BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW OFFICIAL RULES
2026 STONE MOOT COURT COMPETITION

1. General Information

The Edward C. Stone Moot Court Competition is a voluntary program open to all second-year JD students. Stone participants work in teams of two and choose from among three cases. Each Stone team submits a joint brief and presents an oral argument. Participation in Stone is a prerequisite to qualifying for the second semester Homer Albers Prize Moot Court Competition and participation on any of Boston University's intermural moot court teams.

Note: Competitors can and should reference the posted sample briefs and Moot Court Manual for guidance, but in the event of any conflict between those documents and these Rules, these Rules control. Please direct all questions about these Rules to stonemc@bu.edu.

1.1 Workshops

All participants in the Stone Competition must attend two mandatory hour-long workshops: a Brief Writing Skills Workshop on **Tuesday, September 29 at 1:00 p.m.** and an Oral Advocacy Workshop on **Monday, October 26 at 1:00 p.m.** Locations and additional info are on the website. If you are unable to attend one of these workshops, you must notify Jen McCloskey (jataylor@bu.edu).

1.2 Website

Competition dates, updates, and information will be posted on the **competition website** (http://www.bu.edu/law/stone), along with all competition-related documents and schedules.

1.3 Communication

The Stone Directors and Jen McCloskey will communicate with participants via email. Please check your email (**including your spam folder**) regularly to ensure you do not miss any information. Please add jataylor@bu.edu and stonemc@bu.edu to your "safe senders" list. Please email questions to stonemc@bu.edu unless otherwise indicated.

2. Cases and Teams

2.1 Team and Case Assignments

Each team will have a team number consisting of a case number designation (ST-26-##) and a letter designation (P# or R#). The "ST-26-##" portion indicates which case you are assigned to (01, 02, or 03). The letter indicates which side of the problem your team will brief. Teams designated "P" represent the Petitioner/Appellant. Teams designated "R" represent the Respondent/Appellee. (The number following P or R is simply a unique team identifier.) For example, Team ST-26-01-R2 is assigned to case ST-26-01 and is

arguing in their brief for the Respondent/Appellee. **Team designations will be emailed out no later than September 24.**

2.2 Distribution

The Stone problems will be posted on **Thursday, September 24**, on the competition website (http://www.bu.edu/law/stone). All participants will also receive an email notification as soon as the problems are posted. This date is subject to change.

2.3 Clarifications

Any participant with a substantive question regarding a case must submit the question **by email** to the Stone Moot Directors at stonemc@bu.edu. The Directors will send answers to substantive questions by email to all teams. **The deadline for problem clarification questions is Friday, October 16 at noon.** The Directors reserve the right not to answer problem clarification questions after that deadline. You may still ask Rules clarification questions or alert us to emergency issues with your team after that deadline.

2.4 Resources and Assistance

You may consult any published material available in the Boston University library system, including any material on Lexis, Westlaw, Bloomberg, or other websites. You may not solicit or receive advice regarding your brief or oral argument from any member of the Bar or the faculty, or from any moot court Director or Preceptor.

Permissible brief writing assistance: You may not ask any person other than a teammate for help with your brief, and that help is limited: team members may assist each other with research, arguments, and proofreading, but may not write for each other. Any kind of editing or review by a person not on your team, whether free or paid, is not permitted.

> *Use of non-generative AI resources:* Competitors may use grammar and editing apps and tools that are available **for free**, such as Word's editing tools, Grammarly (free version), or BriefCatch (free version). Competitors may not use paid versions of these tools or other paid tools or apps. For equity reasons, the competition prohibits the use of resources that are not free. If a competitor is found to have used a paid tool to review or edit their competition brief, they will be disqualified.
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> *Use of generative AI:* Competitors **may use the AI tools that are integrated into Lexis+ (including but not limited to Protégé) and Westlaw (including but not limited to Co-Counsel)**, which all competitors have access to via their BU-based accounts. Although all competitors also have access to Harvey and Legora, you will not always have access to those in legal practice. Additionally, most external moot court competitions still prohibit the use of generative AI tools. As such, **use of other generative AI tools such as Claude, Chat GPT, Harvey, or Legora is prohibited.**

We encourage competitors to remember that generative AI can be an extremely useful tool, but at this time, it still makes mistakes when asked to analyze the law and use citations. In actual legal practice, attorneys must be extremely cautious about using AI, as it may violate professional ethics standards to submit client information to a generative AI that will store and possibly disseminate that information.

