



Southern Region

Serving NBLSA Chapters in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands

SOUTHERN REGION OF THE NATIONAL BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION



JAMES BALDWIN PRE-LAW DEBATE TOURNAMENT

2021-2022 OFFICIAL RULES

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JAMES BALDWIN PRE-LAW DEBATE TOURNAMENT

Preface

The James Baldwin Pre-Law Debate Tournament (JBPLDT) Committee reserves the right to amend these rules (Rules) and to make any decision, which shall be final, regarding any aspect of the JBPLDT. Please be advised that all sections of the Rules where there is mention of a Committee refers solely to the JBPLDT Committee.

Use of the JBPLDT Problem

The JBPLDT Problem, as prepared by the Southern Region Pre-Law Debate Tournament Review Board, is copyrighted material. No school may use the JBPLDT Problem for any purpose, except in connection with the school's participation in the 20210-2022 Competition, without the express written consent of the Southern Regional Chair for the National Black Law Students Association. This prohibition does not preclude a school from using the JBPLDT problem in intramural competitions or try-outs to select a team for the JBPLDT.

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

In October 2020, the Executive Board for the Southern Region of the National Black Law Students Association (SRBLSA) voted to create the James Baldwin Pre-Law Debate Tournament. The purpose of the Tournament is to create a mechanism to engage the Pre-Law Student Division of the National Black Law Students Association. Those who participate will gain heightened skills by honing their oral advocacy skills, learning strategic research skills, and engaging with practicing attorneys while debating timely topics. Thus, the competition is appropriately named the James Baldwin Pre-Law Debate Tournament.

ARTICLE II – GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The JBPLDT is administered under the direction of the JBPLDT Committee.

ARTICLE III – JBPLDT COMMITTEE

The JBPLDT Committee shall consist of the SRBLSA Chair, SRBLSA Vice Chair, SRBLSA Pre-Law Director, SRBLSA Mock Trial Director, and SRBLSA Moot Court Director. These students shall have the responsibility for coordinating the tournament. The JBPLDT Committee is responsible for keeping the SRBLSA Executive Board informed as to the progress of the competition. The JBPLDT Committee shall also be responsible for answering all questions and responding to all requests for rule interpretations of a substantive nature regarding their year's competition.

ARTICLE IV -- INFORMATION

All information will be posted to the SRBLSA JBPLDT homepage at srblsa.org/convention. Requests for general information should be directed to the SRBLSA Pre-Law Director at srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org and must be in writing via email. The SRBLSA Pre-Law Director will issue a written response within a reasonable amount of time about matters pertaining to the tournament. All teams will be notified of the question and the written response about the problem through the SRBLSA website at the conclusion of the official question period.

ARTICLE V – COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY

A. Rules Pertaining to Individual Competitors

A potential competitor of the JBPLDT must be an active member of his or her affiliated Pre-Law Student Division Chapter before the qualification deadline for the respective competitions. An active member shall be generally determined by the affiliated Pre-Law Student Division Chapter.

B. Academic Standing:

In order to be eligible to compete, competitors must be enrolled in an undergraduate program at an accredited university during the entire academic school year in which they compete. Competitors must also be in good academic standing at the school they attend during the entire academic year in which they compete. The letter of good academic standing for each team member must be completed by or from their registrar's office on official letterhead. This letter must be submitted with the registration form, NBLSA financial status and engagement letter of verification (please see (C)(2) below). All competitors are subject to eligibility verification.

C. Local Pre-Law Student Division of NBLSA Chapter Standing:

1. Members seeking to compete in the JBPLDT must be national dues paying members by the qualifying deadline.

Each team member must be a National dues paying NBLSA member in the current year. A letter must be drafted by the team member's Pre-Law Student Division of NBLSA President, Vice President, or Treasurer and shall include that they are a NBLSA member in good standing prior to entering the competition and the date the participant became an active NBLSA member.

Each school is limited to three (3) teams. Additional teams may be added based on availability after registration is closed.

