

# THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY HACK COMPETITION



## 2024-25 OFFICIAL RULES

The following represent the official rules of The Environmental Law and Policy Hack Competition (“Rules”).

### **RULE I. PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY HACK COMPETITION**

The Environmental Law and Policy Hack Competition (“Competition”) is an annual, inter-university school problem-solving Competition sponsored by the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University (“Haub Law”) and the University of Miami (UM). The purpose of the Competition is to orient students toward the development of practicable environmental policy; encourage students to collaborate with policy stakeholders, including from government and the community; catalyze the conceptualization and implementation of innovative solutions to pressing environmental problems; and further UM and Haub Law’s commitment to advancing environmental protection. The Competition is coordinated by the Competition Board (“Board”), which is comprised of Haub Law environmental faculty, UM faculty, their colleagues in the environmental field, and UM and Haub Law administration.

### **RULE II. THE PROBLEM**

The Problem is prepared by the Board and provided to each Team for its use in preparing for participation in the Competition.

**A. Use of Problem for other than the Competition.** Schools may use the current Problem for intramural competitions or other academic purposes, with appropriate attribution to UM & Haub Law.

**B. Questions about the Problem.** The Board will accept questions relevant to the Problem until **Monday, December 16, 2024**.

### **RULE III. THE TEAMS**

**A. Number and composition of Teams.** Each competing team (“Team”) shall be composed of two to six students, with at least one law student who must be registered law students seeking a *Juris Doctor*, L.L.M., or S.J.D/J.S.D/PhD degree, except by special permission, and in good standing at their respective schools at the time of brief writing or oral presentation. The participation of additional Team members, including community or

# THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY HACK COMPETITION

government stakeholders and students in other disciplines, is strongly encouraged. University faculty may not serve as team members although we encourage teams to discuss the problem and their proposal with relevant experts. Each Team must also have a faculty advisor as their Team Coach.

**B. Registration Process.** Teams must register by **Monday, December 2, 2024**, on the Competition’s website. Earlier registration is encouraged. There is a registration fee of \$50 per team.

## RULE IV. THE POLICY BRIEFS

**A. General.** Each Team may write only one policy brief (“Team Brief”). The Team Brief should reflect the work product of the Team. Teams are, however, encouraged to develop information and feedback from a variety of sources. Those sources should be cited appropriately.

**B. Length and form of briefs.** Each team is required to submit an electronic copy of the Team Brief as specified in Rule IV (C).

- 1. Format.** All text and footnotes shall be in 12-point Times New Roman type. Text should be double-spaced and footnotes single-spaced. Total length of the brief, excluding the Table of Contents, Table of Authorities and Appendices, may not exceed thirty-five (35) pages. All citations shall be in the form prescribed in the latest edition of the Harvard Law Association’s Uniform System of Citation (“Bluebook”). Appendices may be used to recite the text of statutes, constitutional provisions, regulations and materials that are not generally available. Teams are also invited to include as Appendices maps, illustrations, or other tools useful to explain the proposal provided that they can be submitted in a manageable electronic format.
- 2. Certification.** Each Team submitting a brief in the Competition shall certify that such brief has been prepared in accordance with these Rules.<sup>1</sup> The certification shall be included in the Team Brief as the last page.

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<sup>1</sup> The certification shall state:

We hereby certify that the brief for \_\_\_\_\_ [insert Team name] is the product of the undersigned. We further certify that the undersigned have read the Competition Rules and that this brief complies with these Rules.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team Member

## THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY HACK COMPETITION

### C. Service of briefs and certification.

1. Service Upon the Board
  - a. Each Team shall serve upon the Board the Team Brief, Certification, and any other tools by email to Anne Olson, aolson@law.pace.edu no later than **Monday, February 10, 2025**.
  - b. Briefs emailed with a date later than **Monday, February 10, 2025**, will be subject to a one-point deduction per day late pursuant to Rule IX. Briefs are scored on a 100-point scale.
2. **Revision of briefs.** A Team may not revise its brief after its submission to the Board.

### RULE V. SCORING

**A. Preliminary round.** The Board shall score all briefs submitted. The brief score shall be used to determine advancement of the top three teams to the final round. Briefs will be scored in the preliminary round on the following basis: Presentation and Format (correct Bluebook citation, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and effective use of tables, graphics, or other media to communicate information) – 10%; Innovation – 15%; Legal and Policy Analysis – 35%; and Feasibility (including ability to productively utilize award money and potential to effect beneficial change) – 40%.

