



NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
ETHICS BOWL

RULES MANUAL

2024-2025

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I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Introduction and Organizational Structure

The **National High School Ethics Bowl (NHSEB)** is dedicated to hosting, nurturing, and promoting High School Ethics Bowls across the United States. NHSEB's day-to-day operations are overseen by its Director and advised by both an internal Executive Committee and an external Advisory Board, which is sub-divided into various working committees. Beyond these bodies, topic- or task-specific advisory committees and task forces may be formed at the discretion of the NHSEB Director.

The NHSEB program, based at the **University of North Carolina's Parr Center for Ethics**, hosts and organizes the National High School Ethics Bowl Championship competition each April, as well as overseeing a coast-to-coast competition infrastructure of Regional and Divisional Competitions in accordance with the policies and procedures in this document.

Mission Statement

The National High School Ethics Bowl promotes respectful, supportive, and in-depth discussion of ethics among high school students nationwide. By engaging high school students in intensive ethical inquiry, the NHSEB fosters constructive dialogue and furthers the next generation's ability to make sound ethical decisions. Our collaborative model rewards students for the depth of their thought, their ability to think carefully and analytically about complex issues, and the respect they show to the diverse perspectives of their peers. As a result, it enables students to practice and build the virtues central to democratic citizenship, thus preparing them to navigate challenging moral issues in a rigorous, systematic, and open-minded way.

A Brief History of the National High School Ethics Bowl

The National High School Ethics Bowl was co-founded in 2012 by the University of North Carolina's Parr Center for Ethics and the **Squire Family Foundation**, with generous support from GlaxoSmithKline. A little over a decade later, NHSEB is the largest public philosophy program in the United States.

In its inaugural year, the NHSEB program served around 1,000 students from 89 schools in 11 states. Some Regional High School Ethics Bowls had been ongoing before NHSEB's official foundation. After NHSEB's first official slate of Regional Competitions, 12 winning teams attended the inaugural National High School Ethics Bowl Championship, held adjacent to the UNC-Chapel Hill campus in Durham, NC. At the time of its founding, NHSEB's overarching ideals were three-fold: (1) to take seriously the contributions that high school students make as members of their communities, (2) to cultivate deliberative skills and virtues central to democratic citizenship, and (3) to prepare students to navigate challenging moral issues in a thoughtful and constructive way. All of these goals remain our north star today, and comprise the metrics by which we evaluate the program's successes.

The NHSEB program was originally modeled on the **APPE Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (APPE IEB)**, founded in 1993 by Professor Robert Ladenson of the Illinois Institute of Technology, who had created the Ethics Bowl format as a lesson plan for an undergraduate course in practical ethics only a few years before. The Parr Center is indebted to the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, as well as to Professor Ladenson personally,

not only for their fierce example and inspiration, but for their direct assistance in building the National High School Ethics Bowl in its early and formative years.

Since 2013, the NHSEB has grown at a steady clip with the support of its [partners and sponsors](#). Today, NHSEB serves thousands of students from over 500 teams, which represent nearly 400 schools from all across the United States. Each year, NHSEB headquarters at the Parr Center oversees 44 Regionals in 34 states, and directly administers the largest of those, the North Carolina High School Ethics Bowl.

More information on the National High School Ethics Bowl's mission, history, and impact is available at nhseb.org/mission.

Rule Updates from 2023-2024

During the 2023-2024 season, the NHSEB Rules Council and Executive Committee approved the following changes to NHSEB's Official Rules. All are fully detailed in their respective context at the pages and sections cited. The changes have been left outlined in this document for any who were unable to participate during last season.

- **Conferral Times:** The Rules Council has elected to return conferral times to their pre-pandemic state, but to keep consistency across periods, all conferral times will now be up to *two minutes* rather than the previous *three minutes*. Organizers and Moderators should maintain this change across all events in 2024-2025 (6).
- **Speaking Cutoffs:** When a team's speaking time expires, the Rules Council has now formalized a ten second pause to allow teams to finish their remarks. Organizers and Moderators should maintain this change across all events in 2024-2025 (8).
- **Regional Rule Variations:** Variations in regional rules, procedures, or scoring are now allowed with approval from the NHSEB Rules Council. The Rules Council will consider such requests insofar as they are compatible with the spirit of the NHSEB program, and may ask Organizers to report on the effects/implications of any approved rule variations (11).
- **Eligibility Requirements for Community/Organizational Teams:** An eligibility exception has been added for teams which are composed in affiliation with community organizations, e.g., after-school groups, etc. (17).
- **Sanctions for Rule Violations:** While it is the hope and expectation of NHSEB HQ that all teams will comply with the Organization's rules as published, rule violations, whether intentional or otherwise, do occasionally occur. The NHSEB Rules Council, has developed and approved new sanction procedures for continued use in 2024-2025 (24).

2024-2025 at a Glance

This year's season begins September, 2025, with the online release of a new Regional Case Set, as well as registration and information forms for schools and Regional Competitions, respectively. Regional Competitions may occur any time between September and **February 4, 2025**. Due to the National High School Ethics Bowl's prodigious growth across the country, the Executive Committee has begun a multi-year implementation of a new Divisional Playoff system to replace NHSEB's previous Regional Playoffs for winners. This new system will set a (24-team) roster for the National Championship. A new case set for The National Championship will be released in February, after the final playoff match has concluded. To culminate the season, the 2025 National High School Ethics Bowl will take place **April 11-13, 2025**.

SEASON LAUNCH

September, 2024



REGIONAL SEASON CLOSES

February 4, 2025



NATIONAL CASES RELEASED

February 17, 2025



REGIONAL QUALIFICATION DEADLINE

December 15, 2024



DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

February 5 - 17, 2025



 **NHSEB NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP**
CHAPEL HILL, NC
April 11 - 13, 2025



II. THE NHSEB MATCH AND SCORING FORMAT

Individual Match Format

Ethics Bowl matches feature two teams meeting face-to-face to discuss and evaluate case studies which feature tricky moral questions or dilemmas. These cases typically come from one of the NHSEB's annually released **Case Sets**—one for Regional Competitions, and one for the National Championship. Each match will also have three judges and one moderator, and spectators are encouraged to attend as well.

While each team participating in a match may be composed of up to seven members, only up to five members may be seated for any given match. These team members must be selected and seated at the table before the match opens. Substitutions may not occur during a match. Throughout the match, judges will evaluate each team based on their performance. A moderator will be in charge of the room during matches. They keep time and move the match through its various components (see below) while ensuring that all participants and spectators comply with the rules. For more on the respective roles of judges and moderators, see Section IV below.

Each match will begin with a random process to determine presenting order, such as a coin toss or other mechanism. The team that wins the toss may elect to present first (designated as Team A) or to have the other team present first (in this situation, the winner of the toss is then designated as Team B).

