

NAMC Rules Memorandum
September 6, 2023

Dear NAMC Community:

NAMC is publishing this Rules Memorandum to clarify common points of confusion surrounding competition rules and provide a summary of rule changes that will be in place for the 2024 competitive season. We welcome questions and comments regarding these rules or any other aspect of NAMC competitions at board@namcmootcourt.org.

Clarifications on Competition Rules

We begin with two clarifications to competition rules where judge and competitor expectations frequently diverged last season.

First, we address what should occur when a competitor's time elapses while they are still speaking. To be clear: there is no grace period in which competitors may finish their thought prior to concluding; **competitors must stop speaking immediately when their time elapses**.

When asked a question near the end of their allotted time, a competitor may ask the Chief Justice for a brief extension to answer the question and conclude. **However, the extension request must be made at the time the question is asked, prior to the competitor answering the question.** Presiding judges will be instructed to deny any extension request that comes after the speaker has already begun their answer. Additionally, the updated Scoring Guidelines will reflect that judges should consider a competitor's (non)compliance with the timing rules discussed above when assigning the Forensic Skill & Courtroom Demeanor score.

Second, we provide guidance on how competitors should make use of factual evidence from the Record (i.e. case packet) in their arguments. Because of common practice in collegiate and law school moot court, many judges expect competitors to provide page-number citations to the Record when making specific factual claims. Typically, if a competitor uses a statistic or direct quote from the Record, judges expect an accompanying citation. These references help judges (who frequently have the Record open in front of them) to verify and contextualize assertions made by the advocates before them.

Competitors need not provide a citation for every factual claim, no matter how banal or uncontroversial it may be. They should instead exercise their best judgment as to when a citation would provide value to the judges, and be prepared to provide a citation for any factual claim if prompted by a judge.

Rule Change: One Partner Per Person

To ease administrative burden and provide a fairer playing field for all teams, NAMC is instituting the following rule for the 2024 season: **a single competitor may compete with no more than one partner across regional tournaments.** For example, if Alice competes with partner Bob at the Yale Regional, she may not compete with partner Charlie at the Santa Barbara Regional. Exceptions to this requirement will be made for good cause at the discretion of the NAMC Board and must be requested in advance of the applicable tournament.

Please note the following:

- This rule only applies to NAMC Regional Tournaments in which teams may earn a bid to the National Tournament.
- Competitors may still attempt to qualify for the National Tournament at multiple regional tournaments, so long as they compete with the same partner.

Rule Change: Late-Round Timing

During the 2023 season, the Santa Barbara Regional and the National Tournament operated with special timing rules for the semifinal and final rounds. Competitor and coach feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and we are happy to announce that the rule will be adopted circuit-wide this season. **The final round of each NAMC Regional Tournament and the semifinal and final rounds of the NAMC National Tournament will grant each team a total of 30 minutes of speaking time, with Petitioner being permitted to reserve up to 4 minutes for rebuttal.**

For example, a Petitioner team may split their time 13 / 13 / 4, and a Respondent team may split their time 15 / 15. Teams will not be penalized for finishing with time remaining on the clock; however, these rounds will typically feature 5–7 judges and we expect such cases to be rare.

The Board is grateful to the coaches, competitors, and administrators that helped to make NAMC's inaugural season such a success. We're excited to see you all this season!

Warm regards,
The NAMC Team