

SAN DIEGO CITY ACADEMIC LEAGUE 2009 RULES AND REGULATIONS

The following rules and procedures are a revision of the North County Academic League and the San Diego County Office of Education's rules and procedures.

RULES AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

The purpose of the San Diego City Academic League is to encourage, acknowledge, and reward academic excellence through fair competition.

Structure

1. Two teams of no more than five students each compete by answering questions asked by a moderator. **Middle school students, especially 8th graders, may not participate.**
2. All competitors must meet the eligibility rules of the C.I.F.
3. Teams will be formed as Novice, Junior Varsity, and Varsity.
4. No senior may compete on the Junior Varsity team.
5. Only freshmen and sophomores may compete on a Novice team.
6. Two freshmen must be part of the Novice team at all times.
7. Freshmen, sophomores and juniors may compete on both Junior Varsity and Varsity teams.
8. Varsity competitions are to last 30 minutes.
9. Junior Varsity competitions are to last 25 minutes.
10. Novice competitions are to last 20 minutes.
11. Each team coach may request of the moderator two 60-second time-outs during each match. Substitutions will be allowed by both coaches during the time-out. No substitutions may be made during a moderator's time out.
12. A five-minute break is scheduled between the Novice and Junior Varsity competitions.
13. A ten-minute break is scheduled between the Junior Varsity and Varsity competitions.
14. One coach per match may speak to the moderator for the team about protests, appeals, and any other issues. Said coach is to identify him/herself to the moderator prior to the match.

15. **If buzzers, a timer, and a scoreboard are not present, the home teams will be charged a forfeit.**

Team Standings

1. The Varsity champions of the **Coastal, Central, Eastern, and Northern** divisions shall compete for the City League championship. **Pair-ups for city semifinals will be done by seeding.**
2. If two schools are tied for a championship position in their division at the end of the season, the school that won when they competed against each other shall be declared champion.
3. **If two or more teams remain tied at the end of the season, the champion shall be determined by the total number of points earned per team during the 2009 matches played against each other.**
4. At the City Championship finals, there will be one team designated in 1st place and one for 2nd place with two runners-up.

General Caveat

No recording of matches or of match questions is allowed by any means, including the copying of questions by hand, by audio taping, or by video taping. **Computational questions may be worked by coaches only and must be destroyed at the conclusion of the match.**

Admission Fee

No admission fee shall be charged for any competition of the San Diego City Academic League.

Time and Date of Matches

For security reasons, it is expected that all matches will take place beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays as assigned by the league schedule. Times and dates of matches may not be changed. Ordinarily, should a team not abide by the league schedule, it will be counted as a forfeit. However, those varsity matches chosen for video taping by the San Diego County Office of Education may be scheduled for a different weekday, usually Tuesday, provided questions are not the same as those used for Thursday night matches.

Ordinarily, the first competition of each match will be the Novice followed by the Junior Varsity and completed by the Varsity competition. Upon the agreement of both coaches, and with the consent of the moderator, the order of matches may be changed to accommodate extraordinary circumstances.

Officials

1. Each competition requires all of the following:

- a. moderator
- b. timing judge
- c. buzzer judge
- d. scorekeeper

2. Two student scorekeepers must be used at all times. Scorekeepers are to keep a running tab of scores for both teams. Coaches may not serve as official scorekeepers.
3. The moderator will resolve all disputes concerning competition questions.
4. A league-provided moderator must officiate at each match for the match to be official in the standings.

Host School Responsibilities

1. **Allow moderator (not the coach) to introduce and begin the match. The moderator will acknowledge and thank the GATE department and any other sponsors.**
2. Provide for display of a running tabulation of scores to the audience and two student scorekeepers at all times. Coaches may not keep score.
3. Provide the following, and have them set up at least one-half hour prior to the competitions:
 - a. Buzzer system
 - b. Two tables for competitors and one for judges
 - c. Minimum of thirteen chairs
 - d. A podium/lectern with **microphone, if possible**
 - e. Scoreboard of some form which allows the audience to see scores as they occur (chalkboard, gym scoreboard, etc.)
 - f. Pencils and paper at each competition station
 - g. Stopwatch for toss-up and bonus questions
 - h. Timer for timing the length of the competitions that is visible to both coaches and to the moderator
4. Provide a banner with the host school name for the front of the table.
5. Provide a name card with the student's common first name and grade level for each host school team member.
6. Have a list of team members available for the judge in charge of the buzzer system.
7. Provide water and cups for all participants.

Visiting School Responsibilities

1. Make certain teams arrive at the host school 30 minutes before the competition.
2. Provide a banner with the visiting school name for front of table.

