

Guidelines for Scoring

The following are general guidelines to be applied to each category on the score sheet. It is strongly recommended that scorers start with an "Average" and adjust higher or lower for stronger or weaker presentations.

Attorneys	Score	Witnesses
Excellent understanding of the case, rules, and legal issues Questions and arguments advanced case and didn't ask for answers that asked for unfair extrapolations Persuasive and articulate delivery made without use of notes Thought well on feet, in control of situation, and responded to other team's presentation Objected when appropriate; clearly understood how to respond to objections Maintained eye contact with judge and witnesses, spoke in clear and audible voice	9-10 Excellent	Excellent understanding of case, witness statements, and exhibits (if applicable) Convincing, credible presentation Answers were thorough, accurate, persuasive, and natural, not scripted Didn't provide answers that embellished facts and/or went outside scope of case materials Maintained eye contact with judge and student attorneys; strong, audible voice
Good understanding of the case, rules, and legal issues Most questions and arguments advanced case and didn't ask for unfair extrapolations Mostly persuasive and articulate delivery; used notes occasionally Able to think on feet some of the time Most objections were appropriate; usually understood how to respond to objections Mostly maintained eye contact with judge and witnesses Mostly spoke in clear and audible voice	7-8 Above Average	Good understanding of witness statements and exhibits (if applicable) Mostly convincing, credible presentation Most answers were thorough, accurate, persuasive, and mostly natural, not memorized Rarely provided answers that embellished facts and/or went outside scope of case materials Sometimes forgot to maintain eye contact with judge and student attorneys Mostly spoke in clear and audible voice
Fair understanding of case, rules, and legal issues Used notes, sometimes stumbled on delivery Some questions and arguments advanced case and didn't ask for unfair extrapolations Prepared for trial but often relied on preparation and not responding to other team's presentation Missed appropriate opportunities to object; didn't always understand how to respond to objections Sometimes forgot to maintain eye contact with judge and witnesses Sometimes difficult to hear	5-6 Average	Fair understanding of witness statements and exhibits (if applicable) Somewhat convincing, credible presentation Answers not always thorough, accurate or persuasive; sounded scripted, not natural Some answers embellished facts and/or went outside scope of case materials Sometimes forgot to maintain eye contact with judge and student attorneys Sometimes difficult to hear
Demonstrated little understanding of case, rules, and legal issues Needs work on poise and delivery; didn't respond to other team's presentation Read mostly scripted questions; relied heavily on notes Few questions and arguments advanced case; may have asked questions that required unfair extrapolations Struggled to understand when to object and how to respond to objections; used objections to interfere with other team's presentation Often forgot to maintain eye contact with judge or witnesses Often difficult to hear	3-4 Below Average	Struggled to understand witness statements and exhibits (if applicable) Presentation not convincing, credible; often unrealistic Answers were generic and often didn't seem natural, but based on memorized script; sometimes stumbled over responses Often provided answers that embellished facts and/or went outside scope of case materials Often forgot to maintain eye contact with judge and student attorneys Often difficult to hear
Did not understand case, rules, or legal issues Not persuasive or articulate in delivery; read entirely from script Not prepared for trial; not able to think on feet Questions and arguments didn't advance case; asked for answers that required unfair extrapolations Did not know when to object or how to respond to objections Disruptive/disrespectful/inappropriate actions Did not maintain eye contact with judge or witnesses; unclear or inaudible voice	1-2 Far Below Average	Did not understand witness statements and exhibits Presentation not convincing or credible; seems unrealistic Answers were not thorough, accurate, or persuasive, and didn't sound natural; stumbled over responses Answers not consistent with the facts and/or went outside scope of case materials Did not maintain eye contact with judge or student attorneys Weak, inaudible, or unclear voice Disruptive/disrespectful/inappropriate actions Gave excessively long, non-responsive answers on cross examination to deliberately use up opposing counsel's time
Clerk	Score	Bailiff
Very professional demeanor Clear understanding of procedures; excellent time keeping Clear, audible voice when issuing verbal warnings (if applicable) Visual warnings were clearly visible to student attorneys Able to think well on feet, in control of situation	5 Excellent	Very professional, believable presentation Consistent use of clear and audible voice, and eye contact Consistently natural delivery of script Excellent understanding of role and procedures
Professional demeanor Good understanding of procedures; good time keeping Mostly spoke in clear, audible voice when issuing verbal warnings (if applicable) Visual warnings were mostly clearly visible to student attorneys	4 Above Average	Professional, believable presentation Used clear, audible voice, and eye contact a lot of the time Knew script and delivery was mostly consistently natural Good understanding of role and procedures
Good demeanor Basic understanding of procedures; able to keep time Was heard when issuing verbal warnings (if applicable) Visual warnings were visible to student attorneys	3 Average	Mostly natural, believable presentation Audible voice, some eye contact Apparent that script was memorized Understood role and procedures
Demeanor lacked professionalism Demonstrated little understanding of procedures; time keeping not entirely accurate Not clear or audible when issuing verbal warnings (if applicable) Visual warnings may not have been visible to student attorneys	2 Below Average	Presentation not realistic, lacked professionalism Voice not all that clear or audible; little eye contact Used notes, stumbled with script Did not have a good understanding of role and procedures
Complete lack of professionalism No understanding of procedures; time keeping was inaccurate Verbal warnings not used or completely inaudible (if applicable) Verbal warnings not used or not at all visible Disruptive/disrespectful/inappropriate actions	1 Far Below Average	Complete lack of professionalism Voice not audible or clear; no eye contact Relied almost entirely on notes/script Did not understand role and procedures Disruptive/disrespectful/inappropriate actions
0 Score		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to cross-examine a witness (Attorney score) • Failure to conduct direct examination of a witness (Attorney and witness score) • When attorneys and/or witnesses verbally address the scoring attorneys as if they were a jury. (Attorney and/or witness score) 		