To open the first half of the match, copies of the first case and question will be distributed to the judges and teams. The moderator will then read the case number, title, and a question for competition. Neither judges nor the teams will know in advance which case will be presented or which question will be asked by the moderator. We'll refer to this as the **Moderator's Period**. The first half will then proceed as follows:

- 1. Presentation Period:** After the case and question are introduced, Team A will have up to two minutes to confer, after which any member(s) of Team A may speak for up to five/six minutes in response to the moderator's question, based on the team's research and critical analysis. Team A must address the moderator's question during the time allotted.
- 2. Commentary Period:** Next, Team B will have up to two minutes to confer, after which any members of Team B may speak for up to three minutes to comment on Team A's presentation.
- 3. Response Period:** Team A will then have up to two minutes to confer, followed by three minutes to respond to Team B's commentary.
- 4. Judges' Period:** The judges will then begin their *ten minute* question and answer session with Team A. Before asking questions, the judges may confer briefly. Each judge should have time for at least one question, and may ask more questions if time permits.

Teams are allowed to briefly confer (20 to 30 seconds) before answering a judge's question. Any team member can speak during the team's response. Judges evaluate teams throughout the Presentation, Response, and Responses to Judges' Questions by Team A and the Commentary by Team B, and assess the teams based on the judging guidelines found in Section IV below.

Match Timing Overview

PERIOD	TIME ALLOWANCE	TOTAL TIME
Moderator's Period	can vary (~3 minutes)	~3 minutes
Presentation Period	2 minutes to confer 5 minutes to present	5 minutes 10 minutes
Commentary Period	2 minutes to confer 3 minutes to comment	12 minutes 15 minutes
Response Period	2 minutes to confer 3 minutes to respond	17 minutes 20 minutes
Judges' Period	10 minutes for Q+A	30 minutes total (+/-)

Judge Scoring

Judges will score each team throughout the match as follows:

- **Team's Presentation on the Moderator's Question (up to 15 points):** In evaluating a team's answer to the moderator's question, the judges will give the team a score of 1-5 on each of these three evaluation criteria:
 - Did the presentation clearly and systematically address the case question asked?
 - Did the presentation identify and thoroughly discuss the central moral dimensions of the case raised by the question asked?
 - Did the presentation indicate both awareness and thoughtful consideration of different viewpoints, including those that would loom large in the reasoning of individuals who disagree with the presenting team's position?
- **Opposing Team's Commentary (up to 10 points)**
- **Presenting Teams' Response to the Opposing Team's Commentary (up to 10 points)**
- **Presenting Team's Responses to Judges' Questions (up to 20 points)**
- **Each team's display of Respectful Dialogue throughout the match (up to 5 points)**

The judges should not discuss their scoring decisions with each other; each judge is to rely on their own private judgment. For more information on the guidelines and rules for judges, see Section IV below.

After the judges have made their scoring decisions, the moderator will read the second case number, title, and question to the same two teams, beginning the second half of the match. The second half will proceed as above, with Team B presenting, Team A offering commentary, Team B responding, and then Team B participating in the judges' question and answer session.

Thus, in each match, each team will have the opportunity to present one case and to respond to the other team's presentation of another case, for a total of 60 points possible from each of the three judges.

As each match concludes, moderators will help validate scores with the judges and tabulate, based on the scores, which team receives each judge's vote. The winner of the match will be the team with the highest number of votes (out of three totals). For example:

Judge 1: Team A 48, Team B 43 (1 vote for Team A)

Judge 2: Team A 45, Team B 44 (1 vote for Team A)

Judge 3: Team A 39, Team B 49 (1 vote for Team B)

Here, Team A is the winner of the match with two judges' votes despite the fact that Team B had a higher overall point total.

If a judge scores both teams equally (a tie), both teams are awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ of that judge's vote. A match can end in a tie—if all three judges score the match a tie, or one judge votes for Team A, one for Team B, and one scores a tie. Point differential is not typically a factor in determining the winner of an individual match although it is a criterion that may be used when ranking teams with equivalent win records at the end of preliminary rounds.

In elimination matches, judges will be instructed to award their votes to the team which performs best, all things considered. In anomalous cases of ties in elimination matches, Organizers should determine which team advances to the next competitive level by following the *cumulative* ranking order of operations detailed below for the NHSEB National Championship. For more information about ranking methodology, See Section III.

At the end of the match, the moderator will announce the outcome of the match by naming the winning team (or announcing a tie) as well as the number of judges' votes for that team. Moderators will then return all materials to the event staff for tabulation alongside scores from other matches.

General Format Rules

At the start of each match, scratch paper will be provided for team members to make notes during the match, but outside notes and materials are prohibited. All materials will be collected at the end of each match by the moderator.

The moderator will keep official time for each period of the match. The moderator is allowed to use their own device to keep accurate time. Teams may use their own timers with the following restrictions and conditions: (a) the timer cannot be any device that stores data or connects to the internet, and (b) a team may not time the portions of the match when the other team speaks or confers. The moderator should allow a team up to 10 seconds to finish a sentence/thought once time has expired.

All teams will get two standardized time notifications from the moderator during their Presentation Period: one when three minutes remain and one when one minute remains. During the Commentary Period and Response Period, the moderator will give notifications when one minute remains. Prior to the match starting, moderators will consult with teams if they prefer auditory (verbal, knocks, etc.) or physical (e.g., a hand gesture, visual representation, etc.) reminders. When judges ask questions, the moderator will notify the panel when there are three minutes remaining.

The moderator controls the room during matches and should address any unacceptable behavior including, but not limited to:

- Coaches, parents, or audience members communicating—verbally or non-verbally, or demonstrably reacting to team members during a match.
- Judges showing hostility or asking inappropriate questions to team members. Inappropriate questions include, but are not limited to, any that highlight a participant's race, religion, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, appearance, etc. Judges should direct their constructive questions to teams based on the discussion, not to individuals.
- Anyone in the room who intentionally makes distracting noises while one of the teams, judges, or moderator has the floor.
- Foul, insulting, or excessively graphic language or confrontational behavior by anyone in the room.

Please note, the moderator can only control the noise within the match room. If there are outside distractions, such as construction or students talking, it is up to the moderator, not coach or parent, to decide if the match should be paused.

Teams must answer the moderator's case question during the Presentation period. Teams are judged and scored on how well its members clearly and systematically address the question asked.