3. Provide a name card with the student's common first name and grade level for each visiting school team member.
4. Have a list of team members as they compete available for the judge in charge of the buzzer system.
5. Bring an extra buzzer system in case the host school's system fails.

Coaches' Responsibilities

1. **The coach or school official/employee must accompany and remain with the school's Academic League team members throughout all three matches or the school's teams must forfeit the matches.**
2. **If a coach is unable to attend a match, he/she must submit written notice to the Academic League Liaison in the GATE office prior to the match. The notice must state the name of the school official who will accompany teams to the match along with his/her position at the school site, and be signed by the principal of the school. The Academic League Liaison will inform the moderator of the match.**
3. Coaches are expected to distribute, go over, and use their discretion in monitoring the Academic League Contestant's Code of Ethics. Moderators may ask a coach to replace a student who violates the Code of Ethics with a substitute player.
4. The coaches are expected to ensure proper decorum by all participants throughout the competition.
5. Coaches are expected to recommend potential moderators and **have the option to provide written evaluation of moderators after each match. An evaluation form will be provided.**
6. **For a school to be eligible to compete**, each coach is responsible for the following:
 - a. **Fees.** Ensuring that his/her school sends an annual **\$60.00** check **made out to San Diego Education Fund, Account 2150**, to the GATE office for Academic League prizes, awards, and moderators. Fees are due to the Gifted and Talented Education Department at Madison High School, Bungalow 6, 4833 Doliva Drive, San Diego, CA 92117 **by Jan. 16, 2009.** *If a school's fee is not received before the first match, its Academic League teams must forfeit each subsequent match until dues are paid.*
 - b. **Questions.** Submitting 6 toss-up and 6 bonus questions annually by a date agreed upon by the league. Coaches **will sign up for a different question category in advance each year.** Questions should be labeled by school and subject; they should also be divided evenly between novice, junior varsity, and varsity levels. Coaches may write questions themselves, solicit an expert, or purchase the questions. **If a school's questions are not received before the first match, its Academic League teams must forfeit each subsequent match until questions are submitted.**

7. Protests and appeals concerning questions and scores will not be allowed once the moderator has made his/her ruling.
8. Protests and appeals will be heard on matters of procedure and rule interpretations by the Commissioner, with the advice of the Academic League Board. The Commissioner's decision shall be final.
9. **If a protest will impact the outcome of a match**, a coach may file a protest as follows:
 - the coach may file a written protest or appeal within 24 hours of the disputed match with the Academic League Liaison in the GATE office, **and the liaison will contact the Commissioner.**
 - **The coach must inform the moderator of his/her intent to file a written protest at the end of the disputed match.**
 - **The moderator will inform the scorekeeper of the coaches' intent to protest upon calling in the score.**
 - The Commissioner may then seek written statements from any other coaches or officials involved.
 - The Academic League Board shall be convened or contacted by the Commissioner within three days of the filing to consider all evidence.
 - The Commissioner shall render a decision within five days after the protest or appeal is filed with the Academic League Liaison.
 - **Only the coach may contact league officials and speak on behalf of the team.**
 - **All involved will respect the decision of the Academic League Board as final and make no further protests or appeals once rulings have been made.**

Moderators

1. The Academic League Commissioner will write at least nine current events questions from any source that he/she deems appropriate (three per level of competition) for each competition and distribute these to moderators. Current events questions shall be limited to toss-up questions only.
2. If any two Academic League coaches from separate schools agree that a particular moderator not be used again, the Commissioner is to be notified and given reasons for this recommendation. The Commissioner shall decide whether the moderator shall be retained or dismissed upon full investigation and with the advice of the Academic League Board. The Commissioner's decision upon the retention or dismissal of moderators is final and may not be appealed.

Contestants' Code of Ethics

As emissaries of their schools and communities, student contestants should adhere to the following rules. The moderator may ask a coach to provide a substitute for a player who does not comply with this code.

- remember that their behavior reflects upon their teammates, their coach, and their parents;
- react with sensitivity and encouragement to answers given by both teams;
- shake hands with opposing team members at the conclusion of matches and congratulate their efforts;

- refrain from calling out or signaling answers to contestants;
- dress appropriately and in accordance with their school dress codes;
- write only their common first name and grade on name cards as required by the rules (see Host and Visiting School Responsibilities);
- eat snacks and chew gum only during breaks between matches or before and after competition if allowed by the rules of the host school;
- bring only water to the contestants' table;
- turn off cell phones during matches;
- allow any objections or protests to be presented by their coaches;
- respect the decisions of moderators as final and make no further protests or appeals once moderators' rulings have been made;
- wait to be called on by name and school before answering a question (1 point penalty),
- neither record nor allow the recording of match questions by any means, including by hand, or by audio or video recording;
- refrain from conferring during toss-up questions (1 point penalty);
- **refrain from passing notes or papers after time is called during a bonus question (20 seconds)**;
- refrain from requesting prompts for bonus questions when playing varsity; and
- become familiar with and abide by all Academic League rules of play.

