

The CSU–Chico Forensics Program
Goals & Guidelines
Fall 2002

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Program Goals: The primary goal of the CSU Forensics program is to give interested students an opportunity to compete in and learn from intercollegiate competitive forensics. Forensics is viewed as an educational activity, which improves research and reasoning abilities, and develops analytical, critical thinking, and listening skills. Through debate, public speaking, and performance we investigate our world rigorously and creatively.

Program Direction: Generally, the direction and objectives of the Chico State program are determined by student interest. Students, given their own needs, time pressures, and personal situation, can attend the kinds of tournaments in which they are able and most interested. However, Chico State Forensics receives a healthy allocation of university resources. As such, the Director of Forensics and staff will decide specific decisions, including travel opportunities and budget matters.

Program Missives and Pursuant Policies:

* **Educational Achievement.** CSU–Forensics is here to *supplement* one’s academic (classroom) education. As such, all participants must represent the highest level of educational attainment, both in forensics and in the classroom.

- Academic Eligibility. Members of the traveling squad must maintain a CSU, Chico GPA (cumulative) of 2.0 in order to participate. Grades will be checked at the beginning of the spring members for students who wish to continue travel.
- Amount of Travel. Students can travel as often as their course demands (and the budget) allows. However, students are not encouraged to travel three weekends in a row, especially if the travel incurs absences from class. Travel schedules will be sent to your professors. It is important to the health of the program that students do not claim forensics related absences where none exist.
- High Quality Evidence and Literature. All students should follow the guidelines for quality evidence cutting and briefing. If you are new to Forensics and do not know these guidelines, please make this instruction your highest priority. Students competing in Individual events should choose works of literary merit.

Students are expected to search for their own evidence, literature, and speech ideas and rely only on coaches for assistance.

***Group Empowerment.** CSU Forensics will afford each person the opportunity to travel, regardless of experience or skill, and will create an atmosphere of growth, diligence, and unity. All members will work in unison to foster an educational climate in which new members are facilitated and all members are respected and encouraged, as both forensic technicians and people.

–Open Squad Policy. Anyone can join the Forensics program. In fact, it is hoped that all squad members will encourage people to join Forensics and will assist in recruiting new Teaching Associates, potential high school recruits, rookie tournament participants, and junior college transfers to Chico State Forensics by understanding and articulating the goals of our squad to anyone who asks. Caveat: It is considered inappropriate to “recruit” from other four-year collegiate squads. If a member from another squad asks about transferring to Chico, you should refer them to the Director of Forensics.

–Social contract. I govern the squad by a system of social contracts. I ask each student to honestly assess their work commitment, time constraints, and ability in order to construct her/his own work contract. This system allows each student to define her/his commitment to the squad; therefore, students are expected to honor and uphold their own authored work contract.

–Central debate evidence system. The purpose of this policy is to insure that all squad members receive usable copies of briefs, cases, and extensions that have been produced by participants of the Chico State Forensics Program and provides procedural accountability to a back file system. Debate is a cooperative activity. There are few practices as important to encouraging that cooperation then the Central Evidence Policy. Each debater will be given periodic research assignments, which she will fulfill. Everything you produce (assigned or unassigned, Aff or Neg) must be turned into central evidence. All evidence produced under the direction of the Chico State Forensics team is the property of Chico State. Graduating seniors and exiting students will be asked to return their briefs and any supplies given to them throughout their tenure at Chico State.

Procedure for submitting briefs to Central Evidence:

1) An original copy of the brief is turned into the "To Be Copied" bin near the photocopier. All briefs should (a) have ample margins (b) be written in bold, black ink (c) be suitably taped—tape each card on the right and left side of the quote (d) be legible (e) avoid using obscure symbols, jargon, or inside jokes (f) have researcher's name (not nickname), school, AND semester and year brief was produced.

- 2) Do not highlight these cards, briefs, or blocks until the distribution of copies has taken place.
- 3) Every card posted on a brief must have a complete citation.

Procedure for photocopying briefs:

- 1) Those agreeing to or those assigned to photocopy will complete fully this procedure. The photocopier uses a code system. Only the student assistant has access to the copycode. You can ask Monica, Kristina, Kris, Aaron, or Sheila to key in the code for the copier. Please do not ask for the code.
- 2) The squad assistant will check briefs for quality and will return unacceptable briefs to the student's mailbox
- 3) Copies should be made for all debate teams. The originals should be placed in file folders, appropriately labeled, and filed alphabetically in the Central Evidence File cabinet for this year's topic. Discard filed briefs older than five years.

Tournament Research Procedure: Research production inevitably happens en route and at tournaments. These briefs have a tendency not to be copied for the whole squad or distributed to debaters who are not traveling on that particular tournament. To avoid this problem, carefully do the following:

- 1) All traveling teams should receive a copy of evidence.
- 2) All originals should be given to the Coach of Record (COR) for safe storage
- 3) Upon arrival at Chico, the COR will place the originals in the "To Be Copied" bin with instructions. In other words, it should be noted who has already received copies so that photocopying resources are not wasted.

