



CENTER FOR
ANIMAL LAW
STUDIES
AT LEWIS & CLARK

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE
ANIMAL LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

2010 NATIONAL ANIMAL LAW COMPETITIONS

HOSTED BY:

The Center for Animal Law Studies at Lewis & Clark,
in collaboration with the Animal Legal Defense Fund

&

Student Animal Legal Defense Fund at Harvard Law School

**CLOSING ARGUMENT
COMPETITION RULES**

RULE I. ORGANIZATION

The National Animal Law Competitions (NALC) are an inter-law school event comprised of the:

1. Appellate Moot Court Competition;
2. Closing Argument Competition; and the
3. Legislative Drafting & Lobbying Competition

The purpose of these competitions is to provide law students an opportunity to develop knowledge in the field of animal law and to hone their written and oral advocacy skills.

RULE II. PARTICIPATION

A. Competitor Eligibility. Participation in the Closing Argument Competition is on an individual basis. The Competition will be open to the first sixteen (16) students to register and submit payment. Should the competition sell out, potential competitors are encouraged to register for the waitlist as a spot may become available.

Each school may enter up to two competitors. Competitors must be full- or part-time students seeking a J.D. at any ABA accredited law school in the United States or an accredited law school in Canada who have completed at least one year of their studies.

First year law students are only eligible to compete in the Legislative Drafting & Lobbying Competition at the National Animal Law Competitions.

B. Substitution. In the event of an emergency, schools may send an alternate Competitor. The school or individual competitor must immediately notify the Competition Administrators of the change.

C. Registration. Participants must submit a fully completed registration form and pay the registration fee of \$200 (The registration link is provided on the NALC website.). Should a participant withdraw from the competition, a full refund minus a \$15.00 administrative fee is available until December 1, 2009. There will be no refunds after December 1st.

RULE III. TRIAL RECORD

The trial record will consist of a transcript of testimony, documents received in evidence and jury instructions. All of these items are posted on the NALC website.

RULE IV. FORMAT OF PRELIMINARY ROUND

A. Format of the Problem. Using the trial record, each participant will prepare a closing argument for *either* the plaintiff or the defendant to be delivered to a panel of six (6) jurors. The participant need only prepare a closing argument for one side (again, plaintiff or defendant) and

present this argument in both the preliminary round and, should he or she advance, the final round. Each participant will be allowed a maximum of twenty (20) minutes to present their arguments.

B. Preliminary Rounds. There will be one preliminary round during which each participant will present a closing argument to a panel of jurors in a standard jury trial format. Participants will not be permitted to sit in on other closing arguments during the preliminary round and will be called into the room on an individual basis.

C. Format of Argument. At the commencement of each presentation, the participant shall inform the jurors/judges for which party they are delivering their closing argument. The participant will then be allowed a few moments to prepare for delivery of his or her argument. When the jurors are ready to begin, the Bailiff/Timekeeper will announce that the participant may begin and the 20-minute time period will commence.

D. Timekeeping. The Bailiff/Timekeeper will display a green card until only three minutes remain of the participant's allotted time. When three minutes remain, a notice will be given (a separate card reading "3" will be displayed). When one minute remains, a yellow card will be displayed. When the participant's time has expired, a red card will be displayed. The participant must conclude promptly upon display of the red card.

RULE V. VISUAL AIDS AND PROPS

Visual aids are a scored element of the Closing Argument Competition. Visual aids and props may include posters, boards, enlarged photographs, or other items. Students may not use power point projections, and are also prohibited from using any photographs not provided in the competition problem.

RULE VI. SCORING

A. The jurors will be asked to rate each participant on a scale of 1 to 10, with these numbers representing the following:

- 1-2:** Below average performance
- 3-4:** Minimum level of acceptability
- 5-6:** Average performance
- 7-8:** Good performance
- 9-10:** Outstanding performance

B. The jurors are to consider the following factors in assigning a rating to each participant:

- (a)** Use of facts (1-10 points). Selecting and using the strongest facts effectively, including the ability to address negative facts. Stating facts accurately and not misrepresenting them.