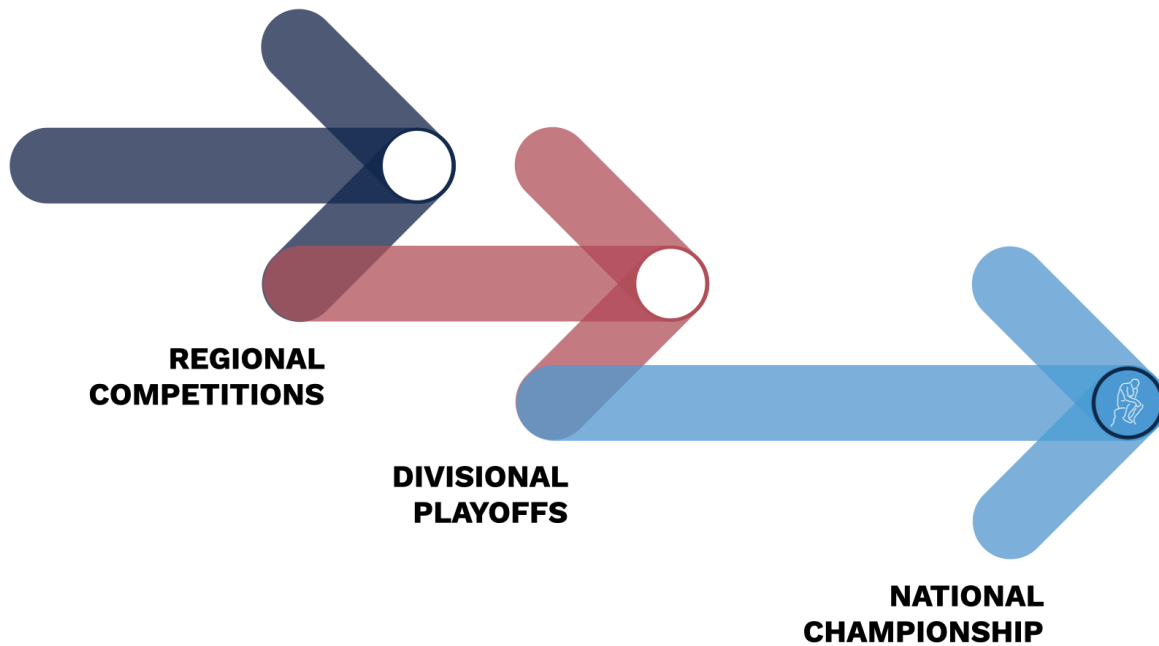
Teams will not be penalized or rewarded by the judges depending on whether one person speaks or everyone contributes. We have let the judges know that they should neither penalize nor reward a team for using either approach: both are welcome.

When one team speaks, the other team and audience members must remain silent although writing and passing notes is permitted. When one team is conferring, the other team may speak quietly as long they are not disrupting the conferring team in any way. For example, when Team A is given the case and question, they are allowed to confer for two minutes, during which Team B may quietly talk and pass notes, and then present for five/six minutes, during which Team B is permitted to write notes but must remain silent.)

Cases and Questions

Competing teams should use the relevant NHSEB Regional or National Case Set and the included discussion questions to prepare for the competition. The included discussion questions *do not include the questions moderators will ask teams during the competition*. Discussion questions are carefully designed to help teams prepare, and to think more deeply about the issues at hand. Official moderator questions for competitions themselves are set at the discretion of Regional Organizers. NHSEB will release a (confidential) set of recommended questions which Organizers may adopt if they prefer, late in the Fall of 2024.

III. THE 2024-2025 COMPETITION SEASON



School Registration Period: September 2024-January 2025

All teams participating in the program must register with NHSEB each season, and pay a yearly registration fee. The registration fee for 2024-2025 is \$175, if schools register before November 1, 2024. After November 1, fees will increase to \$250. All school registrations must be completed by January 15, 2025. The preferred method is through the online registration form located at go.unc.edu/nhseb-registration. If schools are unable to pay online using a credit card, they may remit a check to the Parr Center for Ethics at the following address. Registration invoices for school purchase orders may be requested via an online form located at go.unc.edu/nhseb-invoice.

Parr Center for Ethics, c/o Leonidas Kirby
240 East Cameron Avenue (CB #3125)
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

NHSEB is committed to ensuring that no team is prevented from participating in the program because of financial need. Therefore, financial assistance and/or fee waivers are available for teams who qualify as part of the [NHSEB Bridge initiative](#). For more information or to request a fee waiver, please contact us at ethicsbowl@unc.edu.

Importantly, when a school pays its registration fee to the NHSEB, this does *not* automatically register the school to compete in a local Regional Competition. The coach or advisor of a team(s) must contact the relevant Regional Organizer to confirm participation in their event, provide any additional registration information required at the regional level, etc. Information on how to contact your closest Regional Organizer is located at nhseb.org/regionals.

Regional Competitions: November 2024-February 2025

Teams typically begin their season by competing in a Regional High School Ethics Bowl. Regional Competitions may be held anytime between **November 1, 2024** and **February 4, 2025**.

In order to be recognized as a Qualifying Regional Competition by NHSEB, the Organizer of each Regional must complete a brief Qualification Form by December 15, 2024. All affiliated Regional Competitions are generally expected to conform to the program's rules as detailed in the Rules Manual. However, variations in regional rules, procedures, or scoring are allowed with approval from the NHSEB Rules Council. If you're interested in implementing these, please describe your proposed variations in the provided field when registering your event, and someone from the NHSEB team will follow up with you directly in short order to communicate an approval decision and/or request more information.

The Rules Council will consider such requests insofar as they are compatible with the spirit of the NHSEB program, and may ask you to report on the effects/implications of any approved rule variations. Variations which are implemented *without* approval from NHSEB may result in teams' disqualification from advanced levels of NHSEB's competition structure (including the 2025 Divisional Playoffs and/or the 2025 National Championship). Regional Organizers are responsible for informing teams about any departures from the NHSEB standards detailed here in their respective events, in order to minimize any confusion and or unfair advantage at advanced levels of competition.

Each school may only participate in *one* qualifying Regional Competition during an academic year. Schools are required to participate in the in-state Regional Competition which is closest to their geographical area. In cases where there is not a Regional Competition in a given state, the team should participate in the next-closest event or contact NHSEB HQ for other options. In special cases, schools must request NHSEB Executive Committee approval to participate in a different Regional Competition in lieu of the in-state or geographically closest event. In order to be recognized as a participating school in a Regional Competition, a team must comply with all eligibility provisions in Section IV of this manual.

NHSEB places no maximum limit on the number of schools or teams in any Regional Competition: however, Regional Organizers are allowed to cap the number of participating teams per school to enable a fair competition. Team composition is allowed to change between levels of competition (e.g., Regional, Divisional, National); the high school is being represented, not an individual team. Multiple teams from one high school that competed in a qualifying Regional Competition can combine to form one team with up to seven members for the Divisional Playoffs or the NHSEB National Championship. If a school has multiple teams, all members must have competed in the same Regional Competition in order to create a single team for the National Championship.

If a winning school cannot attend the National Championship, the NHSEB Executive Committee will allow the Regional or Divisional runner-up to participate. A qualifying school that cannot attend the National Championship should notify the NHSEB as soon as possible after winning their Regional Competition or Divisional Playoff, so that the runner-up has sufficient time to prepare to attend in their place. If individual members of a winning team cannot compete at the National Championship, the result of which the team has fewer than three members and the high school has no additional teams, the coach/advisor should contact the NHSEB to request permission to add new members to the team.

Matches in Regional Competitions *must* be judged by three neutral judges (not parents, coaches/advisors, or teachers from participating schools). See Section IV for more on the judge role.

At the Divisional Playoffs and the National Championship, the Presentation Period is extended to six minutes in order to provide teams with more time due to the quality of preparation acknowledged from judges at previous National Championship events. Regional Organizers are not required to adopt the extra minute at their competition; they may continue to keep the Presentation Period at five minutes. Please communicate to teams about these and any other differences in competition match format in comparison to the National Championship to minimize any confusion.

Upon completion of a Regional Competition, the Regional Organizer should complete a post-qualifying reporting form provided by the NHSEB. The Parr Center will work with Divisional Organizers to send Divisional Playoff invitations to winning Regional teams.

