoughts on a ballot is just as important as the organization of a speech. We must remember that arguments are presented in both directions in this activity and the argument on a ballot is just as important as the one being spoken.

The research done from my ballot analysis reinforced the need to solve the problem of unorganized ballots. Some ballots were filled with many comments concerning the delivery of my speech but lacked commentary on content. Others ballots showed favor towards the development of my character but completely ignored the argument presented. Several of the ballots contained hand drawn pictures, one of a particularly detailed butterfly. Though not all judges are practicing their sketching skills on student's ballots, many are providing unorganized if not schizophrenic ballots. Though my Communication Analysis ballots are formatted in a more constructive manner, quite a few still lack detailed arguments to improve the speech. In fact, my ballot analysis showed that over 80% of the ballots did not cover the most basic and fundamental elements of a speech. Quite clearly, I am discussing Aristotle's Five Canons of Rhetoric.

These five principles that have endured for centuries serve unarguably as the primary and universal tenets for every speech. If invention, arrangement, style, delivery, and memory are used in every speech then all five should be mentioned when evaluating an event. These common crucial elements are taught to every Communication Studies major and therefore should be held in higher esteem when evaluating forensics events. I therefore propose that the front side of a ballot be divided into the Canons minus the given of Memorization. Having a memorized speech is the first step in a public address speech or for the most part in an interpretive event and for the sake of judging limited preparation events, the tenet of memorization could be respectfully re-

membered but excluded. In order to speak truth from both sides of the classroom, a judge must also use these basics in order to present their argument effectively as well.

The new ballot will be organized in sections according to Aristotle's Five Canons of Rhetoric, contain the event description and will hopefully, with the help of the tournament director, have an emphasis of explaining the comments made by the judge. In other words, the new ballot should teach. It is important that it is understood that judges are writing less than satisfactory ballots in order to validate the new layout of the proposed ballot. The structure organizes the ballot in a way that guides and reminds the judge what should be covered according to pedagogical roots of the forensics activity.

I do not believe that judges are "on crack." I also do not believe that all hired judges write poor ballots or that my coaches do not effectively explain events to me. I do believe that this activity can be improved, however. Throughout this essay, I have cited several articles written over twenty years ago from the NDC-IE that have had the same concerns as have been discussed above. It is unsettling that the problems presented so long ago have been active in our community without an active solution. Forensics solves problems and creates solutions and isn't that the purpose of the NDC-IE, to discuss the effective and ineffective of this activity? Forensics has and can still improve the world around us but in order to speak truth and take action, we must solve our problems within before we can efficiently work to progress the world around us.

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BRW

Mock Ballot

Event

Round

Section

Name

Code

Rank (1-5 with 1 being the highest)

Rating (1-25 with 25 being the highest)

Judge

School

Content

Structure

Delivery

Communication Analysis: An original speech by the student designed to offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a communication event such as a speech, speaker, movement, poem, poster, film, campaign, etc., through the use of rhetorical principles. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Manuscripts are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.

Towards a Novel Tournament Scheduling Algorithm and Statistical Measure of Team Equity in Large Scale Forensics Tournaments

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Abstract

Business items raised at recent national forensics tournaments regarding scheduling seem to be based around issues of an increased number of competitors and a trend for some schools to have a disproportionate amount of competitors in a single event. This paper examines the stated goals in scheduling a tournament as a device that measures the ability of competitors. Stemming from these goals, this paper proposes a novel random scheduling algorithm capable of scheduling a large number of competitors in an individual event. After implementing this algorithm, its performance is measured in relation to its ability to schedule a tournament comparable with given national level competitions. This paper further suggests that there may be a need to establish a method for measuring the fairness of a schedule. This paper concludes with the recommendation that the means of scheduling the most important tournaments be reexamined and that tournaments describe the means by which they will be scheduled.

At the 2008-2009 National Forensics Association (NFA) spring business meeting a motion was made to discuss limiting the entries per event for each team. While those speaking against the motion indicated the commitment of NFA to inclusiveness, those in favor suggested that the size of the tournament made it difficult to schedule. While the motion to discuss was eventually tabled, discussion about the act of scheduling a tournament, especially one as daunting in size as a national level competition, revealed that scheduling was an inherently conflicted task.

Scheduling a large tournament forces the tournament staff to find a balance between catering to the individual and catering to the team. A tournament simultaneously functions as an assessment tool to find the best competitor in each event, the best competitor overall and the best team overall. It is possible to see how the ability to assess individuals and the ability to assess teams might conflict by examining the decision to break brackets and stop competitors from hitting their own teammates. In general breaking brackets measures team success more accurately but measures individual success with less precision.

Additionally any schedule is a balance between time and efficacy. While there are many means of scheduling a tournament, any method of scheduling is improved the more time the tournament staff spend. Some methods are improved simply by checking and double checking and time spend by tournament staff ensures the basic goals of the tournament as an assessment tool are met. However, if large tournaments had clearly stated goals for fairness and balance, even a fully double checked tournament schedule could be completely rescheduled from a different starting point. Comparing two possible schedules for the same event

and choosing the better one insures that more time could always create a better schedule. This means that the tournament staff are always finding a balance between the amount of time they can afford and creating a fair and balanced schedule.

My personal interpretation of the 2008-2009 business meeting and the general disposition of the forensics community suggests that fairness of scheduling is interpreted as having three key components. The first component of fair preliminary rounds is that competitors should not hit competitors from their own team. It is worth mentioning that this criteria cannot be met if any individual school has more students entered in an event than the total number of rooms of competition in the event. The second component is that an individual should not hit another individual more than once in the preliminary rounds of any given event. While at a national tournament this criteria can easily be met, there is the potential that a small tournament will prevent this type of criteria from being met. The third component is that all other decisions, after satisfying the first two rules, should be as random as possible to avoid human intervention. The first two criteria are well established norms within the forensics community that are considered to be best practices. The third criteria stems from the fact that the people scheduling the tournament are members of the forensics community, inevitably bringing with them to the tab room their own expectations and bias, and the desire to make a fair schedule depends on the ability of the scheduling process to isolate the decisions of the staff from the process.

These criteria are well established, frequently voiced by both competitors and tournament staff as valuable, and work well within the forensics community. However, it is already clear that there are several difficulties that intrinsically present themselves in tournament scheduling. For example, it seems paradoxical that tournament staff could decide how to establish the balance between time and efficacy while completely isolating themselves from the decision in the name of randomness. This paradox shadows similar concerns that, "scheduling ... is problematic because judgment calls, peer scheduling" (Littlefield, 1986). I propose a new means of scheduling that makes the job of placing competitors in rooms of six over a period of three or four rounds that makes an effort to resolve the problem of the level to which tournament staff are involved and cater to the ideal of a random schedule. While I admit that scheduling a large tournament takes a lot more than simply figuring out the ordering of competitors in each round, for example the scheduling of which rooms to use and which judges to use, the arrangement of all of the competitors at the tournament seems significantly daunting in large numbers and is the focus of the method presented here. In addition to proposing a new scheduling algorithm this paper attempts to makes sugges-

tions to help complete create what Littlefield and Sellnow (1992) call healthy competition and to help "create a shared vision of what a tournament experience should include for healthy competition (i.e., well scheduled, well managed)" (Hatfield, Hatfield & Carver, 1989).

An Example Current Scheduling Method

The most current published description of the methods for scheduling a large forensics tournament is Peters (1983) description of the NFA grid scheduling system. The NFA scheduling system is described as revolving around sets of six by six grids. Students are first ordered and anonymously transformed into numerical codes independent of any identifying information. Codes are then placed in multiple six by six grids in such a way that students from the same team follow a preset pattern. If these patterns are followed then four rounds of six individuals, in which competitors do not hit the same competitor and do not hit their own teammates, can be scheduled by using each group of thirty-six's rows, columns, diagonally left right and diagonally right left groups. This method clearly meets the first two scheduling constraints, that students cannot hit their own team and cannot hit competitors twice in the same event. Additionally the anonymous transformation and use of numerical codes at the starts attempts to scramble the individual competitors and prevent human intervention.

This method is surprisingly effective at scheduling a large tournament efficiently, in terms of both time and successfully meeting the preestablished scheduling criteria. An interesting interpretation of the amount of time needed to schedule a tournament illustrates the value of a by hand method like this. One way to consider the amount of time to schedule a tournament is to ask how much it would take to schedule if one additional competitor was added. Because the grid system simply works in independent interchangeable blocks of thirty-six, scheduling each separate grid should take the same amount of time as the previous. Thus while each additional competitor adds a burden of an identical amount of time. It is possible to imagine a hypothetically more complex method in which the entire tournament was considered at once and each competitor added exponentially more time to the equation instead of a steady increase. This analysis is analogous to the means of describing complexity frequently found in computer science and referred to as big O notation (Knuth, 1976), the advantage of the grid system is that for n competitors it has a linear complexity $O(n)$.

However, while the grid system swiftly and efficiently meets the first two scheduling criteria, it also illustrates an interesting problem with the issue of randomness. While the grid system may appear to be random it is a partially imperfect system. The grid system can never be truly random because initial placements and team dependent placements in the grid rely on some human intervention. Additionally the process that occurs to create four preliminary rounds insures that the schedules for each round are not independent of each other, a requirement for true randomness. While the process of using arbitrary numbers for individuals should cut down on human intervention, and other dangers of a

non-random schedule, this is not the same as completely meeting the communities expectations for a truly random tournament.

Verbal Slippage and a Random Schedule

A significant portion of the issue relating to the scheduling of a tournament stems from the fact that the term random, especially as used by the community in this instance, has multiple meanings. For example, in the 2008-2009 business meeting, some individuals referred to the grid system as being a random method because it had a random initial condition while described the structured process that scheduled round one and round two. It seems contradictory to be able to predict what will happen from round one to round two successfully and for the schedule to be considered completely random. In order to illustrate what I believe the true goal of the community is, complete randomness, I will examine four words which I believe are all being used interchangeably as the definition for randomness in the discussion of forensics tournament scheduling.

The first definition to consider is that random means any situation that has a probabilistic outcome. For example, rolling a fair die clearly is random under this definition because before the roll the exact outcome is not known and it ultimately will be somewhere between one and six. However, this interpretation also seems to refer to systems in which different outcomes have different probabilities. For example, rolling two dice is still "random" because the sum of the faces is not predetermined but there is a higher chance that a seven will be rolled and a lower chance that an eleven or two will be rolled. Even though these might seem to be two different situations, in both situation the outcome is undetermined prior to the rolling the dice and leads to an interpretation of random as anything where probabilities determine the result. In terms of a schedule a probabilistic schedule would be any schedule in which some kind of shuffling or randomizing process was used at any point in the scheduling regardless of what tools the rest of the process employed.

The second term the community frequently seems to employ as the definition for the word "random" is better referred to as pseudo-randomization. Pseudo-randomization is best thought of as having the appearance of being random regardless of what the actual underlying methods of determining outcomes are. For example, instead of rolling a ten sided die one hundred times in order to to choose random numbers, it might be quicker to simply use the first one hundred digits of the number pi. To an individual who didn't have the first one hundred digits of pi memorized, this would appear to be the result of a random process, as the numbers in pi are fairly well scrambled. It is easy to see why this definition of a pseudo-random process is frequently used for the word "random" in casual conversation because it is based on appearance to the observer. In the terms of scheduling a forensics tournament if the tournament looks scrambled to the competitors and coaches than it is pseudo-random and in casual conversation might be referred to as "random."

Obfuscated, or in conjunction the presence of too much complexity to grasp, is the third interpretation that is sometimes substituted as a definition of the "random" in the phrase a "random schedule." Obfuscated simply means that the underlying process, regardless of what the result looks like, is hidden from the observer. A classic example of obfuscation is referred to as a black box, whatever happens in the black box is obscured from the outside world and any numbers this mysterious box might produce could be the result of a die, a coin toss or one hundred monkeys at typewriters. Frequently this interpretation is employed if things appear too complex or difficult to understand, and thus are made as if a black box to the viewer. Scheduling a large tournament involves arranging a huge number of individuals into multiple rooms over multiple rounds, a process this complex is almost automatically dubbed "random" under this interpretation.

However, I believe that the best interpretation for "random," and the definition that best meets the needs of the community, is a uniformly random distribution. This interpretation is best thought of in contrast to the first interpretation which said that any outcome that is based on probability is random. Uniformly random refers only to probabilistic events that have an equal chance of occurring. For example rolling one die is uniformly random, as one through six are equally likely, but rolling two dice is not uniformly random, because seven has a higher probability of occurring. A uniformly random forensic tournament scheduling process would have an equal chance of arriving at any possible schedule that met the criteria. Examining the grid system again, while it clearly is probabilistic to some extent, looks scrambled to observers and is both complex and happens behind closed doors, it is clear that it does not meet the criteria of uniformly random. Many possible schedules are excluded having a decidedly unequal probability of occurring. For example there can be no schedule where competitors A and B are in the first grid of thirty six students and competitors X and Y are in the second grid of thirty six students and the two pairs compete against each other. I believe that uniformly randomness is the interpretation that the community should embrace as it intrinsically creates the most balance by allowing every possible outcome to occur.

Abstract Scheduling Process

I next developed an ideal scheduling mechanism based on two central ideas, that constraints of the tournament must always be met and that uniform randomness should be privileged as much as possible. The same constraints of the tournament, that no individual competes against an individual from their own team, and that no individual competes against the same person more than once in preliminary rounds of the same event were employed. These criteria are held paramount and the scheduling mechanism is designed to meet these constraints 100% of the time. Because the mechanism is designed to be automated by a computer, randomness is handled by the computers' internal processes. Uniform randomness is employed on the level of the individual, such that whenever an individual needs to be chosen to be placed into a room, every possible individual has an equal chance of being selected. This ensures that the third criteria of uniform randomness is met by the algorithm.

A generalized description of the process is represented by a decision tree (Fig 1) which represents actions as circles and decisions as diamonds. To schedule the algorithm gos through each room in each round, for each room an unconstrained individual is selected at random and placed into the room. If ever in the process an individual needs to be selected to fill a room but there are no individuals who can be placed into the room due to scheduling constraints all scheduled individuals are cleared and the process is restarted. An alternative to this process would be to remove the last individual scheduled backtrack through the schedule in an attempt to free up unconstrained individuals. However, it is unclear how the backtracking effects the uniformly random outcome of the schedule so I have opted to start over anytime there are irreconcilable conflicts.

In order to identify conflicts the process maintains a list of all individuals entered in the event and a corresponding list of blocked competitors for each individual. Thus the set of all constraints in a tournament can be thought of as a set of corresponding pairs of individuals and lists of blocked competitors. At the start of the scheduling process, every individual who shares a team with someone is placed on their blocked list. As the scheduling process continues, every time someone is added to a room they are added to each person's blocked list, and each person in the room is added to their list. Whenever the scheduler resets, the list is reverted the list that contains only the constraints due to school affiliations.

Given the collection of blocked individuals, the easiest way to perform a random selection is to maintain two lists, a list of all unscheduled individuals in the round, and a temporary list of unconstrained individuals for that room. Whenever starting to schedule a room a person is randomly chosen from the list of available individuals for that round, then they are removed from that list. Whenever adding people to a room that already has people in it, a temporary list is made that is the the list of available people in the round with all constrained people removed from it. A randomly selected person for a room that already has people scheduled in it is chosen from this temporary list. This second temporary list also provides a mechanism for testing if irreconcilable conflicts exist, if ever an individual needs to be entered in a room but the list of unconstrained individuals is empty, because all people left in the round have been struck from it, then the scheduling process must start fresh. An example of two steps in this decision process, and the correspondingly maintained and updated lists is included as figure 2.

Implementation

After designing the scheduling process it was implemented using the Java programming language. Java was chosen for both familiarity and computability as it can be run on all operating systems and even in many web applications. Because the scheduler can be thought of as a theoretical model of a tournament, I followed software design pro-

cess borrowed from Gilbert and Troitzsch's *Simulation for the Social Scientist*, which included the following steps: definition, observation, verification, validation and sensitivity analysis. The definition and observation steps involve selecting the target, a successful tournament schedule, and observing its important elements, namely that it is uniformly random and meets the necessary constraints. After coding the scheduling algorithm I began be performing the process of verification. Verification is essentially debugging the program, I confirmed that all the lists were being created and maintained by printing them out at each time step. Additionally I verified that the program when given an input produced an output that looked like a schedule, the functional elements of the scheduler clearly passed visual inspection.

The process of validation was performed using data from the 2008-2009 National Forensics Association national tournament, the 2009-2010 National Forensics Association national tournament and the 2009-2010 American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament. These tournaments were selected as sample entry data because the results had been sent in a digital format making it relatively easy to create a list of all competitors entered in an event and because they present different situations across both time and tournament. Next I selected two events to serve as benchmarks for difficulty. In general across the selected data Prose was the largest event and Rhetorical Criticism/Communication Analysis was the smallest. Additionally these events tended to be those entered to a high level by specific schools mimicking the problem that initiated the entire discussion, individual schools with nearly as many entries as the number of rooms in the event. The 2008-2009 prose data was selected as the final by hand verification and was entered into the scheduling program. The resultant schedule was hand checked to confirm that it was complete and did not violate the given constraints based on team membership and previous rounds. The results of this process suggest that the implementation of the scheduling algorithm successfully schedules an event according to the rules that have been provided.

Finally I tested the sensitivity to initial conditions, in this case initial conditions are the set of all individuals, and their team affiliations, to be scheduled. To do this I began to track the number of times the scheduler reached a set of conditions that forced it to restart before it found a valid schedule and the approximate time taken for to reach a valid schedule. Because of the random method of the scheduler, given a set of individuals that can be placed into a valid schedule, the algorithm will eventually find it. So the measurement of restarts and time represent assessments of the amount of time needed to find a valid schedule. Once these measurements were established, the data from the selected tournaments was entered and scheduled such that one hundred valid schedules were found for each. For each valid schedule I recorded the amount of time in seconds and the number of times the algorithm had to start from scratch. It is worth noting that the actual time taken is dependent on both the computer being used and the other tasks the computer is

performing. This being said these values represent a possible amount of time it might take to schedule an event. Additionally there is a linear relationship between the number of restarts and the time taken implying that number of restarts will correlate with time on any machine, and that we can consider either number to be a rough measure of the difficulty of scheduling an event. The mean of the times required to produce a single valid schedule for Prose and Rhetorical Criticism/Communications Analysis are represented below.

The results suggest several conclusions about the effectiveness of the algorithm in different conditions. First the significantly faster scheduling of AFA events, which typically have a smaller number of competitors per school due to tournament entry limits, suggests that the constraint of competitors per school is the most difficult to deal with. This is further illustrated by the generally increased difficulty of Rhetorical Criticism/Communication Analysis in comparison to Prose. RC/CA in general have fewer total competitors but more competitors per school creating difficult scheduling scenarios.

Tournament	Mean Time
NFA 2009 Prose	28.5 seconds
NFA 2009 RC	187.8 seconds
NFA 2010 Prose	9.8 seconds
NFA 2010 RC	186 minutes
AFA 2010 Prose	.9 seconds
AFA 2010 CA	.7 seconds

Suggestions

The most obvious suggestion from this analysis of tournament scheduling is that tournaments should be more open and transparent with their scheduling mechanisms. Not only will this help create more fair and well understood tournaments, this helps eliminate the illusion of both pseudo-randomness and obfuscated as being actually "random." The movement of the entire forensics community towards a unified definition of random helps to create a single unified assessable goal. Once that goal is determined the best ways to meet it can be constructed. I argue that if the goal of a tournament is to be uniformly randomly scheduled than the process presented and tested here is equivalent to the best possible option.

The further suggestions of this paper are to consider creating mathematical models for measuring the randomness of the tournament. Quantifiable tournament metrics could take multiple forms, but I suggest that all should in some way measure the distribution of the number of times each team competes against each other team. This is partially because I believe that the first two scheduling constraints are designed to regulate the measurement of the success of individuals, but few constraints exist to protect the assessment of team quality. Measurement of the distribution of the number of

times each team hits another team could be performed as simply as with a measure of variance. However, variance provides the a problem in that each team has a different number of competitors and thus it would not be expected that each team actually hit each other team the same number of times. The problem this produces is that it does not allow much in the way of comparison between schedules because the expected variances would actually be radically different.

Instead of variance, one possible measure of distribution would be to perform a chi-squared test for proportions on any schedules number of times any competitor from a team competed against a competitor from another team. While this produces a probability, and thus doesn't completely solve the problem of comparisons posed by variance, the community could arrive on a standard necessary for their tournaments. For example, to be a valid schedule it could be proposed that the collision of teams must have a greater than 95% chance of occurring by random chance.

The final suggestion of this paper is to explore more partially-deterministic, non-uniformly random, scheduling methods such as the grid system. For example, if the community decided that equalizing the number of team collisions was a top priority, a method of manual forcing teams to collide with each other team at the tournament, while still randomizing individual competitors, could be constructed. This could help meet the dual criteria of balancing the individual and the team in addition to balancing the criteria of time and human effort.

If a forced team collision model is not satisfactory to the community, but measurement criteria similar to variance or probability are determined, another option might be to employ a mass scheduling system. If one hundred or one thousand schedules were produced for an event and then mathematically compared to each other, the best produced schedule could be produced that could be interpreted as the most fair by the communities collective standards.

In conclusion, the discrepancies between interpretations of the word random and how it functions as a criteria of suc-cessfully scheduling large forensics tournaments has generated a useful and fruitful discussion regarding automated scheduling. The algorithm proposed and tested here randomizes every possible decision and successfully automates the scheduling process in a fraction of the time that is needed for traditional by hand, and less uniformly random, scheduling methods. I recommend tournament directors consider establishing the criteria they wish to meet in scheduling their tournaments, and if uniform randomness is a valued criteria, then I suggest the deployment of a system similar to the one discussed here.

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Back to the Beginning – Rethinking the AFA-NIET Qualification System

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On July 31, 2008, Professor Dan West (Director of Forensics at Ohio University) presented a paper at the 4th National Developmental Conference on Individual Events, in which he called our attention to the "Culture of Qualifying". West (2008) explained that this obsession with qualifying for the AFA-NIET results in three problems: pulling events from the circuit after qualifying, "hunting" for legs in order to qualify for the NIET, and a decrease in the quality of regular season tournaments. He further contended that the AFA-NIET qualification system needs to be replaced – not modified, but replaced – by a method that better serves the activity.

Naturally, this culture of qualifying is linked to numerous aspects of our activity – to say it's the sole by-product of the at-large qualification system would be to exaggerate the influence of the at-large qualification method. But the leg system is undoubtedly a detriment to the forensics activity. While the leg system has been a topic of debate for years, we have yet to see any substantial progress in re-evaluating how our students qualify for the national tournament. After countless discussions, debates, and arguments, any talk of replacing the leg system has died in committees, and it's time that more progressive action took place. To that end, this paper proceeds with a history of the AFA-NIET qualification methods and their modifications, an overview of the impacts the leg system has on forensics, and a ballot analysis that provides alternative methods for qualifying for the NIET.

The Leg System – A History

Before getting into the numerous alterations the leg system has undergone, it is essential to explore the history of the AFA-NIET. In the Summer 2000 edition of Argumentation and Advocacy, Guy Yates and Larry Schnoor reported a history of the AFA-NIET which highlights important aspects of the tournament that are influential in understanding the problem with the leg system. In 1976, AFA president James Weaver appointed the National Individual Events Tournament Committee to gather information that would be used to create a national individual events tournament sponsored by the AFA. After developing and distributing a survey, the Committee found that the membership of the AFA had a high interest in a national tournament, with a rigorous qualification procedure that would distinguish the AFA from the NFA national tournament and that was consistent with the principles of qualification that the AFA-NDT upheld (Yates & Schnoor, 2000).

The Committee then decided to develop two methods of qualification: the first method required a competitor to place in the top ten percent in an event at a regional qualification tournament. The second method – also referred to as the alternate qualifying system – required a student to place first, second, or third in an event at three tournaments throughout the academic year. At the first AFA-NIET in 1976, 77% of the entries were qualified using the regional tournaments, while only 23% qualified using the alternate system. It was also at this tournament that the Committee defined the alternate qualification system more precisely; a tournament had to have 15 schools in attendance, and a "sliding scale" was used to determine the "legs" that would count for qualification. First place would be a qualifier if there were 10-15 students entered in an event, second place would count if the event had 16-19 students, and third place would count if the event had more than 20 entries. Further, the student had to achieve a cumulative ranking of 9 in a minimum of 3 tournaments. Since then, the alternate system has been modified on numerous occasions. Here is a breakdown of the changes:

1979 – Number of schools required changed from 15 to 12

1981 – 1st through 6th would be qualifiers; sliding scale as follows:
  10-14 entries: 1st place earns qualification leg
  15-19 entries: 2nd place earns qualification leg
  20-24 entries: 3rd place earns qualification leg
  25-29 entries: 4th place earns qualification leg
  30-34 entries: 5th place earns qualification leg
  35+ entries: 6th place earns qualification leg

1982 – Number of schools required changed from 12 to 10

1991 – 1st through 6th are qualifiers, but no more than 50% of entries can earn legs (12 entries were needed for all 6 places to count)

1992 – Cumulative ranking lowered from 9 to 8

1995 – Number of schools required changed from 10 to 9
2004 – Current system, with cumulative ranking of 8:
  1st place: 2-4 entries
  2nd place: 5-8 entries
  3rd place: 9-12 entries
  4th place: 13-16 entries
  5th place: 17-20 entries
  6th place: 21+ entries

The above information comes from a report by Larry Schnoor presented to the AFA-NIET Committee at the NCA convention in 2004.

The evolution of the leg system is interesting in and of itself, but the changes in the dynamics of the national tournament are equally as intriguing. While 77% of the entries at the first NIET were qualified through the regional tournaments, by 2009 this number had dropped to 18%. At-large qualifications, which comprised only 23% of entries at the first NIET, increased to 82% in 2009. In that 33 year time

span, we have seen a complete shift in the predominant method of qualifying, and this shift is not for the best.

The Harms of the At-Large System

Despite innocent intentions, the leg system is impacting numerous aspects of our activity, and most of those impacts are not good. The National Forensic Journal distributed a special issue on wellness in forensics in the spring of 2004, and the journal is full of articles beseeching us as coaches to re-evaluate our own wellbeing in this activity. I think it's obvious to everyone that traveling to tournaments takes a toll on our bodies, and I won't try to argue that the leg system is solely responsible for our unhealthy life choices. But the competitive culture that has resulted from the at-large qualification system does indeed play a significant role in our health and the health of our students. We've seen a dramatic increase in swing tournaments: only three swing tournaments existed during the 1986-1987 season, but this increased to 34 during the 1997-1998 season (Dickmeyer & Schnoor, 1997). Today, most competitors view the 2-day tournament as the exception to the rule, when in reality the swing weekend used to hold that position. And while the benefits and drawbacks of a swing tournament can be debated until the sun burns out, the reality is that swings provide a demanding schedule and minimal down time in exchange for the chance to earn two legs in a single weekend. Furthermore, Clark Olson (2004) draws attention to the severe dropout rate in forensic coaches, explaining that many directors and coaches leave the activity after experiencing high levels of stress and fatigue – essentially, we are burning out our forensic educators.

Next, the leg system inadvertently places more emphasis on competition than education. Anyone who has been involved in this activity will tell you that forensics is both; I happen to be of the "education through competition" mindset. The two are not mutually exclusive entities, but the negative connotation our community has given to the term "showcasing" signifies the imbalance. It has become a common practice to have students pull their events from the circuit once they have earned their three legs, only to take those events out again at tournaments that are designated as "showcase" tournaments. But when a competitor qualifies an event after just three tournaments – which could equate to just two weekends, given the pervasiveness of swing tournaments – they lose out on the continued growth and education that comes in the form of ballots. And we are making this sacrifice so that others can earn the legs they need. Similarly, when we hear stories of students competing with qualified events we often express nothing short of intolerance and hostility (West, 1997). You can argue that the choice rests with the student or the director as to whether they should continue to take out qualified events, but when the rest of the community frowns upon the practice so much, the "choice" seems fairly obvious. The leg system has drastically changed the way we view our competitions, and this change is not leading us in the right direction.

Finally, the leg system has evolved into a direct violation of the intentions of the AFA-NIET. Recall that members of the AFA expressed interest in a national individual events tournament that upheld a rigorous qualification procedure. This led to the NIET's distinguished, elite reputation as the tournament of champions – a true testament to the skill and abilities of the country's most talented speakers. But the drastic flux in at-large qualifications has proven that anyone with adequate resources can qualify for the national tournament. A 1997 survey found that directors from the top 20 schools at the NIET send their students to around 23 tournaments per year (Dickmeyer & Schnoor, 1997). Considering that the leg system only requires three qualifying legs, and these programs travel enough to earn a potential 23 legs per event, it's no wonder the number of at-large entries at the NIET has shot through the roof. Instead of maintaining the kind of rigorous qualification the founding AFA body anticipated, the leg system has made it possible for just about anyone to make it to the national tournament. If you travel enough, and travel to the right tournaments, you can earn your three legs to compete.

Circuit Says! – A Ballot Analysis

The leg system is obviously broken, and I think we've used up our box of band-aids. It's time to replace the leg system with one that more adequately upholds the ideals we're looking for. In 2009, I wrote a persuasion speech and competed with it at the District 4 qualifying tournament, the AFA-NIET, and the NFA national tournament. In the speech, I asked judges for input as to whether or not they agreed, and what they thought would work as a replacement. An analysis of these ballots provided a few suggestions which should serve as a springboard for further consideration.

First, it was interesting to me that the 19 judges who critiqued the speech were split about what to do. Of the 19, 5 judges said they were indeed in favor of replacing the leg system, 2 wanted it to stay the same, and the remaining 12 didn't comment either way. The suggestions offered, however, were very diverse. First, it was proposed that any tournament that grants legs must be a three-round tournament. This would undoubtedly discourage swing tournaments, seeing as a three preliminary round tournament would be impossible to schedule in a single day. Another judge suggested that we stop encouraging our students to pull their qualified events from the circuit, and instead continue to compete with them. A third suggestion was that every school be allowed to send a certain number of entries to the NIET regardless of qualification. Still another judge proposed something similar to the high school forensics' Tournament of Champions, where certain regular season tournaments would function as bid tournaments. A student would have to earn a certain number of "bids", which would differ based on strength, size, and geographic diversity of the tournament, in order to qualify for the NIET.

While all of these suggestions gained from the ballots have merit, combining two ideas is what I propose the AFA-NIET adopt: utilizing multiple regional qualifying tournaments, and an amended percentage rule. Obviously, if the leg system were removed from the qualification procedure,

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a double-Districts system simply wouldn't work under the current structure. The top 10% rule would have to be modified in order to accommodate the significantly larger District tournaments, and ensure that each district be able to send more than 12 competitors per event every year. Another twist could be to use the District and State tournament as the AFA qualifiers, or use the District tournament and create a different regional qualifier. In any case, multiple qualifying tournaments are the best way to solve the leg system crisis.

This plan isn't as easy as it sounds, however. The immediate reaction I get when I bring up the double-districts idea is the argument that the current district divisions are uneven when it comes to size and number of programs. My response to this is simple, but not easy – we need to re-district the country. By re-districting, we can ensure that the district tournaments are more even, and allow the same opportunities to their students. For example, under the current district lines, the qualifying tournaments for Districts 4 and 5 would be drastically different from those of other districts. By re-dividing the country, we can circumvent this problem and establish a system that works.

Conclusion
The AFA is responsible for much of the standardization we've seen in our activity, and while unintentional, the qualification system for the NIET has drastically reshaped forensics for the entire community. The negative impacts of the leg system have caused us to move backwards in our attempt to create a rigorous, educational, and competitive tournament, and an alternative is necessary if we are to continue to move forward. Replacing the leg system will not bring about an end to the weekend tournament, it will not ruin our students' experience, and it most definitely will not destroy forensics. It's time we take the leap that we've needed to take for years and remedy a problem that, while intimidating, is a step in the right direction. On July 31, 2008, Professor Dan West (Director of Forensics at Ohio University) presented a paper at the 4th National Developmental Conference on Individual Events, in which he called our attention to the "Culture of Qualifying". West (2008) explained that this obsession with qualifying for the AFA-NIET results in three problems: pulling events from the circuit after qualifying, "hunting" for legs in order to qualify for the NIET, and a decrease in the quality of regular season tournaments. He further contended that the AFA-NIET qualification system needs to be replaced – not modified, but replaced – by a method that better serves the activity.

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"I Got All Stupid Judges:" A Pedagogical Reframing of the Ballot as Friend, Not Foe

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Abstract

This paper will focus on ballots as pedagogical tools and discuss how we (and our students) can get the most out of them. It is easy for many students to become overwhelmed by the varied and disagreeable comments—or lack thereof ("Good job! 5-18")—they receive from judges, leading them to argue with ballots, rather than engage in constructive dialogue with them. This paper does not ask students to literally talk to their ballots; rather, it seeks to enable us to better serve our students by helping them find a more healthy and productive understanding of the ballot, its intended purpose, and how to effectively interpret and integrate the messages within.

Introduction

During my first semester as a graduate forensic coach, I witnessed something that literally made my jaw drop. We had just returned from one of the first tournaments of the season. I had looked over ballots and was in the process of handing them back to students. There were the typical murmurs and moans as the students—both energized and frustrated by the feedback they received—began poring over the blue half-sheets of paper. Suddenly, one of them let out a loud sigh, crumpled up her ballots, and screamed through gritted teeth, "I GOT ALL STUPID JUDGES!" It was her second tournament. *Then* came the part that really bothered me: she threw her fistful of ballots in the trash and stormed out of the room.

When I reflect back on this experience, it is not the boisterous insult that stands out as being particularly egregious. I can understand a student letting off steam in dramatic fashion—I am, after all, a forensic coach. It was neither her volume nor tone which earned her a place in this paper. The part of this story that burns in my memory is the moment she threw her ballots away, as though they contained nothing of value.

As a new judge who had just spent the better part of a weekend pondering and meticulously scrawling my heart and brain onto such sheets of paper, the reality of this situation hit me particularly hard. How many students like her were out there? How many of the ballots I had so carefully crafted would face a similar demise? Initially, one might respond, "Not very many. I would never tolerate this type of behavior from a student." Surely, the example I shared is extreme; yet, it is important to remember that there are many other routes—however passive—which lead to the same destination. A student never receives their ballots. Another does, but neglects to read them. Yet another looks at them only to see how long their pieces are running. After all, by the time they are caught up on homework, there is no time to make revisions before getting back in the van and heading off to another tournament. In other words, passive neglect of ballots is just as wasteful as actively disposing of them. Our students do not have to physically crumple up their ballots and throw them into a waste receptacle to arrive at this outcome. It stands to reason, then, that as educators, we should be as concerned with the figurative act of throwing away ballots as with the literal one. In both cases, these pedagogical tools are not being allowed to fulfill their intended purpose: to communicate judges' observations, feelings, thoughts, and attitudes about a given performance.

Outcomes

The message I seek to convey in this paper is much easier in theory than in practice: if we want our students to take their ballots seriously—and we should—then we must lead by example. We must be willing to set aside our preconceived notions about particular judges or judge characteristics, conceal our deeply-rooted stereotypes and event expectations, and camouflage some of our longstanding personal biases in order to foster our students' personal development as thinking performers. As both judges and coaches, we must approach each and every ballot as an opportunity for student growth, sacrificing some of our own self-righteousness for the sake of pedagogy. (I never said this would be easy!) Only then can we expect the students within our activity to do the same.

Who's Opinion Matters?

By its very nature, forensics is an insular activity. We see and interact with many of the same individuals, weekend after weekend and at nearly every tournament we attend. As a result, it can be easy to develop expectations for how the many variables will play out. We make assumptions about coaches, judges, and competitors, and often, it takes an act of Larry Schnoor to convince us otherwise. Surely, it is only natural to try and reduce uncertainty by identifying and making predictions about as many variables as possible; however, it is important to consider the ways in which this tendency limits our growth as educators, as well as the growth of our students. One of the most common ways this scenario plays out is when a student is judged by someone whose opinion they or their coach do not value. Renz (1991) acknowledges this, stating, "After discovering the source of particular ballot comments, it can be tempting to discount the comments from an 'inexperienced,' 'less qualified,' or 'extremist' judge" (p. 167). I would add to this list a judge with whom we or our students have had negative experiences, either in or out of rounds. One of the most common examples I hear is the student who says, "I had this judge before and they hated me." Such a statement reflects not only an overly personalized reading of the ballot, but also a larger tendency to pigeonhole judges into being either for us or against us. While it is tempting to discount ballots written by individuals whose influence on our students' speeches we would prefer to limit, this "temptation should be resisted, since to ignore or disparage ballots from any writer is equivalent to rejecting the validity of another's perceptions, rejecting the reality of multiple perceptions" (Renz, 1991,

pp. 167-168). This brings up an important question: when it comes to ballots, whose opinion matters?

It stands to reason that, as coaches, we should encourage our students to review their ballots with the same care and respect we would like our own ballots to receive in the hands of the students we judge. Just as we feel we have valuable insight to share as judges, so too do the individuals judging our students. The idealist in me would like to believe that everyone's opinion is equally valuable, and that each and every judge will provide our students with significant feedback. However, like many within the community, I am adept at silencing this voice. Thus, I propose a compromise in which we approach every ballot as though it has the *potential* to offer us something worthwhile—regardless of who wrote it or any other circumstances—while understanding deep down that some ballots will be far more beneficial than others. It is my view that a strict good/bad dichotomy, when applied to ballots, leads coaches and competitors alike to disregard many ballots containing potentially important and meaningful feedback.

What Constitutes a "Bad" Ballot?
I feel it is time to make an important admission: I am not so naïve as to believe there are no bad ballots. They exist. We have all seen them. That said, I propose a much narrower definition of what constitutes a bad ballot than the one embraced by most people within our activity. For the purposes of this paper, I contend that this negative label is only applicable to ballots containing flagrant errors, no content, or material of an offensive nature. Judges make mistakes. Many of us have perhaps seen ballots where the student's name does not correspond to other details of the ballot. (An example might be a comment which reads, "I liked the part where you fed the cats," written on the ballot of a student whose piece has nothing to do with animals.) Obviously, written feedback about someone else's piece is of no use to the student whose name appears on the ballot. Another example of such a ballot might be the result of a judge who does not understand the ranking and rating system, perhaps ranking a round backwards. While there may be no way of knowing for sure when such an event takes place, the result is a ballot that does not convey the judge's actual intent, thus potentially invalidating the overall effect of the ballot.

The second type of bad ballot I will address is the blank or nearly-blank ballot. As both a competitor and coach, I have consistently found empty ballots to be the most irksome. "Good job," one might read in its entirety. Combine this with a low rank and you have yourself one extra delicious dish of student frustration. Such ballots offer neither competitive nor educational benefits, yet remain the most common type of bad ballot.

An offensive ballot, on the other hand, might contain *too much* information or comments of an inappropriate nature. Again, many of us can think of examples of such ballots, on which judges fail to properly filter their comments through a constructive lens, resulting in statements that are insulting or offensive to competitor, coach, or others. There is some gray area here, but I am speaking specifically of ballots containing comments that would be universally viewed as obscene, offensive, or inappropriate. A relatively tame example might go something like this: "This speech sucks so bad I want to poke my eyeballs out."

I am well aware that this understanding of bad ballots is narrower than the definition most—if not all—coaches and competitors adhere to. It is easy to apply this label to a wide range of ballots that we do not see serving their purpose; however, such an approach leads us as coaches and students down a slippery slope of dismissing any ballot we disagree with. Certainly, many a ballot will contain individual comments which could be dismissed as bad, but it is important to keep in mind that these ballots may also contain a variety of useful comments laden with helpful information. One bad comment does not void an entire ballot. We must be careful to not discount ballots simply because they contain one or a handful of individual comments we find disagreeable. Constructive and useless comments can, and often do, coexist on ballots.

Helping Students Get the Most out of Ballots
The implication of this conservative understanding of bad ballots is that most ballots—and far more than is typically believed—contain at least *something* of value to our students. As such, one of our top priorities should be to help our students seek out those bits of insight. I propose a goal for us as educators to help our students develop not only greater appreciation for the feedback they receive at tournaments, but the ability to sift through a variety of comments, read between the lines, reflect critically, and implement changes they feel will strengthen their performances. These are learned skills with educational outcomes, and as such, teaching them should be a top priority.

This is not to say that our students must adhere to every bit of advice they get on a ballot; nor does it limit our role in the coaching process. In fact, I would contend that this proposal asks for quite the opposite. It asks *more* of coaches by encouraging us to present ourselves not as inerrant authorities on all that is good, but as opinionated individuals in a fluid activity, who are still open to new ideas and recognize that we have much to learn. Having begun my coaching career as one of several coaches who shared responsibilities for all events, I have witnessed the frustration of students faced with contradictory advice from multiple credible sources. From this experience, I came to understand the importance of framing my coaching advice as an opinion. I would present my case to a student, so to speak, explaining as best I could *why* I felt the way I did about a particular bit of advice, but reminding them that they had ultimate control over their events. Not only does this approach provide students with a much needed sense of ownership over their pieces, but it promotes critical reflection by engaging students in the decision-making process and encouraging them to always reflect on information, regardless of its source. This approach to coaching is not always easy, but the pedagogical benefits are difficult to overlook.

Reframing the Ballot as Friend, Not Foe

With our newly refined notion of what constitutes a bad ballot and the accompanying belief that all other ballots have the potential to contain truly beneficial ideas, we can now get down to the true goal of this paper, inherent in its title. As educators, we must help our students develop and maintain a positive relationship with their ballots. This relationship must be rooted in respect and the desire to improve, not just as competitors but as thinking performers. Our students must learn to regard the ballot not as an opposing force which is to be debated and discarded, but as a friend with whom they may share constructive and thoughtful dialogue. In other words, they should develop a friendship with their ballots, recognizing that they will still have differences but expecting primarily good things to result from the partnership.

A fulfilling student-ballot relationship is not easy to come by. Consider a student who is running four events at a two-round, two-flight swing tournament. Even if they advance to no final rounds, they will receive written feedback on sixteen performances over the course of two days. Sixteen ballots, four per event, can equate to a lot of opportunity for reflection and heightened understanding on the part of the student. Surely, some of these ballots will prove more helpful than others, but the point is that there is an abundance of feedback available to our students, feedback from a larger audience of individuals with unique talents, expectations, experiences, and expertise. These individuals are eager to provide feedback, and for students seeking to hone their skills, this feedback should be regarded as a gift of friendship.

A Note on the Value of a "Hired" Opinion

This issue ultimately boils down to a matter of perception. While I am not so bold as to claim expertise in the fine art of open-minded-ballot-reading, I can say with certainty that it is a worthwhile goal, and one I plan to actively pursue. As coaches and mentors, it is natural for us to want ultimate control over our students' educational experiences. We all have our own perceptions of the activity and its goals, and we go about accomplishing these objectives in different ways. Obviously, we will follow the pedagogical path which leads most directly to the specific outcomes we desire for our students. Yet, no matter how much we think we have it figured out, we must never lose sight of the democratic nature of our activity. Forensics is not just about reaching individuals, but about reaching entire audiences of individuals. Thus, any coach or student who claims to have all the answers is neglecting the very blood which pumps through the forensic artery. If we are to claim that forensics has benefits which extend beyond ourselves, then we must make sure our activity retains its relevancy. The fastest way to lose this is by devaluing all opinions removed from our own belief system.

Moreover, our students reflect our ideals. Thus, it is imperative that we lead by example in our efforts to promote positive student perceptions of ballots. One common situation we encounter, which serves as an excellent example of how we can adjust our own perceptions to influence our students, is the way in which we regard hired judges. As forensic insiders, it is easy for us to think of hired judges evaluating our students as less than ideal. I, too, was guilty of making this association between contentious ballots and hired judges—that is, until I became one. There is nothing quite like moving a thousand miles out of your district and having no team affiliation to change your view on "hireds." Every time I wrote "X" on a ballot next to my name, I faced the reality that my twelve years in the activity were obsolete. My currency was no good in this new place.

This is an experience I will undoubtedly take with me as a coach, one who will again have the privilege of writing a school affiliation on my ballots. I will encourage my students to think of their unaffiliated judges as they would student competitors—unfamiliar does not equal bad. In fact, we should value this outside perspective as it keeps us in touch with reality by providing a much-needed dose of "real world" opinion. Renz (1991) touches on this by noting the value of the minority opinion:

> There is, of course, a competitive reward for improving the sense of audience. It is outweighed by the educational value of recognizing that every audience member has a right to an independent perception of, and reaction to, the presentation and that responding to the majority reaction is not necessarily the wisest approach. (p. 168)

Rather than discounting the ballot of an unaffiliated judge, we should remind our students (and ourselves) that the goal of forensics is to build skills that will serve our students long after their brief stint of eligibility has expired. If those who succeed in our activity fail to succeed out of it, forensics loses its practicality and becomes a purely competitive forum. By thinking through issues such as this and sharing alternate interpretations with our students, we are encouraging them to keep open minds and promoting a healthier student-ballot relationship. This is just one example of how we might successfully shift student perceptions in a more positive direction.

Student Application and Advice for Forensic Educators

As educators, there are additional approaches we can take and tips we can pass on to our students which will help them capitalize on the benefits of an open-minded approach to ballots. Again, I will hold to the friendship analogy, identifying four facets of any healthy friendship that I feel are particularly relevant to the student-ballot relationship. The following are things we should encourage our students to do: keep an open mind—every judge, every round; avoid taking ballots personally; read between the lines; and approach each ballot as an opportunity for positive personal growth.

First and foremost, just as friends must keep open minds when interacting with one another, our students must take a similar approach going into every round and when reviewing every ballot. If students do not perceive a judge to be credible during their round, they will be less likely to re-

spect that judge's ballot. Thus, we should remind students that different judges have different processes and perspectives. Some write during a speech, some after. Some write a lot, while others can make an ink pen last a decade. Students need to be reminded that even if they think they know what a judge is thinking or writing, they may well be wrong. I have heard stories of judges eating meals, falling asleep, running out of ink, not watching the speaker, sifting through other ballots, and so on. This reflects more on the judge than it does on the student's performance. Frankly, some judges do not make very good audience members; yet, it is wrong for students to assume that they know how such behavior will affect the outcome of a round or the keenness of a judge's insight.

Furthermore, we must remind students that each round is different, and judges frequently change their minds about a given performance from one day to the next. Aside from giving students a more positive outlook for the round, this way of thinking promotes the pedagogical understanding of the value of live performance, in which new circumstances *should* make each performance unique. Students have nothing to lose by approaching each round with an open mind; on the contrary, they are likely to have a more positive experience by focusing on the one thing they can control—themselves.

This open-mindedness leads directly to the second key, which is to avoid taking ballots personally. As in all true friendships, the advice students receive in rounds should ultimately seek to help them. As such, this should be the underlying understanding going into their interactions with friends, or in this case, ballots. While honesty is not always the easiest thing to hear, it is the shortest path toward enlightenment. As competitors, then, we must encourage our students to interpret their ballots pedagogically, rather than personally.

As matters of interpretation are concerned, it is also imperative that students learn to read between the lines. In our face-to-face interactions with friends, we have a host of subtle cues to consider beyond the verbal text exchanged. Similarly, when reviewing ballots, students should be willing to *search* for meaning. Renz (1991) points out that "[b]y reading between the lines, the coach and student can use ballots to discover the spot where a problem exists and invent their own solution to the problem" (p. 170). Judges do not always know exactly how to articulate their thoughts. Rather than disregarding comments which are seemingly unclear, students will benefit far more if they situate themselves in the seat of the judge and attempt to garner clues as to what the judge may have meant by a particular comment as it relates to the ballot as a whole.

Finally, we must encourage our students to approach each and every ballot as a chance to improve their performance by adapting to feedback from others, a necessary skill in just about every aspect of life. In relationships, jobs, classes, and the like, students will constantly be faced with feedback—both positive and negative. It is how they adapt to this feedback that determines how much they will be able to grow as individuals. The same is true within forensics.

