

**NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN
LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**

**ANNUAL
WRITING
COMPETITION**

OFFICIAL RULES

(As amended by the NNALSA Executive Board, November 2008)

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MISSION STATEMENT

The National Native American Law Students Association was founded in 1970 to promote the study of Federal Indian Law, Tribal Law and traditional forms of governance, and to support Native American students in law school. We strive to reach out to Native communities and encourage Native People to pursue legal education. We also strive to educate the legal community about Native issues.

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

RULE 1.1 – Promotion of Mission Statement

The purpose of the National Native American Law Students Association ("NNALSA") Writing Competition ("the competition") is to create opportunities to promote the objectives of the NNALSA mission statement, actively encourage the development of writing skills of NNALSA members, and enhance substantive knowledge in the fields of Federal Indian Law, Tribal Law and traditional forms of governance.

RULE 1.2 – Continued Involvement

NNALSA strongly encourages all competition participants to actively participate in NNALSA and local NALSA chapter activities as a student and after graduation in order to further the purpose outlined above.

SECTION 2 – GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

RULE 2.1 - Competition Administration

At the conclusion of the host school bidding process as outlined in Section 14, and after an affirmative vote by the NNALSA membership at the Annual NNALSA Meeting, the competition will be sponsored by the winning NALSA Chapter.

RULE 2.2 – Duly-Enacted Competition Rules

These rules have been duly enacted by the NNALSA Executive Board as the official rules.

RULE 2.3 – Amending these Rules

The Executive Board reserves the right to make any necessary changes to ensure fairness, efficiency, and the appropriate administration of the competition. All such changes shall be posted to the NNALSA and host school websites.

RULE 2.4 – Competition Administrator

The Executive Board will appoint a board member as competition administrator to administer the competition and these rules in partnership with the host school. The competition administrator shall not compete in the competition while serving as administrator of the competition.

RULE 2.5 – Rules Committee

- a. The competition administrator shall convene a writing competition rules committee ("rules committee"), with at least two additional Executive Board members and one representative from the host school, appointed by the host school, none of whom are competing in that year's competition. The rules committee shall discuss and decide all changes, questions, or suggestions regarding these rules.

- b. The rules committee shall operate by consensus to decide the proper action. When no consensus can be reached, the competition administrator shall make the final decision.
- c. Any suggested changes to these rules must be submitted to the competition administrator at least 30 days before the submission deadline.
- d. All questions shall be answered by the competition administrator via email within 24 hours of receipt. All rules committee members must be given an electronic copy of the answered questions. It is the responsibility of all participants to check the websites for information pertaining to the competition.
- e. The decision of the rules committee and/or competition administrator shall be final.

SECTION 3 – QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COMPETITION

RULE 3.1 – *Who to Contact*

Questions about the writing competition should be directed to the competition administrator or host school contact via email or regular mail. Contact information is available on the NNALSA website at <http://www.nationalnalsa.org>.

SECTION 4 – PRIZES

RULE 4.1 – *Prize Amounts and Publication*

First prize shall be at least \$2,000, plus publication* in an official law journal chosen by the host school, subject to approval of the Executive Board. Second prize shall be at least \$1,000, and third prize shall be at least \$500. Other entries of publishable quality may also be published at the discretion of the Executive Board and the forum publication. Authors will be consulted regarding any decision to publish their work.

**Please note that publication is dependent upon author's cooperation with reasonable editorial requests.*

RULE 4.2 – *Announcement of Winners*

The competition administrator and a representative from the host school will announce the winners in April at the Annual NNALSA meeting.

SECTION 5 – TOPICS

RULE 5.1 – *Topic*

The host school shall select the paper topic consistent with the NNALSA Mission Statement; this topic may be broad enough to accept all papers relevant to Federal Indian Law. Papers may explore a topic of national or international importance to Indians, tribal governments, or indigenous peoples consistent with the NNALSA Mission Statement.

