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NALSAR UNIVERSITY OF LAW HYDERABAD



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01. Definitions

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DEFINITIONS

- 1. Advanced Rounds:** The Semi-Final and the Final Round of the Tournament.
- 2. Break:** A period of pausing the mediation and strategizing within the Negotiating pair that can be requested once by each Negotiating Pair in each Round and during which the overall time of the Round continues to run.
- 3. Caucus:** A separate meeting between the Mediator and a Competing Team, separately both Counsels or separately both Clients, during this, the time of the Round continues to run.
- 4. Confidential Information:** The background factual information of the Problem for the exclusive use of a Party and the Judges but not the Mediator or the other party.
- 5. Counsel and Client:** The roles taken respectively by two members of a Team during each Round; together they are referred to as a Negotiating Pair.
- 6. General Information:** The background factual information of the Problem for the use by each Party, the Judges and the Mediator.
- 7. NMT/ Tournament:** Fourth NALSAR Mediation Tournament held at NALSAR in 2025.
- 8. OC:** The Organizing Committee of the fourth NALSAR Mediation Tournament.



DEFINITIONS

9. Preliminary Rounds: The first phase of the Competition, in which Teams are selected for the Semi-Final Rounds based on the number of wins and the number of points.

10. Winner of Previous Edition: Any Participant who was declared the winning negotiating pair or the winning mediator in any previous edition of the NALSAR Mediation Tournament. It is made clear that the definition does not include the winners of special awards in the previous editions.

2.1 Introduction

The Tournament shall be held from the 24th to 26th of January 2025 by the NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad in physical mode on the University campus. The Competition is an educational event seeking to promote and foster the culture of mediation as a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution amongst students from universities across India and abroad, through the provision of simulations of real-world disputes amenable to mediation procedures. The Competition shall be governed by the Rules set out herein. In case of any conflict on the interpretation of rules, the decision of the OC shall be final and binding on all participants.

2.2 Language

The official and only language of the Competition is English. Communication and participation in any other language during the Competition is not permitted.

2.3 Format

Each team must comprise of three members: one Mediator, one Client and one Counsel. After the registration, the composition of the Team can only be altered in exceptional circumstances, on the sole discretion of the OC. While the client and counsel can exchange their roles throughout the rounds, the mediator cannot be part of the negotiating pair and vice versa. Each Round shall comprise of a Client-Counsel pair from each Side and 2 Mediators. The Mediator of the Team will not be in the same room as the Negotiating Pair as far as practicable.

The Competition comprises of three Preliminary Rounds, the Semi-finals and the Final Round. What makes the NMT unique is that there will only be one single Problem with evolving and increasingly complex Confidential Information ('CI') given as the rounds advance. The allotment of sides may change after each round. To ensure a complete understanding of the evolving Problem, the CI of both sides from the previous round shall be revealed to all participating teams before the next round.



03. Participation & Eligibility

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3.1 Participating Universities

After the Registration is opened for the Tournament, interested universities may send the ADR Profile of the University. Based on the Profile, a total of 24 Teams will be selected to participate in the Competition. Only one team per university is allowed to participate in the Competition, and no cross-University teams are allowed. Winners of previous editions are barred from registering in the Tournament.

The teams are deemed to have agreed to the Tournament's rules, terms, and conditions by submitting their applications.

The competition is intended for students presently enrolled in an undergraduate course of law from a recognized university.

3.2 Punctuality & Attire

Non-Arrival of the registered teams after registration is complete may result in a ban on the team from participating in the Competition and the University being blacklisted from future editions of the Competition. Teams are expected to be on time for all scheduled Competition events. Teams that are late for the release of the Confidential Information or for their Rounds are subject to penalties, which may extend to disqualification from the Tournament.

All the Participants shall be dressed in formals for the duration of the Tournament.

4.1 General Procedures

The OC shall assign teams and sides in the Preliminary Rounds through a process of anonymized Draw of Lots. For the second Preliminary Round, the seeding system will be followed and the pair-up will be as follows based on the marks in the first round: R1-R8, R2-R7, R3-R6, R4-R5, R9-R16, R10-R15, R11-R14, R12-R13, R17-R24, R18-R23, R19-R22, R20-R21. For the third round, the pair-up will be as follows: R1-R6, R2-R5, R3-R4, R7-R12, R8-R11, R9-R10, R13-R18, R14-R17, R15-R16, R19-R24, R20-R23, R21-R22.

The total scores for all the Client and Counsel pairs and the Mediators shall be calculated at the end of the three Preliminary Rounds, on the basis of which the top 4 Client-Counsel pairs and top 4 Mediators shall advance to the Semi-Finals. In case of a tie between 4th and 5th ranked teams at the end of preliminary rounds, the participant/s with more marks in starred category as indicated in score sheet will advance to the Semi Finals.

The Teams will be paired for Semi Finals by matching top rank against lowest rank and so on according to their ranking at the end of the Preliminary Rounds. Thereafter, the qualification of teams to the Finals shall be conducted on the basis of Knockouts during the Semi-Finals, with the best Client-Counsel pair and the best Mediator in each room qualifying for the Finals.

In the Advance Rounds, in case of a tie in score, the Participant with more marks in the starred category as indicated on the scoresheet will be declared the winner of the Round.

In the Preliminary Rounds, the judges will also mark the Participants on a special sheet for the Prelim award categories. These scores will not be used for deciding the winner of the Round or qualifying to the Advanced Rounds, but merely to decide the winners of the Special Awards.

