

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI ACADEMIC INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT COMPETITION RULES

Above all, this tournament thrives on scholarly competition that is both courteous and respectful of others. Therefore, appropriate conduct is required for all individuals involved. ANY inappropriate conduct, including yelling, show of temper, or interruptive/distracting behavior (as deemed by the moderator and judge) is grounds for forfeiture of a match or expulsion from the tournament.

TOURNAMENT FORMAT/GENERAL SET-UP

1. Brackets are determined by random assignment of teams, care being given only to avoid the placement of A and B teams from the same school in the same bracket. The standard athletic double-elimination format is used. Once the tournament begins, the competition chart is followed. First and second place teams in each bracket advance to the Championship Rounds, which are played in single-elimination format. In championship play, first through fourth places are determined. In rounds where only one of the two competing teams appears, the match is forfeited to the team present. **A team that is five or more minutes late to the match is subject to a forfeit.**
2. The academic competition is in a question/answer format. The team with the highest score at the end of the match is the winner. Points are received by giving the correct answer or answers.
3. Each team consists of four members and up to four alternates. Teams are allowed to make “half-time” substitutions of alternates. Only eight team members may compete during the day. *If one school submits two or more teams, team members may not move from one team to another.*
4. Team coaches will sit with the judges while their team is in competition and remain totally silent while the competition is in progress. **Coaching of any type may occur only before the match or during the “half-time.”**
5. There are two types of questions. Toss-ups are one-part questions and are worth five points each. Bonus questions have multiple parts and are worth up to ten points each. If the bonus question is two parts, each part is worth four points; supplying correct answers to both parts is worth ten points. If the question is composed of four parts, each part is worth two points, and ten points is earned by supplying correct answers to all four parts. A bonus question is proffered to a team after that team answers a toss-up question correctly.
6. The game is played in two, ten-minute halves. Each half begins with a toss-up question. The first player to signal and be recognized by the Moderator gives the answer to the toss-up question and must do so without consultation and within a natural pause of being recognized by the moderator. The Moderator will recognize a contestant by stating the name of the school and/or the contestant’s name. Bonus questions can only be answered **by the team’s captain; any answer given by a non-captain player will be ignored.** The captain speaks for the team after conference or discussion. The round ends with the expiration of the two ten-minute halves or when the question pool is exhausted.

TOURNAMENT RULES/PROCEDURES

7. Toss-up questions.

- a. On a toss-up question, only the first answer given by a team will be accepted by the moderator. If the answer is wrong and the question was completely read, the other team then has five seconds to answer the toss-up question, **without restatement of the question.**
- b. If a player confers with another team member during a toss-up, the response does not count, and the question is offered to the other team.
- c. A natural pause (approximately a count of two) is allowed between acknowledgment from the moderator and the beginning of an answer. The moderator has sole discretion to determine if a pause was unacceptably long. If an answer to a toss-up is given after the permissible natural pause has expired, the moderator will announce that time has expired and allow the other team a chance to answer. This rule is designed to prevent a competitor from buzzing in while still figuring a response. The competitor should be ready with the answer when acknowledged; stalling will result in a forfeit of the team's response.
- d. If a player answers a toss-up without being recognized, the moderator will ignore the answer until someone buzzes in.
- e. Five seconds are allowed after the reading of a toss-up question for a competitor to buzz in. Timing begins when the moderator completes one reading of the toss-up question.
- f. If a toss-up question is interrupted and the answer provided is correct, the team will receive five points. If the answer is wrong on an interrupted question, two points are added to the opposing team's score. The question is then re-read completely, and the opposing team has the opportunity to answer the toss-up and, if the toss-up is answered correctly, a bonus question. The team which interrupted the original reading of the toss-up may not attempt to answer the toss-up during or after its second reading. Blitzing, the attempt to answer a question before it is completely read by stringing together multiple possible responses, is not permitted in this tournament. In order to prevent successful blitzing, the Moderator will only judge the first answer given by a team. For example, answering "William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury" is not acceptable if The Sound and the Fury is the correct answer. *However, the answer is correct if "William Faulkner" is the correct answer.*
- g. *Irregularities.*
 - i. If the Moderator inadvertently gives an answer to a toss-up without giving either team a chance to respond, no points are given and the Moderator continues with the next toss-up.
 - ii. If the Moderator inadvertently provides the answer after one team has incorrectly answered the question without giving the second team a chance to answer, the question will be thrown out, and the Moderator will go on to the next question.
 - iii. If the Moderator finishes reading a toss-up question without providing the opportunity to answer to both teams, the question will be thrown out, and the Moderator will go on to the next question.
 - iv. If someone in the audience provides an answer, the Moderator will ask that person to leave, throw the question out and move to the next toss-up.

8. Bonus questions.

- a. A team will have twenty seconds to complete bonus questions. Timing begins when the Moderator completes two readings of the bonus question. After the first reading of a bonus question, the captain may interrupt to give the answers to the questions. Answers to bonus questions must be given **within the twenty seconds** allowed. The moderator may not provide a warning that time is about to expire nor will he/she request that a team answer. **Only those answers that are provided within the allotted twenty seconds will be accepted.** If a captain hasn't provided all the answers to the bonus questions, he/she is given the FULL twenty seconds to do so
- b. If a team misses any or all parts of a bonus question, the opposing team is then given the opportunity to answer and earn the remaining points. The Moderator will turn **immediately** to the second team captain and call for answers. **No additional time is allowed** for team consultation. The captain must give answers to the missed part(s) within a natural pause upon being recognized by the Moderator; stalling will not be permitted.

9. Tie-breaks and Expiration of a Round.

- a. If the round (*or half*) ends after a team has correctly answered a toss-up, that team will be given a chance to answer the bonus question, and the other team will be given the chance to answer any incorrectly answered or unanswered parts.
- b. If the round (*or half*) ends during the reading of a toss-up question, the question is not completed, and no answers are taken. *This rule also applies if the round ends during the re-reading of an interrupted toss-up.*
- c. If the round ends during a bonus answer, the answer may be completed, including allowing the opposing team to answer any incorrect parts.
- d. If the score is tied at the end of the match, *a series of ten toss-up questions* is used to break the tie. (The Moderator will call the Coordinator before commencing the tie-break series.)

10. Only challenges with respect to procedure will be accepted. Challenges for the round must be given at the **half** or the **end** of that round. Play will continue without unscheduled interruption until the end of each round. *The official answers provided for questions are always counted as correct, even if they appear incorrect. No last-minute changes of official answers will be made if a round has already begun.* Once the final score has been announced, that is the official score. All decisions of the judges are final.

11. *Any dispute that cannot be resolved and affects the final outcome of the match will be settled by a tie-break; the higher score from the tie-break ONLY will determine the winner.*

12. With regard to math and science questions, all answers are expected to be in fully reduced form unless otherwise indicated; *improper fractions are not acceptable.* Responses that do not comply with these guidelines will be called incorrect. If units are included in the question, appropriate units are expected in the answer. *If a response is given with the correct value but without units, the moderator will prompt for clarification; however, a response with the correct value and incorrect units will be counted incorrect.*