

# RULES FOR THE 2021 NATIONAL BIOETHICS BOWL

*Note: These rules are adapted from the APPE Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl®'s rules and also make allowances for the fact that 2021's National Bioethics Bowl will be a virtual event.*

## PROCEDURAL RULES:

1. In a National Bioethics Bowl match, each team will be questioned by a moderator on a case. In early 2021, the ten (10) cases will be posted on the National Bioethics Bowl website. Each case will have three (3) accompanying questions. Students will not know which case they will debate each round, nor will they know which of the three questions they will be asked. Like the teams, Judges and Moderators will also have access to the cases and questions but will not be informed in advance of the specific cases/questions teams will be asked about at the Bioethics Bowl.
2. Teams can be any size but only five (5) or fewer can be active participants at any time. Substitutions cannot be made once the initial five or fewer are seated and ready for action. Substitutions CANNOT be made once the case is announced. Team members must be undergraduates. Any student who leaves the virtual room during a match cannot return to the table until the case being discussed at the time they left is no longer being discussed. Once the chosen team members are seated at the beginning of the round, no changes to the team composition can be made for the duration of the entire round.
3. During competition books and notes will not be allowed, however, scrap paper to jot down thoughts is permissible. The teams will be given a copy of the case and the question to which they must respond. Teams should wait to use the scratch paper until the case has been announced. Students are permitted to pass notes to one another at any point. At the halfway point in a match teams will be instructed by the moderator to clear notes taken during the first half of the match from the table and placed out of sight of all participants.
4. During competition, teams are allowed to use their own timers with these restrictions:
  - a. The teams must be made to understand that their personal timers are never official—only the moderator keeps official time.
  - b. Teams may not time opposing teams.
  - c. As much as they can, teams should try to use timers in an unobtrusive a fashion (turning off beepers or turning down the volume when possible, not setting too many alarms, etc.). This is intended as a recommendation rather than a strict rule.
5. During each part of the competition teams have the option of requesting time warnings. If the team requests time warnings, they will receive one warning with three minutes remaining and one warning at one minute remaining. Teams are not permitted to request any other time warnings. Moderators will indicate whether they typically use visual warnings only, verbal warnings only, or both, and then ask teams if they would prefer it done differently.

*(Note: for each portion of a match, the moderator will call a hard stop at the end of time. In the past, teams were allowed to finish their sentences. This is no longer the case. When time elapses, moderators will simply say, "that's time.")*

6. During each team's conferral period, the other team may also confer, but should be conscious of not being a distraction; the moderator will enforce this at their discretion.

7. The Moderator will indicate the case with which the team that goes first (hereinafter Team 1) will deal, and then read Team 1's question about the case.

8. Team 1 will then have two (2) minutes to confer, after which they may use up to ten (10) minutes to respond to the Moderator's question. More than one team member may contribute to the response, but only one team member may speak at a time.

9. The opposing team (hereinafter Team 2) receives one minute to confer, and then may use up to five minutes to comment about Team 1's answer to the Moderator's question. (In elimination rounds, teams get 6 minutes to comment.) More than one team member may contribute to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.

10. Team 1 receives one minute to confer and then may use up to five minutes to respond to Team 2's commentary (In elimination rounds teams get 6 minutes to respond). More than one team member may respond to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.

11. The judges then may ask questions to Team 1. Each judge is limited to one question and one follow up until all judges have had an opportunity to ask a question. If time remains after each judge has had an opportunity to ask a question, then judges may ask a team additional questions. Prior to the beginning of the 10 minute question session, judges are allowed one minute to confer. Moderators should remind teams to be aware of the time they use by conferring amongst themselves before responding to a question." Different team members may respond to the questions of different judges. Teams may huddle briefly to discuss their answers to the judges' questions." Moderators will give judges a five minute and a three minute warning.

12. The judges will evaluate Team 1 and Team 2 on score sheet provided to them (see scoring rules below). **AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, THE JUDGES WILL NOT ANNOUNCE TO THE TEAMS THE SCORES THEY HAVE GIVEN THEM.**

13. Team 1 and Team 2 will reverse roles for a second round with a different case.

14. At the close of the second round the Moderator will ask the judges to announce the teams' scores for the match (see scoring rules below.)

