NITOC Balloting Procedures
StoaTrax - Speech and Debate

PHILOSOPHY: Assume the best
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.

SPEECH:
When pushing speech ballots, StoaTrax "flags" ballots from your club so that a different ballot can be found. StoaTrax also records which events and competitors you have judged. This allows Ballot Push to be notified if you have already judged a particular competitor within the same speech event. Stoatrax also quickly tells the Ballot Push staff which rooms do NOT have a club conflict, speeding the process for everyone. You will still need to verify that you do not have an individual conflict by reviewing the competitors' names for a given ballot. Judges should be aware that for speech events, before a ballot is assigned, the competitors in a particular room are not visible on the Stoatrax website to the Ballot Push staff. At Ballot Return, StoaTrax logs that your ballot has been returned, but StoaTrax does not record your ranking decisions.

DEBATE: Blind Ballot Push
When a debate blind ballot procedure is followed, it increases trust on both sides. A potential judge sees the ballot at the same time as the Ballot Push worker.

When a judge comes to the table, 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 (i.e. free from conflicts as listed in the General Judging Guidelines.) The Ballot Push worker should not look at the ballot before showing it to the potential judge. 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. 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. If after showing the judge 8 ballots, he/she still cannot judge a round, the judge should be directed to line up for a different debate event, if desired, or be thanked for being willing to judge and allowed to leave. The ballots that are rejected are placed upside down

on the bottom of the stack.

I. **Goals for Debate Blind Ballot Push:**
   A. To distribute ballots randomly with the least amount of human intervention. The ballots come from the tab room in a random order and a blind push allows for the distribution of ballots in that order.
   B. To minimize the amount of information that goes out in advance of public announcements. By showing one ballot at a time, this is better achieved. Neither side of the Ballot Push table is being exposed to more information than necessary.
   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 make the procedure as speedy and efficient as possible. Decisions are made quickly as each ballot is exposed. Time is saved since the Ballot Push staff is not assessing which ballot they should pick for the parent standing in line.