SECTION 6 – INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY

RULE 6.1 – *General Eligibility Requirements*

Each competitor must be enrolled in a Juris Doctorate program at an accredited law school and be in good standing at their law school during the spring semester of the year of the competition. Each competitor must be a current NNALSA member in good standing throughout the competition.

RULE 6.2 – NALSA Chapter Members

Every competition participant must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- a. Competitors must meet all financial obligations of membership in NNALSA as well as their local NALSA chapter before the submission deadline or they will be disqualified. NNALSA membership dues must be submitted to the NNALSA Treasurer. If there is no local chapter, refer to Rule 6.3.
- b. Each competitor must be involved with the activities of their local NALSA chapter. If there is no local chapter, refer to Rule 6.3.

RULE 6.3 – NNALSA Members without a Local Chapter

- a. Students who do not have a local NALSA chapter and are interested in participating in the competition, must submit the following information with their submission:
 1. Letter of interest from the student, no longer than two pages, double-spaced, all margins 1 inch, 12 point Times New Roman font, attesting to their own interest and activities that advance the objectives of the NNALSA Mission Statement.
 2. Completed NNALSA membership applications and dues for the competitor must be sent to the NNALSA Treasurer by the submission deadline. The NNALSA Treasurer and the competition administrator will work with the host school to ensure all appropriate deadlines have been met and dues have been paid.
- b. The host school shall forward the above requirements to the competition administrator for review before admitting the competitor. Students who do not meet the above requirements will not be allowed to participate in the competition.

SECTION 7 – REGISTRATION AND SUBMISSION**RULE 7.1 – Deadline for Registration and Submission**

The registration deadline must be 30 days or less before the submission deadline. The submission deadline will be set by the host school, but may be extended under Rule 2.5. Any deadline created by the host school will be the date and time by which submissions must be postmarked and/or emailed in accordance with the host school's selected method of submission. Any submission postmarked or emailed after that date and time will be disqualified. The submission deadline must be sufficient to allow judging and scoring to occur before the Annual NNALSA Meeting.

RULE 7.2 – Submission of Registration Materials

- a. The host school will announce a registration deadline between 30 and 60 days before the submission deadline.
- c. The registration fee is \$10, payable to the host school.
- d. Each entrant must submit a complete registration packet, including the registration form, payment of the registration fee, and all additional requirements for participation by the registration deadline to the host school. All applicants are reminded to send NNALSA Membership Applications and Individual dues to the NNALSA Treasurer no later than the submission deadline as outlined in Rules 3.1 and Rule 4.1.

RULE 7.3 – *Submission of Competition Paper*

See Section 10.

SECTION 8 – JUDGES

RULE 8.1 – *Panel(s) of Judges*

The competition will be judged by a panel selected by the host school and approved by the competition administrator. The panel will consist of attorneys and professors with substantial experience and knowledge in the field of Indian law. If there are a sufficient number of entries, two judging panels will be created – one panel will choose the top six papers, and a second panel will select a first, second, and third place from that group of finalists. The second panel of judges will not be informed of any results from the previous scoring round.

SECTION 9 – STANDARDS

RULE 9.1 – *Authorship Standards*

Entries must be between 25 and 50 pages, including footnotes and must be the student's own original work. All entries may only have one author. The paper must not have been previously published nor should it be submitted for publication or entered in any other competition until NNALSA announces the winners of this competition. There is no limit to the number of papers that may be submitted by any one student.

RULE 9.2 – *Judging Criteria*

The papers will be judged on criteria including originality, timeliness of topic, quality and creativity of analysis, knowledge and use of relevant law as well as grammar, punctuation, and citation style. See Appendix A: Score Sheet.

RULE 9.3 – *Submission Identification Numbers*

Each paper will be sequentially assigned a number. The assigned number will be the sole method of identifying the brief during the competition. Entrants may not divulge their law school affiliation or their names within their papers. Entrants shall indicate their submission identification number at the top of each page of their submission, in addition to the title of the paper, and page number.

