



**NATIONAL SEMINAR  
HOST GUIDE**

**ORIGINAL DOCUMENT  
WRITTEN IN 2009**

**UPDATED VERSION  
SPRING 2017**

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## The Objectives of the National Student Debating Seminar

Through the National Seminar, the Canadian Student Debating Federation provides a structure that ensures that debate and speech events in both official languages exist for students from all regions of Canada. For five days each autumn, students come together to debate an issue of national political, economic, and sociological concern in English, French and Bilingual formats.

The main objectives of the National Student Debating Seminar are:

*- To promote valuable travel and cultural opportunities for Canadian students;*

By holding the National Seminar in a different region of Canada each year, students have the opportunity to experience a part of Canada they might not normally visit.

*- To encourage cooperation between schools and their communities;*

Hosting the National Seminar promotes cooperation between schools and their communities by involving community members as volunteers on the organizing committee, as judges for the debates, etc.

*- To foster knowledgeable discussion of national issues;*

Each year, the debates of the National Seminar are based on a theme of national political, economic, and sociological importance. In order to participate in the debates, students must research the topics and learn as much as possible about the issue. Students debate both sides of the prepared resolution, so a diverse knowledge of the issue is required.

*- To celebrate Canada's bilingual and multicultural character;*

The National Seminar brings together a multicultural blend of Canada's youth to debate in both official languages.

*- To provide opportunities for students from all parts of the country to recognize the diversity and shared aspects among themselves;*

The students have ample time to be together participating in a variety of educational, recreational and cultural activities. During this time together, they forge friendships and uncover their differences and similarities.

*- To develop a deeper appreciation for Canada, its people, its resources, its potential and its future.*

Through their close examination of the issues they have been brought together to discuss, students gain a deeper appreciation for Canada, its people, its resources, its potential and its future as they broaden their knowledge, and understanding of topics that affect all Canadians.

## Hosting the National Student Debating Seminar

### Getting Started

Anyone wishing to host a National Seminar **is required to provide a bid with details** such as a budget, venue, and theme. Once the CSDF Board of Directors has accepted a bid to host the National Seminar it is a good time to start firming up an organizing committee. A Seminar organizing committee can come in a variety of shapes and sizes depending on the individual strengths of the key people involved. The challenge of organizing this event is much easier to manage if hosts can delegate many of the tasks to responsible, dependable colleagues and friends.

### Duration of Seminar

In the past the Seminar needed to run for a whole week to meet the requirements of Open House Canada, but with the Exchanges Canada program, there are no rules about the length of the Seminar. When deciding the length of your Seminar, keep in mind that there are many different activities that need to be scheduled and you will want to achieve a comfortable balance between rounds of debate, workshops, and cultural activities. It is also important to allow free time for the participants to get to know each other better and relax during some unscheduled time. While some may think a week long Seminar (five days of programming plus two travel days) is too tiring on both the participants and the organizers, a too-short Seminar (four days of programming plus two travel days) crammed with events is also exhausting.

A four or five-day Seminar seems to best allow events to unfold at a comfortable pace and is strongly encouraged.

Please see “National Seminar Events and Activities” for a description of the various events that are required at the National Seminar.

### Timing of Seminar

It is recommended that Seminar hosts try to select a date for their event that does not conflict with IB exams, major religious holidays, or current debate programs in Canada. Also, timing the Seminar to include a Saturday-night stay may allow participants access to cheaper airfares.

### Finances

When an organization agrees to host the National Seminar, it also agrees to assume financial responsibility for the event. The CSDF does make a substantial financial contribution, but in order to finish the Seminar with a profit or even to break even, the host will likely need to do some fundraising. This can be in the form of sponsorships, donations in kind, etc.

With the Seminar Host’s freedom to make many of the on-site arrangements for the Seminar and decisions affecting the overall event budget, it becomes the host’s responsibility to operate the Seminar with either a balanced budget or even a surplus. The CSDF does not cover any debts incurred by the hosts.

The CSDF provides the host with a hosting grant depending on what is currently available. The host will also receive the equivalent of what is left after the CSDF holds a \$150 from each registration fee paid by the adult and student delegates. (As mentioned in the section on registration fees, sometimes the share from an adult delegate’s registration fee can be as high as \$400.) The hosting grant is generally available several months before the Seminar (upon the CSDF’s receipt of a Seminar budget and tentative schedule).

The share of registration fees is partially settled during the week of the Seminar with a final payment made after the organizers have shipped the newly engraved trophies to the next hosts and the CSDF has received a financial statement, synopsis of media coverage and any other documentation required for the CSDF final report to Exchanges Canada. For more information about what Exchanges Canada requires, please refer to the section on “Exchanges Canada”.

If fundraising efforts are not successful, there is enough money in the hosting grant and the share of registration fees to run a respectable event. Hosts should not feel pressured to out-do previous hosts, especially if the money is not available for such extravagance.

Ideally, most meals, around-town transportation, and event tickets are covered so the students will need to spend as little of their own money as possible. If that means simple meals and no big bus outings, then so be it. Even with just the money from the CSDF, however, it should be possible to provide a couple of nice events or dinners. Keep in mind the focus of the Seminar is on learning. Even though the Seminar contains a significant cultural component, the culture of a venue can be experienced without spending a lot of money.

Often, provincial/territorial debate associations are able to use hosting the Seminar as an opportunity to generate a small profit that can be put towards future local debate activities. Please keep in mind that just as a broke Seminar is undesirable, so is an obscene profit. The CSDF and its various financial sponsors expect that the money they are giving to the Seminar is going to be spent on the students.

#### Accommodations

**Students:** Because most school boards in Canada no longer permit billeting, other accommodations must be found. Students **must not** be asked to sleep in beds with other students. Consequently, the norm is that hotel rooms with two beds are used, with a cot added, so that 3 students per room can be accommodated. Finding appropriate accommodations and negotiating a fair price is a vital component to running a financially successful seminar. This is one of the components that can be arranged far in advance of the seminar. Students **are always** roomed with students from other provinces to build cultural awareness. We do keep them within their registered language category.

