2027 OFFICIAL RULES
updated October 27, 2026

The following represent the official rules of The Jeffrey G. Miller National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition ("Rules").

RULE I. ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW MOOT COURT COMPETITION

The Jeffrey G. Miller National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition ("Competition") is an annual inter-law school appellate moot court Competition sponsored by the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University ("Pace"). The purpose of the Competition is to develop expertise in environmental law appellate advocacy. The Competition is coordinated by the National Environmental Law Moot Court Board ("Board"), which is composed of Haub Law students their faculty and staff advisors at the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University.

RULE II. THE PROBLEM

The Problem is prepared by the Board and provided to each Team for its use in preparing for participation in the Competition.

A. Use of Problem for other than the Competition. Schools may not use the current Problem for intramural runoff competitions or other academic purposes for the current year's Competition; they may, however, use past Problems. Schools may use the current Problem, after completion of the National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition, for intramural competitions or other academic purposes, with appropriate attribution to Haub Law School.

B. Questions about the Problem. The Board will accept questions relevant to the Problem until the deadline specified in the **2027 Fact Sheet.**

RULE III. THE TEAMS

A. Number and composition of Teams. Each school may enter only one team ("Team"). The Team shall be composed of two or three law students, all of whom must be registered current law students seeking a *Juris Doctor* degree and in good standing at their respective schools at the time of brief writing and oral argument. There are to be no alternate Team members. Each Team member must argue in at least one preliminary round.

B. Substitution or addition of Team members. There shall be no substitution or addition of Team members after the release date of the Problem, except for extreme hardship upon written permission of the Board. The Board recognizes that some schools may not have constituted a team by the release date of the Problem (on or about October 1, 2026). In this instance, Rule III (B) applies as soon as the team is constituted by October 30, 2026. Failure to submit team member names on time will result in ½ point deduction.

C. Team numbers. Upon registration, each Team will be assigned a Team number. This number must be referenced in all correspondence with the Board. To preserve anonymity, the Team

Number will be used during the Competition and Teams may not reveal their schools to the Judges. Points will be deducted for non-compliance with this rule during the competition.

RULE IV. THE BRIEFS

A. **General**. Each Team may write only one brief. The Team may choose which side to argue for the brief but will argue all sides of the Problem during the Competition's preliminary rounds. Only the members of the Team who will be arguing may participate in writing the brief. The use of the work product of any person other than a Team member in preparing the brief is prohibited. Work product does not include materials of the type generally used by attorneys to prepare briefs that are available for public use. "Available for public use" means accessible without privilege or reliance on a personal connection unique to the Team or Team member. Both Measuring Brief and Non-Measuring Briefs must be uploaded to new NELMCC portal by Friday, Nov. 20, 2026, 11:59 p.m. EST.

B. **Length and Form of Briefs.** Each Team is required to upload PDF copies of both a Measuring Brief and a Non-Measuring Brief, as specified in Rule IV(C), to the NELMCC portal. Teams must format their briefs exactly as set forth below. Failure to comply with any formatting requirement will result in a deduction of one (1) point per violation.

BRIEF_ [*Insert Team Number Here*] _MEASURING

BRIEF_ [*Insert Team Number Here*] _ NON-MEASURING

1. **Format**. All briefs shall comply with Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure 28 and 32, except as modified by these Rules.[1] All text and footnotes shall be in 12-point Times New Roman type. The total length of the brief, excluding Cover Page, the Table of Contents, Table of Authorities and Appendices, may not exceed thirty-five (35) pages. All

citations shall be complete and, in the form, prescribed in the latest edition of the Harvard Law Association's Uniform System of Citation ("Bluebook"). Appendices may be used to

[1] Briefs of Appellants and Appellees shall comply with Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure 28(a)(2)-(9), 28(d) and 28(e). Excluded are 28(a)(1), 28(a)(4)(C), 28(a)(10), 28(b)-(c) and 28(f)-(j). References to the record under FRAP 28 should be to the record of the court. The applicable parts of Rule 32 are Rule 32(a)(1)-(4), with the exception of 32(a)(1)(A), 32(a)(2)(F) and reference to cover color. For the purpose of this Competition, Teams should use the cover colors on briefs specified as follows: OURTOWN RESIDENTS FOR THE ATMOSPHERE, INC., blue; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and the UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, green and KNIGHTFORK, INC., red; The name of the court shall be the United States Court of Appeals for the Twelfth Circuit.

recite the text of statutes, constitutional provisions, regulations, and materials that are not available.

