

NITOC Balloting Procedures Blind Ballot Push

PHILOSOPHY:

The following concepts are the foundation of our Ballot Push philosophy.

- A. **Impartiality:** Impartiality is a position of making decisions based on objective criteria rather than on the basis of bias. It is choosing not to act on preferences for the benefit of one person over another. We seek to be impartial in the distribution of all ballots in all rounds.
- B. **Consistency:** Consistency is following the same procedure without variation or wavering from the established method of carrying out a task.
- C. **Trust:** We assume the best of both the judges and the Ballot Push staff. It is important to acknowledge that both sides of the table could use their position and knowledge for the benefit or detriment of certain competitors. We must create and assume an atmosphere of trust. Stoa standard is that all ballot information is kept completely confidential. Ballot Push staff and potential judges looking at and receiving ballots must uphold this standard.

GOALS:

- A. To distribute ballots randomly with the least possible amount of human intervention.
- B. To minimize the amount of information that is available in advance of public announcements. This is best achieved by showing one ballot at a time so that judges are not exposed to more information than necessary when being assigned a ballot.
- C. To create an atmosphere of trust and harmony. When both sides of the Ballot Push table see the ballot at the same time, there is not a feeling of “choosing” or “holding back.”
- D. To provide a procedure that is as speedy and efficient as possible. Decisions are made quickly as each ballot is exposed.

SPEECH:

When pushing speech ballots, StoaTrax “flags” ballots that have the following conflicts:

- A student from your own family
- A student from the club you have listed as a conflict
- Students you have previously judged in the same event
- A room that has another judge from the club you have listed as a conflict

The following process will be used:

1. The first available ballot that does not have any Stoa-TraX-identified conflicts will be offered to the judge from the event he/she has requested.
2. If the first ballot offered has other conflicts that are not tracked by StoaTraX (for example a student you know well, a previous partner of your student, previous club members, etc), the judge should decline the ballot.
3. Ballot Push staff will continue to offer ballots for that round until one is found that the judge is able to take.
4. If no ballot is identified that the judge may take, then the judge will be asked to take a ballot for the next round.

At Ballot Return, StoaTrax logs that your ballot has been returned, but it does not record your ranking decisions or any comments.

DEBATE:

When pushing debate ballots, StoaTrax “flags” ballots that have the following conflicts:

- A student from your own family
- A student from the club you have listed as a conflict
- Students you have previously judged in the same event
- A room that has another judge from the club you have listed as a conflict

The following process will be used:

1. When a judge arrives for a ballot, the Ballot Push worker will turn over the top ballot from an upside-down stack and show the ballot to the judge, asking if they are able to judge that round based on their conflicts. The Ballot Push worker should not look at the ballot before showing it to the potential judge.
2. Once the ballot is presented, both the Ballot Push worker and the potential judge can view it at the same time. If the judge cannot take that particular ballot, it is turned over and set aside.
3. The next ballot on top is then turned over and the procedure starts over. This continues until there is a ballot that the person can judge. Once a ballot is agreed upon, the Ballot Push worker will double check Stoa-TraX for any conflicts, and if there are none, then the ballot will be assigned to the judge.
4. The ballots that are rejected are placed upside down on the bottom of the stack.

At Ballot Return, StoaTrax logs that your ballot has been returned, but it does not record your decision, speaker points or any comments on the ballot.

HOLDING NAME BADGES:

Sometimes during the course of the tournament, it can aid in the efficiency and speed of pushing a particular round (especially Speech rounds), for judges to leave their name badges at the Ballot Push table in order to be assigned to a ballot while the judge is currently judging a round. For example, if a judge has a debate ballot and is in a room judging, but he/she would also like a speech ballot for the

following round, he/she may leave their badge to be assigned a ballot in the absence of them being physically present. In these cases, the following procedure will be used:

1. The judge will leave their badge with a designated Ballot Push staff member. A note will be placed on the back of the badge with the requested event.
2. Held name badges will be kept in a “queue box” at the Ballot Push table.
3. When ballots arrive from Tab, the name badges will be assigned to ballots and clipped on to the ballots in the order the badges were received.
4. Judges will always be assigned the first available ballot in the event that they requested that does not show a conflict in StoaTraX.
5. When the judge returns to Ballot Push to pick up their assigned ballot, he/she will double check for conflicts and will be re-assigned if necessary as long as ballots are still available.

Holding a judge badge at Ballot Push does not guarantee a ballot for the next round, nor a ballot in the requested event. This process is a courtesy to enthusiastic judges and aids staff in quickly pushing ballots and keeping the tournament running on time.