

OJCL CERTAMEN RULES AND GUIDELINES



Updated: February 1st, 2017

I. Introduction

Certamen is a team sport that is similar to Academic Challenge. Three teams compete against each other striving to be the first team to respond to the questions on numerous subjects (the Latin language, History, Life/Culture, Geography, etc). Certamen at the State Convention is a major activity: 3 preliminary rounds and the semi-finals are on Saturday morning, depending on division, and the Finals are held in the General Assembly space on Saturday Night.

The Certamen Chairs are Ms. Martinez and Mr. Dean. The Certamen Coordinator is Mrs. Siklosi-Raraigh. Ms. Martinez can be contacted at m.martinez3993@gmail.com.

II. Divisions of Competition

1. There are three divisions of competition: Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced.
2. The Novice division is only for those players who are registered as Latin 1/2 or Latin I by the time of the competition.
3. The Intermediate division is directed *primarily* for students registered in Latin II. However, students registered in Latin II, Latin I, and Latin 1/2 may compete on an Intermediate team, if they wish (i.e. students may "play up.")
4. The Advanced division is directed *primarily* for players who are registered in levels Latin III and beyond. However, students from any level of Latin may compete in the Advanced division, if they wish.
5. A student who has stopped taking Latin at a lower level may not continue to compete on that level for the additional years when they would have moved to a higher level of Latin study had they continued. Questions and requests for valid exceptions should be directed to the State Chairs prior to Pre-Registration. NB: this rule is in effect for Certamen only; it does not affect other contests unless indicated elsewhere. For more details, see:
<http://ojcl.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/OJCL-Latin-Leveling-and-Competition-rules.pdf>

III. Material Covered

1. Questions for Novice & Intermediate will generally follow the guidelines of the NLE syllabi for Levels 1 & 2 respectively. The breakdown of questions will be approximately: 50% language, 25% history & culture, 25% mythology. There will be some overlap in question categories, so these percentages are approximate.

2. In the Advanced Division, the syllabi for Levels 1-6 will be used (i.e. 'anything is fair game'), and literature questions will be included. The breakdown of questions will be approximately: 40% language, 20% history & culture, 20% mythology, and 20% literature. There will be some overlap in question categories, so these percentages are approximate.

IV. Certamen Format

1. ALL Certamen teams shall be PRE-REGISTERED via the web site. A Club may pre-register up to six individuals for Novice, six individuals for Intermediate, and six individuals for Advanced, but only up to four players are permitted to play in each round.

2. Substitutions are not permitted during a round, but different combinations of players can play in different rounds.

3. A team captain must be designated at the beginning of each round and their name and buzzer designation given to the judges.

4. In all divisions of competition, each team will play three preliminary rounds in a non-seeded round robin format. There will be 15 toss-up questions without bonuses in each of these first two rounds, and 12 toss-up questions with one bonus in round three. Three teams will play at a time.

5. Toss-up questions are worth 10 points, bonus questions are worth 5 points.

6. The nine teams with the highest point totals after the preliminary rounds will move on to the semi-finals. In the Semi-Finals, the nine teams will be seeded and matched into three games of three teams each, according to the following pattern: 1 v 5 v 9; 2 v 6 v 7; 3 v 4 v 8.

7. Ties for seeding will be broken according to the high score in round three; if there is still a tie, there will be a coin flip.

8. In the Semi-Finals there will be twelve toss-up questions, with two bonus questions each. The three winning teams from the Semi-Finals will compete in the Finals, which will also have twelve toss-up questions, with two bonus questions each.

9. In Semi-Finals and Finals, ties must be broken. In this case, the Certamen Chair will provide five toss-up questions (with no bonus) to the Moderator of the match. The team to score the most wins the tie-breaker. (e.g. Two teams are tied for 3rd place. Five questions are given. Team A answered one. Team B answered none. Team A is declared the winner of the tie-breaker and moves onto the Finals).

10. If you would like to challenge an answer in the preliminary rounds, please hold the challenge until the end of the round. Direct your challenge respectfully to the Moderator and Judge, and check in later to see what the result is. In Semi-Finals and Finals, all challenges to the first 11 questions must be lodged BEFORE the beginning of the 12th question. Be respectful at all times.

V. Rules on Signaling and Answering

1. On toss-up questions, you may “buzz in” at any time, even before the question is finished, but you must wait to give your answer until you have been acknowledged (the person running the buzzer machine will say ‘A4’ or ‘C2’). If you buzz in before the question is finished, be aware that the buzzer person will loudly say ‘STOP,’ possibly preventing you from hearing the final few syllables the reader might say before halting.

