



Columbia Law School
MOOT COURT PROGRAMS

The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
Moot Court Program

The Winston & Strawn International Moot Court Program

Moot Court Programs 2022-2023

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September 2022

Dear Class of 2025:

Welcome to the world of moot court! In the spring, you will take the second half of Legal Practice Workshop (“LPW II”). As part of LPW II, you will be required to participate in an approved moot court program. This handbook is designed to teach you about the Law School’s ten 1L moot court offerings.

Most of you will satisfy the moot court requirement through participation in the 1L Foundation Moot Court. Through that program, you will receive a moot court problem created through the Law School in January. Working in pairs, you will write several drafts of an appellate brief and then orally argue your position before a panel of alumni and student judges.

Some of you will choose to satisfy your moot court requirement through participation in one of the following “specialized” moot court programs:

American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA) Moot Court

Environmental Law Moot Court

European Law Moot Court (EU)

Frederick Douglass Moot Court

Gender and Sexuality Moot Court

Jessup International Moot Court

LaLSA Moot Court

National Native American Law Students Association Moot Court

Vienna International Arbitration Moot Court (Vis)

These programs allow you to focus your advocacy on a substantive area of law that interests you. Enrollment for each of the listed programs is limited, and interested students must complete an application process in the fall. These programs also have their own timetables, which are set by the sponsoring organizations that create the problems. For some of the programs, you will begin writing your brief in the fall semester. However, regardless of the timetable or other requirements of the particular program in which you participate, you will need to attend and complete satisfactorily the corresponding Legal Practice Workshop section, which runs through the entire spring semester. As part of this course, you will revise your brief under the supervision of a student editor and instructor.

I hope that you have an engaging and rewarding moot court experience.

Best wishes,

Sophia Farber Bernhardt, Director, Legal Writing and Moot Court Programs

Saisha Mediratta, Student Director, Specialized Moot Court Programs

1L Foundation Moot Court

Beginning in January, each 1L participant researches and writes an appellate brief under the close supervision of an upper-class student editor and an instructor. The problems are designed by the editors and in the past have involved a range of legal issues, including First Amendment violations, copyright and trademark infringement, defamation, employment discrimination, civil rights violations, and criminal law.

Editors and instructors work with Foundation participants through all stages of the research, drafting, and revision process. Later in the semester, students will present oral arguments on their briefs before panels of alumni attorneys and student judges. The 1L Foundation Moot Court is an excellent opportunity for 1L students to develop and apply the research and writing skills acquired in the fall semester, while offering students practical training in brief writing and appellate advocacy. The structure and pace of the course allow students to create polished writing samples while reflecting on the purpose of various components of an appellate brief.

Satisfactory completion of the 1L Foundation Moot Court is mandatory for those not participating in an equivalent specialized moot court program.

Eligibility

All 1L students are eligible to participate in the spring, and no application is required. Foundation Moot Court is mandatory for those not participating in an equivalent specialized moot court program.

Requirements

Satisfactory completion of an appellate brief and oral argument

Contact Information

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This program is made possible by the generous support of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP.

American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA) Moot Court

The Giles Sutherland Rich Moot Court Competition, sponsored by the American Intellectual Property Law Association, is a moot court devoted to issues of intellectual property law. Recent years' problems have focused on patent law issues, such as the validity of a patent for a mind-reading device. Other areas of IP law, such as copyright and trademark, are also sometimes involved.

Why AIPLA?

Intellectual property is a growing practice within the legal profession that touches upon multiple industries, including science, technology, healthcare, media, entertainment, sports, and finance, among others. Many law firms report a growing need for intellectual property departments, as both cases and deals more frequently feature an intellectual property component. By participating in the AIPLA Moot Court, students will learn the basics of intellectual property law and the appellate procedures of the Federal Circuit.

Application

While the AIPLA Moot Court problem will address issues in intellectual property law, no formal background in science, technology, copyright, or other IP areas is necessary. Team selections will be made based on the completion of application materials and an enthusiasm for intellectual property and/or public speaking. Our internal moot court curriculum is designed so that team members will first receive exposure to intellectual property law and public speaking, at which point they will be prepared to address the AIPLA Moot Court problem.

We will select at least twelve students for the AIPLA moot court this fall which guarantees enrollment in the AIPLA Legal Practice Workshop course in the spring. Interested students who cannot attend the information session should email cls.aipla@gmail.com for more information. The application can be found on Lawnet.

