



## **Tournament Rules -- 2025**

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## **Section 1 – Tournament Organization**

1.1. The Illinois Masonic Academic Bowl is sponsored annually by the Masons of Illinois, under the authority of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Illinois.

1.2. The Grandmaster appoints an Academic Bowl Committee to serve as the organizing group for this tournament and to manage the tournament. The Chairman of the Academic Bowl Committee also serves as the Tournament Director. The Committee is responsible for establishing the rules and the process of the Sectional Tournament and the State Finals Tournament.

1.3. Only IHSA sanctioned schools are eligible for the tournament. Each school can enter only one team.

1.4. The Illinois Masonic Academic Bowl is a three (3) class tournament for IHSA sanctioned schools only.

1.4.1. The IHSA school enrollment numbers will be used for the classification of high schools into Class 1A, Class 2A and Class 3A. If the IHSA uses a multiplier for non-boundary schools, this same multiplier will be used for the Academic Bowl.

1.4.2. Enrollment classifications will be reviewed biannually. Currently, class 1A schools will have an enrollment of 300 or less. Class 2A schools will have an enrollment of 301 – 860. Class 3A schools will have an enrollment 861 or more. Schools have the option of playing up one class on a voluntary basis.

1.4.3. Sectional sites will be determined by the Chairman. A Sectional site shall not be used for more than one class.

1.5. All Sectional sites will use the same set of questions and follow the same set of Masonic rules and IHSA rules.

1.6. Teams which win their Sectional site will advance to the State Tournament. If the Sectional site champion declines its berth to the State Tournament, the second place team in that Sectional site will have first right of refusal, the third place team in that Sectional site will have second right of refusal, etc until a team from the Sectional advances to the State Tournament.

1.7. Teams in the State Tournament will play round-robin format in their respective class. The State Tournament will use the same set of questions prepared for the State Tournament and follow the same set of Masonic rules and IHSA rules for all three classes.

1.8. The Tournament dates will be on Week 33 of the IHSA calendar. This year Sectionals will be held February 22, 2025. The State Tournament will be on Week 35 of the IHSA calendar which is March 8, 2025.



## **Section 2 – Local Site Manager’s Responsibilities**

2.1 The Site Manager is responsible for the smooth operation of the tournament and ensuring that all rules and protocols are followed.

2.2. The Site Manager will contact the coach of each of the schools assigned to the site to secure a roster and convey logistics specific to the site.

2.3. The Site Manager will maintain the security of question packets once received.

2.4. The Site Manager will fill the necessary positions of Moderators, Scorekeepers, and Timekeepers. High school students will not be used as moderators. The Site Manager will ensure that the Moderators, Scorekeepers and Timekeepers are properly trained for the competition.

2.5. The Site Manager will setup the competition rooms properly and arrange for working equipment to be made available.

2.6. The Site Manager will conduct a Coach’s meeting to update rosters and accommodate any late changes.

2.7. The Site Manager will ensure that an accurate roster is available in each competition room for the scorekeeper to verify participants.

2.8. The Site Manager has the final authority to declare a forfeit.

2.9. The Site Manager will render decisions on illegal or inappropriate team uniforms as defined under the ‘Dress Code’ section when a problem is referred by a Moderator or team coach.

2.10. The Site Manager has the authority to make necessary changes to the schedule of the day but must include the on-site representative of the Academic Bowl Committee in making any changes. This can include revising team pairings due to last-minute cancellations or delaying the start of the tournament for late arrivals. The Site Manager will keep all coaches aware of any said changes.

2.11. The Site Manager will post scores of matches throughout the schedule. This can be done by poster, texting or QR code at the discretion of the Site Manager.

2.12. The Site Manager will arrange an Awards Ceremony to be conducted by the on-site representative of the Academic Bowl Committee.

2.13. The Site Manager will transmit the results of the tournament site to the Tournament Director the same day as the tournament. This can be done via email, voicemail, or text.

2.14. The Site Manager will give the necessary documentation to the on-site representative of the Academic Bowl Committee. This includes the Mason Sign-up Sheet, Scoresheets for All rounds, Completed Won-Loss Records, and the completed Competition Schedule.

