

Thomas Tang Moot Court Competition
Judge's Oral Argument Scoring Sheet

Round # _____ Room # _____ Teams # _____ (P) vs. _____ (R)

Petitioner Team # _____

Counsel #1
Name _____

Counsel #2
Name _____

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (40)

Evidence of Research:
Knowledge of the record, the issues, and the law

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (40)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Organization & Reasoning:
a. How does Counsel perform in answering questions and returning to the argument?

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

b. Is Counsel's argument convincing irrespective of the merits?

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Forensic Performance:
Counsel's presentation and courtroom manner

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (100)

Total:

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (100)

Combined Scores for Petitioners: _____

Respondent Team # _____

Counsel #1
Name _____

Counsel #2
Name _____

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (40)

Evidence of Research:
Knowledge of the record, the issues, and the law

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (40)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Organization & Reasoning:
a. How does Counsel perform in answering questions and returning to the argument?

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

b. Is Counsel's argument convincing irrespective of the merits?

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Forensic Performance:
Counsel's presentation and courtroom manner

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (20)

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (100)

Total:

Min **Max**
(0) _____ (100)

Combined Scores for Respondents: _____

Judge's Name _____

Thomas Tang National Moot Court Competition

Suggested Guidelines for Judges

To ensure consistency of scoring among judges, please bear in mind that the score for an average competitor should be between 78-82. This is considered a competent score. For those who are more familiar with or more comfortable with letter grades, we offer the following guidelines:

For items scored between 0 and 40:

36 - 40 = A
31 - 35 = B
26 - 30 = C
21 - 25 = D
00 - 24 = F

For items scored between 0 and 20:

19 - 20 = A
17 - 18 = B
15 - 16 = C
13 - 14 = D
00 - 12 = F

- A. **A word about procedure.** The bailiffs for your competition rounds have been instructed as to their duties. Basically, when you enter the room for the beginning of the argument, the bailiff will call "All Rise" and read the introduction. You will sit immediately when you reach your places. At that time, the Chief Justice (whichever person you choose amongst yourselves) will advise the parties to be seated and will call the case. Then the Chief Justice will ask if counsel for the appellant and the appellee are ready. When the court is ready to hear the arguments, the Chief Justice may advise the first counsel for the appellant to begin.

Each counsel has fifteen minutes to present his or her argument. However, counsel for appellants may reserve two minutes (in one minute increments) for rebuttal. The first counsel to argue for appellant must reserve time for rebuttal. The entire rebuttal time can be deducted from either person's argument. Counsel for appellant are responsible for notifying the bailiff of how rebuttal time is to be split up.

Given space limitations, at the close of the argument, you may wish to ask counsel to leave rather than have a formal ending. This way, you can calculate the scores for each counsel and the combined score for each team. This scoring is to be done individually by each Justice and not by the panel as a group. Then, when you are ready to do your critique, call counsel back into the room for critique.

- B. **In the Preliminary & Semifinal Rounds, you do NOT announce a winner.** Teams advance based on their total points score as follows:

Brief Score

- + Preliminary Round I Score (team member 1's avg. score + team member 2's avg. score)
- + Preliminary Round II Score (team member 1's avg. score + team member 2's avg. score)

TOTAL SCORE

Thus, no team actually wins "a round." You also do not have access to the brief score, and thus cannot calculate total points.

The teams advancing to the semifinal rounds will be announced after both preliminary rounds have been concluded and scored. The teams advancing to the final round will be announced after the semifinal round has concluded and scored.

- C. **In the Final Round, you DO announce a winner.** In the final round, the judges are not required to tabulate score sheets or take brief scores into consideration. However, if the court wishes to do so, it may request the brief scores of the final two teams and assign oral argument scores. After listening to arguments, the court will make a majority decision as to which team won the round.
- D. **A word about scoring.** The point differential on the Scoring Sheet is highly important because teams advance from preliminary arguments and are seeded according to their total number of points accumulated from the preliminary rounds.

The total cumulative score for each counsel should range between 50 (extremely poor) to 100 (perfect). The range for average performances is 78 to 82.

- E. **Conflicts.** If a judge should know a particular student that is arguing before him or her, that judge must notify the on-site coordinator immediately of such conflict for room reassignment. If a judge has a conflict with a particular school for whatever reason (e.g. bias as an alumnus of a particular school), that judge must notify the on-site coordinator immediately of such conflict for room reassignment. Judges are not to ask students what school they are from, even after the round is over.

Scoring Categories:

Evidence of Research: knowledge of the record, the issues and the law.
(minimum 0 points - maximum 40 points)

1. Does counsel give a broad but brief overview of the argument?
2. Does counsel have thorough knowledge of the record?
3. Does counsel have a thorough knowledge of the cases? Is counsel able to direct you to important language therein?
4. Does counsel emphasize the important issues?

Organization and Reasoning:

(a) performance in answering questions and returning to the argument.

(minimum 0 points – maximum 20 points)

1. Is counsel responsive to questions rather than evasive or repeatedly unable to give an answer? (Deferring to one's partner is permissible where such a question involves the other team member's argument, but if that person fails to answer the question in his/her argument, the latter may be penalized at your discretion).
2. Is counsel able to answer a question with authority, either theoretically or with case names?
3. Is counsel able to fit relevant questions into his/her overall analysis and argument?
4. Is counsel able to continue his/her argument following a question?
5. Is counsel candid about weak points in his/her arguments?

(b) convincing argument irrespective of the merits.

(minimum 0 points – maximum 20 points)

1. Does counsel argue the heart of the matter adequately and is he/she appropriately selective in discussing issues?
2. Does counsel employ reason and logic rather than just relying upon precedents?
3. Are counsel's arguments clear and direct?
4. Are the issues firmly fixed in the Court's mind when counsel leaves the Court?

Forensic Performance

Counsel's presentation and courtroom demeanor.

(minimum 0 points – maximum 20 points)

1. Is counsel trying to be helpful to the Court?
2. Does counsel project an image of professional sincerity toward his/her client?
3. Does counsel have distracting non-verbal mannerisms?
4. Does counsel maintain good eye contact?
5. Does counsel know his/her argument or does he/she refer excessively to notes or read a prepared text?
6. Is counsel respectful and courteous rather than sarcastic, condescending or resentful?
7. Does counsel have good speaking style?