

## What does being on the team do for me?

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Experience as an intercollegiate speech competitor provides valuable training in public speaking and presentation skills. In addition to speaking, research training, organizational tactics, and critical thinking skills will be developed in the process of preparing for competition.

The challenge of finding out what you can do in first-rate competition is important, too. The tournaments we attend typically feature some of the best competition on the national intercollegiate forensics circuit, so the people you will be competing against are among the very best.

Many national and international leaders have learned to polish their skills in intercollegiate forensics. It isn't surprising that most state and national legislators were once forensics competitors, as well as a great many of the world's best lawyers, business executives, and academics.

## Scholarship Opportunities

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The Department of Communication and Dramatic Arts has a limited number of Special Talent Scholarships to offer each year. These scholarships are not based on need and may be renewed each academic year, provided the student meets requirements for competition as outlined by the coaching staff and maintains a 2.5 GPA.

Additional academic scholarships are available for incoming freshmen with excellent high school academic records. For more information concerning scholarships and financial aid, contact the Financial Aid Office, Warriner Hall, (989) 774-3674.

## Additional information

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**For more information, please  
visit us online at:**

[cda.cmich.edu/debate](http://cda.cmich.edu/debate)

**or contact:**

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# CMU FORENSICS



## DEBATE & FORENSICS ACTIVITIES

**CMU**  
CENTRAL MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION & DRAMATIC ARTS

## Who We Are

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The CMU speech and debate squad is a university-supported team that travels to collegiate speech and debate tournaments across the country. We are comprised of an enthusiastic and ambitious collection of students interested in competitive speech and debate.

The forensics program is a co-curricular unit of the Department of Communication and Dramatic Arts and is directed by a full-time faculty member with the assistance of graduate students. Forensics students enjoy computer access and a student lounge. Students enrolling in COM 269 (Forensics Practicum) can receive academic credit for their participation in intercollegiate competition. The forensics squad meets once a week, Tuesdays from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m., to plan for tournaments and conduct team business.

## Membership and Activities

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Membership on the team is open to any CMU undergraduate student in good academic standing. You don't have to be a full-time student, but you have to be taking at least one academic course (not including COM 269). A member of the team is eligible to compete for four academic years.

You don't have to be a COM major to participate, either. Previous competitors have majored in political science, religious studies, recreation and leisure services, theatre and interpretation, biology, psychology, and sociology.

High school experience is beneficial, but not necessary in order to be successful at the college level. Our coaching staff works closely with beginning students to make sure they are well prepared for competition. Weekly practice sessions are arranged to help students continually improve. Two divisions of competition are usually offered: Novice division for first-year competitors, and Varsity (open) division.

We typically attend about 15 tournaments a year. In past years, we have traveled to Boston, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Georgia, California, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New York, Maryland, Kentucky, and all throughout Michigan.

Participation on the team won't put a dent into the tight budgets of college students. All tournament fees, lodging, transportation, and meals are paid for by the forensics team's budget.

Since 1989, CMU students have won numerous awards on both the team and individual level. At the 2012 National Forensic Association national tournament, CMU earned 4<sup>th</sup> place for team sweepstakes in Lincoln-Douglas debate and an individual speaker earned 2<sup>nd</sup> place. CMU has regularly finished in the top ten in its division at the national tournament.

## Events

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Intercollegiate competition is set up differently than high school tournaments, but the foundation is pretty much the same. CMU students excel in all four major divisions of forensics competition—public address, limited preparation, oral interpretation, and debate.

### *Limited Preparation Events*

There are several events under this category, including extemporaneous speaking. This event allows thirty minutes to develop a speech on a current events topic, using a file of current periodicals for resources. In impromptu speaking, you receive a topic, usually in the form of a quotation, and you have a total of seven minutes to plan and deliver a speech.

### *Public Address Events*

Persuasion falls under this category, which consists of a carefully prepared speech, intended to address problems in our society. Informative speaking is just what its name implies; it's a prepared presentation intended to enhance the audience's knowledge of a subject. After-dinner speaking deals with the lighter side of life, and gives speakers an opportunity to show their creativity through humor. Rhetorical criticism (or communication analysis) provides students an opportunity to explore principles of communication as they analyze artifacts for theoretical study and implications.

### *Oral Interpretation Events*

One of the most popular starting places for our students is prose. A prose reading is an exercise in bringing written literature to life in the experience of both the reader and the audience. Poetry is another contest, featuring a single poem or a program made up of several selections. One of the perennial favorites with our team is duo interpretation, a contest that brings together two people in a scene from the world of drama.

### *Debate*

Debate comes in a great many varieties ranging from the free-flowing impromptu form practiced on the Parliamentary circuit to the intense one-on-one competition of the collegiate form of Lincoln-Douglas, which is policy-oriented. CMU competes in Lincoln-Douglas and parliamentary debate. Recent debate propositions have been, "Resolved: that that the United States Federal Government should significantly increase restrictions on electronically mediated communication" and, "Resolved: that the United States Federal Government should significantly increase restrictions on civil lawsuits."