2. Teams must submit a letter of verification for each team member from your Pre-Law Student Division of NBLSA chapter president. The letter shall also include that the team member has participated in one (1) programming event. A team's letter of verification and NBLSA financial standing for each team member should be submitted at the time of registration completion through the registration form.

D. Applicability of School Honor Code:

Each team member is bound by their school's honor code (or its equivalent) and must not receive any outside assistance except as described. The JBPLDT Committee has the discretion to disqualify any team or individual team member for any violation of such code.

E. Rules Pertaining to Team Dues:

In order to be eligible to compete, National Dues of the team's chapter must be paid by December 31, 2021.

F. Registration:

1. Team Member Registration Required: Each member of the team must register and remit all fees, including all NBLSA dues.
2. **Entry Form and Fee:** Each team entering the competition must submit an entry form and entry fee. For 2021–2022, there will be no registration fee.
3. ***Multi-team registration:** The JBPLDT shall cap the number of participating teams at eighteen (18) entries. Schools wishing to send more than three (3) teams will need to register their priority three teams first. After December 1, 2021, if the cap has not been reached, schools will be allowed to register any additional teams they wish to send.

Samples of all of the supplemental forms (Letter of Good Academic Standing, Letter of Local Pre-Law Student Division of NBLSA Chapter Standing, and Programming Requirement Letter) can be found on the SRBLSA JBPLDT homepage but need to be signed, completed, and uploaded at the time of registration through the registration website.

4. **Contact Information:** On the entry form, each team **must** designate a contact person to whom all official correspondence will be sent by the JBPLDT Committee. The contact person may be the team coach or a team member.
5. A mailing address and an electronic mailing address must be provided for the **contact person**. A daytime and evening phone number must also be included. If the contact person has a different phone number while school is not in session, that number must also be included. If the contact person changes his or her address or is replaced, the JBPLDT Committee must be notified within forty-eight (48) hours via email. Any information, questions, or concerns discussed with this person will be considered as information disseminated to the entire team.

All communication between the JBPLDT Committee and the teams must be through the contact person.

G. Composition of Teams:

- 1. Number of Team Members:** Each team shall consist of only two (2) undergraduate students who are enrolled at the same school. Students will be responsible for arguing both the affirmative and the negative. *In the spirit of the James Baldwin Pre-Law Debate Tournament and its commitment to developing skilled advocates, there will be no exceptions made for this rule.*
- 2. Substitution of Team Members:** No substitution of team members after registration may be made except in exigent circumstances, (e.g.: medical illness, lack of academic good standing with the school, death) subject to the written approval of the JBPLDT Committee. All substitutions must be supported with the appropriate documentation (e.g.: letter from doctor/hospital, letter from chapter advisor, etc.). Failure to obtain written approval from the JBPLDT Committee to substitute team members will result in penalties at the Committee's discretion up to and including ten (10) point penalty and/or automatic disqualification.

Note: Teams may NOT register any alternates at any time during the registration process. Individual requests for substitutes must be made directly to the Committee in the event of an emergency.

- 3. Outside Assistance:** Each team must be prepared to argue on behalf of the affirmative and the negative with appropriate cross-examination of opponents without any outside assistance. A team coach may participate with team members in preliminary general discussions of the problem, issues presented, judging practice rounds, providing general critiques and general decision-making as to strategy. While team coaches are allowed to watch rounds, they are **not** permitted to give assistance to team members **during any** portion of the competition rounds. For the purposes of this rule, Rounds begin when the judges enter the room and are not officially over until the judges gives critiques. Coaches may not speak with their team until after critiques are given. The Pre-Law Director has the discretion to disqualify or assess penalty points to any team who speaks with their coach during the round.

ARTICLE VI – TIME TABLE

Date	Description
October 4, 2021–January 28, 2022	Registration between these dates will be available. The problem will be released upon registration. Q&A period begins.
January 28, 2022	Registration deadline; Q&A Deadline
February 24–27, 2022	Inaugural James Baldwin Pre-Law Debate Tournament administered

ARTICLE VII – COMPETITION

A. Location of the Competition:

The Competition shall be held during the SRBLSA Regional Convention. Please be aware that given the anonymity of all competing teams, nothing prohibits two teams from the same school from competing against each other in any round of the competition.