In the end, there is a direct correlation between the quality of the written feedback our students receive and the opportunities they have for growth. Along with reconsidering the ways in which we read ballots, I would urge us as forensic educators to do the same for the ballots we *write*. While this paper is primarily concerned with the ways in which we interpret ballots, it is worth taking a brief moment to reiterate our other role in this process—that of critic. In addition to helping our own students find meaning in the words of other judges, we are responsible for providing the feedback that our colleagues will help their students interpret. It is with this in mind that we must remember to hold ourselves accountable for the ballots we write. This paper is not the forum for a detailed description of what I (or anyone else) see as the ideal ballot. Rather than arguing for specific components or proposing guidelines, I will opt for something much less formulaic but equally identifiable. As forensic educators, we should strive to write ballots we would want our students to receive.

Conclusion

One of the most beautiful things about forensics is that it allows students to give dozens, or even hundreds, of performances for audiences large and small. It demands that students not only create and invent, but recreate and reinvent, again and again, each time in a uniquely intimate space. Over the course of the competitive season, a student may collect hundreds of ballots. These ballots are an essential component of our students' personal development, as they provide written feedback from judges of all different backgrounds and experiences. As Renz (1991) states, "Throughout the course of a year, the ballots begin to represent a composite 'universal audience,' not just of those most able to make reasoned decisions, but a collection of varied interests in the issues being discussed" (p. 168). In this way, ballots have the potential to change not only speeches, but the students giving them. They impact our students' development as competitors, but more importantly, they have the power to make our students better thinkers, scholars, performers, and people. It is our job as forensic educators to make certain that our students are learning to take full advantage of these abundant tools.

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Rummaging Through Cumes: What Existing Results Data for LD at the NFA National Tournament Can Tell Us About Tournament Design

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Abstract

The top seeded LD competitor entering out-round competition has lost their first out-round in each of the last two NFA National Tournaments. This anecdote highlights the immensely dynamic nature of the event and, perhaps, begins to question the sanctity of out-round seeding. In order to better understand the nature of preliminary rounds, their importance in deciding who will advance to out-rounds, and how many of them are actually necessary, it is imperative that we dissect the results from recent tournaments and work toward creating a more fair and competitive tournament. In this paper, I use results data from the 2009 and 2010 NFA National Tournaments to understand how rounds 5 and 6 impact out-round seeding for both individuals and their teams so that we can consider carefully the effect of moving to a 4-round tournament.

Introduction

The spring, 2009 NFA business meeting at Drury University introduced to the community the continuing problem of finding a manageable and pedagogically useful way to implement LD debate at the national tournament. NFA President Larry Schnoor noted that this section of the business meeting was designed to encourage discussion and ideas and numerous members provided suggestions for how to best solve the issue. While the various approaches presented represented very thoughtful consideration of some issues associated with education and budget, note that very little of the discussion was motivated by collected and analyzed data. It is our hope that this paper provides some profiles of existing data on LD that will help create an even more informed debate on the topic.

As the sudden emergence of this debate would predict, there has been relatively little research conducted on how LD should be implemented at the National Tournament. The vast majority of research surrounding LD deals with more blatantly controversial issues like judging philosophy (see Bile 1996; Burkholt & Diers 2004), debate theory (see Abrams & Novak 1997), and event accessibility (see Shelton & Patterson 1997; Minch 2002; Millsap & Millsap 2006). Very little of this kind of research is useful in assembling useful suggestions for administrative changes to the event akin to those suggested during the aforementioned business meeting.

This paper, therefore, attempts to close this gap in the literature by formulating realistic administrative solutions based upon their predicted impact on debate itself. This is done by evaluating the importance of late prelim rounds on prelim seeding and evaluating how that change in seeding is likely to affect out-round performance. Maintain that if a shorter tournament is a viable alternative, it would help make room for several of the suggestions posed by attendees of the business meeting.

Method

In this paper, treat the preliminary rounds (prelims) as an evaluative tool designed to determine the caliber of debaters for use in selecting the best 32 debaters to enter out-rounds. As such, this tool is subject to questions of reliability and validity, even if those concepts take on slightly different forms in context.

Because of the remarkable accessibility brought about by the digital publication of the 2009 NFA LD results, it became possible to construct a reasonably simple computer program to parse that data and begin to analyze it deeply. As a result, the following statistical analysis is done exclusively on the 2009 data. The 2010 data, though published in digital form, was not compatible with text parsing making its analysis vastly more arduous. To accommodate this fact, the statistical analysis of the 2009 data will be followed by an anecdotal analysis of the 2010 data to address similarities and differences between the sets.

The Construct

As the National Tournament is designed at some foundational level to find and award the best competitor in any given event, it seems reasonable to suppose that the purpose of L.D. prelims is to sort debaters based on skill. In this conception of the event, the prelims become a measurement tool designed to evaluate debater skill. The most skilled debaters are then selected to engage in a single-elimination tournament to establish a champion.

It is important to note that, while much of our discussion will surround debater skill, the construct is not necessary for the statistical analysis to be useful. The analysis of data below discusses real numbers and stable predictions, regardless of what the motivator of those predictions is. The construct simply acts as a justification for the nonspuriousness of the relationships established and as a foundation for our hypotheses. If debater skill is a thing that exists, than it ought to impact how quickly debaters arrange themselves by skill in prelims and how accurately prelims predict out-round success.

Reliability

We use the term 'reliability' to refer to the power of prelims to hold rankings relatively constant after a certain number of rounds have been finished. If prelims are designed to accurately rank debaters in terms of skill, then the debaters' rank should become relatively steady as the number of rounds increases. This notion of reliability deviates from most commonly accepted approaches to the topic (Schutt 2009:135-8). That said, it is the only available mechanism to evaluate reliability absent a second sample or another existing metric for evaluating a debater's skill and is at least

conceptually related to a foundational notion of test-retest reliability.

In order to give several useful profiles of the data, I compute the mean distance traveled (MDT) along the rankings by debaters between any two rounds. I predict that the MDT will decrease as the number of rounds increases and that average distance traveled will be particularly low for top-tier debaters during the last three rounds.

Validity
Validity usually describes the extent to which a measurement tool is actually measuring what it set out to understand. I am looking to see if this tool is actually picking out top-tier debaters so that they can compete against each other in out-rounds. This is a remarkably difficult task, as there does not seem to be a quantifiable metric for debater skill.

I, therefore, ground our meaning of validity in the formulation of a useful criterion. In this case, I am looking to see whether prelim ranking is a reasonable predictor of out-round success. As Carmines and Zeller (1979) note, criterion-related validity "has the closest relationship to what is meant by the everyday usage of the term" (p. 17). Our community tends to share the notion that those who are successful at national out-round competition tend to be among the most skilled debaters at the tournament. Moreover, data about prelims as a predictor of out-round success can be useful to policymakers within the event even absent our construct.

In order to allow for quantitative analysis of ranking data, I assign ranks to debaters based on their placement during out-rounds as the maximum rank they could have been given which round they lost in. A semifinalist, for example, acquires a rank of 3, as only 2 debaters advanced farther than them.

Of particular interest to us is a category of debaters who would not have broken if the tournament ended after 4 rounds, but broke as a result of the final two rounds. If this group of debaters did particularly well in out-rounds, then it was of critical importance that they be in the top 32 for prelims to have effectively found the top debaters. In essence, I evaluate the validity of a 4-round version of the tournament as being inversely related to how far this group of debaters advanced as a result of rounds 5 and 6. In doing

so, I hypothesize that both the 4- and 6-round tournaments will be reasonable predictors of out-round success.

Sample
2009 was the first year after which NFA released all of the national's results in a digital form. As this paper is meant only as a pilot study on relatively accessible data, the results from this national tournament is the entire sample (R83). Because I have a particular interest in those debaters who break to out-rounds as a result of prelim success, I break this sample into several subgroups. The first subgroup consists of the debaters who broke to out-rounds at the tournament which consists of the top 32 ranks after 6 prelims (R32). I then further bifurcate this group into R16 and R8, the top 16 and 8 debaters respectively. Our construct would indicate that R8 represents a uniquely skilled set of debaters.

2009 Results
Reliability tests demonstrated that MDT decreased as rounds progressed for every sample. A linear regression on R83 revealed that round number and MDT were inversely correlated with $r^2=0.97$ and $p < 0.005$ with the average debater moving only 9.24 places between rounds 5 and 6. Further analysis revealed that the average member of R16 moved only 12.5 spots between rounds 4 and 6, meaning they must have been in the top 32 after round 4. Additionally, the average member of R8 moved only 5.75 spots between rounds 4 and 6, indicating they were already at an elite ranking after round 4.

When correlating R83 MDT values with round number, the correlation yielded an unbelievable $r = 0.98$. This result suggests that there is a strong source of biased error in these MDT values. This error is best understood as the inability to change one's rank during later rounds because of the diversity of records. A win when someone is 0-1 is much more likely to cause a drastic shift in their ranking than a win when someone is 3-2. Correcting for this error would require a complex application of combinatorics which is not prudent for our analysis. This biased error would not, however, be near enough to explain the immense rigidity demonstrated in R8.

When I compared prelim ranking with out-round ranking, I found several positive correlations. Round 4 rankings correlated positively with out-round rankings for R32 with $r = 0.36$ and $p < 0.02$. Round 6 rankings correlated positively with out-round rankings for R32 with $r = 0.41$ and $p < 0.01$.

	Round 1-2	Round 2-3	Round 3-4	Round 4-5	Round 5-6
R83	15.96	13.44	12.52	11.46	9.24
R32	16.13	13.03	12.94	10.13	7.25
R16	11.94	11.38	8	9.94	6.19
R8	13	7.13	5.25	5.25	3

Figure 1 – MDT by round for all samples.

Discussion

This study found that prelims are a reasonable predictor of out-round success. I note that both 4- and 6-round versions of the national tournament predict out-round success within reasonable parameters. There are, however, some concerns that need to be addressed before concluding that a 4-round tournament would have been sufficient.

First, I should address a common concern that it takes several prelims to ensure that the best debaters have risen to their appropriate rank. Here, the data is very clear. R8 contained all four semifinalists and two of the four non-advancing quarterfinalists. Moreover, every member of R8 would have broken had the tournament been ended after *any round beyond the first*. There are two members of R8 who would not have been in the top 16 after four rounds and they lost in octo-finals and quarterfinals respectively. All of this suggests that it took extremely few rounds to isolate the most skilled debaters atop the rankings.

These results call into question a fundamental assessment of value at the national tournament. While this paper advocates that highlighting the best debaters should be the focus of the national tournament, it is reasonable to suggest that isolating and rewarding the top 32 debaters in a thorough and complete way is also a valuable task. Our data suggests that a choice between a 4- and 6-round tournament is fundamentally a choice between these two kinds of recognition with the 4-round tournament aimed solely at efficiently isolating the very best debaters to ensure that they are in out-rounds.

Next, it seems reasonable to contend that *r*-values of 0.41 and 0.36 fall below a significant threshold. Given the degrees of freedom in this calculation, that would be a difficult claim to justify. Moreover, these values for *r* are arbitrarily lowered by an inability to create a smooth ranking system for out-round results. Because *all* of the double-octo-finalists are ranked the same, there are large clumps in the data that arbitrarily skew the slope of the best-fit line against the correlation we're hoping to establish. Figure 2 (below) helps to illustrate this point by showing how the best-fit line dodges the most convincing pieces of data in the lower-left section of the scatter plot.

Finally, one might be tempted to argue that those individuals who advanced to the top 32 as a result of rounds 5 and 6 (who would not have broken in a 4-round tournament) had an important impact on out-rounds. The data does not support such a contention. Of the nine debaters for whom this was the case, seven of them lost their double octo-final round and the remaining two lost their octo-final round. This data suggests that out-rounds from quarterfinals on would not have been significantly affected by ending prelims early.

Figure 2 – Correlation data for criterion-validity analysis.

Applying Data From 2010

The analysis of the 2010 data can only really be done at a 6-round level, as creating seedings for 4-round tournaments would require the data to be vastly more manipulable. That being said, the 2010 data does shine a very interesting light on the sanctity of the bracket in a 6-round tournament, something the community has not yet had a good chance to discuss.

Unlike the 2009 results, no member of the 2010 top 8 group advanced past quarterfinals. In fact, five of the eight lost in octo-finals or earlier. This includes the first- and second-seeded debaters who both lost their double octo-final rounds. One might notice that this is not unprecedented, as the first-seeded debater in 2009 also lost her first out-round debate. Several coaches on the circuit have correlated this early loss to the 6-0 first-seed being forced to debate the top-speaking 3-3 in double-octo-finals. After all, the top-speaking 3-3 seems much more dangerous in doube-octo-finals than the bottom-speaking 4-2. This proved insufficient in 2010 when both the top 3-3 and the bottom 4-2 won their double-octo-final round. This year was particularly bad for a linear regression because the 32-seed won the entire tournament.

This tremendous variability among the top 16 (see Figure 4 below) suggests that the seeding system for out-rounds is not accurately serving as a predictor of success among top debaters. As there is little that can be done to change the seedings acquired by competitors, it seems reasonable to consider other policy implications of this obvious imperfection. First, the NFA LD tournament might consider breaking brackets for out-rounds, as there is not a good reason for forcing someone to retain their seed if that seed is an arbitrary variable. Second, this could serve as reasonable (albeit disheartening) evidence that the imperfections in a 4-round tournament are not unique to the smaller tournament, further justifying a shortened prelim schedule.

The most predictable and consistent part of the 2010 data was the out-round result for any debater seeded between 18 and 29. All of these debaters lost the double-octo-final rounds making the 17-, 31-, and 32-seed the only bottom-half debaters to emerge from the first elimination round. An inspection of each of these debaters' performance in rounds 5 and 6 shows a large number of either very high (at or above 28) or very low (at or below 22) speaker points awarded during those rounds. This would seem to hint that the 2009 data's demonstration of the ability of rank variability to predict out-round success is supported

Below are two graphs that are particularly telling. Figure 3 shows how well seeding predicted performance in 2010 and demonstrates a trend line that looks remarkably similar to that in Figure 2. This must be because of the consistent losses by seeds 18-30, because Figure 4 shows an inverted relationship if we exclude this low-seed population.

Figure 3 – Correlation data for 2010 rankings
Figure 4 – Correlation data for 2010 rankings for the top 16

debaters

Conclusion

In many ways, it is not the goal of this paper to provide rigid conclusions. Instead, the paper concludes with a series of questions that the LD community at large ought consider in order to properly address worries identified in the introduction: Is there a reason why we have created a tournament with 6 prelim rounds instead of 4 or 8? Is that reason grounded in any LD-specific analysis?

- Does the lack of seeding sanctity exhibited during the 2010 nationals call into question NFA LD policy on breaking brackets?
- Does the strong correlation between consistency and out-round success justify a new ranking system that is based on something besides win/loss?
- And finally: What else would we like to learn from available data?

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Round 6 Rank vs. Out-Round Rank

Round 6 Rank vs. Out-Round Rank, 2010
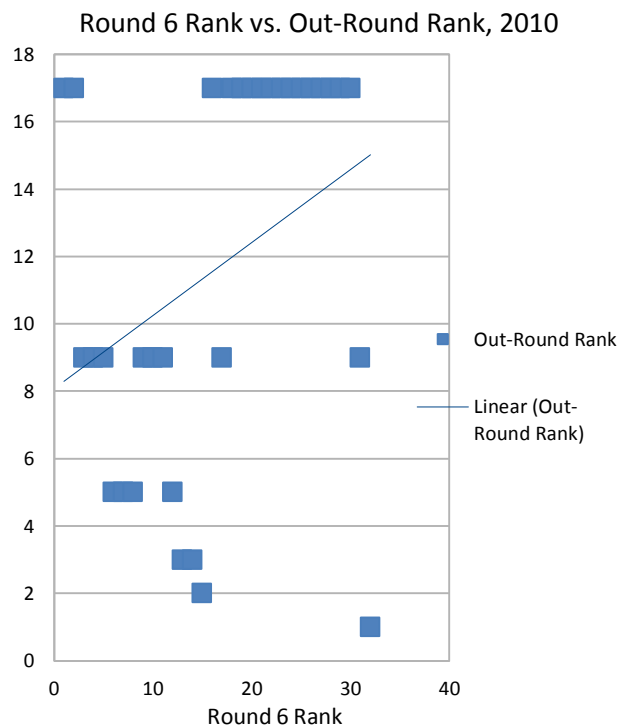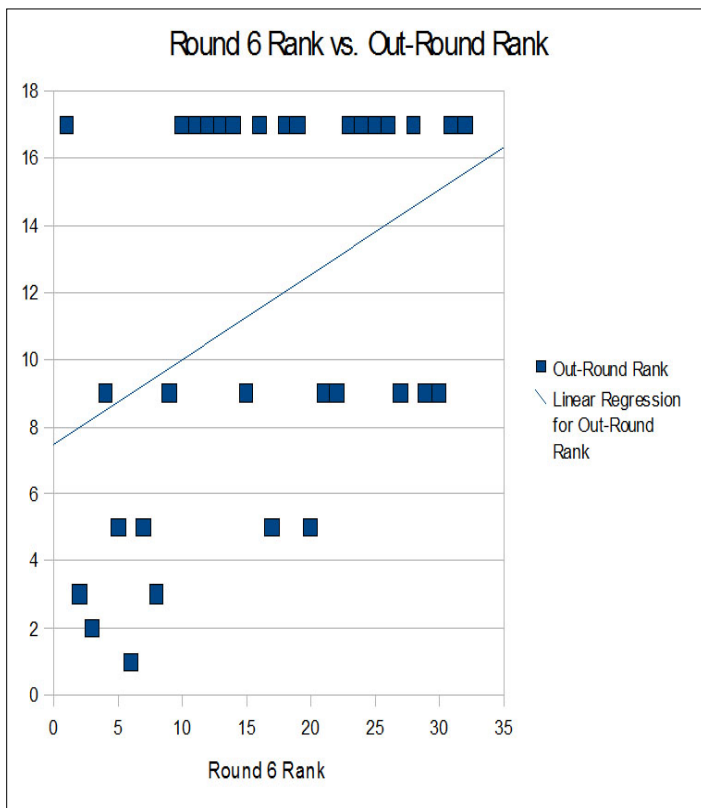
Round 6 vs. Out-Rounds for Top-16, 2010
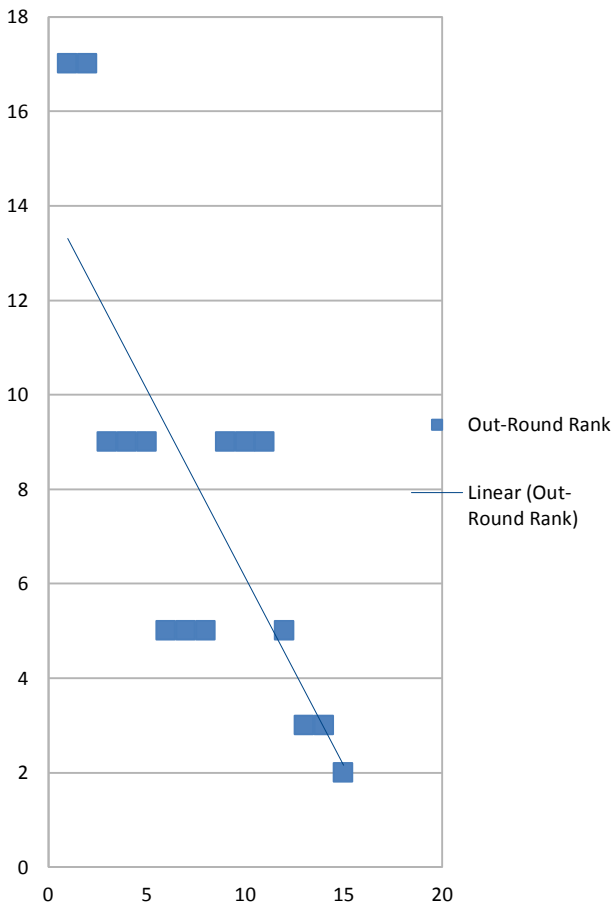
Finding the Prescription for What Ails the Forensics Community
A Deeper Examination of Burnout of Directors of Forensics1

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Being part of a forensics team in any capacity requires a certain amount of rigor that often times is much greater than one expects. Williams and Gantt (2005) compiled a small laundry list of tasks that a DOF must attend to; the list included: "handle[ing] significant or all coaching duties, plan travel arrangements, coordinate team functions, monitor individual growth, produce[ing] public relations efforts directed toward the department, college, university or local community" (p. 54). As reported by Rives and Klopf (1965), the general sentiment as to why DOFs retire was directly related to time, workload, travel demands, compensation, institution and departmental support, competition, and ethical concerns. Gill (1990) noted that issues surrounding travel, training, and competition were correlated to satisfaction; however, whether or not these correlated positively or negatively was not revealed in the study. Gill's (1990) concluding thoughts were that more studies ought to be conducted in areas that examined the "pragmatics of day-to-day living as a coach and less concerned with variables such as ethics and competitiveness" (Gill, 1990, p. 187).

Since Gill's (1990) study was published, several former DOFs have stepped forward to discuss their concerns with the forensics community in regards to the healthiness of the DOF lifestyle. Leland (2004) discussed the physical ramifications of a tournament season upon his health. He noted that the hours spent preparing his students for tournament, led to a marginal diabetic condition, weight problems, elevated blood pressure, and a potential ulcer. Dickmeyer (2002) argues that the length of a typical forensics season has a measurable impact on the overall health (relational, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and career) of the DOF. For many teams the official forensics season begins anywhere from mid September, and finishes sometime in April. However, off-season tournaments have become more prevalent in order to provide students with ways in which to practice their pieces and receive feedback prior to the official season start time. Dickmeyer (2002) continues by writing, "Individual events coaches are at their 'unhealthiest' when traveling and participating in tournaments" (p.58). This is due to little or no time for exercise, sleep, eating properly, nicotine use, and overindulgence in caffeinated beverages or alcohol (Richardson, 2005; Littlefield & Sellnow, 1992). Ann Burnett (2002) goes so far as to say, "Forensics is a dead end job" (p.79). This is due to the fact that it is difficult for DOFs to strike a balance between the pull of academic research, the ability to meet the demands of a tenured position, and maintain a healthy personal life. All three of these former coaches cite time constraints as indicators towards their burnout, as well health (physical, mental, spiritual, academic) concerns. These personal accounts of burnout lend themselves nicely to Gill's (1990) suggestion that research ought to be completed to uncover methods of job sustainability within the forensics community. Burnout is the feelings of anxiousness, stress, fatigue or frustration brought on by a commitment to a cause or way of life (Maslach, 2001; Littlefield & Sellnow, 1992). Burnout has the potential to impact one's self-identity, personal goals, and professional goals due to, "intense reactions of anger, anxiety, restlessness, depression, tiredness, boredom, cynicism, guilt...and in extreme cases, nervous breakdown" (Richardson, 2005, p.108). Maslach, et. al., (2002) cites emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal achievement as the underlying causes to burnout. As noted in Dickmeyer (2002), often times DOFs are unable to attain personal and professional accomplishment and/or proper professional evaluation due to their commitment to the forensics team. This is an example of what Maslach, et. al. (2002) describe as reduced personal achievement. Maslasch et. al. (2001) has found that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are two large factors in how positively a person views their personal life. Upon retiring from their positions, Leland (2004), Dickmeyer (2002) and Burnett (2002) note that the quality of life they experienced became better.

One has to wonder if the effects of burnout are so apparent within the forensics community, why do DOFs continue to be involved in their coaching positions. It seems that both the DOFs and the students are motivated by something more than trophies and certificates. West and Deci (2008) suggest that the motivation that is fueling the forensics community is purely intrinsic. They suggest that all people have innate psychological needs, which become the basis of their personal and intrinsic motivation. When our personal and psychological needs are not being met, that person then begins to experience burnout. (Maslach et. al., 2002) These needs include competence (Harter, 1978; White, 1963), relatedness (Reis, 1994) and autonomy (deCharms, 1968). It was the failure to meet these needs that caused Leland (2004), Dickmeyer (2002), Burnett (2002) and many others to retire from their jobs as DOF.

In the past several years studies have been published in regards to how to motivate students. These studies have found that teachers are able to foster the growth of intrinsic motivation merely by giving students responsibility in the classroom. Bowman (2007) suggests that there is a correlation between responsibility and cohesiveness within the classroom. Could it be that encouraging students to take responsibility via assisting in coaching, administrative work, recruiting new members, facilitating team meetings, or otherwise being the messenger thereby allowing the DOF to be absent (if need be) be the key to reducing the effects of burnout by the DOF and his or her coaching staff? Leland (2004) posited the suggestion that students take on more leadership roles in order to reduce burnout by the DOF. This begs us to question if there are specific ways a DOF can

structure their team in order to reduce personal and professional burnout.

Burnout is a, "state of fatigue and emotional exhaustion that is the end result of a gradual process of disillusionment" (Brown & Roloff, 2009, p. 5). Burnout is characterized by three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is a lack of energy that comes from putting all of one's energy into a variety of projects or day-to-day tasks. Depersonalization is characterized by the feeling as though our social identity within a group is not valued as much as we value the group. Finally diminished personal accomplishment refers to our tendencies to evaluate ourselves from a negative standpoint. McDonald (2001) writes that, "the structure of collegiate debate tournaments and the pressures placed on directors has necessarily created an unsustainable cycle that threatens the physical and mental well being of coaches and undermines the long-term health of the activity of collegiate debate" (p. 115). While many people in the forensics community have devoted time to discussing the symptoms of their burnout, few have provided a theoretical background in which to examine the triggers of burnout.

Just as much as coaches need to be motivated to partake in the forensics community so too do their students, which is why no discussion of organizational and group communication would be complete without a discussion of motivation and cohesion. Ryan and Deci (2000) argue that the desire to be a part of a team is part of our desire for competence, relatedness, and autonomy. They utilize self-determination theory (SDT) to explain the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. While the characteristics of these types of motivation are important to comprehend for the student's welfare, they are also important to understand insofar as the DOF is concerned. It just so happens that the three precursors of burnout (emotional exhaustion, reduced personal achievement, and depersonalization) are a result of a lack of competence, relatedness, and autonomy within one's group (Maslach et al., 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Ryan and Deci (2000) assert that, "the needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy appear to be essential for facilitating optimal functioning of the natural proponents for growth and integration, as well as constructive social development and personal well being" (p. 68). When we feel that our needs are being met within a group then we begin to have more intrinsic motivation and begin to personally invest time and energy into a group.

Social psychologist Christine Maslach has spent the better part of twenty years refining her measure for burnout. Her measure, the Maslach Burnout Inventory, was not only used by Brown and Roloff (2009) but has been used in other areas within the workforce as well. Maslach et al. (2001) suggests that there are "six categories of work life [which] come together in a framework that encompasses the major organizational antecedents of burnout" (p.414). The antecedents are very similar to the ones noted within Bowman (2005), Ryan and Deci (2000), and Pachanowsky and Trujillo (1982). Maslach et al. (2001) defines the antecedents that

contribute to burnout as workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values. These six areas create a psychological contract that serves as a check for an individual in a given job (Rosseau, 1995). If one were to group all the various theories of satisfaction together then he or she would see that the theories boil down to one message: when a person is unable to keep up with his or her work, loses control of situations that fall under his or her jurisdiction, and have a lack of appreciation and community; that he or she will be less productive at his or her job, and less intrinsically motivated to take on responsibility for the good of everyone.

The researcher wanted to have a better understanding of the various obstacles that create an atmosphere of burnout, in an attempt to find some solutions to the problem. Thus, the type of research used for this study was qualitative, as the interview process provides a more multifaceted view of some of the issues DOFs have to cope with professionally and interpersonally. Interviewing DOFs in the forensics community would not only shed light on the current concerns, but it would also allow the interviewer to ask participants to disclose more deeply about specific issues related to the community. The questions posited to the participants allowed them to disclose anonymously about the conditions they work within on a day-to-day basis.

During the interview the researcher was able to guide the interviewee through their past and present experiences in the forensics community. The interview highlighted some important areas of life that are often times neglected by individuals in high stress occupations such as, personal goals, professional goals, and the factors contributing or hindering the progress of achieving them. The interview process allowed for a deeper level of connection between the researcher and the interviewee.

In order to obtain participants for the interview, the researcher asked her former forensics coach and current thesis advisor to send out a call for participants on a variety of listserves devoted to the forensics community. Upon the approval of the university Institutional Review Board, a total of fifteen participants were interviewed. The questions for the interview were set up intentionally to facilitate discussion about Maslach et. al. (2001) three areas of personal and professional burnout, as well as Ryan and Deci's (2000) areas of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The answers to the interview questions confirmed some of the standard issues that are debated regularly, as well as shed light on some possibly new methods of approaching the forensics team.

The overall process of reviewing the participants interviews, coupled with previewing the personal published accounts of DOF burnout provided data that was consistent with the themes that Maslach et. al. (2001) reported as leading to burnout. The themes initially researched were how emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal achievement affected ones work life (teaching), forensics life (coaching), and personal life. Participants were asked how these issues affected their life from a personal, profes-

sional, and forensics perspective. As the interviews were conducted, the researcher made note of what sub themes were prevalent under each main theme. The sub themes that arose out of the interviews were as follows: qualifying for national tournaments, identity as a coach vs. identity as a teacher, lack of personal support within the community, and personal health and well-being of the DOF and personal support system.

Qualifying for National Tournaments

An overarching theme that came out of the research is the idea that in order to be successful a team must be ultra competitive, and receives top accolades. Perhaps an answer to this is to reevaluate our teams from an administrative point of view. Instead of viewing winning as the end result, perhaps a return to learning would be best. As stated by many of the interview participants, when a student is properly versed in how to present and research then they are able to grow and evolve into a competitive public speaker. There seems to be a focus on competiveness, and this could potentially, be why the problems with severe burnout still exist in the forensics community. Furthermore, with the advent of new issues (i.e. the economy, the fact that burned out DOFs feel as though they can't afford to take time off etc.) facing the forensics community it is important that the problems of burnout are taken under review before a new wave of early retirement from burnout occurs.

Coach VS. Teacher Identity

In some cases the levels of burnout experienced by participants were affecting their job performance. Olson (2004) writes that, "Many a forensic educator has sacrificed a successful academic career and the security tenure offers for a chance at the brass ring of competitive forensic success" (pg. 3). The first section of the interview process consisted of ten demographic questions. The main goal of these questions was to gain a more clear understanding of how the participants viewed their role within their institution, as well as find out how long each participant had served within the forensics community. Interview participants reported being a part of the forensics community in a coaching capacity anywhere from 6-36 years. The main finding that came out of these initial demographic programs was that in each case, even in the case where in which the DOF was an undergraduate student attending the university they competed for, participants recognized that they were first and foremost a DOF (n= 6), and secondly an instructor for their institution. What is interesting about this is that without the backing of the institution, and the willingness of the students to want to participate in forensics there would be no team, and furthermore no DOF position within the school. This matters insofar as overall there was an overwhelming concern about the economy and how it is affecting higher education. In each interview the current economic crisis came into play as DOFs discussed their fear of budget cuts to their team. This is a very valid concern as budgetary concerns are affecting the whole of the academy. In a recent New York Times article, Patricia Cohen (2009) reported that, "public universities are bracing for severe cuts as state legislatures grapple with yawning deficits…even the wealthiest private colleges have

seen their endowments sink and donations slacken since the financial crisis" (p.1). Many participants noted having a fear of their program being cut if the team was unable to perform well, so that the university would have more money to allocate elsewhere. As previously discussed, the forensics team is a branch of a much larger entity, which is the institution. If the school is not faring well financially, the administration has the potential to cut a program. Furthermore, the regard for an instructor and their involvement in a campus activity has no bearing on whether or not that instructor is able to maintain their position. To that end, is it more important to identify oneself as a forensics coach, or as a distinguished instructor that takes time to facilitate a forensics program for an institution? The purpose of this question is not to suggest that a DOF does not care about teaching, but more so to challenge DOFs to evaluate how they view their team. Do they view the forensics team as an extension of the classroom, or perhaps an extracurricular activity? Or do they view forensics as a sole reason they are affiliated with an institution?

Mentoring Program

Many individuals have come forth to discuss the benefits of having a mentoring program within the community (Schnoor, 2004; Hefling, 2008; Carver, 1991). Providing an outlet for support for DOFs who feel as though they need some encouragement in regards to their team would be well in line with something that the community could do to support their members. Many interview participants expressed that they might experience less burnout if the forensics community had some more support for DOFs to meet their personal and professional goals. The main issue discussed pertained to lack of child care at tournaments, finding the time to attend enough tournaments to qualify for nationals, and a general level of frustration due to an inability to meet research demands, or continue with their education so that they could qualify for tenure etc at their institution. There is plenty of documentation in existence speaking to many of these concerns (Burnett, Brand & Meister, 2001; Kay, 1990, Parson, 1990; Worth, 2002 Burnett, Brand and Mesiter (2001) The underlying challenge in Burnett et. al. (2001), is that the change has to come from the community. DOFs as community members need to speak up about changes that need to be made in order for their lives to benefit from being a part of the forensics community. Just as much as DOFs should challenge students to be responsible and motivated, so too must the DOFs with each other.

Allocating Administrative Duties to Students

The second grouping of questions dealt mainly with the structural blueprint of the participant's team. The goal was to investigate the ways, in which DOFs locate support for their team, motivate their students, and how they came to their current philosophy for coaching. These questions were important insofar as they allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of the environment the participant was functioning in. DOFs reporting that they had little or no support (assistant coaches, alumni coaches, grad students) tended to have a more loosely based team structure than those that had more support. The researcher was investigating how the

delegation of roles to students affected levels of motivation and responsibility within the team. The initial thought was that DOFs who reported having a more student-structured team would experience lower levels of burnout. The participants noted that while it was difficult at first, that ultimately the delegation had produced positive results by way of students who were peer coaching, helping with managerial duties, acting as communication liaisons etc. This was a positive finding insofar as it shows a change in mindset by the DOFs that not only lowered their levels of burnout from micromanaging a team, but also helped teach their students some valuable life lessons about group communication, public speaking, and administrative tasks.

Participants revealed that during their career as DOF that they have delegated the following duties to students: keeping track of important personal events (i.e. birthday, anniversaries) and making sure proper notification was sent out for said events, team meeting recorder, keeping track of contact information, recruiting new team members, peer coaching etc. Many participants also noted that they had set the expectation of a required rehearsal time during the week (generally midweek). During these times students were able to research, practice, get new ideas for pieces, and often times share a meal. DOFs who reported having a more administrative role via delegating and setting expectations of for team members within their team, seemed to have a more healthy relationship with their students, family, and colleagues.

Personal Health and Well-being of the DOF and his or her support system
The final grouping of questions that participants responded to centered around their personal life. These questions focused on how emotional exhaustion, lack of personal fulfillment, and depersonalization affected the participant outside of their academic and forensic life. Participants reported that their health had suffered during the season, marriages or other relationships had failed, and family life became strained from moving around the country in search of a forensics position, leaving family members or significant others each weekend, or trying to find consistent childcare on the weekends.

There was also a deficiency in the quality of personal life due to the length of the season. Many participants equated a successful team with traveling to national tournaments, which meant that often times their team would be traveling every weekend during the season. One participant noticed that they had roughly 22 swing tournaments during the school year, which means that the team attended roughly 44 tournaments including AFA nationals and Novice Nationals. Coaches responded that they did not always travel with their teams, but did try to travel to a majority of the tournaments. In every interview the topic of reevaluating the demands of AFA and NFA qualifications was discussed. While some participants supported the current qualification mandates, others reported that they wished something would change at a national level to encourage a healthier traveling schedule throughout the school year.

It appears from the research presented that when one is feeling burned out; he or she must make the personal decision to change their course. This decision ultimately reflects their level of personal responsibility. The community has to ask itself as a whole, when will enough be enough in regards to keeping an unhealthy lifestyle? White (2005) argues that the coach is a role model. Is it appropriate that members of the community are perpetuating this unhealthy lifestyle by modeling it to their students? It seems as though there is a lot of discussion to make changes, but there is a considerable lack of motivation and energy to do so. While there is no golden answer to how to overcome these challenges, it became evident through the interview process that there are some individuals have taken the responsibility to initiate changes that may ultimately lead to less burnout, and more positive feelings of accomplishment over time.

As previously discussed, motivation and cohesion evolve from our need for competence, relatedness and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Some of the sub themes that came out of the interview process was that of how to mold a team's philosophy. This of course was also depended upon the coaching style of coach, and the design of the team-all sub themes discussed in the interviews. Cayanus & Martin (2008) found that students had a willingness to be a part of a group if they were able to derive some sort of meaningfulness from the group. To that end, as a DOF, how are we making our teams meaningful for the students? If we can assume that what Brophy (1987) wrote about student motivation was true, then the more meaningful we are able to make the forensics team for the students, then the motivated the students will be to take responsibility and ownership of the team. Derryberry discussed this idea in his 1995 article by highlighting the importance of the team for students as place for cooperative learning. Just as a coach has needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness in their life, so too do the students who participate on the forensics team. Johnson and Johnson (1994) write that, "a vital application of positive interdependence is that "students must believe that they sink or swim together" (p. 22). This supports the findings that students use each other to motivate themselves. Once more, "positive interdependence occurs when students compete on the team with the perspective that they need each other to complete the group's goals" (Capstick, 1994, p. 7). In sum, the more responsibility we are able to give students, the more they will be motivated to learn and have a higher percentage of derived autonomy, relatedness, and sense of competence.

Some suggestions for doing this include setting goals to reach every few weeks and months. Derryberry (1995) provides some excellent team building and maintenance strategies that include recognizing everyone's achievements, working as team to build out entries for overall awards, encouraging students to try new events, and making sure that the team prepares for each tournament by taking time to help each other. These strategies keep members responsible for their own pieces, responsible for the maintenance of the team, and furthermore intrinsically motivate students to

consistently return to learning so that they can be better competitors.

The implications and solutions discussed thus far in this study affect the DOF at a personal level. Finding ways to challenge students in a team via delegating responsibility has the potential to impact the amount of time spent micromanaging every aspect of the team. Furthermore, making the choice to re-evaluate ones role within an institution has the benefit of giving an individual the opportunity to grow as a teacher, coach and individual, not to mention find ways to make themselves appear more valuable to their school. Finally, creating definite boundaries between school, forensics and personal life allows for a more healthy existence for everyone involved with an individual. These are all great benefits from an individual standpoint, however there are still more things that can be done as a community. Imagine the forensics community would be like if one weekend a month there were no tournaments, finding food in close proximity to the school was not an issue, there was a child care option for DOFs with children, if new DOFs were able to partner with senior members of the community in a mentor relationship, or even if the concept of a swing tournament became a thing of the past due to changes at the national level. These are things that the community are talking about, and that the members of the forensics community have the power to change if they are motivated enough to do so. As stated in Workman (2004), the decision to be healthier ultimately falls upon the coach. DOFs need to set the standard for wellness for their team, and allow that push for a healthier competition environment to permeate the community. At this point in time, "the task before debate coaches at the turn of the 21st century is large, but vitally important. Coaches and programs need to strike a balance between personal and professional commitments so the life of the students and directors can be educational, healthy, and satisfying" (McDonald, 2001, p. 117).

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Appendices

Interview Questionaire

Thirty years of research has shown that emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal achievement are the cornerstones to burnout (Maslach, et. al., 2001). Several gifted former coaches and directors of debate cite personal and professional burnout as the reason that they have retired from their position (Leland, 2004; Dickmeyer, 2002). The director of forensics has many roles that they must take into consideration prior to taking the position (White, 2005; Short & Short, 2005). The questions posited in the following interview will hopefully reveal ways in which administration, and directors of forensics can support each other through providing a more mentally and physically healthy environment for the director to work in.

I. Demographic Questions:
    a. What institution do you work for?
    b. Is your institution considered a college, university, or jr. college?
    c. What is your official title at your institution?
    d. What is your official title in relation to the forensics team?
    e. How many years have you been at your institution?
    f. How many years have you been a forensics coach for your institution?
    g. How long have you been in the forensics community in a coaching capacity?
    h. Were you ever a coach for at another institution? If so, how long were you a coach for that institution?
    i. Have you ever taken time off from coaching?
    j. Why did you come back to coaching after taking time off?

Bowman (2007) suggests that self-motivation in the key to cohesion within the classroom. A high level of motivation by a coach or teacher encourages responsibility within the students. Furthermore, the need for autonomy, encouragement, and recognition is a human drive that helps a person obtain their basic needs of social identity, and personal achievement. Ryan and Deci (2000) contend that encouraging a student to be responsible creates intrinsic motivation, which in turn encourages a higher level of responsibility within the student. The following questions will ask you about the structural blueprint of your team.

II. Team Structure
    a. How big is your team right now?
    b. What is the largest your team has been while you have been a coach?
    c. What does the leadership structure of your team look like? Do you have assistant coaches, graduate student help, team president, and undergraduate teaching assistants to help you in the coaching process?
    d. How has the team leadership structure changed since you started?
    e. How involved you were in the change?
    f. What is the biggest team you have been a part of in a coaching capacity?

g. Do you work with students who have to participate in forensics for their major or other university requirements?

h. What sort of responsibility do you give to your students on the team?

Byrne (1994) writes that teachers, "who fall victim to burnout are likely to be less sympathetic towards students, have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, and be less apt to prepare adequately for class and feel less committed and dedicated to their work" (p. 646). Richardson (2005) notes that there is a significant lack of scholarly attention to burnout, as often times the subject of forensics research is considered illegitimate (Burnett, 200) when it comes to coaches pursuing doctorate degrees etc. Burnett (2002) contends that since there is such a quick turnover in leadership within the forensics community that there is often no time to advocate for a change that will relieve some of the stressors of running a team. Billings (2002) cites coaching burnout as one of the top ten issues facing the forensics program as there needs to be a line between forensics responsibilities, personal life, and professional life is blurry. Billings (2002) suggests a coach's level of burnout has a direct correlation with the stability of the team. The following questions will look at professional obligation that you have through your university in regards to non-forensics related activities.

III. Professional Life

a. What is your teaching load throughout the year?

b. How many hours do you spend preparing for your classes each week?

c. How many hours do you spend coaching (not traveling) your team?

d. How many hours do you spend working with students who have to participate in forensics for major or university requirement?

e. How many tournaments do you attend each year both locally and nationally?

f. What other job related obligations do you have throughout the year?

g. What are your professional goals?

h. How often do you achieve your professional goals during the school year?

i. How does forensics support/hinder your progress of achieving your professional goals?

j. How often does the administration of your school support/hinder your progress of achieving your personal goals?

k. Do you have a sense of accomplishment as a teacher? Are you eager to see students that are not involved with the forensics team?

l. How many committees did you serve on last year for both forensics and work?

m. How much of your time did serving on committees take?

The length, lack of personal fulfillment, and health demands upon the director of forensics of the forensics season is cited as having a negative impact upon the director of forensics in all areas of their life (Dickmeyer, 2002; Leland, 2005; Billings, 2002; Schoor, 2004). Dickmeyer (2002) admitted that not only was the forensics team limited his professional achievements, but also his personal life began to decrease in quality. In an attempt to remedy this problem Dickmeyer, like many coaches, quit his position as director of forensics in order to devote more time to his professional and family life. Maslasch et. al. (2001) has found that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are two large factors in how positively a person views their personal life. The Encyclopedia of Mental Disorders cutes that normal people who do not have a professional diagnosis of Depersonalization disorder can experience signs of depersonalization via sleep deprivation, emotionally exhausting situations such as academic endeavors or being in a automobile accident. Croucher et. al. (2009) writes that our, "social identity is the knowledge that an individual belongs to certain social groups together with the emotional value placed on his or her group membership…self-concept is a key part in each person's social identity and intergroup behavior" (p. 75). Gill (1990) suggests that the forensics community ought to be, "more concerned the pragmatic practices of day-to-day living as a coach….such an investigation which focuses on ways by which this lifestyle can be more sustaining" (p.187). The following questions will ask you to comment on the state of your personal life.

IV. Personal Life

a. Think of your life as a series of percentages. Divide your life into the following categories:
  i. Professional life (work, school)
  ii. Forensics life (time spent coaching students, organizing tournaments either for hosing or attending, traveling with students)
  iii. Personal life (family activities, dating, religious activities, non-academic endeavors)

b. What sorts of personal obligations do you have throughout the year?

c. What are your personal goals?

d. How often are you able to achieve your personal goals in a given year?

e. How often does the forensics team hinder/support your progress?

f. How often do your professional obligations hinder/support your progress?

g. Have you ever denied yourself a personal achievement (completing schooling, working on a paper, doing something with your friends or family) because of your commitment to forensics?

h. Do you ever get emotionally exhausted during your season?
  i. What makes you emotionally exhausted?
  ii. When does your exhaustion peak?

i. Do you ever feel depersonalized?

    j. How often do you feel depersonalized within the season? What percentage of your depersonalization can be attributed to the following:

        i.   Professional Life

        ii.   Forensics

        iii. Personal Life

    k. What is your strategy for psychological health during the year?

V. Miscellaneous and Concluding Questions

    a. What are some things your institution could do to help decrease your stress throughout the year?

    b. What times of team structures have you tried to model or admired over the years? What about these teams made them stand out?

Thank you for your time today. Your contribution to my research will hopefully reveal ways in which we can reduce director burnout within the forensics community.

Endnote

[1] This paper is a small sampling of a much larger research project under the same title. Please contact Bethany Piety (bethany.browne@me.com) if you have any questions about the project, or would like to see a full copy of the report.

Rationale for the Event, "Teaching"

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Abstract

Our paper intends to introduce a new limited preparation event called "teaching" to the forensics community. By combining traditional rhetoric with the modern art of teaching, our proposal seeks to shed light on a rhetorical vision of education. We want to move beyond conventional teaching styles to emphasize a greater understanding and comprehension between the teacher and the student. Now, more than ever, education needs rhetoric. Rather than learning a specific piece of knowledge, students should have access to a rhetoric-based education that involves critical thinking and productive arguing. The activity of forensics is rooted in rhetorical education, and consequently provides a forum to promote this nuanced style of teaching. Therefore, this paper will provide the basic rhetorical and educational background to justify the event "teaching," offer an explanation of how the event will unfold, and describe how the forensics community will benefit from the proposed event. Rhetoric and education have long been intertwined. As, scholars, teachers, and students, it is important that we nurture this combination, so that our community may benefit.

Introduction

The tradition of rhetoric has long been wedded to the arts of education. For instance, as Takis Poulakos and David Depew write, the early school of Isocrates provided a powerful counterpoint to Plato's critique of rhetoric. Modern educational theory can draw upon the insights of the Isocratean version of "civic education" as "reflective, aesthetic deliberation [introduced to] the discussion of rhetorical training and practice" (Poulakos & Depew, 2004, p. 4). From this standpoint, education is a matter of fostering self-reflection, an urge to debate topics to achieve greater understanding, and commitment to the duties of civic life. From Quintilian to Booth, this rhetorical vision of education has been honed; and in all fields—from mathematics to literacy—it carries relevant insights. This stance on education moves beyond the traditional, Aristotelian emphasis on a speaker engaging subjects; rather, it moves now into the critical literacy theories of Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux, treating "teachers as students and students as teachers" (Poulakos & Depew, 2004, p. 2). Teaching, from this standpoint, becomes an ethnographic art, in which teachers must directly engage the audience, check their comprehension, and help them learn to be autonomous learners.

Now, more than ever, education needs rhetoric. Teachers and students can become better advocates against the threats of economic disparity and poor conditions for learning through awareness of rhetorical theory; but this is not enough. Curriculum itself needs a heavy dose of rhetorical revitalization. As Wayne Booth has observed, a litany of legislators and misinformed educational reformers have become obsessed with setting academic standards, deciding that each and every student must know this or that piece of knowledge (Booth, 2004). The result is that education becomes less didactic, relying on a vision of students as receptacles for teacher knowledge; the interactivity of education is lost. As Booth puts it, "teachers [are] being forced to stress regurgitation of daily fact-menus, rather than critical thinking and productive arguing" (Booth 2004, p. 94). As education becomes rooted in the push for "standards," and teaching becomes a matter of preparing students for assessment (or worse, the market), teacher education becomes focused on psychological and corporate pedagogical perspectives. Less time is spent concentrating on the educational moment: when the teacher stands before the students and attempts to engage with them, motivate them, and generate within them a love of learning.