By attesting that your brief is your own work, you are attesting that you did not use generative AI in a way that violates these rules.

Permissible oral argument assistance: You may ask other law students, except moot court Directors or Preceptors, to listen to and provide feedback on practice oral arguments.

IMPORTANT: Plagiarism or abuse of library privileges may result in disqualification. Plagiarism includes copying any portion of the Problem without proper citation into your brief.

3. Briefs - Format and Submission

3.1 Format

3.1.1 Appearance. Briefs will be submitted electronically. Briefs should be formatted to fit an 8 1/2 x 11-inch page. Text should be double-spaced and written in a court-appropriate typeface (such as Times New Roman, Century, or Courier New), in 12- or 14-point font.

3.1.2 Length. The body of the argument is limited to a maximum of 3000 words **per issue** (excluding the heading "Argument" but including all other headings and including all footnotes). Thus, the argument portion of the brief may not exceed 6000 words, and no participant may write more than 3000 words of argument. This is a maximum; it is acceptable and often preferable to write a shorter argument. There are no word or page limits for the other sections of the brief, including but you can refer to the Moot Court Manual for suggested lengths.

A note on joint umbrellas: If one or more Stone Problems in a given competition year contains two issues that are sufficiently interrelated that competitors should consider including a joint umbrella section in the argument portion of the brief, the Directors will issue an addendum to these rules to govern the impact of a joint umbrella on argument length and scoring.

3.1.3 Bluebook. All briefs must comply with the most recent edition of the Bluebook (the 22nd Edition). The library has copies of the Bluebook. Reach out to Jen McCloskey (jataylor@bu.edu) if the expense of obtaining a Bluebook would interfere with your ability to participate in the competition.

3.1.4 Required sections. Briefs must contain all of the sections identified in the Moot Court Manual, except for the optional jurisdictional statement. The Manual is posted on the competition website.

3.1.5 Cover Page. All briefs shall contain, on the cover (first) page, the team's entire team number (e.g., ST-26-01-R2). A sample cover can be found in the Moot Court Manual. Please refer to it. Note, however, that you should not include your name on the cover.

3.1.6 Names. The brief should NOT contain the participants' names, either on the cover page or following the conclusion. **In the email message with which participants submit their brief, participants must indicate which person wrote which issue** ("Issue 1" and "Issue 2" is sufficient).

3.1.7 Sample briefs. Samples are on the competition website. These briefs are past best briefs from the Albers competition. As such, participants should view these sample briefs only as a **guide**; these Rules are the final authority on brief requirements for the Edward C. Stone Competition (for example: keep in mind that as of 2018, we have a word count limit and no specific font requirements, and as such, older Albers briefs will be formatted differently).

3.2 Submission

3.2.1 Due Date and Electronic Submission. Briefs will be **due on Friday, October 23 by 3:00 p.m.** Participants must email their briefs to the Directors at stonemc@bu.edu by 3:00 p.m. on October 23. You should **submit two files**: a Word document (which we will use to check the word count) and a PDF (which should not contain identifying metadata, and which we will send to judges and scorers). The document file name must be in the following format (with the appropriate problem number and team designation, which are the last two sections): **ST-26-02-P11.pdf** (or .docx). **The content of the Word document and the PDF must be identical (minor formatting differences are fine, but remember that the PDF will be scored, not the Word document).** If you have trouble creating a PDF, you may submit just a Word document, and we will use that file for scoring.

3.2.2 IMPORTANT: Electronic Signature Required. The submission email should be "signed," as follows, by each member of the team (remember, however, to also include a note in the body of your email indicating who wrote which issue!):

> "Respectfully submitted, [CLIENT NAME], by his/her/its attorneys, [Participant 1] and [Participant 2]. We hereby attest that we adhered to all competition rules."