**Adults:** Adult delegates are accommodated in the same location as the students. Although it is perfectly acceptable to expect the adult delegates to share rooms (two people per room), you will likely get requests from some for private rooms. In this case, you will need to communicate to the adult delegate how much it will cost them to have their own room. Sharing the cost 50/50 is usually considered fair and has been the common practice.

#### How Many Delegates to Expect and When to Expect Them:

Currently, you can expect anywhere from 60 to 75 student delegates based on where the seminar is in the country. This breaks down to 1/2 English, 1/4 French and 1/4 Bilingual debaters.

Most of the student delegates will arrive the day before the Seminar begins. The CSDF Board of Directors usually arrives a day or two earlier for a full-day Board meeting, and to assist where needed.

In all, a typical Seminar has roughly 100 participants (not including the organizing committee): Up to 75 student delegates, 7-10 CSDF Board members and officers, and 15 or so adult delegates. Please keep in mind that this is a rough estimate only, since a province's or territory's ability to send a full delegation varies from year to year.

Most of the adult and student delegates will be arriving by airplane and will need to be met at the airport. This can be a good place to set up a registration booth and meeting place for accommodations. Hosts should let all participants know who and what to look for when they arrive at the airport. If anyone indicates that they will be driving to the Seminar, they will need to be notified as to when and where they should go so they can be matched with their accommodations and receive any additional registration information.

It is possible that some adult or student delegates will arrive at the Seminar earlier than expected, for whatever reason. If this is the case, it is not necessary for the Seminar organizers to make special arrangements for them. In the registration information they receive from the CSDF they are told that they will be responsible for themselves and should not be putting any extra strain on the host. This means that the host is not responsible for making hotel or meal arrangements.

Each provincial delegation will be accompanied by at least one adult delegate. An “adult delegate” is defined as an individual participating in the National Seminar in an official capacity as

- a representative of a provincial/territorial debate association;
- an official chaperon with supervisory duties;
- a future National Seminar host;
- an executive director of a provincial/territorial debate association; and/or
- a voting delegate.

Usually, there will only be one official adult delegate per province who is both the official chaperone of the delegation as well as the voting delegate at the CSDF AGM. As you can see from the definition above, however, provinces may from time to time register one or more additional adult delegates who are staff of provincial debate associations, members of future Seminar organizing committees, or additional chaperons as required by school board policy. If so, these delegates are treated just like any other adult delegates in attendance at the Seminar. They are responsible for their own travel to the Seminar, since Exchanges Canada generally provides travel reimbursements for only one adult per province.

**Registration Fees**

The basic registration fee ranges between \$550 to \$700 per student and official adult delegate, shared \$400 to \$550 to the Seminar Host and \$150 to CSDF. For additional adult delegates, the full registration fee goes to the host. In other words, only the registration fee of the first adult delegate is shared with CSDF.

The Seminar Registrar may ask each province to collect all fees and send in one payment for their full delegation to the CSDF. As a volunteer board, it keeps the book keeping entries down to a minimum, as well as cuts down on the amount of receipting required.

There are up to 10 directors on the CSDF Board, plus the McLeese Debate representative who will attend the seminar. They do not pay a registration fee. There may also be one or more Officers of the Board who attend the Seminar and do not pay registration fees either. The number of Officers who will attend the Seminar varies from year to year. The CSDF President should be able to notify the host of how many, if any, to expect. Traditionally, Tom Lawson, the founder of the National Seminar also attends each year. He does not pay a registration fee and the CSDF pays for his travel.

Parents of debaters and other observers do not qualify to register for the National Seminar as official delegates, but are welcome to attend provided they pay an adult observer registration fee which includes hotel accommodations (single occupancy), the same meals as other Seminar delegates, event admissions and local transportation.

The amount owed by each delegate can vary depending on circumstances, the table below attempts to cover the variety of possibilities.

Student for Seminar only – Triple Occupancy	\$550 - \$700
First adult delegate for Seminar only – Double Occupancy	\$550 - \$700
Additional adult delegates for Seminar only (each) – Double Occupancy	\$550 - \$700
Adult observer (includes single room occupancy) Single Room	\$1000 - \$1200
Any official adult delegate requiring single room occupancy (in addition to Seminar fee)	\$ 500
Late Fee	\$100*

- Registration fees must be paid by the required deadline each year, otherwise a \$100 late fee will be added to the registration fee owing. The additional \$100 collected is for the CSDF to account for extra work to get funds dealt with in time.

### Fill-in Debaters

Depending on the styles of debate being used at the Seminar and the number of debaters in a debate room, the number of debaters in any category must be such that everyone is debating in each round. In other words, there may not be any byes. Often the Seminar host will be required to add fill-in debaters to the event to accomplish this.

According to Seminar regulations, fill-in debaters may choose to participate as either “official” or “unofficial” delegates. Official delegates are eligible to win awards; unofficial delegates are not. Students may attend the Seminar as official delegates only once; therefore, students need to consider whether they would like the chance to win awards and no longer be eligible to attend the Seminar in another year, or whether they would like to compete unofficially and still be able to attend a future Seminar as an official delegate. Students in their final year of high school would usually prefer to be official delegates since this is their last chance to attend a Seminar, whereas students who might earn the opportunity to attend the Seminar next year in another province would likely choose to participate as unofficial delegates when the Seminar is in their own province.

All fill-in delegates, official or unofficial, must pay a full registration fee. It is a good idea to have some debaters lined up to be fill-ins. Be sure they understand they are on stand-by and may not have a lot of notice and that, if selected they still have to pay a registration fee and their own travel. The seminar host is expected to provide as many swing debaters as necessary to fill out the draw.

## Important Communications

### Correspondence with Delegates

A “what-to-expect” letter for all delegates can be very helpful. This letter would include such details as:

- a checklist of items to bring
- a description of usual local weather conditions
- a description of events planned
- a tentative schedule (this is useful for helping participants determine, for example, how many meals they will need to buy for themselves and what clothes to pack)

The letter could be provided to the Seminar Registrar to email to delegates with a confirmation of receipt of their registrations. Alternately, this information could also be posted on the National Seminar section of the CSDF website or provided to provincial debate coordinators to pass on to the delegates as soon as they are confirmed.