2. **Measuring Brief**. As set forth in Rule IV(C)(1)(a)(i), each Team shall upload its Measuring Brief to the designated Measuring Brief folder in the new NELMCC portal. The Measuring Brief (marked "Measuring Brief" on the front cover) shall be used solely for judging the criteria set forth in this section. The Measuring Brief must comply with Rule IV(B)(1). The front cover shall include the Team number in the upper right-hand corner. The school's name and the names of the individual Team members shall appear in the lower right-hand corner. The name of the party on whose behalf the Team is submitting the brief must also appear on the front cover.

3. **Non-Measuring Brief.** The Non-Measuring Brief will be identical to the Measuring Brief except that no identification of the Team or its members other than the team number shall be included on the outside cover. Briefs shall not be signed; nor shall any identifying material appear in the Non-Measuring Brief. Each team must upload its Measuring Brief and Non-Measuring Brief in PDF file format as specified in Rule IV (C)(2).

4. **Certification.** Each Team submitting a brief in the Competition shall certify that such brief has been prepared in accordance with these Rules and that the work product is solely that of the Team's members.[2] The certification shall be on the last page of the Measuring Brief page. No certification shall be included in any other brief except the Measuring Brief.

C. Service of briefs and certification.

1. Service upon the Board.

a. Each Team shall serve upon the Board the following items via uploading Team Briefs and certification to NELMCC PORTAL:

i. The Measuring Brief clearly marked "Measuring Brief".
ii. The Non-Measuring Brief (pursuant to Rule IV (B)(3)); and
iii. The Team's original certification (pursuant to Rule IV (B)(4)) included as the last page of the Measuring Brief.

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[2]The certification shall state:

We hereby certify that the brief for _____ Law School is the product solely of the undersigned and that the undersigned have not received any faculty or other assistance in connection with the preparation of the brief. We further certify that the undersigned have read the Competition Rules and that this brief complies with these Rules.

_____
Team Member

_____
Team Member

Date_____

_____
Team Member

b. Briefs shall be uploaded to Measuring Brief Folder and Non-Measuring Brief folder in the NELMCC PORTAL. bearing the Team name or Team number as specified in Rule IV (B)(2) and (3).

c. Briefs served upon the Board shall be uploaded to the NELMCC portal.

d. Briefs uploaded to the incorrect folder will be subject to a one-point deduction.

e. Briefs uploaded late will be subjected to a one-point deduction per day late.

2. Service of briefs on opposing Teams. Each Team must upload brief copies to appropriate brief folders in the NELMCC portal in PDF file format by 11:59 p.m. EST, November 20, 2026. Failure to do so will result in a one-point reduction per day.

The subject line, "Briefs for Team # [*insert team number*]." All Team Non-Measuring Briefs will be available for all competitors on the NELMCC portal. A Team may not revise its brief after its submission to the Board. 1-point will be deducted if the Subject line is labeled incorrectly.

RULE V. SCORING

A. Briefs. The Pace Environmental Law Review, the Pace International Law Review, the Pace Law Review, and a committee of experienced litigators shall score all briefs submitted and select the best brief for each party opponent in the Competition. The brief score shall be used with the preliminary round scores to determine advancement to the quarterfinal round.[3]

B. Preliminary rounds.

1. **Time and place**. All rounds of arguments will be held on the campus of Elisabeth Pace Elisabeth Haub School of Law in White Plains, NY. The final round will take place on February 20, 2027, at 1:30 p.m. EST.

2. **Number of arguments**. Each Team will argue in three preliminary rounds; each Team will argue a different party position each round. At the conclusion of the three preliminary rounds, the twenty-seven Teams with the highest total preliminary scores[4] shall advance to the quarterfinal rounds. Order of Arguments for preliminary rounds will be emailed via listserv by NELMCC Board to teams on Wednesday, February 17, 2027, by

[3] Briefs are scored on the following basis: Correct Bluebook citation, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization shall represent seventeen percent (17%) of the total brief score. Thoroughness of research, depth of analysis, and persuasiveness of argument shall represent eighty-one percent (81%) of the total brief score. Two percent (2%) of the total score will be for Measuring Brief factors.

