



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY'S WONK INVITATIONAL

NOVEMBER, 2020

NOVEMBER 14-15, 2020

4400 MASSACHUSETTS
AVE NW, WASHINGTON,
D.C. 20016

HOSTED BY AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY'S SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**HEAD COACH:
MIKE ROMANO**

(571) 241 5962
mromano@gmail.com

**TOURNAMENT
COORDINATOR:
RACHEL BOOSE**

(509) 828 9786
Rachel.Boose@student.
american.edu

PARTICIPATING TEAMS:

American University

Eastern Michigan
University

Furman University

George Washington
University

Hillsdale College

Howard University

Santa Clara University

Stevenson University

The University of Iowa

University of Maryland

University of Toronto

University of Vermont

Washington University
in St. Louis

University of New
Hampshire

University of South
Carolina

University of Oregon

WELCOME

Welcome to the 2020 Wonk Invitational! American University Mock Trial is excited to host you in “Virtual Washington DC” this year. While this season is going to look a little different than normal, we are excited to use this virtual format as an opportunity to bring together a tournament field from all across the country - and even across borders. It’s not often you get to see so many different time zones represented at an invitational, so we are pleased to host such a diverse field of teams to learn and grow from. Who knows, maybe you will run into each other again at Nationals!

As we navigate this unprecedented experience, we appreciate your patience and understanding. As always, if you have any questions, concerns, or comments please don’t hesitate to reach out.



COMPETITION SCHEDULE

ALL TIMES IN EST

FRIDAY

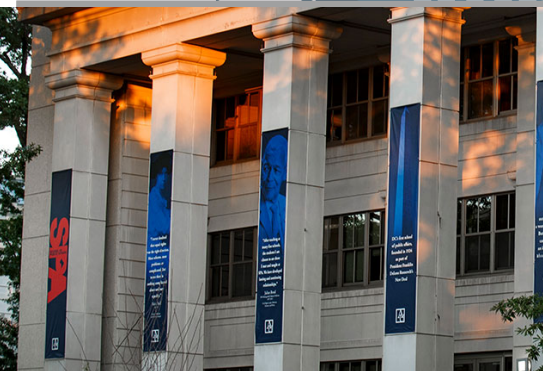
8:30 PM - OPENING CEREMONY

SATURDAY

10:25 AM - ZOOM ROOMS OPEN
10:30 AM - CAPTAIN'S MEETING
10:45 AM - JUDGES INSTRUCTED TO
JOIN ZOOM ROOM
11:00 AM - ROUND 1
1:30 PM - BREAK FOR LUNCH
3:00 PM - ZOOM ROOMS OPEN
3:05 PM - CAPTAIN'S MEETING
3:20 PM - JUDGES INSTRUCTED TO
JOIN ZOOM ROOM
3:30 PM - ROUND 2

SUNDAY

10:25 AM - ZOOM ROOMS OPEN
10:30 AM - CAPTAIN'S MEETING
10:45 AM - JUDGES INSTRUCTED
TO JOIN ZOOM ROOM
11:00 AM - ROUND 3
1:30 PM - BREAK FOR LUNCH
3:00 PM - ZOOM ROOMS OPEN
3:05 PM - CAPTAIN'S MEETING
3:20 PM - JUDGES INSTRUCTED TO
JOIN ZOOM ROOM
3:30 PM - ROUND 4



Due to the unique format of this year, times are subject to change due to technical difficulties, conflicts, etc..

LOGISTICS

We will use eight separate Zoom courtrooms. Teams will receive their links to their assigned courtroom with their pairings for each round. We will post pairings before every round in a Google spreadsheet which each team will be able to access.

We will have a bailiff for every single court zoom-room.

The bailiff will keep official time and will have final say in the event of any disputes over time. Teams are advised to designate a time-keeper for each round as well. Time keepers should communicate privately in the chat with the bailiff to verify times.

Bailiffs will not be providing time signals during elements, so we encourage teams to figure out their own method of alerting their competitors to time remaining.

One person per team will be allowed to record the round. Before the round begins, this person must contact the bailiff to receive permission to record.

Opening ceremonies will be on Friday evening, November 13th at 8:30 PM EST. We'll offer a few welcoming remarks, cover tournament logistics, and Announce Round 1 Pairings. You will receive courtroom links on Friday night so you can go straight to your courtrooms on Saturday morning.

Closing ceremonies will be on Sunday afternoon after Round 4. We will announce individual and team awards, as well as individual awards which will be mailed to the recipients after the tournament.

CAPTAIN'S MEETING PROCEDURES

All captains meetings will take place using the same Zoom link that will be used for competition. Once captains are present in the room, the bailiff will send them to a separate breakout room to conduct a captains meeting.

As soon as you enter the Zoom courtroom, each captain should rename themselves using the following format:

SIDE - Your Name

For example: P - Your Name

For example: D - Your Name

Once in the breakout room, one of the Plaintiff captains should share their screen and pull up the captains meeting form using the provided Google Form. The captains should complete the form together and then submit the form.

Once the form has been submitted, the teams should return to the main courtroom. Do not exit the call.