In order to avoid providing conflicting information, **the CSDF website shall be the only official website providing Seminar information.** Hosts are welcome to forward to CSDF any information pertaining to their event which they wish to have included on the website.

### Duties of the Adult Delegates

Each year, a fair number of the adult delegates are attending the Seminar for their first time and are uncertain of all that is expected of them. Please refer to the CSDF document *Duties and Responsibilities of Adult Delegates While at the National Seminar*, which explains what is expected of them during the Seminar. Copies should be included in the registration packages of all adult delegates.

### Media

You will probably want to contact the local media to get coverage of your Seminar. Since the media outlets most interested in covering your Seminar are likely those who publish less than daily (e.g. the local weekly newspaper) be sure to provide plenty of notice. When you issue a press release, it is helpful to include a copy of the schedule for the week. The press release should also acknowledge Exchanges Canada and the Canadian Student Debating Federation.

Please remember to keep copies of all printed articles relating to the National Seminar so they can be included in the final report to Exchanges Canada.

### Bilingualism

The fact that the National Seminar is a fully bilingual event is a significant part of the reason we get funding for travel from Exchanges Canada. It is therefore imperative that organizers strive to achieve a high degree of bilingualism at the National Seminar. All printed materials, including the delegate program handbook, should be in both French first and then English. All spoken announcements should also be delivered in both official languages, using French first. If your organizing committee does not have the expertise required to provide a quality translation, please ask for help from the CSDF Director of French Debate. It is a good idea for all organizing committees to include at least one bilingual member who will be responsible for the second language commentary and translations.



## Exchanges Canada

Exchanges Canada is the Government program to which the CSDF applies each year for a substantial grant to help cover the delegates' travel to the Seminar.

If we expect to continue to receive funding for participants' travel to the Seminar, it is imperative that the National Seminar continues to meet the three objectives of Exchanges Canada. These are:

1. To contribute to increased knowledge and understanding of Canada among Canadian youth, by enabling them to learn first-hand about the history, geography, industry, institutions, cultures, communities, languages, and other facets of their country.
2. To help young Canadians connect to one another and create lasting linkages, across the country and between groups, thereby helping to strengthen the fabric of Canadian society.
3. To develop Canadian identity and attachment to Canada among Canadian youth by enhancing their appreciation of both the diversity and the shared aspects of the Canadian experience.

The CSDF President is the primary liaison between Exchanges Canada and the Seminar organizers. Throughout the year, the President works closely with the Seminar host to obtain documents and other information necessary for completing the funding application.

Some of these things are:

- a budget for the Seminar
- written confirmation from sponsors of donations and gifts in kind
- a communications plan for the Seminar
- a Seminar schedule
- a description of the safety procedures and service standards in place for the event
- an audited financial statement after the Seminar
- a synopsis of the media coverage of the Seminar including copies of anything that appeared in print as well as a summary of any television and/or radio stories

When the CSDF is approved for this funding, it agrees to acknowledge the Department of Canadian Heritage. The Department expects us to emphasize, in our communication plans, the contribution that Canada has made toward our activities. We are also encouraged to do so publicly, whenever appropriate. In fact, Exchanges Canada requires that its logo appear on all promotion material and that it be approved by Exchanges Canada prior to publication. Please refer to Exchanges Canada's Acknowledgement Guide for more information.

In addition to this, proper recognition should be made wherever other Seminar sponsors are acknowledged.

Often, a representative from Exchanges Canada will attend all or part of the Seminar to observe. If so, he or she makes his or her own hotel and travel arrangements and does not pay a registration fee. If the Exchanges Canada representative is present at the Seminar while any meals are being served, it is courteous to include him or her. The host need not worry about providing any special treatment to this person; the CSDF Directors will make sure he or she is looked after during their time at the Seminar.

## National Seminar Events and Activities

According to the National Seminar Regulations, specific events must be offered at each National Seminar. The idea is to allow hosts as much flexibility as possible while ensuring a certain standard is maintained. Please refer to the table below for a list of required, strongly recommended, and optional activities.

*Required	Two rounds in a Canadian style of debate, two rounds in an International style of debate, and two rounds in a third style of debate from either category or approved by the Board. - Canadian styles are Canadian Parliamentary, Cross-Examination and Canadian National Debate Format. - International styles are British Parliamentary and Worlds Style
Required	Educational Workshops (on the Seminar theme and/or debate technique, etc.)
Required	Cultural Events unique to the host region
Required	Gala awards banquet
Strongly Recommended	A panel presentation or debate featuring experts on the Seminar theme
Required	Model Parliament
*Strongly Recommended	Physical activity to help clear the cobwebs
Optional	Rounds of Cooperative Investigation/Competing for Consensus
Optional	Mock Trials
Optional	Demonstration debates on styles not used at the Seminar

\* If your region's particular situation prohibits you from meeting these requirements, please contact the CSDF President to discuss possible exceptions.

Other events generally included:

- Adult Reception (optional)
- Opening Ceremonies
- Group Photo

Other events suggested by the host and approved by the CSDF Board may also be included.

Also, please schedule time for:

- Briefings
- Board meetings and Annual General Meeting (up to two parts)
- Free time
- An administration period for completing surveys, questionnaires, etc.

### A Word about Participation

Upon registering for the Seminar, the students agree to attend the entire event and participate in all scheduled activities. Deviations from this are at the discretion of the CSDF Executive. If excusing a student or group of students from an activity is too disruptive, it is not allowed.

### Seminar Theme and Resolutions

When considering a theme for your Seminar, try to think of an issue of national importance but with regional flavour (without being so narrow that the rest of the country will be completely unfamiliar with the issue). From your Seminar theme, you will need to be able to produce two distinctly different debate resolutions suitable to the styles of debate selected for your Seminar. An impromptu resolution is also required and shall be on a different topic than the Seminar theme.

