

An aerial photograph of a modern university building. The building features a mix of grey concrete, large glass windows, and a perforated metal facade. A courtyard with a green roof and outdoor seating is visible in the foreground. The sky is a solid red color.

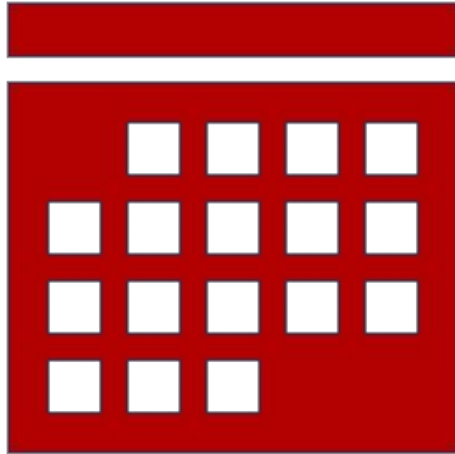
# THE HIPPARD OPEN MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION 2024

LEARNING LUNCH

**THE ADVOCATES**  
at the  
**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**  
**LAW CENTER**

Beck | Redden<sup>LLP</sup>

**HIPPARD OPEN MOCK TRIAL 2023**



# SCHEDULE

Lunch and  
Learn

September 10

Sign Up  
Period

September 11 - 14 @ 5pm

Problem  
Released

September 15

Prepare  
Your Case

September 16 - 26

Competition

September 27 – September 29

Turn-in  
Assignment

October 6

# COMPETITION DETAILS

# OVERVIEW

September  
27 - 29

8:00 am –  
5:00 pm

IN PERSON

At UHLC

CRIMINAL  
CASE





2-PERSON LAWYER TEAMS,  
SIGN UP AS A TEAM!



CAN BE ANY LAW STUDENT  
AT UHLC.  
ALL WELCOME!



IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A  
PARTNER, PLEASE LET ME  
KNOW!



YOU MUST BE AVAILABLE  
FOR THE FULL WEEKEND,  
NO DROPPING OUT BEFORE  
FINALS



YOU WILL PREPARE BOTH  
SIDES OF THE CASE  
PROSECUTION AND  
DEFENSE

**PARTNERS**

## WITNESSES

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Each team is required to have two witnesses

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Witnesses do not have to be law students

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Please let me know if you do not have a witness, I can help

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Witnessing is a great way to participate if you do not want to compete

# MOCK TRIAL OVERVIEW



MOTIONS IN  
LIMINE



OPENING  
STATEMENT



PLAINTIFF'S  
CASE IN CHIEF



DEFENDANT'S  
CASE IN CHIEF



CLOSING  
STATEMENTS



REBUTTAL



# RULES



## **Split the components evenly**

You must do at least one cross and one direct in every round

You cannot do both the closing and opening in a round



## **You are timed**

5 mins for MIL/70 mins for case in chief, not including objections



## **Don't read**

Memorize what you can, but notes are OKAY

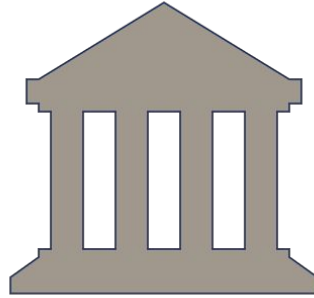
You are expected to use the well.



## **You are scored on professionalism**

Dress professionally

Address the judge as "Your Honor" and remember to stand



# MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION STRUCTURE

# CALLING THE CASE



## **INTRODUCE YOURSELF**

Prosecution goes first, then defense,  
“Good morning, your Honor. (Name) and  
(Name), representing (the defendant/state.)



## **HOUSEKEEPING**

Optional, but helpful  
Ask about pre-marking exhibits, moving about  
the well, invoking the rule etc.

# MOTIONS IN LIMINE

## STRUCTURE

- Limited to 3 parts per side
- Remember that you only have 5 minutes!
- Either partner can argue

## WHAT IS A MIL?

- Motions to exclude evidence that is too prejudicial to just object to when they come up
  - EXAMPLE: “isn’t it true that you killed someone before?”
- You are not asking the court to exclude the evidence completely, but to have the other attorney approach when the topic comes up

## MAKING THE MOTION

- Explain the evidence that you want excluded and under what rule of evidence
- Keep it short!
- Give context- the judge knows nothing about the case



# OPENINGS

- **START WITH A HOOK AND A HEADLINE**

- Something catchy that explains your theme
- “if the glove doesn’t fit, you must acquit”

- **TELL A STORY ARRANGED AROUND THE THEORY OF THE CASE**

- Present tense and easy to understand
- Don’t argue

- **ANTICIPATE THE OTHER SIDE,**

- Don’t hide evidence
- Get in your main points

- **DISCUSS THE BURDEN OF PROOF**

- Beyond a reasonable doubt

- **CALL FOR ACTION**

- By the end of this trial, you will find the only result that the evidence supports, and justice demands