RULES OF PLAY

Toss-Up Questions

1. The moderator will read a three-point toss-up question.
2. The first player on either team to buzz will have the opportunity to answer within three seconds.
3. If correct, the team is awarded three points, and offered a five-point bonus question.
4. If incorrect, the team is penalized one point, and the question is restated for the opposing team.
5. The first answer stated by a player will be considered his or her final answer regardless of whether or not a player states multiple answers or quickly corrects himself or herself.
6. The opposing team will be awarded three points for a correct response and no penalty for an incorrect response will be given.
7. If a contestant buzzes before the moderator has completely read the question on a toss-up question, the moderator is to stop reading immediately and allow the contestant three seconds to answer. The moderator is not to finish reading the question. If the contestant answers the question incorrectly, the moderator reads the complete question from the beginning to the opposing team.

8. The timing judge is to allow five seconds after the completion of the reading of a toss-up question; if no contestant has hit the buzzer, the judge will call "time." When this situation occurs and time has been called, no contestant is to be recognized, and the moderator is to read the answer and provide a new toss-up question.
9. Contestants must wait until the buzzer judge acknowledged both the individual team member and the school before answering a question. Only the acknowledged contestant's answer will be recognized. If a contestant answers before being acknowledged, his/her team shall be penalized 1 point, and the question be restated with no penalty for an incorrect answer.
10. If team members confer during a toss-up questions prior to any of the contestants hitting the buzzer, being recognized, and answering the question, that team is to be disqualified and penalized one point. The moderator is then to reread the question to the opposing team.
11. If the buzzer has been hit, the opposing team will be disqualified from a future chance to answer the toss-up question if team members **confer while the first team is answering**. No penalty points will be awarded in order to help keep consistency in the rules for toss-up questions.
12. Conferring may be defined as any action the moderator thinks involves communication in any form from one team member to another member of the same team.

Bonus Questions

1. If a contestant has correctly answered a three-point, toss-up question, his team is offered a five-point bonus question.
2. All team members may confer during the reading of the bonus questions and for 20 seconds thereafter in order to reach a decision, which must be presented by the team captain or his designee.
3. At the end of 15 seconds, the timing judge will call "five seconds." At the end of the last five seconds, the timing judge will call "time," and the moderator will call for an answer from the team captain or designee. **Team members may not pass notes or papers after "time" is called at the end of the bonus**, and no additional time will be allowed for conferring. The moderator may give "prompts" for the bonus question parts in Novice and Junior Varsity matches, but not in Varsity matches.
4. If correct, the team will be awarded 5 points.
5. If incorrect, the team will be awarded from 0 to 4 points, depending on the number of question parts answered correctly.
6. After hearing the moderator read the entire bonus question, a team may elect not to answer. The team captain will tell the moderator that the team declines

the bonus. The moderator then reads the answers to the bonus only.

Disqualification of Questions

1. If an answer is called out from the audience or the correctness of a bonus question or part thereof is signaled by unengaged team members or coaches, the question may be disqualified. No points will be awarded, and the game will go on to the next toss-up.
2. If a question is challenged or determined to be ambiguous, the moderator has the right to disqualify a question.
3. When a moderator or the buzzer judge makes a mistake of any kind that causes the disqualification of a question, the team losing the chance to answer the question is to be given a free question in the same format as the disqualified question.

Challenge to a Question or Answer

1. The team coach is to indicate an objection by raising a hand and telling the moderator that he has an objection.
2. If a competitor objects to a question or answer, the objection must be presented to the moderator and judges by the team's coach. Once the toss-up sequence is completed, challenge may be addressed.
3. When an objection is made, the moderator will direct the timing judge to immediately stop the clock and start it again when the moderator so indicates.
4. The decision made by the moderator on any objection is final.
5. Once a new toss-up or bonus question has begun, no objections can be made to a previous question or answer.

End of the Competition Time Period

1. If the buzzer goes off to indicate the end of a competition time period and the moderator has started to read a toss-up question, that toss-up question is to be completed. If the question is answered correctly, the moderator will then provide a bonus question. If the toss-up is answered incorrectly, the opposing team is to be given a chance to answer the toss-up question, and, with a correct answer, the chance to answer the bonus question.
2. If a moderator runs out of questions prior to the end of a varsity match, he or she may read unused toss-up and bonus questions from the junior varsity match of the same day. If a moderator runs out of questions prior to the end of a junior varsity match, he or she may read unused toss-up and bonus questions from the novice match of the same day. If a moderator runs out of questions prior to the end of a novice match, time is called.