You will not be given "all clear" until the captain's form has been received and conflicts checks have been performed. Once the form is received, the tab room will give the all clear to the bailiff. The bailiff will then announce all-loss and that the trial may begin.



Every student must compete using a separate device. No students should share devices if they are competing in a round.

Whenever competitors are not participating in a trial function, they will be required to mute their audio and turn off their video.

All schools must follow CDC and state/local guidelines on the proper precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

All competition communication rules apply in the same way they would apply for a normal in-person AMTA competition. From the moment the trial begins to the moment the tabulation room confirms that ballots have been received, competitors may communicate only with their rostered teammates, their opposition, and the presiding Judge.

Team members are permitted to communicate with each other however they choose, including phone calls, text messages, group chats, or any other methods. There are no restrictions on how rostered team members may communicate during a round. Our recommendation for how to communicate during the round is to share a google doc with your teammates in which you can write to each other.

Teams should designate a timekeeper for each trial to monitor time limits for both teams. Those individuals should remain in regular contact with the bailiff throughout the round and should keep the trial participants informed as time limits expire.

Teams' own timekeepers are permitted to appear on screen during opening statements and closing arguments, and may also turn on their video during examinations to provide attorneys and witnesses with a silent time update.

In the event that a competitor's connection fails and they are removed from their trial room, the competitor should take the following steps:

A. If the competitor is actively participating in trial (for example, if a competitor is giving a statement or examination or is the directing/crossing attorney for the current witness), the trial must immediately stop. Another member of that student's team should notify the presiding judge that the competitor has left the room and should work to make contact with the missing competitor. The trial should resume only when the competitor has returned.

B. If the competitor is not actively participating in a trial but does need to participate in a future aspect of a trial (for example, an attorney with a direct/cross remaining, or an attorney giving a closing argument), the trial should not stop immediately. That student should make efforts to reconnect as quickly as possible. If the connection issue appears likely to last longer than 1-2 minutes, the missing student should alert one of their teammates. That teammate should then alert the presiding bailiff. If that competitor has not reconnected by the time they would need to appear on camera, the trial must stop.

C. If the competitor is not actively participating in trial and does not need to participate in the remainder of trial (for example: a witness who has finished testifying, or an opening statement attorney who has finished their direct and cross), the student should attempt to reconnect when possible. The trial will not be stopped for a student losing connection if the student does not have remaining roles in that trial.

D. The Bailiff will have the final word in any disputes about when to stop time. The bailiff will also be responsible for advising competitors, judges, and the tab room on how to respond to tech issues not addressed by the above procedures.



RULES

HOW TRIAL WORKS

We are going to follow the Zoom format is as follows:

The presiding judge will keep their video on throughout trial but will remain muted unless they need to speak.

The scoring judges will keep their audio and video off throughout trial but will be instructed on what to do if they lose connection. The bailiff will also check to make sure the scoring judges are present after each break.

Student competitors will keep their video off and audio muted except when they are participating in a trial function. Participating in a trial function refers to the following situations:

- Handling pre-trial matters/introductions
- Giving an opening statement or closing argument
- Giving a direct examination or cross-examination
- Testifying as a witness
- Listening to the opposite function for a witness they are handling, including their own witness on cross examination and the witness they will be crossing when that witness is on direct examination

All other observers must keep their video and audio off for the entirety of trial. If a non-competing observer has their camera or audio on, the bailiff will turn your audio and camera off. If coaches, parents and friends intend to watch a trial, they must make certain they remain muted and hidden at all times.

Once in their courtroom, team members should name themselves using the following format:

Attorneys in the round: P/D - Name

EX: P - Jordan Ryder

Witnesses in the round: P/D - Witness Name

EX: D - Alex Grace

Other team members in the round: First Name, Last Name

EX: Remy Muchard

Teams will receive their pairings and courtroom links on Friday evening for Round 1 and as quickly as possible after the previous round has ended for Rounds 2, 3 and 4. **Those pairings will be posted in a shared google folder that will contain all the information and links for the entire tournament.** There will be a spreadsheet for each round's pairings, links to the court rooms for each round, and contact information for the bailiff in each room. Please check this folder regularly throughout the weekend.

Captains meetings will happen 30 minutes before each round. Teams are required to attend captains meetings and will not be given permission to start their trial until their captains meeting form is received. Please see the Captains Meeting Procedures located earlier in this rulebook for more details.

Before the trial begins, each team is permitted to designate one person to record the trial. Upon request, the bailiff will give that individual the ability to record the round - and the bailiff will instruct teams on when that person may begin recording. Teams will not be permitted to record judge comments.

Bailiffs will communicate with the tournament staff to confirm there are no conflicts in each room, that the captains' form was submitted, and announce when all loss is.

During the mid-trial break, the Bailiff will move the two teams into breakout rooms to allow the teams to meet privately. The judge will be instructed to allow a break prior to closings, and the bailiff will once again move teams into separate breakout rooms.



BALLOTS

WE WILL BE USING AN ELECTRONIC TABULATION SYSTEM MADE UP OF GOOGLE SHEETS.

