

2017 NJCL Competitive Certamen – Procedures and Rules

N.B. - No matter how hard we try, the students will do things during the round that we can't anticipate, or there will not be a clear answer to how a challenge should be resolved. Even among the moderators, there may be disagreement in the room as to how to handle a particular situation. All coaches and players need to understand and accept that our judgment, as a group, will always be made in the fairest way possible after every aspect of the situation (including protests) have been considered.

Certamen is a game of fast recall of facts about classical civilization and its peoples, languages, and cultures. You are indeed to be commended for the hard work you have no doubt put forth in preparation for this competition. The following guidelines are presented with the purpose of making the game go quickly and smoothly in the time allotted.

1. Levels of Competition

There are three levels of competition: Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced.

The Novice level is ONLY for students who are registered as Latin ½ or Latin 1 at the convention. Furthermore, students may only play ONCE at the Novice level at convention. That is, students may NOT play at more than one national convention as a Novice - e.g. as both a Latin ½ and as a Latin 1 in the following year. If a student plays at the Novice (or any other) level as a Latin ½ in one year, that same student MUST play at the Intermediate or the Advanced level in the following year, regardless of the level of Latin. To make this perfectly clear, a student is only eligible to play at the Novice level if he or she is a Latin ½ or Latin 1 AND this is the first year of national Competitive Certamen competition for that student. Open Certamen play in previous years does not count against eligibility. The penalty for either willfully or unknowingly disregarding this rule is ineligibility for that player at any level of competition for that year.

The Intermediate level is primarily for students who are registered as Latin 2 at the convention, though Latin 2, Latin 1, and Latin ½ students may compete on an Intermediate team if they wish. **N.B. – Starting in 2015, players may play at the Intermediate Level ONLY once. Sponsors of all Latin ½ students who will be competing at the Novice level at the 2014 NJCL Convention at Georgia will need to contact the Certamen Chair for possible waivers for the 2016 NJCL Convention at Indiana. After the 2016 NJCL Convention, no waivers will be given and players may only compete once at the Intermediate level.**

The Advanced level is primarily for students who are registered in a level higher than Latin 2 at the convention, though any student may compete in the Advanced level if he or she wishes. The competition is open only to JCLers. No student may compete in more than one level.

2. Schedule of Play and the Semifinal Round

In each of the three levels of competition, teams will play three preliminary matches. The ladder of play is determined by a random draw at the Certamen Orientation, and each match is played by three teams. Each team MUST commit to playing all three preliminary rounds, regardless of scores or other convention events. After these three preliminary rounds, the nine state teams in each level that have the highest cumulative scores at that time will advance to the semifinal round of competition. In the semifinal round, the nine teams are seeded by their scores and grouped in threes for competition (1 vs. 6 vs. 7, 2 vs. 5 vs. 8, 3 vs. 4 vs. 9). The three winners of these matches in each level will advance to the final round. In the event of tie scores leading into the semifinal or final rounds, ties will be broken as outlined below in section 15.

3. Wild Card Teams

A. Since the groupings in our ladder of play are made in multiples of three, it might be necessary to create "wild card" teams at the Orientation. These teams will be composed of alternates to the state teams that

have registered to play at the convention, or any other interested JCLers. Each team will have up to four players, all from different states. Any alternate who wishes to compete for one of the spots on these Wild Card teams (if they are necessary) must attend the Orientation and listen for instructions. If a Wild Card team does not have four players, any student from any state NOT represented on that Wild Card team may request to play on that team.

B. Starting in 2015, states not having enough players may combine teams at the appropriate level with another state in similar situations. However, these “combined” teams will not be allowed to advance to semi-finals.

C. Wild Card teams are expected to play all three preliminary matches as competitively as they are able to play. They may NOT, however, advance to the semifinal round even if their scores are among the nine highest in that level.

D. If vacancies exist on a wild card team due to a lack of registered participants, registered wild card players who were NOT placed on a team will be allowed to compete in a higher level if they wish.

4. Alternate Players and Substitutions

A team consists of up to four players during each round, but states are welcome to register up to four alternate players. These alternate players may compete during any round of competition, but they must play that entire round. No substitutions are allowed during a round. Alternates may NOT also compete in the Open Certamen competition. If an alternate player is placed on a wild card team, he or she thereby forfeits his or her position as an alternate for his or her state team.

5. Code of Conduct

A. All players must be wearing their own name tags at the start of each round in order to compete. A player will be denied the right to play for not wearing his or her own name tag. Players must also be in compliance with the published convention rules regarding dress and conduct.