3. After the time period has expired and all qualified toss-up and bonus questions have been completed, if the score is tied, the moderator will read one more toss-up question. If the contestant hitting the buzzer first answers the toss-up question correctly, his team will be the winner at that time. If the toss-up question is answered incorrectly, one point will not be deducted. The moderator will continue to read toss-up questions until one team answers correctly.

Moderator Time-out

1. If, in the opinion of the moderator, excessive noise from the team or the audience interferes with the competition, the moderator shall call a time-out until the competition can continue.
2. The moderator may call a time-out to seek advice, clarification, or to meet any emergency need.
3. No substitutions will be made during a moderator time-out.
4. A moderator (or judge) must call time-out to discuss listed answers he/she believes to be wrong, or team answers he/she believes to be acceptable, but not the listed answer.

Completion of the Match, Validation of Scores, and Question Security

The moderator is responsible for ascertaining the score. The moderator may be assisted by the judge and by the scorekeeper, but his decision as to the official score is final. The moderator is responsible for reporting the official score by telephone and for returning a weekly “Moderator’s Report,” along with the toss-up and bonus questions for the novice, junior varsity, and varsity matches to the GATE office.

Moderators

Every coach is responsible for recommending potential moderators each year. When nominating a person for the position of moderator, consider the following qualities:

Intelligence. Moderators must possess knowledge in most if not all areas covered in competition. They must feel comfortable with pronunciation of scientific, etc., terms.

Personality. Moderators will need a sense of humor with which to control a tense and tension-building situation. More than anyone else involved, the moderator must be able to sense problems and anxieties and be able to put contestants at ease without showing favoritism to one team or the other. Moderators must be “performers” for the spectators, while at the same time representing authority to the contestants and knowledge to everyone (even though that knowledge may only be the information held in the hand.)

The moderators must present themselves fairly, as this is the certain criterion upon which they will be judged by coaches and spectators. They must exude warmth and be able to congratulate honestly each team for its efforts.

Skill in Communication. Moderators will need clear, strong voices and must be able to give forceful presentation of questions and decisions. The moderators must possess genuine warmth so as to control both the contest and the audience. The moderators should sound, act, and dress as professionals.

Knowledge of the Competition. The moderators must have an absolute grasp of the rules of the competition and an ability to sense that fairness in presentation of questions, acceptance of answers, allowable timing, conferencing, etc. is maintained. The moderators must be able to move quickly to the alternatives in competition; i.e., when a toss-up is interrupted, the moderators must know to stop reading immediately. Then, if an incorrect answer is given, he/she must go on to the complete question for the other team. Moderators should be able to retrack easily when a question is delivered incorrectly in such a way that each team has an equal chance to answer.

Moderators must sense both the closeness of the score and the amount of available time, using these to enhance the competition without being unfair to either team. In a close competition, a team, which is behind in score, wants more opportunities to answer questions, not more explanation of previous answers; a team leading in score might rather use up the time, so the moderator must be fair to each team.

THE SAN DIEGO CITY ACADEMIC LEAGUE BOARD

1. The Board of Directors shall consist of the Commissioner, the GATE office liaison, and the official scorekeeper for the league, and one coach from each division of the league. Coaches will serve for **two** year on a rotational basis.
2. The board shall determine the rules, procedures and policies of the league at open meetings announced to all coaches and board members at least five school days in advance of the meetings.
3. General meetings of the coaches and/or moderators shall be informational and advisory to the board. Voice votes at general meetings shall be only advisory to the board, but secret ballots with each school having one vote are binding upon the Board of Directors. Secret ballot measures shall be proposed and implemented at the discretion of the coaches or board. **A quorum for voting at general meetings is reached if 10 schools are present.**
4. League rules and procedures shall be issued by the board. All rules and procedure changes shall be based open discussion and agreement reached at the pre- and post-season coaches' meetings. Said rules shall be in effect for the entire season.
5. The operational rules and procedures discussed and agreed upon at the pre- and post-season coaches' meeting shall not be changed by the board or the general membership during the season.
6. All decisions of the board interpreting rules, procedures, and policies shall be published for all officials of the league.

7. All monies collected from the member schools shall be administered by the board, and a published accounting shall be made at the beginning and ending of every season.
8. All monies allocated by the district to the GATE office for the operation of the Academic League shall be reviewed by the board but the GATE office is responsible for the full administration of such monies.
9. The Commissioner and Board of Directors will make the final ruling on all matters of interpretation of rules and procedures for the league upon written protest or appeal.
10. The Board shall be responsible for the hiring, training, assigning, disciplining and dismissal of league moderators. Board members will give advice concerning problems and issues relating to moderators.
11. The composition of the Board of Directors shall be open for review at the post-season coaches' meeting each year.