3.2.3 Lateness Penalties. No penalty will be imposed for early submission, but

we prefer that you not email your brief prior to October 23. **Teams will incur penalties for briefs emailed after 3:00 p.m. on October 23.** Any team that emails the electronic version of its brief after 3 p.m. will lose .5 points for every minute the brief is late up to 4 p.m. No briefs will be accepted after 4 p.m. **Any team that has not emailed its brief by 4:00 p.m. will be eliminated from the Competition.** A more than 10-point deduction for lateness will severely impair your chance to advance to the Albers Competition. Please make every effort to turn in your brief on time. **Computer malfunctions are not an excuse for lateness.**

3.2.4 Partner Issues. Any competitor who believes that their partner will not finish their portion of the brief on time should email the Stone Moot Court Directors at stonemc@bu.edu (or Jen McCloskey at jataylor@bu.edu) as soon as they realize there is a problem. If a competitor does not notify the Directors of an issue with their partner and the brief is late, both competitors will be penalized for lateness.

4. Brief Scoring

4.1 General

The brief is the joint responsibility of the partners. The Stone Preceptors and Directors will grade each half of the brief separately, however, on a scale of 60 to 100. Thus, one partner's brief score will not affect the other partner's brief score for purposes of advancing to the Albers Competition. Sections written together, such as the Statement of Case, will count toward each competitor's score. Copies of the brief score sheets used by the judges and Preceptors will be posted on the Stone website.

4.2 Deductions

The Directors will deduct five (5) points from briefs written for the wrong side and five (5) points for any argument that exceeds the limit of 3000 words per issue. The Directors may deduct an additional five (5) points for briefs that do not otherwise conform to the required brief format (e.g., a missing cover).

4.3 Disqualification

The Directors will disqualify teams submitting unacceptable briefs or briefs submitted after the final deadline identified in section 3.2 and will not permit those teams to present oral arguments.

5. Oral Arguments - Format and Schedule

Illness Note: If any illness prevents you from attending your scheduled argument, the Directors will reschedule your argument or, if needed, offer a remote option. Competitors may choose to wear a mask during any portion of the oral argument round and will not be penalized for wearing a mask.

All arguments are recorded. Competitors may request a link to their argument recording after the conclusion of the competition. By participating in Stone, competitors understand that another competitor in their scheduled argument may request a link to the argument recording.

5.1 Dates and Conflicts

Oral arguments take place from November 2-13, Monday through Thursday at 6:30 p.m., and Friday at 3:00 p.m. Additional time slots may be added if necessary. Makeup arguments, if needed, will take place on November 16 and 17. If any team cannot argue on a particular date, the team must notify the Directors at stonemc@bu.edu by **Friday, October 16**. If a conflict arises after that date, the team should email the Directors immediately.

5.2 Argument and Rebuttal

Each team will have 30 minutes to present its case to the bench. Appellants/Petitioners may reserve up to two minutes per team for rebuttal. Only one team member may rebut, but that person may rebut all issues. Teams must arrange rebuttal time in advance with the Court Clerk. The Clerk will deduct rebuttal time from the total team allotment of 30 minutes. Appellant/Petitioner teams who wish to rebut must inform the Clerk how they will divide their remaining 28 or 29 minutes. No Appellant/Petitioner competitor may elect to argue for fewer than 14 minutes.

Appellee/Respondent teams must divide their 30 minutes equally among the two competitors. No default penalty will be assessed against a competitor who does not use all of the time they elect.

5.3 Argument Check-In and Conduct

Competitors should check-in on the 6th Floor of the Law Tower at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the argument, before proceeding to their assigned room. Competitors must wear court-appropriate attire to their argument. Competitors must treat judges, Preceptors, Directors, and fellow competitors with respect.

5.4 Weekly Argument Schedule

Scheduling information for each week of arguments will be posted on the competition website, and the Directors will email the participants when the schedule is available. Participants should check the schedule regularly. The Directors will make every effort to post the schedules at least one week in advance. In addition, the Directors may contact some participants and request that they argue twice, due to an uneven number of teams or participants arguing a particular case. All participants must argue a second time if asked; this second argument is not scored.

5.6 No Scouting; No Spectating

Competitors may not attend arguments for any problem other than their own scheduled argument(s), nor may they be briefed by other competitors in or spectators of previous arguments of their case specifically. Non-competitor spectators are permitted, unless any competing student objects, in which case spectators will not be permitted to attend that argument. Any competitor who does not wish to have spectators at their argument should email stonemc@bu.edu to let the Directors know.