Divisional Playoffs: February 2025

Due to the National High School Ethics Bowl's prodigious growth across the country, the Executive Committee has designed a new Divisional Playoff system to replace NHSEB's previous Regional Playoffs, which began implementation in 2022-2023. For 2024-2025, the country's existing Regional Competitions will again be sorted into four geographic Divisions (Southeastern, Northeastern, Central, and Western). Each of these Divisions will be assigned a host institution responsible for conducting Divisional Playoffs in partnership with the Parr Center in order to set the team roster for the 2025 National Championship.

In 2024-2025, all Divisional Playoff matches will be single-elimination, with the winner of each match advancing to the Championship at UNC-Chapel Hill. Teams will be seated for the 2025 Divisional Playoffs using a bid system which is responsive to the overall size of each respective Division (in terms of numbers of Regional Competitions and participating schools). These bids will total 48, such that the winners comprise the 24-team roster for the 2025 National Championship. Official bid arrangements and matchups for the 2025 Divisional Playoffs will be announced by NHSEB HQ in December 2024.

Rules for Divisional Playoffs

Divisional Playoff events will be conducted online, using the Parr Center's NHSEBOne competition platform. The following rules have been approved by the NHSEB Executive Committee *exclusively* for online Divisional Playoff events. Otherwise, all Divisional Playoff events will utilize the same rules and regulations as the National Championship.

General Format Rules for Online Matches

NHSEBOne is a dedicated web platform for the National High School Ethics Bowl, which builds upon and works alongside the Zoom video conferencing platform. NHSEBOne functions as an administrative interface to build and administer Ethics Bowl competitions using Zoom’s existing functionality, as well as a match “controller” which works alongside the match rooms to offer Ethics Bowl-specific functionality—cases, timers, scripts, notifications, in-platform scoring/reporting, and more.

NHSEBOne works best with a one student/one computer participation model, and Divisional Playoffs will be conducted in this manner. **Teams may gather in the same physical location for competition, but all students and coaches should join matches *from their own device*, and follow all rules and guidelines below during their Divisional Playoff events.**

Rules on Notes, Materials, and Communications

In accordance with the rules detailed in this manual, the following remain prohibited in all circumstances, including online-format matches, and will be enforced on an honor system and in the spirit of the Ethics Bowl activity. If coaches become aware of violations of these rules by their own team, they are expected to self-report the violation.

- Communication between students and their coaches during a match in progress, including verbal, visual, or written communications.
- Communication between students seated in a match and alternate or non-participating students not seated in the same match, including verbal, visual, or written communications.
- Communication between students seated in a match and any external observers, including verbal, visual, or written communications.
- The usage of pre-written notes, cues, or other external materials during a match in progress.
- Students using NHSEBOne should not make use of their own timing devices, as an integrated timer will be available.
- Verbal or visual communications between students on a given team should only occur during designated conferral periods (i.e., not while the other team is presenting or conferring). Digital note-passing is permitted throughout the match.

Student participants *may* make use of the following tools during a match:

- Pre-printed copies of the case packet (though this is not necessary for NHSEBOne users, as cases are integrated into the platform). In cases where pre-printed copies are used, Moderators should check to verify pages are blank, insofar as is feasible.
- Scratch paper to take notes. In cases where scratch paper is used, Moderators should check to verify pages are blank, insofar as is feasible.
- NHSEBOne/Zoom private chat, in order to “pass” notes among team members during a match in progress. Students may also make use of an off-platform chat tool (e.g., Slack, Discord, etc.), provided that students’ usage remains non-disruptive and consistent with all rules in this manual.

Moderator Scripts for Online Matches

A Moderator Script for online matches is available on the NHSEB [website](#) and has been built into the NHSEBOne Moderator interface. A brief summary of the format changes for online matches is as follows:

- The script includes staging instructions to remind coaches of their observational role when a match begins. To prevent communication between coaches and students, coaches should have their cameras and microphones disabled throughout matches in progress.
- The Moderator's coin toss to determine presenting order has been eliminated from the script. NHSEBOne will automatically randomize the presenting order, and thus designations as "Team A" and "Team B".
- Timing reminders during student presentations, commentaries, and responses may be offered either verbally or visually using the NHSEBOne notification system and/or the chat function in Zoom. Moderators will be instructed to offer students a choice as to how they'd like to receive these alerts.

Online Match Troubleshooting and Contingency Rules

In any online event, connectivity issues may arise. The following are policy recommendations to troubleshoot connectivity issues in individual matches.

- **Moderator Time-Out:** The Moderator may, at their discretion, call a "time-out" during a match to deal with any issues affecting the ability of participants to be seen/heard/understood. In such cases, the Moderator may stop the timer and work with participants to remedy any connectivity problems that arise. Moderators are encouraged to remain as flexible as possible, and to use this tool whenever necessary.
- **Camera Permissions:** In general, participants' cameras should be turned on at all times (with the exception of coaches during matches in progress) in order to facilitate collaboration and conversation, which lies at the heart of the Ethics Bowl. However, in cases where serious bandwidth issues arise, a Moderator may grant permission to a participant to disable their camera in order to proceed with audio-only access.
- **Match Suspension:** If serious technical issues arise which affect the integrity or competitive/ conversational experience of the match, a Moderator may use their discretion to officially suspend the match, in consultation with the Divisional Organizer. In cases of extreme disruption, a match may be rescheduled with different cases, and/or excluded from score calculations at the discretion of the Organizer. Issues justifying a match suspension may include, e.g., the loss of more than one Judge, the loss of a Moderator, the loss of multiple members of either team, or platform technical failure.
- **Score Averaging Contingency:** In the event that a Judge for an online event experiences connectivity issues or drops out of the match, a Moderator Time-Out should be called. If the Judge is unable to regain connectivity after multiple attempts, the Moderator may either suspend the match or, with explicit permission from the Organizer, implement a Score Averaging Contingency. In this case, the final scores of the two remaining Judges should be averaged to devise a third Judge's score which is representative of the evaluations of the panel that remains. **Organizers: This scoring adjustment is entirely optional and should only be implemented as a last resort.** It will need to be calculated and included in results manually; NHSEBOne will not automatically account for this contingency if implemented. For more information or troubleshooting assistance, please contact the NHSEB Executive Committee.

Additionally, all participants are generally encouraged, insofar as possible, to optimize their match experience and connectivity (e.g., by ensuring a strong connection, a well lit area free of distractions, optimal camera/ microphone placement, etc.)

Organizer Recommendations for Online Events

- Wherever feasible, Organizers should provide for testing environments and “dress rehearsals” in NHSEBOne to allow students/coaches/volunteers to acclimate in advance of official matches. NHSEB will provide documentation and walkthroughs of basic tasks for each user type (Student, Coach, Judge, Moderator) in NHSEBOne. NHSEB will provide central training resources unique to each role to facilitate efficient training.
- Wherever feasible, Organizers should work with Moderators for their events to familiarize them not only with the official NHSEB Rules Manual, but with the various troubleshooting recommendations enumerated above. Moderators should be prepared and empowered to “run the room” as well as possible.
- On the day of the event, NHSEB recommends keeping an “HQ” or “Help Desk” room open using Zoom (or your conferencing platform of choice) to give participants a place to go for beginning/end of day event information, as well as troubleshooting during the course of the competition.
- Given the possibility that technical difficulties may occur, NHSEB recommends extending online match times (typically 60 minutes) to 75 minutes, as well as leaving sufficient breaks between matches.
- It is not unlikely that contingencies which have gone unplanned-for may arise during the course of an online match. In cases where the above troubleshooting recommendations are insufficient, please contact NHSEB with any questions or concerns.