SECTION 10 – FORMAT DETAILS

RULE 10.1 – *Submission Requirements*

- a. Submissions must be at least 25 double-spaced pages and no longer than 50 double-spaced pages, including footnotes; this length requirement applies to the paper itself, and not to the required title page (see Rule 10.2) or testimonials which may be required.
- b. All margins must be 1" (top, bottom, and both sides), and the text shall be in Times New Roman 12 point font and the footnotes in 10 point font.
- c. The text of the paper shall be double spaced, footnotes shall be single spaced, and indented quotations may be single-spaced.

- d. Citations shall conform to the latest edition of The Bluebook, a Uniform System of Citation.
- e. The paper itself shall have ONLY the title of the paper, page number, and submission identification number at the top of each page. No other identifying information shall appear within the text of the submission.

RULE 10.2 – Title Page

The submission shall have a title page containing the title of the paper and the submission identification number.

RULE 10.3 – Method of Submission

An electronic copy of the paper must be submitted to the host school by the deadline, in pdf format. This electronic copy must be emailed to the host school submissions contact on or before the deadline. Submitted media will not be returned to the entrant. A representative of the host school will use the electronic copy to perform a plagiarism check through an online service.

SECTION 11 – INTERPRETATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

RULE 11.1 – Requests for Interpretation or Clarification

Any participant or prospective participant may request an interpretation or clarification of these rules from the competition administrator via email. The competition administrator shall forward such inquiries to the host school and will consult with the host school to respond appropriately to the request. All requests for clarification and responses issued by the competition administrator shall be communicated to the host school via email.

RULE 11.2 – Grievance Procedure

- a. The competitor ("the complainant") must complete Appendix B: Grievance Form. The complainant must clearly state the entire grievance or complaint in the space provided on the form.
- b. The complainant shall submit a completed grievance form to the competition administrator via email anytime before the submission deadline and no later than 30 business days after the announcement of winners at the NNALSA Annual Meeting. No grievance forms will be accepted after that time.
- c. The competition administrator will present the complaint to the Executive Board for a decision. The Executive Board may request those involved in the complaint to answer questions or give information concerning the complaint.
- d. The Executive Board and the competition administrator will review the complaint and make a decision regarding the complaint within a reasonable amount of time. The concerned parties will be notified of the decision.
- e. The decision(s) of the Executive Board and/or competition administrator is final.

SECTION 12 – PUBLICITY

RULE 12.1 – *Advertising the Competition*

The competition shall be advertised on the NNALSA and host school's websites. The host school may also distribute flyers. All publicity materials must be approved by the Executive Board before posting/distribution of those materials. Any and all website publicity should include a copy of these rules.

SECTION 13 – HOST SCHOOL DUTIES

RULE 13.1 – *Partnership with NNALSA*

The host school and NNALSA shall work together as partners to ensure a successful competition.

RULE 13.2 – *Host School Compliance with these Rules*

The host school shall comply with these rules.

RULE 13.3 – *Assistance from NNALSA*

In the event that the host school encounters difficulty meeting any of the competition objectives, deadlines, or goals, the host school shall contact the competition administrator, who shall immediately bring the problem to the attention of the Executive Board. Together, the host school, the Executive Board, and the competition administrator will decide the necessary course of action to solve the problem in order to preserve the fairness and the integrity of the competition.

RULE 13.4 – *Preserving the Internal Integrity of the Competition*

The host school will establish the safeguards necessary to preserve anonymity and fairness to the participants and the process. The host school shall inform the competition administrator of these internal safeguards via email at least 2 weeks before the submission deadline.

RULE 13.5 – *Preserving the Scholarly Integrity of the Competition*

The host school shall ensure the accuracy of a significant number of sources cited by the student author, sources that are unlikely to be available through commercial legal research and plagiarism check services. A significant number shall be at least one-third of the total sources unlikely to be found on commercial, online services but no more than fifty percent of the total sources cited by the student author. The manner through which to ensure the accuracy of these sources, often from disciplines other than the law or from Tribal court decisions, etc., shall be left to the discretion of the host school. The host school shall name a winner but no cash prizes shall be paid until the host school has completed this verification. This verification may take place as part of efforts to prepare the winning entry for publication.

