

THE ONLINE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



DREXEL UNIVERSITY
Thomas R. Kline
School of Law



HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY
MAURICE A. DEANE SCHOOL OF LAW

UCLA LAW

Format

Teams consist of two students. Each is an advocate on one side of the case and a witness on the other. Trials are 1-on-1, with one witness per side. Schools have six trials in preliminary rounds – three on each side of the case. All trials are on Zoom.

Eligibility

Consistent with our goal of creating opportunities for students who might not otherwise be able to compete, participation is limited to J.D. candidates **not** competing as an advocate in TYLA's NTC or AAJ's STAC in 2024 (and who have not competed as an advocate in those events previously).

Schedule

The case will be released by January 5. Clarifications are due January 26. A revised version will be published by January 29.

The Coaches Meeting will be 9 pm Eastern on February 19.

This is the trial schedule. Meet-and-confer will be 15 minutes before each trial.

	February 23	February 24	February 25
12 pm Eastern	Round 1	Round 4	Quarterfinals
3 pm Eastern	Round 2	Round 5	Semifinals
6 pm Eastern	Round 3	Round 6	Championship

The Awards Ceremony will be 9 pm Eastern on February 24.

Judges

Coaches will judge preliminary trials. **Each competing team must provide one coach-judge per preliminary round.** Outside judges will judge playoff rounds.

Registration Fee

\$300 per team.

Rules

1. **Trials.** Trials will consist of openings, one witness per side, and closing. The party with the burden gets rebuttal. Each party may make one oral motion in limine. No midtrial motions.
2. **Judging.** We will have two judges in each trial, both of whom will be coaches. ***Each team must provide at least one coach with a J.D. to judge for each of the six rounds.*** Teams may rotate who judges for them each round. Coaches will never judge their own school.
3. **Meet and confer.** Parties must meet and confer 15 minutes before trial. Motions in limine and premade demonstrative aids must be disclosed.
4. **Fair play.** No scouting. No invention of fact; necessary inferences only. No coach-advocate communication between the start of meet-and-confer and the end of trial. We anticipate no protests because coach-judges will reflect advocate conduct in their scores.
5. **Timing.** Each advocate has 40 minutes to present their direct, cross, speeches, motion in limine, and response to their opponent's motion in limine. The clock stops for objections. Each side may make up to two oral motions in limine. No recesses. Judges may give 3 minutes of feedback per advocate. Witnesses keep time – including for judge feedback.
6. **Scoring.** We will use a Top Gun checkmark-style ballot. Judges select the superior advocate in seven categories: opening, direct, cross, closing, objections, theory/theme, and responsiveness. The advocate who wins more checkmarks wins the ballot.
7. **Results.** The eight teams that win the most ballots advance to the quarterfinals. Tiebreakers operate in this order: (a) checkmarks, (b) strength of schedule (number of ballots won by your opponents), (c) checkmarks by the lower-scoring advocate, and (d) coin flip. Playoffs are single elimination. Playoff rounds will be determined first by ballots and, as a tiebreaker, total checkmarks; if still tied, the better-seeded team wins.
8. **Playoffs.** *Quarterfinals* will be 1 v. 8, 2 v. 7, etc., and *Semifinals* will be the highest remaining seed v. the lowest, unless that causes same-school matchups. In *Quarterfinals* and *Semifinals*, the better seed will choose its side unless they have already faced, in which case they switch. *The Championship Round* will be two simultaneous trials (e.g., P Baylor v. D Cumberland in one room, P Cumberland v. D Baylor in the other). Because advocates will need a new witness, their witnesses may be any J.D. student.
9. **Awards.** We will have awards for top teams, top advocates, and (selected by the students) top coach-judges – those who ran the fairest trials and provided the best feedback.