

An aerial photograph of a modern, multi-story building with a prominent glass facade. The building features a mix of grey concrete and large glass panels. In the foreground, there is a courtyard with a paved walkway, several young trees, and some outdoor seating. The sky is a solid red color.

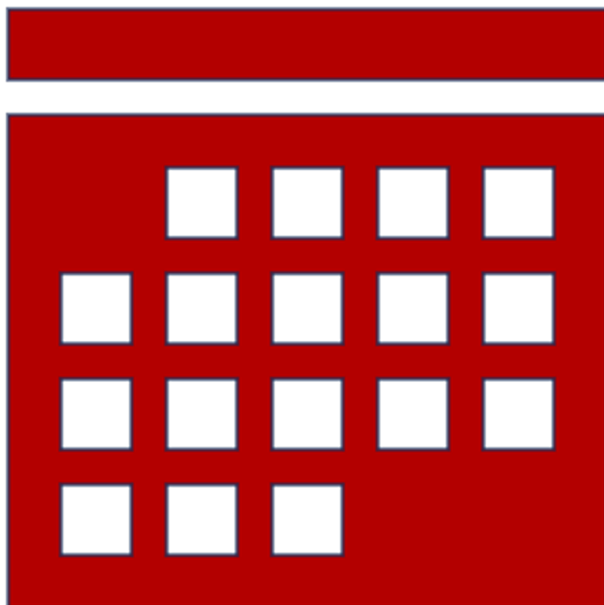
THE HIPPARD NOVICE MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION 2024

LEARNING LUNCH

THE ADVOCATES
at the
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
LAW CENTER

Beck | Redden^{LLP}
Trial and Appellate Attorneys

HIPPARD NOVICE MOCK TRIAL 2024



SCHEDULE

Lunch and
Learn

January 18th

Sign Up
Period

January 22 – January 25

Problem
Released

January 26th

Prepare
Your Case

January 26 – February 9

Competition

February 9 – February 11

Turn-in
Assignment

February 18

COMPETITION DETAILS



2-PERSON LAWYER TEAMS,
SIGN UP AS A TEAM!



CAN BE ANY LAW
STUDENT AT UHLC.
ALL WELCOME!



IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR
A PARTNER, PLEASE LET ME
KNOW!



YOU MUST BE AVAILABLE
FOR THE FULL WEEKEND,
NO DROPPING OUT
BEFORE FINALS



YOU WILL PREPARE BOTH
SIDES OF THE CASE
PROSECUTION AND
DEFENSE

PARTNERS

WITNESSES

Each team is required to have two witnesses

Witnesses do not have to be law students

Please let me know if you do not have a witness, I can help

Witnessing is a great way to participate if you do not want to compete

MOCK TRIAL OVERVIEW



MOTIONS IN
LIMINE



OPENING
STATEMENT



PLAINTIFF'S
CASE IN CHIEF



DEFENDANT'S
CASE IN CHIEF



CLOSING
STATEMENTS



REBUTTAL

RULES



Split the components evenly

You must do at least one cross and one direct in every round

You cannot do both the closing and opening in a round



You are timed

5 mins for MIL/70 mins for case in chief, not including objections



Don't read

Memorize what you can, but notes are OKAY

You are expected to use the well.



You are scored on professionalism

Dress professionally

Address the judge as “Your Honor” and remember to stand



MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION STRUCTURE

CALLING THE CASE



INTRODUCE YOURSELF

Prosecution goes first, then defense,
“Good morning, your Honor. (Name) and
(Name), representing (the defendant/state.)



HOUSEKEEPING

Optional, but helpful
Ask about pre-marking exhibits, moving about
the well, invoking the rule etc.

MOTIONS IN LIMINE

STRUCTURE

- Limited to 3 parts per side
- Remember that you only have 5 minutes!
- Either partner can argue

WHAT IS A MIL?