Competitions

Internal Competition: To determine which AIPLA students will attend the regional competition, we will review each student's legal writing and oral advocacy skills during the Internal Competition. In mid-October, students will submit their first LPW memo and

present oral arguments based on a patent-related prompt. All AIPLA students must participate in the Internal Competition to be considered for the external team.

Regional Competition: The four students that perform the best in the internal competition will advance to the regional competition, where they will represent Columbia against teams from other schools. Regional competitors, in teams of two, write an appellant and an appellee brief over winter break. Each team will work closely with the editors and coaches, who will assist with research, the brief-writing process, and oral arguments. The regional competition will be held in Boston (or remotely) in March.

National Competition: The top two teams at the regional competition advance to the national competition in Washington, D.C. (or remotely) in April, where students argue before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit for the championship title and a prize of \$2,000.

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The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison Moot Court Program

Environmental Law Moot Court

Why Environmental Law Moot Court?

The Environmental Law Moot Court is a great way to fulfill your 1L moot court requirement while gaining valuable advocacy experience through one-on-one training. Our competition team is the smallest of the moot court programs, and we make mentorship and team bonding a priority for all participants.

Build Skills

The Environmental Law Moot Court is an outstanding option for any student who wants to get more experience with appellate law. We welcome applicants of all backgrounds and interests. Environmental law is a mixed bag of many different legal subjects and disciplines including constitutional law, torts, administrative law, and property, to name just a few. We encourage students with past experience in environmental law or policy to apply, as well as those with a general interest in appellate law who want to master a challenging legal problem. By the end of the spring semester, participants will have written a full appellate brief and thoroughly prepared for a rigorous oral argument.

A Record of Excellence

Even though we are the only school that sends 1Ls to the national competition, the Columbia team won the national championship in 2017, the award for best written brief in 2018, and individual awards for best oralist in 2021 and 2022.

Two Ways to Participate

Up to fifteen 1L students may participate in the Environmental Law Moot Court. Three students will be selected for the Competition Team and will write their brief in the fall semester and attend the National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition at Pace Law School in February. The Internal Team, composed of twelve students, will write their briefs in the spring semester and will participate in an oral argument at Columbia in early April. The Internal Team is recommended for those students who are interested in environmental and appellate law and want to improve their legal-writing and oral-advocacy skills in a noncompetitive environmental law-focused program. The Competition Team is recommended for students who are interested in a Moot Court similar to other specialized moot court programs, where they receive close mentorship and try their skills against students from across the country.

Informational Meeting

Learn more about the Environmental Law Moot Court at the Specialized Moot Court Info Session on Thursday, September 8 during lunch hour in JG 106. Tune into the Moot

Court Office Hours/Presentation for additional information on Friday, September 9 at 10:15 am via Zoom.

Application Process

The application for the Environmental Law Moot Court consists of a short interest statement and a one-page response to a substantive legal question. Fifteen students will be selected for the team. We will have an informational meeting to help team members decide which team is right for them, then hold tryouts for the competition team for members who wish to join it. Tryouts will be a short (5 minute) oral argument in front of a panel of three judges (your coaches), based on the substantive legal question addressed in the initial application.

Important Dates

September 8, 2022	Specialized Moot Court Information Session
September 9, 2022	Moot Court Presentation/Office Hours
September 16, 2022	Application due
September 16-26, 2022	Team members selected
September 26, 2022	All rankings due
September 26 - October 3, 2022	Competition Team Oral Tryouts
October 3, 2022	NELMCC problem announced
November 22, 2022	Competitors' brief due
Mid-January, 2022	Oral argument boot camp for Competition Team
February 22-25, 2022	Oral arguments for Competition Team
Mid-March 2022	Written brief for Internal Team due
Early April 2022	Oral arguments for Internal Team

Contact Information

Please reach out to us with any and all questions!

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The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison Moot Court Program

Frederick Douglass Moot Court

Sponsored by the Columbia Black Law Students Association

Become an Outstanding Advocate

The Frederick Douglass Moot Court team is looking for 1Ls from all backgrounds that are excited about developing their writing and advocacy skills. Topics generally concern constitutional law issues affecting marginalized communities, and in recent years have included: cruel and unusual punishment, due process, ineffective assistance of counsel, the Defense of Marriage Act, minority voting rights, classification of NCAA athletes as employees, affirmative action, torture, felon disenfranchisement statutes, racial profiling, sentencing reform, and the process rights of capital defendants.