1. **Time and place.** Each Team must submit the packages containing their briefs by . Afterwards, the Board shall evaluate each submission. All Teams shall receive their brief scores upon the conclusion of the competition.
2. **Results.** The Board will announce the top three (3) Teams on and invite representatives of the top three Teams to compete in the final round.

**B. Final round.** Three (3) Teams shall progress to the final round. The three Teams selected to compete in the final round will receive up to \$2,000 per Team to reimburse costs of transportation to Miami (airfare, train, etc.). Each Team will also be provided with two hotels rooms for two nights in Miami. The winning Team will be selected by the judges based on the Team Brief and presentation. In the final round, judges will be instructed to score teams holistically based on their presentations and referencing their briefs considering the following criteria: organization, preparation, and persuasiveness; feasibility (including ability to productively use award money) and potential to effect beneficial change; innovation; legal reasoning and policy analysis; and handling of questions.

1. **Time and place.** The final round will take place in Miami Florida on **Sunday, March 23**.
2. **Time allowed for presentations.** Oral presentations shall be limited to a total of twenty (20) minutes per Team. Following the presentation, Judges shall be allotted fifteen (15) minutes to question the Team.

## **THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY HACK COMPETITION**

3. **Participants.** One (1) representative of a Team must participate in the presentation. Additional team members that attend may also participate in the presentation and the Team may divide the presentation in any way it chooses. A Team member not presenting may answer questions from the judges.
4. **Results.** The winning Team will be announced after the three (3) presentations have concluded and the judges have conferred.
5. **Videotaping, audio taping and visual aids.** Video and/or audio taping of oral arguments is permitted. Visual aids are permitted and strongly encouraged during presentations.

### **RULE VI. FACULTY OR OTHER ASSISTANCE AND CONFLICTS**

1. Assistance and advice from law faculty or faculty in other disciplines is encouraged in the research, writing or preparation of the brief.
2. We encourage Teams to solicit assistance from a wide range of stakeholders, community representatives, and students studying in other fields.
3. UM & Haub Law students may participate in the Competition. In the preliminary round, no team's brief will be graded by a faculty member from an institution where any team member is currently a student. Thus, for example, the brief of any team that includes a Haub Law student will not be graded by a member of the Haub Law faculty.
4. If a final round judge is on the faculty of an academic institution and a team with members who are current students at that institution advances to the final round, the judge shall be recused.

### **RULE VII. PRIZE**

1. The winning team will receive a trophy and a cash prize of \$2,000, with the money to be put toward implementation of the team's policy concept.
2. Within ten (10) months of the Competition, the Team Coach of the winning team shall submit to the Board a memorandum or presentation, including pictures, to be posted on the Competition's website that details how the funds were spent. The memorandum or presentation should be addressed to the Environmental Law and Policy Hack Competition and sent by email to [aolson@law.pace.edu](mailto:aolson@law.pace.edu).
3. Within ten (10) months of the Competition, the Team Coach of the winning team shall submit to the Board a detailed accounting of how the prize money was used and include, where applicable, receipts. The detailed accounting should be addressed to the Environmental Law and Policy Hack Competition and sent by email to [aolson@law.pace.edu](mailto:aolson@law.pace.edu).

### **RULE VIII. PUBLICATION ON WEBSITE**

## **THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY HACK COMPETITION**

1. The Board will post all Team Brief submittals on the Competition's website to contribute to public thought on the selected issue.
2. The Board will post the winning Team's memorandum on the Competition's website.
3. The Board may also post video recordings of the oral presentations on the Competition's website.

### **RULE IX. PENALTIES**

1. The Board may assess such penalties, including disqualification, as it deems reasonable and appropriate in its sole discretion for failure to comply with the Rules or deadlines set pursuant to these Rules and other rules made pursuant to Rule XI hereof.
2. All briefs in the Competition shall be subject to uniform penalties for each type of violation; penalties may be levied in whole or fractional points.
3. The Board shall maintain records of the penalties imposed pursuant to this Rule for at least six (6) months.

### **RULE X. INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES**

1. Requests for interpretation of these Rules should be addressed to the Environmental Law and Policy Hack Competition and sent by email to [aolson@law.pace.edu](mailto:aolson@law.pace.edu). Requests should be made at the earliest date possible.
2. All interpretations of these Rules and any waivers, consents, assessments of penalties, decisions or other actions taken by the Board in its administration of the Competition shall be in its sole and absolute discretion. Such interpretations, waivers, consents, assessments of penalties, decisions or actions shall be final, and all participants shall be bound thereby.

### **RULE XI. OTHER RULES**

The Board may from time to time make any other rules and procedures deemed advisable for the conduct of the Competition, in its sole discretion.