5.7 Bench and Feedback

Each three-person bench will generally consist of one or two third-year law students and one or two attorneys or faculty members. The third-year student(s) will be a Stone Preceptor or Director who, along with other Preceptors and the Director assigned to the case, will score each competitor for the purposes of advancement to the Albers Moot Court Competition. Stone Preceptors are members of BU Law's intermural moot court teams. Non-preceptor judge feedback will not affect any competitor's official score. Judges will provide feedback from the bench following the argument.

6. Oral Argument Scoring

6.1 General

The Stone Preceptors and Directors will score each competitor's oral argument on a scale of 60 to 100. To ensure uniform scoring, the same Preceptors score every oral argument on a particular case. The Preceptors will score each competitor only on the competitor's first oral argument. If a competitor argues more than once, subsequent arguments will not affect their score for advancement to the Albers Competition. The Directors will post sample copies of the oral argument score sheets used by the judges and Preceptors on the competition website.

6.2 Disqualification

At their discretion and in consultation with Jen McCloskey, the Directors may disqualify any competitor for failure to appear, lateness, or unprofessional conduct (including inappropriate court attire or unsporting conduct).

7. Selection for Homer Albers Prize Moot Court Competition and Awards

Advancement to the Albers Competition will depend solely on scores awarded by the Stone Preceptors and Directors for the briefs and oral arguments.

7.1 Albers Competition

Up to thirty-two **individual participants** (not teams) will advance to the Homer Albers Prize Moot Court Competition for the spring semester. The number of competitors

invited to compete in Albers will be based on the number of competitors who participate in Stone. The Albers Directors will extend invitations to those competitors with the highest individual combined brief and oral argument scores given by the Stone Preceptors for each Stone case. Oral argument scores and brief scores weigh equally in determining a competitor's final score. In the event of a tie in individual combined brief and oral argument scores, the competitor with the higher brief score will rank higher. The number of competitors advancing to the Albers Competition from each Stone case will be in proportion to the number of competitors who argued that case in the Competition.

The Directors reserve the right to devise additional procedures for breaking ties and resolving any inequities that may arise.

7.2 Announcement of Selections and Awards

We will announce the selections for the Albers Competition at the Stone Awards Reception on **Thursday, November 19 at 1:00 p.m.** Details about this reception will be on the competition website and emailed to all competitors. We will also award monetary prizes to the Best Oralist and the authors of the Best Brief for each of the three Stone cases. For each case, the brief with the highest combined score (for both competitors) is deemed Best Brief. The oral advocate with the highest individual oral advocacy score is deemed Best Oralist. Best Brief and Best Oralist designations do not guarantee advancement to the Albers Competition because advancement requires a top combined score for both brief and oral argument.

After the Thanksgiving Break, participants may obtain the Stone Preceptors' scoring sheets of both their oral and written performances. Jen McCloskey will email all competitors instructions for obtaining score sheets.

8. Questions

If you have a question about these rules, oral arguments, or other procedural matters, you should email them at stonemc@bu.edu. The Directors will consider waiving procedural rules for compelling personal reasons only, such as a documented medical or family emergency. **All questions relating to the substance of a particular case must be submitted in writing via email so that a clarification may be issued to all teams.**

2026 Stone Moot Court Competition
Important Dates
(See website for additional office hours and practice times)

Tuesday, September 22	**Registration forms due by 2:00 p.m.** ***Late applications will not be accepted.***
Tuesday, September 22	List of unpaired registrants emailed ASAP.
Wednesday, September 23	Deadline to inform Directors of pairings (time till be in the pairing email); team pairings and assignments will be emailed as soon as possible after this deadline.
Thursday, September 24	**Problems posted** on Stone Moot Court website.
Tuesday, September 29	**Brief Writing Workshop: 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.**
Friday, October 16	Deadline to submit questions and oral argument conflicts
Friday, October 23	**Briefs due via email by 3:00 p.m.**
Monday, October 26	**Oral Advocacy Workshop: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.**
November 2 – 6 November 9 – 13	Oral Arguments Mon.-Thu. 6:30 p.m.; Fri. 3:00 p.m.[1]
November 16 & 17	Makeup arguments if needed
Thursday, November 19	Stone Awards Announcement and Reception

2026 Stone Directors
Paola Caliguiran
David Spinelli
Jason Walker

[1] Additional time slots to be added if needed.