

GUIDELINES FOR JURORS (SCORING JUDGES) - 2019

1. **Scoring Basics:** Scoring is based upon a scale of 1 to 10. Reserve a “10” for an exceptional, near-perfect performance and reserve a “1” for the worst possible performance. Extreme scores of 1, 2, 3, or 10 should be extremely uncommon. You may not give “0’s”, fractions, half-points or “N/A.”

- **Fill in every box on the scoresheet (no blanks).**
- **Base your scores on the students’ performances and not the merits of the case.**
- **Please choose a team in the tiebreaker category after the trial is complete.**

You are encouraged to reward student-attorneys who do not use notes or penalize those who heavily rely upon them. (Attorneys may use notes, but witnesses may not.)

Please refrain from scoring any aspect of the trial, such as the opening statement or examination of a particular witness, until **both** sides have completed their presentations. Thus, you should wait until the defense opening statement concludes to score either opening statement, and you should not evaluate the performance of witnesses until after you have seen them respond to cross-examination. This will enable you to compare the performances. The presiding judge should provide short breaks between trial segments.

2. **Team Identity / Juror Conflicts:** You should not be informed of the teams’ identities until after you have turned in your scoresheets. However, **if you believe you recognize a team or its members**, which may result in a personal conflict and/or create a situation where you may not be able to fairly score the trial, **please advise the bailiff/coordinator as soon as possible**. You will probably not be disqualified from scoring where you merely recognize team members/parents due to professional acquaintance or participation in mock trials in years previous. Nevertheless, please inform the bailiff/coordinator, who will make the decision whether to disqualify or reassign you.

If you do not become aware of the potential conflict until after the trial and you have completed your scoresheet, you should advise the bailiff/coordinator immediately. It is left to the discretion of the coordinator whether to disqualify your scoresheet.

3. **Trial Enactments:** Each team will present **three** witnesses in addition to their opening and closing statements. Witnesses are generally limited to testifying within the scope of their written statements. The teams may not use electronic devices, enlargements, costumes or props. Student-attorneys conducting cross examinations may ask questions beyond the scope of direct exam. Re-direct and re-cross examination are permitted but are limited to the scope of the preceding examination. Non-party witnesses are presumed sequestered but may remain in the courtroom for educational purposes.
4. **Time Limits:** The participants are under time restrictions. Penalties will be assessed if teams violate the time limits provided in the Rules of Competition, but you should score teams

based in part on whether they used their allotted time wisely. There is no minimum time required, and teams should not be penalized for working efficiently.

5. Witness Filibustering: Witnesses are not permitted to be unnecessarily evasive or repetitive on cross (or re-cross) examination for the purpose of using up the other team's time allotment. **DO NOT REWARD WITNESS FILIBUSTERING.**
6. Rules of Evidence / Objections: Evidentiary issues that arise during trial are governed by the Mock Trial Rules of Evidence (fashioned after the Federal Rules of Evidence). While the Rules of Evidence are simplified, they do encompass issues such as relevancy, hearsay and its exceptions, expert opinion, and others. No motions are permitted except a motion to strike inadmissible testimony.
7. Scoring Objections: The presiding judge's ruling may be based on a variety of factors, including factors other than merit. Do not base your score upon the Presiding Judge's ruling. Score teams on their knowledge of the rules and their ability to verbalize why the objection is valid or invalid.
8. Jury Deliberation (Scoresheet Tabulation): Upon the conclusion of the trial, you will be taken to a room for deliberations, which merely involves tabulating your score. If you have any questions regarding how to score the trial, please ask the bailiff / coordinator.

Please make sure to choose a team in the tiebreaker category even if you did not have a tie. That category is there in case your scoresheet ends in a tie due to penalty point deductions or an arithmetic error discovered after you are excused.

9. Comments: You may provide written comments on the various performances on your scoresheet. The teacher coaches may choose to review your comments with the students. Please write legibly and dark enough so that your comments can be photocopied. **Please keep in mind that you are scoring kids.**

You do not have to identify yourself on the scoresheet, but you may, if you wish.

PLEASE REFRAIN FROM COMMENTING ABOUT HOW YOU THOUGHT THE CASE WAS WEIGHTED.

10. Verdict: The winner will be the team which wins the majority of the scoresheets for that trial.
11. Meeting with the Students: After court is adjourned, please feel free to meet with the teams to answer their questions and offer constructive comments. Most teams greatly appreciate this courtesy. However, you should be mindful of whether they have other rounds in which to compete that day or whether the courtroom is needed by other teams and, again, remember that you are talking with high school students