



Donald C. Hudson Moot Court Competition

2024 Rules

A. Sponsorship of the Competition

The Appellate Lawyers Association, formed in 1968, is an association of lawyers who practice in Illinois courts of review, and of judges who serve on those courts. More information on the ALA is available on its website, <http://www.applawyers.org>.

B. Teams

1. Eligible Schools. Only ABA-accredited law schools may enter the ALA Moot Court Competition.
2. Team Membership. A team may consist of a maximum of three members. Team members must be matriculated in a full- or part-time law curriculum in the law school they represent. No team member may hold a law degree. There shall be no substitution of team members after a team has submitted its brief except upon the written consent of the competition sponsor.

All team members may argue in the competition, but only two members may argue in a single round. Teams shall decide for themselves how to allocate their team members.

On or before the date specified in the Rules Addendum, each team shall provide the competition sponsor with the following information for each team member and team coach or advisor: (1) names, (2) email addresses, and (3) telephone numbers. The competition sponsor will reject any brief if the team has not fully complied with this rule.

3. Team Advisors. Any person may be a team advisor, including but not limited to law school faculty or students, practicing attorneys, or sitting or former judges. For purposes of these rules, a team advisor is not considered to be a team member.

C. Briefs

1. Side Represented. Each team shall write for either the Petitioner or the Respondent. The competition sponsor shall advise the teams as to the side they represent based on the order in which their registrations were received, with odd number registrants representing Petitioner and even number registrants representing Respondent.

2. Submission of Briefs. Each team shall submit an electronic .pdf version and a word-processing file version of its brief via e-mail to Brad Jarka, ALA Moot Court Committee Co-Chair, at bradleyjarkaALA@gmail.com by the date specified in the Rules Addendum. The email subject line should read: "ALA Brief Team # ____." No other information may be included in the transmitting email's subject line. Non-conforming briefs will be rejected.
3. Brief Requirements
 - a. *General.* Except as otherwise set forth in this Rule, briefs shall conform to the United States Supreme Court Rules 33 and 34. Briefs need not be printed. All citations shall be in the form prescribed by the most recent addition of *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*.
 - b. *Size, Line Spacing, and Margins.* The brief must be on the equivalent of 8.5 by 11-inch paper. However, no hard copy or paper version of the brief will be submitted to the competition sponsor. Margins must be at least one inch on all four sides. Page numbers may be placed in the margins, but no text may appear there. The text must be double-spaced, except for quotations of more than two lines, headings, and footnotes.
 - c. *Typeface.* All type must be proportionally spaced and at least 12-point size, including headings and footnotes. Main text must be set in a plain style, except that italics may be used for emphasis. Case names must be italicized or underlined.
 - d. *Length.* Briefs may not exceed 30 pages. Alternatively, briefs may not exceed 10,000 words. Headings, footnotes, and quotations count toward the page or word limitations. The table of contents, table of authorities, statement with respect to oral argument, any addendum containing statutes, rules or regulations, and any certificates of counsel do not count toward the limitation.
4. Penalty for Exceeding the Page or Word Limit. The competition sponsors shall assess a penalty of three points per page above the page limit or per 250 words above the word limit against a team whose brief exceeds the page or word limit in Rule C(3)(d), not to exceed a maximum of six points. In order to allow the competition sponsor to verify compliance with this rule, each team must submit a copy of its word-processing file in addition to the .pdf version of its brief, as required by Rule C(2).