Forensics, as an activity rooted in the tradition of rhetorical education, can provide a forum for teacher education programs to better aid future educators in this more nuanced style of teaching. However, in its current iteration, the events concentrate too largely on the "performer/audience" model of rhetoric: wherein the speaker does not ask questions of the audience dialectically, but rather unveils knowledge in as stylistic a way as possible. While these events certainly help future teachers (particularly limited preparation events, where the spontaneous and extemporaneous style of education is used), clearly they do not go far enough in challenging didactic models of education.

To this end, we propose the creation of an experimental event. The event would be called, quite simply, "Teaching." It would be a limited preparation event in which students have thirty minutes to prepare before speaking. The objective is for students to prepare an engaging, student-centered lesson to present in seven minutes. This is a basic explanation of how the event would unfold:

1) The speaker, as in extemporaneous speaking, receives the "topic" on which they must present a lesson. The topic will include a bundle of information sufficient for planning a seven-minute lesson. Competitors will also receive a "grade level" to target the lesson toward; they will be expected to engage their audience as they would that level of student. Topics could include:
   a. An excerpt from a literary text the competitor must help the audience interpret and understand, presented to a tenth-grade class.
   b. An explanation of the food pyramid, presented to a third-grade class.
   c. An explanation of the water cycle, presented to a seventh-grade class.

2) During their half-hour preparation time, speakers would prepare a lesson. Unlike other events, which stress a rigid structure of delivery, in this event extra emphasis would be placed on the speaker's ability to adapt to the information given. The structure should differ from speech to speech every bit as much as the structure of a high school teacher's lessons. If the host school's computer access permits, students would be encouraged to prepare worksheets or printed materials to give out to the audience during the course of the seven minutes.

3) During their lesson, competitors will be encouraged to "break down the wall" that normally separates them from their audience. They must ask questions and explain information in a tone and style that fits the given grade-level. Checking audience perceptions and encouraging audience members to actively participate in the construction of new knowledge are fundamental to this step; the competitor should emulate an interactive classroom lesson. Competitors and audience members can enact several other traditional classroom strategies that are inexplicably taboo in other forensics events:
   a. Competitors may write on the chalkboard to break down a concept.
   b. Competitors may ask the audience to take out a pen and paper and write something down (and reprimand audience members who forget to bring a pen and paper "to class").
   c. Competitors may move around fluidly.
   d. Audience members are allowed to interrupt the speaker and ask for clarification, another approach to an issue, or simply to ask questions. They are to take on the role of students of that grade level.

4) Judges are to evaluate on the following criteria:
   a. Above all: How well would a student, of the listed grade level, have understood the given concept?
   b. Did the speaker engage with audience members, answer questions well, and avoid an overtly performance-driven model of teaching?
   c. Did the speaker adhere to more traditional speech concerns: delivery, content, and understandable progression through information? Was the speaker energetic, enlightening, and inspirational?

If these guidelines feel familiar, it is not just déjà vu: these are precisely the standards that we hold ourselves to as coaches and teachers in our own classrooms. The rationale behind the event is therefore clear-cut. It is an event specifically designed to train teachers in the most practical way imaginable: by doing. It is no coincidence that this event resembles the "sample teach" often required by educational employers and organizations like Teach for America. From a competitive standpoint, success in this event would easily translate well into resumes and anecdotes in job interviews. From a practical standpoint, the event would foster in future teachers—on both the K-12 and collegiate levels—the intellectual nimbleness, interactivity, concision, and lesson planning prowess demanded by the field.

For forensics, it would finally offer a way to escape the relentless rigidity of events that have been roundly criticized for their reliance on unwritten rules, formulaic structures, and disconnected performances. Moreover, by injecting a decidedly education-centered influence into the activity, the existence of teaching as an event would undermine the activity's notorious emphasis on competition. Crucially, it would provide forensics coaches the ability to extend a hand into teacher certification programs, offering future teachers a hands-on environment in which to test their skills. The result could be expanded interest in the activity, a bridge between Departments of Communication and teacher certification programs, and a greater diversity of attitudes regarding what forensics represents. Finally, it would reconnect the skills of teaching with the wisdom of rhetoricians, helping to undermine the growing corporate influence on education with a promotion of hands-on experience between teacher-students and student-teachers.

In a small way, it could help make education about what it is meant to be about: people connecting with one another.

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Unleashing the Power of the Millennials:
Adapting Forensic Extemporaneous Speaking to Make Positive Use of Communication Technology in a Digital Age

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Abstract

Like all forensics events, Extemporaneous Speaking has evolved over the last 40 years to reflect changes in the larger societal culture as well as in the culture of the forensics community. The last 15 years or so, especially, have seen changes at an accelerated pace as natives to the digital age have risen from undergraduate competitors to become graduate assistant coaches and program directors. This changing of the guard has resulted in significant changes that have altered the event in ways that reflect the culture of this so called "millennial generation." However, some of these changes have done little to advance any positive learning objectives; to the contrary, they have skewed the focus of the event away from defensible pedagogical goals in favor of practices that seem to serve solely to make the event more competitively challenging. At the same time, other adaptations that would provide this digital generation of students with more transferable skills have been thwarted by rule or by custom. This paper seeks to set forth recommendations that put us on a better path as we adapt to changing times while maintaining some critical pedagogical traditions.

In the "Convention Supplement" of the Western Association of Teachers of Speech annual convention in November 1937, the Intercollegiate Forensic Activities Strand announced:

> "Preservation of Democratic Liberties" has been selected as the theme for the discussion, extemporaneous speaking, oratory and debate projects in the annual tournaments in the Western Association. The program will take the form of a laboratory project, which embodies principles of integration. All the activities will be united around one central theme, the aim of which is a systematic, comprehensive, and functional presentation of the subject. The discussion and debating will take the form of a five stage progression following John Dewey's sequence of problem, solution, action as described in his "How We Think." The oratory and extemporaneous speaking will parallel and supplement this progression. The orations will be prepared to fit into three symposia: namely, "Technology and Democracy," "Economic Planning and Democracy," and "Public Opinion and Democracy." The extemporaneous speakers will be prepared to draw topics and speak on the social and ethical, political, and personal philosophies incidental to Democracy. (1937)

Social and ethical, political and personal philosophies delineated the categories on which extemporaneous speakers at these 1937 tournaments would speak—not the domestic, economic, international categories that characterize most tournaments today.

It is almost a certainty that "extempers" today would look on the categories of the 1937 tournament with great amusement and not a little disdain; with equal certainty, one can imagine that the teachers of speech who organized the tournaments in 1937 would be appalled that extemporaneous speaking categories of most contests today are devoid of any overt value orientation. The point here is not to argue for a return to the "good ole days" of extemporaneous speeches that extolled the virtues of democracy. Rather, this passage illustrates how much extemporaneous speaking has changed from then to now. Moreover, through all of the changes—either by design or cultural drift—certainly there were those who thought the event had lost its bearings and was doomed to fail to teach the students who suffered these changes appropriate and useful lessons that could help take them through life. Well, we are doing all right.

The point of this walk down memory lane is to illustrate a central way in which extemp has adapted to meet the cultural imperatives of the day. Change is inevitable. So is resistance to that change, because with change comes uncertainty; and we don't like uncertainty. Consequently, resistance to change is not surprising. Change, however, comes nonetheless. Our tendency, when the inevitable occurs, is to first ignore it. Then, we condemn it. Then, we try to incorporate that change into that to which we are already accustomed. Finally, we face it on its own terms and adapt. We "grow into it;" it changes us.

What is true of social change in general may be even truer in the case of our communication technology. New waves of technological change in how we communicate—once we have adapted to it—affect us in ways that can cut to the core of who we are. Television arguably represents the most dramatic leap forward in communication technology in the 20th Century. Adapting to the advent of T. V. was awkward at best. Early television programming was very similar to the radio programming that preceded it. Radio producers were not sure what to do with this new medium; so, they tried to do what they had always done; only now there would be visual images. Eventually, producers figured out how to program for T. V. on its own terms. They "grew into it;" it changed us all. Moreover, Gumpert and Cathcart (2008) assert that "each generation inherits an idiosyncratic media structure . . . those born into the age of radio perceive the world differently than those born into the age of television" (29). We are how we communicate.

Clearly, we are in the midst of another radically transformative wave in communication technology—we have come into the digital age. This change has presented us with challenges not unlike those that radio producers faced, except

the change is broader and runs deeper in our culture than the advent and proliferation of television ever could. In the forensic community we have struggled with how to respond to these new technologies (Gehrke, 1998) AND to a generation that was born into this brave new world of communication technology—the so-called Millennials—whose "idiosyncratic media structure" is more integral to who they are than any generation before them.

Specifically, this paper argues that as the presence and influence of millennial culture in forensics has grown, practices in forensics extemporaneous speaking have reflected that change. However, some of these changes have done little to advance any positive learning objectives; to the contrary they have skewed the focus of the event away from defensible pedagogical goals in favor of practices that seem to serve solely to make the event more competitively challenging. At the same time, other adaptations that would provide this digital generation of students with more transferable skills have been thwarted by rule or by custom. This paper seeks to set forth a set of recommendations that put us on a better path as we adapt to changing times while maintaining some critical pedagogical traditions.

In order to achieve these ends, we will, first, briefly discuss the rise of the millennial generation; second, determine and critique how the practice of extemporaneous speaking has changed in some key ways because of millennial influences; third, examine and critique how the forensics community has either resisted or failed to adapt pedagogy and practices in extemporaneous speaking to the digital age; and finally, make some recommendations for consideration as we move forward.

The Rise of the Millennials

The rising generation—though variously labeled—is most often labeled as either Generation Y or the Millennial Generation. One of the Millennial's defining characteristics, to the extent that a generation has defining characteristics, is that they cannot recall a time before computerized communication. They are native to a highly mediated culture (Rushkoff, 2006); the rest of us are not. Wilson (2004) observes that this generation is "tech-savvy;" the rest of us, not so much. McGlynn notes, "These students spend hours surfing Web sites, instant-messaging, interacting on MySpace and Facebook, talking on their cell phones, text-messaging, playing video games, and so forth" (20); the rest of us largely do not. The lion's share of those of us who teach and coach the Millennials are not nearly as comfortable with digital technology as they are. Where Rushkoff (2006) may see those of us born earlier as immigrants to this rising culture, we might better see the Millennials as invaders wielding superior weapons that we must learn to use if we are to survive in this "new world." Unlike the Native Americans, however, who never saw the Europeans coming, we knew what was coming. In 2000, just before the turn of the millennium, the Millennials began attending college (DeBard, 2004); we were not ready.

Clearly, this generation is not like any other generation. And it is not just that they have more high tech communication toys. In fact, Serazio (2008) argues that this generation and the culture that it has spawned is bound up with the media landscape in which it lives. To understand this generation is to understand its media and vice-versa. They are mutually defining. Their characteristics include:

Flexible
User-centric
Mobile
Interactive
Unlimited
Multidirectional
Open-ended
Nonlinear
Empowering
Hierarchy-flattening
Appropriation-able
Exhibitionistic
Upgradeable
Progressing
Converging
Networked
On-demand (Serazio, 2008, p. 16)

Looking at this list and thinking about our students and their communication/information technology, the relationships jump out at us. Today's technology (like the iPhone) is flexible in its applications and uses; out students are flexible multi-taskers. The technology is highly mobile; so are they. The uses of this technology are unlimited; the Millennials believe their potential is unlimited. The technology promotes exhibitionism; the Millennials do not have the same needs for privacy that earlier generations have. The technology is appropriationable; from Napster to sampling, Millennials are embedded in a culture of appropriation. These parallels go on and on.

Millennial culture and the digital technology that supports it and drives it (and vice versa), increasingly permeates the community of forensics participants. They were our students as early as a decade ago. Now, they are our graduate assistants and our budding young coaches. Through their influence (needs, demands) and the pressures to not be left behind, many of us have been assimilated into their distinct culture to varying degrees. Our activity and, specifically extemp—which is the focus of this paper—have been affected, both positively and negatively, by the spread of this digital culture.

Changes in Extemporaneous Speaking

The coming of this digital age has had a narrow but significant impact on how we practice extemporaneous speaking in forensics. By way of acknowledgement, much of what is written here is based on personal observation/discussion as a 35-year participant in this activity. Clearly, digital culture has influenced pedagogy and practices in extemp. The most noticeable impact has been on how we teach and conduct research. Congalton and Olson (1995) expound on how the access to electronic retrieval systems has impacted forensics. Many of us recall the days of trudging to the library with

our rolls of dimes to do research on microfilm or microfiche, or buying two copies of newspapers and magazines so we could rip different articles on back-to-back pages for our extemp files. Digital technology and digitized information have radically altered this process. We rarely trudge to the library. Now, most extempers do the bulk of their research from the comfort of their dorm rooms, apartments, or team rooms via computer through databases like Lexis/Nexis. Most of our students have no idea what microfiche is. Instead of ripping and filing, our students capture and print articles. Digital communication/information has significantly cut the time needed to thoroughly research any topic and has given almost universal access to resources from around the globe. We can all agree that having virtually universal access to literally a "world of information" is good; it is at its core a positive.

Until recently, nearly all of the voluminous research we now access on-line was printed and hard copies filed in the ubiquitous evidence tubs that are rolled/dragged across many campuses each year between September and April. Some teams, however, are starting to rely on electronic filing. So, filing has started to go paperless. Increasingly relying on paperless files has the potential to make the activity greener, which is a positive.

Further incorporation of digital information technologies into extemp practices is very limited. This can be attributed to a number of reasons. Initially, broad access to the necessary hardware was not available. Given this, opponents of technology at tournaments cited the need to try to maintain a level playing field between technology rich and technology poor programs.

As well, extemp prep room security concerns have mitigated against technology use during tournaments. Laptops are relatively small and easy to conceal making them easy to steal (we all remember the year Illinois State's computers were stolen). No host wants to be responsible for providing the level of security needed to assure the safety of participants' hardware.

Finally, gaining/providing Internet access on campus to all participants (again, the level playing field) has been virtually impossible to secure or guarantee. Consequently, the forensics community has developed a subculture of researching night owls. Debate always had them (as long as a library was open); extemp practices have now fostered them as extempers engage in digital accessing of information at night in hotel rooms as they try to anticipate what the next day's competition might bring in the way of questions. In today's extemp landscape, having "up to the minute" sources of information can often translate into a competitive edge.

While very positive on its face, digital culture and access has had some negative consequences in the form of ever-rising expectations. First, because the digital age has brought a virtually unlimited access to sources via the Internet and on-line subscriptions to various news outlets and databases, there is an expectation that extempers will incorporate an increased number of sources of external support for their arguments (Congalton and Olson, 1995; Brown, 2008). Brown (2008) laments that even the repeat use of a source is viewed negatively—after all, this newfound easy access should be reflected in a diversification of sources (23). Since this paper cites the Brown article several times, I guess the reader must discount the arguments that rely on data from this source (though it is quite exotic). The prevailing attitude seems to be the more sources you have the better your speech is (hence, the more competitively successful you are).

Further, there is an expectation that sources will be of a "higher quality" now that more sources are readily available. Research and experience confirms that once credible domestic weekly news magazines like *Time, Newsweek,* or *Business Week*, and other once common sources of information, are no longer acceptable (Brown, 2008; Colvert, 1994; McCann, 2002). In fact, because the easy accessibility of news and information has been dramatically increased by new technologies, the need for these weekly summaries of important news is not as great as it once was. The loss of high school and collegiate subscriptions alone was probably enough to push them to the brink of bankruptcy.

This shift away from common weekly news magazines is not accompanied by an embracing of mainstream daily news sources; rather, sources are becoming increasingly obscure. Today, there is a bias toward citing international sources. Brown (2008) notes that Reuters and the Agence France Press, for instance, are accepted sources to cite in an extemp speech while our domestic Associated Press generally is not, though all three are similarly reliable news wire services, because international sources have greater cache because they are seen as more "exotic" (21). Yes, as Olson and Congalton (1995) claim, having more diverse sources of data expands the vision of extemp participants and mitigates against ethnocentrism (144); but that does not mean we should subordinate domestic news outlets to international ones. Not only do extempers feel pressured to privilege intententernational sources, Colvert (1994) found that extempers gravitate toward more specialized and less mainstream sources (4-5). As a result of these pressures, extempers feel compelled to load up their files with much more research from far more and more far-flung sources than ever before if they hope to be competitive.

This discriminating palate for only the finest of obscure sources would be fine if it were based on any kind of serious comparative analysis of source credibility. It is not. Rather, what usually happens (if we are honest about it) is that varsity extempers hand the sacred source list to novice extempers who are told, "All of your articles must be filed from these sources only!" No questions are asked; no explanations are given beyond, "This is how it is done." Every novice extemper invariably, in a frantic attempt to finish their filing before the van leaves for the tournament, will let an errant *USA Today* article or a ubiquitous *Sacramento Bee* article slip by because they have not yet memorized the list,

and they don't yet understand how inviolate the sacred list is. That is, until some sophomore varsity member draws just the right question to expose the sacrilege. His or her *Sacramento Bee* filing humiliation of less than one year hence still stinging their memory, the sophomore launches! Words fly! Vitriol spews! Heads roll! Those faint of heart (or mind! to hear the sophomore tell it) drop from the extemp squad. Only the gluttons for punishment stay. Order returns. Filing responsibilities increase to take up the slack.

One somewhat positive consequence has come out of excessive filing demands: Millennials prefer cooperative or collaborative learning (Elam, Stratton, and Gibson, 2007). The pressure to have super extensive files has led to the rise of research consortiums among smaller forensics teams, who do not feel they have the human resources to keep up with these research demands alone. Just kidding! In reality the need to create consortiums is a very sad commentary on the pressure to bulk up the "quantity" and "quality" of research in our files.

Further exacerbating the competitive pressure on extempers is the expectation that students will present their speeches without any written notes. One American Forensic Association National Tournament District Committee actually developed recommended judging criteria that stated that extemp speakers using no notes should "get credit" over those who have them (Olson, 1989, 436). So, "no notes" is more than mere custom or norm. At the same time, these speeches are expected to have all of the polish of the prepared public speaking events that are a part of our activity.

At the 1995 NFA national tournament at Eastern Michigan University, one of the speakers in the final round incorporated a note card into her presentation. While acknowledging that hers was a well-structured, well-argued, and effectively delivered speech, all but one judge ranked the contestant last (her ranks were 1, 6, 6, 6, 6) and gave the use of a note card as the determinant factor in her sixth place ranking. The mere fact of the presence of a note card and not any ineffectiveness of its use was the reason for their decision. To add injury to insult, more than one judge was indignant that a national finalist in extemporaneous speaking thought that a note card was in any way acceptable. This was a student whose analytical skills were unassailable; she just could not memorize sources and dates in the prep time allowed; so, she put them, and only them, on a note card. For this, she was deemed undeserving of any further consideration.

So, what are we left with here? In thirty minutes, students are expected to develop 7-minute speeches—with the overall and internal structures memorized (or mentally noted) and have cogent, clear and compelling analyses to support the positions they are advancing with upwards of a dozen separate pieces of data from a similar number of specialized, often international, and hopefully exotic sources—and commit it all to memory. Is it any wonder that judges are concerned about canned speeches (Brown, 2008; Cronn-Mills and Croucher, 2001)? WE must do better.

The pedagogical value in this "extreme sport" is not apparent. Extemporaneous speaking without notes seems to have no justification other than to make the event more competitively challenging. As Shafer (2005) charges, "Many students who choose to compete without notes in extemporaneous speaking, and many of the coaches and judges who encourage and reward it, do so for competitive gain, not educationally sound reasons" (33). This practice does not impart any significant transferable skill to students. Instead, it creates a pressure cooker in which students either will rise to the challenge (via whatever means necessary) or, if not coached with care, will crack under the pressure (Compton, 2005). The parallels Aden (2002) draws between the choices of the extemp speaker to the choices in US Presidential policy-oriented speaking may be more apropos than he intended. He advises extempers to approach the speech as if they were briefing the President. In the first-year student's mind, I am sure the pressure levels are about the same.

What we are creating in forensics extemporaneous speaking is a practice that takes a cultural positive—almost universal access to the world of information—and turns it into an educational liability. Under intense pressure to achieve—and Millennials already do this to themselves enough without any additional pressure from coaches (Wilson, 2004; DeBard, 2004)—these students may resort to taking shortcuts that may be less than honest (Brown, 2008; Wehler, 2009). One extemper ratted on herself in her senior year persuasive speech in which she admitted fabricating sources in a speech her first year. She went on to state that what she did (and is ashamed of having done) is pervasive. Dishonesty abounds. While not excusing the perpetrators, she lays the blame on the cross pressures of two expectations: "Judges demand competitors to be off the note card and they demand more and more sources. This does not remove blame from students like me who have made unethical choices, but it does shed some light on the situation competitors are in" (Wehler, 2009, p. 56). We MUST do better.

Millennials are adept at gaming the system (Wilson, 2004). They are so accustomed to adapting to changing circumstances and finding time saving pathways of least resistance to truncate tasks that they may have difficulty distinguishing between what is and what is not fair and appropriate behavior. If I fabricate quotes, that is cheating. But if I choose the most difficult and obscure question (Turnipseed, 2005), and if I know that certain articles I read deal with that topic, I might cite them without verification because anybody who might check will find those issues in the article cited, and if I am reasonably sure my judges won't know the difference, that's not lying, is it? If I make up sources, then that is clearly cheating; but if we have some preset generic shells or briefs that my squad mates and I can use across a whole class of question types, that's just being smart, right? We must DO better.

I was shocked to learn last year that teams use pre-prepped materials beyond their research files—which is what leads to those canned speeches about which judges are expressing so much concern (Cronn-Mills & Croucher, 2001). It seems

that to maximize productivity in the 30 minutes of prep time, extemp squads have resorted to creating shells, much the same way as debaters use shells. If one learns the shells, all the extemper has to do is plug in the appropriate sources. This is NOT extemporaneous speaking. We must do BET-TER.

Resistance to Change in Extemporaneous Speaking

While in some ways we have embraced the technology that the digital age has brought us, mostly we act like radio producers—trying to conform new media to our old practices. Our extemp practices do not take advantage of much of what this technology has to offer. Rather than adapting to changing technology, at first, we banned it. Then, we allowed computers into the prep room, but they could not be on-line. Currently prep is to be without Internet access. There is anecdotal evidence that this restriction has not always been universally followed (Brown, 2008). So, the legitimate purpose of digital technology has been rendered illegitimate in forensic pedagogy and practice. As Brown notes (2008), using the Internet is more than just a rule violation; it is an ethical breach against that level playing field that we would like to think we have. Finding a much needed source is so much easier if you can scan the Internet (23); however, under today's rules, to go on-line would bestow unearned work ethic credit on the student in the judge's eyes (24) as opposed to the judge applauding the student's effectiveness in culling out the right support materials from an expansive database of sources.

Brown's analysis raises an interesting conundrum. How can we stop access? Given that this technology is becoming smaller, more portable, and more easily concealed (iPhones are undetectable in a pocket), and given the proliferation of subscriptions to on-line information services, the prohibition against going on-line is virtually impossible to enforce. Anyone can do it undetected in a bathroom stall. Should we, therefore, forbid potty breaks?

The absurdity of what we may have to do to enforce a "no on-line access during extemp prep" rule should tell us something. It is time to change. Creating files is an obsolete means of storing and retrieving information. Very few if any professionals rely on paper files anymore, and computerized files are a poor use of the available technology. Finally, prohibiting on-line research is becoming less and less pedagogically defensible because learning to do so is a critical skill set that prepares students for their future demands as researchers or public speakers (Voth 1997).

Our adherence to 20th Century methods does nothing to promote participation in extemp either—quite the contrary. Millennials prefer to learn skills that are relevant to their lives (McGlynn, 2008). For them education is about making connections to the real world, not just learning stuff for stuff's sake (Wilson, 2005). They want to know that courses and programs provide them with knowledge and skills that have transferability for future endeavors. For better or worse, Millennials see higher education as training for their careers and other pursuits, not as intrinsically valuable. While we

may bemoan the loss of intellectual curiosity as sufficient motivation to learn, we must acknowledge, especially in our activity, that the skill sets we cultivate in our students should have application beyond the activity.

Despite our best efforts to forestall it, change is going to come. The digital age has radically altered how we access information. Our students are culturally technologically connected. That technology is becoming more personal in size. Old paradigms for how we do what we do when we do extemp research and prep will soon be entirely obsolete. We need to change before change makes what we do an antiquarian and isolated activity that will shrink until it disappears. We can and we must do better.

It would be so easy if we could just blame all that is not right with extemp on a judging pool that is ill equipped to adjudicate the event beyond applying only the most superficial standards. Other forensics events have had to endure much worse judges (Haston, 1960). Typically, extemporaneous speaking rounds are not assigned to lay judges as often as are events that require less familiarity with current events. Forensics directors, coaches, and graduate assistants judge the lion's share of these rounds—all of us who have considerable training and experience. If we see nothing wrong with the state of extemp, our blindness may be our doom. If we can see how our expectations have tipped the balance between our educational mission and our competitive format too much in favor of competition (Shafer, 2005), we must take action to restore that balance. We must interface more wisely with the digital culture around us.

Recommendations for the Future

Forensics, if it is to continue to be a thriving community, must do a better job of adapting to these new patterns of communication and information sharing that have arisen in this digital age. We are now nearly 30 years into this techno-driven culture. We can no longer ignore it. We can no longer condemn it as a threat to learning the supposedly invaluable skill of creating, populating, and maintaining the kind of extensive files that are demanded in forensics today. If we do not still engage in the practice of beating our rugs on a line strung up outdoors, this argument will not wash. Technology can and often does make doing things differently possible, advantageous and desirable. We do a disservice if we continue to require students to use their/our computers as little more than electronic evidence tubs. What a waste of potential! It is time to adapt. In other words, we must meet our students where they are—firmly ensconced in the digital age. This means instituting actually only two changes—one has far-reaching implications for how we teach extemporaneous speaking in our team rooms and squad meetings. The other just makes good, sound, pedagogical sense.

First, we need to better integrate technology into forensic activities—in this case extemp. If this means that we need to work to become more proficient in the same technologies our students know in order to use the technologies they are comfortable with (McGlynn, 2008), then we need to put in the time and effort. Our students are looking for transferable

skills; they are not going to find them in a filing tub—actual or electronic.

In a conversation with a recent graduate of West Chester University, he praised his extemp experience for teaching him how to effectively and efficiently conduct research, how to conduct a thorough analysis of an issue, and how to express his views on that issue clearly and persuasively. This student, Russ Moll, recently graduated from University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs program with a Master's degree in Human Security. In the coming weeks he will begin working for a government contractor in Washington, D.C. as a strategic analyst. One skill that he is certain (after rounds of interviews) he will not need is how to file thousands of articles for possible retrieval to create a presentation in a half hour. What he is certain he will be doing is in-depth research on a variety of databases to assist him with creating and testing scenarios in his work on assigned security projects (Moll, personal interview, July 23, 2010; Moll personal interview, July 30, 2010). His new employer was very impressed with his research, analysis, and communication experience and skills; his information storage and retrieval (filing) acumen never came up as a useful skill (one of his interviewers is a former forensicator herself).

In the age of paper, building and maintaining an effective filing system had great value. When digital communication was not as easily accessible as it is today, electronic imitations of these paper files made sense. That time has passed. We do students a disservice if we continue to require them to create and manage files of massive amounts of information in a manner they are never likely to use again. Moreover, given the expectations of judges for more and more diverse sources, building these files is tremendously time consuming. Putting the "more sources/specialized and exotic sources" genie back into the bottle is virtually impossible. Creating and managing extemp files commensurate with this ever-rising expectation is a redundancy that we will be hard pressed to defend. Such files have already been created and are continually updated; they are on-line databases. Extemp files just create subsets of these already existing files. We have the means to access on-line databases. We should permit on-line access to these on-line files in extemp prep.

Inaction has already and will continue to discourage participation by all but the largest extemp squads. The numbers of extempers at our national tournaments is not consistently so low because making limited preparation speeches is so daunting to most competitors—impromptu makes that quite clear. It is because of the extensive time commitment. Millennial students are also notoriously busy. They have always been activities samplers. They are highly (and perhaps not so deeply) involved and tightly scheduled. This is not likely to change because they have come to college. They may continue to join numerous clubs and organizations on campus (Wilson, 2004). As well, millennial students may be stretched to their physical and mental limits and over-scheduled because they hold jobs; plus many volunteer

(Wilson, 2005). We have to be able to effectively compete with classes, other co-curricular activities, extra-curricular activities, work, social engagements, etc. The alternative is to become an exclusive activity supported by fewer and fewer teams. Our students are not as willing as we were to pour a tremendous amount of time into any one activity—especially if they don't see their futures in what that activity is teaching them.

Allowing on-line computer access in extemp prep is possible in ways it was not just a couple of years ago. Campuses routinely provide temporary guest accounts to their servers. Where this is not possible, visiting teams can bring their own access. With advancements of technologies like smart phones and mobile Internet service via 3G and the beginnings of 4G networks, on-line searches are possible just about anywhere. So, the rationale that on-line access puts an undue burden on the tournament host is no longer a valid issue.

Mobile Internet service is affordable and sufficient to meet a team's travel needs. The top two providers of 3G mobile Internet service for laptops—Verizon and AT&T—charge $60 per month for 5GB of data usage (Top Ten Reviews, 2010). This cap on usage should be sufficient for use while prepping at tournaments. Verizon, Sprint, and AT&T aim their mobile Internet service as a solution for business professionals who regularly travel and need reliable access to the Internet wherever they may find themselves. As a supplement to home or office Internet access, 5GB is plenty of data for a secondary Internet connection (Evdoinfo, 2006).

Another concern that has been raised along these lines is what about those times when Internet service goes down? First, this is not a very common occurrence today; mobile Internet service is highly reliable. If it should happen that access fails, all extempers will be in the same boat. They will have to use their existing knowledge and their skills of analysis to compete in the round(s). That is not a tragedy. If only some extempers cannot get on line, what then? We are a community; we should act like one. If not, teams go digital fully aware that the decision is not risk free. We should allow coaches in consultation with their teams to make that decision for themselves.

If electronic retrieval systems have served to level the playing field among squads by giving them all equal access to a wealth of information (Congalton & Olson, 1995, 145), imagine how level the playing field would be if everyone were able to access the Internet during prep. The inordinate amount of time that goes into creating files would be eliminated. Thus, an extemp squad of one or two students would be on nearly the same footing as a squad of fifteen.

To assure that students are not communicating with squad mates and coaches would be a challenge, especially if we insist on fitting digitized extemp prep realities into hard copy extemp prep methods. For instance, with mobile Internet access to retrieve information individually, squads would not have to be clustered in the same physical space to

share physical files. Perhaps all first speakers would sit together and monitor one another; all second speakers would sit together; and so forth. It is not hard to tell if someone is typing a message versus typing in search terms. Any unethical communication beyond the prep room under this configuration cannot be monitored today; so, it is a nonissue when considering whether or not on-line access during prep is workable. The bottom line here is that we have to be willing to think outside the box to bring today's technologies into our activity.

Allowing online access to information during extemp prep would lead to other benefits as well. How we spend our coaching time in extemp could be radically altered to become much more educational. Extemp squad meetings could be focused on explaining why some sources of information are better than others, how to construct sound arguments and how to effectively employ various forms of reasoning. Squads could spend their time analyzing important issues of the day together instead of haggling over filing assignments that might be left undone or done in haste. As coaches, we could actually teach our students through any information discrimination deficits that can come from being literally bombarded by endless streams of information.

As Wilson (2004) notes, information saturation renders Millennials naïve about evaluating sources of information. They think little about author's agendas, points of view expressed, quality and accuracy of content, fair and balanced coverage, source reliability and relevance of information. Our students don't necessarily intentionally misuse information; sometimes, they just do not know any better. Being able to focus on these areas in coaching is pedagogically warranted. Surely, we would much rather teach on those issues than re-teach how to manage the files. Reaching millennial students in order to engage, motivate, and inspire them means situating what we do at that intersection between how they learn and how we teach (McGlynn, 2008).

Second, as any good Burkeian knows, we need some permanence with our change. Students competing in extemporaneous speaking should be permitted to use a note card or not use a note card without penalty as long as they are effective in executing that choice. We can debate whether or not speaking from limited notes means written notations or if mental notes are also limited notes. That debate has raged for years with no clear resolution in sight. What we have yet to hear, however, is any rational and convincing argument that there is an inherent weakness in needing and using notes. This debate over whether or not using notes impacts speaker credibility and effectiveness is not new (Hostettler, 1955); the arguments that having no written notes is better are no more convincing today than they were 55 years ago. What matters is how students incorporate the use of notes into their presentations. Moreover, memorizing a dozen sources that are distributed across a pre-constructed, memorized shell or brief is not only antithetical to limited preparation and unethical; it has no particular pedagogical value because it has little transferability.

On the other hand, people give presentations using notes all the time. Compared to memorizing briefs and sources, effective note handling is a much more teachable and pedagogically defensible skill. When someone is skilled at speaking from written notes, they can be as credible and persuasive as the person who speaks from mental "notes." This is a skill worth cultivating. Further, the requirement of a note card has the potential to end once and for all claims of "I just got my sources in the wrong order" apologies that are all too common in extemp when students rely on mental "notes." Moreover, for the Luddites among us, it does not get much more low tech than a note card.

Conclusion

Like it or not, we live in the age of digital communication technology. For years, our community has ignored it, condemned it, and tried to mold it to our previous ways of doing things. Just as early television show producers wasted the potential of this revolutionary communication technology of the time—those were often visually stark and terrible shows—our reservations and our uncertainty are leading us to waste the promise of communication technology in the new millennium. In the process, we disserve the students in who compete in extemp, and we may be diminishing the ability of our community to attract students whose lives are steeped in this communication revolution. We can and we must do better.

By allowing on-line access to information during extemp prep, we can take advantage of not only the technology that we have had at our fingertips for decades now, but we can adapt forensics to the culture of the generation of students we are currently teaching—the Millennials. They and our community would both be better with this change.

Finally, we need to restore competitive reason to extemporaneous speaking. Expecting students to accomplish all that is now expected of them in their 30 minutes of prep and to keep it straight in their mental "notes" may be asking for the trouble we get. Students will find a way to let us think our expectations are being met all the while making compromises in their choices that they may fail to understand are not fully above board and ethical. Further, if it is what wins, our culture that despite its ideals promotes competition over learning (Burnett, Brand, & Meister, 2001) will continue to get exactly what it deserves—a culture in which our ideals too easily may be compromised and a set of practices that are increasingly irrelevant to the future.

Our adaptation to digital technology need not take us to the end of the line with virtual tournaments. Such a beast should give us cause for pause and concern (Hinck, 2002). Public speaking and public performance is a live face-to-face experience. This is not to say that mediated communication, such as virtual or electronically reproduced performances, does not have its place. But mediated communication is not public communication, which is what our current slate of forensics events intends to teach. Within the clear parameters of what we do, there are many fruitful and pedagogically justi-

fiable uses of digital communication that we can and should embrace.

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Accreditation Criteria and Forensics: Essential Principles for Directors of Forensics

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Abstract

Assessment pressures abound for all institutions of higher learning. During her tenure as Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings frequently called for transparency and greater accountability in our colleges and universities. This paper review each of the criteria for accreditation established by the Higher Learning Commission, putting our teams and events to the test to determine our activity's ability to meet each of the criteria and contribute to our academic mission, vision, and objectives. The skills and knowledge derived from forensics, in particular the limited preparation events, provide evidence of engaging and challenging our students and creating effective learning environments for students who "live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society."

Introduction

Colleges and universities in the United States voluntarily seek accreditation from one of six regional accrediting agencies recognized by the Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Since 1895, the regional North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), with colleges and universities in 19 states, "has been committed to the improvement of education at all levels through evaluation and accreditation" ("FAQ," 2010). Accreditation provides "both a public certification of acceptable institutional quality and an opportunity and incentive for self-improvement" ("FAQ," 2010). The regional agencies provide criteria for accreditation in categories that range from the mission and integrity of the institution, to student learning and practices of effective teaching, to ensuring that institutions have sufficient resources and planning to carry out their mission (NCAHLC, 2010). Reaffirmation of accreditation must take place no more than ten years after prior accreditation. These institutions of higher learning gather materials, write self-reports, and undergo site visits from the accrediting agencies. Based upon the institution's mission, vision, and goal statements, the accrediting agency evaluates the materials and determines whether an institution is accredited. If an institution is weak in one of the criteria, the review team may ask for follow-up reports or other types of information and return to the campus to conduct a focus visit in relation to that specific criterion.

Although this process is voluntary, nearly every college and university in the country pursues accreditation. Inspection of an institution through the regional accrediting agencies provides a statement of public transparency and trust. Students cannot receive federal financial aid from schools that fail to meet standards for accreditation. Due to the tremendous importance of accreditation, institutions typically spend several years gathering materials and authoring reports in anticipation of the site visit. Failure to meet criteria would be unacceptable to trustees of the institution. Thus, college and university officials focus considerable attention on accreditation, particularly with regard to any changes or proposed changes within the criteria.

Although the forensics community might initially see accreditation as something of concern only to deans, provosts, and presidents, this could not be further from the truth. Institutions invest tremendous resources to ensure that criteria for accreditation are met. All stakeholders of the institution play a role, even in small ways, in providing evidence of student learning, appropriate resource management, and long-term planning. Forensics provides unique opportunities to shape student learning and engagement.

This paper is a tool of advocacy for directors of forensics. It consists of a review of each of the criteria for accreditation as provided by NCA's Higher Learning Commission (HLC), which oversees the accreditation of colleges and universities. The paper provides recommendations for actions that directors of forensics can take to link program objectives and outcomes to these criteria. Each regional agency (such as the NCA) is technically independent of the others, although they work together, and each recognizes accreditation of schools provided by the others. Due to this independence, it is recommended that directors of forensics review their accrediting agency's website for more information.

There are five major headings of the criteria for accreditation. Each heading features a criterion statement, which are the "necessary attributes of an organization accredited by the Commission,"; core components, which consist of "reasonable and representative evidence of meeting a criterion"; and multiple examples which illustrate "the types of evidence an organization might present in addressing a core component" (NCAHLC, 2010).

Before detailing the criteria, core components, and examples of evidence, I want to make something known and clear. In order to prevent the need to cite NCAHLC, 2010 at the end of every other sentence throughout the remainder of the document, and to encourage direct application of HLC's specific language and phrasing, I liberally use the language of the criteria, core components, and examples of evidence without formal citation being applied. Thus, I encourage those who quote freely the text of this paper to please consult the original text of the criteria, core components, and examples of evidence for clarity.

Criterion One: Mission and Integrity
The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and pro-

cesses that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

1a. The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.
Universities and colleges must adopt clearly-articulated statements of mission, vision, values, and goals that provide a foundation for the institution and direction for future growth and development. Directors of forensics need to identify the institutional mission statement and review the specific vision and goals provided. A key piece of evidence that institutions are actually meeting this criterion includes documentation to the public, particularly to enrolled (and prospective) students. Thus, there should be abundant information online to meet the goal of transparency for the accreditation review process.

Mission statements themselves are often very broad. At a baseline philosophical and educational level, most forensic organizations and individual teams readily meet the same goals as the institution. For example, consider Ripon College's mission statement (Ripon is a private, four-year liberal arts institution of approximately 1050 students):

> Ripon College prepares students of diverse interests for lives of productive, socially responsible citizenship. Our liberal arts curriculum and residential campus create an intimate learning community in which students experience a richly personalized education (Ripon, n.d.).

Directors of forensics should note the key trigger points in the mission statement that link to the forensic activity in general and the individual team's philosophy in particular. My team has very, very diverse interests. In fact, part of the appeal of Ripon as an institution is that students can express their views openly and participate in a number of activities alongside forensics. Thus, a member of the forensics team might also be involved in Student Senate, a fraternity or sorority, be a lead in a theatre production, play for an orchestra, have a show on the radio station, or write for the campus newspaper. This also fits the philosophy of Ripon's program to provide opportunities for competition at a level comfortable for the individual student. Other triggers include the liberal arts, for which I argue that forensics is the strongest of the co-curricular activities in the development of student knowledge and skills in the humanities (literary criticism), natural sciences (a substantial percentage of informative speeches), social sciences (oratory/extemp), and fine arts (performance of literature). I strongly believe that extemporaneous speaking is liberal arts in action. Forensics by its very nature is part of an intimate learning community and provides a richly personalized experience.

> The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire is a comprehensive university whose purpose is to foster the intellectual, personal, social, and cultural development of its students. The University provides an academic environment designed to encourage faculty-student interac-

tion and promote excellence in teaching and learning, scholarly activity, and public service. Its residential setting fosters personal and social development through a rich array of co-curricular activities (Eau Claire, n.d.).

Although our neighbor to the north is larger than Ripon, public, and part of the massive University of Wisconsin system, the mission statement's forensic triggers are clear. Our events foster intellectual, personal, and social development of students, and can, in certain circumstances, also affect cultural development. In addition, forensics uniquely engages faculty-student interaction and collaboration. Students can take their scholarly activity and apply it to their events. Some teams require or highly recommend public service. The key is to identify the specific triggers within the mission statement that apply to your team.

Individual teams should offer mission statements and place them on the web, on social networking sites, and in literature (such as brochures). Directors of forensics are often unaware of, or don't seriously consider, university mission statements in the development of their team. However, they are missing a great opportunity to link the activity and their team's philosophy to the mission of the institution. This information then informs current and prospective students, the administration, and faculty from all disciplines and campus locations, many of whom don't necessarily understand the activity and its benefits. Most teams have a particular philosophy of participation, competition, and/or education that truly represents excellence at all levels. Unfortunately, these mission statements often remain unstated or shared only with team members. Directors need to be very clear to link the mission of the team to the institution's mission, in particular as forensic education relates to the curriculum, learning goals, and activities of students.

1b. In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.
Forensics often draws a very diverse student base. It is important to celebrate diversity and note the various ways forensics as an activity welcomes diversity in all its forms. Directors must not limit themselves to the interpretation of diversity as a matter of race/ethnicity or learning styles exclusively. Diversity of thought, appreciation for other cultures and ideas, and understanding of contemporary world issues through the lens of various national and international agencies affords forensics a unique place in the consideration of diversity on campus.

Diversity also recognizes the institution's function in a multicultural society. The institution must demonstrate a commitment to honor the dignity and worth of individuals. Forensic programs can provide evidence of this, following codes of behavior that reflect well upon the institution and which celebrate the dignity and worth of individuals. Oral interpretation of literature, in many ways, serves this purpose uniquely. As the institution needs to provide evidence of strategies to address diversity, teams should take the op-

portunity to promote the activity to a range of groups, both on campus and off, and inform the administration of their efforts to enhance diversity on campus.

1c. Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

In essence, this means walking the walk – for the institution itself and the forensic teams as well. We must live our mission statements. This means that the mission is posted in multiple places, both internally (e.g. squadrooms or coaches offices) and externally (online, including Facebook and Twitter). The central argument to be made is that, when team members understand their mission, they can become empowered to make ethical, competitive, and event decisions through that lens when questions arise. This behavior can have a powerful impact on the team. Is it acceptable to make up a source on the fly in extemp? Is it more educational to consider a variety of organizational structures in impromptu instead of just repeating one? Can I take a politically unpopular stance on a topic and support it? Students should be able to answer these questions, in part, by reflecting on the spirit of the mission. Coaching decisions should also be approached through this lens.

Directors of forensics need to understand that institutions, under this section of the core component, must provide evidence that strategic decisions are mission-driven; strategic decisions which involve planning and budgeting flow from and support the mission of the institution. By living the mission statement, teams which need administration support, or which need to defend themselves from the threat of program elimination, will be creating very strong arguments that the activity in general, and the team specifically, provide valuable evidence that the institution truly is meeting its mission, vision, and goals.

1d. The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

This section provides an opportunity to support a program that is under consideration for elimination. If the director of the program reports to someone who is ill-informed or apathetic toward the activity, or just in the mindset to cut budgets to bring numbers in line, then the structures of administration and support should be carefully considered and evaluated. For example, some teams work well through student activities budget lines and support, but others prefer budgets that are not subject to the political will of a student body. If the director reports to a department chair, is that chair well informed? How does that chair respond to the organizational structure? As institutions are evaluated, in part, on their mission and integrity as reflected in the category of effective leadership and collaborative processes, the director of forensics has the opportunity to argue that faculty and other academic leaders share responsibility for governance and demonstration of effective leadership. Institutions are called upon to evaluate structures and processes regularly and make appropriate adjustments. Directors of forensics

must understand these structures and how programs overall fit within the system in order to make appropriate arguments in support of their students.

In addition, directors of forensics are urged to carefully consider their own team's leadership structures and articulate the means by which teams will develop effective leadership and support collaborative processes. As one example, extemporaneous speaking, with a team's file system, requires students to collaborate, coordinate, and share a knowledge management system that effectively supports the team's educational and competitive goals. To enhance students' leadership and collaborative engagement in team decision-making, I created an advisory board at Ripon College (one student affectionately refers to the group as my "Cabinet") which consists of the six team officers and two students chosen at-large for any given meeting. These students provide advice and perspective on issues related to team management, team policies, and budgets. This provides ownership, transparency, and an example for the administration of how student leadership can be fostered (and then used as one piece of evidence by the institution as meeting its core mission, vision, and goals).

1e. The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

This final section of Criterion One is dedicated to ensuring that the activities of the institution are congruent with its mission. Legal, ethical, and fiscal responsibilities are a critical component of living the mission. Specifically related to forensics, the institution is concerned with the integrity of its co-curricular activities and that it supports structures and processes which demonstrate that integrity. The institution must represent itself accurately and honestly to the public and any complaints/grievances (in particular from students) must be documented and responded to in a timely fashion. The team should clearly state how student concerns are addressed. Directors of forensics simply may wish to adopt their institution's specific statements and procedures as they regard harassment, behavioral policies, and ethical responsibilities. These should be provided in writing (or with specific reference to where policies can be accessed in written form). If these procedures are lacking at an institutional level, the director should craft statements and share them with other constituents of the campus (with supervisor approval, as necessary).

Each director of forensics must ensure that the statement of their team's mission, vision, and goals are consonant with the practices of the team in order to uphold integrity. This applies to the practice of all competitive events. Directors of forensics need to identify specific learning objectives/outcomes for each of the events (or grouping of events) so that students understand their goals. It is easy to mistake competitive goals (I want to win the next tournament and get that last leg to qualify for nationals) with learning goals (I want to demonstrate a clear understanding of this topic and argue persuasively for my position). The learning objectives/outcomes become evidence for the demonstration of integrity as the students can read, reflect

upon, and internalize the director of forensics' desired outcomes.

I will use the limited preparation events as an example. Source fabrication in extemp (in which students feel the need either to create a false attribution for source diversity, or simply forget specific sources/dates due to limited time to memorize during prep) is a strong temptation. The director's tolerance for such practices on the team and the ability to detect and correct for these types of ethical lapses should be linked back directly to the mission statement and specific learning objectives/outcomes established for the event. If students cannot memorize, accurately, the source citations, then the student may need to use a notecard to ensure integrity of the event's outcomes (presuming that one outcome might be to handle evidence appropriately, in context, and with accurate citation). The notion of canning in impromptu, in which speeches are essentially prepared in advance and then forced to fit a quotation, demands that the program director and other coaches have frank discussions about the nature of the event and the need to link the specific language of the topic to the speech content to ensure integrity. Whatever the learning objectives/outcomes set by the director (hopefully in concert with the team members or a cross-section of team members), the team's integrity should not be compromised due to competitive goals trumping educational goals.

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future
The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

2a. The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.
Although the forensics program may not be able to have an enormous impact on the preparation of an entire university or college system for accreditation, it is important to reflect upon best practices that can be considered by the director of forensics to meet the goals of the home institution. This criterion asks programs to look forward. Thus, the director must continue to keep in mind the mission, vision, and goals, as well as the learning objectives/outcomes of the events, and indeed the program as a whole, while making plans for the future.

