Rules for Participating Law Schools

The Paper Chase Regional Legal Writing Competition is a first-of-its-kind, practice-oriented legal writing competition designed to test your students’ analytical and writing skills as young lawyers-in-training. The competition stands out as the first regional legal writing competition in Texas.

Topics

Each participating law school will receive a packet of information that contains rules and forms for entrants to sign and a specific writing assignment. Entrants are to complete the assignment according to the instructions provided and submit their responses as required by the participating law school. Each law school should give entrants no more than seven (7) days to complete their entries.

This year’s topic represents a typical assignment a new lawyer might receive in a law-firm setting. The problem will require students to write a memo on a discrete issue in a criminal case. Students are free to conduct legal research that might help them better understand the issue. But, the library of relevant cases is a closed library. No other cases, rules, statutes, or authorities may be cited in the memo. The assignment is judged on writing quality and is not focused on research abilities. Students must comply with the formatting rules set out below when completing the motion.
Eligibility

The competition is open to students enrolled in a J.D. program at any participating Texas law school as of September 1, 2022. (Baylor Law will not participate). Each participating law school may decide whether to allow 1L students to enter. 2L and 3L students are eligible.

Each law school will submit its entries to Professor Matthew Cordon at Matthew_Cordon@baylor.edu. Professor Cordon will administer the competition but play no part in the judging.

Standards

Judges will evaluate entries based on originality, logic, reasoning, analysis of the issues, use of the available authorities, clarity, organization, the correctness of format and citations, grammar, style, and strength of conclusions.

Form

The memo should appear professional, although the precise format of the heading need not follow a particular style. The memo must be a maximum of seven (7) double-spaced pages in length, with one-inch (1") margins, and must be in Century or Century Schoolbook 12-point font. All citations should conform to The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (Columbia L. Rev. Ass’n et al. eds., 21st ed.). Each entry must have only one author. No collaboration, coaching, or consultation is allowed. Judges will not consider any entries not fully in accordance with the required form. The student should attach, as the first page of the memo, the Student Entry Cover sheet, and fill out the name and contact information. The cover page does not count towards the seven (7) page limit.

Each entrant is required to sign a Certification that the work is 100% of the student’s own and a Photographic Consent/Publicity Release form which are both attached to these rules.
Judging

The Texas Young Lawyers Association will identify the finalists and choose the winner. Baylor Law will then announce the winning students and school(s). TYLA and Baylor Law will publicize both.

Deadlines

Entrants should fill out and submit a Declaration of Intent to Enter by October 24, 2022. Baylor Law will issue the problem to participating schools on October 31, 2022. Students will have until November 7, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. to complete the assignment and turn it in. The schools may decide whether electronic or paper submission is most appropriate. The schools with entries to submit will have until November 9, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. (noon) to forward all submissions to Baylor Law. The law schools that participate have the option to screen entries for compliance with the rules and to disqualify entries that do not comply with formatting rules or other rules. However, there is no requirement that the participating schools judge or rank any of their submissions. All submissions received by the November 9, 2022 deadline will be submitted for judging by TYLA. Late entries are not eligible for consideration and will not be submitted to TYLA for judging. TYLA will choose the winners and the announcement of winning students will be made on a To-Be-Determined date (TBD). Baylor Law will acknowledge entries upon receipt. All entries become the property of the Baylor University – Baylor Law School.

Awards

The first-place winner receives $5,000; second place receives $1,500; and third place receives $500. Each of the three winners and the winning law school receives a trophy. The winning law school will keep the master trophy for one year, until the next competition.
For more information, contact:
Professor Matthew Cordon
Baylor Law School
Email: Matthew_Cordon@baylor.edu
Phone: (254) 710-4913

Attached Forms:

Law Student Cover Sheet for Entry
Law Student Certification
Law Student Publicity Release
Law School Cover Sheet for Submitting Entries