B. All players and coaches are expected to conduct themselves throughout the entire Certamen process with courtesy, dignity, and respect for other teams and for the Certamen staff.

C. Players may bring with them to the table their own writing instruments and paper on which to write during the round. Such paper must be blank at the start of a round or must be approved as-is by the moderator of that round. Players must be careful not to look at what their teammates are writing during a toss-up question, though on boni questions players are encouraged to look at their teammates' writings. Players are also permitted to bring team mascots and good luck tokens as long as such items are not deemed by the Certamen staff to be distracting or inappropriate.

D. Protests should only be made to correct a legitimate flaw in a question or a prejudicial error in the moderation of the question. Protests should NOT be made by coaches to stall, intimidate, or otherwise interrupt the flow of a match or the concentration of participants. Moderators have discretion to disregard any protest made for these purposes. N.B. – Starting in 2015, each state will have a limit of 5 protests allowed per each level for the three preliminary rounds. Challenges that are accepted by the Certamen staff will not count against the limit. However, if a challenge is denied by the Certamen staff, the state will lose that challenge from the total. There is no limit for semi-finals and finals.

E. During a round, coaches may encourage their teams in a general way after the scores are read (5, 10, 15, 19) - e.g. “Good job, guys! Keep it up!” HOWEVER, coaches may NOT say anything that may give his or her team an advantage during the round. It is NOT permitted for a coach to keep tabs on the question categories and relay that information to the players during the match. For example, a coach knows that question 20 will be a mythology question. With this knowledge, (s)he shouts out during the applause “John, the next one is yours!” Actions such as these will result in disqualification for the coach’s team on that question.

6. Format of Each Round

A round consists of twenty questions, each of which consists of a toss-up and two boni. A correctly answered toss-up earns the team ten points, while each correctly answered bonus question earns the team five points. Thus, up to 400 points may be earned in a round. Questions from a number of categories are included in a round; the number of questions from each category varies among the levels, so consult the white convention booklet for those percentages.

7. Toss-Up Questions

A. As the moderator begins to read a toss-up, any player on any team may interrupt the reading of the question by pressing his or her buzzer. Pressing the buzzer indicates the player's desire to give an answer immediately upon being recognized. A player should NOT press the buzzer in order to have information repeated, clarified, or spelled. When a buzzer is pressed, the moderator will stop reading the question and the spotter will identify the signaling player by team letter and player number (e.g. A4, B3, C2). Upon being recognized by the spotter, a player is expected to give an answer within 3-5 seconds, the exact length of which will be determined by the moderator.

B. If a player answers a toss-up correctly, the team earns ten points and the right to answer two bonus questions for five points each. If a player answers a toss-up incorrectly, then no other person on that team may give an answer to that toss-up. If more than one person signals at nearly the same time, the spotter will identify each player who signaled in the order that they signaled until a correct answer is given or all answers are incorrect.

C. A toss-up will be read in its entirety no more than twice. If no team signals within five seconds after the second complete reading, time will be called on that tossup.

8. Requests for Repetition or Spelling

Any request for repetition or spelling during a toss-up CANNOT be made after pressing the buzzer. A player wishing for such information should simply speak that request loudly and clearly to the moderator WITHOUT pressing the buzzer. **It is highly suggested that players raise their hands while asking a question during a toss-up. This indicates clearly to the moderator that what is being said is not an answer to the toss-up question.** If no team has signaled, the moderator will comply with the request unless the question has been read in its entirety twice. A toss-up may only be read twice by the moderator, not including interruptions due to signaling by players. After reading a question from start to finish twice and no team has given a correct answer, the moderator will reveal the correct answer and continue to the next toss-up.

9. Disqualification During Toss-Ups

A. If a player signals but answers a question before being verbally recognized by the spotter, then that team will be disqualified from answering that toss-up. The only exception to this rule is when a player answers the toss-up before being recognized, BUT that player IS the first person who has signaled in. In other words, players will be penalized for answering out of turn only.

B. If a player signals but someone on another team answers first and without being recognized, the other team is disqualified from that question and the player who signaled may answer the question after being recognized.

C. If a player signals but someone else on his or her OWN team answers without being recognized, that team will be disqualified from that question. Other teams may still signal and answer when recognized.

