

# IEEE Ethics and Member Conduct Committee Student Ethics Competition Guidelines

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**IEEE EMCC STUDENT ETHICS COMPETITION GUIDELINES**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS BY SECTION**

SECTION 1 – <a href="#">Introduction</a>	Page 3
SECTION 2 – <a href="#">Overview</a>	Page 3
SECTION 3 – <a href="#">Hosting a Student Ethics Competition</a>	Page 4
SECTION 4 – <a href="#">Competition Administration</a>	Page 5
SECTION 5 – <a href="#">Additional Resources</a>	Page 7

## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

IEEE Student Ethics Competitions (SECs) are sponsored by the IEEE Ethics and Member Conduct Committee (EMCC). It was developed for use at IEEE student events to encourage the study and awareness of professional ethics by IEEE Student and Graduate Student Members. The competition includes a presentation and defense of a case analysis by teams of students. Specific objectives of the competition program are:

1. To foster familiarity with the IEEE Code of Ethics and ethical concepts,
2. To promote a model for discussing and analyzing ethical questions, and
3. To provide experience in applying ethical concepts to professional situations.

The use of the competition as part of curriculum assignments or extra credit activities is encouraged.

## **SECTION 2 – OVERVIEW**

### **2.1 Activities**

Participants will be tested on their knowledge and application of the IEEE Code of Ethics as demonstrated by student analysis and findings resulting from a study of a fictitious ethics case.

### **2.2 Materials provided by EMCC**

For competitions that are approved by EMCC, the following materials are provided:

- SEC Toolkit ([see additional resources](#))
- Access to an EMCC case study for use at an event
- Funding for prizes
- Certificates signed by the IEEE President and the EMCC Chair

### **2.3 Organizing a Competition**

Any IEEE member may be designated by their Section Chair to serve as a competition organizer. All applications for EMCC support must include a letter of support from the Chair of the Section where the competition will be hosted.

### **2.4 Teams**

Competitions shall consist of no fewer than four and no more than six teams. Each team shall be comprised of either two or three students.

### **2.5 Eligibility**

Competition participants must be IEEE Student or Graduate Student Members in good standing.

### **2.6 Venue of Competition**

It is recommended that the competition be part of a major IEEE Student or Graduate Student event that attracts a cross-section of IEEE Student and Graduate Student Members. The competition must be promoted as a visible part of the event's agenda or program.

### **2.7 Prizes**

Based on the judging criteria, the competition judges will determine the winner and first runner-up teams. Prize amounts are based on the event type described in section 2.8 *Funding* below. Upon

completion of the event, the competition organizer shall notify EMCC of the winning teams so that the prize money can be disbursed to the appropriate IEEE Section.

Members of the winning and first runner-up teams will receive certificates signed by the President of the IEEE and by the Chair of the IEEE Ethics and Member Conduct Committee.

### 2.8 Funding

The IEEE Ethics and Member Conduct Committee provides funding for prizes for up to three competitions per quarter, but no more than ten competitions each year.

Each IEEE Section is eligible to receive funding once every two years.

Events, if approved by the EMCC, may be funded as follows:

- An event involving two or more IEEE Student Branches is provided \$600 US (\$400 first place & \$200 runner-up)
- An event involving a single IEEE Student Branch is provided \$300 US.

All funding is distributed in the form of an account transfer directly to the Section hosting the event. Sections are encouraged to use these funds to promote and support future ethics-related activities.

### 2.9 Judges

Competition organizers will select no fewer than three, and no more than six judges. Judges should be selected based on their detailed knowledge of and experience applying professional ethical practices to wide-ranging engineering situations within the purview of IEEE. Judges are not required to be members of IEEE but IEEE members in good standing should be favored if their relevant experience is equivalent.

### 2.10 Selection of Winners

Judges will evaluate participants based on the following:

- Analysis of a hypothetical case study presented orally with appropriate visual aids (70%)
- Interview with the judges in defense of the case study conclusions (30%)

Each judge will rank all the teams using the Judging Forms provided. Points awarded by the judges will be tallied, and the winners will be determined by the final scores. Ties will be resolved by majority vote of the judges. All other decisions will be made by majority vote of the judges and will be final with regard to adherence to rules, disputes, team eligibility, disqualifications, and other competition conduct.

### 2.11 Notification of the Winners

It is recommended that winners be notified at a Competition Award Ceremony. A list of winners may be made available on the IEEE Ethics & Member Conduct Committee webpage based on official notice to the IEEE Ethics & Member Conduct Committee at [ethics@ieee.org](mailto:ethics@ieee.org).

## **SECTION 3 – HOSTING A STUDENT ETHICS COMPETITION**

Individuals wishing to organize an EMCC-funded competition should first contact their Student Branch Chair or Section Chair to coordinate the activity.

### 3.1 Application

Once a decision to host a competition has been made, and the competition organizer has been appointed by the Section Chair, an application for funding must be submitted to EMCC. The application must be completed online by clicking [here](#).

Applications must be received **at least 60 days in advance** of the scheduled competition.