15. The team with the greatest number of judges declaring them winner is the winner of the match. Any team that wins on two judges' score sheets wins the match. If a team wins on one judge's score sheet and ties on the other two, they win the match. If neither team wins on more of the score sheets, then the match is deemed a tie (even if one team scores a greater number of total points).

## **RULES FOR ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR, SOCIAL DISTANCING, AND VIRTUAL CONSIDERATIONS**

1. The moderator is in charge of the room. Should any problem arise that indicates unacceptable behavior (see below), the moderator should attempt to address it. Should that become impossible or if the issue is very serious, the designated disputes official should be called in and a time-out must begin, until the issue is resolved.

2. In the interest of health safety and competitive balance and since some teams will be allowed by their institutions to be in the same room and others will not, all competitors are required to use separate electronic devices and to be in separate physical locations while participating in the virtual bowl.

3. On an honor system and in the spirit of the Ethics Bowl, the following things are prohibited. Any violations of these rules will result in the forfeiture of the match:

- a. Coaches communicating in any way with their team during a match.
- b. Team members not seated for the match communicating in any way with the seated members of the team during a match.
- c. Outside observers communicating in any way with team members during a match.
- d. Team members using pre-typed or pre-written notes during the match.
- e. Team members using phones or any other devices other than the one being used for the match

*Note: If a coach of a team becomes aware of a violation of any of the above rules by their own team, they are expected to self-report the violation.*

4. The person to handle disputes at the national competition will officially be known as "Disputes Official."

5. Teams during a match may pass notes to each other using the regional platform (ex. Zoom) private chat function, and/or use scratch paper to take notes during the match.

6. Examples of unacceptable behaviors include: a) Coaches communicating with students excessively while a match is in progress. Note that a simple smile or nod is not inappropriate. b) Coaches acting demonstrably to potentially distract the opposing team (e.g., rolling eyes or shaking head while the other team speaks). The degree of demonstrability should be taken into consideration. c) Judges berating students. d) Students (audience and team members) being loud during opposing team's presentation and discussion. e) Foul, graphic or insulting language by any/all parties. f) Any behavior that might be construed by a reasonable person as sexual harassment is unacceptable.

7. The moderator may call a “time out” at any point of the match if it appears connectivity is impacting the ability of participants to hear and be heard. The moderator will stop the timer and will resume the match when the matter has been resolved to the moderator’s satisfaction.

8. If connectivity issues impact a match to such a large degree that there is no way to salvage a competitive experience for the two teams, the moderator may suspend the match, and the match will be rescheduled, and if possible, with different cases.

9. All team members, judges, and moderators are required to have their webcams turned on during all parts of the match. If a participant is having bandwidth problems which results in the video not working, they must inform the moderator. In such a case the moderator may allow them to continue competing with their webcam turned off.

## **REGISTRATION FEE REFUND RULE**

A full refund of the national competition registration fees is available up to one month prior to the competition. After that date, a full refund will be awarded only in the event that another team is available to fill the vacated spot.

## **RECORDING RULE**

At the national competition teams are allowed to record any round except for the final round, but (1) must secure permission from the other team prior to the round, and (2) must do so in a fashion that is not disruptive to any of the participants. The organizers of the competition will be responsible for taping the final round.

## **SPONSOR RULE**

Every team participating in either a regional or national ethics bowl competition must have a sponsor from their school who is either (1) a regular faculty member or (2) either an adjunct instructor or graduate student who is authorized by the school to sponsor a team. There is no requirement that the sponsor travel with the team to competitions. Teams without sponsorship may petition the APPE IEB Subcommittee for permission to compete. Said petition must explain why they are unable to obtain school sponsorship." The faculty sponsor must be the point of contact for the team and must be responsive to communications from APPE in a timely manner. Failure to communicate regarding the status of a team could result in the team forfeiting their spot in the IEB.

