

FORMAT, PROCEDURAL RULES, AND SCORING RULES OF THE BIOETHICS BOWL

PROCEDURAL RULES:

1. Cases are typically 1 to 3 pages long. In a Bioethics Bowl match, each team will be required to answer a question posed by the moderator; that question will be drawn from the questions that appear at the end of the case. The teams will not know in advance which cases will be selected or which case questions they will be asked. Judges and moderators will also receive copies of the cases but, like the teams, they will not be informed in advance of the specific cases or questions that teams will be asked at the competition.
2. Teams must have a minimum of three (3) members, but only six (6) or fewer can be active participants at any time. Substitutions cannot be made once the team members are seated and ready for action. Substitutions CANNOT be made once the case is announced. Team members must be current undergraduates. Any student who leaves the table 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's composition can be made for the duration of the entire round.
3. During competition, books and notes will not be allowed. Scrap paper to jot down thoughts is permissible and will be distributed by the host school. The question to which a team must respond along with the text of the case from which the question is taken will be made available to the teams at the beginning of the round. Teams should wait to use the scratch paper until the case has been announced and the timer has started. Students are permitted to pass notes to one another during case presentations. At the end of the first round, the moderator will remove the used scratch paper, and new scratch paper will be provided for the second half of the match.
4. During competition teams are allowed to use their own timers with these restrictions:
 - a. Personal timers are never official—only the moderator keeps official time.
 - b. The timers cannot store data or connect to the internet (iPhones, etc.).
 - c. Teams may not time opposing teams.
 - d. Timers must be set to silent so as not to interrupt the match.
 - e. If a timer is accidentally stopped, the moderator, in accordance with the judges, should reset the timer to the closest approximation.
5. During each part of the competition, the moderator will ask teams if they want 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 ask teams if they would prefer verbal or visual warnings.

6. The end of time for each part of a round will be a “hard stop,” with moderator simply saying “that’s time” at the end of the time for a particular portion of a match. Presenters must stop speaking immediately once time is called.
7. 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.
8. The Moderator will pick one of the teams to call a coin flip (or use an equivalent transparent method). The winner of the flip (or equivalent) gets to decide whether to go first or second. The moderator will indicate the case assigned to the team that goes first (hereafter Team 1), and then read Team 1’s case question. (The Moderator will not read aloud the entire case).
9. Team 1 will then have two minutes to confer, after which they may use up to ten 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.
10. The opposing team (hereafter Team 2) receives one minute to confer, and then may use up to five minutes to comment on Team 1’s response to the Moderator’s question. More than one team member may contribute to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.
11. Team 1 receives one minute to confer and then may use up to five minutes to respond to Team 2’s commentary. More than one team member may respond to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.
12. The judges will then pose 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 ten-minute question session, judges are allowed one minute to confer. Different team members may respond to the questions of different judges. Teams may huddle briefly to discuss their answers to the judges’ questions, but moderators should remind teams to be aware of the time they use by conferring amongst themselves before responding to a question. Moderators will give judges a five minute and a three-minute warning.
13. The judges will evaluate Team 1 and Team 2 on the 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.
14. Team 1 and Team 2 will reverse roles for a second round with a different case which will be distributed by the moderator.

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

16. 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 than the other team, then the match is deemed a tie. (Point differences are not tie breakers).

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:

3-30 for a team's answer to the Moderator's question (30 = best); in evaluating a team's response 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.

1-10 for the opposing team's commentary (10 = best).

1-10 for the response to the opposing team's commentary (10 = best).

1-10 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 overall ranking of teams in the qualifying rounds of the competition will be determined in the following way:

- a) the number of wins, followed by
- b) the number of ties, followed by
- c) point differential

Thus, all teams with three wins will rank ahead of all teams with two wins. All teams with two wins will rank ahead of all teams with one win. 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.

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 be negative in the case of a loss.

4. The winner of the Bioethics Bowl will be the team that wins the final round.

5. Rules for breaking ties:

- a. If two teams have the same ranking and they played against each other during the qualifying rounds of play, whoever won that match will earn the higher ranking.
- b. The above method 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 rules 5a and 5b do not determine a higher ranking, then raw points will be used to determine the highest ranking.
- d. Finally, if a-c above fail, an impartial random process will determine the final ranking between the teams. In case 2 teams are still tied, a coin toss will be used.
- e. In the event of a tie during the final round, the team with the greatest point differential across all rounds of the day wins the tie-break, or else the two finalists will be declared co-winners of the National Bioethics Bowl.

RULES FOR ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

- 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. The person to handle disputes at the competition will be determined by the host institution.
3. Examples of unacceptable behaviors include:
 - a) Coaches communicating with students 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 or influence judges (e.g., rolling eyes or shaking one's 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 the 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.

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.

RECORDING RULE

Teams are not allowed to record any round; however, the organizers of the competition may choose to record the final round.

SPONSOR RULE

Every team participating in the Bioethics Bowl is encouraged to 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. The sponsor is not required to travel with the team to competition.

FEEDBACK

Judges may provide feedback to the teams.

Feedback will be contingent upon the availability of time.

Students are not permitted to argue with the judges about their scores or to berate them.

Note: These rules have been adapted with permission from the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl

Updated 7/26 (changes include clarification regarding scrap paper and clarification of tie breaker rules)