



STUDY GUIDE

Directive (LITERATURE)

Category Overview

The Literary Litigation category at JT MUSE represents one of the most innovative and ambitious experiments of the festival this year. At its core lies a unique attempt to merge the rigour of legal reasoning with the depth and imagination of literature. Instead of drawing case problems from conventional law reports or constitutional disputes, this category takes its inspiration from the pages of novels, plays, and stories. Teams will litigate disputes within the worlds of Shakespeare and other playwrights. The result is an intellectually demanding yet creatively stimulating exercise that challenges participants to navigate the world of justice through the lens of human narrative.

Note: Literary Litigation at JT MUSE is adopting the Jessup Guide 2025 followed in the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition.

General Procedure

Case Briefs

Each participating team will receive a “Case Dossier” before the event. The dossier includes:

- A summary of the in-play conflict.
- Relevant excerpts from the play
- Character profiles for witnesses and accused.

Roles in Each Trial

- Prosecution Team – advocates arguing against the defendant. (First and Second Chair)
- Defense Team – advocates defending the accused character. (First and Second Chair)
- Witnesses – portrayed by actors who stay in character from the original play. (3 Witnesses per team, 2 minutes per witness)
- Judge/Jury Panel Rules & Time Limits: (Participant Limit: 3-6)

Timings

- Opening Statements – 6 minutes each.
- Witness Examination – 24 minutes
- Closing Arguments – 4 minutes each.

Example Case Ideas

- The State vs. Othello – Accused of murdering Desdemona; defense claims provocation and manipulation by Iago.
- Hamlet vs. Claudius – Murder of the king and usurpation of the throne.



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Round 1

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes

Delegate cap: 3

Prosecuting participants will have to draft a subpoena against the other litigating party. They must explain their key arguments and legal grounds upon which they are taking the other party to court. Defending participants must draft a "Motion to Quash", whereby they must explain, under the law, why their clients are innocent. The setting of the play will govern the relevant law applicable. The top 2 teams will proceed to the final round.

Note: This will be an elimination round. Elimination, delegate caps, and round timings are open to change on the day of the event. Category head decisions on such are final

Judging criteria:

- Strength, clarity, logic of legal argument
- Proper use of sources (cases, treaties, authorities)
- Structure and organization (both writing and oral)
- Persuasiveness and whether you anticipate counterarguments
- Oral skills: clarity of speech, ability to respond to questions, poise, time management.
- Compliance with rules: format, citation, word limits, etc.

Round 2

Participants are allowed to conduct a deposition. Here, both litigating parties will be allowed to cross examine the defendants and prosecution will be allowed to cross examine each other's clients.

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Round 3

Duration: 2 hours

Delegate cap: 3

Using all the information from round 1 and 2, and the play as a mandate, participants will be asked to simulate a full-fledged trial, where the guilt and innocence of each side may be evaluated. There will be Submission of Evidence, Opening and Closing Statements, Examination in Chief, Cross Examinations and Closing Statements. This will be between the final 2 teams.

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