

CONSTITUTION FOR
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY ETHICS BOWL AND BIOETHICS BOWL TEAMS

This constitution is comprised of the following sections:

- 1. Purpose**
- 2. Responsibilities and Expectations of Undergraduate Participants**
- 3. Responsibilities and Expectations of Coaches**
- 4. Role of the Faculty Adviser**
- 5. Signed Agreement**

Purpose

Ethics Bowl and Bioethics Bowl are debate-style competitions for undergraduates. The central aim of this extracurricular activity is to cultivate philosophical writing skills and learn about contemporary ethical problems. Students will receive assistance in analyzing and evaluating the competition cases, and they will be expected to write a compelling philosophical argument for each case. Coaches will help with editing, research, and articulation of arguments. The team intends to present cases that will win at competition, but more importantly, Ethics Bowl and Bioethics Bowl are meant to provide undergraduate students the opportunity to work together to study philosophical arguments and to reflect on contemporary ethical issues.

Georgetown undergraduates from any discipline and background are welcome to participate. For each competition, we will have a team of five competing undergraduates and potentially alternates to stand in for competitors when needed. Regional Ethics Bowl takes place in the Fall semester, and National Ethics Bowl (when the team qualifies) and Bioethics Bowl take place in the Spring. Competitors and at least one coach will need to travel to the place of competition.

Responsibilities and Expectations of Undergraduate Participants

Undergraduate students may participate as a) a competitor, b) an alternate, or c) a case helper.

- *Competitors* are responsible for researching, preparing, memorizing, and presenting cases at competition. These students should attend as many meetings as possible, especially meetings during which his/her case is discussed. They should expect to meet individually with coaches when needed and make consistent progress each week on the assigned case load. These students will need to travel to competition, and they will potentially miss class days in order to compete. Only five competitors per competition are permitted to sit at the table by Ethics Bowl and Bioethics Bowl rules.

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- *Alternates* are responsible for helping with case preparation and being familiar enough with the cases to stand in for someone in case (e.g.) a competitor falls ill while at competition. These students should attend as many meetings as possible and work with the competitors and coaches as needed. These students will need to travel to competition and potentially miss class days in order to compete. We will take as many alternates as funding allows.
- *Case helpers* are welcome to attend meetings to contribute to case preparation, discussion, and research. These students are not expected to travel with the team, and their expenses will probably not be covered if they decide to go to competition.

Students who travel for competition will receive a signed letter from the coaches and faculty adviser requesting that any missed classes are excused. These students are still responsible for all coursework and any missed exams.

Coaches will determine which undergraduate students will serve as competitors, alternates, and case helpers for each competition. Their decision will be based on the student's proven commitment, attendance record at meetings, and level of contribution at meetings. Students who are not chosen to compete for one competition could be selected to compete at another competition. Participating as an alternate or case helper can demonstrate commitment to the team and thus increase a student's chances of being able to compete in the future.

One competitor each semester will be chosen for Team Captain. Coaches will choose a student who has a strong record of commitment, reliability, teamwork, and sportsmanship. In addition to the above duties, the Team Captain is responsible for taking notes during meetings, helping with recruitment and other administrative tasks as needed, and representing the undergraduate participants during decision-making.

Regardless of the level of involvement, requirements for all students include but are not limited to the following:

- Commit to the team and to take on the responsibilities attending the agreed on level of participation
 - For competitors, this involves making clear progress on cases from week-to-week, doing necessary research, attending meetings regularly, maintaining consistent communication with the team and coaches, and memorizing cases prior to traveling to the competition.
 - Students who volunteer to compete should be certain that they have the time and ability to put forth the needed effort to prepare cases and to travel to competition. Deadlines for outlines, rough drafts, and memorization will be taken seriously by

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coaches. If a student cannot meet a deadline, needs to leave the team, or has to reduce his/her case load, this situation needs to be communicated to the coaches immediately. Students are expected to be honest about their workload and ability to contribute to the team; they should talk about any concerns with coaches and/or the faculty adviser.

- Speak and act respectfully to the other participants, coaches, faculty adviser, competition organizers, and teams and coaches from other universities
 - Sportsmanship is required of everyone involved in these competitions.
- Arrive promptly when preparing for travel departure, and maintain communication with coaches while traveling
- Stay within the vicinity of the competition and the lodgings during travel
- Refrain from illegal drinking, providing alcohol to underage students, drunken behavior, illicit drug use, and obscene public behavior
- Represent Georgetown University with professionalism

No student will be expected to do the following:

- Disregard class work or preparation for standardized tests for the sake of Ethics Bowl or Bioethics Bowl
- Pay for expenses incurred by other team mates or coaches

Students who travel with the team might need to pay for some of their expenses (such as food, cab rides), depending on what funding the team receives. Students who have concerns about these expenses should talk to the coaches or the faculty adviser.

If a student fails to meet his/her obligations, the coaches should communicate concerns to the student. If the student continues to neglect his/her obligations, then the coaches can change the student's level of involvement with the team. While at competition, if a student does not abide by the above listed regulations, the coaches can prevent the student from competing at any point. The coaches can replace a competitor with an alternate if the competitor has not taken reasonable steps to be prepared for competition, is in breach of the above regulations, or is unable to compete due to illness.

All potential disciplinary issues will be handled by the faculty adviser.

Responsibilities and Expectations of Coaches

Coaches are graduate students whose responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Recruit new undergraduate students at the beginning of every semester
- Handle administrative duties, such as scheduling, e-mail communication, and fundraising
- Ensure the team has a faculty adviser every semester
- Attend meetings regularly and contribute to discussion and research
- Meet with students individually as needed
- Help with case preparation by editing, providing comments and critiques, offering relevant research or philosophical literature, and assisting students in their articulation of arguments
- Travel to competition (at least one coach)
- Maintain communication with undergraduates while traveling
- Refrain from providing alcohol to underage students, drunken behavior, illicit drug use, and obscene public behavior during meetings and while traveling with the team
- Speak and act respectfully to the other coaches, team mates, faculty adviser, competition organizers, and teams and coaches from other universities
- Mediate significant conflicts by appealing to the faculty adviser
- Represent Georgetown University with professionalism

Graduate students and faculty members will not write large sections (i.e., a paragraph or more) of the cases for the undergraduate competitors.

No coach will be expected to do the following:

- Disregard class work or preparation for standardized tests for the sake of Ethics Bowl or Bioethics Bowl
- Pay for expenses incurred by team mates or other coaches

Graduate students who travel with the team might need to cover some of their own expenses (such as food, cab rides), depending on what funding the team receives. Not all coaches are guaranteed funding for travel. Which coaches are funded for travel will depend on level of involvement, availability, and willingness to work with the students while traveling.

Graduate students who wish to assist with case preparation without committing to being a full-fledged coach must agree to the above listed regulations.

The faculty adviser can ask any involved graduate student to step down or to change his/her level of involvement if complaints are brought against him/her.

Role of the Faculty Adviser

The Georgetown Ethics Bowl and Bioethics Bowl teams will have at least one adviser every semester. The adviser will be a faculty member of the Philosophy Department.

The adviser will handle all potential disciplinary issues and conflicts that might arise. Team mates and coaches should feel free to contact the adviser with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