Use caution when selecting a theme for the purpose of securing sponsorships. Not only are the issues sometimes very dull, but they can also be difficult to shape into decent debate resolutions. Also, some sponsors become uncomfortable when they realize that *both* sides of the issue will be debated so this should be made clear from the start. Although a sponsor must never be allowed to control the wording of the resolutions or who will participate in any panel discussions on the topic, they do often make for good judges and enjoy the opportunity to present their one-sided view of the issue.

When forming your debate resolutions, you are expected to consult with the CSDF Board of Directors. Ideally, the resolutions should be daring enough to face the real issues head-on and not sidestep it into a safe subsidiary of the real issue. In addition to this, any good debate topic must rest on the foundation of some sort of philosophical question. A good prepared topic should require debaters to gain knowledge of the “real world,” but should also point them towards higher principles.

For example, “Should zoos be banned?” is a good topic because, in order to debate it well, you need to know about what zoos are really like and you need to think about higher principles. You need to know how animals are treated, what research goes on in zoos, who gets the profit, etc. You also need to think about questions like animal rights and human's responsibility to other creatures, etc.

#### Research Packages

Sometimes Seminar hosts arrange for research packages to be provided to the debaters before the Seminar. This is optional. In fact, the original purpose of ensuring that debaters from remote areas had access to the same information as the debaters from larger centres is becoming less and less relevant in this age of the Internet. If you choose to supply a research package, it should contain both English and French articles. Sometimes there is a company or an organization that can provide quality, bilingual information at no charge but be aware that it will likely not be balanced information. Even if you are able to provide a research package, debaters are expected to do their own research beyond what may be supplied.

An alternative to creating research packages, which is less expensive and less work, is to post a list of useful links on the National Seminar section of the CSDF web site.

#### Meetings

The CSDF Board of Directors typically conducts a lengthy Board meeting prior to the AGM during the seminar. Please arrange for a meeting place suitable for approximately 10 people.

During the week of the Seminar, the Annual General Meeting of the CSDF also takes place. This meeting always occurs in at least two parts, so please be sure to allow time in the schedule for these meetings. If possible, scheduling Parts One and Two of the meeting more than a day apart allows delegates time to communicate with their home debate associations about any issues that were tabled at the first part of the AGM. The Seminar schedule should allow time for the newly elected Board of Directors to meet sometime after the conclusion of the AGM.

Please work with the CSDF President to schedule them. They may be scheduled at the same time as other activities if necessary, but the host should understand that this would mean that the adult delegates and the CSDF Board members would not be available to supervise or help in any other way during this time. For this reason, it is not advisable to schedule meetings during any free time for the students for which adult supervision is required.

When scheduling the meetings and selecting the venues for the various activities throughout the week, please also make arrangements for a suitable place to conduct the AGM. The room will need to accommodate 25 to 30 people and they should be able to be seated in an appropriate manner for participating in a meeting.

Sometimes the hotel the adults are staying at is willing to provide the meeting space at no charge as part of the deal and sometimes it works out that meetings can be held in classrooms or in the board rooms of other facilities being used without any extra cost being incurred. Coffee, tea, water, even juice and pop, are an appreciated courtesy if the Seminar budget will allow.

If the schedule allows, the CSDF may host a dinner for all adult delegates early in the week. This dinner can be held in a restaurant with a private meeting room large enough to accommodate the group or it can be held in a meeting room of a hotel and catered as a banquet. There is a limited budget for this dinner, so please be sure to make all decisions in collaboration with the CSDF President.

If you have any questions about the CSDF's requirements for either the AGM or the Board meetings, please consult the CSDF President.

#### Adult Delegates' Reception

A reception for the adult delegates on the day of their arrival is entirely optional, but welcoming, touch. For convenience, the reception is usually held at the hotel where the delegates are staying. Sometimes a sponsor can be found to host this reception.

#### Opening Ceremonies

After the delegates have all arrived and are accounted for, the first official event of the National Seminar is the Opening Ceremonies. A typical Opening Ceremonies includes greetings from a variety of people such as the hosts, the CSDF President, local politicians and/or school board officials, and often also includes a panel presentation on the Seminar theme. Sometimes there is a keynote address.

It is appropriate to introduce the CSDF Board of Directors, the McLeese Debate representative and CSDF Founder Tom Lawson during the opening ceremonies. This is also a good time for general announcements and an opportunity to draw the delegates' attention to anything particularly important in the registration package. The Opening Ceremonies can easily take up a whole morning, especially if there is a panel presentation and/or keynote speaker.

The CSDF owns a set of provincial flags with poles. These are shipped from venue to venue with the trophies each year and may be used to dress up the room in which the opening ceremonies are taking place. Be sure to inspect the flags well in advance of the event since they may need to be ironed. Many people do not know that there are rules governing flag etiquette. Please consult "Flag Rules" for instructions on how to properly display the flags.

#### Panel Presentation

A panel may consist of approximately four speakers. You want enough to get a nice sampling of opinions, but not so many speakers that it takes up too much time or becomes boring for the audience. Exactly how to run a panel presentation is a matter of personal preference. Generally each speaker has a chance to make an initial presentation, maybe even a brief rebuttal and then the floor is open for students to ask questions.

A confident moderator is an essential part of any panel presentation. Someone who is comfortable controlling the speaking order and speaking times should be asked to preside over the panel. This person would also moderate the question and answer period following the panel presentations.

The panel presentation is not an appropriate event for the media or the general public to attend. Unless the panelists were informed in advance, they would not expect the media and might not appreciate the surprise. It has happened in the past that members of special-interest groups have shown up to lobby the panelists for their cause.

The Opening Ceremonies must be bilingual. There will likely be some Seminar delegates who do not speak English at all so translation should be arranged. The CSDF Director of French Debate is available to assist with translations.

#### Group Photo

If you take a group photo, please endeavour to provide a copy to each participant (very easy to do digitally).

### Cultural Activities

The National Seminar is not to be confused with a national debate competition. It is therefore important to include enriching cultural activities in your schedule. Please keep in mind that there is a difference between *cultural* and *commercial* activities. For example, a visit to the mall is too standard an experience to be programmed. This sort of thing is best left to experience during free time.