B. Eligibility to Compete at the Competition

The Competition shall include all teams that have submitted completed Registration Packets including:

- Competition Registration form
- Academic letters of Good Academic Standing for each Team Member
- Letters of financial Good Standing with local NBLSA Pre-Law Chapter for each Team Member
- List of Coaches

Note: By submitting the Registration Packet, team members forfeit any right that they may have to their submitted packets, rounds and any derivatives of their work thereof.

ANY COMPETING TEAM MEMBER THAT IDENTIFIES OR CAUSES TO BE IDENTIFIED ANY OF ITS SCHOOL, SOCIAL, CIVIC, OR FRATERNAL AFFILIATIONS THROUGH THE USE OF APPAREL, JEWELRY, HAND GESTURES, OR MATERIALS BROUGHT INTO THE COURTROOM SHALL BE SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION OR POINT PENALTY AND FEE FORFEITURE.

A “competing team member” is one who has not been eliminated from the competition rounds. Once a team is eliminated from the competition, then they are no longer considered competing teams and are no longer bound to the anonymity rules. However, if a second or multiple team attending the same school as the disqualifying team advances, the disqualified team may not disclose their school identity.

C. Designation of Side That Teams Will Argue:

The side that a team will argue in the first and second preliminary rounds of the Regional Competitions will be determined by the JBPLDT Committee in alphabetical order by team in the scheduling process. During the first and second preliminary rounds, each team should be prepared to argue each side, for the affirmative and alternatively, for the negative.

D. Team Withdrawal from Regional Competition:

If a team would like to withdraw, they should notify the JBPLDT Committee through the SRBLSA Pre-Law Director of their intention not to participate after the pairings have been established but before the competition has begun. Absent extreme circumstances, a withdrawing team must notify the JBPLDT Committee in writing at least 5 days before the beginning of the competition. Please note that extreme circumstances are situations such as

family/personal/health emergencies and other situations to be determined at the discretion of the JBPLDT Committee. The JBPLDT Committee will make the necessary changes in preliminary round pairings and notify the affected teams of the changes as soon as possible. Schools/teams that find they must withdraw from the competition are expected to notify the JBPLDT Committee at their earliest possible date.

FAILURE TO NOTIFY THE JBPLDT COMMITTEE OF A TIMELY WITHDRAWAL MAY RESULT IN YOUR SCHOOL BEING BANNED FROM COMPETING IN JBPLDT FOR ONE YEAR.

E. Preliminary Rounds:

Each team will argue at least once for the affirmative and once for the negative. Team advancement will be first based on win/loss record, and then, in the event of a tie, ballots, and points.

Sample of preliminary round structure for the Competition:

Preliminary Round 1

A (representing affirmative) v. B (representing negative)
C (representing affirmative) v. D (representing negative)
E (representing affirmative) v. F (representing negative)
G (representing affirmative) v. H (representing negative)
I (representing affirmative) v. J (representing negative)
K (representing affirmative) v. L (representing negative)
M (representing affirmative) v. N (representing negative)
O (representing affirmative) v. P (representing negative)
Q (representing affirmative) v. R (representing negative)

Preliminary Round 2

R (representing affirmative) v. A (representing negative)
P (representing affirmative) v. C (representing negative)
N (representing affirmative) v. E (representing negative)
L (representing affirmative) v. G (representing negative)
J (representing affirmative) v. I (representing negative)
H (representing affirmative) v. K (representing negative)

F (representing affirmative) v. M (representing negative)
D (representing affirmative) v. O (representing negative)
B (representing affirmative) v. Q (representing negative)