Become Part of a Winning Legacy

Frederick Douglass (Fred Doug) Moot Court is truly a team—and in fact the largest competitive team at Columbia Law School. Fred Doug 2Ls and 3Ls remain actively and enthusiastically involved, serving as coaches, editors, and judges. This support is integral to our team’s long tradition of excellence in competition. Last year, our teams took first, second, and third place at the regional competition, as well as the awards for “Best Oralist” and “Best Respondent Brief.” We sent two teams to the national competition; one team went on to win third-place overall. In prior years we have had similar success, including winning the national competition.

Make the Most of Your Moot Court Experience

You can expect Frederick Douglass Moot Court to be a substantial time commitment, but you can also expect huge returns on your investment. You and your partner will work with 2L editors as you develop substantial brief writing skills. Editors will assist you, after your individual submission, as you make substantial edits to your briefs and arguments before the regional competition. The final product of your brief will be an excellent writing sample for employers. Once the second semester begins, your focus will turn to oral advocacy. You will be expected to master both sides of the problem—an incredibly rewarding challenge. Each team will complete numerous practice sessions in the weeks leading up to the regional competition. During those sessions, panels of student judges, all Fred Doug alumni, will challenge your arguments and provide extensive individual feedback. After all this prep work, you will feel prepared to field tough questions asked by attorneys, professors, and judges during the regional competition, and feel more confident in the classroom.

Join an Enriching Community

The Frederick Douglass Moot Court Team is made possible by the support of the Columbia Black Law Students Association. All of our team members become members

of BLSA; however, you do not need to be a member to apply. As part of Columbia BLSA, our team participates in general body meetings, community service, and committees. This is the heart of our team and our mission. All members are expected to attend general body meetings, and we also participate in a community service event with BLSA in the fall. Past members describe our moot court as the Fred Doug Family because we are part of a shared experience that goes beyond writing and the competition. By joining this moot court, you will become part of a community that extends far beyond law school and will support you throughout your time at Columbia.

Application Information

Application Release: September 9, 2022 at 9AM

Application Closes: September 16, 2022 at 5PM

Oral Tryouts and Interviews: September 17-25, 2022

Offers made to selected applicants: On or Around 9/30 Briefs Due: Late November 2022

Boot Camp: January 2–6, 2023 (early return from Winter Break)

Regional Competition: Early February 2023 (As of now, in-person in New Jersey)

National Competition: March 2023 (Location TBD)

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The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison Moot Court Program

Latinx Law Students Association (LaLSA) Moot Court

The LaLSA Moot Court program offers law students the opportunity to explore complex contemporary issues in refugee and asylum law while developing their brief-writing and oral advocacy skills. Every year, thousands of refugees apply for asylum in the United States to escape persecution in their home countries. The LaLSA Moot Court focuses on the legal issues that affect those asylum claims. Students will compete in the Fourteenth Annual Asylum and Refugee Law National Moot Court Competition hosted by the UC Davis School of Law, where historically, the team has had great success.

The Competition

We are looking for sixteen dedicated first-year law students of all backgrounds. Four student coaches and two student editors will assist selected students. During the fall semester, students will participate in oral advocacy and legal research training and will also be invited to virtual social events to build relationships with team members, coaches, and editors. The competition problem will be released in mid-December, and students will write the first draft of their briefs during the winter break.

The final draft of the brief will be due in mid-January after a three-day boot camp on legal research and writing and oral advocacy. During this time, students will begin practicing their oral arguments in preparation for the internal competition, which will be judged by respected practitioners, professors, and judges in late January. The two winning teams will represent Columbia Law School in the national competition, which will be held virtually by U.C. Davis during the first weekend in March.

The Application

Students will be chosen based on two criteria: (1) two short answer questions about your interest in LaLSA Moot Court and (2) an oral presentation. The short answers should discuss why students wish to join the LaLSA Moot Court team, what they can contribute to the program, and any experiences relevant to the selection process, including previous work or volunteer experiences. The oral presentation will require students to choose a side in an asylum issue and defend their position before the student coaches and editors. The issue will be thoroughly explained in the application materials, so no outside research will be necessary.