Applications must include the following information:

- Competition Organizer’s name, IEEE member number, and contact information
- Proposed date
- Proposed location (if live)
- Proposed platform (if virtual)
- Type of event at which the competition will be held (e.g., Student Branch Congress, Student Activities Committee meeting, etc.)
- Approximate number of attendees at event
- Participants’ names, IEEE member numbers, and their respective student branches
- List of judges
- Either a request for a competition case study to be sent by EMCC, or submission of a competition case study composed by the Competition Organizers specifically for their own competition for EMCC approval
- Letter of Support from competition organizer’s Section Chair

### 3.2 Responsibility of Competition Organizers

- Obtain Letter of Support from Section Chair
- Set date and location for competition
- Select competition judges
- Submit application for EMCC approval
- Advertise and promote the competition
- Notify EMCC of competition results

## **SECTION 4 – COMPETITION ADMINISTRATION**

### 4.1 Competition Length

As a guideline, an average competition should take approximately four hours to complete. The competition should not be paused for meals or other unsupervised breaks so that contestants do not have an opportunity to discuss their decision outside of the group. An example timeline is shown below:

<i>Live &amp; Virtual</i> – Orientation and distribution of the case	10 minutes
<i>Live &amp; Virtual</i> – Team preparation & creation of visual presentation	2 hours
<i>Live &amp; Virtual</i> – Submission of teams’ visual presentation files	n/a
<i>Live</i> – Teams give oral presentations <i>Virtual</i> – Teams record video presentations	1.5 hours

<i>Live</i> – Teams interview with judges <i>Virtual</i> – Distribution of judges’ written questions & preparation of responses	5-15 minutes
<i>Virtual</i> – Judges review recorded presentations and written responses	Varies
<i>Live &amp; Virtual</i> – Judges’ deliberation	Varies
<i>Live &amp; Virtual</i> – Award presentation	n/a

Teams that have not yet made their presentation must be isolated from the presentation venue during presentations of other teams.

#### 4.2 Registration – Distribution of Competition Case

Upon arrival, teams should register with the competition organizer. Participants may be asked to sign an Oath of Ethical Conduct upon arrival (see sample provided in the SEC Toolkit). When all teams have assembled and are ready to begin, the competition organizer will distribute the following:

- Schedule/agenda
- Participant guide
- Competition case study – all teams receive the same case study
- IEEE Code of Ethics
- Case analysis format
- If virtual, the competition organizer shall provide instructions for recording a video presentation.

#### 4.3 Preparation of Visual Presentation

Two hours is the recommended time for teams to prepare their visual presentations. Teams are not permitted to use any supplementary materials or resources (e.g., books, internet, etc.), except that which is distributed by the competition organizer for use during the event. Teams shall work in isolation and will require tools to develop their presentations (e.g., laptop computer, visual presentation software (e.g., Microsoft PowerPoint), and flash drive – internet access and file-sharing capabilities may be required for virtual competitions).

Required presentation components include:

- Case Facts – restatement of relevant facts
- Question(s) – summary of ethical questions
- References – identification of relevant sections from IEEE Code of Ethics
- Discussion – analysis of case using the IEEE Code of Ethics
- Conclusion – position statement on each of the identified ethical questions and recommendation for action

#### 4.4 Preparation by Judges

While teams prepare their presentations, judges will work together to set case expectations and procedures for team interviews.

#### 4.5 Collection of Presentations

For live competitions, teams will save their presentations to a flash drive. The presentations will be collected, and the teams will continue to be sequestered. For virtual competitions, presentations must be submitted according to the event instructions (e.g., email, DropBox, Teams, Google Drive, etc.).

#### 4.6 Presentation Sequence

The sequence of team presentations shall be determined at random (e.g., draw from a hat).

#### 4.7 Presentation and Interview for Live Competitions

For live competitions, each team is allotted 20 minutes, as follows:

- 8 to 12 minutes – team presentation
- 5 minutes – interview with judges
- 3 minutes – completion of judges' forms

Only judges shall ask questions during the interview period. Each team member must respond to at least one question.

#### 4.8 Presentation for Virtual Competitions

For virtual competitions, teams must have the capability for remote monitoring by the competition organizer. Teams must have the capability to record their presentation (e.g., webcam, cell phone, etc.). Technical assistance for the recorded presentation may be provided by the competition organizer. After the teams have submitted their recorded presentations, the competition organizer will distribute two questions related to the case, which are prepared in advance by the judges. Teams are given 15 minutes to prepare and submit written answers to these questions.

Judges are given the visual presentation files (and software to read them), the video recordings, and the written responses to the judges' questions.

#### 4.9 Deliberation

After all submissions are complete (live and virtual) the competition will be closed, ballots counted, and results tabulated.

#### 4.10 Competition Results

It is recommended that certificates for the winner and runner-up teams be awarded at a central or plenary activity of the event.

### **SECTION 5 – ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

These Guidelines are featured in the IEEE Student Ethics Competition Toolkit. Other resources in the toolkit include:

- IEEE Code of Ethics
- Sample Honor Statement
- Promotional poster template
- Case criteria and analysis format
- Sample ethics cases
- Sample participant guide
- Judging forms
- Suggested references
- Guidance for members seeking support

Competition information is available at [www.ieee.org/ethics](http://www.ieee.org/ethics).

For questions, contact the IEEE Ethics and Member Conduct Committee at [ethics@ieee.org](mailto:ethics@ieee.org)