To be able to demonstrate to potential sponsors that the National Seminar is a valuable educational and cultural experience can have a positive impact on the funding received for your event. Events with a significant cultural component may be more attractive than purely competitive events.

When considering cultural activities and field trips, strive for experiences that will be culturally and/or educationally valuable to the participants. If there is a cost associated with the activity, is the cost appropriate for the value of the trip or activity?

Consider also the time factor. Depending on the length of travel time to and from the cultural/educational event, you may find that it is preferable to select an activity at a different (closer) location. Alternately, you could combine a trip to a distant venue with another activity such as a group meal. Generally, you want to minimize the amount of time that Seminar participants spend on a bus.

### Workshops

Workshops on a variety of debate and debate coaching topics are also a part of the Seminar schedule. Ideally, the workshops will take place prior to some of the rounds of debate so that the debaters will have an opportunity to incorporate what they have learned into their debates. When workshops are scheduled after the debates have all been run, enthusiasm is very low.

In addition to workshops for the students, some sort of professional development opportunity for the adult delegates is also expected. Teachers will be met with less objections to being allowed to attend the Seminar when there is a Professional Development component to it.

Workshops may be on either the Seminar theme or debate technique. Ideally, there would be a balance of both. The following suggestions for workshops have been collected from past Seminar evaluation forms:

- club building
- publicity within a school and on a website
- team spirit, etc.

### Briefings

Because there are often regional differences in debating styles and debating rules, it is valuable to hold a briefing on each of the styles of debate to be used at the Seminar. This insures that all of the delegates are on the same page regarding the rules. CSDF directors and officers are often willing to help with these briefings.

## Debate Tournament Basics

### Venue

Since one of the main objectives of the National Seminar is to provide opportunities for students from all parts of the country to recognize the diversity and shared aspects among themselves, absolutely every effort must be made to find a venue large enough to accommodate all the debaters. It is extremely undesirable to separate the delegates along language lines and send them off to different venues.

### Debate Judges

The task of assembling enough judges for a Seminar is a big job and should be the one job of a planning committee member.

To help increase the quality of judging at the Seminar, hosts should aim for the following:

1. to recruit a diverse panel of judges from the community that includes a good number of experienced judges as well as new judges;
2. to maximize the quality of the judges briefings;
3. to create a Chief Adjudicator position and implement provisions to make this position effective; and
4. to encourage adult delegates to judge if they are comfortable.

Goal #1: To recruit a diverse panel of judges from the community that includes a good number of experienced judges as well as new judges.

Ideally, each debate room would have at least three judges. Five is even better. Not only does a large and diverse panel of judges help ensure fairness to the students, but it also helps to bring schools and their communities together. As the community becomes more involved with your Seminar, it becomes a much richer experience for the participants and the benefits extend further into the future for the organizers and their own local debate programs. Conferral and/or consensus judging may allow hosts to require fewer judges. Open adjudication is an excellent educational tool for debaters. We recommend that one judge only deliver this feedback.

If you aim for three to five judges per room that works out to:

- 12 to 20 French judges in four debate rooms
- 12 to 20 bilingual judges in four debate rooms
- 33 to 55 English judges in 11 debate rooms

You can never have too many judges. You will need extra judges to fill in for those who don't show up. For a variety of reasons, there are always fewer judges at the event than there were people who agreed to come, so plan for this. Knowing what languages your judges speak is also helpful in case you need to move a judge from one language category to another.

A common misconception is that judges must have a lot of debate experience. This is not true. While it is good to have some experienced judges, all that is required of a judge is a firm understanding of the language (or languages) they will be listening to, an open mind, and a willingness to listen attentively.

Goal #2: To maximize the quality of the judges' briefings.

The CSDF provides written instructions for the judges. In addition, you may choose to provide some early training for your judges prior to the Seminar. Even if they are trained prior to the start of the Seminar, they will also need to be briefed the day of the debates. If you'd like, you may ask a CSDF Board member to assist with this task since the Seminar has its own rules which are very likely to be different from the rules in the host community. Be sure to allow enough time in the schedule to properly brief the officials. 20 minutes is not enough, 45 minutes to an hour is best.

Goal #3: To create a Chief Adjudicator position and implement provisions to make this position effective.

Many tournament organizers include a Chief Adjudicator on the organizing committee who is responsible only for debate portions of the Seminar and no other organizational details. Some of the duties of this position include assigning judges to rooms, identifying judging problems and responding to judging concerns from debaters, judges and other tournament volunteers. A Chief Adjudicator would work closely with the host and the tabs director.

Goal #4: To encourage adult delegates to judge if they are comfortable.

Hosts may wish to ask if any of the adult delegates would be interested in judging debates. Keep in mind that not all adult delegates will be comfortable judging and the adult delegates are not always available for judging if, for example, they are in meetings. Also, it takes extra time to assign these judges because you have to find them a room that doesn't have their own debaters in it. Having extra judges is best.

#### Other Tips

As the judges arrive at your event, you will need them to register so you know they have arrived and can assign them a debate room. You can label the outside of their package with details about which room they have been assigned to and which category of debate they will be judging. It is also very helpful to include in their package of information a schedule for the day as well as any instructions about where to eat, etc. A thank-you note is a nice touch.

The National Seminar Regulations state, "where time and funds permit, a copy of his or her score sheets from a debate should be provided to each debater." Therefore, please ask the judges to be prepared to make a few written comments on the ballots for the students. Don't forget to assemble a team who will take on either scanning each ballot to send out to the delegates, or the task of photocopying, collating, and distributing copies of the ballots to each of the debaters.

#### Other Officials

Other officials required are moderators and timekeepers. Usually, these are students. Experienced local debaters make excellent moderators and timekeepers. While timekeepers can be less experienced in debating (all they need to do is count down time), it is important that your moderators be familiar with the CSDF rules of debate. They may be called upon to moderate in disputes about the rules and may also need to intervene in the debate if the debate gets off track. This means that they must be comfortable stepping in and taking control of the round if circumstances require this of them. It may be practical for a judge to assume this role.