F. Team Governance:

a. Identification

Each team will be assigned a random letter accompanied by predetermined competitor identification (Team Identification Letter) numbers at the close of the team registration period by the JBPLDT Committee. **Competing team members are not to divulge their school affiliation to judges in attendance at the Competitions until after the final round.** It is especially important that team members do not reveal this information to the judges as some judges may be used again in later rounds. If a competing team member is asked by a judge or a bailiff what school the team member represents, the student should respond that the rules do not permit the divulging of that information until after the competition. **Team members are permitted to divulge their names within the competition.**

b. Late Arrival of a Team

In the event that a team fails to appear on time for any round of any competition, that team may be disqualified from the competition. If the late team is allowed to participate and arrives at a time that permits that round to begin on time without schedule disruption, the round may be so held but the late team shall receive an appropriate point deduction, as indicated on the Scoring Rubric.

G. Judges:

1. Before the start of any round, team members and coaches are required to disclose any relationship or affiliation to the judge of that round, if such relationship exists. The JBPLDT Committee will then make an appropriate substitution. If a relationship or affiliation exists and is not disclosed at any time between a competing team and a judge of that team's round, that team will be subject to disqualification.

2. If a judge fails to appear for his/her scheduled trial, then the JBPLDT Committee may substitute judges. Professors and other school faculty and staff may not sit for a trial involving schools with which they are affiliated. Law students may judge any aspect of the competition at any level. Coaches may be asked to serve as substitute judges in the event of extreme exigent circumstances.
3. If a situation exists where the JBPLDT Committee is unable to find a qualified person to judge a round, the JBPLDT Committee members are permitted to sit as a judge for that round.

H. Changed Circumstances:

In the event of circumstances that directly affect the advancement of any Debate team member(s), the JBPLDT Committee is required to give reasonable notice to the team members (or coaches) of the teams directly affected.

I. Videotaping Competitions

By virtue of entering the JBPLDT Committee, teams agree that some, all, or none of the rounds at the National Competition may be videotaped by SRBLSA for the exclusive benefit of the Association and any other educational use as determined by the National Executive Board.

Spectators, competitors and coaches are not permitted to record any aspect of the JBPLDT rounds.

J. Spectators

Spectators will be permitted during all rounds contingent upon physical space capacity. **Team coaches are allowed to be in the competition room. Neither team coaches nor spectators are permitted to interact with any of the team members on either side during the competition round.** This includes any form of communication and hand gestures. Team members are allowed to talk to each other during breaks, outside of the presence of the judge. Teams who violate this rule are subject to a point penalty or disqualification, at the discretion of the JBPLDT Committee.

K. Communication During Rounds

Competing team members are only permitted to talk to their teammates for the duration of an individual round. Teammates are NOT permitted to talk to their coach(es), the judge(s), the bailiff, opposing team, or the opposing team's coach for material assistance once the judge is seated. If this is violated the opposing team is permitted to file a grievance.

L. Unprofessional Behavior:

1. All competitors must conduct themselves in a professional respectful manner at all times. Behavior that is inconsistent with professional standards and common decency will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to the use of profanity, physical and/or verbal threats to any other person involved with the competition, including but not limited to competitors, administrative officials, and or support staff, loud or disruptive remarks, disrespect of any person involved with the competition, or intoxication.
2. If any team member is found to have engaged in any type of inappropriate behavior, that team will be subject to point penalties at the discretion of the competition judge, and/or disqualification, at the discretion of the JBPLDT Committee.
3. If a team is disqualified for their unprofessional behavior, the JBPLDT Committee will send a letter to the team's school Dean requesting that appropriate action be taken against the individual(s) or team.
4. If a team or an individual member of a team continues to act unprofessionally after they are eliminated from the Competition, the JBPLDT Committee will send a letter to the team's school Dean requesting that appropriate action be taken against the individual(s) or team.

ARTICLE VIII – SCORING

A. Round Scoring:

The judges will be given a list of criteria and will score each team member accordingly.