One example of a piece of evidence that might be used by the institution, and thus the team, is planning based upon capacity. Programs vary tremendously in regard to philosophy, requirements, and resources available for travel. Directors of forensics need to examine the number of students, events, tournaments, and other important characteristics to determine capacity. The best place to argue the ideals (as well as the probable ranges of participation/competition) is in a program's annual review. If you are not required to write a review, write one anyway. Articulating specific goals, and sticking to them, as they regard team capacity, is

of value to the director whether an administrator evaluates the document or not. In fact, having a plan available demonstrates initiative, thoughtfulness, and attention paid to resource availability. View this planning document as an opportunity, not a threat, to further the goals of your program. As all faculty and staff members must have annual performance reviews, take the opportunity to discuss with supervisors your program's goals and objectives as they relate to team capacity. Linking to mission statements and core learning outcomes will make a very, very positive impression in the eyes of any supervisor, in particular if this action is not a requirement or even a suggestion that comes from the supervisor's office.

Use these reports to plan for the program's future. If directors do not currently have scholarships available, for example, track the capacity and use the planning documents to make arguments for why scholarships are essential to forming and/or sustaining a team. If there are too many students demanding extensive coaching that isn't supported by staffing levels, make the argument to increase resources for staffing, or recommend that caps be in place in terms of the number of students who actively travel and compete. For example, on-campus tournaments can be hosted to provide students a learning experience, and traveling team members may serve as judges to provide feedback to the non-traveling members. Many students can be involved without cost to the team's budget. In addition, if the director of forensics does not have a formal performance review, then ask for one. Directors will want the documentation that their supervisor supported their efforts and that they met expectations.

Outside of capacity, evidence in support of this core component may include planning documents that take into consideration emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization. Our teams frequently explore contemporary issues that pertain to these three categories. Extemporaneous speaking, by its very nature, examines the future as it is shaped by societal, international, and economic trends. Additionally, the institution's planning documents likely demonstrate its role in a multicultural society and effective environmental scanning as part of this core component. By encouraging administrators to attend showcase events which reflect upon these topic areas, or by holding an extemp round for administrators in which the administrators come up with specific questions for students to analyze and answer, it may signal that the administration is serious about innovation and change. After these experiences, the relevance of the program will be made stronger; as students engage in discussion with these officials after the speeches, there is an ownership created. The institution should also incorporate those aspects of its history and heritage that it wishes to preserve and continue. Demonstrating a commitment to programs like forensics certainly could be an important extension of the institution's identity and potentially result in further support.

2b. The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

Although resource bases vary from institution to institution, directors can certainly do their utmost to ensure that resources are used effectively. Shifting to electronic files often saves teams volumes of paper and ink. Students who are on food-service contracts can request boxed meals to be provided to take to tournaments. Identifying discount rates at hotels, working with advancement offices to assist in fund-raising efforts, and hosting high school tournaments to enhance admission efforts and raise money are just a few ways for a team to build a resource base and demonstrate a shared commitment to responsible use of resources for the future. In addition, the institution needs to provide resources that are adequate for achievement of the educational quality it claims to provide. Thus, making arguments and providing evidence that the team's budget is managed responsibly and in consonance with its mission is a critical element to the team's success in the eyes of the institution.

In addition, human resources are crucial in the focus of this core component. The director of forensics must review the planning documents and determine where forensics is seated in the context of the future of the institution. Carefully examine coach impacts on FTE (full time staffing equivalency) and the delicate balance among teaching, research, service, and coaching/travel. If the director meets other obligations outside of faculty appointment, ensure that the auxiliary or primary appointments outside of forensics meet institutional goals. Note the number of hours that coaches volunteer their time. Document each and every time a member of the campus or community serves as a guest judge or coach. All of these pieces of evidence contribute to the discussion of human resource allocation.

2c. The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

It is a rare forensics team that holds a formal assessment of its students. Typically students travel when they sign up, or when coaches deem an event "tournament worthy," but what assessments are used to ensure learning objectives/outcomes are met? We often look to the final results to determine success. However, much as a letter grade on a single assignment does not ensure that a student has actually mastered the unit outcomes, so also single scores do not match goals for event outcome assessment. We often reward competitive behaviors instead of tuning in to educational objectives when evaluating students in tournaments. In limited preparation events, for example, students may perceive that they will be more successful in extemp if they memorize the speech. If an outcome consists of being able to deliver a speech with spontaneous language choices and from limited notes, then scores may not inherently reflect the learning objectives/outcomes desired by the program. The key with assessment is that a feedback loop is created so that improvement can be demonstrated. Thus, hosting mock

tournaments in which community members serve as judges and provide feedback to students, may actually serve the interests of assessment better than a specific tournament result.

I also want to encourage tournament directors to consider placing learning objectives/outcomes in tournament invitations and attaching criteria for evaluation to the ballots to encourage more targeted assessment. Bradley University's Norton Invitational last year encouraged research and modified tournament practices to assess certain behaviors (such as requiring use of a notecard in extemp). These assessments help to shape the activity and provide valuable feedback, which assists individual programs and the forensics community, as a whole, in forming a process of continual improvement for the team.

2d. All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

Directors of forensics need to dedicate time to long-term team planning. As part of that planning, directors should reflect upon educational practices, student learning, and their budgets. Long-range planning by institutions typically will provide sufficient flexibility so that institutions can make adjustments depending upon the financial conditions of the college or university at the time. As a result, forensic programs will always be in a situation to defend their practices, to prove benefits, and to promote their missions. This will not change. Programs that are prepared to defend themselves, even in a tight economic environment, will better be able to weather the storm by asserting evidence in support of the institution's mission, vision, and goals through long-term planning.

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

3a. The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

The key at this stage is to develop program-level learning outcomes. As mentioned earlier, it is very easy to confuse competitive outcomes with learning outcomes. Program-level outcomes determine if a director's philosophy has been developed and sustained in the program, if all students who desire access can have that access, or if all students should meet specific requirements in order to compete. Directors must ask themselves, outside of trophy counts and sweepstakes points, what does a successful program look like? The goal of this component sought by accrediting agencies is often confusing – it is not to dictate *what* learning outcomes must be met at the program level. However, it does indicate that a program must *possess* learning outcomes and identify ways to measure those outcomes. Out-

comes must regularly be evaluated to determine success in meeting the stated objectives.

Event learning outcomes should also be established, as noted earlier. Ultimately, while finishing first in a competition is enjoyable, desirable, and beneficial to both one's esteem and the program overall, it does not ensure that students have actually developed a particular skill or mastered a particular field of study. Tournament results are indirect measures of student learning. We cannot assume that something has been learned when students meet a certain level of success. If learning objectives in interp, for example, consist of student selection, analysis, cutting, and development of a piece(s) of literature, and the student wins because a coach selected, cut, composed, and even wrote the introduction word-for-word, we might say that competitive success was achieved, but none of the learning outcomes materialized.

Likewise, students might meet some learning outcomes and develop valuable and measurable skills, yet are not rewarded with final round placements. Ranks and scores on their own don't measure learning outcomes. A clear rubric with specific points of analysis regarding specific skills can serve as direct assessment. In fact, if tournament directors placed learning outcomes on ballots and asked judges to measure specific outcomes at the contest, those comments could be considered direct assessment. The status quo suggests that one *could*, in theory, earn that type of ballot. However, without the specific learning objectives/outcomes directly stated, "nice shoes" might alone dictate who received the "1" compared to the "3" in the round. In essence, in the absence of clear criteria, judges simply create their own. Official rules typically are brief and broad and don't suggest what students should have learned from the experience and, as a result, are of little help in the formation of specific criteria for assessment.

Directors of forensics should have both direct and indirect measures of success embedded in the program. Clearly articulating the learning outcomes, and then creating measures to evaluate those learning outcomes, is critical to ensure external accountability. Indirect measures of learning may also be considered as a part of assessment, and may include alumni surveys of what they see as being of value upon reflecting on their forensics career, specific and on-target ballot comments, and assessments from community members. If a student takes a particular ballot comment related to a learning outcome, makes adjustments based upon recommendations on the ballot, and improves the event such that the learning objectives are met and an outcome can be measured, then the director of forensics has just identified a direct measure of assessment. In addition, data on retention rates among students who were on the team compared to the institutional whole, GPA's of students on the team compared to non-competitors, and other indirect measures certainly may be used in the justification of a program.

I recommend that directors of forensics discuss appropriate assessment strategies and tools with their academic assessment coordinator or institutional researcher, or both, to learn how best to craft effective assessments that the institution can use as evidence that students really are learning what we say they have learned. That's the ultimate question that assessment seeks to answer – how do we know that students learned something as a result of the instruction provided? What in the feedback loop from students, guest judges, and others constitutes an understanding that faculty and coaches have learned something they didn't before?

3b. The organization values and supports effective teaching.

I have twice in this paper argued against reporting results related to competitive norms when it comes to assessment. The primary reason for this is that judges often don't use recognized and content-specific criteria in their assessment of who "wins" or "loses." Curriculum models should be adopted that are well tested and capable of adding valuable information to the study of forensics or the improvement of student learning. Directors of forensics cannot meet goals of improving pedagogy if student horizons are not being expanded through learning outcomes. Students and coaches are invited to participate in professional conferences and meetings. In order to engage in practices that are innovative, norms must be reconsidered and tested, and in order to do that, one needs to understand the underlying theory that grounds the practices of communication, in general, and the various forensic events, in particular.

One substantial argument that directors of forensics can make under this criterion is that forensics features varied learning environments. One-to-one teaching and tutoring, enhancing learning through competitive activity, reflection and emotional maturity through interp, and engaging in the heavy research typically required of speeches serve as a truly unique opportunity to exercise skills desired by faculty and future employers alike. In addition, students who truly attempt to break norms will advance innovative practices, which means that forensics will be less likely to grow stagnant as students exercise a range of perspectives.

3c. The organization creates effective learning environments.

The direct and indirect assessment results mentioned above are key to this third component of Criterion 3. Results from assessments provide a feedback loop to the coaches and demonstrate an open environment for examining the curriculum, coaching methods, instructional resources, and student services. All learners are supported in the various ways that they practice, develop, and adopt skills. If a practice is not working, it can be recorded, assessed, and ultimately even dismissed. This cannot happen absent a process of assessment. In addition, this cannot happen if the director of forensics avoids taking the assessment process seriously. In speaking with colleagues who may not be inclined toward common assessment practices and procedures, the director might assume that this process does not carry value, or is only a process of "jumping through hoops." When used well, this process is not external to the running of a foren-

sics program; in fact, it becomes integral to developing a solid, logical and ethical program.

3d. The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.
Resources under this heading may include the purchase of electronic databases for research, performance spaces, and practice sites that support quality teaching and learning. Technology, specifically, is mentioned in this component as a means to meet the goals of the criterion. Thus, staffing of learning resources, support for students, faculty, and staff in the use of technology, and the effectiveness of learning resources all play a vital role. The evidence and arguments that you use can be helpful to information technology staff, the library, and faculty/staff development coordinators, among others. By sharing information on resource usage, directors of forensics can support other departments on campus while seeking approval from others for their own program. For example, if the forensics team is heavily using a particular database or part of the physical campus for performances or practices, note the need for such spaces, document their heavy use, and prepare to make recommendations as a result.

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Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

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The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

4a. The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.
This criterion statement provides extensive potential for directors of forensics to argue the benefits of their activity. As establishing a life of learning is forward-focused and difficult to measure, the director must articulate the goals of forensics that point toward the likelihood of a lifetime of engaged learning. One of the examples of evidence is that the institution publicly acknowledges achievements of students and faculty in the area of knowledge creation, application, and presentation. Forensics emphasizes research, analysis, and application of a body of knowledge through its public address events. In addition, extensive consideration of literature promotes creativity and character analysis in the interpretive events. Limited preparation events promote acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge in every single round of competition. Due to the need to promote these successes publicly by the institution, the forensics team should furiously promote their accomplishments by using the language of the criterion. In press releases, directors of forensics should note that students pursue acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge. The directors then need to provide examples for support. The range of topics that students address in forensics, if announced in press releases, provide further evidence in support of the criterion and in our support of students' critical inquiry, creativity, and practice. Cyberterrorism, false promises in

the promotion of organic foods, and a narrative which details the traumatic events that take place within a terrorist cell, demonstrate this criterion more effectively than the facts, on their own, that one student finished third in persuasion, another ranked fourth in CA, and yet another won prose. This is not to disparage the rank of students at a tournament; quite the contrary, it is the director of forensics' avenue to promote the team's success. Noting some of the final round topics in extemporaneous speaking, for example, reinforces the criterion and the emphasis on the promotion of life-long learning, while promoting a student's final round placement in the event.

This criterion also provides a unique opportunity to promote research in forensics. The National Developmental Conference is but one occasion for coaches and students to gather and share through the exploration of applied research. There are two specifically relevant pieces of evidence here: First, that faculty and students produce scholarship and create knowledge. Second, that research should be used to improve organizations and education. Directors of forensics should promote their own research and presentations in addition to highlighting student participation in these types of conferences. Coaches and students alike can help shape forensics and ultimately meet some of the most worthwhile goals of criterion 4 – to improve the activity for the future and foster a lifetime love for learning through competition.

4b. The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.
This activity provides incredible evidence in support of breadth of knowledge and skills and the engagement of intellectual inquiry with an educational program. Although this component, in large part, addresses the curriculum related to general education requirements of the institution, forensics certainly provides a clear connection between the curricular and co-curricular components of a college or university education. Forensics supports critical inquiry, practice, creativity, and social responsibility. In addition, if we have done our jobs effectively by creating learning outcomes for each category of events, we then can demonstrate achievement of a breadth of knowledge and skills. These learning outcomes, combined with alumni feedback and support, can turn promotion of this activity into a catalyst for continued learning well into the future.

4c. The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.
Once again formal curriculum is the focus for this core component. Those who host either formal programs of study, or even forensics as a single course, will be able to detail the specific curricular connection here. Outside of the formal curricular context, directors of forensics will likely discuss limited preparation specifically in regard to this core component. One of the examples of evidence – skills and professional competence essential to a diverse workforce – substantially relates to the preparation and skills we provide

through impromptu and extemporaneous speaking. In addition, having the skills and knowledge needed to function in a national and global society is represented in every round of extemp. Directors of forensics need to articulate these skill sets and share information with alumni, employers of former students, and other external constituents with documentation on how forensics has played a substantial role in their lives.

There is a caveat which is important to highlight at this time. As this core component addresses the usefulness of the curriculum, and holds as an example of evidence student/faculty research, I recommend that coaches have frank discussion with students on the effect of competitive dimensions on public address research, in particular with regard to CA. Research for many public address events focuses attention on magazines, newspapers, and the occasional journal, and may or may not add substantive new research to the field of study (often students summarize, or analyze, others' works instead of creating their own research). In CA, although students are producing very creative and original ideas, in particular in the implications section found in most CAs, students and directors should take care not to confuse extensive academic research practices with those of CA. Directors should discuss with students how research is conducted in the academy, the role of the research question in published articles, and how these elements differ from some of the research that is done for CA. We would not publish a ten-minute CA script in an academic journal. This is not a criticism of the event – it is the reality when we consider that the scope and burdens of CA research are often very different from formal scholarship, even though there are many talented students who find ways to link their academic scholarship in creative and interesting ways to their specific events.

4d. The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.
This entire core component regards responsible use of knowledge, ethical conduct with regard to use of information, and respecting intellectual property rights. It is incumbent upon the director of forensics to discuss responsible use of information with students. We must ensure that students are writing their own speeches, that they review each source citation so that it accurately and appropriately reflects the information consulted, and consider the role of learning objectives/outcomes in the practice of event development.

Source conduct is a very important component of limited preparation because of the spontaneous nature of both events. It is very easy for a student to "botch" a source in impromptu or extemp, either by simply forgetting or mixing up dates/periodicals or theories/reference points. Although anyone can, in the tension of a competitive round, forget or misstate a source, we must take steps to ensure that this is the exception and not the rule. Thus, I urge the entire forensics community to consider the role of notes and to address

perceptions on how notes are considered in the context of the round. It is interesting that absence of notes in a limited preparation event, with content that students likely have not consulted or used in a particular way in advance of the round, is determined more credible than possession of notes. I would argue that, when referenced on occasion, notes should actually *convey* credibility instead of harming it. However, imagine the reaction if, when judging national tournaments, I were to write, "good speech, but because it's memorized I'm worried that it's not fully credible." Yet, we have all seen ballots that suggest the opposite ("you'd be more competitive if you dropped the notecard"). While this is not to suggest that everyone who uses a notecard is automatically more responsible with their sourcing, our standards for information usage should reflect appropriate use and consideration, and efforts to promote practices that encourage this appropriate use should be adopted.

Criterion Five: Engagement and Service
As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

5a. The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.
This criterion and core components should be the most enjoyable to fulfill of all – outreach of our activity into the community. Forensics possesses ample opportunity to enhance our students' skills and improve the lives of others in ways both large and small. Our students can share their presentation skills and perspectives with local schools, civic groups, or prison inmates. Performances showcase the talents of the students, spark valuable discussion, and forge strong connections/networks outside of the forensics community. Students may form or join a speakers' bureau, for example, which emphasizes "real-world" speaking in non-competitive contexts.

Whatever directors of forensics use to reach out to and support the community, they should ensure that it is documented. For example, if students perform at a local Rotary group, pass out surveys afterward requesting feedback. Specifically, Rotarians might be asked to provide their perspectives on a persuasive speech that is delivered to a non-forensics audience. Were they persuaded? What dimensions of the topic were not considered in the speech that should have been included? What did you like best about the presentation? Part of assessment is "closing the feedback loop," which means that we take the feedback and actually use it to inform practice. These are the types of questions that can lead us to an examination of practices and procedures within the community.

5b. The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.
The focus of this core component is the direct linkage of the institution's structures and programs to the community. Specifically, educational and co-curricular programs need to

provide evidence of engaging and connecting students with external communities. This is an opportunity for the program to put its best foot forward and bring performance and persuasion to those outside of our organization.

Directors of forensics can get very creative and discuss outreach with their team members, creating ownership and pride among the team members. Putting on a showcase of events prior to nationals can bring campus and community together without a cost to attend. Asking students to perform for various civic groups broadens the reach of the activity and also engages external audiences in a discussion of important issues. Audience adaptation is an important skill that can be lost in our activity. Thus, performing for older audiences (such as nursing homes or assisted-living facilities) and younger audiences (Dr. Seuss Week performances of children's literature) alike is a value that can be reached through community. There are literally dozens of ways to link our activity to the community. The key to success is to select quality events that are audience-appropriate. For example, after dinner speaking is an event that, due to styles of humor and audience, may not work well with external audiences. In addition, competitive behaviors, such as walking in triangles, puns in preview statements, and assumptions of audience attitudes and beliefs need to be carefully considered and adapted based upon the context.

As the community enjoys the student performances and engages in the discussion of important issues, teams benefit as well, through exposure of the activity, avenues for future team fund-raising, and testing clarity and quality of events to a non-specialized audience. Publicizing these connections also provides valued evidence of engagement by the institution. In short, under this component, everyone involved benefits.

5c. The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.
While the forensics team does not typically have a constituency that relies upon it for service, partnerships can be formed with local groups and organizations. A capable group of students can help research important issues and deliver speeches to targeted groups, such as nonprofit boards, city councils, and chambers of commerce. In addition, senior-level and well-rounded team members may be able to serve as no-cost public speaking coaches for community members or organizations. Overall, however, the strongest partnerships under this core component will likely take place in the schools. Team members can assist local schools by coaching and/or judging for their teams, putting on summer or seasonal training camps, and serving as role models for community youth.

5d. Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.
What impact do services of the institution have on the community? This final core component attempts to measure impact and ensures that it's positive, sought after, and open to the public. Directors of forensics should seek out testi-

monials from alumni, local employers who have hired forensics students, satisfaction surveys from civic groups and other community organizations, and letters of program support from neighboring school districts who have benefitted from college student coaching.

In addition, institutions must demonstrate that external constituents participate in the activities and co-curricular programs open to the public. Inviting community members to serve as judges at locally-hosted tournaments, for example, can provide invaluable exposure and evidence of engagement. Directors of forensics should invite public officials to serve as judges. After a contest hosted last year, a Wisconsin state representative asked two students for copies of their speeches and their research base as those topics related to issues being debated or proposed in the state legislature.

Conclusion
The goal of this paper has been for directors of forensics, in particular, and coaches/students/friends of forensics, in general, to appreciate how our programs can support an institution's efforts toward accreditation while also benefitting the team's focus, philosophy, learning outcomes, and promotion. I encourage directors to adopt some of the recommendations above, in particular by adopting learning objectives/outcomes so that students understand what they are learning and why they learning them. If you need help and support, please contact me and I will do everything I can to help you with your team's progression in these vital areas.

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A Case for Limited Preparation: It's Not as Easy as You Think

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Abstract

Limited preparation events are useful tools that offer students many transferable skills. Because of these skills, we feel that limited preparation events should be the cornerstone of any forensics program. We also believe that repeated exposure to limited preparation events leads to a reduction in communication anxiety. We will examine the current climate of limited preparation events, the many benefits of limited preparation events and the way limited preparation can be incorporated into the educational environment. We hope to convince others of the critical role limited preparation events play in creating a well-rounded speaker.

Introduction

Every coach has had that student, the one they've thrown into impromptu with the assurance that "it'll be fine. Just talk." Many of us have been the student being told "it's just 5 minutes. Just say something. Anything." As judges, who doesn't love getting a round of impromptu—it goes so fast! Limited prep is one of the most nerve-wracking and least respected events on the circuit. There's a perception that anyone can do it with little or no coaching. Frequently it appears there's no rhyme or reason to how coaches choose which students compete in limited prep. We feel that the many benefits of doing limited prep events are not being given credence. They offer students valuable tools in combating and dealing with communication apprehension. We believe that repeated exposure to limited prep events should lead to a reduction in communication apprehension within the tournament environment and beyond.

Definitions

To begin, we must be clear on what limited prep events encompass. For the purpose of this paper, we are talking about impromptu and extemporaneous speaking as practiced on the collegiate forensics level of competition. In limited prep, each competitor must either be prepared to speak on a myriad of world events each weekend, or interpret a wide range of different quotations (Turnipseed, 2005). There are clear delineations between the two events: "….the extemporaneous speaker should seek to answer literally a significant question about current events, the impromptu speaker should strive for an insightful, metaphorical analysis" (Preston, 1992). Extemporaneous speaking, requiring one to research and present a main thesis with sub-theses on current events and world situations, has been an aspect of forensics since the first debate clubs were formed at William and Mary College in the late 1700's (Geiger, 2000). While impromptu speaking is frequently paired with extemporaneous speaking, the event offers uniquely different challenges. Impromptu does require the same answer, major thesis, and sub-thesis structure as extemporaneous speaking, the infor-

mation provided comes from within the individual's own interests and compiled knowledge (Turnipseed, 2005).

In looking at communication anxiety, we are looking specifically at situational anxiety. Situational anxiety is an apprehension that occurs when speaking in specific settings. In this case, the apprehension felt has been defined as an "individual level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey 1977). We are focusing on the apprehension one feels when having to address a group of peers, such as happens in a public speaking forum (Holbrook, 1987). The most frequent outcome of speech anxiety is avoidance of speaking situations, which in turn can limit one's involvement and effectiveness in community activities, educational pursuits, and career endeavors (Finn, Sawyer, & Schrodt, 2009).

Current Climate

Impromptu and extemporaneous speaking are isolated within the forensics world with neither being regularly applied outside of forensics. Hunt (1997) warns us that "forensics is not a public enough activity" and that "we have become advocates in a private technical sphere without public sphere experience." The limited prep events have become a "test of elocution" rather than focusing on "reasoning, invention, argumentation, evaluation and other critical skills" (Davis & Dickmeyer, 1993). The current incarnation of limited prep events has become too stagnant (Rice & Mummert, 2001).

The important classroom application and value of these events is often ignored. In the hierarchy of the forensics world these two events seem to carry the least prestige. In an informal survey of several collegiate forensics teams' current students and alumni, they were asked to rank events in order of "coolest" to "least cool." The coolest ranked at the top of the scale and the least cool ranked at the bottom of the scale. Duo and after-dinner speaking ranked at the top of the results. Additionally, five of the six top ranked events were interp events. There seems to be a clear bias towards the prestige of interp events from a competitor's viewpoint. Impromptu ranked seventh out of eleven events. Extemp clearly ranked last by a wide margin. There's a strong case to be made that extemp is currently not considered "cool" or worthwhile by students.

Impromptu speaking is one of the most frequently entered events in forensic competition (Williams, Carver, & Lowery-Hart, 2002). But, "all too often impromptu speaking is treated as a 'throw away event'-an event added so that a student becomes eligible for pentathlon" (Dean, 1988). Students tend to think of impromptu speaking as "winging it" for a couple of minutes (Gracey & Moe-Lunger, 2008);

speeches are formulaic and frequently judged on form over function. Impromptu speaking requires the speaker to interpret a resolution and take a stand on it. The ideal impromptu speech should be delivered well and should directly address the quotation. Problems arise when judges reward students for their speaking style alone, not for their ability to provide a direct, metaphorical response to the quotation (Davis & Dickmeyer, 1993). Ideally we should discourages the use of "canned" or "generic" approaches to impromptu speaking—because of the way these speeches impair the development of a contestant's ability to think on his or her feet (Preston, 1992).

Benefits of Limited Prep

Limited prep activities are unique within the forensics world in the way they have direct correlation to real-world communication skills in and out of the academic arena. Preston (1990) suggests that "since a great percentage of our daily speaking occurs in extemporaneous or impromptu forms, these events offer important practical experiences to prepare students to communicate intelligently on the spur of the moment beyond the classroom into society." The effective limited prep speaker not only acquires skill in preparing areas to discuss, but in expressing ideas just as those ideas come into consciousness. This is an invaluable tool for success.

Limited prep events offer a plethora of learning opportunities. Students acquire many benefits unique to limited prep events, such as: a) their thoughts become more easily accessible, b) they learn how language shapes our conception of reality, c) they learn to conduct research on contemporary issues more thoroughly, d) they learn how to organize the information gathered, and e) they learn how to use metaphors and other figures as supports (Preston, 1990). Additionally, students are forced to develop critical thinking skills as they analyze and construct arguments. These skills are evident in the competitor's ability to recognize the opposition between two assertions, relate supporting and refuting evidence to the assertions, and to integrate and weigh the evidence in order to evaluate the merit of the competing assertions (Davis & Dickmeyer, 1993).

Frequently, students will be placed in a situation where they have to think about a topic in a different way than they normally would. They will also be placed in a position to speak in a role with which they are not familiar. These challenges will help the student develop stronger ability and perspective taking. This ability will help students understand alternative points of view and adapt to foreign or difficult speaking situation (Williams, Carver, & Lowery-Hart, 2002).

Students can transfer these skills to any conversation where answers are required within a short time. It is a useful tool for any situation where a thoughtful response is called for. Thus, "impromptu speaking can enable a student to become more proactive—not only in competition but also in society" (Preston, 1992).

Additionally, limited prep can help to alleviate communication apprehension. Communication apprehension and the stress it produces can have a severe impact on students. Students' with higher levels of communication apprehension suffer academically with lower cognitive performance, lower grades and lower evaluations when compared to student's with low levels of communication apprehension; they are also more likely to drop out of college (Dwyer & Fus, 2002). Communication apprehension inhibits creativity in speech building and delivery as well. Our assertion is that by competing in limited prep events, students will see a reduction in their levels of communication apprehension. The very nature of limited prep forces one to confront fears about speaking in public. It's especially important to have continual exposure to competition in limited prep events to make a solid impact on communication apprehension. The more frequent exposure speakers have to audiences, the more likely their public speaking state anxiety will decrease. Exposure promotes habituation as well as long term reductions in anxiety (Finn, Sawyer, & Schrodt, 2009).

Using Limited Prep in Education

To help develop the critical thinking skills needed to be successful in limited prep events, students must explicitly engage in critical thinking activities. This is where the classroom comes into the picture. By utilizing a variety of critical thinking exercise with students, we can help them develop the skills needed to analyze, interpret and construct solid argumentation. By having students work on brain teasers, logic puzzles and event-specific critical thinking activities, i.e. argument analysis, argument mapping, evaluating evidence and constructing inductive reasoning, they are more likely to expand their critical thinking matrix.

One other possible classroom application for extemporaneous speaking is an "Extemp Briefing." This is an exercise Janis Crawford uses in her classroom with business majors. Students have their course textbook. They are separated into groups of five and the textbook is divided into sets—each group is given a set of seven chapters from the book. The groups have to create topics based on those seven chapters, which are due to the professor the class period before speaking. The day of their in-class performance, students draw three topics from the set their group created. Then they must choose one of those three topics to create a speech about. They have 30 minutes to prepare the speech before giving a 5 to 7 minute presentation to the class. Students have access to a computer lab and are encouraged to use multimedia in creating their presentation. The inspiration for this exercise is the extemporaneous nature of the business world. Being prepared to speak about a current project with little to no warning is vital. Prior to completing this exercise, my students are often agitated and worried, exhibiting many symptoms of communication apprehension. Afterwards, most of them come to realize that extemporaneous speaking is a critical skill.

Conclusion

Limited prep events offer significant benefits to the students who compete in them. There is a skill set utilized in giving limited prep speeches that does not exist on the same level in the other types of competitive speaking. Consequently, we feel it is critically important that all students of a speech team have repeated exposure to competing in limited prep events. Our plan for the upcoming school year is to require all students on our team compete in a limited prep event at every tournament they attend. We will also be administering the PRCA (the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension) and we will try to administer the STAI (State-Trait Anxiety inventory) before and after each tournament. In this way, we hope to show quantitative proof to support our hypothesis that competing in limited prep events significantly decreases communication apprehension.

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Thinking Outside the Can
Restoring the Value, Teaching and Practice of Limited Preparation in Limited-Preparation Events

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It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech.
- Mark Twain

The humor in Twain's often-referenced quotation is more readily apparent to those outside of the forensics community than to those within. Ironically, a student addressing this quotation in competition would likely disagree with the quotation, because, well, it seems like one should. Two "arguments" would ensue—one trumpeting the importance of preparation, and a second reaffirming the value of free speech. After hearing these truisms "supported" by Festinger's Theory of Cognitive Dissonance, the Dalai Lama's new PR strategy of emptiness, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and those feisty boys from George Orwell's *Lord of the Flies* (yes, the author is aware that Orwell did not write *Lord of the Flies*, but a student in the 2007 NFA final round was not), a judge would be expected to comment intelligently on the fluent, at times almost human, presentation. And so the examples that were neatly packaged weeks earlier would stand in opposition to Twain's observation about preparing what is typically not prepared in advance. In actuality, the arguments and examples would be irrelevant to an understanding of the quotation, but such is the nature of the game. "Our tournament champion in generic exemplification is …"

Language matters. This point is not lost on any serious student, teacher or scholar of rhetoric. Burke (1957, 1961) claims that language represents "strategic, stylized" responses to the human condition. The label assigned is loaded with meaning, allowing the agent to accept or reject the prevailing context or condition (Burke, 1952). When something is assigned a label, a suggestion is made regarding what the thing is, and what it is not. When forensic educators use the terms "impromptu" and "extemporaneous" in journals or at conferences, the words suggest modes of delivery associated with speeches developed in a limited time frame. However, the pedagogy of practice that has emerged over the past three decades works against the nature of these terms and the intent of these events. When "limited preparation" really means advanced preparation, when "impromptu" rewards the use of examples fully pre-prepared and "extemporaneous" punishes only the deliveries that are truly extemporaneous, then perhaps the forensics community is experiencing an accurately-referenced Orwellian nightmare. Our language betrays us.

The Value of Education in Speaking with Limited Preparation

Limited preparation events are unique in that they are the only events named after modes of delivery rather than genre of content, purpose or occasion. Impromptu and extempora- neous speaking prescribe particular methods of delivery in their titles. The other major distinguishing factor is their common generic tie—limited preparation. The existence and perpetuation of these events represents a community belief in the value of providing instruction in public speech constrained by strictly limited preparation time. The nature of public speech changes when messages are constructed "off the cuff" or "on the spot." Memory functions differently. Invention is necessarily more immediate. Language choices are typically less specific. Audience expectations related to content and delivery are different. These and other factors comprise unique rhetorical situations worthy of continuing study and practice.

Communication text authors and forensic researchers are quick to highlight the value of impromptu and extemporaneous speaking. Impromptu speaking is by far the most practical form of delivery for everyday speech (Lucas, 1998). Beyond the obvious conversational application, speakers are often called to respond immediately in business meetings, religious gatherings, social settings, classroom contexts and civic arenas. The ability to formulate arguments quickly and concisely, and deliver them effectively represents the most practical, useful public speaking skills. When a speaker is given time to prepare, and the presentational setting is a bit more formal, extemporaneous speaking is the most practical and useful method of delivery (Zarefsky, 2007; O'Hair, Stewart & Rubenstein, 2004). Beebe and Beebe (2000) suggest that "extemporaneous speaking is the approach most communication teachers recommend for most situations" (280). Given the usefulness, practicality and pervasiveness of extemporaneous and impromptu speaking in presentational settings, one is made to wonder why they occupy such a narrow tract of forensic landscape.

Speaking with limited preparation time fosters the development of critical thinking and argumentative skills. Impromptu speaking typically requires a student to analyze a quotation and formulate a well-reasoned, organized argumentative response—in a matter of minutes. Extemporaneous speaking invites students to engage the world by forming argumentative answers to domestic and international current events questions. Aden (1992) likens extemporaneous preparation and speaking to presidential public address, in that both necessitate the process of analysis, synthesis and rhetorical strategy. Pratt's (1981) description of final round limited preparation speakers from three decades ago reflects the essence of critical thinking skills and argumentative analysis:

> … they advance, support and criticize claims and they give reasons as justification for acts, beliefs, attitudes

and values. They use a variety of supporting data to try to establish subordinate claims; once established, those subordinate claims serve as data for a central claim they have made, either in answering their extemp question or in responding to their impromptu topic. (380)

Enhancing the student's ability to develop clear, cogent arguments with severely limited preparation serves an enormously valuable educative function.

Additional educational benefits emerge from the content areas associated with limited preparation events. Reynolds and Fay (1987) note that one of the distinct features of impromptu speaking is its lack of a particular area of content specialization. Impromptu is the one event where a breadth of knowledge is rewarded. As a result of the challenge of immediate preparation, Reynolds and Fay (1987) add that the canons of invention and memory play uniquely significant roles in impromptu development. The discovery of ideas involves googling one's own mind for relevant ideas, arguments and examples. The memory required in impromptu speaking differs from prepared speaking events in that it is a personal "storehouse of knowledge" from which ideas can be sought out, generated and created. The disciplined process of rhetorical invention initiates, develops and sustains a way of thinking. Articulating the constructions of these cognitive and creative processes forms the essence of impromptu speaking.

The value of content specific education in extemporaneous speaking is so overwhelmingly obvious that it barely requires mentioning. At its best, extemporaneous speaking challenges students to acquire an in-depth knowledge of current social, political and economic events in both domestic and international contexts. And while the task is daunting, the educational outcomes are phenomenal. To begin to know the world, and to articulate its problems while seeking the language of solutions, is the beginning of education.

Limited Preparation in Limited Preparation Events

The redundant section title seems odd in light of the previously noted educational benefits of contest limited preparation speaking. The genre is literally defined by the time constraints, or limited preparation imposed by the events. No doubt, the forensic founders recognized the unique benefits gained from the limited preparation experience. However, the pedagogy of practice imposed over the intervening decades has undermined the events to the point where truly limited preparation is detrimental to success in limited preparation speaking. The pedagogy of practice refers to the dominant educational paradigm present in competitive forensics. In the absence of well-stated, time-honored, community embraced educational standards and pedagogical priorities, the circular pragmatic law of "what wins is good, and what is good wins" functions as "teaching." And students learn these experiential lessons well. Presentational innovations transform into performance norms, which become judge criteria, eventually resulting in unwritten rules (Ribarsky, 2005). The process occurs with little or no dis-

cussion of educational benefits or harm at the national organizational level. Instead of being considered rhetorical or performance choices, presentational devices, such as teasers in interpretation, research questions in rhetorical criticism, previewed subpoints in speech events, and a problem-cause-solution format in persuasive and after-dinner speaking, rise to the level of criteria on ballots. And the percentage of the national judging pool who gather at conferences such as this one to discuss forensic pedagogy is dwarfed by the number of judges whose programs are fully vested in and served by the hegemonic demands of the status quo.

In limited preparation events the pedagogy of practice has eroded the very idea, and certainly the practice, of limited preparation. In impromptu speaking, the use of "canned" or pre-prepared examples is both commonplace and encouraged. Rather than developing a unique argument in response to a given topic, students plug in well-worn, previously prepared and practiced, meticulously delivered examples. The results are smooth, fluent, impressively delivered collections of examples which offer little insight and have almost nothing to do with the topic at hand. Competitors who are skilled at this method constantly repeat the topic to support the illusion of topicality. Instead of offering focused, insightful argumentation derived from an understanding of the topic, speakers are more likely to develop the unstated, but understood, argument that the examples being offered really do "fit." Judges are continually confronted with the task of weighing polished, less than topical, generic presentations against speeches that lack presentational polish but are developed on the spot, or as some would call it, impromptu. When topicality and argumentative sophistication are not the primary concerns of judges, then a pre-packaged arrangement and recitation of examples will beat an impromptu speech almost without exception. Reynolds and Fay (1987) identified and explained the problem over two decades ago:

> Too often, we hear impromptu students and coaches refer to using "blocks" or canned speeches. The problem with this is … that such set pieces do not employ memory and invention in tandem. This attitude runs the danger of producing stiff and unimaginative speeches that are not adapted to the demands of each specific metaphor. …If speakers already have established what they will discuss in a given round, then they will not continue trying to expand the fields of knowledge or use newer learning. This type of thinking, even in a purely forensics sense, precludes development. In a larger sense, using only memory co-opts the purpose of the event in a way that can make it meaningless as an educational tool. (87)

In the intervening decades, forensic "impromptu" speaking has rewarded and perpetuated this non-argumentative, anti-intellectual approach.

The problem of extensive pre-preparation is not limited to impromptu speaking. In their content analysis of extempo-

raneous ballots, Cronn-Mills and Croucher (2001) listed the issue of "canned" speeches as one of two major concerns that emerge from the study. They noted that "prefabricated" speeches were often indicated by a presentation that was "non-unique to the question posed." Three significant questions emerged from their inquiry.

1) Are students pre-prepping speeches based on assumptions of what the questions may be on any given weekend?
2) Are coaches encouraging students to pre-prep extemporaneous speeches?
3) Are coaches actually pre-prepping speeches themselves for their students to present?

From a pedagogical perspective, question three obviously points to practices that are educationally, and ethically, unsound. The other questions call forth interesting instructional issues. One could certainly argue that in-depth pre-preparation affords students more engagement with significant current events. However, if issue "briefs" are encouraged, how can a judge be sure that the student speaker prepared them? The allowance of briefs seems to greatly advantage a large squad. The experience involved in delivering a speech from pre-prepared briefs differs significantly from the strict 30-minute preparation experience. And while the educational advantages afforded by both approaches is a matter for debate, the issue of fairness seems more obvious and potentially damaging to the event. On one hand, the event calls for 30 minutes of preparation, on the other, as Cronn-Mills and Croucher point out (2001), current intercollegiate event guidelines do not preclude the use of briefs. At the very least, forensic professional organizations need to discuss the issue and clarify event guidelines—if not for pedagogical purposes, at least as a matter of fairness.

A pedagogical inquiry into extemporaneous speaking poses the question, what is most valuable in extemporaneous instruction? The current pedagogy of practice argues that delivery polish and numerous source citations trump most other concerns. In fact, an obsession with delivery threatens to eliminate the use of a note card in an event that's name is generally characterized by the use of notes. From an instructional perspective, the message delivered is clear, we would rather you spend half of your prep time memorizing source citations and committing your speech to memory than developing your argument or refining your analysis. As the push for polish pervades, and the easily observable, least common denominator delivery techniques become event standards, the pedagogical value of extemporaneous speaking is severely diminished. Richardson (2009) offered the following six reasons for encouraging the use of note cards in extemporaneous speaking:

4) Tournament rules explicitly allow the use of notes.
5) The most common definitions of "extemporaneous" speaking offered by communication text authors include the use of notes.

6) Practice in extemporaneous speaking is valuable because it is the most practical method of public speech delivery.
7) Current contextual variables contribute to the likelihood of unethical behavior in extemporaneous speaking.
8) Research fails to support a no note card thesis.
9) An insistence on note card exclusion emphasizes lesser pedagogical prerogatives.

In the end, we must ask, do we truly value limited preparation in extemporaneous and impromptu speaking? Our pedagogy of practice suggests that we value the educational benefits of limited time constraints far less than the appearance of polish. Perhaps this is a natural outcome of a contest that is constructed, in all other speaking and interpretation events, to reward those who are best prepared. The notion of limited preparation, of constructing arguments "off the cuff," runs counter to nearly all of the important lessons offered by all of the other events. If we truly value limited preparation speaking events, we must act to preserve the very notion of limited preparation.

Restoring Limited Preparation

A re-introduction of limited preparation requires a shift from the pedagogy of practice to the practice of pedagogy. As professional educators we need to direct forensic practice toward pedagogically justifiable ends—outcomes that develop critical thinking, encourage creative expression, enhance rhetorical processes, and inspire audience engagement beyond the narrow latitude of acceptance of current forensic practice. The enhancement of limited preparation speaking begins with well thought out and articulated judging criteria derived directly from meaningful educational objectives.

An increased focus on the development and sophistication of argumentation should dominate our teaching and practice in both impromptu and extemporaneous speaking. Students, coaches and judges need to explore the breadth and depth of comparative argumentative analysis. As program directors, we should produce graduates who can skillfully and accurately assess and articulate quality differentiation among arguments. In general, more emphasis on speech content and less on delivery can help to revive limited preparation. The push for polish that has dominated forensic practice for the past three decades has resulted in a disturbing confident incompetence. Speakers display all the style and intellectual depth of infomercial hucksters. In order for students to gain the great benefits of limited preparation speaking, they must be allowed to experience speaking with limited preparation.

Impromptu speaking requires innovation for the event to wear its name accurately again. Experimentation with new and old formats benefits impromptu outcomes. In their 1993 article, "Is it Time for a Change in Impromptu Speaking," Williams, Carver and Hart outline an event they call "Reasoned Response," which no doubt brings to mind "Rhetorical Situations" to many forensic veterans. In this variation, students are provided with situations, audiences, topics, and even a role that they are required to assume in the rhetorical

context. Adaptation and creativity can be encouraged and rewarded by this approach. The National Forensic Association's experimental event, Editorial Impromptu, also forces students outside of the can of familiar examples to a context that is more argument-centered. Certainly students can develop canned approaches to these events as well, but educators can be vigilant in staying ahead of the latest developments from the canning factories. When the community agrees that true limited preparation is a valuable learning experience, then the pressures to develop pre-packaged short cuts will minimize. Variations in types and forms of impromptu speaking are generally good for the event.

Impromptu speakers also need to be encouraged in the employment of various types of supporting material. Forensic impromptu has relied almost exclusively on exemplification in recent year. Typically, the examples highjack the speech and become the focal point of content development. The argument is often lost in the sea of pre-prepared examples. Students who spend time actually explaining, or experimenting with comparing and contrasting, are criticized for not arriving at examples sooner. Examples are meant to support arguments. They often exist within the framework of explanation, or comparison, or even criticism. Impromptu speaking rules do not mandate the use of examples. Judges should be open-minded enough to allow for the use of explanation or other types of support, especially when these types clearly represent a more directly topical argument. In fact, several years ago impromptu speakers typically used the first point to explain, the second to exemplify, and the third to apply. While this may appear on the surface to be a can of a different color, this approach emphasized critical thought in all three areas of analysis. Students had to demonstrate an understanding of the quotation, as well as the ability to connect with their audience through application. Examples were important, but they did not dominate the speech.

Practice in impromptu speaking should encourage invention and creativity. When students spend practice time delivering repetitive examples, not only is the idea of limited preparation at risk, but also the limited preparation of ideas. Critical and creative thought and expression should be the hallmarks of impromptu speaking. The well-worn pages of the student's speech-in-a-can notebook should be abandoned for approaches that blend invention with memory. The "storehouse of knowledge" from which speeches are drawn should appear more like a great art museum where the human condition is depicted in aesthetically and intellectually challenging ways, less like a Walmart, where ideas are neatly packaged for human consumption.

Contest extemporaneous speaking should encourage the use of note cards for the sake of credibility and depth of argumentative analysis. While the presence of a card ensures neither, the insistence on its absence potentially harms both. A renewed emphasis on source accuracy is imperative for the future of extemp. Pedagogy is useless if it teaches the wrong lessons. Our pedagogy of practice must emphasize

ethical behavior. Judging paradigms that emphasize analytical depth over source tallies and stumble counts will focus the limited preparation that occurs on argument development. Delivery is important, but an excessive emphasis on polish to the exclusion of analytical insight threatens to undermine limited preparation.

The relative pedagogical value of a given practice is often difficult to determine. To emphasize one lesson often means de-emphasizing another. One way to increase the chances for a level playing field while reviving true limited preparation in extemporaneous speaking is to mandate the use of the Internet in extemp prep (Voth, 1997). Instead of spending preparation time between tournaments constructing a file, students would spend their time in the news on issue analysis. Work sessions could be built around extending current events knowledge rather than adding bulk to the file. The ability to search the Internet quickly and construct arguments from credible sources serves students in today's world much better than the outdated filing mode of a bygone era. Preparation time could be extended if necessary. Students would be forced to do their own work, and that work is likely to be much more valuable to them as students, researchers and, one day, professionals. Mandating the use of Internet searches in extemp prep enhances the presence of limited preparation in extemporaneous speaking.

Our language has betrayed us for far too long. If the forensics community believes in the unique educational values afforded by limited preparation speaking situations, then it will act to preserve limited preparation. If not, we should restate our pedagogy and rename our events. Perhaps a championship in generic exemplification or current events briefs awaits.

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Thoughts on Limited Prep: Problems and Solutions

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Abstract

The formulaic nature of the limited preparation events is keeping many of our students from accomplishing the learning objectives of public speaking. Simply changing judging paradigms will likely fail to prevent these formulas from winning in the future because, to some extent, they are based on applying sound practices in a simple way. However, the abuse of these formulas is leading many students to learn detrimental speaking habits. This paper attempts to discover new ways of approaching the limited prep events in order to develop methods for better educating students through the most commonly applicable speech genre.

Introduction

Nearly every coach would agree that the knowledge gained from participation in the limited preparation events should be the most applicable to daily life. The ability to clearly articulate thoughts when the time is right without the need for lengthy preparation could be the difference between making the best of a moment and missing an important opportunity. For most people, these moments to speak can be incredibly nerve-racking. However, in theory at least, those students who regularly participate in the limited preparation events should be able to quickly find the courage, steady mind, and calm demeanor that is necessary to give an outstanding speech in almost any situation. Unfortunately, this may not be the case due to the way the unwritten rules of our activity have shaped public speaking in the minds of our students. I could not have seen this more clearly than when one of my students decided to compete in an oratorical contest at Indiana University Purdue University of Indianapolis during this past season. The tournament was developed so that students from the school could compete alongside speech team students in a final round before the speech tournament's awards ceremony. The judges were made up of university faculty and leaders from around the Indianapolis community. The oratorical contest consisted of three IUPUI student finalists who competed against each other and then the top three students who competed in the speech team side of the contest. The purpose of the contest was for students to give speeches about how to resolve some form of conflict in the world. The IUPUI students used Power-Point and gave solid speeches, albeit other than the young woman who won, they had many fallacious arguments. The speech team students on the other hand, incorporated strong argumentation and solid delivery. Of the finalists though, it was apparent that my student was out of place. One of the three students used the persuasive speech that he performed at the tournament earlier, one student gave a very intelligent extemporaneously delivered speech on conflict resolution theory with a very natural delivery style, and my student gave what would have been an incredible extemporaneous speech in competition. The student who gave his usual persuasion was not very competitive on the national circuit

despite having a wonderful speech. I attribute this to the breaking of forensics norms in his speech. He spoke on a topic that many had used that season, his delivery was less polished, and his speech had significantly more pathos than a typical competitive persuasion. The judges of this final of course didn't know speech conventions and loved the speech. This student won. The student who took second gave a very natural speech, moved all around the stage, and would have never been successful with his speech in collegiate competition. He cited ancient Chinese leaders and classical approaches to conflict resolution. I don't believe he cited the specific date to any source and his only current source was from a paper written by an instructor of his. Despite this, his speech was still impressive and well received. My student however, gave what many in our activity would call a long extemporaneous speech based on the formula he usually followed. He used a large number of current sources and he spoke on a topic that few had heard about before, the bombing of Christian churches in south Asia. He also delivered the speech like a polished nationally competitive speaker, just as he did in his national semi-final round of persuasion and national semi-final round of extemp the year before. His largest flaw of course was not adapting to his audience. His judges found the source citations to be too lengthy and distracting along with his delivery being too stiff and unnatural.