### Section 3 – Moderator’s Duties

3.1. The Moderator conducts the match following the established rules and has final authority over everything that takes place during the match. This includes, but is not limited to, uniform violations, illegal communications, equipment malfunctions, answer clarifications, moderator or timekeeper errors, and handling appeals to the Moderator.

3.2. A Moderator has the option of involving the Site Manager on any decision.

3.3. Prior to the match, the Moderator will ensure that he/she has the correct set of questions for that round, ensure that the seating is compliant with the rules, ensure that the scorekeeper and timekeeper have the necessary tools for their assignments, verify rosters if the scorekeeper has not, verify the lockout system by having the team captain for each team introduce the players and their coach, verify the coach for each team, verify that all team uniforms are in compliance, ensure that all scratch paper provided for the teams is blank, and introduce himself/herself along with the scorekeeper and timekeeper.

3.4. During the match, the moderator is in control of the match. He/she determines if a question is to be replaced, recognizes students for answers, determines if an answer conforms to the one in the question packet, and ensures timeouts and substitutions are handled properly,

3.5. All errors involving the Moderator, scorekeeper or timekeeper shall be handled by the Moderator fairly and equitably. The Moderator has the final authority to decide how to proceed.

3.6. The Moderator may, but is not required to, initiate a consultation if:

3.6.1 She/he is unsure of match procedures.

3.6.2 She/he is unsure as to the correctness of the printed answer.

3.6.3 She/he is unsure of the correctness of an answer given by a team member.

3.7. The Moderator has the right to initiate a consultation:

3.7.1 Before a question is read (ideal situation).

3.7.2 After a question is read, but before an answer is given.

3.7.3 After an answer is given but before the Moderator rules on correctness.

3.7.4 After the Moderator rules on correctness, but before the next question is read, regardless of whether either coach makes an appeal.

3.8. Once the Moderator has begun reading a question, any decisions that were made on the previous question are final.

3.9. The Moderator may rule the first team’s possibly correct answer as incorrect without hesitation or pause, even if it might later be proven to be correct, to allow the second team to answer before a consultation or an appeal is initiated. This is done to avoid giving an advantage to the second team (via body language or visual cues) just in case the first team’s answer is, indeed, proven to be incorrect.

3.10. The Moderator will declare the winner of the match at the conclusion of the match and ensure that both coaches sign the official scoresheet,

## **Section 4 – Team Organization**

4.1. Each team will have an administratively-sanctioned person serving as coach. Only one person can act as the coach during a particular match. Changes in coaching are permissible for the next match. Only the designated coach for a particular match may communicate with the moderator unless the moderator chooses to speak to another individual.

4.2. Each coach will be asked to submit a preliminary roster of ten (10) students prior to the competition. That roster is finalized at the coach's meeting on the morning of the competition day. The roster for the Sectional Tournament and the roster for the State Tournament do not have to match.

4.3. A team roster shall consist of a maximum of ten (10) players with any combination of Frosh, Sophs, Juniors or Seniors. That roster is finalized at the morning coach's meeting and cannot be altered after that meeting. Only students whose name is on the finalized roster are eligible to compete in the day's matches.

4.4. Each team shall consist of five (5) players with a minimum of three (3) players to compete. The coach will designate one player as the captain. Failure to have the minimum three (3) players shall cause the team to forfeit.

4.5. If a team member arrives in the competition room after the match has started, he/she may participate only if his/her name is already listed on the team roster in the competition room. She/he may enter the match only during a scheduled 45 second break. If their name does not appear on the team roster, he/she is ineligible to participate in competition for the entire day.

## **Section 5 – Team Seating**

5.1. The competitors within each team will be seated side-by-side and facing the same direction so far as room constraints will allow.

5.2. The Moderator will be positioned so as to see the faces, name plates, and responder lights of all competitors and as close as possible to halfway between the two (2) teams.

5.3. Coaches and reserve players should be physically separated from the competitors and may be behind or in front of the teams, depending on room constraints.

5.4. Spectators should be physically separated from the competitors and may be behind or in front of the teams, depending on room constraints,

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## **Section 6 – Team Dress Code**

6.1 All teams competing in the Masonic Academic Bowl shall wear matching tops. Matching is defined as the same color, style and sleeve length with matching logos, emblems, or other markings. If ties, blazers or vests are worn they must also match. Any shirts worn under a blazer or vest must match.

