

NCFCA Vision of Academic Forensics

NCFCA seeks to carefully maintain the unique vision of home school forensics first advocated by the Home School Legal Defense Association when it launched home school debate in 1997. As stated in the NCFCA mission, the ultimate purpose of NCFCA forensics is to provide a means for home schooled students to learn and exercise analytical and oratorical skills, addressing life issues from a Biblical worldview in a manner that glorifies God. Rather than pursuing competitive forensics as an end unto itself, NCFCA encourages students to pursue forensics as a means to learn the skills necessary to effectively communicate truth to the world.

In order to accomplish and protect this vital mission, NCFCA has intentionally adopted a philosophy of forensics designed to encourage students to learn the skills necessary to be effective witnesses for Christ. While others may pursue speech and debate for the sport, NCFCA aims to use forensics to teach life skills. For this reason, NCFCA supports a real-world, conversational style of speech and debate and advocates the use of content and strategy that ultimately upholds a biblical worldview.

For a more detailed explanation of NCFCA's approach to the forensic activity, see the [NCFCA Philosophy of Forensics](#) [coming soon].

Careful attention must be given to the judging of academic forensics in order to preserve the style upon which the league was founded. A number of leagues have started with good intentions, only to find that a short time later, the forensic activity has become a strategy-centered activity focused on persuading experts rather than on training real-world communicators. In order to avoid this familiar path, NCFCA intentionally seeks to broaden its judging pool to include not only forensics experts, but also those with no previous experience or training in forensics.

The diverse NCFCA judging pool includes experienced judges (both those with NCFCA experience and those from other leagues), lay judges, affiliated judges (e.g., parents and coaches), community judges, and judges with worldviews which are both similar to and different from those of NCFCA competitors. Each type of judge adds something unique and important to the judging pool. Experienced judges give the benefit of their knowledge to competitors. Lay judges give competitors the chance to persuade the type of audiences they are most likely to meet outside the competition round—those with no formal training in forensics.

The benefits of a broad judging pool are further explained in the [NCFCA Judge Philosophy](#).

There are three purposes of NCFCA judge orientations, and each purpose corresponds to the judge's forensics experience. In an orientation, judges with NCFCA experience should receive updated information and clarification. Judges with other experience should be shown the unique aspects of the league. Judges with no previous experience need to be empowered to feel comfortable judging.

Because forensics itself is based upon basic theories of human nature and common-sense logic, NCFCA views the average adult as already possessing the skills necessary to judge a round of NCFCA competition. NCFCA discourages efforts to use the orientation time to train lay judges into experts and instead encourages a method of judge orientation that helps lay judges to feel comfortable relying on their intuitive decision-making abilities to adjudicate rounds according to NCFCA rules.

For a further explanation of NCFCA's model for Judge Orientations, see the [NCFCA Judge Orientation Philosophy](#) [coming soon]. For helpful tools that can be used in your next Judge Orientation, see [NCFCA Judge Orientation Tools](#) [coming soon].