The purpose of writing this lengthy story is to do two things: to demonstrate how the speeches that our top students develop, especially in the limited prep events, are at times indicative of poor public speaking habits; and to show that we can teach our students to adapt. Shortly after placing third out of three in that final round, I spoke with my student at length about what he did well and what went wrong. I found myself continually saying, "Well, in competitive speech yes. You do that to adapt to your audience. But in actual public speaking…," and then I immediately questioned why I wasn't calling what our activity does, "actual public speaking".

Coaches speak to each other at length about how our forensics norms can develop poor speaking habits. Many of them have also argued that this development of norms is a natural part of the activity and any changes we make will simply lead to future norms and competitive formulas. Moreover, many also argue that adaptation to these norms is healthy for the learning process. I agree that certain norms are certainly beneficial for students to learn. However, I argue that due to the inevitable development of norms, a regular refreshment of speech events is necessary to cultivate the construction of new approaches to our activity, both at the level of the individual speech and as regards the educational value of the forensic experience as a whole. I believe that we, as educators, have watched the formula for success surpass our

ability to accomplish our learning objectives. Therefore, we must assess both what we see as being detrimental to those objectives and possible ways we can improve our activity.

While I would love to discuss every genre of our activity, I think that the limited preparation events are the most vital to analyze first, given that they are the most commonly applicable to life outside of the activity. At future developmental conferences I will be happy to discuss the other genres if no one else does so at that time.

My approach to this topic was a simple one. I decided to brainstorm about problems with and solutions to limited prep and ask everyone who is listed on the Individual Events Listserv to brainstorm about problems and solutions as well. As it turns out, many of us have felt the same way about the limited preparation events for a while (right now I can imagine many long-time coaches' responses of sarcasm after that statement). While the problems brought up with the LP events were often similar, the possible solutions were usually quite unique and at times seemed so obvious after thinking about it. For example, Dillon White suggested that we host all of our limited prep events in random casinos in Las Vegas (D. White, personal correspondence, July 28, 2010). While it was not an obvious suggestion, it was certainly unique.

The purpose of this paper is not to solve the problems of the limited preparation events overnight. Rather, it is to foster another discussion at the best place for it to happen, this year's developmental conference. I hope that by briefly discussing some of the problems with limited prep, and then showing some of the arguments involved with specific potential changes, we can shorten our discussion of the topic and actually decide on something that makes *most* of us happy.

The Problems with the Limited Preparation Events
While I most certainly will not be able to express all of the problems with limited prep here, this attempt will touch on some of the most commonly discussed issues.

Impromptu Speaking
1) Students don't use the language of the quotation provided and have weak links to the thesis (Pape, personal communication, July 26, 2010).
2) Speeches are being canned. Students are memorizing short speeches and adapting a quotation to fit (Copeland, personal communication, July 26, 2010).
3) Most students leap to an obvious answer which leads many speakers to say the same thing as others in the round because the Agree/Disagree format takes away from a unique thesis. Quotations are the problem (Melendez, personal communication, July 26, 2010).
4) Quotations overlap and students can and do reuse examples (A. Duncan, personal communication, July 26, 2010).
5) Depth of analysis has become the exception rather than the rule. Fast prep times, smooth delivery and humor are

often rewarded at the expense of depth of analysis. (Chen, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

Extemporaneous Speaking
1) In extemporaneous speaking, the predominant structure has become the 3x1 simply because students have been taught that this is what is supposed to be done (Chen, personal communication, July 26, 2010).
2) Cross examination is not a mandatory factor in ranking the final round (Chen, personal communication, July 26, 2010).
3) Students are not utilizing live access technology when this is likely the way they will prepare extemporaneous speeches outside of the activity (Lauth, 2007).

Some Potential Solutions
Impromptu Speaking
1) Coaches can teach students how to link their thesis to the quotation better. Deano Pape suggests that as an experimental component, a slip of paper should be attached to impromptu ballots stating that the ability of the student to evaluate the quotation as written should be a factor in the judging decision (Pape, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

While it seems obvious that coaches should teach students how to link their thesis to their quotation in an effective manor, at least in my opinion we are asking too much if we expect students to do well at this every time. This step in argumentation is a difficult one. I have found that students are usually quite adept at determining what a quotation means. However, explaining "why" it means such a thing can be difficult to impossible for some students under the pressure of an impromptu speech. This is why in most circumstances we should, and I believe do, reward those who do this well. I believe that Pape is indicating the need to use the specific language as a means to assure that the student is better able to understand the linking step. This would help students find the ability to articulate the "why" part of the link in a way that allows the connection to the thesis to become clear.

Regarding the experimental aspect, I think this would be a great idea for future research. However, many may be reticent to include such a statement on all ballots. As Preston (1992) explains the distinction between extemp and impromptu, in impromptu it is important that students use a metaphorical or indirect response to a quotation by creating their own thesis. I think many would agree that impromptu should be on topic; however, it should not be a literal discussion of the topic. For example, if a student were given the quotation "Happiness is a warm puppy", most of us would prefer not to hear a speech on happiness or puppies. However, a speech on why we should care for those things that are more delicate than ourselves would be acceptable. The challenge, of course, is showing how such a thesis links to the quotation by using the language of the quotation.

2) When evaluating canned speeches we must realized that there will always be canned speeches in impromptu or at least sections of canned material. The word "canning" carries a strong negative connotation to many coaches. This is why some tournaments have developed alternative prompts to help reduce this tendency. Kristopher Copeland explains that he once ran a tournament where the round one prompt was a quotation, round two was an object, round three was a cartoon and the final round was a scenario. He found that this was confusing for some students but others had no trouble handling it (Copeland, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

This use of alternative prompts seems as though it would reduce the ability of canned speeches to be as competitively successful. It would also allow for more creativity in analysis, something that has been discussed on numerous occasions. Some organizations already give prompts in such a way. However, in order for such a change to really take hold around the nation, the NFA and AFA-NIET rules or practices would have to change in order to encourage most local tournaments to follow suit.

3) Many students may select the obvious thesis. As Tanya Melendez explains, certain quotations lend themselves to obvious answers and many students quickly run with this approach. Melendez suggests that in order to alter this, alternative prompts should be used. She notes that objects, values, words, or photos would be an alternative that would force students to develop a unique thesis. She also notes that at least once during the SNAFU season there will be quotations that are context related such as items from that week's news, celebrities, or headlines. This requires that students have some understanding of how to relate to the context of the quotation in the speech. Melendez argues that if a student creates a unique thesis the rest of the speech will likely be better as well (Melendez, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

The major downside to such an argument is one that I later questioned Melendez about. If the link to the thesis is so important in order to determine if a speech is canned and this prompt is so relative that the link can be very creative, this will make it easier to can speeches. Melendez responded by explaining that the ability to construct a quality thesis and the link to that thesis should make the thesis clear and applicable. She explained that good students of limited prep should be able to do this. Melendez explained that if all the parts of the speech support the thesis and the link is clear, the judge is put in a tough spot even if he or she disagrees with the interpretation. In her opinion it is much more important that a student constructs a unique thesis because a well constructed thesis will make everything fall into place (Melendez, personal communication, July 28, 2010).

4) As has been discussed previously, quotations do overlap and students will reuse examples. Aaron Duncan explained that one solution to this could be to do what Craig Brown does at the Kansas State University tournament. They ask questions like, "Who would you put on the $10 bill?" or "What one skill would you be sure your child had?" Duncan explains that this is an effective means of breaking the formula of forensics. (Duncan, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

This could be an effective means for moving away from the impromptu formula. While it would still be important for students to develop some form of structure to answer questions similar to these, it would also force students to rethink what impromptu is. That discussion would be quite important to the activity. Similarly, this form of response would be much more applicable to the lives of students outside of the activity.

The downside to such a prompt is that it becomes much like extemp in the literal form of the answer. If we really are searching for a metaphorical approach to the thesis, this may not be the best way of accomplishing that goal. However, it is difficult to deny the pedagogical value in such a prompt. It is for this reason that alternative forms of impromptu, such as editorial impromptu, have intrigued many in the community. We will have to ask ourselves how much value we find in the metaphorical approach before such adaptations are adopted.

5) In order to improve the depth of analysis in impromptu, Michael Chen suggests that we adopt some of the rules of certain high school leagues. He notes that in Illinois students are given two full minutes of prep time before six full minutes of speaking time. Chen explains that this would have three major benefits. First, it would make it easier for novices to handle impromptu. Second, students could spend more time developing stronger analysis and could experiment with structure. Third, the time would allow students to utilize more "sophisticated examples" (Chen, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

While many might argue that students can still use two minutes of prep time if they so choose, this then forces the student to sacrifice time that could be used to develop more in-depth analysis. A change in the rules of prep time does seem warranted. However, a change such as this would require the support of NFA and the AFA-NIET in order to become the national standard.

Extemporaneous Speaking
1) The increased prevalence of the 3x1 unified analysis structure has been noticed recently by many coaches around the nation. M. Chen believes that this may be the case due to the teaching of the structure at high school camps around the country. This structure is easier to teach in a short amount of time and is also the standard at the high school level. These students later become collegiate competitors and then collegiate coaches. Chen notes that there is no elegant solution to this problem (Chen, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

Perhaps this issue can only be improved by the continual push to have students structure their speeches in the way that best accommodates the overall argument and supporting material. It is also important that judges refrain from writing on ballots that students should use one structure over another unless the judge can explain why the specific structure would be a better fit in that situation.

2) Many individuals in the forensics community are in support of cross examination in extemp. Michael Chen argues that the pedagogical benefits outweigh the costs (Chen, personal communication, July 26, 2010). Many individuals agree with this assertion; however, it certainly creates logistical challenges. I am strongly in support of a cross examination period. However, perhaps the best argument for or against cross examination that I have heard was explained by Jessy Ohl in, ironically, the cross examination period of the final round of the AFA-NIET in 2009. After being asked what he thought about CX in the final, he said that it seemed unfair that a student could give an outstanding extemporaneous speech in the same way that he or she did to get to that point, but then face a situation in which one small miscue in that period could cost the student a national championship, even though the actual speech portion was the best in the nation. Since hearing that statement I have agreed with Jessy and I know that others in the community feel the same way. The simple solution would be to add CX to every round of extemporaneous speaking. I find it problematic that, in essence, students are competing in a different version of an event in the most important round of the AFA-NIET. If that is what we want extemp to be, we should make it that way.

I would also note that at the 2010 Developmental Conference on Individual Events I spoke to Jessica Furgerson, another competitor who was in the same 2009 AFA-NIET Extemp final round as Jessy Ohl. She was adamantly against CX because of the unfair advantage it gives men and because of the way college CX differs from high school CX. She argued that the college style is often overly aggressive and questions are asked that attempt to simply make another competitor in the round look unintelligent. She persuaded me to believe that questions should be proposed by judges rather than other students. In a final round with five judges this would allow for a variety of questions that were not malicious in nature. (Furgerson, personal communication, August 6, 2010). In the same way, I am unsure of the need for cross examination by students in extemp because this is already a significant pedagogical tool of Lincoln Douglas debate.

3) Live internet access for extemp is a difficult topic to propose due to the challenging logistical issues that it gives rise to. However, few students in their post academic future will have a large filing system at their fingertips that they have presorted for the purpose of answering a question. The much more likely scenario is that students will need to hurriedly do an internet search shortly before giving a speech. In this scenario, it is vital that students learn how to quickly search through and filter information. As Taylor (2002) and Voth (1997) have argued in the past, we need to continually utilize technology in our speeches if we want students to learn how to utilize such technology in the future. If we do not, we will not be adequately teaching our students. While it may still be years away before schools have so many computers available that this could be achieved easily, it is important that we keep searching for ways to accommodate live access in a fair manner. Many years ago students were all given the same library at a school to look through. I see no reason that students should not be given one online database to research from, other than logistical concerns that one day will not exist. The best argument I have heard is that filing is incredibly educational. However, with nearly all schools using electronic filing that requires few students to actually read the articles, this argument is becoming less impactful every year. I believe that soon the pedagogical value of live access extemp will outweigh the benefits of the status quo. We need to look for logistical solutions now so that when that time comes we will be able to accommodate every student in a fair way.

Discussion

We can use the limited prep events to do a better job of fulfilling our pedagogical mission for our students. We can make changes that increase creativity while still teaching students to develop a solid structure in their speeches. We can also deter students from taking the unethical approach to limited preparation speaking that leads to canning. The solutions that have been proposed here may be the way to do just that or maybe there is an entirely new solution. However, there are a few things to keep in mind.

First, we must be careful not to throw the baby out with the bathwater. This sentiment was expressed by John du Bois when he noted that an attempt to change impromptu in a way that eliminates the use of structure will likely result in speeches that simply confuse an audience (du Bois, personal communication, July 27, 2010). This concern is well taken, and we must keep in mind that many individuals, including the writer of this paper, love the way impromptu and extemp work right now. However, this doesn't mean that we should be afraid to alter it in minor or major ways if that helps to improve the educational value of the activity.

Second, we need to be very careful when complaining about the canning of speeches and we must be especially sure not to accuse students of canning without being absolutely sure first. Simply reusing an example over and over does not constitute cheating if the example is used in a different way every time. The Star Wars series, for example, could be used one hundred different times in unique ways that all act as proof for an argument. The same can be said for countless examples. The mark of a good limited prep competitor is the ability to describe examples in a way that supports a thesis which has been tightly linked to the quotation or question. Nearly all of the great limited preparation competitors will use unique examples in nearly every speech because that specific example best fits the argument he or

she is trying to make. Furthermore, simply because a student gave an amazing speech with a poor link to a quotation does not constitute prima facie proof that that student presented a canned speech. Some students are simply amazingly good. However, even these students make mistakes and such accusations can unfairly damage the ethos of students in a way that they may never recover from in forensics. We must remember that these are simply students who are trying to get better and the limited preparation events, especially impromptu, can scare almost anyone into making mental hiccups.

Third, we need to consider what the rules actually are before ranking students and before making wholesale changes to any event. Allow for creativity first and then rank based on the final product before making assumptions based on the unwritten rules of the activity. The same can be said for making decisions about the way we run our tournaments. Joe Cozza explained that rule changes may not be worth the likely multi-year process necessary. Instead, he argues that the easiest and fastest way to refocus an event like impromptu into an event that is more in line with the values of the activity, would be to make it align with the actual rules. Impromptu topics at NFA are supposed to be "short excerpts dealing with items of general interest, political, economic, and social issues" rather than "a short quotation". Cozza believes that adapting to this description will allow for interesting, political, social, and philosophical arguments to be formed. He believes that we should address the ways these rules were originally written (Cozza, personal communication, July 26, 2010).

It is unlikely that changes to the prompts/structure of impromptu speaking or the addition of cross examination in extemporaneous speaking will cause us to lose any educational benefits. However, these changes have the potential to make improvements that many of us could be thankful for decades from now. Thank you to all of the students and coaches who helped me with this paper by responding to a simple e-mail. It was very much appreciated.

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Breaking the Formula: Integrating Performance Studies into Interpretation Preparation

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Abstract

Forensic educators and students spend much of their time trying to perfect a new definition of "good performance" without appreciating said performance or participating in the exchange process. While many studies have examined the most common interpretation ballot comments, the results and suggestions of those studies have not changed how students perform interpretation. This is where performance studies research may come into play. The author proposes ways to incorporate performance studies research into interpretation event practice and performance. Additionally, the author also suggests several new coaching techniques to bring an educational appreciation for interpretation performances.

Introduction

A good performance, much like the Supreme Court's ruling on obscenity, is difficult to define – you just know it when you see it. Aesthetically, performances are meant to examine human discourse – the exchange of ideas between the interpreter and audience (Pelias & VanOosting, 1987). In forensics, we spend much of our coaching and judging time trying to perfect a new definition of "good performance" without appreciating said performance or participating in the exchange process. I am inclined to agree with Perlich (1999) when he writes, "Unfortunately, many coaches, competitors, and scholars practice intercollegiate forensics pedagogy with seemingly little concern for a greater understanding of what it is that we do" (p. 2).

Interpretation event guidelines provide little in the way of performance requirements upon which we can all agree. Thus, constant adaptation to incoming ballots and future judges in multiple locations has thrown off our focus on performance. It is my position the forensic community must return interpretation practices to a focus on creating the best performance and not on all encompassing tournament adaptation. The purpose of this essay is to examine some of the forensic research related to interpretation, reveal how performance studies research can help, and explore forensics-specific strategies to get us back on track.

Interpretation events are much more difficult to critique than platform events; there are no sources to examine, no clear cut solutions, no perfectly timed transition walks. Therefore, creating a uniform way to analyze interpretation performances is near impossible. Many researchers have spent countless hours poring over ballots, searching for common ideals or judging philosophies. Mills (1991) identified 19 unique ballot comments, Jensen (1997) found 25 different comment types, Klosa and DuBois (2001) tried to narrow down the list to the top five comment types per category, and Elmer and Van Horn (2003) identified dozens of key words appearing in five distinct categories. Each study focusing on interpretation events only, each well researched, each providing excellent discussion for future competitors and coaches, each seemingly ignored by most programs.

One of the major themes which appeared in both Mills (1991) and Klosa and DuBois' (2001) analysis was the material presented by the competitor. Comments focused on the proper selection of literature for the event or the activity. These comments, while probably well meaning, subtract from the analysis of the performance at hand. Does the comment "'As a monologue, this is inherently less challenging than something interactive'" (Klosa & DuBois, 2001, p. 8), critique the performance just observed? I would contend not.

Because judging criteria is so subjective and personal, our judging pools need to learn more about what they are actually judging. Not to create a uniform system to rank students, but to understand the performance and critique the speaker. Morris (2005) defines three unhealthy comments used by judges who evaluate the competitor versus critiquing the performance: how the event should be done, personal comments, and forensics history. These comment types, each of which appear in the above research, do little to help the student evolve as an interpreter.

This is not to say we should throw out all our personal standards in place of a checklist of accomplished goals in a speech; part of what makes forensic speaking so important is the unique insight each observer provides. But, using these insights to choose literature which "…would meet the expectations of judges in these events" (Klosa & DuBois, 2001, p. 8), may not be the answer. I do not wish to get into the dichotomy between competition and education, because I truly believe we can have a healthy mix of both. Many different strategies can be pulled from performance studies research which will both refocus interpretation events on the performance and provide judges with new types of ballot comments.

Too often a divide exists between what we teach students about interpretation and what we actually value in the round. This split leads to a formulaic approach to interpretation, wherein students lose the inherent value of interpretation in favor of what wins ballots. Allison and Mitchell (1994) identify two forms of assessment: summative and formative. Summative assessment is what we explicitly use when judging students in rounds; it is the rank, the rate, the time, and the most common ballot comments. These elements are essential to the process of the activity. However, if we combine summative assessment with formative assessment, which are items we value, but do not explicitly

use on ballots, our comments may become more well rounded. Formative assessment may even take place outside of the round, in the form of informal conversation between judge and competitor. While the rank may already be tabbed, further focus on the performance does not stop between rounds.

Judge adaptation and training only gets us so far, much of the responsibility of creating a better performance lies with the coaches and students. I have often judged and coached students who do not completely understand the literature and/or characters they are trying to interpret; performance studies research can help here too. Students should attempt a 3-part writing process which will, hopefully, increase the student's understanding of the literature. Bowman and Kistenberg (1992) outline three types of original texts the student should write: *within*, *upon*, and *against*. Bowman and Kistenberg (1992) explain,

> The first text should work *within* the terms of the original text, that is, it should focus on what is named in the text and on the story's own narrative or cultural logic. The second text should work *upon* the original, that is, it should try to "thematize" the story or connect it with some larger social issue or cultural myth. The third text should operate *against* the original, that is, it should judge or evaluate the story's logic and its themes from the perspective of the student's own collectively-defined system of values. (p. 293)

Once students build upon their understanding of the literature they are attempting to interpret, it is important they, and their coaches, continue to evaluate the performance. Not to say this sort of evaluation does not already take place in coaching sessions every day, but Long (1991) provides a formal approach to evaluation. We should follow the five practices of continued evaluation: self-appraisals, individual responses, implicit endorsements, casual judgments, and institutionalized forms of evaluation.

Self-appraisals are common in forensics, and almost subconscious by a competitor; knowing if a performance went well or poorly, understanding if a character stood out as it should, or analyzing how it felt, just to name a few. Individual responses take place when students observe other speeches, categories, or activities – these observations add to a student's understanding of performance. Implicit evaluations involve expanding the performances to outside your average tournament. To my knowledge, interpretation events are rarely, if ever, recorded at tournaments. While mostly due to rights and royalty regulations, these performances should be shared with the outside world. Perhaps more public showcases would help forensics spread past the average empty college campus.

Casual judgments take place quite often at tournaments, but could occur even more – discuss performances with other students, coaches, or judges. These discussions create continued discourse about the activity and lead to positive changes. The final evaluation technique outlined by Long (1991) needs little description – institutionalized forms are the ballots we write and receive each week. These various forms of evaluation not only help students and coaches create better performances, but help forensics expand its ground.

Bowman and Kistenberg (1992) also believe students should debrief after each performance, allowing for further growth as an interpreter. When possible, students should immediately write down their thoughts and feelings about their just completed performance; a performance journal, so to speak. These journals would go in tandem with the ballots from each round, leading to a deeper understanding of both the ballot comments and the performance. Coaching is a two-way street; therefore coaches should incorporate student performance journals with their own coaching journals/sessions and allow students to develop as performers.

Performance studies also reminds us of two important lessons; acting and interpreting are different and all critiques are contextual. A fine line exists between the actor and the interpreter. So fine, the line is usually quite blurry for both competitors and judges, but a line nonetheless. Actors have the means to fully become each character, costuming, lighting, props, sets – these all allow the actor to recreate a piece of literature. The interpreter, however, has fewer means than the actor, but maintains the ability to become a character just as efficiently as the actor (Frederickson, 1983). Just as a United Nations interpreter takes one language and attempts to make another understand what has been said, the forensics interpreter takes a piece of literature and attempts to make an audience understand what the literature means.

Scholars such as Koeppel and Morman (1991) and Glauner (1992) have argued for a more message-based system of interpretation, performances which have an argument. Introductions provide a great means of addressing the significance behind literature – but we should not rely on an argument to win a round. Messages are important, they set us apart from most actors, but a healthy balance of argumentation and embracing the total performance will lead to better interpreters.

We should also remember an audience's interest in any performance is highly contextual (Long, 1991). All the preparation and practice in the world cannot account for the subjective nature of the activity. Students and coaches alike should remember this when analyzing ballots and scores – sometimes the cards just fall as they do and nothing can change them. Incorporating performance studies techniques into forensics is a great step, but there are also other strategies we, as forensic educators, can take to help students become better performers.

To reference the realm of college football, coaches may try "red shirting" new interpreters. Not to say we should pro-

hibit new members from competing in favor of saving a year of eligibility; but to focus these students on learning performance techniques and gaining experience over winning ballots. I am reminded of a student who performed a piece which completely bombed competitively. This piece was not good for competition and the student could not embrace the character. However, it was a perfect "learning piece" for the student; examining who the character was, what the story was about, and identifying the message. I believe by continuing to perform this piece throughout the majority of the season the student evolved as an interpreter. Results pay out over time with these students, not only will they understand what a good performance is, but their scores will naturally improve.

Competitors should also have the opportunity to judge others while maintaining eligibility for future competition. While competing in college forensics, I remember gaining quite a bit of insight into what judges are looking for when I was able to judge high school speech competitions. Reaching out to the high school speech community is one important way to learn about judging, but it may not be available to every student. I suggest an experimental tournament for collegiate competitors, one where students are the judges. The tournament would be for novices – first and second year competitors only; but with third and fourth year competitors acting as the judges. While such a tournament would likely not count for any sort of national tournament qualification system, it would provide a new opportunity for students to learn about the judging process.

Finally, we as forensic educators must let students fail. Failure is an important aspect of evolution, often when we learn the most. We must not be afraid to simply let competitors go down in flames – no hand holding or cursing the "dumb judge", let the students learn. If we always pick them back up after they fall, they will never learn to get up themselves. Forensics is not a simple activity—we cannot determine a winner by counting the number of baskets made in 60 minutes; and we should pride ourselves on this fact. Each performance is different and should be appreciated as such. If we can attempt to implement some of the strategies listed above, not only will our students become better performers, and not only will our judges and ballots become a stronger form of criticism, but our activity will truly value performance. Something we can all agree on – when we see it.

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What are We Doing?: An Argument to Change a Name

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Abstract

Despite years of heated debate over the relevance and future of the oral interpretation events, our performances have evolved to an extent that the definition of oral interpretation no longer applies. In an effort to address the necessity of a change in the name of the largest genre of events, this paper details the separation of title and practice in interpretation before offering a solution.

Introduction

There are few things that are more compelling than a poetry program that has been marvelously constructed and performed. In one of my poetry courses in college, the best lesson I took away was how two words when placed side by side can force the mind to construct new thoughts and meaning, much in the same way that placing the word "Hitler" with "mustard" is very different than placing "mustard with baseball". The world of forensics has developed a method of performance that is at times enlightening because of our development. This is the case with our use of programming to construct new meaning through the combination of poems in the same way that a poem combines words. In a sense, students can easily create their own greater poem through performance. Some of the most ambitious performances have begun with a simple goal to communicate a single thought to an audience. Many theorists argue that such a transmission is impossible, that no one will ever be able to really think the exact same thought as another. However, in our search for such a seemingly ridiculous goal, we have created a form of art that is unlike any other.

In a poetry writing workshop in graduate school, a well accomplished professional poet and my teacher was quite impressed by what poetry performances can do when the forensics mold is applied. In the same way, the teacher of my oral interpretation class during my freshman year loved the way I incorporated a book into my performance. Unfortunately, she only allowed students to perform one poem or one work with only minimal "cutting" of the work, meaning that I couldn't perform the script I used in competition. When trying to explain what competitive oral interpretation was to this teacher, I quickly discovered that either she had not kept up with the current state of oral interpretation or what I performed on the weekends was something entirely different.

Later in my academic career, as I began to learn more about the study of performance, I realized how incredible and unique our performances of literature really are. We have found a way to develop creative and at times deeply emotional experiences for our audiences. This new connection to the performance can literally change the lives of members of the audience if done well. And for most forensics educators, this is our exact goal, to help foster the voice of our students so that they can shape the world around them for the better.

In so doing however, we have strayed from the word that is in the name of nearly half of our events, "interpretation". Many would argue that students have moved out of the realm of oral interpretation when they perform home written material, do not introduce each selection of a poetry program, pantomime, use literature to construct a performance rather than performing what is in the form of the literature, as well as countless other things many of us may love and hate.

Rossi and Goodnow (2006) describe how interpretation has evolved in forensics to the extent that it is no longer oral interpretation. Rossi and Goodnow argue this by pointing out many of the contemporary and historical definitions of oral interpretation; detailing the way our activity differs from this traditional definition based on the literature we use, our process of developing a performance, our performances themselves, and the way we evaluate performances; and then finally offering some solutions.

There are many aspects of the work by Rossi and Goodnow (2006) that I disagree with, such as the insinuation that much of this evolution happened in order to win trophies rather than as a search for a better way to leave the audience with an impactful experience. However, the most important conclusion of their discussion is salient. The larger field of oral interpretation must change, our activity should revert back to oral interpretation, or we should simply change the name of our events to "performance". Rossi and Goodnow argue that this would be the simple and honest way to keep the unique art form that we have created as well as to foster the development of our performances in the future.

This would be a relatively simple change that more accurately depicts what we currently do. It would also align us with more contemporary scholarly work in communication. Performance Studies is a blossoming field with immense opportunities for research. Unfortunately, many of the scholars of communication no longer view "oral interpretation" as a contemporary and developing field. This was no more evident than when I was searching for doctoral programs in performance studies and was told by numerous individuals at one top program, "We no longer have a speech team because the faculty here believes forensics is dying and we should let it die." Perhaps that is only one institution; however, few institutions are developing new oral interpretation departments.

Many might believe that a slippery slope in judging will occur if this change were to happen because performance is so relative. However, subjective judging is how this activity

works. Besides, at least in the past eight years, I have never seen a ballot with constructive comments that would no longer be valid with a simple name change. I see few negative ramifications that we can not work through as well as positive benefits. I do not see this as any major change, simply calling the events what they really are. Rossi and Goodnow (2006) have done a wonderful job depicting the negative ramifications of maintaining the status quo and I suggest that each of you read their work.

I like what our students do right now. They use the works of past authors and maybe their own to graft together a unique and creative experience for an audience. No matter the event, students should be learning how to express their own voices through their ideas and the ideas of others. This is the foundation of critical thinking. Students analyze literature to find as many meanings as possible that can come from it. They then use that meaning to bring light to something in the world that others had never seen so clearly before.

Rossi and Goodnow (2006) illustrate the changing role of literature and authors in contemporary forensics by describing them as "colored media that the oral interpreter mixes and applies as he or she sees fit in the rendering of an original artwork" (p. 49). They argue that students are treating literature as if it is "a tube of cadmium blue" (p. 49). As educators we have to ask ourselves a simple question, do we want students to show us the paintings of others, or do we want to hand them a brush and let them paint?

At the 2010 Developmental Conference on Individual Events

After this proposal was made to the interpretation division at the conference and the issue was discussed, the group decided to propose that the name "Oral Interpretation" should be changed to "Performance of Literature". Nearly all of the larger body at the conference supported the change as well and the proposal was approved.

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A Proposal for the Re-Categorization of Interpretation Events

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Background

I began to seriously consider the need for this proposal in 2009 when the AFA-NIET National Committee was faced with evaluating a potential violation of the rules related to Dramatic Interpretation (http://www.mnsu.edu/cmst/niet/minutes/November09.htm). The violation centered on differing interpretations of what texts are included within the parameters of the event description. In response to the controversy, many called for a revision of the Dramatic Interpretation event description in hopes of making it more specific, thus preventing future disputes. My assessment of this, as well as other more regional controversies, has led me to believe that many of the concerns related to interpretation events are not due to the wording of the event descriptions, but rather the way in which we categorize the events as a whole.

This proposal is also motivated by the work of members of the National Forensic Association Executive Council to develop a document which "features descriptive analysis of prerogatives for collegiate forensics pedagogy" (Kelly, Paine, Richardson & White, 2010, p. 1). Work on this document revealed areas within forensic competition where our practice is not maximizing our ability to meet possible learning outcomes. Specifically, in the area of interpretation events, we as a community "seem to cater to one school of thought emphasizing performance over analysis, thus deemphasizing critical thinking skills" (Rice, 1991, p. 125). Rossi and Goodnow (2006) make a similar observation stating, "The value, necessity, and power of an awareness of literary content and form, as well as a credible attempt at honoring the two, is almost a given for most theorists… How then does contemporary forensics deviate from these values and why" (p. 48)? After spending several months helping to draft possible learning outcomes for our interpretation events, I began to wonder if a re-categorization of the events would help maximize our ability to meet certain learning objectives.

Concerns with Current Practices

Categorization of Texts

The first concern related to oral interpretation events is the growing confusion over where certain texts "fit" within our literary genre categories. The introduction of the internet, the spoken word revolution, an increasing interest in alternative literary forms and the growth of unconventional performance pieces all erode our traditional notions of literary genre distinctions. The podcast "The Moth" is an excellent example of these current ambiguities. The Moth describes itself as "a New York City based nonprofit organization that conducts live storytelling events" in the form of podcasts, storySLAMS and staged performances. During the 2008-2009 forensic season, I had a student run a Dramatic Interpretation piece taken from The Moth podcast. Given the piece was transcribed from a live performance my assessment was Dramatic Interpretation was the appropriate category for the piece. My student and I were both surprised to discover another competitor doing the same selection in Prose. As the piece was a traditional first-person autobiographical narrative, the placement in Prose seemed equally reasonable. In this instance, which student was breaking the rules? If the story had been published in a book of essays it would have been considered a Prose, that it was delivered on stage, however, is what led me to consider it Dramatic Interpretation. The text itself was the same, essentially rendering genre distinction irrelevant.

Homogenization of Voice

A second concern I frequently encounter related to interpretation events is the complaint that all performances sound alike regardless of the event category. The predominance of first-person voice found in all interpretation event categories has led some to question if these events are meeting their educational potential. Texts written in first-person are capable of creating more intense immediacy with an audience and as a result, from a competitive perspective, may lead to higher ranks. As Steele (2005) argues, "The first-person narrator is a wonderful device. It allows us to inhabit a fictional character more fully than is possible in any other point of view, or even in any other form of storytelling." Yet our students' reliance on the first-person voice leads to the neglect of other equally valid and perhaps even more challenging narrator points of view. Fludernik (2001) explains the limitations of texts presented in the first-person voice explaining, "the first-person narrator, as a persona endowed with no magic powers, is precisely limited to his or her knowledge and perception and, except by infringement of these natural parameters, cannot move from one locality to the next" (p. 621). Calling upon the writings of Genette, she explains that the difference is found in a "problem of distance". Essentially, there is a significant difference between a narrator who "tells" the audience a story and one who "shows" the audience the events.

Proposal

In an effort to address these concerns, I argue the Interpretation Events should be categorized according to the primary narrative voice (point of view) used in the text, rather than the text's assumed genre.

Possible Scenario

First-Person Interpretation

Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which use the first-person narrative voice as the predominant point-of-view. The inclusion of dialogue within the first-person telling should be limited. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

Second and/or Third-Person Interpretation
Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which use the second and/or third-person narrative voice as the predominant point-of-view. The inclusion of dialogue within the second and/or third-person telling should be limited. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

Dialogue Interpretation
Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which use dialogue between two or more characters as the predominant point-of-view. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

Poetry Interpretation
Selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of language. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Duo Interpretation
Selections of material of literary merit, presented by two individuals, which may be drawn from more than one source, which use dialogue between two or more characters as the predominant point-of-view. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc, are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Program Oral Interpretation
A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from a balance of material representing first-person narrative voice, second–person narrative voice, **and/or** third-person narrative voice, **as well as** dialogue **and** poetry. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme. The material must be pulled from at least three separate pieces of literature. Only one selection may be original. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Proposal

I understand that any change to current practice will involve the resolution of some concerns while simultaneously introducing new potential problems. My goal in this final section is to address some of the possible advantages and disadvantages of this proposal in an effort to engage the forensic community in a discussion of the feasibility and desirability of this proposal.

The most immediate logistical concern with this proposal is that it would add an additional event to the traditional eleven AFA-NIET and ten NFA events. Scheduling at the national tournaments is already difficult. The need for even 10 additional classrooms at any time slot could be impossible

for future host schools to absorb. One possible way to help alleviate the increase in tournament entries, would be to limit students to only one Duo Interpretation entry at the National Tournaments.

A second issue is, with the exception of poetry, this change would almost eliminate disputes related to differences of opinion regarding the categorization of texts into different literary genres. However, if implemented, the proposal could usher in a whole new area for controversy. Given the ever contentious nature of forensics as a competitive activity, disagreements about what voice is predominant in a text seem likely. Narratologists already question the concept of "voice" as a definitive construct. Literature is an ever evolving art form which many would argue will always defy strict categorization. Nielsen (2004) argues we can accept some level of ambiguity with respect to how voice is defined stating, "The concept must necessarily assume metaphorical signification in connection with literature, but that this metaphorical usage hardly makes it an invalid concept (p. 134). If we accept some level of ambiguity will always be present when categorizing literature, the real question becomes is it better to deal with ambiguity surrounding genre or voice?

For me, the answer to this question is found in the final benefit I see of this proposal. I contend the risk of introducing new ambiguities is justified because of the pedagogical advantages this proposal offers. The current categorization of events by genre does not lend itself to a wide diversity of skill development from our students. The vast majority of competitors focus their efforts on the development of texts written with the first-person voice. We as judges reward this meticulous character development and often shun the less accessible third-person voice or multiple character dialogue. Our ranks follow our emotional responses and we have become overly dependent on the easy identification with the "I" of a first-person account. Re-categorizing events by voice would level the playing field for these oft maligned narrators. Students would be exposed to new approaches in literary analysis and would also need to learn how to create strong emotional responses in an audience using a more distant narrator. Our public speakers learn the nuances between the varying purposes of informing, persuading and entertaining. I argue it is time for our interpretation events to encourage this same diversity of skill acquisition.

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Appendix

Discussions among session participants resulted in the presentation of the following revised proposal to the General Assembly.

Resolved: The performance of literature events be re-categorized as follows:

Justification: Growing difficulty in clear genre distinctions and lack of diversity of narrator perspectives performed.

Performance of Monologue
Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which use the first or second-person narrative voice. A minimal presence of dialogue, as filtered through the narrative voice, is allowed. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

Performance of Dialogue
Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which include third-person narration and/or dialogue between two or more characters. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.

Performance of Poetry
Selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of language. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Duo Performance
Selections of material of literary merit, presented by two individuals, which may be drawn from more than one source. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc, are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Performance of Literature Program
A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from a balance of material from each of the other solo individual performance of literature events. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme. The material must be pulled from at least three separate pieces of literature. Only one selection may be original. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

Discussion during the General Assembly revealed support for a further adaptation of this proposal. Some members suggested dropping "Performance of Poetry" as a category and adding "Second and/or Third-Person Performance". Poetry would then be allowed in all the categories as long as the material adhered to the narrator perspective described in the event category.

Should Collegiate Forensics Parent Organizations Take the Lead in Recruiting New Schools to the Speech Activity?

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Abstract

This paper argues that the health of college forensics could be greatly strengthened with increased membership. This paper also posits that forensics parent organizations on the state, regional, and national level are uniquely positioned to recruit new schools to the speech activity. Finally, this essay details plausible approaches for enticing and fostering new programs.

The intercollegiate forensics (speech and debate) community faces many challenges. Budget constraints, fading programs, ongoing insularity, and ever-present scrutiny highlight the need to bolster the health of the speech activity. Growing the number of participating schools in forensics could eventually reduce the costs associated with and time involved in speech travel. Additionally, expanded membership could increase diversity and enhance competition contributing to the overall strength of the activity. This paper argues that the health of college forensics could be greatly strengthened with increased membership. This paper also posits that forensics parent organizations on the state, regional, and national level are uniquely positioned to recruit new schools to the speech activity. Finally, this essay details plausible approaches for enticing and fostering new programs.

Challenges Facing the Forensics Community

Forensics programs have had to weather budget cuts along with the steady decline of programs over the years (Alexander & Strickland, 1980; Derryberry, 1991; Schnoor & Kozinski, 2005). With the completion of each season, additional speech and debate programs are eliminated from their respective college or university (Stepp, 1996). In addition, speech programs are constantly being forced to defend themselves against administration scrutiny and the budget scalpel. The speech community has also been scrutinized for a lack of diversity. Certainly, the activity is more diverse now than in years past. Shelton and Matthews (2001) write that the forensics community has made remarkable progress and has worked to share the benefits of forensic practice with often socially marginalized demographic groups, particularly women and minorities. However, there is much work that can be done to ensure that a broad pool of individuals are involved in the activity. In addition, teams should do more to reach out to individuals who might possess invisible disabilities (i.e., mental disorders, impairments). Thus, the future challenge is to enlist and gain participation from underrepresented groups. Wider participation would extend educational advantages to more individuals and strengthen the overall health of the activity. Foren-sics programs must grow and remain vibrant and vigilant if it is to maintain its standing given the many challenges facing the community (Derryberry, 1991).

Unique Role of Forensics Parent Organizations

With budget, participation, and insularity concerns, it is important that forensics parent organizations--such as the American Forensics Association, National Forensics Association and Pi Kappa Delta or regional and state speech associations--carry out a campaign to increase membership in the activity. Organizationally, these associations have the resources, structure, and leadership necessary to effectively undertake such an effort. These organizations have a storied history of working to prevent the elimination of programs. Similar efforts can be focused on expanding the number of forensics programs on the college level. On the high school level, the National Forensics League (NFL) offers a mentorship program along with curriculum suggestions and online resources (Billman, 2008). It seems plausible that college forensics parent organizations could do more to recruit and support new speech and debate programs.

Approaches for Recruiting New Schools

Additional college individual event and debate teams would benefit the forensics community, but enticing new schools to the activity can be challenging. Regardless of the barriers, there are several steps that can be taken to strengthen the membership and enhance the overall health of the speech community. Given widespread budget cuts, professors with heavy teaching loads and other tensions, a foremost approach would be to contact specific students about starting student-run speech teams. The names and contact information for targeted students would be provided by current forensics members. Schnoor and Kozinski (2005) write that the student-run programs sometimes encounter added challenges, but this is a very viable option considering today's academic climate. Ohio State University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison have had a successful history with student-directed programs.

Second, and a most ideal situation, forensics organizations could solicit participation from deans, chairs, and professors at respective colleges and universities. It is extremely beneficial to have a faculty advisor/sponsor when requesting the use of university resources. Approaching a friendly department head or faculty member might be the ticket for a sustaining and well-connected speech program. If these individuals cannot be of assistance, approaching instructors outside the field of Communication might prove fruitful. There are scant examples of forensics programs housed in English,

Liberal Arts, and Honors departments across the United States.

Third, graduate students might be willing to help set up a program at their university. It might also be possible for a community member to help establish a forensics team on a local campus. Former high school and college speech coaches could also play a role in helping establish new collegiate teams if so inclined.

A forth option is to approach the office that deals with student organizations to see if they might be willing to help start/publicize a forensics program. A college might be looking for the recognition a speech program would bring to the institution.

A fifth approach is to offer workshops at regional and national conventions (e.g., Central States, National Communication Association) on "How to Start a Forensics Program" or "Why Start a Forensics Program at Your School?" A publicity campaign might reach a former competitor who is looking to give back to the activity or college instructor searching for a new professional development opportunity.

Finally, once a program has been established, it must be supported. Forensics parent organizations can take the lead in ensuring universal support across the activity. New programs could benefit from reduced tournament fees, assistance in finding student housing, and by offering a full-service formal mentorship program. Host schools have been known to offer assistance to student-run teams. for example. and with a mentorship service, experienced coaches would be available to answer questions and give advice to new teams when warranted. Carver (1991) and Hefling (2008) write that new coaches and teams have responded favorably to formal and informal mentoring in the past.

Starting a forensics program can be a daunting and challenging undertaking. Questions of funding, travel, membership, and program direction all need to be addressed. A significant amount of time and effort will have to be expended. Luckily, however, there are students on most every campus who have participated in high school speech and debate, or students who are interested in a new challenge, like founding a speech program.

It is understandable that forensics parent organizations have not spent resources and time on recruiting new schools to the speech activity. Boylan (1994) as cited in Valdivia and Simon (1997) notes:

> Forensics may place a greater demand on students and faculty than any other college or university course. Even when students and faculty are traveling to a tournament, their free time is usually spent writing, revising, and practicing for the next tournament. Furthermore, forensics coaches often have other classes to teach, professional obligations to meet, administrative

responsibilities to fulfill, and personal commitments to consider. (49)

The high stress level accompanying forensic involvement, in combination with a low compensation level and heavy teaching loads (Gill, 1990), may also contribute to the small percentage of coaches actively involved in an effort to attract new schools to the activity.

Although this paper is not meant to be prescriptive, its purpose is to spark further discussion on the health and sustainability of the forensics community. This paper argued that the health of college forensics could be greatly strengthened with increased membership and that forensics parent organizations on the state, regional, and national level are uniquely positioned to recruit new schools to the speech activity. Finally, this paper detailed plausible approaches for enticing and fostering new programs. Efforts must be undertaken to ensure the growth of collegiate speech. The long-term success of forensics requires that our activity stay alert and respond accordingly to the challenges facing our community.

Example of Letter for Deans, Chairs, or Professors
On behalf of the Minnesota Collegiate Forensics Association (MCFA), we write in hopes that you might consider starting a Forensics (speech and debate) program at your university or college.

There is an active collegiate speech and debate circuit in Minnesota. Students have the opportunity to compete in eleven individual events and Parliamentary Debate. Intercollegiate speech tournaments are offered throughout the school year. Students compete in public speaking (like Persuasive, Informative, After Dinner Speaking), oral interpretation (like Prose, Drama, Poetry), limited preparation events (like Extemporaneous and Impromptu Speaking) and debate (like Parliamentary Debate and Lincoln Douglas Debate). Students can choose to participate in up to six events, plus debate, at a tournament.

Participation in speech and debate provides students with important research, critical thinking, organizational, and performance skills. In addition, time spent in forensics serves to improve a student's overall educational experience. Further, research reveals that speech participation is often ranked as one of a student's greatest memories from college and assists greatly in a student's career success. Forensics competition is preparation for life in many respects.

MCFA is interested in helping start programs at additional universities and colleges across the state. The organization and its members are committed to providing support and guidance to faculty and students starting new teams. It is our hope that you or someone you know at the college might be interested in founding a team. We will follow up with you in a few days to see if you have any questions about collegiate speech and starting a forensics program on your campus. In the meantime, if you have questions, you can contact us at

_____ or call _____. Thank you for considering this offer.

Sincerely,

Example Letter for Students

Dear _____,

Your name was provided by _____ from ___(school)_____. We understand you participated in competitive speech and/or debate while in high school. We are contacting individuals about starting speech programs at their college or university. Many forensics teams are started as student organizations (and funds are available at most colleges and universities to support these types of organizations). The Minnesota Collegiate Forensics Association (MCFA) is ready to provide assistance to new programs. MCFA will help cover the cost of tournament fees and assist in finding lodging for the first year for new programs.

There is an active collegiate speech and debate circuit in Minnesota. Several intercollegiate speech and debate tournaments are held across Minnesota each year with a state tournament at the end of the competitive season. Students have the opportunity to compete in eleven individual events as well as two forms of debate. Speech tournaments are offered throughout the school year. Students compete in public speaking (like Persuasive, Informative, After Dinner Speaking), oral interpretation (like Prose, Drama, Poetry), limited preparation events (like Extemporaneous and Impromptu Speaking) and debate (like Parliamentary Debate and Lincoln Douglas Debate). Students can choose to compete in up to six events, plus debate, at a tournament.

Participation in speech and debate provides students with important research, critical thinking, organizational, and performance skills. In addition, time spent in forensics serves to improve a student's overall educational experience. Further, research reveals that speech participation is often ranked as one of a student's greatest memories from college and assists greatly in a student's career success. Forensics competition is preparation for life in many respects.

A list of collegiate events is attached. We hope you or someone you know might consider starting a program at your college or university. We will follow up with you in a few days to see if you have any questions about collegiate speech and starting a forensics program on your campus. In the meantime, if you have questions, you can contact us at _____ or call _____. Thank you and we look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Example Letter for Coaches

Dear MCFA Coaches,

Please share this information with your students. Minnesota Collegiate Forensics Association (MCFA) is working to recruit new schools to the speech and debate activity. Please ask your students if they have the names and contact information (if possible) of students who might be interested in starting a speech team on their campus.

MCFA is looking to start programs at additional universities and colleges across the state. In addition, we are committed to providing support and guidance to students starting new teams. We anticipate that most speech programs will start as student-directed student organizations. If you or your students know of friends who are attending schools without a program and who might be persuaded to start a program, please provide their name and contact information. Send information to:

Minnesota Collegiate Forensics Association: Growing Forensics
c/o
Address
City, State, Zip
Phone Number

We are particularly interested in starting forensic programs at any of the institutions listed below. Thank you for assisting with this effort.