- Motions to exclude evidence that is too prejudicial to just object to when they come up
 - EXAMPLE: “Isn’t it true that you killed someone before?”
- MIL’s are purely preliminary -- the judge can always change their mind
- If something is excluded, you can still ask to approach and bring it up later

MAKING THE MOTION

- Explain the evidence that you want excluded and under what rule of evidence
- Keep it short!
- Give context- the judge knows nothing about the case



OPENINGS 5-8 minutes

- **START WITH A HOOK AND A HEADLINE**

- Something catchy that explains your theme
- “if the glove doesn’t fit, you must acquit”

- **TELL A STORY ARRANGED AROUND THE THEORY OF THE CASE**

- Present tense and easy to understand
- Don’t argue

- **ANTICIPATE THE OTHER SIDE,**

- Don’t hide evidence
- Get in your main points

- **DISCUSS THE BURDEN OF PROOF**

- By a preponderance of the evidence

- **CALL FOR ACTION**

- By the end of this trial, you will find the only result that the evidence supports, and justice demands



DIRECTS

- Ask open ended questions – no leading the witness
- Let the witness tell the story. You are just there to keep the witness on topic
- Prepare your witness well. Make sure they know the facts
- Personalize your witness to give them credibility
- Keep your witness organized
- Listen to your witness's answers, follow up if needed.
- Anticipate cross questions and stay ahead of it.

CROSSES

- You are the star of the show
 - The attorney should be talking most of the time
 - Tell the story through the questions, not the answers
- Leading questions only!!!
 - Keep the witness from talking too much about their side
 - Show that you are in control
 - Ask questions that you KNOW have “yes” or “no” answer
- Make your case
 - Get evidence that supports your case theory
 - Discredit the witness
 - Attack the witness’s testimony
- Be organized
 - Know the facts
 - Don’t write out your questions but use an outlines
 - Don’t let the witness get you off topic

CLOSINGS

**Use your
theme to
help tell your
story**

Reuse and repeat your hook from your opening

**Bring it all
together**

Incorporate what has come in through the course of the trial
Reference specific testimony and exhibits

Argue

Attack the other side of the case

- Witness credibility
- Key evidence

Was the burden of proof met?
What was/wasn't proven?

**End with a
request for a
verdict**



HELPFUL REMINDERS

- **Be respectful, be professional**
 - Judges could be your potential employers!
- **Don't be a jerk (witnesses too!)**
 - Please play fair and within the rules
 - Don't make up facts
- **Have a good time!**
- Don't stress and try your best

REGISTRATION



HOW TO SIGN UP



Pay to the Advocates Paypal

[@TheAdvocatesatUHLC](#)

Save your confirmation number



Entry Fee per team

\$20 per team for members,

\$100 per team for non-members,

\$60 per team for a member/non-member team



Must pay by deadline

January 25th - No exceptions (BUT, keep in mind the competition will likely fill up before this last day to register)

Late payment means that you will not receive the problem!

PAYMENT

REGISTRATION

Fill out the google
form w/ your paypal
number

One form and one
payment per team

Once you register you
must compete
If you drop out there
will be consequences

Your space is not
reserved until you
both paid and
completed the
registration form

Further instructions
on the Advocates
website

Registration opens
tomorrow 1/22 at
12pm

RECEIVING CLASS CREDIT



Must fill in the Blakely Credit Petition:

<https://www.law.uh.edu/blakely/credit-petition.asp>



Regular Tuition Fee (you're paying for a credit)



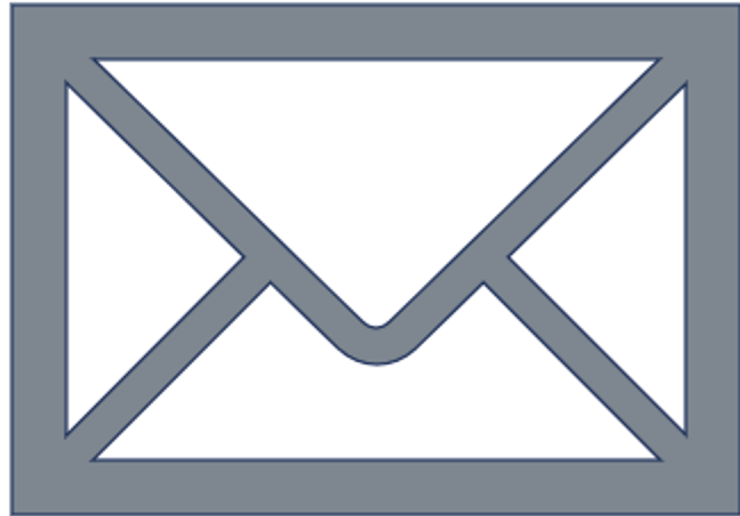
You must show a good faith effort – you cannot waive a round.



Submit 5 Pages (3 of 5) of written work products by email, no later than Sunday February 18, 2024 at 11:59pm



THANK YOU!



ANY QUESTIONS?

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