Important Dates

September 8	Moot Court information session
September 9	Application released
September 9	LaLSA Moot Court informational session & office hours 12:15-12:30
September 16	Application due on LawNet
September 20-25	Oral argument tryouts
Mid-November	Problem released
January 4-6	Moot Camp
January 13	Briefs Due
Late January	Internal Competition
March 4-5	U.C. Davis National Competition

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The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison Moot Court Program

Native American Law Students Association (NALSA) Moot Court

The National Native American Law Students Association (NNALSA) has hosted a national moot court competition since 1993, offering students from all backgrounds a great opportunity to gain experience in the truly unique, multidisciplinary, and challenging field of federal Indian law. Recent topics in the area of federal Indian law include state jurisdiction over crimes committed by non-Native Americans on tribal lands, the status of reservation boundaries, double jeopardy, child custody under the Indian Child Welfare Act, marijuana legalization, and gaming activities on reservations.

After a few primer sessions on basic federal Indian law and brief writing, participants spend part of the fall semester and winter break working with their partner to write a brief based on a problem published in November by the host school. Briefs are due in early January, after which teams practice with their coaches and editors for oral argument twice each week. The national competition will take place in February 2023 (dates TBD). Each team argues at least twice at the national competition—once on the side for which they wrote their brief and once on the opposite side. Judges consist of high-profile federal Indian law practitioners and academics, tribal justices, and state and federal judges. Sixteen teams are selected to advance beyond these preliminary rounds and are assigned different sides to argue for up to five additional elimination rounds. Scores at the competition combine teams' brief scores with their scores for oral argument. Prizes are awarded for best brief, best individual oralist, and best overall performance. NNALSA has not yet announced how many teams will be allowed to compete from each school, but we will likely have two sets of teams – one internal and one external. If that happens, the coaches and editors will work with competitors to decide which teams participate in each competition. Last year, four pairings competed in the national competition and four competed in an internal competition; all teams participated in an identical preparation program.

We do not know what school will host the competition this year, but past competitions have taken place in North Dakota, California, and Arizona. The competition is scheduled to take place in person. Columbia Law School teams are consistently among the top teams at the national competition. Last year, Columbia reached the semifinals in the overall competition, and Columbia students also won first in best overall advocates, third in best written advocates, and first and second in best individual spoken advocate.

1L students receive credit for the NALSA Moot Court to satisfy the Foundation Moot Court requirement. EVERYONE is eligible to participate and encouraged to apply. You do not have to be Native American, and most past participants have had little to no

exposure to federal Indian law prior to joining the team. 1Ls are welcome to reach out to any of this year's coaches and editors (contact information below) with any questions.

Important Dates

Thursday, September 8	NALSA Moot Court Info Session
Friday, September 16	Application due at 5pm
October 2022	Primer classes on Federal Indian Law and brief writing
November 2022	Problem published on the NNALSA website
December 2022	Sides assigned
January 2022	Briefs due
January – February 2023	Oral argument practices
February 2023	Participate in the national competition

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The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison Moot Court Program

The Columbia Gender and Sexuality Moot Court

The Gender and Sexuality Moot Court (formerly Williams) is the only national moot court competition dedicated to the areas of sexual orientation and gender identity law. It offers students the opportunity to analyze unique and challenging issues of constitutional law affecting the LGBTQ community. Previous legal topics have included a Title IX challenge to school policies affecting non-binary and transgender students, an affirmative action program based on sexual orientation in government contracting, the intersection of antidiscrimination law and religious liberty, the rights of transgender people in prisons, and the intersection of Free Speech rights and a requirement of professors to use students' gender-affirming pronouns.

Program Structure

Twelve students will participate in the program at Columbia. Students of any background who have an interest in constitutional law, appellate advocacy, or issues of sexual orientation and gender identity are encouraged to apply.

Within the twelve students participating, we will select four students (two teams) to compete in the national competition. This selection will take place through a “mini moot” in the fall semester. During Legal Methods II, these external teams will participate in brief-writing and oral argument workshops with the editors and coaches. The external teams will submit briefs to the national competition in February and may, depending on travel restrictions, travel to sunny Los Angeles in late March to participate in rounds of oral argument before judges and legal professionals. If a team advances to the final round, they may return to UCLA in April to compete again.

In 2020-2022, the Williams Institute canceled the formal competition due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are currently awaiting updates for the 2023 competition; Williams' ability to hold a competition will be determined by UCLA's policy regarding outside visitors to campus. In 2021, Columbia created its own version of the Williams competition with participating schools from throughout New York state. In 2022, we competed in the Gender and Sexuality Moot Court Competition hosted by Michigan State University in a virtual format against teams around the country. If the formal 2023 Williams competition is canceled, we anticipate being able to offer an external competition similar to the one held in 2022.