List of Programs Without a Forensics Program
College of St. Scholastica, Duluth
St. Catherine University, St. Paul
Saint Mary's University, Winona
Winona State University, Winona
St. Thomas University, St. Paul
Hamline University, St. Paul
Martin Luther College, New Ulm
Metropolitan State University, St. Paul
Macalester College, St. Paul
Carleton College, Northfield
University of Minnesota-Morris
University of Minnesota-Duluth
University of Minnesota-Rochester
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
University of Minnesota-Crookston
Bemidji State University
Rochester College and Technical College, Rochester
St. John's University/College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph
Minnesota State University, Moorhead
Anoka Community College, Anoka
St. Paul Technical and Community College, St. Paul
Inver Hills Community College, Inver Hills
St. Cloud Technical and Community College, St. Cloud
Alexandria Technical College, Alexandria
Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Coon Rapids
Central Lakes College, Brainerd

Century College, White Bear Lake
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, Cloquet
Hibbing Community College, Hibbing
Inver Hills Community College, Inver Grove Heights
Itasca Community College, Grand Rapids
Lake Superior College, Duluth
Mesabi Range Community & Technical College, Virginia
Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Minneapolis
Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Detroit Lakes
Minnesota West Community & Technical College, Canby
North Hennepin Community College, Brooklyn Park
Northland Community & Technical College, East Grand Forks
Rainy River Community College, International Falls
Ridgewater College, Hutchinson
Riverland Community College, Albert Lea
Rochester Community and Technical College, Rochester
Saint Paul College, St. Paul
Vermilion Community College, Ely
Brown College, Mendota Heights
Duluth Business University, Duluth
Minnesota School of Business & Globe College, Brooklyn Center, Blaine, Oakdale, Plymouth, Richfield, Rochester, Shakopee, St. Cloud
Rasmussen College, St. Cloud, Eden Prairie, Brooklyn Park, Lake Elmo, and Mankato

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Helping Out the "Newbies": A Call for Broader-Based Professional Development in Forensics

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Abstract

Many Directors of Forensics follow a clear path from student competitor to graduate coaching assistant before holding a professional position. Often this traditional route represents the full training a future DOF may receive.   While this experience is invaluable, as a primary means of education it does not account for those starting programs without such a background, or those taking on a director position at an institution with a significantly different emphasis or philosophy than encountered in their training. This paper posits that a focus on training & mentoring is needed at the national level in order to facilitate a broader approach to professional development of forensic professionals.

The forensic community is made up of passionate and dedicated educators who spend countless hours working for the enrichment of students and the larger community. That dedication is reflected and justified by the countless research and position papers acknowledging the many positive benefits of participation in competitive forensics. There exists a wide body of forensic assessment research focusing on attempts to measure the benefits of participation in forensics for undergraduate students (Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Louden, 1999; Rogers, 2002; Selnow, 1994).

An area that receives less attention, but is equally important for the continued growth of the forensic community, is the development of forensic professionals, i.e. coaches, and directors of forensic programs. Thomas A. Workman noted in 1997 that "one solution to the growing problem of coach and program burn-out seems to be better education for the future forensics educator. Yet very little has been written on the subject…"   Many forensic professionals follow a clear path from student competitor to graduate coaching assistant before holding a professional position. This path may seem commonsense, and in fact has worked for countless DOF's. Yet, even for the forensic professionals who receive this training, there tend to be few graduate courses available focusing specifically on coaching and forensic administration (Jensen, 1996). In practice, this makes the DOF position extremely difficult for those who didn't hold a forensic graduate assistantship. Given the shrinking resources in higher education today, the forensic community would benefit from additional training resources for newcomers to the activity as well as those who have risen through the ranks.

The current status quo in forensic training, while offering excellent opportunities, can also create some unique problems. To begin, without clearly defined goals for professional forensic education, graduate students likely experience widely differing training from program to program (Jensen, 1996). Additionally, while it would seem common sense that a communication faculty member with a graduate degree in speech communication should be able to step in to the role of DOF if needed, in practice it is much more difficult. Without clear sources of information about forensic administration and coaching, newcomers to the profession are forced to reinvent the wheel or attempt to reverse engineer what other coaches are doing based on competitors speeches.

This paper argues that the Council of Forensic Organizations (COFO) should create a committee to establish specific resources for training and professional development. Such a committee could work to establish practical forums for addressing the need for training and development for forensic professionals and establish baselines for such training. This paper will focus primarily on the needs and benefits of placing increased attention on professional development for members of the forensic community at the national level.

Professional Development

As noted above, the majority of professionals in the forensic community today are typically former competitors and graduate coaching assistants. At a practical level, the evolution from competitor to apprentice to professional is an ideal means of training. However, as the sole means of training this route isolates the forensic community and serves to discourage latecomers from taking an active part in forensics. In essence, the profession has become a specialty area within higher education with very few outlets to achieve training and a lack of consistency in training. For example, the skills gained as a graduate assistant in a large university with a well-funded program may not adequately prepare professionals for the challenges of working in an environment where fighting for resources is a political balancing act. Likewise, training in a smaller program that travels regionally may not provide suitable preparation for a career in a nationally competitive program. Establishing standards for training and professional development may not entirely remove obstacles such as these, but it can go a long way towards minimizing them. The forensic community is generally willing to help out new programs and DOF's, but more needs to be done to ensure that new DOF's and non-community members know that such help exists.

As colleges and universities across the nation slash budgets or cut programs, the forensic community also needs to encourage the development of new programs. For colleges who do not have a current DOF or a faculty member with direct forensic experience, there is little incentive to build a program. The promotion of national and/or regional coaching and administration workshops could provide much needed support to floundering programs. Matching new DOF's with more experienced forensic professionals as mentors could also help minimize some of the uncertainty new program directors face.   Despite the wide body of re-

search on DOF burnout (Leland, 2004; Richardson, 2005), the passion and longevity of most forensic professionals certainly indicates that a career in forensics is uniquely rewarding. Providing increased opportunities for professional training could serve to open up the forensic community to a more diverse population of educators and could enhance the growth of the activity. Each year, a significant number of communication generalists are hired across the nation into communication departments. Administration of a forensic program could be an attractive option for communication scholars seeking professional activities for career advancement including tenure and promotion. Promoting the profession of forensics beyond the traditional scope of participants can only serve to enhance the forensic community.

Most DOF's who have served in the position for several years can point to a number of smaller programs that have died off, or attempts to start up programs that have faltered. Much of the literature in the field typically focuses on arguments for the value of forensic education when competing for tight resources on campus as one means of slowing this type of attrition (Sellnow, 1994). This information is key for existing programs but more basic information is often needed for untrained or new DOF's. At present, there is a much smaller body of work available regarding new program development, and very few textbooks address this area. Issues such as locating suitable tournaments, making contacts within the region, budgeting, and learning pragmatic coaching strategies, can all serve to frustrate those "outsiders" attempting to build programs. Furthermore, there are enough regional differences in areas such as competitive styles and national organization affiliation that even a graduate student who has risen through the ranks may struggle when hired out of his or her competitive region.

Individually, the vast majority of members of the forensic community are willing to go out of their way to help foster new programs or work with new coaches or DOF's. Anecdotal evidence suggests that informal mentoring is fairly common; this practice could be greatly enhanced through institutional mentoring programs at the national and regional level.   Likewise, there are resources available including research papers, conference proceedings, etc. that can serve as training materials. However, these resources are difficult to track down for forensic neophytes as not all journals are connected to electronic resources like Ebscohost and information is frequently spread across a disparate group of websites. Clearer web design for national organizations and inclusion of welcome packets with directions for accessing resources for new coaches could help more forensic professionals take advantage of the wealth of information available. A basic guidebook for forensic coaches, sponsored by a national organization could provide some much needed assistance for newcomers as well as a source of revenue for the national organization.

Training & Development Resources
National organizations including the National Forensic Association, the American Forensic Association, the Council

of Forensic Organization, Pi Kappa Delta and others currently maintain websites which include a variety of resources, including peer reviewed journals, for forensic professionals. The next challenge for the future development of the activity is to focus on improving ease of access and organization to these resources, and to sponsor an increased focus on professional training and development. The following are suggestions geared towards the national organizations, particularly COFO, which could provide assistance to both the new coach as well as the seasoned veteran DOF looking for new ideas and approaches. This list is not inclusive but is meant to spark discussion, debate, and reflection on the state of professional development within the forensic community.

1. Provide a centralized location for coaching materials (for example, a well-organized set of links could allow national organizations to provide access to such material without having to own or control the material).

2. Provide information on proper tabulation practices as well as hosting responsibilities and duties.

3. Provide training materials for judges. (Most DOF's have their own version of the "training handout", having a place to post these would keep everyone from having to reinvent the wheel, and would likely evolve a smaller number of excellent guides.)

4. Provide regional and national contacts of individuals willing to provide advice or mentoring to new forensic professionals.

5. Provide a centralized location for information about using forensic experience in tenure portfolios, as well as evidence and arguments for inclusion of forensic experiences as a component of tenure.

6. Conduct an assessment on the state of the profession. Assessment could include tracking percentages of forensic professionals receiving tenure, long-term contracts, etc.

7. Foster increased research on pedagogical strategies for DOF's, such as National Communication Association panels focusing specifically on training & professional development.

8. Foster a national guide with standards for forensic education, similar to other communication fields (for example, the Commission on Public Relations Education report, *Public Relations Education for the 21st Century, A Port of Entry.*)

Final Thoughts
Many forensic competitors have risen through the ranks to pursue careers in forensic education out of love of the activity. For members of the community, a quick perusal of journal articles and national developmental conference pro-

ceedings is the closest thing forensic professionals have to a national yearbook. These are just two indicators of the value of pursuing a career within this particular collegiate area. For too long, the feasibility of having a career in forensics has been a secret kept within the family. If the activity is to continue to grow and evolve, national and regional organizations and membership need to think beyond coaching and undergraduate competition and remember that training and development is a critical component of any professional activity. Helping new coaches and newcomers to the professional forensic world can only improve the status of forensics as a whole.

The National Development Conference on Individual Events has been a sounding board for a diversity of issues related to coaching and pedagogy. The challenge for the future is to use the conference and other forums to provide clear assistance to those wishing to join the ranks of forensic careerists. At present, career training is inconsistent and insular, and may serve to keep interested faculty at arms-length from the activity. Starting a national dialogue on the needs of and expectations for forensic professionals could evolve to greater consistency in training, a more comprehensive approach to professional development, and recognition of the need for formal mentoring programs. Countless undergraduates in a dizzying array of majors have entered the workforce better prepared due to the dedication and diligence of forensic professionals. As forensic professionals, we owe it to ourselves to ensure that current and future members of our profession receive the same assistance, care, and attention in their career paths as we impart upon our students.

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Student Research as a Method for Developing New Forensic Leaders

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Abstract

For years, a call for more forensic research has echoed across the nation. While some respond to the continued challenge, many others have not. Numerous programs have disappeared from the collegiate forensic map over the years, with the questioned legitimacy and effectiveness of forensic programs and forensic professionals cited as the reason for their disappearance. In order to maintain a strong participation of programs, students, and coaches, we must develop strong leaders who, through research, will promote and stabilize forensics in the collegiate scene. As forensic leaders, it is our responsibility to nurture students into leadership positions where they, through research, will help ensure the activity's survival. I advocate for student-authored forensic research as a method for transitioning students from competitors into active forensic scholars. I will share the gains of involving students in forensic research and then offer suggestions on how to encourage student to engage in forensic research.

Introduction

I want to clarify something before we get too deep into this paper: I am a graduate student in Communication Studies and a graduate-student assistant forensic coach. Initially, I debated the merit to openly disclose this information as one would think my status as a graduate student has little to do with the quality of ideas presented to the community. I determined a faux-confession was in order, however, after careful re-examination. My admission does not act as a *mea culpa* by any standards. I will rarely apologize for my opinions regarding the forensic community, no matter where I stand on the academic totem pole. The clarification of my status as a graduate student highlights my unique position on student-authored research. Instead of well-established forensic leaders calling for veteran scholars to seek publication, I (a student) am calling for more student research through the help of current community leaders. My plea seems like a selfish one at first: Help students (like me) advance in the field of forensics. My call for more student-authored research, however, is about more than myself.

As an undergraduate competitor on a peer-coached speech team, I spent the majority of my time figuring out basic elements of collegiate forensics: where to find literature, how to write a speech, tournament etiquette, winning strategies, etc. I had questions, but no idea how to ask or who to ask. My senior year was a personal revelation, after three years of struggling. I felt like I belonged. I understood how certain aspects of the community worked. However, I believed I had missed out because it took so long for me to "get into the game." Other competitors may never get past the question phase and may quit the activity out of frustration, robbing them of a fantastic experience and robbing our community of another contributing member. I have great interest in forensics as a graduate student, and, like before, the path is clouded. Luckily, my department is supportive and helpful in letting me pursue my research interests—I am fortunate for the guidance. I am fortunate to find exceptional mentors during my graduate studies, yet I often wonder how many students are left to wander when they have academic interest in forensics. If a student wants to explore forensics academically but no one is there to help them, they are more than likely going to turn away. The community potentially loses a new scholar every time a student misses an opportunity to engage in forensic research. The oft-referred Madsen (1990) article strikes at the heart of my message: finding ways to help forensic students become forensic scholars. While Madsen focused on graduate students, we need to include undergraduates in our attempt to gather students into the research fold. Student-conducted forensic research will "foster advances in the field of forensics … [and] serve to increase the professional advancement of … students" (Madsen, 1990, p. 48).

Workman (1997) outlines six competencies for a forensic professional: one competency involves "demonstrat[ing] an interest in scholarly activity in the field" (p. 85). Leaders can be effective for entire careers without publishing. Like Workman (1997), however, I believe we should be balanced forensic professionals. Leadership includes being a supportive coach, an attentive administrator, and an active scholar. Coaching helps students learn; administrative duties keep the program running. Scholarship provides the link between what we do and communication theory—it also helps legitimize the activity as worthy of support by school administrators and funding committees (Aden, 1990). Many forensic professionals publish on a fairly regular basis, but many do not. We must support our scholarly colleagues by writing and researching with them, so that they no longer are the sole contributors to what is often looked at as justification for having a forensic program. Forensic programs are in the decline (Klosa, 2008), and leaders in the community need to do whatever they can to help ensure a future for forensic programs, forensic competitors, and forensic professionals.

We must prioritize supporting upcoming leaders to be active scholars. The community will "lose mentors and mentoring opportunities regarding scholarly inquiry, processes, and productivity" when current leaders retire (Hinck, 2008, p.8). We must help students advance as scholars, or we may be looking at a bleak future for forensics. Our duty to mentor new leaders starts with research.

The Echoing Call for Research

The call for forensic research has been resonating for decades. The Sedalia Conference was a plaintive call for the forensic community to focus on research (e.g., Becker, 1975; McBath, 1975; Rieke & Brock, 1975). The 1984

Northwestern Conference yielded similar discussions on the importance of research in the forensic community (e.g., Goodnight, 1984; Logue & Shea, 1990; Parson, 1990). Others have picked up the torch, spurring the community into the research so vital to the activity (e.g., Cronn-Mills, 2008; Hinck, 2008; Rogers, 2000). Despite the repeated request for more research in our field, we rarely see it. The community appears to be ignoring this crucial aspect of forensic existence. Forensic journals have bemoaned the dearth of writing, citing the lack of submissions as a major problem for the future of forensics (e.g., Geisler, 1993; Klumpp, 1990; Ryan, 1998). The calls for more research bounce around the community only to be taken up at the next conference—to little or no avail.

It is surprising so few submissions are received by forensics journals (Klumpp, 1990; Ryan, 1998). According to its website, the *National Forensic Journal* (NFJ) last published in the fall of 2006. In a recent discussion with Dan Cronn-Mills, editor of *Speaker and Gavel*, Cronn-Mills attested that the journal rarely receives a forensic manuscript. The importance of research has been repeatedly highlighted (e.g., Cronn-Mills, 2008; Goodnight, 1984; Hinck, 2008; Logue & Shea, 1990; Parson, 1990; Rogers, 2000). Forensic professionals need to be active scholars in their field. Aden (1990) suggested three main reasons why forensic professionals should engage in research; I provide a fourth reason:

1. *Forensic research assists coaches by offering perspectives for approaching the various events.*
   Simply put, research helps coaches see the activity in new and, hopefully, improved ways. As Aden (1990) pointed out, countless articles offer thoughts and suggestions on the individual events. When unsure of how to approach an event with a student, coaches can turn to the material generated by other forensic professionals.

2. *Forensic research provides a valuable resource for students and coaches.*
   Aden (1990) explained coaches can guide students to the research to help explain current thoughts in the community. Instead of relying only on ballots, students can learn from reading research.

3. *Forensic research enhances student and coach understanding of the connection between theory and practice.*
   Aden (1990) believed forensics research can provide clear explanations for why forensic competitors and professionals do what they do. Forensic norms are linked to communication theory. Forensic research offers rationales for norms that many in the community deem to be pointless.

4. *Forensic research can help legitimize and maintain forensic programs and forensic professionals.*
   Aden (1990) conceded research does not hurt a career, but he argued the focus should be on enhancing the practice of communication. I am inclined to agree with Aden. However, with increasing regularity, budget cuts threaten many programs. Faculty, staff, and administrators are questioning the need for a forensic program when the members of the community are not actively engaged scholars, something many of our peers expect us to be (Aden, 1990; Kay, 1990; Madsen, 1990; McKerrow, 1990; Parson, 1990). Many departments withhold tenure promotion for forensic professionals who have not conducted much "real research" (Danielson & Hollwitz, 1997; Kay, 1990, McKerrow, 1990). Forensic professionals have a duty to research and write about forensics as well as other research interests—and the standard that we hold current professionals to should be the same standard to which we train our new leaders.

Involving Students: Gains
Students gain from doing research. When taking the initiative of performing original research, a student may be paired with a faculty member or forensic professional. Conversely, writing an essay that is not original research (such as this one) allows the student to work in a more independent fashion. Whatever the situation may be, a student involved in generating original forensic research will enhance his/her future as a forensic professional.

1 *Students benefit from Aden's reasons.*
   What Aden (1990) wrote about forensic professionals holds true for students. The more research generated the better, regardless of authors' credentials. Students and coaches can learn from perspectives shared in the research process. Involving students in research creates opportunity for fresh points of view. Given the limited range of research interests in the forensic community (Croucher, 2006; Kerber & Cronn-Mills, 2005), we need to be open to new ways of thinking and seeing that students might provide. Increasing student research may be a way to increase our points of view. More students involved in understanding (and creating) past, current and future forensic research can only enhance the quality of student involvement in the activity. Active involvement in scholarly forensic research may help the student create stronger competitive speeches, as well as offer justifications for choices made in the creation process. Students that conduct research may influence other students, as students may be drawn into the academic arena to read perspectives of other students. The more research perspectives, the more everyone gains.

1. *Students are exposed to advanced material and gain research experience.*
   Working closely with forensic professionals on research will give students the opportunity to be exposed to research techniques and a greater understanding of their research topic. A student may be collaborating on a project with a faculty member who can use the opening as a teaching opportunity. Communication theory and research can be introduced to students while working on the research project—an opportunity the student may not have taken if working alone. Students who research a topic will discover new concepts and ideas in areas of interest. Ex-

panding a student's knowledge and experience in theory and research is a service to the student.

Students learn higher level thinking skills and gain greater understanding of communication and forensic research while working directly with a faculty member/coach. Students are often unsure of the research process. An experienced researcher demystifies the process of scholarly writing for the student. The student can observe and ask questions. When a student first competes at a tournament, the experience gained gives the student a better understanding of what forensics is all about. The same can be said about research. Jumping into research can be intimidating. Students who gain the experience of research are better suited to handle future research projects and publication submissions. Just getting started and doing the research can gain the student invaluable experience.

2. *Students receive guidance/mentoring.*
A mentoring relationship may develop when a student works directly with a forensic professional and can serve many functions. A forensic mentor can help a student interested in future scholarship, graduate/doctorate school, coaching, or other professional endeavors, as well as make a difference in a student's personal life (White, 2005). Close bonds are formed between students and coaches. The relationship can develop into an advice seeking/distributing duality. Students seeking a career as a forensic professional may also find a mentor to be helpful in making the transition from graduate student into a coach or director (Hefling, 2008).

Additionally, forensic professionals can steer a student toward a faculty member better suited to guide the student. For example, if a student was interested in intercultural communication, the forensic professional might direct the student to the faculty member whose research interests coincide. As a mentoring relationship develops, the mentor may begin to recognize what a student needs help. Forensic leaders should guide students to where they can receive the most fruitful assistance, even if that assistance is not with a forensic professional.

3. *Students are more likely to stay with forensics after competition.*
A student researcher may continue to serve the forensics community, which benefits everyone. Retention of forensic students after competition must be a priority as we are seeking forensic leaders. Nagda et. al. (1998) concluded pairing undergraduates with faculty on research projects increased retention rates in the particular programs. The Nagda study (and other studies like it) implies we need to mentor students through research in order to foster new leaders. Cronn-Mills (2008) echoed the belief of mentoring students in research, contending "the earlier students engage in the forensic research experience, the more likely they may continue and become strong contributors to the development of forensics" (p. 11).

While positives can emerge from involving students in research, many professionals do not actively mentor students in the research process. Training students to be active forensic researchers is an important task, but merely being an important task does not equate to it being an easy one.

Plan of Action

Hinck (2008) outlined the obstacles standing in the way of forensic research: 1) lack of skill and training; 2) lack of reward; 3) lack of resources. Hinck's obstacles are commonly heard when asked why more forensic research is not generated. Generally, I am sympathetic to the situations of forensic professionals. Running a program takes an enormous effort, compounded by other professional obligations and duties, and fitting in personal and family commitments: Life as a forensic professional can be rough (Littlefield & Sellnow, 1992; Richardson 2008). Life as a forensic student is difficult as well. Students may not start research projects because they do not know how, do not see the point, do not have the time, and see little tangible rewards. For example, the forensic community spends tens of thousands of dollars on tournament trophies, yet very little rewarding strong student-led forensic research. The following suggestions are designed to support student-led forensic research, and thus promoting effective forensic leadership.

1. *Encourage meta-analysis of forensics in student performances.*
Interest in forensics for undergraduate competitors starts with the events. Students participate in forensics because they enjoy some aspect of speech competition. Coaches can encourage students to tackle issues in the forensic community through competitive speeches/interpretations. A student showing interest in expressing their thoughts about forensics should be encouraged to do so in the most basic (and public) way they know how: during a tournament.

In recent memory, several students have attempted to address forensic issues through their competitive speeches: Christine Zani of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire wrote an Informative speech on the history of forensics; Erin McCarthy of Bradley University wrote an ADS on the way students structure speeches in forensics; Elizabeth Wehler of Lafayette College wrote a Persuasion speech about academic integrity in extemporaneous speaking; Justin Rudnick of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire wrote a Persuasion speech on the AFA qualification system. Following personal passions for a speech will allow students to start preliminary reading on a topic of interest and may spark further research on the area. Discounting performances with a forensic focus deters students from transitioning from competitor to scholar. Ribarsky (2005) suggested tournament directors try experimental events to encourage outside-the-box thinking, assuming students (as well as coaches and judges) might see forensics in a different light. Ribarsky's approach is well-intentioned, but delegating innovation to special events blocks the path to change. Offering special events to encourage creativity in regular events

only makes it more difficult for forensic community members to see the creative approach as a part of normalcy. Meta-analysis of forensics should be integrated into regular events and not segregated to experimental events.

Students may continue on as forensic professionals after competition, yet we know most move on to other things. Meta-analysis will fuel future research projects. Students can be active members in their own community outside forensics, seeking to inform or persuade their audiences about an important issue that impacts everyone. Since we know that most students will not be forensic professionals, forensics should prepare students for communicating and leading no matter where they end up (Derryberry, 1991; Madsen, 1990). There has always been criticism that the impact of a speech does not leave the round; empowering students to impact the activity through meta-analysis can help our students' work actually make a difference in forensics and outside of it. Allowing students to be self-advocates in forensics is training to be a self-advocate in future endeavors. Empowering competitors garners additional appeal for the activity, and may convince students to continue their forensic studies.

We as coaches can make a difference in this area by letting students pursue their interests in forensics through their performances, even if it means we think they might not final at a tournament. As judges we can help students by not immediately dismissing a forensics-related speech as "not being far-reaching" or "not applicable to many people." I truly hope the dozens of persuasive speeches I hear every year on foreign tragedies have made a difference for those suffering, but I know a passionate speech about something happening right now in forensics and is clearly relevant to that student is likely to elicit debate, and possibly change, in the community. Regardless, we should not put any approach or topic area on a pedestal, so encouraging students in this fashion is up to the discretion of the coach/judge. Perhaps the best practice is to merely not discourage or discount meta-analysis of forensics in student performances.

2. Work on research projects.
Hinck (2008) is quick to point out obstacles to doing our own research in forensics. He argued for the Nike approach: *Just Do It*. The expectation of students bailing forensic professionals out of their research onus is laughable. How can we ask students to write and submit if we do not take the same interest and effort? There are many obstacles to overcome. Because of the hectic travel demands of the forensic coach, we often feel as if research is "something external to the daily demands of our jobs" (Worth, 2002, p. 67) and, thus, something that can be ignored or put to the side for later attention. Hinck suggested that we make forensic research part of our routine. Leaving our research to when we have time is dangerous—we rarely "have time." Instead of making it a luxury, make forensic research a priority.

We can do this as Hinck recommended, by making a plan for a project and sticking with it on a regular basis. Divert time from other projects to these projects, or use down-time at tournaments for research. Many tournament directors are open to having research performed at tournaments if they are only asked. Tournament research is highly under-used (Worth, 2000). Finding ways to collect data is critical, and we cannot turn away from our basic area in which we function.

While doing more research is important, we also need to focus on doing quality research. Several scholars have argued that forensic scholarship is not up to par with other communication study fields (Croucher, 2006; Klumpp, 1990; Ryan, 1998). Forensic leaders must "satisfy each standard at the same level of QUALITY expected of their colleagues; the AMOUNT of … scholarship … however, may distinguish forensic educators from their colleagues" (Parson, 1984, p. 25-26). Due to the added rigors of forensic life, forensic professionals should not be expected to publish as often as their colleagues. However, holding our research to the same standards as our colleagues is the only way to increase the quality of forensic research.

We can measure where our research is at by submitting to non-forensic journals for publication. Forensic scholars need to show the link between communication theory and forensics for the communication discipline to take them more seriously. An enhanced focus on communication theory in individual events research at NCA and in journals will improve the overall image of forensic research (Porter, 1990). Croucher (2006) noted that, with the exception of *Argumentation and Advocacy*, no major communication journals publish articles about individual events. Focusing on the link between communication theory and forensics will give forensic scholars a better opportunity to get published in non-forensic journals. If forensic articles can get published in journals such as *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, or even a smaller journal, we will have seen the quality of forensic research change for the better.

Forensic professionals need not solely focus on forensic interests for their research (Kay, 1990; Parson, 1990). Merely being an active scholar in the communication field will increase the credentials of a forensic professional. It may be difficult to conduct research with many obstacles in the way, but to generate new leaders in the community, we must be willing to put the work in ourselves. Without an example, potential future leaders may not see the need for research in the field. Modeling the research we hope that future leaders will do will help them see how it is done.

3. Mentor students.
This is where we bring students into the game. If you know of a student who shows interest in forensic research, talk to them about it and see if they have any questions. Offer help to your students that express interest, but do not shy away from working with students whom you are not already working directly. If you see a student that you

think you might be able to help, contact them and ask them to assist you with something on which you are working. Asking students to help you in your research provides two potential benefits: It helps the student gain valuable research experience, and it also can decrease the work load of research/writing. Not only can students provide manual labor, but they also can reenergize an idea or project that may have become stale. If students becomes involved extensively in the project, they might be able to be added as co-authors, giving individual students a leg up in their future forensic academic and professional endeavors. A forensic professional might also connect students to other faculty for assistance. For example, a study on conflict within teams could be helped by the interpersonal specialist in a department. Reach out to students— you never know which students are too intimidated to speak up for themselves.

Education plays an important role as well. Like Cronn-Mills (2008), I, too, urge departments with forensic and graduate programs to offer forensic pedagogy and research courses. Students will research the areas in which they study, and a course on forensic issues will provide the arena in which to do it. Bartanen (1996) claimed that less than half of all universities with graduate programs offered a directing or administrative forensic course. I might guess that number has not increased since 1996. Formally training our future leaders in classrooms designed to help discuss and research issues of the field only makes sense—all other disciplines do this. Being thrown into forensic leadership positions without training can be unsettling, confusing, and could be contributing the high burnout rate attributed with DOF positions. Elton's (1989) call for more formal training still has yet to be heeded. Without formal training, new forensic professionals have no where to turn for information on forensics pedagogy and how to coach events (Dean, 1990). We need to offer courses in forensic issues so that students can learn about, discuss, and research them. These courses will better prepare the students to become independent forensic leaders. While new coaches continue to surface, new scholars are scarcer. A search on the Online Index of Forensic Research revealed that only three of the ten recipients of AFA-NIET Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award have published an article in a forensic journal. Our education of new forensic professionals needs to change to include scholarly forensic training with an emphasis put on publication.

An area that should also be mentioned is that of graduate students' capstone work. Many students who work with speech and debate teams during their graduate experience do not focus their thesis on forensics. This is a trend that we should be encouraged to change. If graduate students wish to pursue a career as a forensic professional, their thesis work is a perfect opportunity to perform original research in their field. Encouraging graduate students to research their passions might go a long way in assisting them in their forensic careers.

4. *Pursue a terminal degree.*

Many forensic professionals do not have terminal degrees. With so few coaches having research degrees, it makes sense that fewer people do research. The coaches themselves have not had the formal training. We need more forensic professionals with Ph.D,s and M.F.A.s to stay in forensics. If you find yourself without a terminal degree, look into pursuing one. Having a terminal degree will help in two ways. First, administrators are more likely to hire faculty, promote faculty, and grant tenure to faculty with a terminal degree; second, forensic professionals with terminal degrees will have more experience and formal training with advanced research. Forensic professionals with terminal degrees may be better prepared to conduct research and help mentor students.

5. *Create opportunities for student publication.*

As mentioned earlier, relative to other academic areas, forensics has a smaller level of submissions into discipline journals. This would seem to suggest that students have a greater chance of publication, and that may be true. Opportunity is there, but students are not taking advantage of the situation much like many of their forensic mentors. To help recruit new forensic leaders, we need to create special student sections for forensic research and discussion in our journals and at our conferences. By creating specific forensic sections and panels for students, we can help remove the daunting feeling of submitting against their coaches, judges, and mentors. Even something small like one student forensics panel at NCA—there are plenty of sessions that do not produce publication (Cronn-Mills, 2008) and could be used exclusively by students— or a featured student submission in *NFJ* would go a long way into bringing students along into the academic world of forensics.

Also, we need to encourage the current efforts of forensic professionals to help students with forensic academic ambition. This past spring, JoAnn Edwards of the University of Mississippi helped create the first DSR-TKA Student Research Conference dedicated to have undergraduate students present research on communication. Sadly, only five students submitted, and the conference was canceled. We need to be encouraging our students to be submitting to conferences such as one created by Edwards. Students need opportunities to shine, and it is our responsibility as leaders to help them get those opportunities. I also strongly urge other national forensics organizations (PKD, AFA, NFA, etc) to follow Edwards' lead and create their own student research conferences or workshops dedicated to forensics. For example, much like the dissertation workshop NCA sponsors, AFA could sponsor an "outstanding student project" research weekend where selected students have a retreat weekend with top scholars in forensics. At the least, other national organizations should support the DSR-TKA effort.

Students have opinions on issues in forensics. Giving them more venues to express these issues will keep them as vest-

ed members of our community and hopefully guide them into forensic leadership roles.

6. *Increase reward/acknowledgement for student research and publication.*

As Cronn-Mills (2008) noted, rewards and acknowledgement for forensic publication are scarce. That needs to change. Without any kind of incentive, why should students engage in research? Undergraduates might see little need as most graduate programs will accept students with no research experience. Graduate students generally are focused on their capstone work and find it hard to devote their remaining time to additional projects. The main incentive to perform academic work for the student is to advance their career. As forensic professionals, we need to urge our colleges and departments to initially only consider forensics job applicants with strong academic forensic backgrounds. If our new leaders are to continue what we have started, they should be willing and able to seek publication. Research is important to the field—our actions in choosing our new leaders must reflect that. Of course, not all forensic professionals will seek publication. That is their choice and their right. Those that do not seek publication should not be excluded from hiring, nor should they be made to publish. Every coach and director has their strengths and all candidates should be considered for a position, but the best candidates are well-rounded with experience and eagerness for coaching, administration, *and* academic writing. The optimal forensic professional should be trained and active in a variety of ways (Workman, 1997). To ignore this in the hiring process is to short-change our programs. Once students notice that academic contributions matter more in hiring, they should focus more of their efforts on publication.

Hiring criteria used by departments is not where this starts, however. Regional or state forensics organizations should jump on this idea of research rewards as soon as they can, offering an annual season award to the best student forensic paper. Simply by appointing a subcommittee to handle the few details, an organization can give public recognition to our students willing to engage in research. Being recognized in front of the community can be a powerful incentive. Just look at what competition and awards do to forensics now. Students who commit time to do forensic academic work should be just as highly lauded as those that make national out-rounds. I propose that AFA should include "forensic research" in the criteria for All-American. Currently, a student must document their service work in and out of the forensic community. For the forensic research portion, a student may document forensic research work if applicable. Students who have contributed to forensic research in some fashion will have initial preference, while other students are still able to apply and receive All-American status. The practice of rewarding students for their all-around contribution to forensics should extend to research, and the All-American status is meant to award students for going above and beyond mere competitive success. Without recognition

or incentive, students have little reason to join the ranks of forensic scholars.

Conclusion

These are steps that forensic professionals can take, but if you are student, you need to step up as well. The responsibility is not all with coaches and directors—part of it falls on you as a student. Take the initiative: If you have questions, ask. If you want to get more involved, talk to someone. Being passive will not get you noticed by forensic professionals who are more than willing to assist you. If you have interest in pursuing a career in forensics, speak with your coach. They will be able to answer your questions or, if they cannot, find someone who can. Invest in your future and the future of this activity by discussing your forensic passions with a forensic scholar—you might be surprised to find that there are many people out there who think similarly and are willing to help you express your ideas.

I am aware that these suggestions require more work for all of us, but we can never be satisfied with the status quo. We must constantly be seeking to improve for the future, or there might not be a future at all. As Hinck (2008) implored about research, we all need to take chances and not be afraid of failure or rejection. As leaders, it is our responsibility to help train the next group of forensic leaders by getting them involved in scholarly forensic work.

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The Bloomington Recommendations
Improving Forensic Leadership by Continuing the Conversation on Evaluating the Forensics Professional

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Preface: Forensics as an Activity—Why the Call for Evaluation and Assessment?

Forensics is by its very nature both co-curricular and competitive (Cardot, 1991). Normally, this insight would appear trivial; however, it does make for dilemmas when it comes to how we evaluate the work of our colleagues. The question of how we evaluate our colleagues is not unique to individual events (and for purposes of this paper, I am considering Lincoln-Douglas debate to be an individual event). Indeed, our colleagues in the policy community have faced a similar dilemma. One struggle that debate directors/coaches consistently confront is how to articulate teaching effectiveness outside of competitive success.[1] One director/coach resents the connection between teaching effectiveness and competitive success because despite how effectively a debate director/coach teaches his/her students, "Student talent is still an extremely important intervening variable" (Rowland and Atchinson, 2009, p. 6).

The debate community recognizes some of the unique challenges of assessing coach effectiveness. Rowland and Atchinson (2009) in the policy debate regarding promotion and tenure guidelines observed the following:

> The responses demonstrate that traditional measures of teaching effectiveness such as student evaluations are rare for a director's/coach's debate related activities. We suspect that few of these traditional student evaluation measures would be appropriate for determining the teaching effectiveness of a debate director/coach. As a result, rather than focusing on measures for effectiveness, institutions are increasingly developing descriptions of the connections between debate coaching activities and the educational benefits associated with participation in intercollegiate debate. (Rowland and Atchinson, 2009, p. 6)

I start the Bloomington recommendations quite specifically with the phrase "how we evaluate the work of our colleagues" because it has a double meaning. When we fill out ballots at a tournament, we indirectly evaluate the efforts of our colleagues to prepare students for their competitive rounds. That kind of assessment can – but usually doesn't lead to – a second kind of assessment – the assessment of our colleagues both within the forensics community and within their respective institutions.

As of now, within the forensics community, much of what we have done in assessment has been fairly informal and tends to be more on a discussion-based level. Just as within the athletic community they say, "Oh, so and so is a good football/volleyball/etc. coach," we often say the same thing

with regard to other programs. What has passed for assessment is what Ehninger described nearly 60 years ago: "Apparently a few teachers of speech still believe that the success of a school's forensics program may be measured merely by counting the cups in its trophy case. Fortunately, however, the majority are now more interested in the contribution which that program makes toward the intellectual, social, and moral development of the students who participate in it" (Ehninger, 1952, p. 237).

The question we must ask ourselves is simple: *How do we know that a program or what a forensics professional does is effective?* So why should the forensics community care about evaluation and assessment? Increasingly, regional accrediting agencies, states, and the federal government are placing stronger emphasis on assessment in the curriculum. Further, as Lederman (2010) observes, the next wave of assessment is to move from institutionally driven models toward faculty-driven models. As a part of that next wave, higher education is moving toward models within what has been called the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL). It is important for us as an educational activity to have assessment be a greater part of what we do. To put it in simply, it is up to the forensics community to create models of assessment before those models are created for us (Erwin and Wise, 2002).

Introduction

The continuum between competition and education that Ehninger described nearly 60 years ago is still part of forensics culture today. It could be argued that most people attending this conference side toward the educational aspect of forensics. However, Ehninger's opening statement raises another more serious question: How do we know that forensics contributes toward the intellectual, social and moral development of students? Indeed, such a question is vital to SOTL, for as Kreber (2006) notes, SOTL involves "(1) careful consideration of educational goals and purposes suitable for addressing the various political, social, cultural, environmental and economic challenges of our times, (2) understanding how students learn and develop toward these and other academic goals, and (3) identifying ways to best facilitate this learning and developmental process" (p. 90). Many in the forensics community would identify with Kreber's first two criteria of SOTL as part of the reason we encourage students to participate in forensics. The question becomes, how do we know that students have made progress in these areas?

The forensics community has taken tentative steps in the direction of assessment. The National Forensic Association has already started to make a move toward assessment with

its guidelines for individual events (Kelly, Paine, Richardson & White, 2010). Kelly, Paine, Richardson and White, serving as the NFA Pedagogy Committee, suggest a three-tier approach that is primarily designed to offer both an *apologia* for forensics within the communication discipline and to examine the rationale behind the genres of individual events. The committee did not, however, focus on the assessment of specific events (instead, their focus was on *genres* of events), nor the assessment of individual programs or forensics professionals.

What follows in this paper is not completely new. It serves as an extension of both Michael Bartanen's (2006) and Shawn Batt's (2003) arguments for assessment, and as a way of codifying what forensics professionals do. Given the increased calls for accountability within higher education, a document that helps guide the forensics professional in terms of her or his responsibilities both to her or his team and to the activity becomes more important than ever. This particular set of recommendations is not designed to assess specific events. Rather, it is designed to begin the conversation in six different areas:

1. Assessment by peers, colleagues, and self-assessment of instruction for forensics professionals.
2. Assessment by students of forensics professionals.
3. Begin the process of identifying how we assess the tournament process.
4. Begin the process of identifying how we assess forensics professionals' roles within organizations.
5. Begin the process of identifying how we assess the leadership abilities of forensics professionals.
6. Begin the process of how we may evaluate forensics programs.

This paper seeks to both provide structure and formalization to the process of assessment, as well as to answer the question, "Is it possible to run a 'successful' program that's not based in competitive success?" These recommendations serve both as a companion document and as an expansion of the recommendations previously made with regard to promotion and tenure (Dreher, 2010). The Peoria Recommendations dealt with questions to be asked of all forensic educators, documentation of teaching, research, and service, and questions to be asked by internal and external reviewers, and are summarized in appendix 1. This paper will provide further detail about the kinds of questions forensics professionals should use to evaluate their own performance, as well as to provide further guidance for internal and external reviewers. The role that forensics team members play in evaluation will also be discussed. The remainder of this paper will consider each of the five purposes (hereafter identified as standards) in light of appropriate literature from the forensics community, higher education assessment, and leadership.

Standard 1: Peer, Colleague and Self-Assessment of Forensics Professionals' Instruction

I list this standard first because it is the most important – yet arguably, the most difficult – to define. Forensics professionals have a great many responsibilities, including both administrative and coaching (Danielson and Hollwitz, 1997; Workman, 1997; Williams and Gantt, 2005; Rowland and Atchinson, 2009; Dreher, 2010).

The challenge in understanding the effectiveness of instruction is that it often takes students several years to recognize the benefits of their forensics experience. Thus, any effective assessment program – particularly for the long-term forensics professional – must include both short-term and long-term assessment (Bartanen, 2006). In certain cases, this document will recommend various assessment tools; in other cases, the tools have not been developed, or have been started and should be researched and/or developed by the forensics professional. The idea behind the Bloomington recommendations is that assessment should not be considered an *addition*, but, rather, should be an outgrowth of what we already do as forensics educators (Ewell, 2002).

In order to assess instructional effectiveness, we must look at five particular types of assessment, several of which were mentioned previously (Bartanen, 2006), but will be greatly expanded in this document: self-examination, chair and colleague review, peer review, chair and colleague review, and student and alumni assessment.

Standard 1a. Self-Examination

Seldin (1999) recognizes that self-examination and reflection is a part of – but not the end-all – for evaluation of teaching. As he observes: "Self-evaluation thus has the potential for a positive effect on teaching as the instructor develops self-recognition and is thereby enabled to respond more effectively to students and others. Despite this obvious benefit, however, self-evaluation by itself holds limited promise to teaching improvement. Some teachers simply do not know how to evaluate their performance" (pp. 100-101). Forensics professionals tend to be more critical and self-aware by the nature of the activity in which we engage; we are used to continual feedback loops and criticism. However, it is easy for the efficacy of the self-examination to be lost, particularly when symptoms of burnout appear (Piety, 2010).

Seldin (1999) suggests a variety of questions that can be asked as part of a self-examination. These questions (pp. 104-106) are adapted to a forensics context.
- What is my greatest asset as a forensics professional? My greatest shortcoming?
- Within forensics, which area do I regard as my strongest? My weakest?
- What is my primary goal with respect to students?
- How would I describe the atmosphere on my team? Am I satisfied with it?
- How do I encourage students to seek help when necessary?

- What is the one thing I most want students to learn? Why is that so important?
- What is the one thing I would most like to change about my approach to forensics coaching? What have I done about changing it?
- What would I most like my student to remember about me as a teacher/coach 10 years from now? Why?

In order for the self-examination to be successful, Seldin (1999) argues that it must be consistent with information obtained from other assessment sources and should help to explain contradictory information that may be found elsewhere.

Self-assessment can also fall under the scholarship of teaching and learning. For that to be the case, self-assessment must be ongoing, documented continually, and demonstrated to be part of a research program. Truman State (2006) offers a worksheet in SOTL that offers the following areas to consider:

1. What topics of inquiry interest you? Teaching strategy, curriculum revision, assessment method, recurring student misconception, recurring disappointment, other.
2. Try framing your interest as a question amenable to research.
3. What evidence could be collected to answer this question?
4. What do you have in place already that would assist your inquiry into this topic?
5. What methods would be used to interpret that data?
6. What outside help would you need to pursue this?
7. Who else might be interested in your findings?
8. Could your question stand re-framing?

McConnell and Sasse (2005) provide additional guidelines in terms of framing questions involving SOTL by asking, "Is this question of importance beyond your course? How would you share your results?" (n.p.).

Based on the answers to these questions, a forensics professional might be able to utilize her or his ongoing investment in forensics and her or his team to profitably conduct research in the area of forensics and forensics pedagogy. Areas within the communication discipline such as small group communication, interpersonal communication, organizational dynamics, and leadership studies could be applied to forensics teams. Such research already takes place on an informal level as we review what happened in a given year; what becomes important is how we make changes in how our teams function as a result of those reviews (Piety, 2010). Additionally, this may be a way not only for forensic professionals to engage in significant SOTL research, but to answer the questions of how forensics research fits within the forensic discipline (Logue & Shea, 1990; Kerber & Cronn-Mills, 2005; Croucher, 2006).

Standard 1b. Chair and Colleague Review

This type of assessment is focused internally within one's department and institution, as opposed to externally (the latter will be covered in the next section). One of the starting points to consider when it comes to chairs and colleagues within the department would be to consider how the forensics professional has negotiated and defined her or his role with respect to the sponsoring department and the institution as a whole. Some professionals, for example, may have been given limited committee work or advising loads, while others may have traditional standards for tenure and promotion in addition to their forensics duties.

The recommendation here would be that each forensics professional have a uniquely defined set of goals and expectations that cover the roles played by the forensic professional, as well as what is considered adequate and exemplary performance within those roles. As a starting point, the forensics professional can look to lists already generated of a professional's duties, such as Williams and Gantt's (2005) article describing the typical duties of a director of forensics, Danielson and Hollwitz's (1997) approach to evaluation, and the tenure and promotion guidelines for both debate and individual events (Rowland & Atchinson, 2009; Dreher, 2010). Additionally, for those on a tenure track, how forensics counts toward teaching, research, and/or service should be clarified and agreed to (preferably before hiring) by both the professional and the appropriate academic officials. For some professionals, for whom creative performance counts as scholarship, this may be particularly important in helping chairs and colleagues see that they are meeting appropriate scholarship requirements.

The point made here in these recommendations is that often the forensics professional does not look like her or his colleagues when it comes to rehiring, tenure and promotion guidelines – because of the nature of what we do, we *are* different than other faculty members. Accounting for that difference is crucial in terms of review.

Standard 1c. Peer Review

Peer review is often discussed as both a formative and summative process (Perlman and McCann, 1998). Formative review "should include nonjudgmental descriptions of faculty members' teaching by colleagues, administrators, and, where available, teaching consultants as well as students" (Keig and Waggoner, 1994, n.p.). Formative review is typically a feedback process designed to give advice and feedback about one's teaching in a non-judgmental setting. Summative processes, on the other hand, are designed around formal decisions when the chair, other colleagues, and students provide feedback after the course was over.

Obviously, the forensic professional typically cannot have peer review done in the same kind of way as it would be done for a course. If there are nearby forensic professionals, however, they might be consulted for a more traditional course-based peer review. In terms of peer review of programs and of the professional, one proposed solution would

be to have two different peer coaches from other institutions conduct a program/professional review. Some of the kinds of questions to be included could be (adapted from University of Minnesota Center for Teaching and Learning, n.d.):

- What is the main goal of your team?
- What specific objectives do you try to accomplish with your team? In other words, what do you expect students to be able to know and do as a result of being on the team?
- What strategies/methods will you use to help the learners to reach this objective?
- How will you assess whether the learners reached this objective? In other words, how will they show that they know and can do what you expected of them?
- Do you have any concerns that you would like the observer to address?

Peer review can involve the use of interviews and teaching portfolios, as well as observations of the forensics professional's team. External reviewers also could profitably discuss the effectiveness of the forensics professional in terms of feedback given to the community through her or his ballots (Morris, 2005).

Much of what happens now in terms of formative peer review takes place informally through mentoring and conversations in a variety of settings. The point of these recommendations is not to discourage such informal mentoring, but, rather, to encourage forensics professionals to document that mentoring through the use of formative peer review. Having another colleague be able to provide feedback in terms of one's team, particularly in its educational purposes, could potentially significantly benefit the forensics professional's development.

Standard 2. Role of Students in Assessment and Evaluation

The role that students play in the evaluation process is twofold: Students have the ability – and some would argue responsibility – to assess the role of the forensics professional, and students have the responsibility to assess their own learning. From a pragmatic perspective, one can argue that forensics students are indeed among the best students to evaluate a forensics professional, for they are the students who are most familiar with the work of the forensics professional, spending many hours both inside and outside classrooms. What follows in this portion of the guidelines is the concept that both assessment of the forensics professional and students' self-assessments are symbiotic in nature; a student's self-assessment can be utilized by the forensics professional, and the forensics professional arguably can be one of the biggest helpers for a student's self-assessment. This is the model established by a variety of colleges and universities beyond the education major (which often uses a portfolio model[2]), including Truman State University, where nearly one-quarter of all students used co-curricular activities in their required portfolios (Kuh, Gonyea, & Rodriguez, 2002, p. 119). In addition, forensics teams are a particularly good place for formative assessment; since the team is a dynamic system, the forensics professional engages in and receives continual feedback. The team's performance at tournaments can be considered at least in part illustrative of the success of the feedback loop that exists between students and the forensics professional.