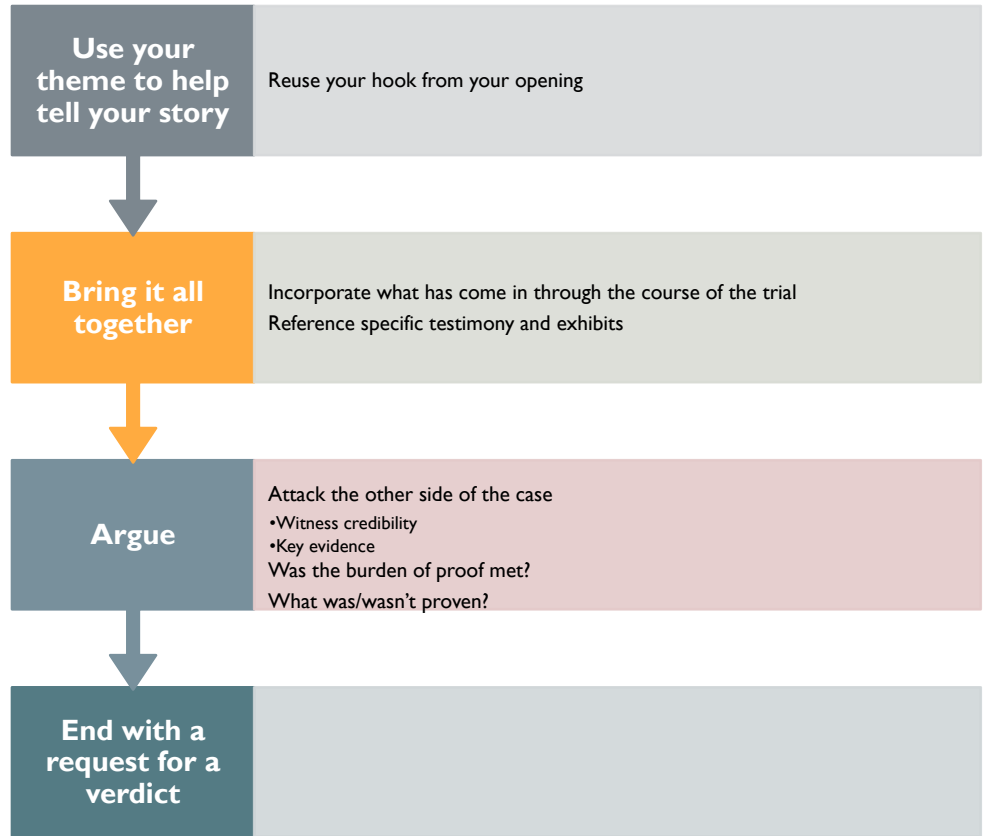
# DIRECTS

- Ask open ended questions – no leading the witness
- Let the witness tell the story. You are just there to keep the witness on topic
- Prepare your witness well. Make sure they know the facts
- Personalize your witness to give them credibility
- Keep your witness organized
- Listen to your witness's answers, follow up if needed.
- Anticipate cross questions and stay ahead of it.

## CROSSES

- You are the star of the show
  - The attorney should be talking most of the time
  - Tell the story through the questions, not the answers
- Leading questions only
  - Keep the witness from talking too much about their side
  - Show that you are in control
- Make your case
  - Get evidence that supports your case theory
  - Discredit the witness
  - Attack the witness's testimony
- Be organized
  - Know the facts
  - Don't write out your questions but use an outlines
  - Don't let the witness get you off topic

# CLOSINGS







## HELPFUL REMINDERS

- **Be respectful, be professional**
  - Judges could be your potential employers!
- **Don't be a jerk (witnesses too!)**
  - Please play fair and within the rules
  - Don't make up facts
- **Have a good time!**
  - Smile and be yourself

REGISTRATION



# HOW TO SIGN UP



Pay to the Advocates Paypal

[@TheAdvocatesatUHLC](#)

Save your confirmation number



Entry Fee per team

\$20 per team for members,

\$100 per team for non-members,

\$60 per team for a member/non-member team



Must pay by deadline

September 14th - No exceptions

Late payment means that you will not receive the problem!

PAYMENT

# REGISTRATION

Fill out the google form w/ your paypal number

One form and one payment per team

Once you register you must compete  
If you drop out there will be consequences

Your space is not reserved until you both paid and completed the registration form

Further instructions on the Advocates website

Registration opens tomorrow 9/11 at 12pm

# RECEIVING CLASS CREDIT



Must fill in the Blakely Credit Petition:

<https://www.law.uh.edu/blakely/credit-petition.asp>



Regular Tuition Fee (you're paying for a credit)



You must show a good faith effort – you cannot waive a round.

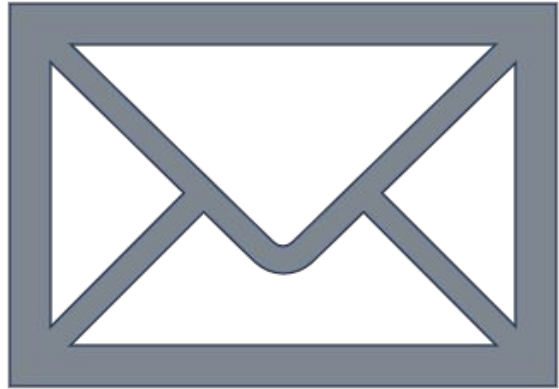


Submit 5 Pages (3 of 5) of written work products by email, no later than Sunday, October at 6th, at 11:59pm

Beck Redden<sub>LLP</sub>

The Trial and Appellate Law Firm

THANK YOU!



ANY QUESTIONS?

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