6.2. The only exception to the Dress Code is for a student who has a 504 plan on file with their local school district. Verification of a 504 plan by the coach of the team is sufficient.

6.3. It is a violation to wear anything over the matching team tops while competing except as allowed in 6.2.

6.4. Other acceptable apparel worn with matching tops includes dress slacks, casual slacks, nice jeans, and skirts.

6.5. Unacceptable apparel includes any apparel with holes, tears, or patches including those manufactured with holes, tears, or patches. Skirts must be long enough so that the bottom hem is at the fingertips with the arms hanging naturally along the side of the body while standing. Other unacceptable apparel includes tennis skirts, shorts, cutoffs, spandex tights, or leggings unless worn under an acceptable skirt, sweat pants, sport pants, exercise pants, lounge pants, pajama pants or any similar apparel, bib overalls, any apparel with frayed areas including those manufactured that way, tank tops, see-through tops, anything with a hood regardless if visible or tucked in, hats, scarves, bandannas or non-religious head covering, sunglasses, slacks, jeans, or skirts worn too low on the hips or exposing any undergarments.

6.6. Any apparel that advertises alcohol, tobacco, drugs, any explicit material, or anything political are unacceptable in all forms and regardless of size or location of the advertisement.

6.7. Apparel with a manufacturer logo or trademark is permissible as long as there is only one such logo and it does not exceed 1 ½ inch square.

6.8. Apparel with a Masonic emblem and/or name of a Masonic Lodge is permissible, however, the emblem shall not be larger than the school emblem if used.

6.9. Although coaches do not have to dress the same as their team members, coaches are expected to dress in a manner that demonstrates credit to their school and to this tournament. Anything listed as unacceptable for students applies to coaches.

6.10. Violations of the dress code before the match has begun will result in a thirty (30) point bonus to the opposing team which will be noted at the top of the scoresheet. This penalty will be assessed at the beginning of each match in which the team or player is in violation of the dress code.

6.11. When a player wearing a non-matching or illegal uniform attempts to enter the match the Moderator shall not allow the substitution until the player is in compliance with the dress code rules.

6.12. A player wearing unacceptable apparel shall not be allowed to compete without penalty by covering the unacceptable apparel with jackets, sweaters, scarves, blankets, or other such items.

6.13. If a player is noticed with an illegal uniform and at least one competition question has been asked while that player was in the match, the Moderator will immediately call a time-out and have the player removed for a player wearing a legal uniform. The removed player may re-enter the match if the violation is corrected during a regular 45 second break. If no substitute player is available, the coach has the option of leaving the player in the match after taking a 30 point violation (6.10).

6.14. The Dress Code shall be enforced. It is not permissible for coaches, the Moderator, other match officials, or the committee representative to waive all or any part of the Dress Code.

## Section 7 – Team Nameplates

7.1. Everyone playing in the match shall display her/his name legibly on a placard always displayed in front of the player clearly visible to the Moderator.

7.2. The first name on the placard must match the first name on the school roster. Diminutive forms of names (i.e. Mary for Maria, John or Jack for Jonathan) are acceptable. Nicknames are not acceptable.

7.3. A school's roster cannot be changed in the competition room at any time during the day.

7.4. Placards do not need to be professionally made, but all names must be clearly legible to the Moderator.

7.5. Each school shall have a placard with the school's name displayed legibly on it. This placard shall be displayed in the front of the table where the team is seated, readily visible to the Moderator. It is an acceptable substitute to have the school's name on each team member's placard.

7.6. It is not permissible for a Site Manager, Moderator, Coach, Coaches, or an Academic Bowl representative to determine that this rule is not mandatory.

## Section 8 – Match Format

8.1. The Academic Bowl uses one of two match formats: Round Robin if there are 8 teams or less and Pool Play if there are 9 – 12 teams. No Sectional site will be assigned more than 12 teams. The Masonic Academic Bowl awards first, second, third and fourth places in each sectional and in each class at the State Final Tournament.

8.2. In the Round Robin format, each team will play the other teams. The team with the best won-loss record will be the champion. The team with the second best won-loss will be second place winner, etc. Tie breakers are explained in 8.4.