## **FEEDBACK AND SPIRIT POINTS**

Judges will be able to provide feedback to the teams. This is optional and will be contingent upon time factors. There is also a place for judges to enter Spirit Points. Spirit Points reflect the judges’ assessment of the extent to which each team’s presentation embodied the spirit of the ethics bowl competition (in particular with respect to civility.) Each judge decides this score on his/her own on a

five-point scale and the scores are to be displayed at the end of the round along with the other points. Spirit Points are not part of a team's total score and are not a factor in determining which team wins the match; they are just there to provide feedback.

Time permitting (for up to 5 minutes after a match), students may ask questions of the judges on their performance and for constructive criticism. Students are not permitted to argue with the judges about their scores or to berate them.

## **“NO SHOW” RULE**

### *A. If an Odd Number of Teams Fail to Show Up for Nationals*

If there is an odd number of teams, the organizers for the bowl will ask teams that have more members than usually can sit for a match if they would be willing to have some of their students help comprise a “stand-in” team to compete in case of an uneven number of teams. If a team can be created with at least three students, then that team will be the stand-in team. If not, then a bye round will be utilized.

If a bye round schedule is needed it will be employed as follows. With an odd number of teams, one team each round will have a bye. This requires that there is a round for just those teams that have had byes (henceforth known as the "bye make-up round"). The bye make-up round will take place during the lunch break. Since there are an odd number of preliminary rounds, an additional team will be needed (henceforth known as the "additional team"). To the extent feasible, the organizers should attempt to allow teams to volunteer to serve as the additional team (i.e., the team that plays an extra match during the bye round). If no team volunteers, then if more than one team fails to show up for the competition, the divisions should be shuffled via a random process until all the teams with a bye are in the same division.

The additional team will then be the team in that division of the remaining teams who (1) are not already scheduled to play all of the bye teams, and (2) are bringing the greatest number of team members. If there is no single team (of the remaining teams in the division) who is bringing the greatest number of team members, then a random process will be used to determine the additional team, from those teams tied for greatest number of team members. In the event that there is no team in the division that doesn't play at least one of the bye teams, then the team from outside the division with the greatest number of team members will be the additional team. If there is no single team from outside the division with the greatest number of team members (i.e., if two or more teams are tied from greatest number of team members), then a random process will be used from among those teams that are tied for greatest number. If more than one additional team is needed, the same process shall be employed to determine the second or third additional teams. The additional team's results are not counted in their bye round match, but the team they play against will have their results counted (the same is true for multiple additional teams).

### *B. If an Even Number of Teams Fail To Show Up for Nationals*

If an even number of teams fails to show up, the divisions should be shuffled via a random process to make it the case that an even number of teams is in each division. No bye round is necessary.

## **RULE REGARDING FEES FOR EXTRA LARGE TEAMS**

The registration fee for the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Championship covers the first eight members of a team. (Members include competitors and coaches.) There will be an additional per person fee of \$15 for each member of a team beyond eight.

## **RULE REGARDING OFFICIAL COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES FOR TEAMS**

The person listed as ‘sponsor’ on the registration for the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Championship is considered to be responsible for decisions relating to the team and is understood to represent the school in all matters related to the team. This person is responsible for ensuring all members of the team are eligible to compete and for accepting or rejecting the team’s invitation to the National Bioethics Bowl.

## **RULE REGARDING DISQUALIFIED TEAMS**

If a team is found to have violated a rule that the competition organizer finds to merit disqualification from a match, even if that finding comes after the match is over, the team will be disqualified from the round.

Teams facing a team that is disqualified from a match will be awarded a win in that match, with a judge majority of 2-1, and a point differential of 0.

## **SCORING RULES**

1. Judges shall evaluate the responses of teams solely in terms of the following criteria:

- a. Clarity and Intelligibility - Was the presentation clear and systematic, and did the team answer the moderator’s question? Regardless of whether or not you agree with the conclusion, did the team give a coherent argument in a clear and succinct manner?
- b. Identification and Discussion of Central Ethical Dimensions: Did the team’s presentation clearly identify and thoroughly discuss the central ethical dimensions of the case?
- c. Deliberative Thoughtfulness: Did the team’s presentation indicate both awareness and thoughtful consideration of different viewpoints, including especially those that would loom large in the reasoning of individuals who disagree with the team’s position?

