

Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Judges' Scoring Guidelines

PRESENTING Team's initial presentation (30 total points)

1. *Was the presentation clear and systematic?* Regardless of whether or not you agree with the conclusion, did the team give a coherent argument in a clear and succinct manner?

1-2 = Incoherent presentation
3-4 = Serious logical problems in the argument (poor)
5-6 = Hard to follow the argument (passable)
7-8 = Reasonably clear and systematic
9 = Crystal clear presentation
10 = Exceptional

2. *Did the team's presentation clearly identify and thoroughly discuss the central moral dimensions of the case, doing so in a way consistent with a collegial and thoughtful discussion?*

1-2 = Failure to cover any relevant moral dimensions
3-4 = Serious missing or underdeveloped dimensions (poor)
5-6 = Some significant dimensions are missing or poorly covered (passable)
7-8 = Most dimensions are present and well developed
9 = All dimensions present and clarified appropriately
10 = Exceptional

3. *Did the team's presentation indicate both an awareness and thoughtful consideration of, as well as a respect for, different viewpoints, including especially those that would loom large in the reasoning of individuals who disagree with team's position?*
(Note: A team does not necessarily need to explicitly say, "We will now address objections..." to have done this well.)"

1-2 = Minimal awareness of different viewpoints
3-4 = Minimal consideration of different viewpoints.... (poor)
5-6 = Underdeveloped discussion of different viewpoints.... (passable)
7-8 = Solid analysis and discussion of different viewpoints, including careful attention especially to those that would loom large....
9 = Insightful analysis and discussion of different viewpoints, including full and careful attention especially to those that would loom large....
10 = Exceptional

Opposing Team's Commentary (10 total points)

Did the commentary team give a fair and accurate representation of the presenting team's argument and present a thoughtful commentary on the argument?"

1-2 = Failure to respond to presenting team
3-4 = Weak or irrelevant response (poor)
5-6 = Some points are made (passable)
7-8 = Solid response to presenting team's points
9 = Key points zeroed in on (crystal clear)
10 = Exceptionally composed commentary

Presenting Team's Response to Commentary (10 total points)

Did the team thoroughly and respectfully respond to the commentary presented by the other team, addressing the relevant concerns raised by the commentary team?"

1-2 = Failure to respond to commentary
3-4 = Weak or irrelevant response (poor)
5-6 = Some points are made (passable)
7-8 = Solid response to commenting team's points
9 = Key points zeroed in on (crystal clear)
10 = Exceptionally composed commentary

Presenting Team's Response to Judges' Questions (10 total points)

Did the team thoughtfully and respectfully address the questions of the judges and in doing so deepen the analysis of the case?"

1-2 = Failure to respond to judges
3-4 = Weak or irrelevant response (poor)
5-6 = Some points are made (passable)
7-8 = Solid response to judge's points
9 = Key points zeroed in on (crystal clear)
10 = Exceptionally composed commentary

Research

Successful presentations should include a clear and detailed understanding of the facts given in the case. Since cases often involve details that are not general knowledge, research will often be necessary. Students should be prepared to identify sources of facts gained through independent research. While research is helpful, even necessary as a learning tool, judges should focus predominantly on the quality of arguments presented.

Moral Theories

Judges should be looking for good arguments that employ clear ethical principles. This does not require that teams put those arguments explicitly within some formal ethical theory. What really matters is that they grasp important ethical principle(s), and are able to clearly articulate and defend them well against critique. For example, if a team has a good argument about fairness they should be rewarded for this, whether they drape it in the clothing of Rawls' Veil of Ignorance or some other theory or just leave it in plain English. The above should not be interpreted to mean that teams should be discouraged from using ethical theory. Rather, if they do they should clearly explain the theory(ies) and not merely drop names (a really good argument based on such theories is possible).

Reasonable Disagreement

The ethical case studies are designed to address controversial issues about which intelligent, thoughtful people can reasonably disagree. The scores of the teams, therefore, should be based on the quality of their arguments, not on whether or not they adopted one position rather than another. The team that makes the strongest argument should win the most points. Moral decisions are made case by case based on applying critical thought to difficult situations. When evaluating teams, judges should not let whether or not they agree with the team's conclusion influence their assessment.

Presentation Style

The focus of the ethics bowl is on the arguments the students provide. This means that judges must evaluate, and only evaluate, a team on aspects of its presentation that relate directly to the three criteria identified on the judge's score sheet. Judges may not consider in their scoring other aspects of the team's presentation (e.g. the voice quality of presenters, whether they maintain eye contact with the judges, etc.).

Posing Questions in the Commentary

In their commentary (Rule 8), Team 2 may also pose questions to Team 1, but Team 1 is under no obligation to answer any or all of Team 2's questions. Team 1 should, however, be able to answer the most important question or two (in the event that there are more than two questions). When scoring team 2's commentary, judges should consider that questions raised during the commentary should address truly substantive issues both in relation to team 1's presentation and the moderator's question. A "question shower" in which Team 2 attempts to dominate Team 1's response to Team 2's commentary simply by posing a large laundry list of questions, should not merit a high score.

Scoring Note

At the end of each round you should enter the following scores:

- a) The presenting team's presentation score,
- b) The responding team's commentary score,
- c) The presenting team's response to commentary score, and
- d) the presenting team's response to judges' questions score.

Spirit Points

Spirit points reflect an assessment of the extent to which each team's presentation embodied the spirit of the ethics bowl competition (in particular with respect to civility). Give a score of 1-5 on the flipside of the judges' Scoresheet. Spirit Points are NOT factored in to a team's overall score, but are for feedback purposes only.