- (b) Use of jury instructions (1-10 points). Educating the jury as to the criteria to be used in rendering a verdict. Effectively weaving in discussion of the jury instructions with the facts.
- (c) Persuasive content of presentation (1-10 points). Whether the presentation is persuasive, creative and memorable.
- (d) Demeanor (1-10 points). Demonstration of a professional level of confidence, delivery, pronunciation, diction, use of eye contact, appearance, overall effectiveness of the advocate.
- (e) Effective use of appropriate visual aids (1-10 points).

RULE VII. ADVANCING TO THE FINAL ROUND

A. Judging Competitors. Following the presentation of each argument, the jurors will complete an evaluation for each participant. At the conclusion of the preliminary round, the jurors will also rank the top four participants who will move onto the final round. The same six jurors will score each of the participants in all rounds.

B. Tie-Breaking. In the event of a tie, the tie will be resolved by consideration of the rankings given by the jurors. The rankings will be evaluated by assigning to them the following points:

1st = 5, 2nd = 4, 3rd = 3, 4th = 2, 5th = 1, no ranking = 0 points.

The participant with the highest rankings will advance. For instance, if participants A and B each have 24 points but participant A was ranked 3rd by three jurors and 4th by three jurors (for a total of 15 points) and participant B was ranked 2nd by one juror, 3rd by 4 jurors and 5th by 1 juror (for a total of 17 points), participant B will advance to the final round.

RULE VIII. FORMAT OF FINAL ROUND

A. Format Change. The format of the Competition changes in the final round. In the final round, Competitors will deliver their closing argument as if at a bench trial. The standard jury trial format will only apply in the preliminary rounds. In the final rounds, the “jurors” are now “judges” and will act as such. Competitors should be ready to answer questions interjected by the panel of judges in this bench trial format.

B. Competitor Order. The four finalists will be randomly assigned a presentation order in the final round.

C. Round Closed to Finalists. The competitors in the final round will not be permitted to view the closing arguments of other competitors in the round.

D. Judges. Six (6) judges will hear and score all arguments in the final round.

E. Determining Placing. Upon completion of the final round, the competition winner will be determined by considering the total score given to each participant in the final round only. In the

event of a tie, the rankings given to each participant will determine the winner. See *infra* Part VII (B).

F. Notification of Advancement. The names of the competitors that will advance to the final round will be announced at the Saturday evening banquet.

RULE IX. AWARDS

The winner of the competition will receive an individual plaque, as well as a plaque for display by his or her law school. Semi-finalists will receive individual plaques. Winners' names and photos (unless otherwise instructed) may be posted on the NALC website.

RULE X. RESTRICTIONS

A. Coaching. Competitors may not receive coaching, advice, or assistance from anyone who will be a judge for any of the three events comprising the 2010 National Animal Law Competitions. The burden for determining coaching eligibility rests with the competitor(s). If competitors plan to ask their animal law professor or a local animal law attorney for assistance, they should first ask whether this person is acting as a judge for any of the 2010 National Animal Law Competitions.

B. During the Competition. Coaches may assist competitors before and after each round, but may not provide assistance or feedback during rounds. Coaches may only attend the preliminary rounds of their team(s), no others. The final round will be open.

C. Communication with Judges. During the competition, competitors and coaches may not discuss the rules, problems, cases, strategy, or scoring, and may not receive any advice, feedback, or coaching from the NALC judges beyond feedback provided immediately after each round.

RULE XI. PENALTIES

Penalties, including disqualification, may be assessed for failure to comply with the rules or deadlines set pursuant to these rules.

RULE XII. INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES

Requests for interpretation of these rules should be made at the earliest date possible. Competitors will receive prompt notification of any new rules, as well as revisions to or interpretations of existing rules. All competitors shall be bound by any changes, effective at the time of notification.

Questions about the National Animal Law Competitions should be directed to:

Competition Administrator Liberty Mulkani
Center for Animal Law Studies at Lewis & Clark,
in collaboration with Animal Legal Defense Fund

Email: lmulkani@aldf.org

Please note that Ms. Mulkani will not respond to any questions that are clearly addressed in the rules and/or guide. Be sure to read both documents in their entirety before emailing questions. Also be sure to refer back to both documents from time to time.

The Center for Animal Law Studies at Lewis & Clark, in collaboration with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, wishes you a fun and productive 2010 Closing Argument Competition. Best of luck to all competitors!