Note for parts A, B, and C: Any word or part of a word that a player utters and a moderator hears may be construed as being part of an answer. For example, a toss-up is read and player B1 buzzes in to answer. However, before B1 has a chance to begin answering, player A2 starts talking and says, "Um..." The moderator has legitimate discretion to disqualify team A for that question. Please understand that there is no way to cover every possible scenario regarding what will or will not result in disqualification. All players on all teams are encouraged to remain entirely quiet during the toss-up questions until recognized. The exception to this is rule 8 (above).

D. If a player signals accidentally (say, due to "nerves") after the moderator has begun reading the question, the player must give an answer when recognized. If the accidental signal is made before the moderator has begun, a warning will be given to the player on the first instance; any subsequent occurrences of this nature will result in the player being required to give an official answer to the question, none of which he or she will have heard.

E. If a player attempts to stall his or her answer by repeating part of the toss-up as part of his answer, one warning will be given for a player not to do that. Any subsequent stalling in this fashion by that player will

result in the team's disqualification from that toss-up.

F. Consultation (see next section) will result in disqualification from a toss-up.

G. See rule 5E above.

10. Consultation

Consultation is defined as giving or receiving assistance to a teammate during a toss-up. Consultation will be declared only by the moderator, though other Certamen staff members may advise the moderator of suspected consultation. The result of the declaration is that the team is disqualified for that question. This assistance can include speaking, writing messages, eye contact, nudging, throat clearing, or any other activity that the Certamen staff feels is serving as communication between players. Each player should basically ignore his or her teammates during the reading of a toss-up, acting as if those players were not present next to them. Consultation also includes audience members calling out or even whispering information to a player during a toss-up.

11. Answering the Toss-Up Question Appropriately

A. A player should be careful to answer the question as asked. A player who buzzes before the end of the question is gambling that he or she knows for what answer the question will ultimately ask. For example, if the question reads, "Two brothers vied for power in the founding of Rome. Which one prevailed?" and a player buzzes early and says, "Romulus and Remus", that answer is clearly wrong.

B. If a player's answer (after buzzing early) contains many pieces of extraneous but correct information, the moderator will ask the player to narrow down his or her response to ONLY the elements that would have been asked for. For example, suppose the question begins, "Distinguish in meaning between cur and ..." and a player buzzes early and says, "**cūr** means 'why', **currō** means 'run', **cūra** means 'care', and **cūrō** means 'take care of'", the moderator will ask the player to specify which elements of this lengthy answer fit the question as it would have been asked. If a player cannot do this, his or her answer will be counted incorrect. This situation also applies to toss-ups asking for a specific part of an English sentence to be given in Latin. Beginning in 1999, this rule was extended to all question categories, not just language questions as was done in the past.

C. If a player interrupts a multiple choice question, he or she must be prepared to NAME the needed element. A player cannot call the answer by letter or say "the next one" or "the last one" or "the first one".

D. For questions relating to the Latin language, if a player is recognized and pronounces his or her answer but then chooses to spell it and spells it incorrectly, the answer will be counted as wrong.

E. The moderators will have reviewed the questions before they are asked and will have agreed on how much of an answer is necessary for each question. A moderator might then ask a player for additional information if an answer is seemingly correct but imprecise. For example, to the question "Who defeated Hannibal at Zama?" the answer "Scipio" is insufficient since there are so many Scipiones in Roman history. The moderator would ask for a more specific answer, in which case the player would have to give as much of the answer as was deemed sufficient for that question by the moderators. However, in a situation where a player is prompted for additional information and the moderators later determine that they shouldn't have prompted, the player will NOT be punished for the extra incorrect information and scores will be adjusted accordingly.

F. Unless otherwise specified, any question asked in Latin must be answered in Latin, and correct syntax must be maintained. For the question, "**Quot oculi tibi sunt?**", only "**duo**" (the nominative form) would be acceptable; neither "two" nor "**duōs**" would be acceptable, but the complete sentence, "**Habeō duōs oculōs**" WOULD be acceptable. If the answer to be given in Latin is a proper name, it must be pronounced in Latin; saying "Sissero" instead of "Kikero" or "Seezer" instead of "Kaisar" would be incorrect. Additionally, if players have learned the ecclesiastical pronunciation in class, e.g. pronouncing Cicero as "Cheechero," those players will not be penalized for using this pronunciation for their Latin. It would, however, be helpful if those players would point this out to the moderator in each round since they are all accustomed to hearing and teaching the Classical pronunciation as set forth in *Vox Latīna*. N.B. – A previous (before 2005) exception to

item F was a vocabulary question that began with "**Quid significat...**" (what does ___ mean?); The new format is now "**Quid Anglicē significat...**", which specifies that an answer be given in English. In addition, the "**Quid Anglicē significat**" questions, unless otherwise specified in the question itself, are vocabulary questions and do not require exact translations. For example, the answer to the question, "**Quid Anglicē significat portō?**" can be "I carry", "to carry", or simply "carry".