4.2 Timing

Participants are accountable for and adhering to set time limits in each Round. Each Preliminary Round shall be of a total of 60 minutes. The Semi-Finals and Finals shall be of a total of 90 minutes. The time will continue to run during the caucuses and breaks as well. The timings will be indicated by the Bailiffs present during each round.

After the completion of each Round, the judges will be provided with 15 minutes to ask both Teams and Mediators questions regarding the strategies employed by them. The question-and-answer session will not in itself be scored but will be used to help the judges score the Teams better on existing criteria. A maximum of 10 minutes will be reserved for the purpose of post-mediation feedback given by the judges, after the question-and-answer session and the awarding of marks. Judges reserve the right to not engage in providing the Teams detailed feedback.

4.3 Admitted Materials

Participants are permitted to bring any printed material and to refer to them during the Round. Each Team may also bring and use a calculator and a watch (or equivalent: stopwatch, timer, etc.) if they wish to do so. Use of any other electronic devices, such as mobile phones of any type or tablets, laptops, etc. is not permitted in the room where the Round takes place.

4.4 Observing & Scouting

Members of a competing team shall not be allowed to observe any of the Preliminary Rounds of other Teams. Scouting by either the team members or the Visitors is absolutely prohibited, and the teams found involved in any such practices may be disqualified. During the Semi-finals and Finals, the members that have failed to qualify for the respective rounds may observe the rounds. Audio or video recording is strictly forbidden during the Mediation Session. The OC shall record the Finals and make the recording available at a later stage. The OC retains the right to make and share recordings of the sessions across all rounds of the Tournament.

4.5 Caucuses

A Caucus can take place between one Mediator and both members of the Requesting Party or the Responding Party. Caucuses can also take place between the Mediator and either the Counsel from both Competing Teams or the Clients from both Competing Teams and this would be called a cross caucus. All the Rules pertaining to caucus apply to cross-caucus as well. During each Mediation Session, the Mediator and the competing Teams have the right to call for a caucus in accordance with the following provisions:

The maximum time limit for a caucus is 10 minutes (5 minutes per team) out of 60 minutes during the Preliminary Rounds. The maximum time limit for a caucus is 12 minutes (6 minutes per team) out of 90 minutes during the Semi-Finals and the Finals.

The Caucus can be requested by either the Mediator(s) or the Client or Counsel of either Teams. The Teams have the right to reject the call for a Caucus initiated by the Mediator for any reason they deem fit, however, the Mediator(s) must adhere to the request of the Teams if called for a Caucus. Each competing Team or Mediator may request only one Caucus and one Cross-Caucus during each Round. Team members who are not participating in a Caucus will be asked to leave the room and may not talk to any other Teams, use any electronic devices or contact any third parties outside the room during a Caucus.

4.6 Breaks

A Break can be initiated by the competing Teams at any stage during the Round in accordance with the following provisions:

The maximum time limit for a break is 6 minutes (3 minutes per Team) out of 60 minutes during the Preliminary Rounds. The maximum time limit for a break is 8 minutes (4 minutes per team) out of 90 minutes during the Semi-Finals and the Finals. Only Teams are allowed to call for breaks and not Mediators. A Team can call for a Break only once during any Round. Both members of the Team are not permitted to talk to anyone other than each other or use any electronic devices during the Break. No Team shall leave the room, and space will be provided within the room for discussion of strategy with each other.

4.7 Anonymity

The participants shall not at any stage of the Tournament disclose the name of their institution to the judges and shall use their assigned team Code. They shall also ensure that the identity of the College is not apparent from any printed material or other indicator that is taken inside the Mediation Session. Non-compliance with this Rule may result in disqualification of the team.



05. Format of the Rounds

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5.1 Competition Problem

There shall be one problem for the entire tournament, with different sets of Confidential Information being released to the teams for each round. The Confidential Information provided for each subsequent round shall be built on the Confidential Information from previous Round(s). Since Team sides may change with each subsequent Round, the Confidential Information of both sides shall be made public once each Round has ended, and the same will become part of the General Information for the subsequent Round.

The General Information and the Confidential Information shall be self-contained, and teams are prohibited from deviating from the facts provided in the Problem in any manner possible, including the creation of a background story, the misrepresentation of facts, the creation of new facts, or denial of a fact contained in their Confidential Information. Participants are, however, free to indicate that they do not wish to disclose certain information or that they do not have access to such information. However, teams may interpret the problem in order to draw reasonable conclusions. In case of any conflict, the Judges have full discretion on whether inferences drawn are reasonable or not.

5.2 Disclosure of Confidential Information

The assignment of roles and the disclosure of Confidential Information for the rounds shall be 1 hour prior to the start of the respective rounds. The Teams are absolutely prohibited from disclosing confidential information to their Mediator, or to any other participant in the Competition outside the Round. The Mediators participating shall at no time prior to their Rounds have access to the Confidential Information for either party for the respective Round, and neither competing Client and Counsel Pair shall have access to the Confidential Information of the Opposing Party at any time prior to their respective Round. The violation of this Rule may lead to the disqualification.

07. AWARDS

Cash Prizes and/ or Internship Opportunities with sponsor firms shall be provided to the following awardees.

General Awards

- 1) Best Negotiating Pair
- 2) Best Mediator
- 3) Runners Up Negotiating Pair
- 4) Runners Up Mediator
- 5) Second Runners Up Negotiating Pair
- 6) Second Runners Up Mediator
- 7) Spirit of the Tournament Award

Special Awards (Prelims)

- 1) Best Negotiation Strategy
- 2) Best Mediation Strategy
- 3) Best Team Work

Only teams not proceedings to the advanced rounds shall be eligible to receive a special award. Each team may be awarded a maximum of one special award.