5. Identification of School on Brief. The cover and contents of the brief shall contain the team members' names and team number but **shall not** identify the law school. The brief shall be saved electronically with the following identification: "ALA Moot Court Team # ____." Please do not deviate from this form. Briefs that contain any other information or deviate from this form may be rejected.
6. Requests for Interpretation of the Record or the Rules. If any team seeks an interpretation of the Record on Appeal or the Rules governing the competition, the team may file a request for interpretation with the competition sponsor **on or before the date specified in the Rules Addendum.** The competition sponsor will then send an email to all competitors explaining the interpretation of the Record or the Rules. Requests for interpretation of the Record or the Rules received after the date specified in the Rules Addendum will not be considered unless they relate to concerns of oral argument administration.
7. Due Date and Service of Briefs. Teams shall serve the competition sponsor with their briefs by emailing them **on or before the date specified in the Rules Addendum** to bradleyjarkaALA@gmail.com. The competition sponsor must **receive** the team's brief by 11:59 p.m. Central Daylight Time on that date for the brief to be considered timely filed. A brief received at 12:00 a.m. will be deemed filed the next day and subject to the late penalty in Rule C(8). In determining whether a brief was timely received, the electronic time stamp of the email shall be conclusive. If a brief is timely received but rejected for noncompliance with these rules and a compliant version is submitted in its place, the time and date the compliant version is received shall control.
8. Late Brief Penalty. A deduction of five points per day (5% of the total brief score) will be made for each day or portion thereof that a brief is late, up to 20 points.
9. Brief Writing. Teams are not restricted in their brief writing to the research that is contained in the Record on Appeal. Teams are encouraged and expected to perform their own independent research on the issues presented, but are cautioned against use of material without proper attribution. If the competition sponsor determines that a brief contains plagiarized material from sources including but not limited to law review articles or appellate briefs, the competition sponsor may disqualify the brief. Teams may not use **any** artificial intelligence application to assist in the research or writing of the brief.

Any team member may write or edit the brief. While team advisors may discuss possible issues with their teams, the briefs must be the team members' work product. For example, advisors may not provide redline edits to the brief.

10. Oral Argument Preparation. Teams are encouraged and expected to practice oral argument before the competition. If a school has more than one team registered, those teams may practice against one another. Teams are permitted to practice oral arguments with, and may receive suggestions and other feedback from, anyone not affiliated with the competition.

D. Oral Argument

1. Rules Governing All Rounds.

- a. *Location.* Oral arguments will be held on the date and at the time and place designated by the sponsor of the competition, **as specified in the Rules Addendum.** In the event of unexpected shifts in State or local regulation regarding COVID-19, the competition sponsor reserves the right to revert to remote format hosted on Zoom. Should the need arise to host the competition remotely, the competition sponsor will notify teams as far in advance as possible and will distribute rules governing remote argument. Unless otherwise notified, teams should refer to this Section D for rules governing the conduct of oral argument.
- b. *Timing.* Each team will be permitted to argue for up to 30 minutes. Judges may, in their discretion, allow additional time. Two team members will argue in each round on each side (see Rule B(2)), and they may split the 30 minutes in any way they choose, except that each team member must argue for at least 10 minutes. The team arguing for Petitioner may reserve up to five of its 30 minutes for rebuttal. Only one team member may argue during rebuttal and that member must be one of the members who argued the Petitioner's case in chief.

Teams are responsible for keeping their own time and may either rely on a designated bailiff, any non-arguing team member, or any coach or sponsor to do so.

- c. *Scoring.* Each argument shall be judged and scored on scale of zero to 100 points. A team will receive a single oral argument

score, which will be the average of the argument scores from each round. The average will be added to the brief score (in proportions designated in this Section D for each successive round) in computing the aggregate score for the round. Judges shall not disclose the numerical scores or declare a winner but are encouraged to give the teams oral feedback on their performance once the round has concluded.

- d. *Identification of Teams.* Team members shall announce their individual names at the beginning of their argument and may announce their team number. Team members and advisors shall not identify their sponsoring schools or any of the other competing schools to the judges, either during the oral argument or at any time during the competition, including the competition reception. Team members are similarly prohibited from disclosing any personal information that would allude to their attendance at a particular law school. Team members and their advisors must remember that the person sharing an elevator with them may be somehow affiliated with the competition.