What should students assess?

The issue of having students help in the assessment process has become codified by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS). As Lakeland College's guide to assessment pointed out, one of the newer guidelines from NCACS was that, "Results obtained through assessment of student learning are available to appropriate constituencies, including students themselves" (p. 1).

There are several places in which students can help with the assessment of forensics professionals and forensics programs: overall leadership and vision of the team, coaching/teaching, critical thinking, as well as affective learning.

When examining the role that students have to play in the assessment process, one of the factors we must consider is to what extent the vision of the team coincides between students and the coaching staff (Piety, 2010; Lauth, 2008). Students are able to assess this particular dimension of the leadership abilities of the forensics professional because they are, in a sense, living with this dimension of the forensics professional on a daily and weekly basis. Indeed, our colleagues in athletics engage in leadership assessment within their athletic programs (Skoglund, 2008; Farneti, 2008; Tsutsumi, 2000; Cumming, Smith & Smoll, 2006).

Standard 2a. Student Assessment of Coaching/teaching

As noted earlier, the applicability of traditional teaching measures to the realm of forensics is somewhat suspect. Since the courses we teach (for those institutions offering academic credit for forensics) are not like traditional courses, institutions often have to use alternative assessment tools. For some, treating forensics as a laboratory course is the closest approximation. For others, individualized assessments will have to be created. While there may be a loss of validity and reliability in the created assessment, that loss is balanced by the lack of validity of traditional instruments for the kinds of learning done on a forensics team.

The recommendation here is that students can help evaluate coaching and teaching through both formative and summative evaluations throughout the season. One means by which some programs engage in these evaluations is through end-of-the-year meetings with students. Notes about those meetings – from both the student and the forensic professional – can be part of assessment.

Standard 2b. Student Assessment of Critical Thinking

Forensics in general and debate in particular has had a research tradition that has looked at the effects of participation on critical thinking (Allen, Berkowitz & Louden, 1995;

Greenstreet, 1993; Colbert, 1995). At this conference, three of the six panels deal with the role of critical thinking in individual events.[3] Students in particular should be asked about how their critical thinking skills have developed as a result of their forensic participation. Paul and Nosich (1993) have provided both a series of objectives and criteria by which we can assess higher order thinking. Paul and Nosich's paper offered 21 criteria; an example of how we might assess the role of forensics from a critical thinking perspective can be found in criterion #11:

> Narrow concepts of critical thinking sometimes characterize it in negative terms, as a set of tools for detecting mistakes in thinking. A rich, substantive concept of critical thinking, however, highlights its central role in all rationally defensible thinking, whether that thinking is focused on assessing thought or products already produced, or actively engaged in the construction of new knowledge or understandings. Well-reasoned thinking, whatever its end, is a form of creation and construction. It devises and articulates purposes and goals, translates them into problems or questions, seeks data that bear upon problems or questions, interprets those data on the basis of concepts and assumptions, and reasons to conclusions within some point of view. All of these are necessary acts of the reasoning mind and must be done "critically" to be done well. Hence all require critical thinking. (n.p.)

Standard 2c. Student Assessment of Affective Learning

This is the area of forensics that we tend to ignore, but it is an area in which communication instructors have some knowledge and familiarity. McCroskey (2007) observes: "When discussing affective learning, we are most likely to be concerned with student affect toward the subject matter of the course. If students do not like the subject matter, there is much less probability they will learn the subject being taught" (p. 512). In the realm of forensics, we certainly have the ability to assess affective learning. While it's often true that the debater won't cross over and do interpretation, what we should be able to do is to convince the debater of *the inherent worth* of interpretation, and vice versa.

Additionally, there are several surveys available to the forensics community that deal with some of the affective reasons students become part of a team, and how they feel about forensics. McMillan and Todd-Mancilla's (1991) survey does start to address the issues of affective learning in the forensics community. Williams, McGee and Worth (2001) created a survey that looked at the perceived advantages and disadvantages to forensic competition; Quenette, Larson-Casselton and Littlefield (2007) followed up by using the Williams, McGee and Worth questionnaire for their study. The recommendation is that these surveys be further tested to determine their reliability and validity for measuring affective learning.

Finally, there is the notion that forensics can contribute to student learning outside of the immediate forensics context. "Informal discussions with faculty members about intellec-

tual issues are associated with increases in students' aspirations to achieve at a higher level than would be predicted by pre-enrollment characteristics. Initial interactions with faculty members are also very influential in increasing the value placed on high academic achievement and in compensating for the general student culture that does not typically value such achievement" (Komarraju, Musulkin, & Bhattacharya, 2010, p. 334). Further tools can be created to investigate students' desire to succeed, and measurements of post-baccalaureate education can also be utilized to assess Komarraju, Musulkin and Bhattacharya's assertion.

Standard 2d. Alumni Assessment of Forensics Professionals

Bartanen (2006) notes the importance of alumni in terms of guiding program choices. He offers one example: "if program alumni report that they made particular use of research skills learned in forensics, the forensic educator may need to determine whether the program's current emphasis on extemporaneous debate or individual events is adequately building those research skills" (p. 41). Alumni information gathered either by direct surveys, or questions asked in the process of tenure and promotion can provide the forensics professional with valuable information.[4] Some universities already ask questions helpful to the forensics professional, such as in the area of critical thinking.[5] The key is to find ways to make sure that the questions are not just focused on the entire collegiate experience, but more specifically in the student's forensic experience.

Standard 3: Assessment of the Tournament Process

Obviously, administering course evaluations does not work effectively within a tournament setting, but we really must ask the question more concretely: What makes for a successful tournament experience? How do we know that the host has run an effective tournament? Curiously, the forensic literature is mostly silent to this issue – interestingly, the one relevant line from the 1st Developmental Conference (Schnoor and Karns, 1988) comes in the recommendations section as a result of the Hatfield, Hatfield and Carver paper about wellness: Tournament hosts should be encouraged "to analyze and meet the needs of the forensic community even if it places more demands on the host" (p. 32). However, nowhere within the Hatfield, Hatfield and Carver (1988) paper does it specify *how* this analysis is to take place; rather, the paper is (rightly) concerned with issues of wellness in the forensics community.

Clearly, no standardized tools have yet been developed in order to assess the tournament experience, but several key components can be suggested:

1. How effective was the tournament host (or director, if the host also didn't direct) in terms of managing entries? Were initial entries and changes to entries handled correctly?
2. Did the host adequately explain where key facilities were on campus?

3. Did the host provide opportunities for wellness – adequate food/drink options, time in the schedule for eating, reflection, etc.? (Olson, 2004)
4. Were limited preparation topics and parliamentary debate topics both challenging and appropriate for the level of the student? (Hefling, 1997)
5. Was tabulation done efficiently and correctly?

Tournament hosts, as well as other forensics professionals, should feel free to add to this list and to create standards by which tournament effectiveness can be discussed.

Standard 4: Evaluation of Professionals in Organizations

This proposed standard goes beyond what we typically do in terms of assessing lines on a curriculum vitae. Historically, when someone has said that she or he is a member of an organization, or in a leadership position, the default has been to accept what that person says at face value. Within the forensics community, however, accepting the default paradigm has led to two different types of problems: the same individuals who are really doing the lion's share of the work in several organizations, as well as serving as inadequate documentation for those who are doing the work. Both of these problems will be discussed, and proposed solutions identified.

Clearly, people such as Larry Schnoor, Joel Hefling, Dan Cronn-Mills, and others have been recognized as exemplars in terms of the work they've done for the forensics community. However, many organizations have a variety of committees, but the work of those committees goes undone or unnoticed. There is a fine line that must be balanced here. How should we recognize those who are engaging in effective leadership while recognizing that sometimes, the most effective leadership does not necessarily get mentioned or isn't obvious? Chairing an impromptu topics committee, for example, will not necessarily get a great deal of publicity, but is absolutely essential to the functioning of a national tournament.

Organizations should engage in a greater effort to find members that are not currently serving and train them in both the necessary tasks as well as the importance of those tasks to the organization. Additionally, some committees never end up producing the work needed to engage the organization. A simple review of meeting minutes will indicate that a given committee has been tasked to accomplish a particular goal, with no mechanism for follow-up. Such issues often arise because of the busyness of the committee head or even the officer that appointed the committee. However, those issues lead to questions of how the committee head has engaged in leadership.

Proposed solutions:
1. Encourage member organizations to require committees to publish semi-annual or annual reports of their work. Include a discussion of all committee members, as well as what those committee members have done toward the committee's work. If there are *ad hoc* committees, those should be included. Links to all of the committee reports should be made available on the organization's website.
2. Organizational leadership should use the appointment powers they have to remove people from committees who are not functioning well.
3. When it comes time for promotion/tenure/rehiring, chairs or committees should verify and contact organizational leadership to verify committee work.
4. Particularly active members of committees should solicit from their chair and/or the organizational leadership descriptions of the work done for rehiring/tenure/promotion files.

I recognize that the third solution is a bit idealistic. However, a knowing department chair *can* engage in that strategy; all it takes are several phone calls or emails. In any event, it is important for the forensics professional to be proactive in documenting her or his work on a committee. In fact, if that work is significant, it is likely that a member of the organization's leadership would be an external reference.

Standard 5: Evaluation of Leadership Abilities

At first, this standard seems to be inherent within the forensics position and unworthy of further discussion. Obviously a team cannot be successful without effective leadership. However, in order to have a complete picture of the forensics professional, we must understand her or his leadership style, and see the ways in which leadership is fostered both within the team and externally, since the development of leadership skills is often listed as one of the benefits of forensics (Zueschner, 1992).

The study of leadership and group cohesion within coaching situations is a well-documented part of the athletic literature (Skoglund, 2008; Farneti, 2008; Tsutsumi, 2000; Cumming, Smith & Smoll, 2006). Certainly, forensics has some significant differences from athletics. Athletics is often more selective in terms of who is part of a team's roster, while forensics, by its educational nature, must be a bit more open in terms of who is a part of a team. Accordingly, it may not always be possible for a forensics professional to have the power to influence change within a group. But, insofar as it is possible for the professional to do so, the professional should be aware of strategies to help with group dynamics on teams (Lauth, 2008; Croucher, Thornton & Eckstein, 2006; Hughes, Gring & Williams, 2006).

Wergin (2007) surveyed the leadership literature and found that servant leadership has become an important area of research within the field of leadership. Many forensic professionals remain in their positions because of a desire to serve students, whether it be in a mentoring role or for other reasons (White, 2005). Wergin's survey of servant leadership highlighted four elements that are particularly relevant for forensic professionals: altruistic calling, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational leadership. Each of these will be explained, and then implications will be drawn in terms of assessment.

Demonstration of Servant Leadership:
Altruistic calling is the "leader's deep-rooted desire to make a positive difference in others' lives" (Wergin, 2007, p. 13). In other words, the altruistic calling comes out of the idea of serving first, and asking, "Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, and more autonomous?" (Beazley & Beggs, 2002, p. 57).

Wisdom is "a combination of awareness of surroundings and anticipation of consequences" (Wergin, 2007, p. 13). Wisdom is also labeled as foresight within the servant-leader literature. Young (2002) describes foresight as the central ethic of leadership. For Young, foresight includes the ideas of foreseeing the unforeseeable, using the art of discernment, moving with the lead of a leader (by demonstrating both leadership *and* service), and developing creative, measurable plans (p. 246).

Persuasive mapping is "influencing others using sound reasoning and mental frameworks" (Wergin, 2007, p. 13). McGee-Cooper and Trammell (2002) note that servant-leaders will be "sensitive to what motivates others and empower all to win with shared goals and vision" (p. 145). In addition, McGee-Cooper and Trammell note that persuasive mapping within a servant-leadership mindset involves the generous sharing of power, as opposed to the control of power, and that trust is an important part of persuasion. Sipe and Frick (2009) suggest that in servant-leadership, persuasion is often best accomplished in a narrative framework.

Organizational stewardship is "preparing an organization to leave a positive legacy" (Wergin, 2007, p. 13). Simply put, it is the idea that we leave an organization – or in this instance a forensics team – in better shape than when we first became a part of the team.

These same four elements can with modifications be applied to a forensic professional's service to an organization. For those professionals who lead organizations, it is fair to raise the question of how they have helped the organization, particularly in areas such as organizational stewardship.

Application and Evaluation: Knowing How a Team is Effective
There is a developing literature base within the field of leadership studies that suggests several approaches by which we can examine a team. Hill (2010) offers a questionnaire that can be given to examine team excellence and collaborative team leadership; it can be found in Appendix 2 of this paper. Hill's survey or a similar survey could be given to team members in order to investigate issues of both team cohesion and leadership on the part of the forensics professional. Sipe and Frick (2009) also establish 21 different traits for servant leaders, which can be found in Appendix 3. Both tools can serve as initial guides to help evaluate this component of leadership.

Standard 6: Evaluation of Forensic Programs
Forensics programs typically don't exist within a vacuum; they exist to further serve the college or university. Additionally, since many programs are grounded in an academic department, assessment and evaluation must come in the context of that department's mission and objectives.[6] Certainly, if there are specific courses for which students get credit, then evaluation should come in the context of those course numbers. That said, however, evaluation of the forensics experience can become more complex, based on whether or not forensics is open simply to regular team members, or if forensics is part of departmental requirements to graduate.[7]

Models of Evaluation:
Bartanen (2006) referred to triangulation as a strategy for evaluation – utilizing peer institutions as a means of comparison for a given program. Bartanen rightly suggests that triangulation may only be partially successful because of fundamental differences between programs.[8]

One factor that forensics professionals must be aware of is that evaluation of programs occurs under a variety of different models. Conrad and Wilson (1985, p. 21) suggest that there are four paradigms by which academic programs are typically evaluated:

Model Type:	Organizing Framework:	Typical Questions:
Goal-based	Goals and objectives	To what extent is the program achieving its objectives?
Responsive	Concerns/issues of stakeholders	What are the activities and effects of the program? What does the program look like from a variety of perspectives?
Decision-making	Decision making	To what extent is the program effective?
Connoisseurship	Critical review	How do critics interpret and evaluate the programs?

Under these paradigms, the forensics professional should work with her or his supervisors and her or his colleagues to establish the appropriate model(s) to assess the team as it functions within the institution. Many decision-makers will function from either a responsive or decision-making paradigm; however, most professionals will function from goal-based or connoisseurship models. Reconciling these positions is critical. As Conrad and Wilson (1985) suggest, "The use of features from several different models enriches evaluations and is more likely to yield useful results" (p. 68).

Additionally, the use of external reviewers in the realm of forensics offers challenging guidelines. Will the people who are responsible for reviewing the program be the same people who judge the students of the program? If not, there is a danger that the external reviewers run into the kinds of problems that Miller (2005) noted in terms of understanding the nuances of particular regional forensic cultures. By the same token, we run the risk of being completely insular if we only accept regional reviewers; a balance of both regional and national reviewers is necessary. The call for reviewers has been made in our literature before (Bartanen, 2006); this call is to provide external feedback for the program as well as for the forensic professional, in addition to the internal feedback that is a normal part of assessment.

Integrating a model-based framework with normal assessment objectives:
For the forensics professional (who may or may not be working in conjunction with a staff), the important aspects to consider are the following:

1. What characterizes our program?
2. Why do we have forensics at our given institution? How does forensics serve the institution's needs? This is where Conrad and Wilson's perspective comes into play – how do the various audiences and constituencies of the institution view forensics? Additionally, the evidence found to support this question can help when it comes to maintaining a program during vulnerable times.[9]
3. What are the goals and objectives sought for the forensics team? These will likely be a combination of forensics professional goals as well as student goals, and should be prioritized by the forensics professional.
4. How will we measure the attainment of those objectives? Walvoord (2010) suggests that in addition to portfolios, forensics professionals could also gather sample student work along with establishing criteria for how we evaluate that student work. This evaluation would go beyond the realm of counting breaks at various national tournaments and instead could utilize approaches such as the assessment criteria from the NFA Pedagogy Committee (Kelly, Paine, Richardson, & White, 2010).

Bruff (n.d.) suggests an approach for assessing and making changes to educational practice based on the SOTL literature. Assessment must be:

1. Informed by the work of others
2. Include an explicit question or hypothesis about teaching-learning relationships
3. Shaped by an explicit design or plan for addressing the question at hand
4. Collecting credible data as evidence
5. Analyzing evidence and drawing conclusions
6. Reflecting and taking action
7. Cyclical and ongoing

8. Results are documented and disseminated
9. The practitioner is principally responsible for the inquiry plan and process

Answering the question: Can a program have success without "competitive success?"
If a forensics program is grounded in education, then clearly, it should be able to demonstrate that it is successful beyond the trophies earned in any given season. There are at least two different ways in which a forensics professional can both structure a program as well as justify a program: service learning, and bringing in new students to the activity.

The notion of service learning within the forensics community is not new; many programs such as Central Michigan University's program have been engaged in service learning for many years. There is also a fair amount of literature describing service learning both within forensics (Hatfield, 1998; Hinck & Hinck, 1998; Warriner, 1998) and within departments of communication (Oster-Aaland, Sellnow, Nelson & Pearson, 2004). Forensics professionals can document their work with a variety of non-traditional populations, such as what Central Michigan and Ball State University have done, bringing forensics to the community through presentations and performances, as well as groups such as Urban Debate Leagues (UDL's). In all cases, the students must be able to reflect on their experiences; Hinck & Hinck (1998) provide frameworks by which the students can process their service-learning experience, and Warriner (1998) provides an example of the reflection of that experience.

Additionally, forensics professionals can document the educational success of their program in terms of how well it brings in new students to the activity. Some programs, such as the University of Vermont in debate, are well known for incorporating novice students into forensics. Being able to document the ways in which new people without previous experience are drawn into the activity can serve as a testimony to the leadership and the success of the forensics professional in building a sustainable program.

Conclusions
The reality is that standards for assessment, promotion and tenure have been changing over time (Perlmutter, 2010). **Demonstrating** the effectiveness of what we do as forensic professionals will not be optional; rather, it will be an expected part of the academic lifestyle. Such efforts will not only help the forensics professional continue to remain a part of the community, but will also help the community in general. Any time we can provide answers to the question, "What do students uniquely gain by being a part of forensics?" we help the community, and we help the individual student as well. It also allows us to demonstrate academic leadership. Asking how forensics contributes to home departments as well as our respective institutions helps to demonstrate how the forensics professional is contributing to education. Indeed, forensics professionals are leaders in a variety of ways: forensics professionals are able to integrate

the insights gained from a variety of disciplines such as interpretation, argumentation and political science into practical applications. Forensics professionals have an ability unlike many professors to contribute to the development of students both academically and socially. We must take the next steps to document the leadership in which we already engage.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Original framework for tenure and promotion evaluation (Dreher, 2010):
1. Questions to be asked of all forensic educators
    a. What is your coaching philosophy?
    b. What is your judging philosophy?
    c. What is your teaching philosophy? How do you demonstrate effective teaching?
    d. How do you see your program within the context of various forensic organizations? Do you know what the various organizations stand for?
    e. How do you see forensics as an educational opportunity?
    f. How would you define your program? If someone were to ask you what makes your program unique, how would you answer?
    g. How do you know your program is meeting its goals?

2. How does the professional document teaching?
3. How does the professional document service?
4. How does the professional document research?
5. Questions to be asked by internal and external reviewers
    a. Does the forensic professional understand the key issues of the field?
    b. Has the forensic professional shown mastery of key competencies?
    c. When appropriate, has the forensic professional established her/himself as an effective teacher in her/his field of study?
    d. Has the program clearly identified its mission, and has the forensics professional successfully operated within its mission?

Appendix 2: Team Excellence and Collaborative Team Leader Questionnaire From Hill (2010, p. 267):
1. There is a clearly defined need – a goal to be achieved or a purpose to be served – that justifies the existence of our team.
2. We have an established method for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback.
3. Team members possess the essential skills and abilities to accomplish the team's objectives.
4. Achieving our team goal is a higher priority than any individual objective.
5. We trust each other sufficiently to accurately share information, perceptions, and feedback.
6. Our team exerts pressure on itself to improve performance.
7. Our team is given the resources it needs to get the job done.

8. If it's necessary to adjust the team's goal, our team leader makes sure we understand why.
9. Our team leader creates a safe climate for team members to openly and supportively discuss any issue related to the team's success.
10. Our team leader looks for and acknowledges contributions by team members.
11. Our team member understands the technical issues we must face in achieving our goal.
12. Our team leader does not dilute our team's effort with too many priorities.
13. Our team leader is willing to confront and resolve issues associated with inadequate performance by team members.

Appendix 3: 21 traits of servant leadership (from Sipe & Frick, 2009, pp. 5-6):
- Maintains integrity
- Demonstrates humility
- Serves a higher purpose
- Displays a servant's heart
- Is mentor-minded
- Shows care and concern
- Demonstrates empathy
- Invites feedback
- Communicates persuasively
- Expresses appreciation
- Builds teams and communities
- Negotiates conflict
- Is visionary
- Displays creativity
- Takes courageous and decisive action
- Comfortable with complexity
- Demonstrates adaptability
- Considers the "greater good"
- Accepts and delegates responsibility
- Shares power and control
- Creates a culture of accountability

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Notes

[1] That is not to say that the results of competition cannot be used as *an* assessment tool. This argument is more to say that results at competitions are not *the only* assessment tools we have to determine the educational effectiveness of forensics.

[2] See among many others Williams, S. C., Davis, M. L., Metcalf, D., & Covington, V. M. (2003, January 31). The evolution of a process portfolio as an assessment system in a teacher education program. Current Issues in Education [On-line], 6(1). Available: http://cie.ed.asu.edu/volume6/number1/; Britten, J.S. and Mullen, L.J. (2003). Interdisciplinary digital portfolio assessment : Creating tools for teacher education. *Journal of Information Technology Education 2*, 41-50. Available: http://informingscience.org/jite/documents/Vol2/v2p041-050-82.pdf.

[3] Appropriate citations will be included here upon the conclusion of the conference.

[4] The author's institution requires the selection of several alumni as outside reviewers when it comes time for promotion, tenure and retenure. Other institutions have utilized a similar system.

[5] Illinois State is one such example. See http://assessment.illinoisstate.edu/activities_services/documents/2007ASurveyCodebk1.pdf

[6] Historically, forensics programs have been housed in departments of communication. However, increasingly, we find forensics programs in places such as the Honors College, Political Science, or even within Student Development.

[7] The author's institution requires Media Communication majors to attend at least two forensics tournaments before graduation. Several other institutions in Minnesota have similar requirements.

[8] It is possible for people to see which institutions a school considers to be its peer institutions. Go to: http://nces.ed.gov/ipedspas/expt/, a website created by the National Center for Education Statistics. Make sure to select "Use institution-defined custom comparison group" to see who your institution considers its peers. The selection is normally made by either someone in the assessment office, or in academic affairs. Also note that the comparison is not necessarily two-way; for example, the author's university considers Gustavus Adolphus to be a peer institution; Gustavus does not consider the author's university as a peer.

[9] As one example, the author's institution published several years back its president's strategic report. The forensics team served three of the items mentioned in the report.

Advocating High School Speech Communication Education: Sowing Stronger Seeds for the Future

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Abstract

This paper presents a case for the necessity of speech communication as part of the core curriculum for secondary schools in the United States. In considering research-based pedagogical practices, as well as outcomes-based assessment, communication education focuses students' critical thinking and competency in the two most overlooked zones of literacy: listening and speaking. To that end, the National Communication Association (NCA) and its special interest organizations, such as those focused on forensics are urged to support efforts to require speech communication as a graduation requirement, to require those courses be taught by teachers certified in communication, and to encourage NCA member institutions to recruit communication majors to be licensed as secondary teachers.

Introduction

In his book, *Global Achievement Gap,* author Tony Wagner discusses skills needed in the 21st century knowledge economy; how businesses are looking for employees who know how to think critically and solve problems. While the education sector has been rife with frenzy to prepare students to achieve on high stakes tests, President Obama's *Race to the Top* has pushed a reform agenda to answer a call by civic, higher education and business leaders: our schools are falling behind the rest of the world and something must be done.

June 2, 2010 will remain a landmark date in the annals of education. It was the day the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association launched the *Common Core Standards,* an initiative that seeks to normalize English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards across the country, and ensure college and career preparedness. What makes the standards so credible is that they weathered an extensive review process that included feedback from educators at all levels (including community colleges), and civil rights organizations. The standards are sensitive to students with disabilities and English language learners, and draw from the most effective models from across the world. The core standards define knowledge and skills aligned to college and work expectations, emphasize high-order learning, and are research and evidence-based. They do not identify specific content to be taught; that is left up to individual schools, districts, and states. As of August 11, 33 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core Standards (corestandards.org).

These standards mandate skills and understandings in speaking and listening that are cornerstones of forensic education, which tie the forensic discipline to the field of communication. The standards document explains: "New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication." It continues later: "Technology itself is changing quickly, creating a new urgency for students to be adaptable in response to change." (p. 48).

In a nutshell, the Speaking and Listening Standards call for proficiency in collaborative discussions; pulling from multiple information media, and evaluating the credibility of those sources to make informed decisions and solve problems; evaluate a speaker's perspectives, and use of evidence and logic in argument; present information in an organized, clear manner, sensitive to purpose and audience; harness digital media in presentations to aid in understanding and interest; and adapt to a variety of contexts and tasks (49).

The central question decision makers in education must ask is this: if reading and writing are taught as formal core skills that are used across the curriculum, then why are listening and speaking often subsumed within other areas, and trivialized? The NFL has partnered with the Elementary and Secondary Education Section of the National Communication Association (NCA) to propose a resolution at its legislative assembly in November that asks the NCA to lobby state and national education agencies to require a course in speech communication as a high school graduation requirement, and to require that those courses be taught by teachers licensed/certified in the field of communication. Additionally, the resolution asks that NCA member higher education institutions more aggressively recruit students into speech education licensure programs. The proposed resolution is featured in the appendix.

This is important from the forensics perspective, because traditionally forensic coaches most commonly emerged from the ranks of speech communication teachers, and with the dearth of teachers licensed in that field, schools now struggled with recruiting new coaches. Additionally, mandating education in this critical content area will create more demand. Forensic competition breeds motivation to succeed and improve, and the interscholastic tournament model creates an ongoing, multi-institutional assessment environment that is unlike any other content area. Students benefit from traveling and building cultural literacy while encountering people from diverse walks of life and experiences.

When discussing mastery of learning, current practice in pedagogy centers on two core principles: objectives and outcomes. Objectives describe intended achievement of specific tasks as dictated for an entire group, whereas outcomes describe measurable success in a broader sense as experienced by each individual. While those cynical may complain that this is merely an exercise in semantics, the inherent connotation represents a paradigm shift, and one for which we must take note. Outcomes require assessment,

the means by which decision makers understand the relative value a program provides.

At the National Developmental Conference on Individual Events, held August 6-7, 2010, several collegiate directors of forensics discussed the importance of assessment as it pervades the accreditation process for their institutions. This process involves peer review and self study as part of larger strategic planning institutions – and several organizations and corporations today – undergo to ensure achievement of desired outcomes. Measurement of these outcomes directly affects job performance evaluations and informs decisions made within the institution. Devising assessable outcomes gives a forensics advisor a formidable tool for defending added value a speech and debate program offers a school. With tighter budgets and accountability, forensic sponsors must be proactive in establishing outcomes and assessing those on a regular basis.

Dr. Kattie Grace of Hastings College in Nebraska developed an impressive approach to measuring the cognitive, affective and behavioral outcomes of her forensics program that includes specific goals for everything from recruitment and retention to individual tournament success to competition preparedness (K. Grace, personal communication, August 6, 2010). This illuminates the important benefits forensics provides beyond even the obvious cognitive skills of critical thinking and linguistic prowess. The social benefits of the activity do, indeed train youth for leadership as the NFL motto suggests, and those are just as important as the higher-level skills speech and debate engender.

The NCA moved its headquarters of operations to Washington, D.C. to facilitate advocacy efforts, including lobbying of government agencies. While resolutions examining torture and similar social issues are noble in their intent, those measures often fail passage at the NCA legislative assembly, because their communication focus is not apparent. While the NCA is dominated by higher education institutions, scholar members are encouraged to embrace the importance proper secondary education holds in preparing students for further student in communication, as well as recruiting potential majors to the field in the future.

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Appendix

Proposed Resolution Regarding High School Speech as a Graduation Requirement

Whereas, The National Communication Association serves the scholars, teachers, and practitioners who are its members by enabling and supporting their professional interests in research and teaching. Dedicated to fostering and promoting free and ethical communication, the NCA promotes the widespread appreciation of the importance of communication in public and private life, the application of competent communication to improve the quality of human life and relationships, and the use of knowledge about communication to solve human problems; and

Whereas, The venue in which all students are exposed to communication and communication instruction and in which all students may benefit from the Mission of the NCA is the elementary and secondary level of education in this country; and

Whereas, The fifty states have differing policies regarding the requirement of communication instruction in the elementary and secondary schools, with only a few states either requiring a course in communication in order to graduate from high school or have standards which focus on communication; and

Whereas, Licensure to teach communication has declined in the fifty states; and

Whereas, The NCA Strategic Plan 2010-2015 states as its third goal that it will support disciplinary pedagogy through three objectives: 1.Increase resources for communication course development, 2. enhance resources for developing instructional practice, 3. increase dissemination of communication pedagogy beyond the discipline, and as Goal 2, Disseminate knowledge about communication through its second objective, improve public understanding of communication research, the NCA stands committed to improving the state of elementary and secondary communication education; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the National Communication Association actively pursue the implementation of a required communication course for graduation from all secondary schools in this country and that it promote the enhancement of communication offerings throughout the K-12 curriculum and that it strongly recommend that such courses be taught by communication-trained professionals.

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Forensic Leadership: An Isocratean Vision

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Contemporary forensic students and educators owe much to the leaders of the latter half of the twentieth century who rediscovered the educational benefits of speech competition, founded several collegiate programs and professional organizations, and established numerous tournaments and perfected their management in a time of great technological change and challenge. A long list of noteworthy women and men who sacrificed inordinate amounts of time, money, often careers and professional standing, and more, for the benefit of forensic activity deserve recognition, appreciation and honor. The spirit of sacrifice that characterized the founding generation of leaders and those who immediately followed is in many ways, in many places, the reason for the existence of forensic activity today. A discussion of leadership in the forensics community must begin with gratitude.

 "Leader" is a title worn by forensic professionals from the executive level of national organizations to an assistant coach at Mount Nowhere College in the hills of Georgia. Leading students on the educational journey of understanding and practicing rhetoric is a noble task that both unifies and divides. At the same time that forensic educators are drawn together by purpose, we are often scattered by directional differences of interpretation, opinion and philosophy. While diversity of perspective represents one of the greatest strengths of the forensics community, a transcendent sense of identity and direction is necessary for meeting the challenges of the future. Leadership requires a clear vision, especially now.

Critics of intercollegiate forensics have leveled the charge that the activity emphasizes competition to the detriment of education (Thomas and Hart, 1983; Inch, 1991; Burnett, Brand and Meister, 2003). Burnett, et al. (2003) were particularly harsh, labeling education in forensics a "myth" and claiming that "competition coopts education" (p. 12). The authors left little doubt about the nature of their criticism when they explained, "Myth 'distorts' because its rhetorical ambiguity offers mere impressions of virtuous behavior" (p. 13). And while Hinck (2003) and others expound on the educational value of forensic activity, questions regarding the balance between competition and education persist. Kelly and Richardson (2008) contend that the prevailing metaphor underpinning forensic practice is an athletic one, in which the game itself is the end result. Competition dominates through overt acceptance or pedagogical complacency. Ultimately, the pedagogy of practice motivates contest activity. The lack of clear educational objectives creates a void that is filled by fads, unwritten rules and opinions elevated to criteria. "What wins is good, and what is good wins" is the unsubstantiated circular premise of forensic competition. Forensic practice perpetuates rules, standards, even a pedagogy of its own. Burnett, et al. (2003) were mis-

taken in referring to the "myth" of education, because even though the lessons of purely competitive ends may be the wrong lessons, students are obviously learning them. Burnett, et al. (2003) charge forensic coaches with "masking" the truly competitive nature of the activity. In reality, a pedagogy of practice likely prevails due to the lack of an active practice of pedagogy. Forensics professionals are much more keenly aware of how to win, than we are of how, or even what, we should be teaching. The continuing dominance of the pedagogy of practice over the practice of pedagogy results in an increasing insularity that separates forensic practice from communication scholarship, rhetorical theory and public speaking in society at large. Competition is no longer a means to educational ends. The game becomes the purpose. Forensic education grows less relevant within communication departments, colleges and universities, and society as a whole.

Forensic leaders at all levels need to reaffirm a commitment to the principles and practice of rhetorical education. These principles have had no better proponent throughout the centuries than Milton's "old man, eloquent," Isocrates (qtd. in Wagner, 1922). Isocrates' approach to rhetorical education, civic engagement and public relations serves as an outline for effective leadership – then and now. As Cicero noted centuries after the glory of Athens, "From his school, as from the Horse of Troy, none but leaders emerged" (qtd. in Benoit, 1984).

Isocrates and Rhetorical Education

Isocrates reminds forensic leaders today that we are first and foremost rhetorical educators. From his view, there is no higher calling. Garver (2004) notes that Isocrates included the following explanation of the power and civilizing influence of speech in three of his most famous speeches – "Antidosis," "Panegyricus" and "Nicocles."

> We are in no respect superior to other living creatures; nay, we are inferior to many in swiftness and in strength and in other resources; but, because there has been implanted in us the power to persuade each other and to make clear to each other whatever we desire, not only have we escaped the life of wild beasts, but we have come together and founded cities and made laws and invented arts; and generally speaking, there is no institution devised by man which the power of speech has not helped us to establish. (pp. 190-191)

 A belief in the power to persuade undergirds Isocrates' entire educational system. While he has been called "the Father of the Liberal Arts" and "the Father of Humanism" (Marrou, 1956, p. 79), because of his unique broad-based curriculum, at the center of instruction, every day, was the

study and practice of rhetoric. Wagner (1922) summed up Isocrates' philosophy of education, noting that the three marks of Isocratean schooling were that education should be practical, rational and comprehensive. Isocrates railed against the philosophers for their preoccupation with abstractions that lacked practical application. He attacked the Sophists as well for their polished displays of affectation that served selfish ends. Isocrates had little patience for impractical rhetoric that lacked virtuous functionality in Athenian society. Rationality grounded students in the practice of well-reasoned argumentation. Isocratean rationality also included the idea of the development of the whole intelligence, not a highly specialized professional or technical routine. A comprehensive, well-rounded education served as preparation for all of the duties of Athenian life.

Isocrates' educational philosophy was grounded in pragmatism, but a closer look at his approach to the teaching of rhetoric reveals moral and philosophical objectives as well. For Isocrates, the ability to speak eloquently represented the surest sign of a sound understanding (Conley, 1990). Employing the right word at the right time ("kairos") in the right way demonstrated appropriateness, understanding and good reasoning. The arduous process of speechwriting and speech making at the heart of the Isocratean system, ultimately resulted in good thinking. "To speak well is to think well" is an idea often associated with Isocrates. His notion of "right thinking" differs from the moral absolutes offered by Plato. For Isocrates, the practical outcome of sound reasoning was the most nearly right solution, the best to be found in the particular circumstance (Marrou, 1956). The concepts of rhetoric and truth were interdependent.

Isocrates' teaching methods both reaffirm and challenge forensic practice today. His teaching of no more than nine students at a time, and usually only four or five, mirrors the common practice of individualized attention present in most contemporary programs. His placement of performance at the center of pedagogy is another common element (Ober, 2004). Leff (2004) compares Isocrates' methods with typical higher learning practices today.

> Isocrates taught performance at the center of a curriculum designed for a small number of students who remained at his school over a period of several years. These circumstances obviously no longer exist – not even at our liberal arts colleges, let alone our research universities (p. 252).

Leff's lament emphasizes a significant niche for forensic educators. The very elements that provided success for Isocrates' school provide educational benefits for students in forensic programs today.

Berquist (1959) added that Isocrates' success resulted from his dedication to his students. Beyond individualized attention, Isocrates displayed compassion and concern for each of his pupils. While all students shared the same general course of study, their paths differed according to their spe-

cific educational and professional needs. Berquist characterized the bond between Isocrates and his students as follows: "At the end of their term of studies, students wept. Many kept up a lifelong correspondence with the master, and a few erected statues in honor of his friendship and wisdom" (p. 254). Similarly, forensic activity typically encourages a level of familiarity that goes beyond the bounds of the traditional classroom setting. When approached professionally, the journey from student to friend can be a rewarding experience for both student and teacher.

Another characteristic of Isocratean instruction was a dependence on models and the practice of imitation (Marrou, 1956). Students pored over worthy speech samples as a means of both understanding topoi and refining style. Beyond this, they also worked on repetitive recitations of the speeches—for the sake of developing effective delivery technique. Interestingly, Isocrates was known for attacking the imitative practices of the Sophists (Haskins, 2004). He rejected the genres of discourse identified by Aristotle and adhered to by the Sophists. Isocrates preferred to group public discourse according to its relative significance to society. To Isocrates, "imitation is not a mere repetition, but a timely reaccentuation of already uttered speech" (Haskins, 2004, p. 78). Jebb (1962) observed that Isocrates' approach to imitation contrasted with the Sophists in that he was a stickler for making students develop their own ideas before moving to imitative exercises designed to accentuate the artistic excellence of the great works. Behme (2004) concurred with Jebb's analysis, claiming that originality was one of the main criteria of a successful speech in Isocrates' system. According to Isocrates, "That man seems most artful who both speaks worthily of the subject matter and can discover things to say that are entirely different from what others have said" (qtd. in Behme, 2004, p. 198). Isocrates' ancient ideas regarding imitation and originality serve as valuable guides for forensic educators today.

Isocrates' approach to rhetorical education calls forensic leaders to remember that we are educators first. Pedagogy must lead forensic practice.

Isocrates and Civic Engagement
Education does not exist in a vacuum. By its very nature, it is both a product of and a reaction to a social context. Forensic leaders would do well to heed the lessons of the ancient world's "greatest speech teacher" (Berquist, 1959). Isocrates enhanced civic engagement through the direct effect of civic-minded students, through active socially engaged rhetorical criticism, and through adapting his teaching to the current communication climate.

Isocrates' rhetorical education prepared students for the popular and professional demands of 4th century B.C. Athenian democracy. The pragmatic focus of his teaching engaged pupils in politics, law and public service of nearly every kind. Isocrates was, by far, the most influential teacher of his time. A list of his famous students reads like an Ancient Athenian Hall of Fame. Statesmen, politicians, three of the Attic Orators—including Isaeos, orators, logog-

raphers, teachers, historians, and his beloved general, Timotheus—are listed among his successes by several scholars (Benoit, 1984; Berquist, 1959; Marrou, 1956). Conley (1990) notes that it was Isocrates' ideal of "the good man speaking well" that would define educational instruction for centuries. Clearly, Isocrates' students learned the lesson of civic engagement. While his contemporaries Plato and Aristotle may have taught Athens philosophy, it was Isocrates who taught Athens.

Isocrates also modeled civic engagement through a socially active rhetorical criticism. Two of his major speeches, "Against the Sophists" and "Antidosis" exposed the Sophists for their misuse of forensic rhetoric. "He thought that the pressure to win at all costs was forcing the practitioners of judicial rhetoric to put the art of persuasion into such unethical uses as misleading, lying, deceiving, using false witnesses, and so on" (Poulakos & Poulakos, 1999, pg. 19). As a leader in the area of rhetorical education, and as a concerned citizen, Isocrates used the power of the speech to expose corruption, greed and empty rhetoric. His rhetorical insight and use of a fully developed prose speech allowed him to engage in educating the polis beyond his pupils.

The shift from the spoken word to the written speech represents a major transition in public communication. Depew and Poulakos (2004) point out that Isocrates was the central figure in this transition. His shift to a written prose style of speech was attacked by those in Athens who were distrusting of the new medium. Isocrates' wisdom provided a vision for the future of rhetoric and education. As with those who emerged from the Horse of Troy, history proves Isocrates to be the winner.

Implications for forensic leaders abound. Forensic education should inspire students to meaningful civic engagement. Events like extemporaneous speaking and persuasive speaking are excellent venues for such inspiration, when students are allowed to glimpse the world beyond the round of competition. When world issues are treated as expedient means to more trophies, we do our students and our world a grave disservice. The rhetorical excesses and fallacies of our own time demand thoughtful, analytical criticism. Engaged forensic educators are positioned well to lead these discussions in the classroom and beyond. Our society is depending on a new generation of critical rhetors to lead the way. As we move forward in the age of Google, and communication is transforming before our eyes, we need to borrow the rhetorical wisdom of Isocrates to know when to adapt new forms of communication and when to reject technological impediments to critical thinking. As forensic leaders, our pedagogy must adapt to communication innovation. If we continue to fight the insular battles of the preceding decades, our irrelevance will most certainly win out. We need to engage society where possible, and work to reform it when our rhetorical instincts perceive threats to democratic values. Leaders in our community need to dedicate their efforts to affirming a pedagogy that drives meaningful rhetorical practice. This vision requires real education and civic

engagement. From a practical standpoint, an Isocratean vision also suggests improved public relations.

Isocrates and Public Relations
Similarly, at its most fundamental level, the practice of public address calls for engagement with audiences and publics, an engagement that leads to mutual benefit, rather than exploitation or propaganda. Isocrates argued for a "moral, symmetrical rhetoric" that seeks to unify and build consensus, rather than vilify or defeat those with opposing viewpoints (Marsh, 2001; see also Marsh, 2003, and Marsh, 2008). Thus, Marsh has argued, Isocratean ethics provides the ethical principles and impetus for the practice of public relations exemplified in what Grunig and Hunt called the "two-way symmetric model" (1984) of excellent public relations practice. Rhetoric should seek to establish engagement, rather than enmity or even mere entertainment.

As Grunig and Hunt describe it, the communication within this model is dialogic; both the organization and its public may be changed as a result. Thus, a two-way symmetric model of public relations is the most ethical and effective. Those involved in this type of communication plan their communications in order to "achieve maximum change in attitude and behavior" (p.23), planning that is based on feedback and analysis of the key public. Grunig and Hunt write: "In the two-way symmetric model, finally, practitioners serve as mediators between organizations and their publics. Their goal is mutual understanding between organizations and their publics" (p. 22).

This Isocratean perspective as demonstrated by Grunig and Hunt informs and underlies the understanding of public relations explained by Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006); they view the field as "the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failures depends" (p. 5). The groups known as publics or stakeholders vary depending on the priorities associated with a given issue by the organization or the stakeholders themselves.

> Organizations typically face multiple publics with different interests and conflicting goals. … All of these different forms of relationships suggest that relationships in public relations can be two-party or multiple party. And, all of these relationships are situational. That is, any of these relationships can come and go and change as situations change. Finally, these relationships are behavioral because they depend on how the parties in the relationship behave toward one another. (Hon and Grunig, 1999, pp. 13-14)

A forensic administrator or leader who seeks to implement this Isocratic ideal of public engagement and symmetrical rhetoric would benefit from understanding some of these core principles of public-relations practice. Leaders might begin by exploring who their key publics are and what common interests or rhetorical goals they share. (See Figure I.)

For example, leaders within national forensics organizations and various institutional teams might identify a variety of stakeholder groups as key publics. (See Table I.) Why would it be advantageous for the forensic leaders to be engaged in mutually beneficial communication relationships with each? Take, for example, the university or college administrators with association-affiliated teams. National association leaders are interested in sustaining (or increasing) institutional support for their member forensic programs. Institutional administrators are interested in providing economic and assessable learning opportunities for students and in garnering positive attention for their students and programs. Establishing and maintaining a symmetrical flow of communication between program leaders or association leaders and the institutional administrator can be achieved by developing and delivering messages in a timely, accurate and believable manner that addresses these mutual concerns, in effect, by answering key questions sometimes even before they are asked. Fact sheets or background reports that identify and justify learning outcomes of forensics programs could be developed and shared annually with administrators. Feature stories that highlight successes of current students and alumni could be written or videotaped. Tracking the retention of involved team members and sharing that data with key administrators offers another way of demonstrating how the practice of forensics increases the engagement of the individual student. In short, messages that focus on the following seven elements could be developed and disseminated in ways that address common concerns of college and university administrators:

1) Explanation and demonstration of learning outcomes of program
2) Building institutional or individual pride
3) Fostering positive public image for institution
4) Recruitment of team members and other students
5) Retention of team members
6) Engagement with institutional fund-raising activities
7) Public service activities

Obviously, message creation and dissemination is not enough. Creating opportunities for administrators to observe forensics activities and to ask questions of students and forensics leaders is equally important. What do administrators want to know? How would they like to know it?

These questions are clearly appropriate for another key stakeholder: College and university public relations and news bureau personnel. How much do they know about the forensics program and how it contributes to the overall reputation of the institution? Are they aware of opportunities for individual feature stories or video streams of performances or speeches? Inviting news bureau or public-relations personnel to a team showcase or providing them with an appropriate information kit would be simple ways to foster mutually beneficial relationships.

What other symmetrical public relations practices could allow association or team leaders to become more engaged with their key publics? Here is a quick listing of other ideas.
1) Establish a news center for each tournament through which information would be channeled on campus, to area and to the national association at large.
   a. Provide standard advance news release giving information about the tournament and the competitors who are participating
   b. Provide social-media feed of events and breaks and winners
   c. Feature vlog or Twitter stream during events and awards
   d. Invite local media to cover story (see #4)
2) Develop stronger social media presence for the associations, with Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts.
3) Develop templates for standard news releases: Preview of tournament; announcement of winners and participants.
4) Develop media kit for national tournament with standard releases, bios for director and/or host, fact sheet about organization, fact sheet about local host team, FAQs, backgrounder on specific events, fact sheet about events, feature story about one or two competing teams, etc.
5) Use flip cameras to record brief segments of speeches for video streaming online and in digital news releases.
6) Expand website to offer breaking news and streamed video, background of the association and rhetorical competition, electronic media kit, speech manuscripts, etc.
7) Develop digital national media tour for national presidents or tournament directors.
8) Develop promotional video and brochure (posted on website) touting how forensics prepares participants for success and service.

Isocrates provides a vision for effective leadership in contemporary forensics. His emphasis on education, civic engagement and practical public relations serves to enhance pedagogy and connect forensic practice with the needs of 21st century culture.