Rule 1.3 — Trial Procedures

- A. The mock trial is a bench trial; attorneys and witnesses may not verbally address the scoring attorneys as if they were a jury. A ten point deduction must be taken from each score sheet when a team member addresses the scorers.

Rule 3.3 — Trial Communication

- A. Once the trial has begun, coaches, teachers, alternates, and spectators may not communicate (including signaling and passing notes) with the teams.
- B. Mock Trial is a bench trial; attorneys and witnesses may not verbally address the scoring attorneys as if they were a jury.
- C. Communication between trial attorneys is allowed during the trial but must be non-disruptive.
- D. The defendant may sit at the counsel table and communicate with the defense attorneys. All communication must be non-disruptive to the trial.
- E. After the pretrial, the pretrial attorneys may not sit with the trial attorneys and may not communicate with the trial attorneys at any time.
- F. Once the trial has begun, there must be no spectator contact with student team members, whether in the hallway or the courtroom.
- G. If any section on rule 3.3 has been violated, scorers must deduct ten points per score sheet per violation.

Rule 3.4 — Witnesses

- G. All witnesses must be called in the allotted time. If the direct-examination attorney runs out of time without calling one or more witnesses, the direct-examination attorney and the witness will each automatically receive a score of zero for each witness not called, and the cross-examination attorney will automatically be awarded ten points for each witness not called. Once the time allotted for witnesses has ended, direct examination attorneys may not call any other witnesses.
- H. Cross-examination is required for all witnesses. If the cross-examination attorney does not cross one or more witnesses, the cross-examination attorney will receive a cross-examination score of zero for the witnesses.

Rule 3.5 — Unfair Extrapolation

- J. Witnesses and attorneys making unfair extrapolations and attorneys who ask questions that require the witness to answer with an unfair extrapolation should be penalized by having two points deducted from their individual scores.
- K. If a team has several team members making unfair extrapolations, in addition to the individual point deductions, five points must be deducted from the offending team's performance/participation score.

Rule 3.6 — Attorneys

The attorney who conducts the direct examination of a witness is the only person allowed to make objections to the cross examination of that witness. The attorney who conducts the cross-examination of a witness is the only person allowed to make objections during the direct examination of the witness. Points should be deducted for objections made by the wrong attorney.

- G. There are no objections allowed during opening statements or closing arguments. (It will be the presider's responsibility to handle any legally inappropriate statements made in the closing, while scorers will also keep in mind the closing argument criteria.) Two points must be deducted for each objection made during opening statements or closing arguments.
- L. If the presider determines a violation exists and there is not a specified deduction outlined in the team rulebook, the presider will direct the scoring attorneys to take the violation into consideration. The scoring attorneys will use their discretion to determine individually how many points (if any) will be taken off their score sheet.

Rule 3.7 — Conduct of the Pretrial Motion

- C. No objections are allowed during pretrial arguments. Two points must be deducted for each objection made during pretrial arguments.
- G. The pretrial motion, motions entering exhibits into evidence, and motion to strike testimony are the only motions allowed. All other motions are prohibited. If a motion is made that is not listed in this section, two points must be deducted from the team's total performance/participation score.

Rule 3.8 — Clerks/Timing

- D. Running of another team's time is not allowed. One team's unreasonable running of the opposing team's time is inappropriate. The scorers should deduct 5 points from the offending witness' score, should they determine that a witness is trying to run the opposing team's time. In addition, the presider may admonish the witness.

Delay Tactics - Below are some examples teams might be trying to run the opposing team's time:

- Attorneys – Every member of counsel looking at evidence prior to approving;
 - Witnesses – Speaking slowly to the point of being annoying;
 - Witnesses – Taking too long to review exhibits;
 - Witnesses – Unnecessarily asking for question to be repeated.
 - Witnesses – Answering a yes/no question with lengthy narrative.
- J. At the State Finals, two-minute, one-minute, and 30 second visual warnings (not verbal) must be given before the end of each section. The time remaining cards must be displayed in a manner to ensure that there is a clear view for the counsel and presiding judge. The clerk will stop students (both visually and verbally) at the end of the allotted time for each section. Thus, there will be no allowance for overtime. Two points must be deducted per score sheet if the presider finds that any section of this rule has been violated.

Rule 4.1 — Rule Interpretation

- G. Arguing for hyper technical interpretations of the rules, especially when designed to embarrass others or to gain an unfair advantage, is prohibited and five points must be deducted.