2. The judges will score each team as follows:

- a. 0-30 for a team’s answer to the Moderator’s question (30 best); in evaluating a team’s answer the judges will give the team a score of 0-10 relative to each of the three evaluation criteria indicated above and total the sum.

- b. 0-10 for the opposing team’s commentary (10 best).
- c. 0-10 for the response to the opposing team’s commentary (10 best).
- d. 0-10 for the response to the judges questions, by the team that answered the Moderator’s question (10 best).

In evaluating a team’s commentary, the other team’s response to the commentary, and a team’s response to the judges’ questions the judges will take into account the three evaluation criteria indicated above, but give the teams an overall score, rather than a separate point score relative to each of the criteria.

3. The top four teams in the competition will be determined in the following way.

*Preliminary Rounds:*

At the end of the four preliminary rounds, teams will be ranked based on a) the number of wins, followed by b) the number of ties, followed by c) point differential. Thus, all teams with four wins will rank ahead of all teams with three wins. All teams with three wins will rank ahead of all teams with two wins, etc. Within rankings, a team with more ties ranks above a team with fewer ties. Finally, for teams with the same number of wins and ties, a team with a higher point differential would rank above a team with a lower point differential.

For example:

<b>TEAM</b>	<b>WINS</b>	<b>TIES</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>RANK</b>
School R	4 wins	0 ties	12 point differential	1st
School M	4 wins	0 ties	10 point differential	2nd
School B	3 wins	1 tie	15 point differential	3rd
School S	3 wins	0 ties	-8 point differential	4th
School H	2 win	2 ties	-6 point differential	5th

Note, for example that School B has a greater point differential than School M, and School H has a lower negative point differential than School S. Nonetheless, M ranks ahead of B because it has more wins, and, likewise, S ranks ahead of H.

Point differentials: Point differentials are the margin of victory or loss. A point differential for each match is determined by taking the team’s total points and subtracting the other team’s total. Note that point differentials will not necessarily be negative in the case of a loss. At the end of the preliminary rounds the point differential for a team is simply the sum of the point differentials for that team in each of its four preliminary matches.

The 4 teams with the highest ranking based on the preliminary rounds will enter the elimination rounds.

*Ties at the end of the preliminary rounds:*

- a. If 2 teams have the same ranking, and if they played against each other during the three rounds of play, whoever won that competition will gain the higher ranking.
- b. The method in a) above will also apply to a 3 (or more) way tie in ranking, just in case all teams played each other and transitivity holds (e.g. A beat B, B beat C, but C did not beat A).
- c. In case numbers a) and b) do not determine a winner, then raw points will be used to determine a winner.
- d. Finally, if a-c above fail, an impartial random process will determine the final outcome between the teams. In case 2 teams are still tied, a coin toss will be used. If more than 2 teams still remain, the high card drawn from a standard deck of playing cards will decide. This process will be repeated until the outcome is decided.

4. The winner of the Ethics Bowl, among the top four teams, will be determined as follows:

*Elimination Rounds*

The top 8 teams will face each other during the elimination matches.

Judges will use the same numerical scoring guidelines as they did during the preliminary rounds.

The winner of the National Bioethics Bowl will be the team that wins all their matches in the elimination.

*In case of a tie in a quarterfinal or semifinal match:*

- a. the team with the most points in the match wins the tie-break, or else
- b. if the two teams have faced each other in the preliminary rounds, the winner of that match wins the tie-break, or else
- c. the team with the most wins in the preliminary rounds wins the tie-break, or else
- d. the team with the most ties in the preliminary rounds wins the tie-break, or else
- e. the team with the highest point differential in the preliminary rounds wins the tie- break, or else
- f. the team with the highest total points in the preliminary rounds wins the tie-break, or else
- g. a coin toss decides the winner of the tie-break.

*Ties during the Final Match:*

- a. the team with the most points in the match wins the tie-break, or else
- b. the two finalists will be declared co-winners of the National Bioethics Bowl.