G. If the toss-up question instructs a player to carry out a command, the player should wait to be recognized before performing the command. Most importantly, players should be aware that command questions are much like the game Simon says. If, for example, a question instructs a player to stand first, then the player should stand. If, however, a question does NOT instruct a player to stand, then the player SHOULD NOT stand. Any LARGE movement which deviates from the given instructions may result in an incorrect answer, and this will be determined by the moderator's discretion.

H. Unless otherwise specified, a vocabulary item in Latin ought to be referred to by the first form to be found in a Latin dictionary. This form is generally nominative singular for nouns and masculine nominative singular for adjectives, though there are exceptions; for verbs, either the first principal part or the second principal part may be given unless otherwise specified. If a question asks for the definition of the verb **portō**, then "carry" or "to carry" or "I carry" are acceptable. If a question asks for the definition of the verb FORM **portō**, then "I carry" would be acceptable but "carry" or "to carry" would not. Be sure to note whether or not a verb FORM is being mentioned or requested, as that is different from a request or mention of just a verb.

I. Unless otherwise specified, archaic, poetic, or other non-standard forms are NOT acceptable unless the player also indicates (at the time of answering the question) the exceptional nature of the answer. If the question says, "What is the present passive infinitive of **dūcī**?", then "**dūcier**" is unacceptable unless the player says something like "**dūcier**, but that's the archaic form".

J. If a mythology question stipulates either Greek or Roman culture specifically, then the answer must also correspond to that culture. The wife of Zeus is Hera, not Juno, since both Zeus and Hera are the Greek names. Unless otherwise stated, a question of this nature will continue with that same culture in the boni. If the Zeus/Hera toss-up had a bonus asking who their son was, Ares, not Mars, would be correct. When neither culture is specified, then an answer from either culture would be acceptable, but the culture selected by the player must be used in answering the subsequent boni for that question.

K. No matter how obvious it may be, all years named as part of an answer MUST include the designation B.C. or A.D. If no such designation is given by the player, the moderator will prompt the player to make the designation.

L. Be careful about changing your answer while giving it. If you speak only part of a word (not the whole word) and catch yourself, you may correct your error with no penalty (for example, you say "Parthe-- I mean Pantheon"). If you complete an entire word that you realize is incorrect, you may not correct that word in your answer (for example, you say "Parthenon -- oops, I mean Pantheon"). In both of these instances, it will be the decision of the moderator as to how much was said. If you spell your answer and catch an error as you are spelling it, it will be the decision of the moderator whether or not to accept your answer (see section 12 below).

M. For questions in which a passage is read and a question is then asked about the general content of the passage, it will be acceptable for the player to paraphrase. If the question asks for specific information from the passage, the answer must give that specific information.

N. For questions involving multiple items, a player may give the answers in the order that was given in the toss-up and say something like "in that order" or "respectively" without having to repeat the items in the question. For example, if the question is "Differentiate in meaning among **cēna**, **cēra**, and **cūra**", a player may say "dinner, wax, and care respectively" as his/her answer. However, if the player says "wax, dinner, and care respectively", then the answer is wrong. If the player doesn't specify, the moderator will assume the answers are intended to be in the order of the words in the question and proceed accordingly.

P. Answers to questions asking for literary and rhetorical devices must use terms that can be verified in either Allen and Greenough's *New Latin Grammar* or Gildersleeve's *Latin Grammar*. This is to standardize

terms for Certamen in order to avoid ambiguity.

12. Clarification of Answers by the Moderator

The moderator may, for the sake of clarity, ask a player to spell his or her answer. If the answer involves Latin grammar, vocabulary, or forms, the spelling by the player must then be EXACT in order for the answer to be counted as correct, **including important macra**. It is up to the moderator to decide which macrons are or are not essential for each particular answer in any given question. In other question categories, the moderator will decide whether to accept approximate spellings as correct.