Ideally, every debate room will have one moderator and one timekeeper. Some of your officials may be experienced enough to feel comfortable handling more than one task at a time if you find yourself short on help. Although adult delegates can be called on if necessary to help out as officials, it is preferable to find members of the community to fill these roles.

Each of your judges will need a ballot for each round, your moderators will all need scripts, and your timekeepers will all need to know the speaking times for the debates. It is a good idea to have extra copies of all these things handy, as paper sometimes gets accidentally destroyed or misplaced.

#### Runners

Having a few extra people around to act as runners and troubleshoot can reduce the strain on the organizers during the frantic time before the debates start. Having runners available to assist you will help ensure that you remain available to oversee everything and deal with any major issues that may arise. Runners will need to have a pretty good idea of how the debates are being run so they can make decisions quickly and keep things rolling. You should be able to count on your runners to perform the following duties:

- direct debaters, judges, and officials to their rooms
- ensure that each room is properly set up and has everything that will be needed for the debate
- find the things (or people) that are missing

- carry extra ballots, scripts, and pens
- alert the Tournament Director if there is a problem
- collect the ballots from each room

### Briefings

Plan to brief everyone before the start of the debates. The debaters will need to know where their rounds are taking place and often there will be last-minute questions about the style of debate or how the judging works. Judges will need to be briefed about CSDF rules and debating in general. Moderators will need to be brought up to speed on the procedures for solving rules disputes. Timekeepers will need to make sure they know how to time a debate and how to signal the time remaining to the debaters. Although much of the training can be handled in advance of the Seminar, the judges and moderators will especially need to be refreshed on the big day. Finally, gathering your officials for briefings also allows them a final opportunity to ask questions and gives you the opportunity to assign the officials to their rooms. It is important that all information presented be consistent with CSDF's currently-approved and published materials.

Ideally, the Seminar schedule would allow for the coaches to be available to their students during the briefings.

### Timing of Events

A general rule is to allow extra time for everything. If you want to give a 30 minute briefing, then set aside 45 minutes. This gives time for moving people in and out of the room, unexpected questions, emergencies that interrupt or delay the briefings, and the general chaos that surrounds any debating tournament.

This holds especially true for the rounds of debate. Before a round can begin, debaters, officials, and judges need to find their rooms. Then runners need to check that the rooms are ready and if there are any problems (missing people, etc.) they need time to solve them. Remember that the time between speeches, the time used to resolve disputes over the rules and the time for judges to make comments all need to be considered when determining how much time to allow for a round of debate.

Debating on school days in front of full classes is an excellent opportunity to elevate debating's profile in your school and community and is strongly encouraged. It is often unrealistic to accomplish and therefore debating during the weekend at a school while welcoming spectators is more practical. Adherence to a strict bell schedule, however, will require extra careful planning and preparation in order to eliminate as many of the potential delays as possible.

Also, keep in mind that any time set aside for preparation needs to take into account that the debaters need to get from wherever they are to where they are supposed to be to prepare and then they need to find their partners once they get there.

### The Debates

All debates are co-ordinate style, that is, students are paired with students from other provinces. Usually, partners will change every other round. Once the co-ordinate teams have been announced, the teams will need some preparation time.

### The Draw

The draw is an important part of the Seminar. Debaters can be very sensitive about the perceived fairness of the draw. A good draw will mix the debaters up as much as mathematically possible, providing debaters with a variety of partners and opponents as well as attempting to prevent debaters from appearing before the same judges. Also, the draw may dictate the speaking order for each debate. This ensures that each debater takes a turn in a different position since some positions are considered more desirable or more important than others. Special attention is needed in the French and Bilingual categories where the much smaller number of participants makes all these things more difficult to accomplish. If you would like any assistance at all with creating the draw for your Seminar, please feel free to ask the CSDF Board. There are some people who quite enjoy (and are quite skilled at) creating draws, and would be happy to help.



#### Tabulation of Scores

You will need to have a system for collecting the ballots after each round of debate and all your helpers should know what that system is in order to reduce the chance that any ballots go missing. The collection of ballots is one of the most common and best uses of runners.

For tabulation, a spreadsheet is the easiest way to calculate the debate scores. The judges' scores from each round are averaged to form an average score for each round. Then each of the rounds is averaged to determine an overall score. A spreadsheet will allow you to sort the results in the variety of ways necessary for determining the various award winners (and there are many).

At the end of the Seminar, the scores should be sorted from highest overall score to lowest. If there were delegates who were not eligible to win awards, their scores are to be included and they are to be identified as "not eligible to win awards". In the unfortunate event that a delegate is disqualified, no scores are to be shown and the delegate is to be identified as "disqualified".

The full results are then to be forwarded to the CSDF President. The president will confirm that the results have been presented in the correct format then will distribute them to each provincial debate coordinator who may distribute them within their associations as they see fit.

National Seminar Regulation 17 (d) states that published results of competition should acknowledge only outstanding achievements but the full results shall be sent to each coordinator. It is therefore inappropriate to issue the full results to each delegate.

## Other Components of the National Seminar

### Free Time

Your Seminar participants will need some structured free time. It is a good idea to provide enough free time so that they can unwind and get to know each other socially. This is a big part of making the event memorable. It is not enough, however, to simply indicate “Free Time” on the schedule since the students are new in town and will not likely know what to do or where to go. Also, the lack of structure makes it difficult for them to make plans and for the adults to supervise.

One suggestion is to arrange a few simple options and print them right in the schedule with any necessary instructions about how to get there, when and where to catch the bus you have arranged to transport them, etc. The only other task might be to call ahead to these places to confirm that they can accommodate a large number of guests.

### Example:

2:00 - 5:00	Free Time	Shopping at Mall <i>(Bus to Mall leaves from front of school at 2:15)</i>
		Swimming, gym facilities, tennis courts available at Fieldhouse <i>(10 minute walk from school)</i>
		Bowling at Crazy Ernie’s Bowl-a-Rama <i>(\$5/person, 10 minute walk)</i>

Provincial/territorial delegations often appreciate the opportunity to spend time together going out for supper. Allowing time in your schedule for this is not only acceptable but also encouraged.

