

Long Island High School Ethics Bowl Guidelines for Judges

GUIDELINES DURING MATCHES

- Judges should score based solely upon content, not on whether one person, a few, or all team members speak.
 - Each team decides for itself how to divide up speaking time during all portions of the match. Some teams choose to have an individual “own” a certain case. Other teams prefer to have each person on the team speak for a portion of the match. *Teams should be neither rewarded nor penalized for taking either approach.* Teams have been advised to explain who will speak at the beginning their Presentation so that everyone has an idea of how the presentation will be structured.
- Teams do not need to refer to specific ethicists or ethical theories in order to present good arguments. We are asking judges to look for valid, sound arguments that can be made without citing names or theories.
- Teams should not base their presentation on outside research. Teams have been told that they can use research but need to cite sources; however, reciting strings of “facts” is not an argument. This isn’t the “research bowl.”
- Sometimes, teams realize that they want to change their “position” as a result of the second team’s commentary. Because the ethics bowl is about ethical inquiry, and because these are high school students, and changing one’s mind can be considered a sign of fluid rather than crystallized intelligence – a hallmark of higher-order thinking – *changing or modifying a position is not necessarily negative.*
- Judges’ Questions are addressed to teams, not individuals
 - **NEW: Please take less than 45 seconds to pose your question**
 - Keep your own opinions to yourself
 - You do not have to ask a question if you do not wish to
- Judges should decide on their scores independently, without consulting the other judges.

SCORING

The winner is the team for which 3 out of 3 or 2 out of 3 judges determined was the winner. Total points do not matter at this stage.

No half points – please use only whole integers.

- If the scoring reveals that 3 judges chose Team A as the winner and 0 judges chose Team B, then Team A wins, and *vice versa*
- If the scoring reveals that 2 judges chose Team A as winner and 1 chose Team B, then A wins, and *vice versa*

- If the score reveals that 1 judge chose Team A as winner, 1 judge chose Team B, and one judge gave the teams a tie, then the round is a tie (because each team has one win and one tie).
- If the score reveals that 1 judge chose Team A as winner, and each of the other 2 judges thought the teams were tied, then Team A wins (because Team A has 1 win and Team B has no wins).

PRE- AND POST-BOWL GUIDELINES

Before the match begins: Judges should maintain a “judicial bearing” towards teams and coaches at all times. Because this is the 7th year of the Bowl, many students, coaches, and judges recognize each other from previous years, or may know each other through different associations. When judges greet teams or coaches, it can be construed – though it is not intended in this way - as bias. Please maintain as neutral a stance as possible when greeting teams and coaches, even to the point of avoiding friendly hellos, so that the other team does not harbor the corrosive feeling that they are the underdogs before the match begins.

After the match: Do not discuss your scoring with other judges, coaches or teams. If teams ask for advice, give them “process” advice: speak more loudly, look at the person questioning you, etc. Refrain from offering substantive advice relating to arguments, etc. This advice can (and did) backfire despite best intentions.

NEW: When the moderator is deciding who won the round, please use the small pad in your envelope to jot down notes for the teams you judged. Coaches and students really appreciate any feedback you can give them. At the top of the sheet, note the team name and the round – you don’t need to include your name. And then, if you could comment on each team’s strength and weakness, even if only as a bullet-point list, that would prove very helpful. The moderator will collect these pages from you at the conclusion of the round.

Respectful Dialogue

Finally, teams are scored on “respectful dialogue.” This is to underscore the importance of civil and respectful dialogue, an essential value of Ethics Bowl. Teams that earn ten points in this category demonstrate their awareness that an ethics bowl is about participating in a collegial, collaborative, philosophical discussion aimed at earnestly thinking through difficult ethical issues. *It is not a contest between adversaries or a combative debate.* Teams that score poorly in this category are those that resort to rhetorical flourishes, adopt a condescending, critical tone, and are unduly adversarial – which doesn’t mean that they can’t argue, but that they need to argue respectfully.

Included in this score is the extent to which the team that is not presenting conducts itself with decorum and listens to the other team with respect and attention – no eye-rolling, gestures or vocalizations that may indicate disrespect or lack of attention.

If you are not judging a round, please come to Hofstra Hall, the white building in the center of campus, to decompress and have a snack.