

A proposal to revise source citation rules in Farrago

explanation and rationale:

Over the last decade, Farrago has grown into a more complex, argumentative category. As part of their work to hone their literary argument, students are bringing in many more short selections of text, often from journals, articles, and online posts. While these diverse sources have helped to raise the level of discourse within the category, they have also made introductions more cumbersome, due to the requirement of verbally stating full titles and authors for every source used in the presentation. With some students including upwards of a dozen sources, each of them important to the argument the student wishes to make, introductions are getting overstuffed and are taking up time that the student should have available for the main body of their performance.

To be clear, this proposal does not seek to remove the requirements to identify the sources used for a Farrago, but rather to streamline the verbal attribution process. At the national level, where the equivalent of Farrago is known as Programmed Oral Interpretation, students frequently cite the source of an article or a journal or an online post simply by naming the name of the publication, rather than the full title and author (especially if there are multiple articles taken from a particular magazine or website). For example, a student might state “and articles from The Atlantic and Slate.com” as part of their introduction rather than providing the individual titles and authors, particularly if the performance includes multiple articles from those sources. This frees up space in the performance for students to maximize the argumentative impact that their performance can have.

The rules at the national level allowing students to identify a source by published do not lessen the need to carefully and precisely document their sources, as the rules also state that students/coaches must be prepared to share a full Works Cited documentation of every source used in the performance to tournament officials should any questions about source material arise. Should source material be questioned, this requirement ensures that TPP staff can properly address the protest.

The changes highlighted in red below are adapted from the National Speech and Debate Association’s rules for Programmed Oral Interpretation. Adopting these changes will help Farrago students move between the state and the national level seamlessly, but more importantly it will help all WFCA students in Farrago craft increasingly deep argumentative pieces without the introduction material becoming too cumbersome for the performance

Additions to rule number 2 for the rules of Farrago in the WFCA handbook:

An introduction, which establishes the tone and theme is required, and along with any transitions, if any are used, is to be presented without the use of notes. All selections must be verbally identified by title and/or author. The title may identify the primary source (e.g., book, anthology, journal, magazine, newspaper, website, etc.) or the specific title within the primary source (e.g., a poem, a play, a short story, a journal/magazine article, a newspaper article, etc.). It is at the presenter's discretion where, when, and how to accomplish those identifications. A Works Cited of all sources must be available to tournament officials upon request. The introduction must be the original work of the speaker. The presentation may begin with a read portion of the selected material prior to the presenter's personal introduction. The student must identify the genre of each selection presented.