[4] Total preliminary scores shall be computed as follows: The brief score shall constitute forty percent (40%) of the total preliminary score. The combined score of the preliminary rounds shall constitute sixty percent (60%) of the total preliminary score (twenty percent (20%) for each of the three (3) rounds). The score each Team member receives in each preliminary round shall constitute fifty percent (50%) of that preliminary round score, which is ten percent (10%) of the total preliminary score.

6:00 p.m. EST.

3. **Ties**. Ties shall be broken in favor of the Team that has the highest aggregate point differences over its opponents in the three preliminary rounds.[5] In the event that tying Teams have the same aggregate point difference over their opponents, the tie shall be broken in favor of the Team having the higher brief score.

4. **Byes, assignment of Teams for arguments**. Byes,[6] if any, Team grouping, and party shall be randomly selected, except as qualified by Rule V (B)(2). No Team shall draw more than one bye during the preliminary rounds. Assignments for later rounds shall be announced as soon as reasonably practicable following the completion of the preceding round.

C. Final rounds.

1. **Time and place**. The quarterfinal and semifinal rounds of arguments will take place on a schedule announced by the Board.

2. **Arguments**. Twenty-seven (27) Teams shall progress to the quarterfinal round and the party they represent will be randomly selected.

3. The best Team from each trio in the quarterfinal round will be selected by the judges based on the oral argument and will advance to the semifinal round of the Competition.

4. The best Team from each trio in the semifinal round will be selected by the judges based on the oral argument and will advance to the Final round of the Competition on February 20, 2027.

D. Order, timing, and results of arguments.

1. Participants. Any two members of a Team may participate in any argument, but two members must participate in each argument. In the case of three-member Teams, each member must argue at least once during the preliminary rounds. Each Team must address all the issues in the arguments, dividing them among the two Team participants in any way it chooses, and determine the order of issues argued. A Team member not participating in an argument may be of counsel. It is encouraged that Teams have three members.

[5] Aggregate point differences shall be computed in the manner illustrated by the following example: If Team A defeated its closest first round opponent by a score of 80-75 and lost its second argument to the winning Team by a score of 78-80 and lost the third round to the winning Team by a score of 82-83, its aggregate point difference for the three rounds is +2 points (i.e., the net of the +5 point difference in its first argument, the -2 point difference in its second argument, and a -1 point difference in its third argument).

[6] Any Team that draws a bye shall have its total preliminary score computed as follows: The brief score shall constitute forty percent (40%) of the total preliminary score. The score for each preliminary round shall constitute thirty percent (30%) of the total preliminary score. Otherwise, scoring shall be the same as described in Rule V (B).

2. **Time allowed for arguments**. Oral argument shall be limited to a total of thirty (30) minutes per Team, fifteen (15) minutes for each Team member, except as discussed below. Judges, at their discretion, may interrupt arguments to ask questions but may not allow additional time. Each party, by advance notification to the judges and bailiff, may reserve up to five (5) minutes for rebuttal. Additionally, the first team member to argue must request rebuttal time from the judges. Rebuttal time may be subtracted from either or both two arguing Team members' time allotment. (Example: Team Member #1 may argue for 14 minutes, Team Member #2 may argue for 13 minutes, thus reserving a total of 3 minutes for rebuttal by one Team Member).

   Only one Team member may rebut. If the first Team member to argue fails to designate from whose argument the rebuttal time will be deducted, the time will be automatically subtracted from the first Team Member. The official time of the round is the time indicated by the bailiff. No one other than the bailiff may display timecards or signal to the oralist how much time is left. Teams may use silent digital or analog watches, but no smart watches.

3. **Results**. The Best Oralist for each courtroom in the preliminary rounds will be announced by the judges after each preliminary round. The Best Oralist of the combined preliminary rounds will be announced by the Board after the conclusion of the rounds and must have argued in two of the three rounds to qualify. The scores for each team will not be announced but shall be determined by the judges without knowledge of the brief score and shall be arithmetically weighed and combined with the brief score by the Board under the formula described in Rule V (A) and (B) with scores computed to decimals or fractional points, as necessary, to determine the twenty-seven schools which will advance to the quarterfinal round.