The NHSEB National Championship: April 11-13, 2025

A new Case Set for the National Championship will be released to the participating teams in February, after all Divisional Playoffs have concluded. The National Championship will take place April 11-13, 2025 on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The event will begin on the evening of April 11 with a Welcome Reception, followed on Saturday, April 12 with an Opening Ceremony required for all participating teams (students and coaches). Competition will proceed from there until late afternoon on both Saturday and Sunday. The National Championship field will feature 24 teams from across the country, set by performance at the Divisional Playoffs. For more information about the 2025 National Championship, please visit nhseb.org/championship.

At the National Championship, teams will be provided with an extra minute during the Presentation Period, for a total of six minutes.

At the NHSEB National Championship, each team will participate in four preliminary matches, with teams assigned to matches by random draw. At the end of the fourth round, teams will be ranked by the number of wins (0-4). When two or more teams have the same number of wins, the ranking order will be determined by the following data points:

1. **Lowest number of losses** (so a team that has 2 wins, 1 tie, and 1 loss will rank higher than a team with 2 wins and 2 losses)
2. **Highest number of judge votes** (over the course of four rounds, a team has the opportunity to win the votes of 12 judges. If two teams finish with 4 wins, but one team has 11 judge votes and the other has 10, the team with 11 votes is ranked higher)
3. **Greatest point differential** over all four matches (If two teams have 3 wins and 1 loss and 9 judge votes, and Team A has a total point differential of +30 [winning two matches by 12, winning one match

by 10, and losing one match by 4] while Team B has a point differential of +28 [winning one match by 11, winning two matches by 9, and losing one match by 1], Team A will be ranked higher in the standings).

4. **Highest point total** over all four matches.
5. A coin toss.

The top eight teams after the four preliminary matches will advance to the NHSEB Quarterfinals. The eight quarterfinal teams will be announced after lunch on Sunday, April 13, 2025. The top four teams after that round will advance to Semifinals, and the top two will advance to the National Championship Match.

The rules and procedures for the Quarterfinal, Semifinal, and Championship matches will be identical to the other rounds. The winning teams from each of these rounds will advance (with rankings as determined above). The winning team of the final match will be named the 2025 National High School Ethics Bowl Champion. In the unlikely event of a tie of judges' votes during the finals, the two top-ranked teams will be named co-champions.

The Awards Ceremony after the final match will include recognition of all semi-finalists and finalists, as well as the Judges' Choice Award (for highest cumulative Q&A score). There, the *Robert Ladenson Spirit of the Ethics Bowl Award* will also be announced. This award will go to the team which best embodies the spirit and ideals of the Ethics Bowl, as voted on by all teams. The criteria are:

- Respect, civility and courtesy for others, both during the rounds and informal discussion;
- Thoughtfulness, in terms of expressing their positions and commenting on other teams' presentations;
- Valuing collaboration above competition.

IV. RULES BY COMPETITIVE ROLE

Eligibility and Team Composition

Teams must meet the following criteria to qualify for and participate in the National High School Ethics Bowl, and to count as a qualifying team in their Regional Competition:

- **Students:** A team must be composed of at least three high school students. NHSEB teams will be capped at seven students (all of whom participated on a qualifying team at a Regional Competition—see below), but keep in mind that only five students can be seated on a team in any one match. Teams who end up with fewer than three available students due to extenuating or emergency circumstances on the day of an NHSEB-affiliated event may be allowed to compete at the discretion of the event's Organizer.
 - A team must represent an accredited and certified school that offers classes for grades 9, 10, 11, and/or 12 in the United States and must have the official endorsement of the school administration to participate in NHSEB.
 - Students participating in a dual enrollment program qualify to join or create a High School Ethics Bowl team.
 - Home-school and Community Organization exception: Regional Organizers may, at their discretion, allow a team or teams of students to participate who are not enrolled in an accredited high school with a team that participates in an NHSEB Regional Competition. This could be a team of home-school families, or a team from a community organization. Regional Organizers should verify high school age and encourage home-school students to form a team from multiple families. Participants may not be otherwise enrolled in another accredited high school.
- **Coaches:** All teams must have a coach or other advisor vetted and approved by school administration. If a team does not have an adult coach or advisor approved by the school's administration, the team cannot compete at the Regional Competition, Divisional Playoff, or National Championship.
 - Home-school and Community Organization exception: the coach or advisor of a home-school or organizational team should be approved by the Regional Organizer. We are also able to help facilitate establishing teams and coaches/advisors—please contact us for more information.

The student composition of the team is allowed to change from the Regional Competition, to the Divisional Playoffs, to the National Championship.

- The high school is represented at the Playoffs and National Championship, not individual teams.
- If a school enters multiple teams into a Regional Competition, those teams can combine to form a new team for the Divisional Playoff or National Championship with up to seven members. All members from *both* teams need to have registered and must have competed in the same Regional Competition in order to create one team. It will remain the case that only seven students will be eligible for competition in Divisional and National events.
- A team may substitute members from round to round if a team has more than five registered members; substitution cannot occur not *during* a match.
- If members of a winning team cannot compete at the National Championship, the result of which the team has fewer than three members and the high school has no additional teams, the coach/advisor should contact the NHSEB Executive Committee to request permission to add members to the team.

All members of the team must be enrolled at the participating high school during the semester that the Regional Competition takes place.

Teams must pay the NHSEB registration fee prior to competing at their Regional Competition.

Team members (students, coaches/advisors, and chaperones) are expected to follow all federal, state, and local laws while traveling to/from and attending either their Regional Competition or the National Championship. Illegal activity and/or disruptive behavior (including, but not limited to, intoxication, violence, verbal abuse, or harassment) will result in the removal of the participant(s) and disqualification of the team.

Rules for Teams

High School Ethics Bowl has important distinctions from other speech and debate formats. In Ethics Bowl, teams are not required to pick opposing sides, nor are they encouraged to “win” the argument by knocking down the other team or its position. Ethics Bowl is, at heart, a collaborative discussion during which the first team presents its analysis of a question about the ethical dilemma at the core of the case being discussed, offering support for its position but also considering the merits of other positions.

The central goal in NHSEB competition is to demonstrate breadth and depth of thinking about difficult and important ethical situations. In fact, teams are rewarded for the degree to which they eschew adversarial positioning and instead adopt a more collegial, collaborative stance.

- In other words, teams are strongly encouraged to think of themselves as being on the same side rather than as opponents. That is, both teams are working together trying to solve a difficult problem—while impressing the judges with thoughtful, considered analysis and support. Listening to the other team with an aim to affirm, gently correct, supplement, or build on their argument is a prudent approach and one that expresses the ideals of the NHSEB.
- Because an Ethics Bowl encourages collaboration, team members are encouraged to remain seated rather than standing during a match.