ALL JUDGES WILL USE A GOOGLE FORM BALLOT SET TO RECORD THE SAME INFORMATION AS A STANDARD AMTA BALLOT.

HEAD COACH MIKE ROMANO WILL DISTRIBUTE THESE FORMS THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND.

PAIRINGS, WIN-LOSS RECORDS, AND INDIVIDUAL AWARDS WILL BE TABULATED USING THE SYSTEM DESIGNED BY SAM JAHANGIR OF UCHICAGO.

TEAMS WILL BE REQUIRED TO FILL OUT A GOOGLE FORM WITH THEIR ROSTERS IN ORDER TO CALCULATE INDIVIDUAL AWARDS.

In order to remember these unique virtual circumstances, we would love to offer you a t-shirt memento you can order directly through these links!

<https://www.customink.com/fundraising/american-university-wonk-invitational>

Shirts will be available through November 24th, and orders will be delivered on December 10th.



If you've been on the hunt for mock trial roommate/parent gear, consider purchasing from the following two links:

<https://www.customink.com/fundraising/mock-trial-parent>
<https://www.customink.com/fundraising/the-mock-trial-roommate>

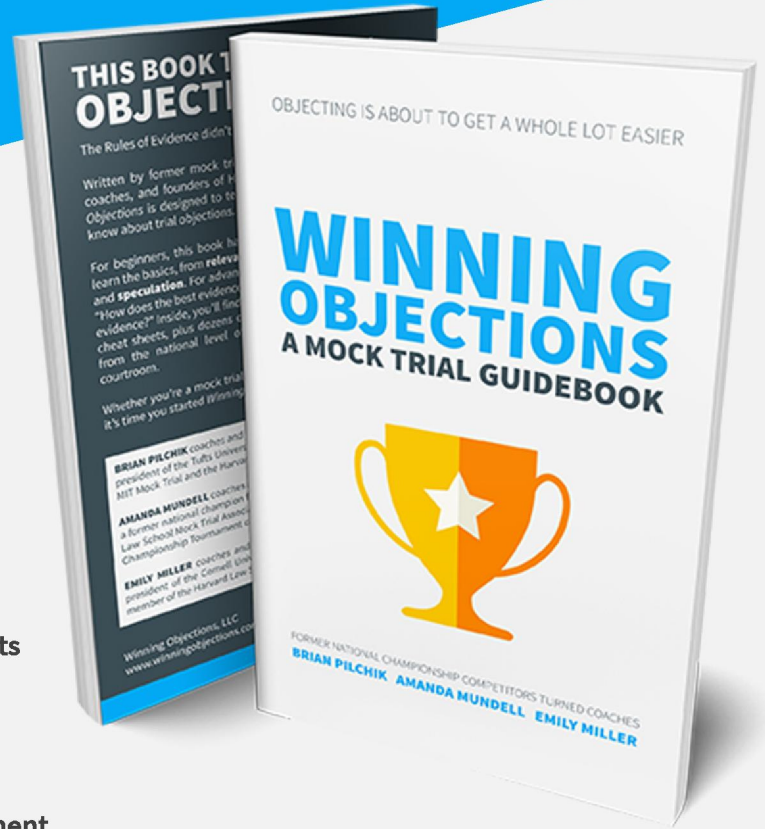
Both of these will be available to purchase until December 2nd, and will be delivered on December 18th. We hope you, your roommates, and your parents enjoy!



Last but not least, we want to thank you all for choosing to participate at our Wonk Invitational. Mock Trial is a great community of people and we're excited to be connected once again. Remember to take care of yourselves, rest up, and have a wonderful weekend competing in virtual Washington DC!

Obsessed with objections? Yeah, us too.

That's why we wrote a
whole book about them.



9 CHAPTERS

and 200+ pages on every objection, from
“authenticity” to “vague and ambiguous”



PRO TIPS

to teach you tricks from college and law
school national championship tournaments



100+ TRANSCRIPTS

and examples to show you how it sounds
to make each argument and counterargument



LEARN THE LAW

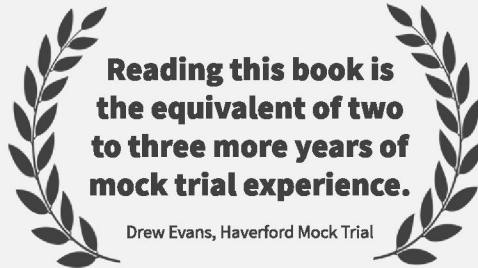
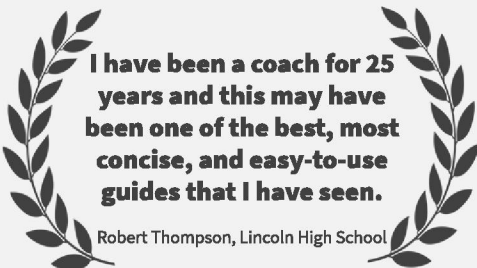
used in mock trial competitions at the
high school, college, and law school levels



adopted by multiple

TOP 10 PROGRAMS

at colleges and universities nationwide



Written by three Harvard Law School graduates
and edited by over 20 attorneys, alumni, and coaches.

LEARN MORE AT winningobjections.com