Area	Description
Constructive Argument	Advocate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented a cohesive theory of the argument • Argued persuasively and effectively • Used the sources effectively • Minimal reliance on notes, had a good clear pace, spoke clearly, and had good eye contact
Cross-examination	Advocate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified the weakness in opposing team's arguments • Defended themselves against attack • Used the sources effectively • Reacted appropriately to the preceding argument and stayed on topic • Used leading questions
Rebuttal	Advocate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified the weakness in opposing team's arguments • Used the sources effectively • Appropriately used and reacted to the information presented by their opponent

B. Determining the Winner of a Round:

A tabulation committee composed of the JBPLDT Committee and their respective designees shall determine the scores for each team.

C. Best Advocate:

There will be an award given at the Regional Convention to the advocate with the highest combined individual scores from the preliminary round(s).

ARTICLE IX – GRIEVANCES

A. Grievance Process

1. A grievance should only be filed if the grieved complaint would change the outcome of the round. Grievances submitted in any manner other than that laid out by the following procedure will NOT be accepted.

Grievances are generally limited to the following violations of the following JBPLDT rules:

<u>Grievance</u>	<u>Minimum Penalty Assessed</u>	<u>Maximum Penalty Assessed</u>
Inappropriate communication during the trial between team members	3 points	5 points
Inappropriate communication during the trial between team members and coaches	5 points	10 points
Article VII(L) unprofessional behavior	5 points	10 points

There will be a five (5) minute recess between the second affirmative rebuttal and the Judges’ critiques.

A team will waive their right to file a grievance, based on anything that occurred during a trial if they fail to do so PRIOR to the Judges’ critiques.

2. Grievances must be submitted on the Grievance Form that is provided at the start of each round. The Grievance Form must be completed after the trial concludes but before the judges’ critiques are given. Grievances must be filed with the JBPLDT Committee through the designee listed on the provided form. The JBPLDT Committee or its designee will assess the

situation and what information is needed before deciding the matter. If further information is needed, the JBPLDT Committee or its designee will consult with the Judges in the presence of the Bailiff, after the Judges' critique. The Bailiff will not participate in the discussion with the Judges unless specifically requested to do so; they are only present as observers. The conduct referenced in the grievance will be described to the judges and the nature of the rule violation alleged explained. The Judge(s) and/or Bailiff shall be requested to state whether they were aware of said conduct and whether said conduct had an effect on their decision. In the event of a discrepancy, a hearing shall be called to settle the matter.

- a. If a hearing needs to take place, the JBPLDT Committee or its designee will notify both the team that filed the grievance and the team that the grievance was filed against of a time and location of the hearing. The full JBPLDT Committee will be present. The filing team will then have 15 minutes to present its argument. The team that the grievance has been filed against will then be heard for 15 minutes. The SRBLSA Pre-Law Director may choose to extend the time. No team member or coach will be heard for longer than 30 minutes.
- b. After both teams are heard, based on the comments of the teams, Judges (if applicable), and coaches (if applicable), the JBPLDT Committee will determine what effect, if any, the alleged misconduct had on the Judges' scoring decision. The JBPLDT Committee will then determine a remedy.
- c. Any penalty assessed to any team shall be a minimum 3-point deduction. If the JBPLDT Committee decides that a point deduction shall exceed 3 points, the deduction must be approved and affirmed by a unanimous vote of the full Committee. Points will not be awarded to any teams. If the grievance is deemed to be moot or frivolous because of these Rules, a 3 point penalty may be assessed against the filing team. Teams are permitted to appeal the Committee's decision regarding either the grievance penalty and/or dismissal of a moot or frivolous grievance.

All protests and appeals of decisions made on properly filed grievances must be submitted in writing to the designee listed on the provided Grievance form.

Please be aware that the full JBPLDT Committee is the **LAST** and **FINAL** decision maker on any grievance pertaining to any Competition.