Application Process

We will select students for the program based on a 250-word statement of interest, a short closed-universe writing prompt, and a 5-10 minute oral argument based on the closed-universe prompt. The statement of interest should discuss why students wish to join Williams, what they can contribute to the academic and/or social community of Williams, and any relevant experience, especially public speaking. After those twelve have been selected, we will hold an internal moot, or “mini-moot,” during the fall semester to determine which four will compose the external team.

One Important Note

Although the topics of this moot court focus on sexual orientation and gender identity, all identities are welcome!

Timeline

Information Session for All Programs: September 8th during lunch hour

Application Released: September 9th

Drop-In Hours at Revson: September 12th and 14th, 12-2pm

Written Application Due: September 16th, 8pm

Oral Tryouts: September 19th and 21st, 12-2pm

Decisions Released: September 30th

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The Winston & Strawn International Moot Court Program

European Law Moot Court

The European Law Moot Court deals with current issues in European law. This moot court is an exciting chance to tackle questions of current legal, social, and practical significance emerging from European integration and political changes in Europe.

Working on the moot court exposes team members to issues beyond what they would normally see in the 1L curriculum, giving team members a unique and valuable opportunity to learn about another legal system in depth. For instance, last year's problem touched on strands of EU law related to competition law, employment law, sport law, contract disputes, and the relationship between Member States and the EU. In years prior, the problem dealt with the public procurement, data-privacy regulations, Brexit, religious freedoms, corporate governance, and national security.

Schedule

There are three stages to the competition: (1) the submission of written pleadings; (2) the oral rounds in cities across Europe and around the world; and (3) the oral finals at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg. Because the written pleadings are due by the end of November, the teams begin working on their briefs at the end of September. This work is especially exciting for our 1L members, as it will expose them to brief-writing before the start of LPW II. The written briefs for ELMC are typically due before finals in the Fall, allowing the students to enjoy their winter break. Up to two teams of four students will draft written briefs on behalf of both applicants and defendants.

If a team's written pleading is selected by the regional moot court committee, the team will advance to one of the regional finals across Europe in February. The Law School graciously funds the trip to Europe to compete in the regional finals. In previous years, regional rounds have been held in Athens, Helsinki, Prague, Paris, and Barcelona. The judges include prominent scholars of European law as well as officials and judges from the European Court of Justice. Not only do team members gain invaluable experience in conducting oral arguments, but they are also able to meet with governmental officials, tour the host countries, and meet with other competitors from all over Europe and America. Columbia students have frequently won the best oral advocate award at regional finals.

The top teams from each regional final, as well as one additional individual team member, advance to the All-European Final held at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg in March or April. Finalists are given the opportunity to moot in front of the European Court of Justice, the highest court of the European Union. Columbia has previously won first place oral advocate at the All-European Final.

Application Process

We will be selecting team members for the 2022-23 competition (up to two teams of four members each). We encourage all interested 1Ls to apply. For native English speakers, knowledge of French at any level of competency is highly desirable, though not necessary. Native languages other than English are also an asset. Previous exposure to European law and/or previous experience with public speaking or debate will be considered assets, but are by no means required. We strongly encourage any interested students to apply!

Applications will be submitted through LawNet, and we request that candidates submit a resume, a brief statement of interest, and a writing sample responding to a prompt provided on the application. Top candidates will be notified and invited back for oral auditions. Two teams of four individuals will be selected.

Important Fall Dates

While subject to minor adjustment, we ask that you please keep the following tentative recruitment dates in mind:

September 9	Information session and applications open
September 16	Application materials due at 5:00 pm
September 17-25	Oral auditions
September 30	Offers made to applicants
Late-November	Written submissions for competition due

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The Winston & Strawn International Moot Court Program

Jessup International Law Moot Court

The Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition is the world's largest moot court, with participants from more than 600 law schools across 100+ nations. The competition simulates a dispute between two countries before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the judicial arm of the United Nations. Recent topics have included the use of force, covert cyber operations, international trade, international criminal law, state responsibility for environmental degradation and human rights violations, legality of nuclear weapons, undersea espionage, the threat or use of force, validity of international arbitral awards, mass surveillance, the right of self-determination, and international protections for traditional knowledge and cultural property.