### Model Parliament

A Model Parliament, Mock Parliament, or Youth Parliament are all examples of a type of “other” activity that will be included in a National Seminar. It can be a fun opportunity for the students to participate in a debating event together as one group. It can also quickly turn into a circus so careful planning is essential.

Where to position the Model Parliament in the schedule is up to the organizer. Activities such as the Model Parliament are often scheduled closer to the end of the week when the delegates are in the mood for a “lighter” activity. Holding the Model Parliament at the start of the week, however, has the advantage of acting as a “mixer” for the participants, and since everyone is still a little reserved at the start of the week, it might help eliminate some of the silliness that comes as students become more familiar with each other and giddy from a long week.

The details of the organization of this event are at the discretion of the Seminar organizer. It is quite common to draw on local practice and tradition. Regardless of what format is chosen, it is important that all communications and documents are bilingual and that there is adult supervision.

The space chosen for a Model Parliament needs to be large enough to comfortably seat all the delegates and have good acoustics or microphones so everyone can be heard. If the students can’t hear each other, they are not going to sit quietly. It is also helpful if there are meeting rooms nearby in which the parties can hold their caucus meetings.

The delegates are divided into three parties: Government, Official Opposition and Third Party. Usually the Government has a majority and the Third Party is somewhat smaller than the Official Opposition. Each party should have a good mix of English- and French-speaking delegates.

During the caucus meetings, you might have the students create their bills to debate. If so, one of the organizers must approve each of the Bills for decency and taste. Another option is to assign each party a Bill. One idea is to assign the Government a serious Bill, the Opposition a more humorous one and for the third (smaller) party, give them the floor for question period.

A flipchart or white board in each caucus room is useful for any brainstorming that might take place in the meetings.

It is a good idea to have some bilingual adult helpers in the caucus rooms to guide the students through their caucus meetings. These helpers would also be responsible for keeping the students on task and making sure the bills are acceptable. The larger Government caucus would benefit from two helpers while the two smaller parties manage well with only one helper each.

Once the bills to be debated have been developed, it is nice to be able to provide each participant with a copy, so access to a photocopier is recommended.

#### The Awards Banquet

The awards banquet is the last official event of the Seminar. It is the last time that the delegates will all be together. A formal awards banquet is also a fun opportunity for the delegates to dress up. The awards banquet should be designed to reflect the honour and importance of both the delegates and any special guests who are also in attendance.

Don't forget that the provincial and territorial flags can be used here again to decorate the room. Be sure to consult the document on flag protocol before setting up.

The host should feel free to invite whatever special guests he or she would like to attend the awards banquet. Not only does it add some "class" to the event, it is an opportunity to give the local debate programs some exposure.

It is up to the organizing committee to invite the special guests. These might include local, provincial, and/or federal politicians, school board representatives, the Lieutenant Governor or Governor General (will require Protocol), etc. Of course, these guests would not be expected to purchase tickets for the banquet since they are the invited guests of the organizing committee. Other than the cost of the meal, there should not be any other costs associated with having special guests in attendance at your awards banquet since they normally pay for their own transportation and accommodation, if required.

If you have special guests at your banquet, they are often prepared (and expect the opportunity) to bring greetings on behalf of the office they represent. It is also nice to involve them in presenting awards while you have them there.

Anyone who receives an award will require a "keeper award" to take home. Wherever possible, these should be of as aesthetic a nature as possible (as opposed to the usual commercial trophies) and ought to reflect the culture of the venue of the Seminar. Books and art (such as prints or small sculptures) are examples of awards commonly used. It's a good idea to use a variety of items since some students may earn more than one award. For example, the top English debater may also be the top debater from his or her province/territory and would therefore win both the Weedon Award and Founder's Cup.

Each keeper award should also have a label or engraved tag attached stating the name of the award, the year and name of the Seminar as well as the venue. For example:

The Weedon Award  
Top English Debater  
1998 National Student Debating Seminar  
April 22-28, Saskatoon

The exact dates of the Seminar are less important and may be excluded if necessary.

For an award that the host knows will be presented to a French debater (such as the Governor General's Award), the wording should be in French. Both languages should be used for awards in the Bilingual category.

#### Presentation of Awards

Since the National Seminar is supposed to be a non-competitive event, the presentation of the awards should not be a big deal. (Try telling that to the debaters!) Nevertheless, it is important that the organizers keep things moving along.

The awards should not be described at length, only a brief mention of the name of the award and what it is for is necessary before announcing the name of the recipient. The number of guest presenters should be kept to a minimum, perhaps only two or three. And if the presenters are going to be allowed to speak, they should be reminded to keep it brief.

When it comes time to present the awards for the top debaters in the English, French and Bilingual categories, they should be announced all at once in order to avoid giving the impression that you are building up to a final, most-important presentation to any of them. All three have won equally prestigious honours.

The Seminar awards may be presented in the following order:

1. Willis McLeese Awards
2. Speaker's Citation
3. Founder's Cup and Awards of Excellency - one for each province and territory participating
4. Governor-General's Award, Chief Justice Award, and Weedon Award
5. Tom Lawson Awards

*Willis S. McLeese Awards:* Member provincial/territorial debate associations may choose to recognize up to two adults from their province or territory for their outstanding contribution to debate in their jurisdiction with a McLeese award. Nominations are communicated to the CSDF on the annual member application forms. McLeese Debate is responsible for providing the awards to be distributed. If there is a representative from McLeese Debate present, they are asked to present the awards.

*Speaker's Citation* (2 recipients): This award is presented to the best in English and best in French Model Parliamentarians as determined by the votes of the participating students at a Seminar at which a Model Parliament is conducted. Delegates will require a ballot in order to cast their votes. This can be included in the program. Also, two keeper awards are required. One option is to contact the Speaker's office to try to arrange for two autographed copies of a book that exists about the History of the Speakers of the House, or the host may choose something else as the keeper award.

*Founder's Cup and Awards of Excellency* (one recipient per province/territory): This award is presented collectively to the top debater, regardless of language category, from each member in attendance at the Seminar. Each debater will need an individual keeper award. Keep in mind that the francophone debate association in Quebec and the English debate association count as two separate members.