4. The winning Teams for the quarterfinal, semifinal and final rounds will be announced by the NELMCC Board at the conclusion of each round.

5. **Calculation and Announcement of Scores**. A single listing of all final brief scores and final overall scores after the preliminary rounds will be emailed to participating Teams via the NELMCC LISTSERV before moving on to the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds. No individual Team member's scores will be distributed. A challenge made after that time is waived.

6. **NO** laptops, mobile phones, videotaping, audiotaping, and other electronic devices are prohibited during oral arguments. Devices should be turned off by competitors until the conclusion of the round.

7. **Visitors in Courtrooms.** Visitors may observe NELMCC if there is sufficient space in the room and if the visitor has been pre-approved prior to the commencement of the round. Visitors must turn off all mobile/smart phones or any other electronic devices. Visitors may not take photographs or videotape during the oral arguments and will be asked to leave.

8. **Final round** recording will be available at the end of the competition on the NELMCC website.

RULE VI. FACULTY OR OTHER ASSISTANCE

No Team shall receive assistance prior to filing its brief, including research, writing or any aspect of preparing the brief. No Team shall receive assistance of any kind during an oral argument at the Competition or during any recess thereof. To maintain Team anonymity, coaches may not communicate with their Team during the oral arguments. Point deductions will be made, if upon request, it is determined that interference has taken place by a coach or faculty member.

RULE VII. PENALTIES

A. The Board may assess such penalties, including disqualification, as it deems reasonable and appropriate in its sole discretion for failure to comply with the Rules or deadlines set pursuant to these Rules and other rules made pursuant to Rule XI hereof.

B. All briefs in the Competition shall be subject to uniform penalties for each type of violation; penalties may be levied on whole or fractional points.

C. Plagiarism in any form is strictly prohibited, including plagiarism arising from the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, whether intentional or inadvertent. Any brief containing plagiarized material or citations to AI-generated, fabricated, or non-existent authorities will be disqualified.

D. Except as specifically stated below, Teams may not use generative AI tools or AI-assisted technologies to draft, edit, outline, paraphrase, summarize, fact-check, research, or otherwise assist in the preparation of briefs or oral arguments. Prohibited tools include, but are not limited to, large language models and AI-powered platforms such as ChatGPT, Claude, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, and similar technologies.

Teams may use traditional legal research databases and search engines, including Westlaw, Westlaw CoCounsel, Lexis+, Bloomberg Law, vLex, Fastcase, Google, and similar legal research platforms, provided such tools are used solely to locate, retrieve, and review legal authorities and not to generate substantive written or oral advocacy.

Any violation of this rule may result in disqualification or such other sanctions as the NELMCC Board deems appropriate. Teams may also receive general clerical assistance (e.g., copying, printing, or mailing) and may discuss the Competition Rules with faculty members and other students.

E. The Board shall maintain records of the penalties imposed pursuant to this Rule for at least six (6) months.

RULE VIII. INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES

Requests for interpretation of these Rules should be addressed to the National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition, by mail using the address in Rule IV (C)(1)(b), or by sending an email to the NELMCC office Pursuant to Rule VI, teams may not receive faculty assistance prior to the filing of the brief; therefore, any questions related to brief writing are to be submitted by the competitors and not the coach or advisor.

Requests should be made at the earliest date possible. All interpretations of these Rules and any waivers, consents, assessments of penalties, decisions or other actions taken by the Board in its administration of the Competition shall be in its sole and absolute discretion. Such interpretations, waivers, consents, assessments of penalties, decisions or actions shall be final, and all participants shall be bound thereby**.**

RULE IX. SCHEDULE

The Competition is held on the following days and times.

Day 1 - Thursday, February 18	Preliminary Round 1	9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
	Preliminary Round 2	2:00 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.
Day 2 - Friday, February 19	Preliminary Round 3	9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
	Quarterfinal Round	3:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.
Day 3 - Saturday, February 20	Semifinal Round	9:00 a.m.– 11:00 a.m.
	Final Round	1:30 p.m.

RULE X. OTHER RULES

The Board may from time to time make any other rules and procedures deemed advisable for the conduct of the Competition, in its sole discretion.