Teams are not penalized or rewarded depending on whether one person speaks or everyone contributes. We understand that each team has its own process:

- Some divide up the cases so that individuals are responsible for a certain number of cases; as a result, one person would present. Other teams ask that each member of the team become responsible for a different aspect of all the cases; as a result, all team members would speak.
- Either of these strategies or variations is feasible and scoring is neutral on this issue.
- At the National Championship, judges know that they should neither penalize nor reward a team for using either approach: both are welcome.

Successful analyses will include a clear and detailed understanding of the facts of a case. Since cases are often highly complex, researching the topic or incident involved may be helpful. As such, there are no limits on the amount of prior research a team can do to prepare. Although teams may use outside research to prepare for a match, they should not assume that merely presenting factual information will impress the judges. Teams need to propose valid, sound, persuasive arguments that are buttressed by fact to score well.

When researching cases, teams should think of this as an opportunity to gather and assess arguments supporting a wide range of points of view rather than to seek only those sources that support opinions the team already holds. As team members analyze the range of arguments, they should strive to understand the perspectives of those who have different beliefs and concerns than the ones with which they are familiar. Some key questions to ask might be: What motivates people to have certain beliefs? What are their values? A team should also ask themselves: "Why is this case difficult or complex?" If it doesn't seem to be difficult, it is a good sign a team is not probing deeply enough. The cases are designed to challenge world views. Asking questions like these will help a team solidify its own position.

During the Presentation Period, a team should make sure it briefly introduces the case and identifies the central moral question. A team must clearly and systematically address the case question asked by the moderator. After presenting a position, a team should explain how others might have different points of view. Teams should do their best to understand and seriously engage with these other positions, even if their team disagrees.

During the Commentary Period, a team's role is to help the other team perfect its presentation, *not* to present its own position on the case. When team members comment, they should think of themselves as thoughtful, critical listeners. Their goal is to point out the flaws in the presentation, to comment on its strengths, note what has been omitted or needs further development. All of these contributions are in the interest of strengthening the analysis of the case.

Although teams are allowed to and should pose one to three key questions during Commentary, the first team is under no obligation to answer any or all questions raised by the second team (or vice versa). The presenting team, however, should be able to answer the most crucial or morally pressing question or two (in the event that there are more).

- Teams are expected to ask insightful questions that target the primary position, key implications, or unaddressed central issues.
- When scoring Commentary, judges will consider the questions raised by the opposing team and whether the questions addressed truly substantive issues—both in relation to the presentation and the moderator's case question.
- A "question shower" or "rapid-fire questioning," during which a team asks many questions in an attempt to overwhelm or dominate the other team, is inconsistent with the aims of the NHSEB, and will not merit a high score.

On occasion, team members may discover that they want to modify or perhaps change an aspect of their initial position as a result of the second team's commentary. Some judges may think this indicates that the team did not fully think through its initial position. However, because the Ethics Bowl is about ethical inquiry, and because these are high school students, and changing one's mind can be considered a sign of fluid rather than crystallized intelligence—a hallmark of higher-order thinking—**changing or modifying a position is not necessarily negative.**

Judging the quality of a team's analysis can often be subjective and difficult. It is easy for teams to fault or blame judges if they lose a match. To fully understand how each judge will reach their decisions, please read the guidelines for judges below. Judges come from diverse backgrounds: some are philosophers or professional ethicists; others come from a range of professional fields such as business, education, medicine, or journalism; and some are fans of Ethics Bowls. Part of the task of a successful team is to communicate reasoning effectively to judges who have different viewpoints and life experiences.

Because of judges' diverse backgrounds, it is not essential for teams to reference specific ethicists or ethical theories: doing so is not a requirement of a good answer, nor is it indicative of a poor answer. The argument matters; it is not necessary to name the philosopher associated with the argument. Keep in mind that a team is speaking to a broad audience: many judges have no formal background in philosophy or ethics, and may not understand your reference to "Kantianism." A good strategy is to explain ethical reasoning in terms everyone can understand.

If a team member does refer to, say, "deontology" for example, make sure the reference is accurate. A judge may question a team about that specific theory during the judges' question & answer portion of the match. In short, just remember that philosophical name-dropping is *not* a substitute for presenting a sound argument.

Rules for Judges

All matches at the National Championship or a Regional Competition should be judged by a panel of three neutral judges. That is, a judge should not be a coach/advisor or parent of a child on any team participating in the match; teachers should not judge their own students; judges should not have other obvious conflicts of interest. If a Regional Organizer is unsure if a judge is appropriately neutral, contact the NHSEB Executive Committee before assigning the judge in question.

Judges should not interrupt teams during their presentation, commentary, or response periods by asking questions, offering prompts, or gesturing. Judges should maintain an unbiased tone towards all teams. Socializing with teams and/or their coaches before or after a match is discouraged (e.g. greeting teams or coaches you may know). This behavior can appear to confer an unfair advantage to one team over another. Please wait until the competition has completely ended to approach teams or coaches to avoid the appearance of unfair judging.

Judges should direct their questions to a team as a whole and not an individual or a subset of the team. It would be particularly inappropriate to ask a question of student(s) based on an immutable characteristic, such as race, religion, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, appearance, etc. (e.g., addressing a question about immigration to a student who speaks with an accent).

Judges should score based solely upon content, not on whether one person, a few, or all team members speak:

- Each team decides for itself how to divide up speaking time during all portions of the match. Some teams choose to have an individual "own" a certain case. Other teams prefer to have each person on the team speak for a portion of the match.
- Teams should be neither rewarded nor penalized for taking either approach. Teams often explain who will speak at the beginning of their Presentation so that everyone has an idea of how the presentation will be structured.

Judges should not discuss their scoring decisions with each other; each judge is to rely on their own private judgment.

It is counterproductive when judges talk to teams about their scoring (particularly other judges' scoring). Teams will receive score sheets with comments after the event is over. Please refrain from explaining scores, giving overt criticism to a team during or after a match, or expressing disagreement with a fellow judge's scoring. Teams need to focus on their next match, not a comment that a judge made at the end of the previous match.

The moderator “runs the room.” Moderators will direct the match by indicating whose turn it is to speak and how much time remains. At the end of the match, the moderator will collect the judges’ score sheets, help assist with calculations if needed, and announce the results in terms of judges’ votes. In the unlikely event that something out of the ordinary occurs or the match is disrupted, the moderator will direct participants on next steps.

A judge’s role in Ethics Bowl is to gauge a team’s breadth and depth of thought as applied to a specific case. These guidelines will help to explain how to evaluate a team’s performance in combination with the score sheet and scoring criteria:

- Teams have received the cases several weeks, if not months, in advance. They have prepared by meeting to discuss the ethical components of the cases and to formulate their analyses. During Ethics Bowl, the teams know that the cases they will discuss come from this set, but they do not know which case will be used in any given round, nor do they know the question asked (until announced by the moderator).
- A good answer indicates both breadth and depth of thought. A prepared team recognizes that there are multiple viewpoints or possible “answers,” discusses them, and then explicates its own position about the case. The presentation should clearly and systematically address the moderator’s case question.
- The commenting team then has time to comment on the presentation. This commentary should be focused on the presenting team’s primary answer. That is, the commenting team can ask for clarification, point out contradictions, ask for more information, etc. They should *not* use this time to present their analysis of the case. They will have the opportunity to present a case during the other half of the match.