B. Invention of a Material Fact

1. Inventions of material facts are grievable offenses. A material fact is any fact which significantly alters the course of trial. (Ex. A defendant accused of beating someone with a bat reveals during trial a handicap that makes the use of a bat impossible.) If during a trial, a team believes that the opposing team has invented a material fact, the advocate cross-examining that witness must attempt to impeach. Impeachment is also permitted on cross. BOTH IMPEACHMENTS BY OMISSION AND COMMISSION ARE PERMITTED.
2. If a competitor has invented a material fact, he/she must admit, if asked, that the “facts” they have testified to are not in the source packet. Competitors may not qualify this response in any misleading way. The competition Judge will be instructed to deduct points from the offending team.
3. If a grievance is filed regarding an invention of a material fact, the Judges will be contacted. If in the Judges’ opinion the invention of the material fact is not sufficiently remedied by the deduction of points, the JBPLDT Committee reserves the right to take additional action, including and not limited to granting an automatic win to the opposing team. If in the Judges’ opinion the fact was not material or was sufficiently resolved by a point deduction, then the matter will be deemed resolved and no further action will be taken.

ARTICLE X – JUDGES

A. General Rules:

The JBPLDT Committee will recruit competent competition judges who may either be law professors, judges or justices, or practicing attorneys. Enough competition judges should be recruited so as not to overload any judge with continuous judging.

B. Role of Judges:

1. Every judge shall be absolutely fair and impartial in all evidentiary rulings, in scoring and in all other judging activities. It is the role of the Chief Judge to control all proceedings and to carry out all other functions of a debate judge for the round over which he or she presides. The

Court shall refrain from questioning witnesses or preempting the role of student advocates.

All judges must chose a winning team for the trial in which he/she is presiding.

2. Additionally, the Judge will evaluate the performance of the attorneys in the round. Scoring **should not** be based on the merits or outcome of the case, as it would be judged in an actual trial.

C. Dissemination of Information:

Judges shall be informed during an orientation meeting of the scoring procedure and given adequate scoring sheets, together with judging criteria. Judges should also be informed as to procedure (i.e., time limits, role of bailiffs, time-keeping, asking questions, etc.) Judges shall be informed during the orientation meeting that judging shall be according to oral advocacy skills, without any consideration as to which team should win on the merits. Judges should also be advised that post-trial discussion between each of them as to which team should win is not recommended. Any discussion should be solely for the purpose of tabulating scores. Personal comments to the teams concerning the trial are encouraged. The comments of Judges are important to pre-law students as they sharpen their skills. Judges should strive to educate and inform participants as well as seek to give them advice on improving their performance.

ARTICLE XI – BAILIFFS

A. General Rules:

The JBPLDT Committee is responsible for recruiting Bailiffs. Bailiffs are officers of the court. The JBPLDT Committee is responsible for acquainting all Bailiffs with the rules and scoring procedures. A Bailiff orientation must be held by the JBPLDT Committee to review these rules and procedures prior to the first preliminary round. This orientation should not be held at the same time as the team orientation, though it may be part of the team orientation.

B. Bailiff Duties:

1. Starting Trials:

- a. Bailiffs are responsible for making sure participants and judges are ready to begin the round.
2. Assisting Competition Judges:
 - a. Bailiffs are to assist the Judges when needed, to explain procedure to the Judges, and to assist in the tabulation of scores and submit the score sheets for review.
3. Timing Trials:
 - a. Bailiffs are responsible for timekeeping during the rounds. The Bailiff will faithfully and truly monitor the time used. The Bailiff shall unobtrusively indicate using cards, to the teams and the bench, the amount of time remaining. Before the beginning of each round, the Bailiff will announce at what interval he or she will show the time-remaining cards.
4. Tabulations:
 - a. Each Bailiff shall keep a written record of the time, using the official timekeeping sheet. The accuracy of the tabulations on the timesheet is the responsibility of the Bailiff and the designated timesheet reviewers. However, the applicable JBPLDT Committee designee is responsible for ensuring that the score sheets are tabulated before any team is allowed to advance.

C. Communication with Teams:

Bailiffs may not communicate with participating team members during a round, including breaks.