8.3. In 'pool play' the teams will be divided into Pool A and Pool B. The determination of pools at a tournament site shall be the decision of the Tournament Director who will select the teams for each pool. A team will play every other team in its pool. If an odd number of teams are in each of the two pools, the 'idle' team in Pool A will compete against the 'idle' team in Pool B. If cross-pool play is used, the cross-play matches will not be used in determining won-loss records for the final rounds. The team with the best record in each Pool will advance as well as the team with the second best record in each Pool. The first-place team in Pool A will play the second-place team from Pool B and vice versa. Ties within each Pool are explained in 8.4. The winners of that round will play each other for the championship and the losers will play for third and fourth place.

8.4. If two teams have the same record in pool play or round-robin play, the first tie breaker is head-to-head competition. The same is true if the third and fourth place teams are tied. In all tie-breaker scenarios, no cross-pool play is used. If more than two teams are tied, the second tie-breaker is the total points scored by each of the tied teams in only their head-to-head matches. The third tie-breaker is the total points scored by each of the tied teams in all matches for the day of the tournament. The fourth tie-breaker is the total points scored against each of the tied teams in all matches for the day of the tournament. The team allowing the fewest points will be awarded first place.

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## **Section 9 – Match Procedures**

9.1. A match for the Academic Bowl consists of 32 questions consisting of 16 toss-up questions and 16 teamwork questions. Throughout the match, each correct answer is worth 10 points. Subjects are mathematics, social studies, literature, science, fine arts and miscellaneous. Subjects are randomly chosen and vary from match to match.

9.2. Teams will have ten (10) seconds to buzz in at the completion of the reading of toss-up questions. Players have three (3) seconds to begin their answer for toss-up questions once recognized by the moderator. If the first team to buzz in answers incorrectly, the other team will have the remainder of the ten (10) seconds, or up to three (3) seconds, whichever is longer, to buzz in.

For teamwork questions, the team in control will have ten (10) seconds to begin their answer. Unlike IHSA rules, there will not be a prompt for an answer at 8 seconds. If the controlling team answers incorrectly or elects to give no answer, the other team will have three (3) seconds to begin their answer. In the absence of a timekeeper, the timing may be done by the Moderator or the Scorekeeper.

9.3. All matches follow this format:

--First Section: Six (6) toss-up questions followed by a 45 second time out.

--Second Section: Eight (8) teamwork questions followed by a 45 second time out.

The team that answered the most toss-up questions correctly in the previous section will have the first teamwork question. In case of a tie, the team that answered the first toss-up question correctly will have the first teamwork question. Teams do not have to remain seated during the teamwork sections of the tournament. Teamwork questions consist of three parts. The first part is answered before the second is read and the second is answered before the third is read. Rebounding is allowed during the teamwork portion of the match and is supervised by the Moderator. Each team will have the same subject for corresponding teamwork questions. For example, questions 7 & 8 will be the same subject, 9 & 10 will be the same subject, etc.

--Third Section: Six (6) toss-up questions followed by a 45 second time out.

--Fourth Section: Eight (8) teamwork questions followed by a 45 second time out.

The fourth section follows the same format as the second section.

--Fifth Section: Four (4) toss-up questions. Match concluded.

9.4. At the end of each section, the scorekeeper should reconcile the current match score with the coaches and resolve any discrepancies before proceeding with the next section.

9.5. The 45 second time-outs can be used for substitutions by either coach. Either coach may confer with their team or teammates. No one is permitted to leave the room during the match or during a time-out. Teams do not change sides during a time-out. The 45 second time-out or any portion thereof may be waived at the discretion of the moderator and agreement of both coaches. If substitutions have been made, that individual will introduce themselves and test their buzzer.

9.6. Each team will be allowed one (1) 45 second time-out during each section of the match. Only the head coach can call a time-out. A time-out must be called before the category of the next question is read. During teamwork questions, a coach can only call a time-out after the even number questions. A player may signal her/his coach if she/he believes there is a reason why a time-out should be called but the Moderator will ignore this signal. During the called time-out, either coach may substitute players, confer with players or name a new captain.

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9.7. If any substitutions are made during the called time-out, the Moderator will verify the individual is on the roster, conforms to dress policy and has not taken any written material to the table. The Moderator will have all substitutes test their control button.