Columbia Law School Jessup Team

The Columbia Law School Jessup team has been one of the most successful in the history of the Jessup competition, frequently winning national championships and advancing to become finalists or competition winners at the international level. Team members have also received numerous awards for their written submissions and individual accolades for being the best oralists at the preliminary and final rounds. This past year, the team's briefs were ranked first in the National Rounds for both Applicant and Respondent. In 2020, the team won the Northeast Regional championship for the 11th time in 12 years and was crowned the U.S. Champions., but the international rounds were cancelled because of COVID-19. In 2018-19, Columbia Jessup was crowned U.S. Champions (placing ahead of roughly 110 U.S. schools competing over the course of the year) and successfully argued in the international rounds against the eventual Runner-Up in the World Championships. In 2016, the team became the first team since 1998 to win the top international honors for both of its written submissions.

Team members have also received recognition from Columbia Law School for their work with the Jessup team. Since 2010, team members have been named Archie O. Dawson Prize (which recognizes proficiency in advocacy) winners five times, and David M. Berger Prize (which recognizes educational excellence in the field of international law) winners eight times.

This year, the Columbia Law School Jessup team seeks to recruit two (2) new members. Joining as a 1L requires a two-year commitment. Participation in Jessup fulfills the 1L moot court requirement and, as a 2L, may fulfill the minor writing requirement and earn course credit. All Columbia Jessup team members write a portion of the memorials and argue before the judges during competition rounds.

Application Process

1Ls applying for the Columbia Jessup team will be requested to submit a short-written brief arguing one side of a hypothetical contentious case before the ICJ. If selected to advance to the oral rounds, candidates will be requested to present a 10-minute argument for the opposite side of the same case. Candidates will occasionally be interrupted by judges with questions relating to their arguments.

Participation on the Columbia team is a substantial commitment, but offers a tremendously rewarding experience that gives students access to exceptional coaching in legal writing and oral advocacy, a forum for intellectually stimulating discussions on issues of international law, and an opportunity to meet law students and practitioners from around the world. Participants will also have access to a superb network of current and former participants, including alumni who have clerked at the ICJ, at the U.S. Supreme Court, in the 2nd Circuit, are DOJ Honors, work in the State Department, at Human Rights Watch, within the United Nations, and at top law firms.

Important Dates

While subject to adjustment, we ask that you please keep the following tentative recruitment dates in mind:

Thursday, Sept. 8, 2022 at 12:10 p.m.:	Big information session
Friday, Sept. 9, 2022:	Release of application materials
Friday, Sept. 16, 2022 by 5:00 p.m.:	Candidates' applications & written briefs due
Tuesday, Sept. 20 -- Thursday, Sept. 22, 2022:	Oral tryouts
Monday, Sept. 26 -- Friday, Sept. 30, 2022:	Announcement of new team members

Contact Information: columbia.jessup@gmail.com

This program is made possible by the generous support of Winston & Strawn LLP.

The Winston & Strawn International Moot Court Program

Vienna International Arbitration Moot Court (Vis)

What We Do

We represent Columbia Law School at the annual Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, one of the most prestigious law school moot court competitions in the world. The competition attracts teams from over 300 law schools worldwide and has been dubbed the “Olympics” of international commercial arbitration. The Vis Moot is based on a hypothetical private contractual dispute in international trade. It involves the submission of two written briefs and an oral competition held in April in Vienna, Austria. Columbia Law School has a long tradition of sending a team to Vienna and is one of only four schools to have competed every year since the Moot’s founding.

The preparation for written memos begins in the fall. 1L students will take the lead in researching and writing a Claimant brief (from October to November) and a Respondent brief (in January), with 2L coaches acting as resources and editors for their work. In the Spring, the team participates in a number of pre-moots held at law schools and law firms in New York and hosted virtually from around the world. 1L team members will have the opportunity to prepare their own oral arguments and participate in several pre-moots. They will also provide valuable support to help the 2Ls prepare for the oral competition.

Columbia has historically performed well at the Vis Moot, winning the inaugural moot in 1994 and the award for best Claimant Memorandum in 2006. Over the years, team members have consistently taken home speaking and brief awards from the Vienna competition.

How to Join

1L students at Columbia Law School may apply to join the Vis team at the beginning of each school year. There are no course or language prerequisites. The team will release applications in September and will hold tryouts soon afterwards. Participation in Vis satisfies the moot court component of the Legal Practice Workshop. The Vis team expects 1Ls to stay on as competitors and coaches during the 2L year.

Contact Information

For any questions or additional information, please email ***columbiavis.request@gmail.com*** or contact one of the 2L team members:

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