D. Insufficient Number of Bailiffs:

1. Bailiffs are a courtesy extended to all competing teams. In the event that the JBPLDT Committee is unable to supply enough bailiffs, the SRBLSA Executive Board is permitted to Bailiff.
2. If the JBPLDT Committee is still unable to supply the round with enough bailiffs, then no round during that respective round shall have a bailiff. The teams will then be required to keep

track of their own time and must not exceed the time limit set forth in these Rules. At the conclusion of the trial, each team will be required to share their time log with the competition Judge. If a team exceeds the stated time limit, the competition Judge shall deduct points as set forth in Article XIII(B)).

ARTICLE XII – THE ROUND

1. The competition involves a current legal issue that presents either a circuit split or an inconsistent application across courts. The same fact pattern will be provided to all participants for use throughout the James Baldwin Pre-Law Debate Tournament.
2. **Only these Rules and the sources provided in the fact pattern shall be used in each round.**

A. Introduction of Team Members:

At the commencement of each round, the participants shall introduce themselves in the appropriate manner (i.e. John Doe of Team A, Issue 1), except that their school must not be mentioned before, during or after the trial or during the judges' critiques. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a point penalty or disqualification of the team.

B. Discussion with Judges:

The only discussion with judges permitted shall be during the critique, which will be conducted by the judges in the presence of the Bailiff and both teams after each trial.

C. Duty of Advocates:

1. Diligent Preparation:
 - a. All Advocates shall strive with diligence to undertake the study, preparation and practice required to present their cases with integrity and competence.
2. Zealous Representation:

- a. Advocates shall represent their issues zealously, within the bounds of the law. Specifically:
- b. If the facts of the case can lead to more than one inference or the law can reasonably be interpreted in more than one way, the Advocates may argue the inferences and conclusions and interpretations most favorable to their clients.
- c. Advocates shall refrain from offensive behavior; shall not attempt to circumvent any rule, nor commit any dishonesty, deceit, or misrepresentation, nor engage in any conduct that is unfair or prejudicial to the administration of justice.

3. Person Specific Duties:

- a. Each Advocate shall conduct either a constructive argument, one cross-examination, and one rebuttal. An Advocate may not give both the constructive arguments for their side, and handle both cross-examinations, or both rebuttals in a single trial. An Advocate who chooses not to ask one or more questions of a witness on cross-examination will receive a zero for that cross. Only the Advocate handling the examination of a witness may interject during the testimony offered by that witness. Advocates are not prohibited from requesting permission to briefly consult with co-counsel.

D. Court Decorum:

Advocates shall maintain a respectful demeanor at all times. Courtesy toward the court, opposing counsel and the law is expected throughout all rounds and breaks. In addition, all participants shall be dressed appropriately in business professional attire.

E. Time Limits:

The time limits for each element of competition are as follows:

1. Time Limits Generally:

- a. Each team will have thirty-two (32) minutes to complete its round. The time breakdown for each element shall be:
 - Constructive Argument: Eight (8) minutes each

- Cross-Examination: Three (3) minutes each
 - Rebuttal: Five (5) minutes each
- b. The time limit will be strictly enforced, although it is not necessary that all time allotted be used.

Should a team go over their allotted time, the penalty will result in a point deduction and possible disqualification. NOTE: The presiding judge and JBPLDT Committee have the discretion to determine if the overlay in time was the result of an external factor not within the competitor's control and adjust the penalty as necessary.

F. Round Defined:

A round begins when the Judges enter the room and ends when the Bailiff concludes court after the second affirmative rebuttal and the judge's critiques. For the purposes of these Rules, competitors are not allowed to consult with their coaches, opponents, judges, and bailiffs during the rounds. This includes consultation with respect to prospective grievances.