BackFile Checkout: Backfile bookmarks are located on the side of the filing cabinet. When you remove a file from the backfile cabinet, a completed bookmark must be left in its place. The bookmark must include your name, the date the file was removed, and the name of the file taken. Please replace the files in a timely manner.

Please pick up your evidence regularly and file it promptly. Valuable time is often wasted at tournaments chasing down missing evidence.

***Goodwill Ambassadorship.** All members of the CSU–Forensics squad are considered goodwill ambassadors. In other words, traveling members represent the university and our program. Team members are expected to behave lawfully, professionally, and pleasantly to their partners, fellow teammates, and competitors.

Dress code and tournament conduct. As a matter of community standard, individual event students have a much more stringent dress code. In sum, each student should dress as they would for a job interview. For men, this means a

suit and tie. For women, it means a pant suit or skirt suit. You should be neatly groomed and professional looking. If you follow the "job interview guide" you can't go wrong. Some IE competitors may talk of unwritten rules of tournament apparel. You can listen and follow that advice if you want, but it is not squad policy. Debaters are required to look presentable for debates. This means that students should wear nice dress pants and an appropriately coordinated shirt. Debaters are not allowed to compete in the following: jeans, shorts, t-shirts. Women can wear skirts but be aware that you are getting in and out of cramped spaces & chairs looking for files. Both IE and Debate students should wear comfortable shoes for a grueling tournament schedule.

Sexual harassment. The University's sexual harassment policy will be rigorously enforced in this classroom and during tournament travel. Additionally CEDA and the AFA (our governing organizations) have their own Sexual Harassment Policy. Please refer to your student handbook, or talk to the Director of Forensics, if you are unsure what behavior constitutes sexual harassment. In sum, sexual harassment will not be tolerated. It is important to note that sexual harassment also occurs by creating a "hostile environment" through repeated demeaning remarks, jokes and innuendo about sex, sexual activity, or about one's gender, or directed at a particular gender.

Interpersonal terrorism. A little ribbing is always a healthy component of group dynamics. Interpersonal terrorism (repeated attacks on one's appearance, personality, mannerisms or cultivating dissent and disagreement) is another matter. We will travel together in a rather tight knit group for long distances. As such, we must remain patient and tolerant of our quirks, likes, dislikes, and opinions. If your interpersonal behavior discourages the full participation of other squad members, a staff member will speak to you. If the behavior continues, you will be considered out of sync with the goals of this program and prohibited from travel. If you have a legitimate problem with a squad members behavior, you are to bring the complaint to the attention of a coach and they will approach the student.

Open to criticism. In accordance with the educational philosophy of forensics, you will receive copious amount of constructive criticism. Please understand criticism as a component of positive growth, not a negative event. Additionally, accept and listen attentively to comments and decisions from adjudicators. You may ask polite questions of your critic—never argue. The "closed window, 70 mph rule" must be adhered to while Chico State travels. You also must speak respectfully of all your opponents. Take the high road!

***Sustainable Development.** Chico State Forensics will demonstrate to this university, other universities, and the community, that we are a valuable expenditure of resources. The property and products of the Chico Forensics squad must be cherished and

protected. We should strive to abate outlandish consumptive habits and honor the considerable resources we are allocated.

Cleanliness. The wonderful squad room allotted to the team is used for departmental meetings every Monday, thesis defenses, and to showcase the accomplishments of the team. It must look presentable at all times. Students can store drinks and their lunch for the day in the squad refrigerator. Please do not leave large containers, condiments, or two liters in the fridge. Food left for an extended period of time will be discarded. Please clean the microwave of any spilled food. Please do not eat or drink while at the computer tables.

Rookie Tournament. We receive many additional squad members through the Rookie Tournament. All squad members are expected to be available for the entire Rookie Tournament.

Exhibitions. Exhibition debates and performances are a great way to showcase our talents and provide an educational experience to the community. All squad members are expected to be available during the hosting of any exhibition. Please note your willingness to publicize, entertain, or perform during any event.

Resource/Computer use. The computers are to be used for forensics use only. Students can check their email and play music on the computers at a respectful level. You are not allowed to use the computers to compose papers when others are here to work on forensics. You are not allowed to print school papers and personal documents out on the computer. The computers are on a file server (called the H drive). You may create a folder for yourself and store your forensics documents there. Do not place a large amount of movies, mp3s, and non-forensics related documents on the server. We do not have unlimited space. Movies that may be deemed offensive should not be played in the squad room VCR or DVD layers. In sum, this is a workspace, not a lounge. Please be aware that faculty members work late in their offices on this floor. It is never all right to make a lot of noise.

Students that load unauthorized software, view, or download pornographic material for personal use will have their computer lab rights revoked.