During the Response to Commentary Period, the presenting team is under no obligation to answer any or all questions raised by the second team (or vice versa). The presenting team, however, should be able to answer **the most crucial or morally pressing question or two (in the event that there are more than two questions).**

- Commenting teams may ask one to three insightful questions that target the primary position, key implications, or unaddressed central issues.
- An excellent commentary may seriously, substantively engage in dialogue with the presenting team *without asking any questions at all.*
- When scoring the Commentary period, judges will consider the questions raised by the commenting team and whether the questions addressed *truly* substantive issues—both in relation to the presentation and the moderator’s question.
- A “question shower” or “rapid-fire questioning,” during which a team asks many questions in an attempt to overwhelm or dominate the other team, is inconsistent with the aims of the NHSEB, and will not merit a high score.

During the Presentation, Commentary and Response periods, judges do not ask questions or comment. After the presenting team responds to the other team’s commentary, the moderator will indicate that it is time for the judges to ask questions. This is the longest individual portion of the match because the questions posed give the team an opportunity to think on their feet—they cannot prepare for this portion of the match. As a result, judges will gain more insight into the breadth and depth of the team’s analysis of the case.

- A judge’s question should be short and to-the-point (usually 30 seconds or less) and should be designed to help probe a team’s understanding of the case. Please do not use this opportunity to argue your own

perspective. When asking your question(s), please be mindful of the time that remains for other judges to ask their questions as well as for the team to respond.

- Most importantly, please remember that the main criterion for judging is to evaluate teams based on the breadth and depth of their thinking about a difficult ethical situation. This includes addressing and evaluating opposing or different viewpoints. Judges should NOT engage a team in an argument based on a personal viewpoint nor score a team based on whether the judge agrees or disagrees with the team's position.

On occasion, team members may discover that they want to modify or perhaps change an aspect of their initial "position" as a result of the second team's commentary. Some judges may think this indicates that the team did not fully think through its initial position. However, because the Ethics Bowl is about ethical inquiry, and because these are high school students, and changing one's mind can be considered a sign of fluid rather than crystallized intelligence—a hallmark of higher-order thinking—changing or modifying a position is not necessarily negative. Before making a judgment, consider several questions: Was the team's initial position well-founded and thought-out? Is their revised position well-founded and thought-out? In short, modifying or changing a position should be judged on its individual merits.

Finally, at the bottom of the score sheet, a team can receive up to 5 points for engaging in productive and respectful dialogue as opposed to combative debate. This is to underscore the importance of civil and respectful dialogue—values of central importance to the NHSEB program. Teams that earn five points in this category demonstrate their awareness that an Ethics Bowl is about participating in a collegial, collaborative, philosophical discussion aimed at earnestly thinking through difficult ethical issues. Teams that score poorly in this category are those that resort to mere rhetorical flourishes, adopt a condescending, critical tone, or are unduly adversarial.

Moderator Procedures

All moderators at affiliated events should use the official NHSEB Moderator Script to guide matches. A current version of the Moderator Script is always available for download at nhseb.org/rules-documents.

The moderator's timekeeping efforts help each event unfold in a timely manner and ensure that all teams have equal opportunities to express their arguments.

All teams will get two standardized time notifications from the moderator during their Presentations: one when three minutes remain and one when one minute remains. During the Commentary and Response periods, the moderator will give notifications with one minute remaining. Prior to the match starting, moderators will consult with teams if they prefer auditory (verbal, knocks, etc.) or physical (a hand gesture, visual representation, etc.) reminders. During the judges' questions portion of the match, the moderator will notify the panel when three minutes remain.

No more than five students can be seated on a team. Teams cannot substitute members, review notes or confer with their coach once a match begins. Moderators will provide scratch paper and pens supplied by the event Organizer.

The moderator will announce the beginning of the match once everyone is settled by welcoming teams, coaches and judges, and introducing themselves. Next, judges and the teams will be invited to introduce themselves. Matches will then follow the format above. In brief:

1. Each match will begin with a coin toss (or other applicable randomization process). The team that wins the toss may elect to present first (designating them as Team A) or to have the other team present first (in which case the team winning the toss is designated as Team B).
2. In the first half of the match, copies of the first case and question will be distributed to the judges first and then the participants, Team A and Team B. Neither the judges nor team members will know which case will be presented or what question will be asked. The moderator will distribute copies of the cases and question face down so that no one sees the case before the moderator reads the case question.
3. The moderator will announce the case by its title and read the question. The moderator should only read the case title and the question; not the entire case, if listed.
4. Team A has 2 *minutes* to confer. Either team may take notes, but Team B must remain silent.
5. Team A has *up to 5/6 minutes* to make its presentation. Any member(s) of the team may speak.
6. Team B has 2 *minutes* to confer (Team A is silent)
7. Team B has *up to 3 minutes* to comment on the presentation. Any member(s) may comment.
8. Team A has 2 *minutes* to confer (Team B is silent)
9. Team A has 3 *minutes* to respond to Team B. Any member(s) may respond.
10. Judges have 30 *seconds* to confer, if they would like, and then ask questions of Team A. The question and answer period will last for up to 10 *minutes*. Judges' questions should be brief, clear, and devoid of overt personal bias. The moderator should issue a reminder when there are three minutes remaining in the Q&A period.
11. Judges score Team A's presentation and response, and Team B's commentary.
12. In the second half of the match, steps 2-11 are repeated with a new case and question, and with the teams reversing positions (i.e., Team A becomes Team B).
13. At the end of the match, the moderator will announce the outcome of the match by naming the winning team (or announcing a tie) as well as the number of judges' votes for that team (e.g., "With a score of two votes to one vote, Team A has won this match."). Moderators will then return all materials back to the competition headquarters for compilation with scores from other matches.

V. SANCTIONS FOR RULE VIOLATIONS

Overview

While it is the hope and expectation of NHSEB HQ that all teams will comply with the Organization's rules as published in the official Rules Manual, rule violations, whether intentional or otherwise, do occasionally occur. NHSEB HQ, in coordination with the NHSEB Rules Council, has developed and approved the following sanction procedures for continued use in 2024-2025.

Rule violations at events affiliated with the National High School Ethics Bowl should be considered for sanction based on two core values, in the listed order of priority:

1. **Competitive Fairness**, defined as the extent to which any given rule violation significantly affects the outcome of a match, round, or competitive event.
2. **Pedagogical Consistency**, defined as the extent to which any given rule violation signals a departure from the core educational goals of the Ethics Bowl activity.¹ These sorts of violations, we expect, will be exceedingly rare, and we strongly urge consultation with NHSEB HQ in such cases.

In cases of rule violation, match Moderators and Event Organizers should strive, above all else, to ensure that all competitive matches run according to fair and consistent application of the NHSEB program's official rules. Any adjustments to in-event competitive structure (e.g., rematches) which are required due to a rule violation should only be implemented to maintain a core sense of fairness and consistency with the values above.