*Governor General's Award* (1 recipient): This award is presented to the top debater in the French category.

*Chief Justice of Canada's Award* (1 recipient): This award is presented to the top debater in the Bilingual category.

*Weedon Award* (1 recipient): This award is presented to the top debater in the English category.

*Tom Lawson Awards* (2 recipients): These awards are presented to the male and female student delegates who contribute most to the spirit of the Seminar. Winners of this award are selected by the student delegates themselves so, again, they will require a ballot in order to vote. Tom Lawson usually provides

the two keeper awards required but the host should always confirm this with Mr. Lawson in advance of the Seminar. If he will not be supplying these, then the host will need to arrange for something suitable.

#### Souvenirs

If your budget allows, a souvenir such as a t-shirt or bag is nice. If you personalize a souvenir item, please be sure to use the correct name of the event (National Student Debating Seminar) and to make it bilingual. The date and location of the event should also be included. To be safe, it's a good idea to have the artwork and text approved by the CSDF President to be sure that it meets the standards and acknowledges all of our major sponsors.

#### Last-Day Envelopes

Delegates enjoy going home with the following items in hand:

- *Certificate of Participation*. According to the Seminar Regulations, each student delegate shall be presented with an official memento of his or her participation.
- *Copy of the ballots*.
- *Awards Summary*. A bilingual list of who won which awards.
- *Group Photo*

Since the National Seminar Regulations state that published results of the competition should acknowledge only outstanding achievements but the full results shall be sent to each provincial debate coordinator, a complete copy of the tournament results should not be included in the list above.

The above items can be packaged in envelopes on the last day of the Seminar and given to the adult delegates to pass on to their students at the end of the awards banquet. It has been proven time and again that the moment the students have their ballots in their hands, all other activity ceases so they can pour over the results. This is why it is strongly encouraged that the packages not be delivered into the hands of the students until as late as possible.

A package should be prepared for all adult and student delegates including the CSDF Board.

#### After the Awards Banquet

After the awards banquet, the students will want to do something social because this is the last chance they will have to spend time together. Perhaps a dance or some other activity on-site could be arranged.

#### Engraving and Shipping Trophies

At the conclusion of the Seminar, the host must have the trophies engraved with the names of the current year's recipients then ship them to the next year's host. Both of these are the financial responsibility of the host.

Shop around a little for a shipping company and you should be able to find one that will charge a reasonable price.

The flags should travel back with the next years' host, at the end of the seminar, as an extra bag on a flight is less costly than shipping.

## Miscellaneous

### Evaluation

In order to know whether the organizing committee and the CSDF have met the objectives of the Seminar, it is important to ask the participants to evaluate the event. This is usually done in the form of a questionnaire. The fact that we are measuring outcomes is relevant to the application that is made annually to Exchanges Canada. The CSDF President will work with the Seminar organizers to ensure that time is formally scheduled for the completion and gathering of questionnaires.

### Other Suggested Activities

If the schedule permits, feel free to incorporate other activities into your Seminar. What about a demo or showcase debate featuring the top four or six debaters? How about experimenting with consensus-style decision making such as cooperative investigation? Mock Trials might also be fun.

Remember, there are essential components of the Seminar that may not be removed in order to accommodate these additional activities. These types of activities are optional and may be included at the discretion of the organizing committee. It is always a good idea to consult with the CSDF Board. There is a balance to strive for that does not bind organizers too rigidly to a set format, but still allows a certain standard to be met.

### Asking for Help

If you have any questions or concerns or are struggling with a particular problem at any time during the planning of the Seminar or the Seminar itself, please let the CSDF know. The CSDF has a lot of knowledgeable people working with them with years of experience. Someone may have already solved the problem that you are trying to solve. They may also be able to provide you with resources and other assistance.

### Expect the Unexpected

Although the CSDF Board and others do everything they can to keep things as simple and straightforward as possible, the nature of our business sometimes causes things to come up. Open communication is important during these times. Do not be afraid to ask questions and get answers. You might be thinking about something important that has not occurred to the others yet.

### Acknowledgements

The CSDF Executive gratefully acknowledges past CSDF President Tania Sturgeon as the original author of this handbook. Thanks as well to Dave Stewart and Bonny Hubley, 2016 Seminar Hosts, along with President Debra Miko, Jordan Burg, and Richard Picotin, 2016 – 2017 CSDF Board of Directors, for updates and translation.

## Canadian Heritage's Rules for Flying the Flag

Adapted from Canadian Heritage's Website, February 2009 <http://www.pch.gc.ca/index-eng.cfm>  
Home > A-Z Index > Flag of Canada (The National) > Flag Etiquette in Canada > Rules for Flying the Flag

### Flying the flag with flags of the Canadian provinces and territories

When provincial and territorial flags are flown with the National Flag of Canada, the order is based on the date of entry into Confederation of the provinces followed by the territories. In a grouping of flags that includes the National Flag of Canada and all of the flags of the provinces and territories, the order of precedence is:

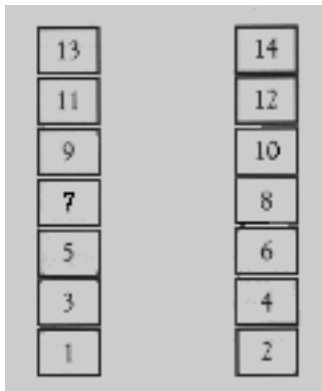
1. National Flag of Canada
2. Ontario (1867)
3. Quebec (1867)
4. Nova Scotia (1867)
5. New Brunswick (1867)
6. Manitoba (1870)
7. British Columbia (1871)
8. Prince Edward Island (1873)
9. Saskatchewan (1905)
10. Alberta (1905)
11. Newfoundland (1949)
12. Northwest Territories (1870)
13. Yukon (1898)
14. Nunavut (1999)

When there are more than three flagpoles/masts, the National Flag of Canada should be flown on the left of the observer facing the flags, followed by the flags of the provinces and territories. ***An additional National Flag of Canada may be displayed at the end of the line if desired.***

Display along a wall



Display flanking an entrance



“V” display for visual effect

