

2010 National Ethics Bowl



First, I'll talk about the tournament itself. When the draw came out, I found out that we got some lousy matchups. Our very first match was against Clemson University, a perennial powerhouse that placed second in the nation last year and actually won the national tournament in 2008. Our kids presented their cases very well, and the judges recognized that: we lost by a very narrow margin, 144 to 151. None of the three judges had us more than three points lower than Clemson. It was a loss, but we could hold our heads up high after that. Casie Dunleavy and Ashley Goo took the lead in the two debates. (Each student had focused on a set of three different cases, so we had one team expert on each case.)

The next round was against Dartmouth, and it was tougher for us, mainly because the team had to present on a case with a poorly worded question. The challenge fell to Pat O'Brien, who put up a strong fight. The second match was led by Allison Radabaugh, who drew on her education experience to talk about public school expulsions. We lost 131 to 154.

The third match was against the University of Wisconsin, and our team was fired up. Led by clear and convincing arguments from Casie Dunleavy, Mike Mocerri, and Phil Downes, we rode to victory with a tight but convincing win (none of the judges had us losing): 125 to 123.

The one-and-two record wasn't good enough to earn us a spot in the semifinals, but several of the students attended later matches, and we all sat together to watch the final match. We discovered that our students perhaps lack some public speaking skills, but they understand the issue.

The quality of their education has been demonstrated in other ways during the conference. The students have attended many paper presentations (including mine), and they've been able to follow people's arguments. The paper that preceded mine referred to authors many of them had read in my Business Ethics class. Other papers have dealt with topics in Bioethics or Environmental Ethics that they had studied in those classes, and they clearly have a grasp of the underlying moral theories. They've been asking intelligent questions and engaging experts in applied ethics in ways that should make us all proud.

Avengers: Ashley Goo, Phillip Downes, Patrick O'Brien, Casie Dunleavy, Mike Mocerri, Allison Radabaugh

Coaches: Matt Altman and Alain Beauclair

[Observer Article](#) [Daily Record Article](#)