

Detroit Mercy Ethics Bowl Rules & Procedures

1. In an Ethics Bowl match, each 3-5 member team will be questioned by a moderator on a case. Although the cases are made available ahead of time, teams will not know in advance which of the cases they will be asked about in the Ethics Bowl competition, nor will they know the questions.
2. Books and notes are not allowed on the teams' tables. However, blank scrap paper to jot down thoughts is permitted. Teammates are forbidden from orally conferring except where indicated. At all other times they may only pass notes to one another.
3. At the beginning of each match, the moderator will flip a coin. The winner of the coin toss will choose to go first or second.
4. The moderator will read aloud the case and a question about the case.
5. The first team will have one minute to orally confer, after which one spokesperson for that team may use up to ten (10) minutes to respond to the moderator's question. More than one team member may contribute to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.
6. The opposing team receives one (1) minute to orally confer, after which it may choose to present a response to the first team's answer in the form of a question and/or a comment. The opposing team's response may not exceed five (5) minutes. More than one team member may contribute to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.
7. The first team will have one (1) minute to orally confer and two (2) minutes to respond to the opposing team's question or comment. More than one team member may contribute to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.
8. The judges may then ask follow-up questions. Each judge may ask no more than one question. The entire period for the judges' questions shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes. More than one team member may contribute to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.
9. The first team has one (1) minute to orally confer and two (2) minutes to respond to each judge's question. More than one team member may contribute to the commentary, but only one team member may speak at a time.
10. This format (4-9) is then repeated for the second team.
11. Scoring. Judges are asked to calculate their final scores only after both teams have completed the match. Team responses will be evaluated on the basis of four (4) criteria:
 - i. Intelligibility - Has the team stated and defended its position in a way that is logically consistent? Has the team expressed its responses with enough clarity and precision that the judges can understand it?
 - ii. Depth – To what extent does the team's statement and defense of its position indicate an awareness and understanding of the issues that the judge views as ethically central to the case.
 - iii. Focus – To what extent does the team's statement and defense of its position avoid issues that are ethically irrelevant to the case?
 - iv. Judgment – To what extent, in the judge's view, has the team made a careful and reasonable comparative assessment of considerations it identifies as ethically relevant to the case.

Each of the four criteria will be rated on a scale from one to five, five being the highest score, one being the lowest. When the scores for the four criteria are tallied, a team may receive as many as twenty (20) points per judge or as few as four (4). A perfect score for a panel of three judges would be sixty (60) points.

12. The team scored highest by the majority of judges wins the match, and continues on to the next round of the competition until it either wins the tournament or is defeated.

revised 9/20/2016