13. Bonus Questions

A. After answering a toss-up correctly, a team will be given two bonus questions worth five points each. Team members are permitted and encouraged to discuss their answer before giving it officially. A time limit of fifteen seconds is imposed on each bonus question, beginning at the conclusion of the first reading. If no answer is given after fifteen seconds the moderator will prompt the captain for an immediate answer. If no answer is given in the next couple of seconds, the moderator will call time and accept no answer for that bonus. If a team asks for a bonus question to be repeated or part of it to be spelled, those repetitions WILL be counted toward the team's fifteen-second time limit; in other words, the clock will not stop for repetitions or clarifications. However, the moderator may still choose to give more than fifteen seconds on a bonus question in certain rare situations, including but not limited to the following: 1) a misstatement of the question by the moderator; 2) the moderator senses a genuine lack of understanding or perception by the team.

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT NOTE: As of 2008, the clock no longer stops for repetitions of passages during bonus questions. Should a player ask for a repetition of the passage, THE TIME WILL CONTINUE TO RUN.

B. The official answer to a bonus question should be given by a designated team captain whose identity has been made known to the Certamen staff before the round has begun. A captain may defer his or her authority to another player for a specific answer if the captain feels uncomfortable or uncertain about giving that answer. Team members should be careful to speak in low tones when discussing their bonus answers; if a remark is made loud enough to be heard beyond the table, it might be construed by the moderator as an official answer. If a team does not know the answer to a bonus question, the captain may guess an answer or may simply say "We don't know" or "No answer".

14. Challenges and Score Modifications

If a player or coach wishes to challenge the accuracy of an answer during the first three rounds of play, then he or she must do so within fifteen minutes of the conclusion of the round. If the challenge is made during the round, the moderator will note the grounds for the challenge and will consult the published Certamen sources at the end of the round. If the published sources are not able to resolve a challenge in our reasonable discretion, the Certamen staff reserves the right to consult other sources as deemed appropriate. If the dispute involves a toss-up, the moderator might require that the disputing teams write their answers to the boni so that their correctness may be checked and points assigned later when the toss-up dispute is settled. A resolution of any disputes in the first three rounds will be made before the next round of play begins. If a resolution involves a toss-up question, it may require that two teams be brought together to play a make-up question.

If a player or coach wishes to challenge the accuracy of an answer during a semifinal or final round, such a challenge must be made to the moderator before the conclusion of the round. No new challenges will be accepted after the conclusion of the semifinal or final round.

The Certamen staff carefully reviews each round after its conclusion to ensure that all rounds were played

accurately and fairly. In some instances score adjustments may be made after each of the first three rounds when errors are discovered, such as answers that were not accepted but should have been counted as correct, or answers that were erroneously accepted as correct.

15. Tiebreakers

In the preliminary rounds, a tie at the end of a match will not be broken, since qualification for the semifinal round is based on total points scored and not on a team's win-loss record.

If at the end of the three preliminary rounds of play there are two or more teams in the same level with identical cumulative scores, a short tie-breaker round will be played, either to determine which of the teams advances to semifinal play or to determine the seeding of the teams involved if they both qualify for the semifinal round. The tiebreaker shall consist of five toss-ups with no boni. In the Novice and Intermediate Levels, the five toss-ups shall include the following: three language questions, one mythology question, and one history question. In the Advanced level, the five toss-ups shall include the following: two language questions, one mythology question, one history question, and one literature question. If the tie-breaking round results in another tie, similar tie-breaking rounds will be played as long as is necessary.

If at the end of the final round there are two teams with identical scores, a tie-breaking round will be played as outlined above. Only the teams involved will play the tie-breaking round.

16. The Final Round

The final round in each division of competition will feature the three state teams that have won their respective semifinal matches in their division (excluding Wild Card teams). The format and procedures for this round shall be the same as all other rounds, except that all protests must be filed before the conclusion of the round.

The seating of teams at the three tables for the final round shall be determined not by a random draw but based on the cumulative scores of those three teams during their previous four matches. The team with the highest cumulative score will be given first choice, the second highest team will have the second choice, and the third highest team will have the third choice.

17. Players with Disabilities

If a player has a disability that may affect his or her ability to play Certamen, the player must notify the moderator at the beginning of the round. If during the round a question is asked in such a way that the player's disability affects his or her ability to answer the question as asked, the player is welcome to signal, wait to be recognized, and then offer an explanation of the question and why he or she cannot answer it. For example, if a player is visually impaired (and has notified the moderator before the round of this), and a question asks the player to make a visual identification, the player may signal and indicate what the question is asking, though he or she may not be able to answer it. In such situations the moderator will decide whether to accept the explanation, ask for more information, or count the response as incorrect.

18. Changes and Updates to these Guidelines

The Certamen staff reserves the right to amend or change these guidelines before or during the convention. Any changes will be announced no later than the Competitive Certamen Orientation to all competitors before they are implemented.