February 23, 2016

Dear colleague:

As the Director of Forensics at Oregon I am responsible for the instruction and the supervision of undergraduate students competing for the forensics program, one of the oldest and most successful co-curricular activities on campus. One of our debate teams is currently ranked #3 and we have three separate teams in the top-40 nationally. Our program has the full support of the Clark Honors College and the administration of the University of Oregon.

We emphasize to team members that their first responsibility is as your students and we work hard to minimize conflicts with courses and coursework. Nevertheless, several times each term team members travel to intercollegiate competitions and sometimes those plans conflict with classes. As one of few competitive debate programs on the quarter system we face a unique challenge every year: Our national tournaments fall at the end of the winter term.

This year we are attending the qualification-only National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence and the open National Parliamentary Debate Association national tournaments. Our students **leave** for the first tournament in the afternoon of **March 11, 2016** and will **return** from the second during Spring Break on **March 22, 2016**.

Team members should present this letter to explain why and when they will be unable to attend your course. We do not expect students to be excused from any activities or course requirements except those that occur on travel days or tournament days. Our aim is to work with you so that students’ work is completed in a timely way that meets your needs as an educator. With the blessing of your colleagues, recent team members have completed work early, others completed tests between the tournaments using a proctor, and others find alternatives acceptable to their professors. The typical protocol – though we are open to whatever you require – is for professors and GTFs to email me their tests at a time of their choosing and we proctor those exams during the two days between tournaments. We cannot promise that students take the exams at the same time as your other students if the test is given during the tournament.

Thank you for accommodating our students as they engage in this rigorous, co-curricular activity.

Feel free to contact me to confirm that a student presenting this letter is attending nationals or with any questions or concerns at 541-600-0762 or by email at [trond@uoregon.edu](mailto:trond@uoregon.edu).

Sincerely,

Trond E. Jacobsen, Ph.D.

Director of Forensics

Director of University Forum

Clark Honors College

University of Oregon