G. Rounds:

The format of each round shall be as follows:

First Affirmative Constructive Argument
Cross-Examination by the First Negative
First Negative Constructive Argument
Cross-Examination by the First Affirmative

Second Affirmative Constructive Argument
Cross-Examination by the Second Negative
Second Negative Constructive Argument
Cross-Examination by the Second Affirmative

First Negative Rebuttal
First Affirmative Rebuttal
Second Negative Rebuttal

Second Affirmative Rebuttal

ARTICLE XIII – PENALTIES

A. JBPLDT Committee’s Authority to Impose Penalties:

The JBPLDT Committee may disqualify teams and assess penalties, in accordance with the guidelines enumerated below, as it deems necessary and proper.

B. Penalty Points:

Penalty	Minimum Penalty Assessed	Maximum Penalty Assessed
Post-registration substitution of team members without written approval of the JBPLDT Committee	5 points	10 points and possible disqualification
Lateness to rounds	3 points	10 points
Exceeding time limits*		
0-5 minutes	0 points	5 points and possible disqualification
5–10 minutes	5 points	10 points and possible disqualification
10+ points	10 points	Automatic disqualification
Revealing school affiliation prior to the final round	0 points	10 points
Inappropriate communication during the round between team members	3 points	5 points
Inappropriate communication during the round between team members and coaches	5 points	10 points
Article VII(L) unprofessional behavior	5 points	10 points

**Each team is strongly encouraged to monitor its own time, even if a Bailiff is present during the trial.*

C. Failure to Submit Letter of Good Standing and NBLSA Membership Status:

Failure to submit a verification form or a letter of good standing from a team's school registrar office or dean AND Community Service Verification AND NBLSA Financial Status shall result in automatic disqualification.

D. Confidentiality of Certain Competition Material:

A team will be disqualified for using any JBPLDT information that is marked CONFIDENTIAL or is obviously confidential based on the content.

E. Other Important Notes:

The penalties provided herein are all the penalties that are to be levied against a team by the JBPLDT Committee. The JBPLDT Committee may not levy any penalties, not described herein or in the grievance procedures, against a team. Participants should also note that certain rules have a provision for disqualification, if the particular rule is not followed. Should a team be disqualified for any reason their fees shall be forfeited, regardless of the time that disqualification is levied.

ARTICLE XIV – AWARDS

1. There shall be an award given to the winning team (the JBPLDT First Place).
2. There shall be an award given to the second place team (the JBPLDT Second Place).
3. There shall be an award given to the third place team (The JBPLDT Third Place).
4. There shall be an award given to the best advocate (advocate with the highest score) and the First and Second runners up, as determined in the preliminary round.

ARTICLE XV – INTERPRETATION OF RULES

A. Official Interpretations:

1. All official interpretations of these rules are the JBPLDT Committee's responsibility. Requests for official interpretations of these rules shall be submitted in writing to the SRBLSA Pre-Law Director.
2. Teams are responsible for abiding by all of the rules herein. Teams may be subject to penalty

or disqualification for not abiding by the rules. Teams may not rely on judges, bailiffs, coaches, or any other party for interpretation of these rules.

B. Submission of Requests:

Teams may submit anonymous requests for interpretation or the settlement of grievances without disclosing the names of the teams, participants or other parties involved. Submissions should be emailed to srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org.

C. Answers:

All answers to questions will be posted as expediently as possible on the JBPLDT homepage so that all participants may benefit from official interpretations and inconsistent interpretations among participants may be avoided.

D. Questions, Comments and Concerns:

All questions, comments and concerns regarding the 2020–2021 JBPLDT shall be directed to the SRBLSA Pre-Law Director. The following contact information is provided:

Southern Region Pre-Law Director srblsa.prelaw@nblsa.org

ARTICLE XVIII – PROCEDURES

A. Integration of Disseminated Information:

For the purposes of these Rules, any substantive or administrative information provided by the JBPLDT Committee that is disseminated to all teams, either via email or via posting on the JBPLDT website shall be considered incorporated into these rules.

B. Resemblance to Actual Events or Individuals:

The persons and events depicted in this problem are in part fictional and based on actual events, solely for the educational exercise being conducted by JBPLDT.

The JBPLDT Committee reserves the right to alter, delete, or change the rules as necessary.