TABLE I
Stakeholders or Key Publics for National Association Leaders

1) Institutional administrators
2) Institutional public-relations staff
   (Alumni; donors; governing boards)
3) Institutional research staff of each college and university
4) Campus media
5) Institution's students, faculty and staff
6) Faculty, staff and students of host sites
7) Residents of host cities
8) News media in host cities
9) Convention and visitor bureaus in host cities
10) Parents of team members
11) Home towns and high schools of team members
12) Members and competitors of national associations
13) News media in significant cities within regions or states
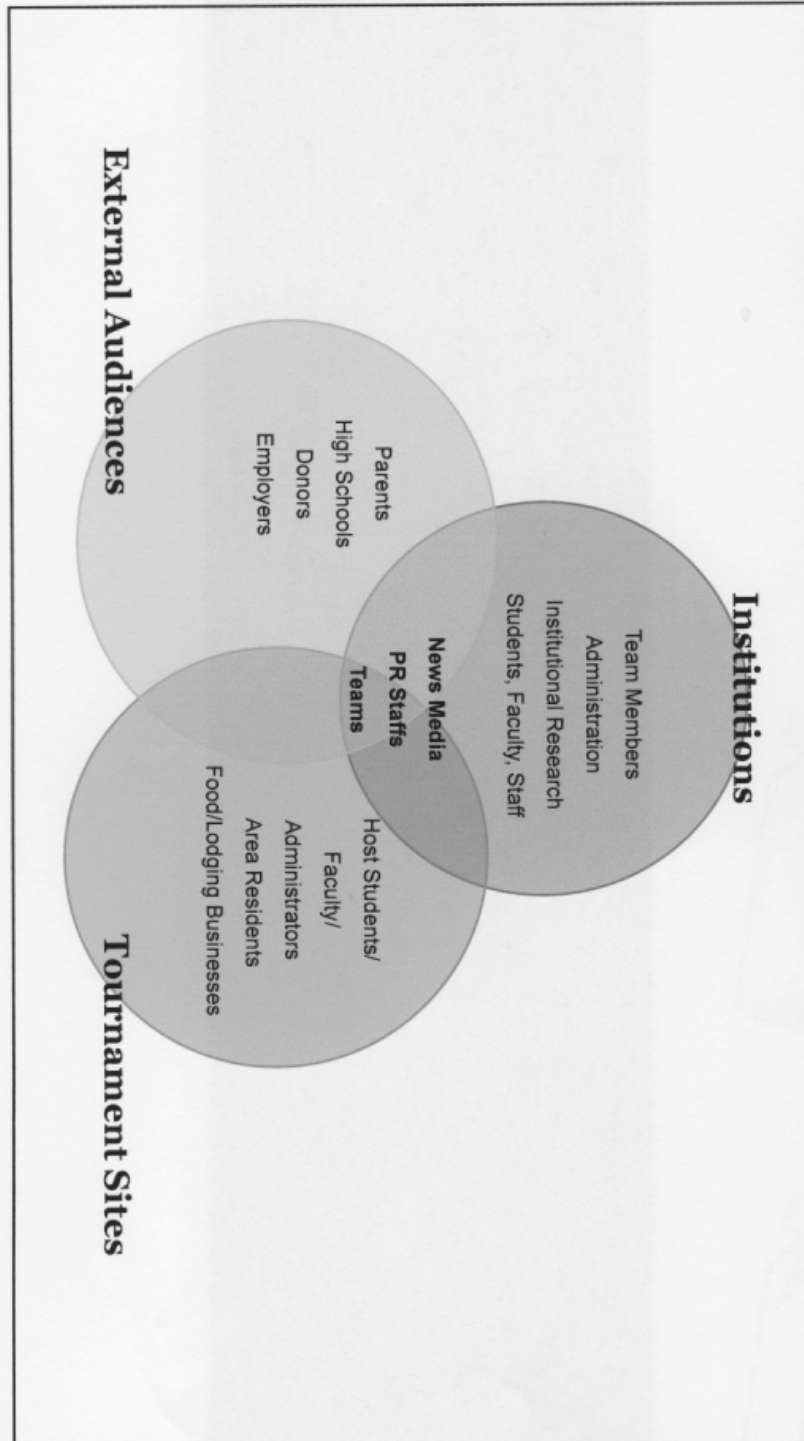14) Users of social and Web-based media

Figure 1
Priority Publics

External Audiences

Parents
High Schools
Donors
Employers

Institutions

Team Members
Administration
Institutional Research
Students, Faculty, Staff

News Media
PR Staffs
Teams

Host Students/
Faculty/
Administrators
Area Residents
Food/Lodging Businesses

Tournament Sites

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Founding Practice: Examining Intercollegiate Competition as Assessment

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Abstract

Intercollegiate forensics is, at its core, a form of teaching. Like other pedagogical elements within higher education, the practice is now, and will increasingly be, subject to institutional assessment requirements in higher education. The conventional argument that the evaluation processes inherent in intercollegiate forensics competition will demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching and learning in forensics pedagogy is false. The assessment practices within the framework of competitions are part of the teaching processes. Forensics pedagogy, therefore, must align itself with institutional assessment components. This essay argues for the roots of that alignment to be tied to an academic learning compact that seeks to meet the requirements of institutional assessment and clarify the focus of the collection of scholars, educators and students that comprise the intercollegiate forensics community.

Introduction

A great number of scholars have worked to conceptualize forensics pedagogy and its place in higher education. Intercollegiate forensics competitions provide a unique opportunity for faculty and undergraduate students to travel together to attend competitive tournaments in which student work is assessed by communication scholars, faculty, and graduate students from multiple institutions. Additionally, the pool of adjudicators at each competition normally includes lay audience members that are drawn from outside of the collegiate forensics community. Therefore, students are challenged to devise intricate, and often intuitive, methods of audience analysis in order to meet the needs and expectations of a diverse audience.

The products of this unique pedagogical framework reflect a depth and substance that is difficult to replicate in the traditional classroom setting. Forensics is a creative learning space in higher education that consistently delivers on its promise to produce evidence of effective teaching via comparative analysis of student performance in contest settings. While this essay focuses on demonstrating the value of forensics in the language of data-driven assessment, the inherent value and efficacy of forensics is unquestioned. Yet, unquestioned efficacy and notions of value from the pen of a true believer does not preserve funding streams for collegiate forensics programs or bolster the role of said programs at the institutional level.

Forensics programming at the collegiate level needs to be reconceptualized in order to communicate the natural alignment between forensics pedagogy and institutional expectations of programmatic value. Intercollegiate forensics is primarily a highly effective, resource intensive, tutor-style teaching craft that will invariably be subjected to institutional assessment requirements. Each component of this conceptualization of collegiate forensics can be easily identified for an unfamiliar audience, save one. In the following section I provide a brief description of each component to test its illustrative ease.

A. Intercollegiate forensics is resource intensive: Illustrating this element of collegiate forensics is simple. The institutional resource commitment to forensics programming compared to traditional classroom teaching is very high. When calculating the full measure of programmatic resources we must consider FTE allocations of faculty and staff; travel funds; supplies; research; equipment; spatial resources, etc. While the returns on investment are extremely high, the fact the forensics programs reflect resource intensive forms of teaching remains.

B. Intercollegiate forensics is a tutor-style teaching craft: Forensics provides a unique pedagogical platform. It is staged in an infrastructure that moves the professor-student transaction from tutor-style teaching to a multi-institutional assessment environment. In this instructional framework, the study of theory and practice are interwoven in ways that allow students to grow their knowledge and presentational skill sets more rapidly. It begins in the fall of each academic year. Coaches move students from the communication classroom into a daily, developmental regimen of one-on-one coaching and training in speech writing, delivery and analysis and oral interpretation of literature. The consistent focus on one-on-one coaching, qualifies collegiate forensics as a unique construct in higher education.

C. Intercollegiate forensics is a highly effective form of teaching: The impact of forensics pedagogy is easy to identify because the products of teaching are student performances. The process of developing student performances aligns with the rhythm and progression of the intercollegiate season. An attendee at the national championship tournament would hold up final round participants as examples of undergraduate students of the highest order. Additionally, if that same attendee were to track to the progress of randomly selected students through the course of a season, collegiate forensics itself would be celebrated for teaching efficacy of the highest order. However, at this time, tracking practices and assessment mechanisms that are aligned with the expectations of colleges, universities and accreditating agencies do not exist. Outside of the perception of practitioners, the efficacy of the craft is not verifiable.

I propose that the inevitable subjection of the collegiate forensics programs to institutional assessment requirements is upon us. Programs throughout the United States will be challenged by their institutions to demonstrate their func-

tional effectiveness in teaching and learning in order to justify their funding and resource streams. On that basis, I advocate that the national intercollegiate forensics community, at the governance level, needs to embrace a common academic learning compact.

In 2008, the National Forensic Association commissioned a *Committee on Pedagogy* to address concerns among the membership related to the future of collegiate forensics. The fundamental issue that the committee was charged with exploring was one that has long frustrated forensic educators at the collegiate level. "For decades the assessment of what constitutes "quality performance" in collegiate forensics has been rooted in a mysterious and unsupported collective conception of unwritten rules and performance practices related to a very narrow and instinctive set of standards" (Kelly, Paine, Richardson, White, 2009). The central product from that committee was a published report that argued for a formalized embrace of assessment in intercollegiate forensics, in order to strengthen the position of forensics pedagogy in higher education. The report provided insight into a variety of important questions related to forensics pedagogy, the insufficient answers to which have helped to shape collegiate forensics over the last 30 years. More importantly, the report exemplifies the fact that higher education is being reshaped by standardized assessment practices, and collegiate forensics must reshape practice accordingly.

This essay is designed to challenge a single conventional argument related to pedagogical practice in collegiate forensics and its connection to the assessment of student learning. The argument has two primary components. The first contention asserts that intercollegiate forensics competition serves as a mechanism for institutional assessment of student learning. The notion will be repudiated on the basis that competition is a component of the teaching context. Second, I will assert a foundation for assessment practice in collegiate forensics that could unify and strengthen the place of the discipline in higher education.

Competition as Assessment

It is not uncommon for forensics practitioners to assert the argument that intercollegiate competition serves as a form of assessment. Structurally this is true. Intercollegiate forensics competitions serve as multi-institutional classrooms in which adjudicators from a variety of institutions provide a cross-section of student performance feedback. There is great value for students in this form of assessment: community, continuous improvement, skill building performance experiences, mixed audience of lay and expert perspective that simulates conventional professional contexts, etc. In the same moment, the foundations for performance evaluation among this pool of adjudicators are not explicitly linked to common learning outcomes. Therefore, the only unifying factors in this evaluative context are the structural variables (limitations on oral critique, common scoring system, multiple rounds, etc.) and general event criteria. These factors do not allow us to draw distinct lines between shared pedagogical goals that are linked to the roots of the communica-

tion discipline and the performance products that students are presenting during competitions. Therefore, multi-institutional competitions do not meet the standards for institutional assessment.

The conventional argument, also, contends that because competitions feature experts in the field as adjudicators, then surely that level of expertise informs the value system that founds standards for evaluation in competitions vary by region in the same way that the formulation of the competition is culturally based. Miller (2005) provides insight in the cultural space that exists between different regions of the country. Miller (2005) observed that forensics competitions are reflective of micro cultures within the forensics community based on the region in which a competition occurs. "My exposure to students and colleagues in other regions was limited to national tournaments, to a few out-of-region tournaments I had attended, and to national conferences like NCA. After having the experience of adapting to a new region, and thus gaining a clearer perspective on exactly how many differences actually exist in terms of regional beliefs, values, and practices, I believe that the label "micro culture" is indeed warranted for each region" (Miller, 2005, p. 4). If we are to accept Miller's observations as valid, then surely these cultural distinctions are also reflected in the performance assessments and pedagogical goals. At this time, an extensive, national platform for forensics pedagogy is not in place. This allows for disparate goals and values to inform teaching. Additionally, the age-old question of whether the fundamental foundation of forensics is competition or education persists. "This tension, expressed in speech journals as early as 1915, continues between the educational goals of debate and its competitive nature" (Wood & Rowland-Morin, 1989, p. 81).

Forensics competitions, in and of themselves, are not yet acceptable mechanisms for institutional assessment. The primary reason for this exists in the fact that they were never intended to assess learning from that vantage point. Competitions are a key component in the teaching and learning process in forensics pedagogy. Multi-institutional environments provide students an incentive to develop speeches and performances. The act of sharing performance in a competitive, comparative environment allowing students to mark their progress as a developing speaker in relationship to a wider scheme of peers than the institution they attend is able to provide. Additionally, the sense of community and collective mission that is derived from these experiences is invaluable in their time of "becoming" as a college student.

The vast array of substantive and valuable outcomes that are derived from the experience of intercollegiate competition are clear. Yet, the fact that no framework for articulating the high degree of learning that comes from these experiences in terms that are valued by institutional assessment practices puts forensics pedagogy in peril.

The next section of this essay identifies a starting point for the forensics community to address this limitation.

TABLE 1

The National Forensic Association Academic Learning Compact incorporates student learning outcome activity across five domains that should characterize the skills and abilities of a successfully trained student/competitor in collegiate forensics, regardless of the program, which they represent. The Academic Learning Compact [1] should align with the following five domains.

- DISCIPLINE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (ALC 1)
  - (ALC 1.1) Use communication technology effectively.
  - (ALC 1.2) Describe and apply communication concepts and principles from the following areas:
    - Rhetorical theory
    - Fundamentals of speech
    - Audience analysis
    - Fundamentals of oral interpretation of literature
    - Argumentation
- COMMUNICATION (ALC 2)
  - (ALC 2.1) Adapt style and delivery to communication clearly and memorably.
  - (ALC 2.2) Deliver effective presentations with well-defined introductions, main points, supporting information, and conclusions.
  - (ALC 2.3) Establish credibility with audience.
  - (ALC 2.4) Use information technology effectively to conduct research.
- CRITICAL THINKING (ALC 3)
  - (ALC 3.1) Apply rhetorical, relational and critical theories to understand communication events.
  - (ALC 3.2) Evaluate effective and ineffective communication.
  - (ALC 3.3) Suggest audience-centered strategies for improvement in public speaking and performance that are considerate of the speaker
  - (ALC 3.4) Identify trustworthy evidence and information.
- INTEGRITY/VALUES (ALC 4)
  - (ALC 4.1) Distinguish between ethical and unethical behavior in human communication.
  - (ALC 4.2) Describe and adhere to the principles of ethical practice in public speaking, performance, scholarly activity and citizenship.

Academic Learning Compact: The Point of Unification in Teaching and Learning

Stanney and Halonen (in press) wrote:

> Higher education has demonstrated a growing commitment to the principle of continuous improvement; the current accreditation environment demands that departments and institutions engage in assessment to maintain their competitive position as high-quality academic programs. (Banta, Lund, Black, & Oblander, 1996; Suskie, 2004)

Seemingly, there would be great economy in devising assessment alignments, at the national organization level, that inform programmatic goals at lower divisions and allow individual programs to demonstrate teaching efficacy to meet institutional requirements. Articulation of programmatic value would be rooted in the language common to resource decision makers. Additionally, foundations for performance evaluation would be clarified for adjudicators based on pronounced pedagogical prerogatives.

The fact that intercollegiate competition is not currently founded (in an official manner) in shared learning outcomes substantially problematizes the venture moving forward. In order to meet institutional and accreditation agency standards, forensics organizations must publish ALC compacts, student learning outcomes for each event, and teaching priorities for each genre. This process begins with an academic learning compact, which clarifies the foundational goals of the discipline in the broadest fashion. All elements of teaching practice would be linked back to this common, general outline. The National Forensic Association *Committee on Pedagogy* published a report in 2009 in which an academic learning compact, aligned with the goals and philosophy of that organization, was featured (refer to Table 1). While this formal articulation of pedagogical outcomes is out of character for forensics organizations historically, the landscape of higher education has changed along with the inter and intra-institutional intensification in the battle for resources.

Implementation of an academic learning compact, such as the NFA model featured in Table 1, would begin to align the practice of national organizations with the standards of accreditation agencies nationwide. Standard 3: Teaching and Learning in the *Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools for Schools seeking NCA CASI or SACA CASI Accreditation* highlights, "gathers, analyzes, and uses data and research in making curricular and instructional choices" as standard 3.3. (2009). Data driven assessment of teaching and learning is the standard that informs accreditation. In order to demonstrate and articulate program quality and effectiveness, collegiate forensics must make a concerted effort to formally embrace these standards.

Accreditation, however, is not the central concern for most forensics programs in terms of institutional placement. The primary interest at this level is demonstrating teaching effectiveness and programmatic value at an institutional level. This is the area in which the articulation of pedagogical prerogatives brings the greatest value. Currently, a forensics program seeks institutional support and value perceptions based on a variety of approaches. Some rely on competitive result profiles, others on institutional tradition, and so on. Each argument can prove effective to varying degrees depending on the advocate and institution. Yet, the only commonly held criterion that is celebrated by all institutions is verifiable, teaching effectiveness. The integration of assessment standards in collegiate forensics would unify all programs to that end, without excluding the functional argument, which preceded them.

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Justifying Forensic Programs to Administrations Using Humanistic Outcomes

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Mills, Pettus, and Dickmeyer (1993) tell a story that, seventeen years later, bears an eerie familiarity. A recession hits the country. A department at a major university is forced to make deep and difficult cuts to their budgets and programs. In lieu of making "horizontal" cuts, i.e., uniform cuts from all departments and programs, the university chooses to make one, incisive "vertical" cut: the complete elimination of the school's Speech Communication department, which, of course, means the end of the school's forensic program. This particular story has a happy ending, with the forensics team itself playing an instrumental role in the salvation of the entire department. Using a vast network of alumni, friends, and family, the team was able to keep the Speech Communication Department off the chopping block. The team would go on to fight another day.

Not so with many other forensic programs. The last two years has seen the United States in a similarly precarious economic position, and stories of drastic staff reductions, hiring freezes, and program cuts have once again become alarmingly commonplace. In an effort to preserve themselves from elimination, many forensic programs have had to start to justify their existence at a school. To this end, coaches have employed a number of techniques. Of these, an approach that is easy to quantify and codify is the identification of discrete "learning outcomes" for forensics.

The field of education, at both the secondary and collegiate level, is inundated with the concept of the learning outcome, i.e., an evaluable measure that determines whether or not a certain pedagogical goal was reached. The name of the school I work at is Florida State College at Jacksonville. In Spring of 2009 (and for many years before that), however, the school went by Florida Community College at Jacksonville. With the Florida Department of Education's creation of the "state college," community colleges could now widen their enrollment to both 2- and 4-year students by offering both associate's and bachelor's degrees, and FCCJ was eager to get on board. However, this also meant that the college had to keep their accreditation current, which entailed a massive analysis and evaluation of FCCJ's curriculum across the board. During this period of general education review, the touchstone that guided the entire evaluation process was the "learning outcome." Each class had to determine what exactly students who complete any given course were, in theory, now able to do. What's more, how do we evaluate whether the outcome was met, and whether the curriculum addresses this outcome in the first place?

In a forensic context, an analogous endeavor seems a pretty worthy one. The more we are able to present a list of outcomes and say, "Here! *This* is what a student of forensics learns," the more viable the program seems. In essence, we can defend our programs to the administration using the language of the administration itself. In fall of 2008, the NFA Executive Council formed a Committee on Pedagogy to do just that. The committee released a technical report in 2010, identifying four over-arching categories of outcomes for forensic participation: Discipline Knowledge and Skills, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Integrity/Values.

However, forensic students themselves report another kind of education they get through their participation in forensics. Paine and Stanley (2003) conducted a study of which components of forensic involvement students found the most rewarding – those that were considered the most "fun." The response that appeared the most often was not one associated with academic knowledge, or even performance itself. It referred instead to the social connections forensics helps students forge, the opportunity to meet other people. Other studies detail to what extent the social and interpersonal dynamics within a team can preoccupy the coach's time, and how much a social team culture can make or break the success of a team (Carmack & Holm, 2005; McNabb & Cabara, 2006; Rowe & Cronn-Mills, 2005; Schnoor and Kozinksi, 2005; White, 2005). These social and interpersonal "outcomes" of forensic involvement are more difficult to quantify, however, and more difficult to justify to administrators as reasons to keep a forensics team at an institution.

This paper will review literature concerning forensic learning outcomes, drawing a distinction between traditional "academic" learning outcomes and more "humanistic" outcomes that function at an intra- and interpersonal level. This paper will also examine avenues coaches can use to defend the most beneficial aspects of their programs to administrators.

Learning Outcomes of Forensic Participation

When examining literature that purports to demonstrate what exactly forensic students learn, it is clear that forensics offers a wide variety of academic skills. Though Geisler (1985) notes that many competitors in oral interpretation fall short of this goal, ideally, an effective student of oral interpretation should come away from their competitive experience with an understanding of hermeneutic theory, and how it applies to performance of a text. A student should be able to understand the importance of preserving the integrity of a text, as well as "honor generic characteristics of a given art work" (p. 78). Finally, students should not only be able to see that many interpretations of a text or valid, but should also be able to clarify which interpretations are more "defensible" and are, thus, more valid.

Gernant (1991) similarly notes a distance between theory and practice in forensics, but maintains that effective oral interpreters display a strong command of literary analysis. Strong oral interpreters have absorbed the concepts of au-

thorial intent, thematic analysis, and the performative link between the audience and the performer. Conversely, Koeppel and Morman (1991) focus not on the literary outcomes of participation in the interpretation events, but the rhetorical benefits. They argue that, by focusing on the argumentative or rhetorical nature of oral interpretation, coaches can help students understand the function of oral interpretation, give students a competitive edge, and "increase the communicative value of the oral interpretation events" (p. 150). Though many of these authors focus on what is missing from current forensic practice, the fact remains that, if all goes well, a student will have achieved a wide variety of impressive learning outcomes.

As for the public address events, literature abounds on the potential learning outcomes of participation in this genre of forensic competition. The entire Fall 1985 edition of the National Forensic Journal is devoted to the event of Rhetorical Criticism (Communication Analysis) alone. Rosenthal (1985) focuses on how the activity can reinforce its roots in the rhetorical tradition – how to put the "rhetorical" back in "rhetorical criticism." Benoit and Dean (1985) explore how CA competitors can broaden their knowledge of so-called "non-rhetorical" artifacts, like literary works and films. Shields and Preston (1985) even note how participation in communication analysis can familiarize a competitor with such concepts as fantasy theme analysis.

The learning outcomes of participation in events like informative and persuasive speaking are self-evident and parallel to the learning outcomes of basic public speaking courses. A look at the AFA Event Descriptions (2010) shows that a competitor in persuasive speaking should be familiar enough with persuasion theory to successfully "inspire, reinforce, or change the beliefs, attitudes, values or actions of the audience." Students competing in After Dinner Speaking should be able to "exhibit sound speech composition, thematic, coherence, direct communicative public speaking skills, and good taste," a pretty impressive pedagogical stew. Finally, Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, and Louden (1999) assert that participation in competitive forensics augments a student's critical thinking skills.

Few of these benefits to forensic participation should be too surprising to coaches in the activity. At the risk of sounding self-congratulatory, forensic participation demands a wide-reaching breadth of knowledge few teachers and students outside the activity attain (Boileau, 1990). Even relatively new directors, such as myself, become quickly aware that to effectively coach (or, more importantly, compete in) all the genres of competition, one must have an eye for good literary writing, a solid foundation of literary and rhetorical theory, a working knowledge of current events, a keen grasp of structure and outlining, and a broad base of pop culture and historical knowledge.

Humanistic Outcomes of Forensic Participation
However, there is another set of outcomes students claim to glean from the activity, a set that I will call *humanistic out-*

comes. Hinck (2003), drawing similarities between athletic and forensic participation, describes these outcomes as a result of sustained involvement in a competitive activity:

> Competing can give a student identity as a member of a team since joining a team, becoming assimilated as a member, and preparing for a season of tournament activity can challenge students to develop social skills that are essential to success beyond the college classroom. . . . A competitive season simulates life situations requiring adaptation to changing circumstances, recommitment to achieving one's goals, coming back from a disappointing experience, and hard work without the guarantee of success. (p. 62)

In addition to intrapersonal communication outcomes like reacting professionally to victory and setback, Carmack and Holm (2005) elucidate the education forensic students experience through interaction with their teammates:

> Members also learn that forensics is not an easy activity in which to be involved. They learn about practice schedules, the amount of practice "required," who to go to for coaching in which events, and which events to compete in, through their interactions with coaches and varsity competitors. Sometimes these role behaviors are consciously communicated to the new members with the expressed intent of getting them to conform. (p. 35)

It becomes clear that forensic students, due only to their participation in a competitive activity, receive a profound education in intrapersonal, interpersonal, and group communication.

Furthermore, Paine and Stanley (2003) studied which factors of forensic competition a forensic student perceives as most "fun." The second most popular group of response involved "the value of an education," and included such benefits as enhanced critical thinking skills and increased performance ability. However, the most popular set of factors in the study were those related to "the value of people and relationships." Students reported that meeting new people, sharing time with like-minded students, and having a "sense of community with other schools" were the most fun aspects of forensic involvement (p. 44).

I would hope these findings are not terribly surprising; if we did not all value the interpersonal and humanistic education that students in competitive forensics receive, we would simply be instructors of communication, and not forensic coaches.

Working with Administrations
Sellnow (1994), in addition to offering a formidable review of literature on how to justify programs to administrators, offers an additional take: framing forensic education as "experiential education." Forensics, in this particular mode of thinking about the activity, offers a unique connection to theory and practice that few other co-curricular activities can provide. Forensic participation also teaches students to

value a wide array of "ways of knowing," that will ultimately lead them to become lifelong learners.

Paine and Stanley's (2003) study has special relevance for the community, however, when examining how to justify forensic programs to administrators. Littlefield (1991) conducted a study of college and university administrators nation-wide, searching for attitudes about debate and IE programs. Administrators responded that the primary benefits to having a forensic program on-campus was enhanced education for the students and enhanced *retention* of students (emphasis mine). College presidents, provosts, chancellors, and deans are, unsurprisingly, interested in ways to keep enrollment in the university high. Paine and Stanley's findings about the "fun factor" of forensics bear an even greater importance when considering that these are the very factors that keep the students in forensics, and ultimately, in school. The forensics-as-family concept may be difficult to articulate to administrators, but it keeps students coming back, which is music to any administration's ears.

This paper is only the start of an important conversation. By all means, we need to take a look at the pedagogical outcomes of the activity. The pressure to keep our activity a viable presence at a college or university demands that we do so. The NFA's Committee on Pedagogy has created an invaluable document that will serve directors of forensics well all across the country, and its importance and usefulness cannot be overstated. However, just as the document claims to move discourse about the sustainability of forensic programs beyond a competition vs. education dichotomy, I would encourage us to take the conversation one step even further to embrace the humanistic outcomes of forensic participation, as well. We are certainly teaching our students (or at least, allegedly so) a vast body of knowledge – how to argue, how to persuade, how to deliver a composed speech, how to analyze literature, how to step into the skin of a fictional creation – but we are also teaching a different and complementary set of skills: how to graciously accept both goals met and hopes dashed, how to be a good teammate, how to place the needs of the group before those of the individual, how to take constructive criticism, how to be a good person. We must value and codify the educational outcomes of the activity, but so much of our time as forensic coaches is devoted to these intangible values that we cannot ignore them either.

I recognize that these values are not unique to forensics. Participation in any competitive team activity ostensibly confers these same values. This does not (nor should not) detract from their importance. As Hinck (2003) notes:

> Although it might be possible for some of our forensic team members to participate in college or intramural sports for the purpose of gaining the common benefits of striving toward competitive excellence, it seems unreasonable to expect all of our students to seek the common benefits of competition there. They are drawn to forensic activities because forensics is a collection of

speech activities, of which they are interested in, and because they are not interested enough (or possibly talented enough) in basketball, football, field hockey, chess, tennis, bridge, or any other game to forgo participating in forensics activities to pursue those other interests exclusively. (p. 63)

Littlefield's (1991) study is nearly twenty years old; perhaps it is time to re-investigate what administrators view as the primary benefits to having a debate or IE program on-campus. Hopefully, some the literature cited in this paper will prove useful to directors seeking to defend their programs to administrations. Moreover, what I am offering is a different way for us to think about "outcomes." I have heard several coaches say, "You know what? Educational objectives aside, my goal is for this student to become a better person." I believe students *can* become better people through forensics. Some administrators will be swayed by this assertion. Others will not. For those administrators, focusing on the diverse rhetorical, theoretical, and literary benefits of forensic participation will have to do. But if we are going to start to formalize our discussion of forensic outcomes, we need to pay attention to the more intangible benefits of participation in the activity.

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Assessment in Forensics: It's a Dirty Job but We Need to Do It!

Kittie Grace
Hastings College

Cognitive, affective, and behavioral assessment are all necessary measures to understanding the effectiveness of any collegiate major or forensics team. As the Director of Forensics at Hastings College, I use all three measures to assess the strength of the current program and to track trends regarding the team. This discussion focuses on presenting different ways to assess your programs to increase departmental and institutional support for your forensics programs.

Purpose:
Accredited by North Central
Help Administration
Help Provide Your Own Records for PR purposes
Help See Team Needs

The Measurements Needed:
Keep sight of the mission=Need the goal or mission of the team in every assessment document
Affective (example: How much do you like being a part of the speech team?)
Behavioral (example: Video of persuasion speech from start of the season and end of the season)
Cognitive (example: Testing how well students understand the event rules vs. norms)
Be specific, administration likes numbers and clear examples

Example: We will qualify a majority of the team for the AFA-NIET=50% of the first year class, 90% of second and third year class, 100% senior class

Collaboration:
Ask other coaches to help with the document
Ask colleagues to look at it so it is readable beyond a forensics audience

PR
Workshops-students and coaches
Summer Camps
Factoids to admissions
Alumni Gatherings

Example Assessment Document

Achievement of Last Year's Goals:
Short Term
- *Strong/Clear Tournament Ready Standards that are upheld—*Work with students so events are very strong and ready for competition for their first tournament out. Help students use the coaching staff available to them. To achieve this we will…

  o Encourage students to use coaching hours

o Conduct an event night every Tues. evening
o Have all events work with two different coaches before the event travels
o Check-off is due Monday night by midnight

  ▪ Goal was partially achieved
  ▪ We held to these standards and for most tournaments events were ready to travel.
  ▪ We need to re-assess this "Tournament Ready" schedule and assess what is feasible with the coaching staff schedules
  ▪ We decided that short in-meeting lessons will be most beneficial for the 2009-2010 team

- *Qualify everyone to the AFA-NIET that travels and coaches consistently—*This is a lofty goal but to have a *competitive* team this year, *we* need everyone to fully participate. We will work to *achieve* this goal by…

o Having students coach at least two hours a week
o Use team meetings for coaching time
o Encourage students to travel earlier in the season
o Students must make the necessary changes to events to continue traveling

  ▪ Goal was partially achieved
  ▪ Everyone who coaches at least two hours a week and traveled to six tournaments each semester did qualify for nationals
  ▪ A majority of students did not travel beyond scholarship requirements this year. The average number of students travel was approx. 8 students which is frustrating with a team of 21
  ▪ Coaches need to encourage travel and explain the importance of travel as an educational activity
  ▪ Students need to present a welcoming atmosphere, respect differences and diversity to help encourage travel for underclassmen

Long Term
- *Increase campus & community involvement—*For students to become strong liberal arts candidates, activity variety is needed. On-*campus* activities will be encouraged by the staff. Additionally, students will be asked to participate in at least **one community service activity** each semester to increase community involvement. The students will also be asked to participate in non-competitive speaking performances such as performing for Homecoming, State Fair, Rotary Club, etc.

  o We will continue to encourage campus involvement by looking to other events where student can use their forensics talents.

▪ *Improve recruiting procedures*—The ADOF will work with admissions to help improve our *connection* with the high schools. We will provide workshops, high school tournament, summer camp, night of forensics, etc. to help increase campus enrollment.

o This goal is in process. We will have a student recruiting committee this year as well and we will host a fall showcase to help with recruiting.

RESOLUTIONS

What are Our Goals as Forensics Educators for the Public Speaking Events?

RESOLVED: National organizations and individual programs need to embrace assessment criteria relevant to institutional and accrediting agency requirements in forensics. National organizations should devise assessment infrastructure that will inform their constituencies based on pedagogical goals and values. Assessment criteria should be fashioned to address disciplinary, generic and individual event learning outcomes. While the structure of this conference is insufficient to develop official documents and content related institutional assessment, we strongly support the content that has been supported by the body that provides starting points for the development of assessment criteria.
APPROVED

**The PUBLIC ADDRESS panel began a discussion on the operationalization of assessment criteria for public address events with informative speaking. Noting the limitations of time and scholarly resources at the conference, we agreed to include a list of starting points for the developmental process that emerged from our discussion. A review of the general themes appears below.

INFORMATIVE SPEAKING:
- Justifies the importance and relevance of the topic or subject for the audience.
- Emphasizes description and clarification, over position and or support.
- To create understanding by relaying information on a significant topic
- Technical information
- Utilizing a variety of stylistic devices and rhetorical strategies to synthesize and clarify information for the audience
- Meet the audience's informational needs and expectations that seeks to improve quality of life

RESOLVED: Real-world speech contexts often require the use of personal narrative to humanize the speaker and endear her/him to the audience (in alignment with Aristotle's notion of goodwill). Additionally, communication theorists have long contended that narrative is an essential sense-making mechanism in human communication. Since this is an attribute of rhetorical situations subsequent collegiate forensics education, forensics pedagogy should embrace its inclusion in public address. Teaching of personal narrative and its topical and ethical use in public address events is strongly encouraged.
APPROVED

**In order to promote this effort, two experimental event outlines are provided below.

A. Experimental Event: **public narrative**

Rationale for the experimental event is identified in Escaping the "Uncanny Valley": Humanizing Forensic Address Through Public Narrative by Randy Richardson (Berry College) included in the proceedings for this conference.

Event Description: Students will share a personal narrative designed to inspire social or political belief and/or invite social or political action. The speech will develop a student's personal story, enhance audience identification with an issue or set of issues, and characterize the urgency of the moment. The speech may be delivered from manuscript, notes, memory or any combination thereof. Maximum time limit: 10 minutes.

B. Experimental Event: **personal narrative**

Rationale for the experimental event is identified in Escaping the "Uncanny Valley": Humanizing Forensic Address Through Public Narrative by Randy Richardson (Berry College) included in the proceedings for this conference.

Event Description: Students will articulate an important personal value or belief and share a narrative that inspired this conviction. Notes are optional. Maximum time limit: 5 minutes.

While individual tournament hosts are encouraged to devise and implement experimental events in order to provide students unique speech and performance opportunities, all tournament hosts that affiliate with a particular national/state organization are strongly encouraged to host the experimental events sponsored by said organization during invitational tournaments. If a national association is not sponsoring an experimental event, individual tournament hosts are encouraged to champion experimental events at their discretion (i.e. hosting editorial impromptu sponsored by NFA in 2009 and 2011 every year).
APPROVED

RESOLVED: Without compromising the value of originality, we encourage more process oriented teaching techniques. Reconceptualize normative performance approaches as technical training and mastery of foundational principles in public address. Performance conventions can be useful teaching mechanisms when accompanied by explanation from coaches that establish the theoretical and pedagogical justification for students.
APPROVED

**A quick reference guide of teaching suggestions submitted by panel attendees:

- Recognize the utility of imitation in speech writing and delivery training (i.e. rhetorical traditions of declamation and amplification)

- Coach transparency: coaches should articulate pedagogical choice making to students in the context of forensics training
- *An illustration in the area of public address*: Forensics educators should dedicate themselves to emphasizing the foundational principles of rhetoric. For instance, emphasize the links between the rhetorical tradition and speaker choice making related to argumentative models in persuasion (i.e. linking the choice to parameters of events (time), audience, context and topic).
- Adjudicator transparency: adjudicators should articulate pedagogical choice making to students in the context of competition (i.e. ballots).
- Provide reference guides for forensics students in order to reinforce the relationship between forensics activities and foundational principles in communication. These guides may provide information related to the speech training and development process, as well as, theoretical foundations.

RESOLVED: Rhetorical criticism: Forensic educators are encouraged to strongly consider the pedagogical goals of contest rhetorical criticism, with particular regard to the consideration of the mission of analytic education in the event. Specifically, educators should address the space between analytical approaches utilized in scholarly and contest rhetorical criticisms.
APPROVED

RESOLVED: Encourage the forensic community to reject the false dichotomy of education and competition.
Forensics educators should embrace a conceptualization of collegiate forensics as a mode of tutor-style teaching, which endeavors into multi-institutional learning spaces (i.e. intercollegiate contests). Competition is not a separate mission from education in that intercollegiate competition is a learning environment essential to forensics education. Intercollegiate competition provides students opportunities to experience student performances and performance evaluation.
APPROVED

RESOLVED: How Does The Operation of the "Forensic Circuit" Address Our Goals as Forensic Educators:
The End/Purpose of Forensics

As we envision and re-envision collegiate forensics for the 21st century, we caution all stakeholders to be cognizant of not getting caught up in the rules and structures of our activity. Instead, we recommend that all discussion and deliberation about forensics begin with a consideration of the "end" or purpose of forensics.
APPROVED

Overview of Director of Forensics and Burnout

RESOLVED: Because the focus on the Health and Wellbeing of Forensics has successfully brought many productive changes for the student population, we encourage the Forensic Community to focus on the health and wellbeing of the coaches. Because of the extensive burnout of coaches, each school should clearly identify the roles of the forensic staff.
APPROVED

**Some helpful ways the community could work together to decrease burnout would be by either looking into or adopting the following examples: providing a mentoring and or training program for new coaches, creating ways for the students on the team to take "ownership" via administrative roles, peer coaching etc.

A Pedagogical Reframing of the Ballot

RESOLVED: Because we believe the ballot is a valuable pedagogical tool, we encourage coaches to help students seek the validity in *all* ballots.
APPROVED

As the ballot is the primary vehicle for assessing a performance, we encourage judges to be mindful of the educational value of the feedback they provide.
APPROVED

Changing the structure of the ballot

RESOLVED: In order to maximize the full pedagogical potential inherent in the judge-student relationship and assist all judges in writing more constructive and pedagogically sound ballots, we encourage tournament directors to consider alternate ballot formats.
APPROVED

**Examples may include, but are not limited to, incorporating Cicero's five canons of rhetoric and/or including the respective event descriptions.

Scheduling Tournaments

RESOLVED: In order to promote transparency, we encourage directors to describe their sectioning mechanisms, tabbing methods, and sweepstakes calculations in tournament invitations.
APPROVED

In order to maximize parity in competitor assessment, we propose national tournaments adopt random scheduling methods for preliminary rounds of individual events.
APPROVED

Lincoln Douglas Scheduling

Because the administration of Lincoln-Douglas debate at the NFA National Tournament demands a tremendous amount of resources from both the tournament administration and the community of teams competing, we recommend considering alternative scheduling systems that might condense the event.

**Such systems may include but are not limited to four pre-liminary rounds, only presetting one round, and/or having more judges per round.
APPROVED

Redistricting the AFA-NIET

In order to provide a more accurate representation of the AFA-NIET membership, both democratically and competitively, we strongly encourage the AFA-NIET committee to consider options for redrawing districts.
APPROVED

Culture of Qualification for the AFA-NIET

Before making additional changes to the structure of their qualification process and/or tournament administration we encourage the AFA-NIET to reassess and define their purpose as an organization and as a national tournament. Upon completion of this examination, we encourage the AFA-NIET committee to align their qualification system to best meet that purpose, if necessary.
APPROVED

Forensics and Service Learning and Community

Service Learning

1. As a best practice, teams should incorporate at least one service learning project each season.
   a. Recommendations:
      i. Forensics journals should devote at least one article, or an entire issue, to the implementation of service learning projects.
      ii. Organizations should devote a section of their websites to possible service learning projects.
      iii. Teams should publicize their squad's participation in service learning projects for public access.
APPROVED

Forensics/Assessment

2. As a best practice, each forensics program should provide admissions and administrators with a short description of forensics easily understandable to those unfamiliar with the activity.
APPROVED

3. As a best practice, forensics directors should generate affective, behavioral and cognitive means for assessing their individual programs including more humanistic means of assessment.
   a. Recommendation:
      i. Each national organization should devote a section of their website to guidelines for learning outcomes.
APPROVED

Community

4. We encourage the efforts of the NFL and The Elementary and Secondary Education Section of NCA to do the following:
   a. Lobby state education agencies to require speech communication as a high school graduation requirement.
   b. Require said courses to be taught by teachers licensed/certified in communication.

   c. Collegiate institutions should aggressively recruit students to be licensed/certified as secondary teachers in communication.
APPROVED

Resolved: That forensic programs should be encouraged to gather and present qualitative/quantitative research which documents the potential benefits of student participation in forensics.
APPROVED

Resolved: That forensic programs should develop educational mission statements which: A) connect them to the general mission statements/strategic plans of their home institutions; and B) articulate strategic goals to meet specific criteria for national accreditation standards, including but not limited to diversity, social responsibility, and intellectual inquiry.
APPROVED

Resolved: That individual forensic programs should adopt a set of student learning objectives/outcomes.
APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following three educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to all competitive events: 1) The student should recognize the transferability of what they learn to other non-forensic contexts (e.g., professional, personal, and societal); 2) The student should demonstrate good audience participation skills which honor other speakers by evidencing the ideals of collegiality, professionalism, and civility; 3) The student should demonstrate an ability to face competitive situations with confidence, aplomb, and steadily maintained self-esteem.
APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to both impromptu and extemp: The student should be able to develop a thesis, assert subordinate claims, and select evidence

which are all directly relevant to the original intent of the prompt.
APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following five educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to impromptu speaking: 1) The student should effectively uphold a claim with support drawn from a wide array of evidentiary types and sources; 2) Whenever possible, the student should examine the interplay between the rhetoric (prompt) and the original rhetor (source); 3) With a minimal amount of time to prepare, the student should craft an original and prepared in-the-moment speech which is clear and well reasoned; 4) The student should synthesize and connect their own unique knowledge base to a prompt in support of a claim; 5) The student should demonstrate an understanding and analysis of the original prompt by providing an interpretation which fully accounts for all of its components.
APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to adopt the following three educational learning objectives/outcomes relative to extemporaneous speaking: 1) The student should effectively uphold a claim which is primarily supported by externally sourced knowledge; 2) The student should ethically and skillfully craft, implement, and utilize an information database; 3) The student should demonstrate a nuanced and well-informed understanding of current world events.
APPROVED

Resolved: That national forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to research, develop, and share assessment instruments with forensic organizations for national dissemination.
APPROVED

Resolved: That tournament directors should provide participants with a list (as complete as feasible) of the learning objectives associated with each event.
APPROVED

Resolved: That developmental conferences and national forensic organizations are encouraged to adopt and circulate educational learning objectives/outcomes for each event.
APPROVED

Resolved: That tournament directors should select varied, challenging, and educationally appropriate impromptu prompts that encourage creative analysis and speech development.
APPROVED

Resolved: That tournament directors should provide schools attending their tournaments with the event and prompt formats for limited preparation events.
APPROVED

Resolved: That tournament directors should explore the use of online research during extemporaneous prep.
APPROVED

Resolved: Unless tournament rules specify otherwise, tournament directors are encouraged to remind adjudicators that the effective use or non-use of notes in limited preparation events should not be a meaningful criterion for judging.
APPROVED

Resolved: That the forensics community should encourage the steady development and pursuit of experimental events.
APPROVED

Resolved: That the forensics community should recognize the use of invitational rhetoric as a legitimate mode of performance
TABLED

What are Our Goals as Forensics Educators for the Oral Interpretation Events?

Resolved: In forensic practice "oral interpretation" shall be called "performance of literature"

Justification: More consistent with current practice and pedagogical objectives
APPROVED

Resolved: In performance of literature events, beyond providing title(s) and author(s) at some point during the performance, other identifiable original commentary is optional.

Justification: Recent bias toward argument/persuasion in performance of literature over other purposes such as informing or entertaining. This often manifests in extensive introductions.

APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic organizations should adopt the following ethical use of literature guidelines

Ethical Use of Literature in Individual Events (as adapted from AFA-NIET Charter/Bylaws)

A. Contestants may not rewrite a literary selection so the work differs from the original text. This includes:
   1. adding scenes or lines to the performed cutting. (Although an occasional line might be added, especially if a character has been deleted, this practice should be discouraged.)
   2. rewriting the ending of a work.

3. rewriting lines to change the gender of a person or a character.

B. Contestants should not deceitfully distort core known characteristics of a text.

C. Contestants may not perform a text in a category in which it does not meet the event description.

D. Contestants performing original literature should be held to the same standards as articulated in section A.

Justification: Rewording to reflect current practice.

APPROVED

Resolved: The performance of literature events be re-categorized as follows:

Justification: Growing difficulty in clear genre distinctions and lack of diversity of narrator perspectives performed.

Performance of Monologue
Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which use the first or second-person narrative voice. A minimal presence of dialogue, as filtered through the narrative voice, is allowed. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.
1. Create immediacy between audience and single well developed character
2. Emphasis on internalization

Performance of Dialogue
Selections of material of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source, which include third-person narration and/or dialogue between two or more characters. Poetry is prohibited. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time is 10 minutes including introduction.
1. Showing the conflict and subtext found in interaction

2. Use of voice and body to differentiate between characters
3. Comfort with the versatility of the 3rd person voice
4. Ability to work within the "4th wall"

Performance of Poetry
Selections of poetry of literary merit, which may be drawn from more than one source. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of language. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.
1. Focus on rhythm of language
2. Ability to create vivid visual images through the use of a variety of literary devices

Duo Performance
Selections of material of literary merit, presented by two individuals, which may be drawn from more than one source. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc, are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.
1. Interaction through listening and response to another performer
2. Nuanced pacing

Performance of Literature Program
A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from a balance of material from each of the other solo individual performance of literature events. A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme. The material must be pulled from at least three separate pieces of literature. Only one selection may be original. Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.
1. Understand power of intertextuality
2. Exposure to multiple literature sources
APPROVED

FORENSIC LEADERSHIP

Resolved: Whereas, the rhetorical excesses of our time and our society demand scrutiny, and whereas social and technological developments in communication challenge the development of critical thinking and whereas a pervasive insularity is harmful to the forensic community and as forensic professionals we are first and foremost educators, be it resolved that civic engagement should be encouraged through forensic education.
APPROVED

Resolved: COFO should create a committee with web development expertise to assess and manage the online forensics presence.
APPROVED

Resolved: The forensic community in general and national organizations in particular should develop a centralized online library to encourage coaches to contribute:
a. Materials about coaching individual events.
b. Materials on tournament management and tabulation practices to serve as a resource guide for tournament directors.
c. Materials related to the training of judges.
d. Materials related to promotion and tenure.
e. Any additional materials pertaining to pedagogy, program or professional development.
APPROVED

Resolved: An online resource with regional and national contacts of individuals willing to provide advice or mentor-

ing to new forensic professionals should be created.
APPROVED

Resolved: The forensic community should be encouraged to consistently include applied sessions focusing specifically on forensic pedagogy, training & professional development at NCA specifically as well as other conferences.
APPROVED

Resolved: Forensics organizations should exhaust all avenues to inform and seek input from all members on potential changes that would impact school participation.
TABLED

Resolved: The national forensic organizations of AFA, NFA, DSR-TKA, Pi Kappa Delta, and Phi Rho Pi together should seek out and employ an external assessment organization to perform an individual events health audit.
APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic professionals should be encouraged to participate in joint research projects and professional development activities with undergraduate & graduate students.
APPROVED

Whereas, the leaders of the latter half of the 20th century, rediscovered the educational benefits of speech competition, founded several collegiate programs and professional organizations, and established numerous tournaments and perfected their management in a time of great technological change and challenge. And whereas they sacrificed inordinate amounts of time, money, often careers and professional standing, and more, for the benefit of forensic activity. And whereas, they deserve recognition, appreciation and honor, be it resolved that forensic organizations should establish leadership advisory boards for programs of benefit to the larger forensic community such as developing historical leadership narratives, preserving archival information, serving as advisors for new or endangered programs, and acting as mentors and ambassadors of the forensic community.
APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic organizations should develop campaigns to actively recruit new forensic programs.
APPROVED

Resolved: Forensic organizations should develop strategies and means of supporting retaining existing forensic programs.
APPROVED

POSSIBLE ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Activities throughout the year:

1. Student/Coach journals
2. Various worksheets students can complete to help guide tasks (i.e. cutting guide)
3. Compile yearly portfolios of student work
4. Coach performance reviews for each student
5. Track ballots

Formal Survey Questions:
-- pre/post test
--administer end of each year
--administer when exit team

I. Awareness of Disciplinary Influences:
   a. What is the difference between performance of literature and acting?
   b. What is the purpose of the presence of the book?

II. Text selection
   a. What characteristics constitute literary merit?
   b. What specific characteristics translate into performance worthy literature?

III. Textual analysis: structural and aesthetic
   a. Outline the dramatic structure of one of your literature pieces.
   b. What performance choices did you make to communicate this structure to the audience?

IV. Integrity of text
   a. Describe the process you used to cut your material?
   b. Justify how your final cutting upheld the integrity of the original text?

V. Effective and authentic vocal and physical performance
   a. What performance choices did you make to create authentic characters and/or narrative voice(s).
   b. What consistent ballot comments did you receive which helped identify your physical and vocal performance strengths and weaknesses?

NDC-IE 2010
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ALABAMA
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Marlin Bates, University of the Pacific

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Debra Yancy, University of Mississippi

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Curt Casper, Hastings College*
Trevor Brass, Hastings College*
Kittie Grace, Hastings College
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Marty Birkholt, Creighton University
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