Rules and Procedures
Thad T. Hutcheson Moot Court Competition | Texas Law

Overview
The Thad T. Hutcheson Moot Court Competition is a 64-person, single-elimination tournament. Tryouts are open to all students enrolled in Persuasive Writing and Advocacy. Advancement in the competition is based on a written brief and oral arguments before a moot court.

You are responsible for reading these rules. If you try out for or participate in the competition, you are responsible for complying with the rules, regardless of whether you have read them.

Dates
First round: Friday, April 22, 2-6 p.m.
Second and third rounds: Saturday, April 23, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Quarterfinal and semifinal rounds: Sunday, April 24, 12-4:30 p.m.
Final round: Monday, April 25, 4-5:30 p.m.

Competition Director
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Canvas
If you are interested in participating in the competition, you must enroll in the Hutcheson Moot Court Competition 2022 organization on Canvas. Your writing lecturer will provide self-enrollment instructions. You should regularly check the Hutcheson Canvas site for announcements and information about the competition.

Trying out for the Competition
To be eligible for the competition, you must attend the Hutcheson Moot Court Information Meeting. Be sure to sign in at the meeting. You also must fill out and submit a Participation Agreement to your writing lecturer. The Participation Agreement is due no later than Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. Participants will be selected based on the quality of their briefs and oral arguments.

Briefs: The final brief you submit for a grade in your Persuasive Writing and Advocacy course will be your tryout brief for the competition. A late brief or a brief that exceeds the word limit will make you ineligible for the competition.

Oral arguments: The oral argument you present on the final brief problem in your Persuasive Writing and Advocacy course will be your tryout for the competition.
Selection: The writing lecturers will choose the participants based on the final briefs and oral arguments. Selection decisions are final. Names of students selected for the competition will be posted on the Hutcheson Canvas site on Wednesday, April 20, 2022.

Briefs

Deadline and submitting briefs: Submit your brief to your writing lecturer according to the instructions provided in your Persuasive Writing and Advocacy course and at the time designated by your writing lecturer.

- If you are selected for the competition, by 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 20, you must e-mail an electronic copy of your brief to BeckCenter@law.utexas.edu. Put your name on the title page of this brief. Do not include your word count or exam number anywhere in your document. Include all parts of the brief in a single document. (For example, do not submit the Table of Contents in one document and the argument in another.) Name your document according to this convention: side_FirstnameLastname. For example, Jane Smith, representing the appellant, would name her document appellant_JaneSmith. The director will post all competitors’ briefs on the Hutcheson Canvas site.

Do not raise any procedural defects in the record: Because of the academic nature of this competition, some degree of artificiality in the problem record is unavoidable. If you see (or think you see) procedural defects in the record, they may not be raised as issues in your brief.

Research cut-off: Do not cite, in your brief or in your oral argument, any authority decided, passed, or published after January 25, 2022.

Deadline for asking clarifying questions: The writing lecturers have their own policies about answering questions on the brief problem as a graded component for your Persuasive Writing and Advocacy course. Follow your lecturer’s instructions.

For the competition, questions that seek clarification about the brief problem can be directed to your instructor. If the writing lecturers believe a clarification is needed, the question and answer will be posted on the Hutcheson Canvas site. For the competition, the writing lecturers will not answer any questions about the brief problem submitted after 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22, 2022.

Brief format: Use the format required by your instructor.

The Competition
Advancement in the competition is based on the quality of a participant’s brief and the quality of the participant’s oral argument.
Determining brief points: The writing lecturers will score the briefs written for their classes. (Note: The brief score in the competition is not correlated to a grade in the Persuasive Writing and Advocacy course.) Each writing lecturer will award—

- 20% brief scores of 5 points (the highest score)
- 20% brief scores of 4 points
- 20% brief scores of 3 points
- 20% brief scores or 2 points
- 20% brief scores of 1 point (the lowest score)

Determining oral-argument points: Each oral-argument round is judged by three judges. Each judge will vote for one of the participants as the winner of that round; each winning vote receives 2 points. (Judges may not split their points.)

For example, if advocate A is selected as the winner by all three judges, advocate A receives 6 oral points. If one judge votes for advocate A and the other two judges vote for advocate B, advocate A receives 2 points and advocate B receives 4 points.

Rounds
Brackets: The writing lecturers will place participants in a single-elimination bracket. The bracket will be posted on the Hutcheson Canvas site.

Schedules: The times, rooms, and sides for each round will be posted with the bracket. The posted times are starting times. You should check-in at the check-in table 10 minutes before the round start time and proceed to your assigned room. If you arrive more than five minutes late, you forfeit the round.

Sides: You must be prepared to argue either side of the brief problem.

Seating: Counsel for Petitioner/Appellant sits on the judges’ left.

Time allocation in rounds: Each participant has 15 minutes to argue. Petitioner/Appellant may reserve up to 5 minutes for rebuttal.

Computing scores after each round: Your brief points (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) are added to your oral-argument points (0, 2, 4, or 6). The highest total score wins the round. If the score is a tie, the person who received more oral-argument points wins the round.

We do not announce brief points or oral-argument points.

Winners: For all rounds except the final round, we will post the brackets after the last argument in the previous round. We will announce the winners of the final round in the courtroom shortly after the round.

Bailiffs: Counsel for Petitioner/Appellant must provide a bailiff (timekeeper) for all rounds except for the final round. We will provide a bailiff for the final round. Your bailiff may not be another student currently in the competition. Bailiffs keep time, collect ballots from the judges.
after the round, and return ballots and time cards to the check-in table. Bailiffs may not look at the ballots before returning them. It is your responsibility to make sure your bailiff complies with this rule. Bailiffs must come to the check-in table at least 10 minutes before the round starts to pick up their instructions and the time cards.

**Failure to compete**
If you are selected in the tryout rounds but do not compete as scheduled throughout the competition, you may not list on a résumé that you were selected for the Hutcheson Moot Court Competition. The law school’s Board of Advocates may also sanction you for failure to compete.

**No wagering**
Participants in the competition may not wager on the outcomes of the competition.

**Other penalties**
If you do not comply with any competition rule or procedure or with any law-school rule that applies to student activities such as this competition, the director has the discretion to disqualify you from the competition or impose another penalty.

**Conflicts, Observers, and Waiver**
**Conflicts:** Students who want to participate in the competition should keep the competition dates open. We will try to accommodate unavoidable religious conflicts for those students who strictly observe religious restrictions, but we generally cannot accommodate travel. Students who have possible religious scheduling conflicts for the competition must submit a Religious Accommodation Form to the director by the day and time specified by the director during the competition meeting. Because of the size and complexity of the competition, we can make few accommodations.

**Observers in the oral rounds:** We encourage everyone to attend the final round. Other competition rounds are also open to observers, including other competitors.

**Waiver or reduction of penalty in extraordinary circumstances:** The director reserves the right to waive or reduce penalties in extraordinary circumstances. If you believe that some unusual situation entitles you to the waiver or reduction of any penalty, you must submit a written request for the waiver to the director. The written request should be accompanied by appropriate documentation (for example, a note from a doctor). Check with the director to find out what other documentation may be appropriate.

**Modification of rules in extraordinary circumstances:** The director reserves the right to modify these rules if the orderly completion of the competition requires modification.