9.8. The team with the most points at the end of the match is declared the winner. In case of a tie at the end of regulation, the moderator will choose the first un-used toss-up question in the 'Extra Question' section regardless of subject. If neither team answers the question correctly, a second toss-up will be chosen, etc. until a winner is determined.

9.9. If a replacement toss-up question is needed, the moderator will choose the first toss-up question in the 'Extra Question' section regardless of subject. If a replacement teamwork question is needed, the moderator will choose the first teamwork question in the 'Extra Question' section regardless of subject.

9.10. No toss-up question nor teamwork question for the Academic Bowl Tournament will consist of true-false answers, multiple choice answers, audio material, visual material, or handouts.

### **Section 10 – Electronic Lockout System**

10.1. A ten-position electronic lockout response system shall be used for each match in this tournament.

10.2. It is suggested that extra lockout systems be available for use at each Sectional site on the day of the tournament.

10.3. If a Moderator has read a question and a malfunction of the lockout system occurs which results in a tie between teams or if the lockout system is not functioning at all (because it has been inadvertently shut off or a wire has become disconnected, etc) the question shall be discarded and a replacement question will be asked.

10.4. If a malfunction of the lockout system results in a tie within a team, the captain of that team shall be asked by the Moderator to designate which of those tied should be given the opportunity to answer.

10.5. If malfunctions are repeated or if the lockout system is obviously broken the match shall be stopped and the local site manager shall be contacted immediately. The lockout system shall be repaired or replaced with a working system, which ever method requires the least amount of time.

### **Section 11 – Team Forfeit Policy**

11.1. Forfeits may be invoked upon agreement of the site manager and the Committee representative upon a coach or team's blatant disregard for the organization of the tournament. Two examples: 1) A team is late for their first match and did not notify the site manager of the emergency. 2) A team leaves the competition site (lunch, drinks) and does not return by the scheduled start time of the next round.

11.2. A team that is not present when the round is scheduled to begin shall forfeit its match in that round.

11.3. If a team forfeits a match, the opposing team shall be awarded the average number of points scored by their team in all of its matches that day. If 'cross-pool' play occurred, the points scored in the cross-pool match(es) shall not be used in the calculations for average points.

11.4. In the event of a forfeit, an official scoresheet shall be filled out with both school names recorded. The team that forfeited the match shall be clearly identified on the scoresheet, A '0' shall be recorded in that team's final score box and the average number of points as per calculation will be recorded in the final score box for the opposing team at the end of the competition day.

## **Section 12 – Participant behavior**

12.1. All students, coaches, match personnel and spectators are always expected to display appropriate sportsmanship. The use of profanity, obscene gestures, or any offensive behavior by anyone at the tournament site will not be tolerated.

12.1.1. A team member who violates this rule while actively participating in a match shall be immediately removed from the match and be banned from any competition room for the remainder of the day. Their team shall forfeit that specific match.

12.1.2. A team member who violates this rule while not actively participating in a match shall be immediately removed and be banned from any competition room for the remainder of the day,

12.1.3. A coach who violates this rule during a match shall cause his/her team to immediately forfeit that specific match and the immediately following match.

12.1.4. Anyone who is disrespectful or threatening towards students, coaches, tournament workers, or Academic Bowl Committee members shall be immediately ejected from the building,

12.2. No student or spectator shall be allowed to use an electronic device while the match is in play. This includes cell phones, electronic tablets, smart watches or computers. Team coaches are exempt from this rule if used for score keeping.

12.2.1 If a team member is using an electronic device, he/she will be asked to turn the device off and give it to his/her coach. If the team member refuses, the match will be suspended until he/she leaves the competition room.

12.2.2. If any other person in the room other than a team member or coach uses an electronic device, he/she will be asked to turn it off for the duration of the match. If he/she refuses, the match will be suspended, the site manager notified, and the individual will be removed from the premises.

12.3. A practice match is defined as a match between two (2) idle teams in a designated competition room with a Moderator working at the tournament site. No teams shall participate in a practice match with the penalty being forfeiture of all matches for the day.

12.4. If a team has a scheduled idle round in the competition, it may practice on its own in a room not scheduled for competition. An official question packet from the day cannot be used for said practice.

12.5. In the event of a necessary cancellation due to weather or other circumstances, the site manager and the Tournament Director will communicate to determine logistics.