



**JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL**  
COURSE SYLLABUS  
Competitive Speech and Debate



## **Competitive Speech and Debate**

### Course of Study

Competitive Speech and Debate begins with an overview of the events for competition and the multiple choices students have for participation in these events. The aspects of logical reasoning and argumentation are studied, as well as the basics of good communication. Students are to research and present arguments on current issues, learn case construction, refutation, and cross-examination techniques. Students will also learn how to make and use visual aids, how to write an effective speech, and how to develop interpretation skills. These studies will lead to participation in tournaments around the state this school year.

### Tournament Participation (400 points)

Competitive Speech class gives students the opportunity to travel to other schools and participate in debate and individual tournament events. **Participation in tournaments is a requirement of this course.** Students must compete in **4 or more tournaments**<sup>1</sup> to meet the minimum requirements for this course. It is strongly recommended that students attend three competitions in the first semester, as the second semester tournaments are mostly qualifiers for the state and national competitions. In addition, a minimum of 8 students and 2 parent judges must sign up before we go to a tournament. Failure to attend a tournament you have signed up for will result in fines. Fines that are not paid will result in inability to compete in future tournaments. Students will arrange their own rides to and from the tournaments.

Each regular tournament will be worth 100 points, not including reflections. To receive full credit, you must attend **and participate in** the events you have signed up for. Leaving the tournament before the rest of the team will result in loss of points.

### Fees and Dues

In order to pay the league membership dues and to defray costs, each student must contribute \$10 per semester to the Speech and Debate Club. Additionally, each student must pay a \$5 registration fee for each tournament.

### In-Class Expectations

Students are expected to be self-motivated and driven. The Speech and Debate classroom is unlike a typical classroom in that assignments are not given and students will be held accountable for their own progress. Depending on which events students choose to compete in, they will be assigned to an in-class group led by a senior team member. These smaller groups will meet every day. Students are further mandated to have three meetings with a coach or a cabinet member prior to competing in a tournament.

### Team Captains

The team captains are very important to our team. They will help team members practice, pick scripts, arrange rides, make phone calls, check competitors in at tournaments, report any problems that arise at tournaments, and assist in teaching the Zero Period class. Get to know your captains; they will be of great help to you!

### Assignments and Grading

- Participation in class is essential to student success in tournaments. If you are always on time to class and working on your tasks, you will earn all your participation points (25 points per week). On the other hand, if you are frequently tardy or absent, you will lose these points and your grade will be adversely affected.
- Each competitor is required to have a minimum of three coaching sessions (for each event) before each tournament: one from a coach, one from a senior team member, and one from another team member of

---

<sup>1</sup> Invitational Tournament participation will earn 150 points.

your choice. During coaching sessions, students will record comments and critiques. These coaching notes will be reviewed and assigned points later.

- After each tournament, students will write a reflection of their performance in their events. After you receive your ballots, you are to write a ballot summary. These reflections should be one-half to one page long. Your reflections will be collected, so you should have these materials in class with you each day.
- Any deadlines for specific events must be met before the tournaments.
- Recruitment for Speech and Debate Competitive team and participation in Speech Contests will each earn 50 points toward the Tournament Participation grade.

#### Grade Category Weights

Tournament Participation	50%
Daily Participation	15%
Final Exam	15%
Reflections	15%
Demeanor	5%

#### Tournament Schedule and Important Dates

September 17 Debates/Congress @ Ponderosa HS

**September 19 Mandatory Parent Meeting at JFK, Room T-12, 6 pm to 7 pm**

October 8 A&B Panel Events @ Woodcreek

October 22 Debates/Congress @ Mira Loma HS

November 5 A&B Panel Events @ Antelope HS

December 10 Debates/Congress @ Davis Senior HS

January 21 NCFL Qualifier @ Rosemont

February 4 A&B Panel Events @ location TBD  
*IE Qualifier Script Deadline for Original and Interp Events*

**Feb 24- 25 State Individual Events Qualifier @ location JFK (Fri/Sat)**

March 3- 4 State Debate/Congress Qualifier @ Granite Bay HS (Fri/Sat)

*March 15 State Entry Deadline (online)*

March 17-18 NSDA District Qualifier @ Ponderosa HS (Fri/Sat)

*March 22 State Entry Deadline (postmark)*

April 1 NSDA Congress Qualifier @ El Dorado HS

April 28-30 CHSSA State Tournament @ Arcadia High School (Fri/Sat/Sun)

June 18-23 NSDA National Tournament @ Birmingham, Alabama (Sun-Fri)