Organizers are authorized to ensure accountability among teams which violate rules via four levels of escalating sanction: scheduled rematches, individual match forfeitures, competitive disqualification from an event, or ongoing suspension in consultation with NHSEB HQ. In all cases of rule violation, whether officially sanctioned or not, NHSEB HQ encourages Organizers to explicitly clarify and reinforce official rules wherever relevant and necessary.

Moderators and/or Organizers should use the following decision procedure(s) when considering whether and to what extent rule violations warrant sanctions. The NHSEB Rules Council and Executive Committee are available to assist with questions, clarifications, and consultations on the procedures detailed in this document.²

¹ For an extended discussion of these core pedagogical norms, please review available materials at nhseb.org. Cf., Robert Ladenson, "The Educational Significance of the Ethics Bowl," in Teaching Ethics 1:1 (2001) and Roberta Israeloff and Karen Mizell, eds., The Ethics Bowl Way: Answering Questions, Questioning Answers, and Creating Ethical Communities, New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022. Any questions or concerns about interpretation of these goals should be referred to NHSEB HQ.

² Organizers may contact NHSEB HQ with rules concerns at ethicsbowl@unc.edu. The Director of NHSEB will serve as the first point of contact for any and all reportable rule violations, and will consult with the Rules Council on an ongoing basis and as needed to resolve any disputes that may arise

In-Match Rule Violations

If a Moderator or Organizer comes to believe that an official rule was violated during a match in progress, they should use the following decision procedure in sequence to determine whether a violation warrants official sanction.

I. Did the rule violation compromise competitive fairness in the match (e.g., by creating an unfair advantage for one team)?

- A. **No:** If the rule violation did not create an unfair advantage for either team, the Moderator should proceed with the match as planned. Depending on the nature of the rule violation, it may be appropriate for the Moderator to acknowledge the violation, clarify the relevant rule, and announce that the match will proceed. In such a case, rule violations should be reported to the Organizer upon conclusion of the match, but no further steps need to be taken in the room.
- B. **Yes:** In the case that one team gained an unfair advantage because of the rule violation, a Moderator or Organizer should:
 - 1. Attempt repair by making any advantage symmetrical between teams by allowing the other team to violate the same rule(s) in the same way(s), so long as doing so does not undermine the educational goals of the NHSEB program as defined above.
 - 2. If such a repair is not possible, the Moderator or Organizer should proceed to Section 2 below.

II. Did the rule violation affect the outcome of the match?

- A. **No:** If the rule violation did not affect the outcome of the match, the Moderator or Organizer should allow the match to proceed as normal. As above, depending on the nature of the rule violation, it may be appropriate for the Moderator to acknowledge the violation, clarify the relevant rule for all parties present, and announce that the match will proceed, and that its win/loss result will stand.
 - 1. In such cases, a Moderator should report any rule violations to the Organizer upon conclusion of the match. This is so that the Organizer can determine if the violation will affect any ranking metrics for the event writ large (read: outside the individual match), and make any necessary adjustments that may be required.
- B. **Yes:** If the rule violation is believed to have affected the outcome of a match, the Moderator should pause the match and announce to the room that the result is under review, and that a clarified result will be announced to participants afterwards. The Moderator should (where feasible) state what the rule violation in question was and ask teams to direct all further questions to the event Organizer. Teams should then be instructed to continue to their next match of the day.
 - 1. In such cases, the Moderator (as well as Judges, where appropriate) should give a detailed report of the incident to the Organizer. The Organizer may then apply sanctions on one or more of the following "levels," in escalating order based on the seriousness of the violation, and/or if any relevant rule violations are repeated.
 - a) **Scheduled Rematch:** Where feasible, both teams involved in a match affected by rule violations should meet again in an additional match at a mutually agreeable time with new cases, questions, and Judges. During any scheduled rematches, expectations around any rules violated should be explicitly clarified. If a rematch is unable to be scheduled, Organizers should proceed to Match Forfeiture.

- b) **Match Forfeiture:** If a rematch is not feasible, or a violation is suitably serious in the judgment of the Organizer, the team responsible for the rules violation should forfeit their match. This should be recorded and tabulated as a 0-3 vote result, with a recorded score of zero from each Judge in the room. A forfeiting team may, at Organizer discretion, continue to participate in the remainder of a given event.
- c) **Competitive Disqualification:** If a violation is suitably serious in the judgment of the Organizer, is a repeated offense, or is clearly malicious in nature, the Organizer may sanction the team responsible for a rules violation with a competitive disqualification from the remainder of a given event.
- d) **Ongoing Suspension:** Organizers may reserve the right to suspend participating teams from their event for up to one year, and in the most serious cases, may consult with NHSEB HQ to determine if disqualification from additional future Regional Competitions, and/or advanced levels of NHSEB Competition is warranted.

“After the Fact” Rule Violations

If an Organizer comes to believe that an official rule was violated during a match which has already concluded, they should use the following decision procedure in sequence to determine whether a violation warrants official sanction. In all cases of violations reported outside matches in progress, the Organizer should seek additional confirmation or information from Moderators, Judges, and Coaches to clarify whether a violation warrants sanction.

I. Did the rule violation create an unfair advantage for the team at the competition writ large?

- A. **No:** If the rule violation did not create an unfair advantage for a team in overall competition, the Organizer should communicate with the coach of the responsible team to explicitly clarify the relevant rule and expectations for future matches and events. If appropriate, the Organizer may communicate with all teams in the region to clarify the relevant rule.
- B. **Yes:** If the rule violation did create an unfair advantage for a team in overall competition, the Organizer should determine if the severity or frequency of the rule violation warrants a Scheduled Rematch, Match Forfeiture, Competitive Disqualification, or Ongoing Suspension (Cf., II.B.1.a-d). If a formal warning is issued, the relevant Coach should be notified that continued rule violations may result in sanctions. Organizers may reserve the right to suspend participating teams from their event for up to one year, and in the most serious cases, for longer, in consultation with NHSEB HQ.

On Pedagogical Consistency and Uncovered Rule Violations

If the Organizer of an NHSEB-affiliated event comes to believe that a rule was violated in such a way or to such an extent so as to constitute a significant departure from the NHSEB program’s core educational goals, and such a violation is not sufficiently captured by the guidance above, they should report the situation immediately and consult with NHSEB HQ to determine whether the violation warrants official sanction such as a Scheduled Rematch, Match Forfeiture, Competitive Disqualification, or Ongoing Suspension (Cf., II.B.1.a-d). Official sanctions for these reasons will only be considered in cases of the most flagrant, malicious, or repeated disregard for the pedagogical goals of the NHSEB program. Such cases, we anticipate, will be exceedingly rare.

Organizers are empowered to make final rule determinations during their events. If an Organizer encounters or suspects other rule violations during an event which are not covered or captured by the guidance in this document, they are encouraged to resolve those situations using the considerations outlined here as optimally as possible. Organizers may also consult with NHSEB HQ on matters associated with rule sanctions by contacting ethicsbowl@unc.edu via email or [919.480.8811](tel:919.480.8811) via phone or text message, in the event of a time-sensitive emergency.



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