2. Preliminary Rounds

- a. *Number.* Each team will argue three times during the preliminary rounds, once on each side of the case and once on a randomly selected side. If there is an odd number of teams, a randomly selected team will argue without an opponent during each preliminary round, with no team arguing without an opponent more than once.
- b. *Pairings.* Teams will be paired by random selection, except that no two teams from the same school will be paired against each other and no two teams will argue against each other in more than one of the first two preliminary rounds. For the third preliminary round, every effort will be made to ensure teams do not argue against a team they have already faced.

3. Quarter-Final Round

- a. *Advancement to Quarter-Final Round.* The eight teams with the highest aggregate scores will advance to this round. The brief score will be weighted at 50% of the total score used to determine advancement from the preliminary round to the quarter-final round. Ties will be broken in favor of the team

having the higher composite brief score. If the two teams' composite brief scores are the same, the team with the highest single-person oral argument score from a single judge will advance; if both teams have the same highest single-person oral argument score, the team with the next-highest single person oral argument score from a single judge will advance.

- b. *Pairings and Side Argued.* Pairings for this round will be seeded according to scores from the preliminary rounds. A coin toss will determine which team is permitted to choose the side it will argue, with the higher seeded team calling the coin toss. A team will argue only once. Timing will be as in the preliminary rounds.

4. Semi-Final Round

- a. *Advancement to Semi-Final Round.* The winner of each pairing in the quarter-final round will advance to the semi-final round. The brief score will be weighted as 25% of the total score used to determine advancement from the quarter-final round to the semi-final round. Ties will be broken as described in Rule D(3)(a).
- b. *Side Argued.* A coin toss will determine which team is permitted to choose the side it will argue, with the higher-seeded team calling the coin toss. A team will argue only once. Timing will be as in the preliminary rounds.

5. Final Round.

- a. *Advancement to Final Round.* The winner of each pairing in the semi-final round will advance to the final round. The brief score will be weighted as 25% of the total score used to determine advancement from the semi-final round to the final round. Ties shall be broken in favor of the team having the higher brief score.
- b. *Side Argued.* A coin toss will determine which team is permitted to choose the side it will argue, with the higher-seeded team calling the coin toss. Timing will be as in the preliminary rounds.
- c. *Brief Weight.* The brief score will be weighted as 25% of the total score used to determine the winner of the final round.

6. Best Oral Advocate. To be eligible for the Best Oral Advocate award in the competition, the student must argue in at least two rounds. The student with the highest average score for the two best rounds argued shall receive the award.
7. Best Oral Advocate in Preliminary Rounds. To be eligible for the Best Oral Advocate award in the preliminary rounds, the student must argue in at least two rounds. The student with the highest average score for the best two preliminary rounds argued shall receive the award. In the event the Best Oral Advocate for the competition and preliminary rounds is the same, the award for the preliminary rounds shall go to the second-best advocate.

E. 2024 Rules Addendum—Dates

September 3, 2024: Deadline for providing the competition sponsor with the information required in Rule B(2), by 5:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time.

September 20, 2024: Deadline for seeking interpretation of the Record on Appeal or the Rules governing the competition. Questions regarding oral argument administration or other logistical questions will be received and answered after this date.

October 4, 2024: Deadline for each team to serve the competition sponsor with its brief, at bradleyjarkaALA@gmail.com. The competition sponsor must receive the team's brief no later than 11:59 p.m. Central Daylight Time on this date for the brief to be considered timely filed.

October 11, 2024: Briefs to be distributed among teams by the competition sponsor. Teams shall not serve each other with their briefs.

November 1-2, 2024: Oral arguments held in person in Chicago, Illinois. Tentative venues are:

Preliminary Rounds:

DePaul University College of Law
25 E. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604

Elimination Rounds:

Richard J. Daley Center
50 W. Washington St.
Chicago, IL 60602

The final oral argument schedule will be provided to teams no later than October 25, 2024, pending confirmation of venue.