2. You have ten (10) seconds to buzz in from the time the question is finished. You have five (5) seconds to begin your answer once you have been acknowledged. Your first answer is the one the reader will accept. Saying “um” or “uh” does not constitute beginning your answer, and your time will continue to run down. Do not elaborate. Give the concise answer only. Always be prepared to spell your answer if asked. **THERE WILL BE NO PROMPT FOR AN ANSWER ON THE TOSS-UP QUESTIONS.** The timer will begin a silent 5-second count and will loudly say ‘time’ after 5 seconds. The Moderator & Judge will be the sole arbiters of whether a student began an answer before ‘time’ was called.

3. If any player, even the one who actually signaled, answers a question before the spotter has called out the correct signaler’s identity, that team is out for that toss-up. Likewise, if the wrong player answers a toss-up question, whether or not a teammate of the announced player, that player’s team is out for that toss-up. A player whose question was “usurped” in such a fashion by a player from another team will, of course, be given the chance to answer.

4. If a player signals for a toss-up and answers incorrectly, the Moderator may always reread the toss-up question from the beginning for other teams. No question will be read more than twice. When no correct answer has been given at that point, the Moderator will reveal the correct answer and proceed to the next question.

5. Toss-up questions must be answered individually - there must be no consultation. Teams will be given one warning if they do so on accident. Any consultation on a toss-up question after the one warning will result in disqualification of the player. The moderator & judge will be the sole arbiters of whether a student consulted on a toss-up.

5. Consultation may only occur during bonus questions, which appear in round three, Semi-Finals, and Finals. The teams have ten (10) seconds to consult and give an answer. The moderator will prompt for an answer (‘I need your answer please’). The answer to a bonus question must be given by the team captain. If the team captain is unsure about pronunciation/spelling, the team captain may defer to another member of the team for any bonus question (‘I defer to C3’).

6. If the moderator is unsure of a player's answer, the Moderator or Judge may ask for it to be spelled. A good rule of thumb for mythological names: all the syllables should be present; so, “Nemosyne” would likely be accepted, but “Mosyne” would likely not. Latin words, of course, must

be spelled 100% correctly. The Moderator and Judge, however, are the SOLE ARBITERS of whether a player's answer is "close enough" to the standard spelling to be counted.

7. Any question which requires a date as an answer must be given with the designation BCE/BC or CE/AD - no matter how obvious the date may be. Remember - your first answer stands. "476" is wrong, "476 CE" or "476 A.D." is acceptable.

8. For passage questions, the Moderators will read the passage twice before the toss-up question is read, and once more before the first bonus. **No further requests for repetition will be entertained.**

9. Vocabulary questions require the following format, unless otherwise directed by the question:

- o Verbs: First or second principal part.
- o Nouns: Nominative singular.
- o Adjectives: Masculine nominative singular.

VI. Certamen Competition and Observation Policies

1. Each team member **MUST** display his or her nametag plainly at all times. If a team member does not have his or her nametag, he or she is ineligible to play that or any subsequent matches until they are wearing their nametag. If a competitor does not have his or her nametag, they must leave the competition area immediately. Matches will not be delayed to enable a competitor to retrieve his or her nametag, nor for a team substitution to be performed.

2. No team member may join his or her team during a match already in progress. No exceptions.

3. No students are permitted to observe a Certamen match without their name tag plainly displayed.

4. There shall be no loitering or talking in the corridor or room adjacent to Certamen match locations.

5. If you are scheduled to compete in a Creative Arts contest, and your division is still in rounds at your performance time, visit the Certamen Chairs/Coordinator (Ms. Martinez or Mr. Dean or Mrs. Siklosi-Raraigh) to make arrangements to change your performance time.

6. At any time, any Adult supervising, administrating, or observing may ask any student or adult to leave if they are being disruptive or unfairly influencing the competition or do not observe the rules herein. If so instructed, the individual **MUST** leave the area immediately. Objecting or resisting will be possible grounds for disqualification from competition or participation in the Convention if deemed necessary by a State Chair.

7. Unsportsmanlike or disrespectful conduct toward Judges, Moderators, Administrators, Supervisors, other competitors on one's team or other teams, or in general will not be tolerated and will result in disqualification of an individual or team if deemed necessary. OJCL reserves the right to assess penalty points for inappropriate behavior on Team scores.