RULE 13.6 – *Guidebook*

The host school shall create a binder containing any information relevant to the operation of future NALSA writing competitions. Such information may include, but is not limited to, a checklist, competition timeline, list of judges, and form letters. The host school shall

forward this binder to the NNALSA Secretary by the end of the next Annual NNALSA meeting.

SECTION 14 – HOST SCHOOL BIDDING PROCESS

RULE 14.1 – Solicitation of Host School Bids

The Executive Board will solicit bids from prospective competition host schools between February 1 and April 1 of each year. In the event no school submits a bid, the Executive Board may solicit bids during the Annual NNALSA Meeting.

RULE 14.2 – Prior Screening by NNALSA

After receiving bid packages from prospective host schools, the NNALSA Secretary shall confirm that the bidding NALSA chapters are in good standing before publishing such bid packages.

RULE 14.3 – Publication of Host School Bids

The Executive Board will publish a notice of each bid from prospective host schools to the NNALSA email listserv and post each bid to the NNALSA website.

RULE 14.4 – Content of Bid Packages

NALSA chapters are strongly encouraged to compile professional bid packages that are accessible via the NNALSA website. Bidding NALSA chapters will also have an opportunity to present their bid to the NNALSA general membership during the Annual NNALSA Meeting. Bid packages must include: letters in support of the bid from the NALSA chapter's law school administration, Indian Law program (where applicable), and the law journal that will be publishing the winning submission(s). Bid packages may also include: prize pledges and any other information that may be relevant to running a successful writing competition.

Appendix A: NNALSA Writing Competition – Judges’ Score Sheet

Entry # _____

Please indicate the author’s score within the point range for each category (below each category is a suggested range). The total score is the cumulative total of all categories. The lowest possible total score is 0 and the highest possible total score is 100.

SUBSTANCE (55 points available)

Clearly-Stated Thesis (8 points) _____

Excellent: 6-8, Average: 3-5, Poor: 0-2

Originality of Thesis (10 points) _____

Excellent: 8-10, Average: 4-7, Poor: 0-3

Timeliness of Thesis (10 points)* _____

Excellent: 8-10, Average: 4-7, Poor: 0-3

Quality of Analysis (15 points) _____

Excellent: 10-15, Average: 5-9, Poor: 0-4

Creativity of Analysis (10 points) _____

Excellent: 8-10, Average: 4-7, Poor: 0-3

Within Scope of Topic (2 points) _____

Excellent: 2, Average: 1, Poor: 0

RESEARCH (20 points available)

Knowledge and Use of Relevant Law (10 points) _____

Excellent: 8-10, Average: 4-7, Poor: 0-3

Knowledge of Background Information (10 points) _____

Excellent: 8-10, Average: 4-7, Poor: 0-3

FORM (25 points available)

Adherence to Formatting Rules (5 points) _____

Excellent: 4-5, Average: 2-3, Poor: 0-1

Citation (5 points) _____

Excellent: 4-5, Average: 2-3, Poor: 0-1

Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation (5 points) _____

Excellent: 4-5, Average: 2-3, Poor: 0-1

Writing Style (10 points) _____

Excellent: 8-10, Average: 4-7, Poor: 0-3

TOTAL SCORE _____

*Excellent: current issue has not been fully addressed.

Average: issue/argument has been somewhat discussed.

Poor: issue/argument has been adequately addressed.

Appendix B: NNALSA Writing Competition Grievance Form

Name: _____ Date: _____
Address: _____ Telephone: _____

My concern rests with:

_____ The general operation of the NNALSA Writing Competition
_____ The action or failure to act of _____
_____ (Name)
_____ Other. Please explain: _____

Grievance, Complaint, or Concern:

I would consider this grievance, complaint, or concern resolved if:

Signed:

Dated:
