

2021 Prompt

The 2021 Maryland Chapter of the Federal Bar Association Essay Contest is now accepting entries. This year's question is: "What should be the role of attorneys in combating systemic racism and/or advocating for marginalized groups in the legal profession?"

Who May Enter

The contest is open to high school students enrolled in public, private, parochial and charter schools and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status (grades 9-12) in Maryland.

Essay Length and Format

The maximum essay length is 1,000 words. While not required, proper use of endnote citations and bibliographies will be credited during judging but are not included in the word count. Essays must be emailed to FBAMaryland@gmail.com by the submission deadline and submitted as a Microsoft Word document or PDF file following these formatting guidelines:

- Use 12 pt. Cambria or Times New Roman font, double-spaced text, with one-inch margins
- DO NOT include a title page, page headers or footers, or page numbers
- Include your name on the first page only
- Place all in-text, numbered citations at the end of your essay as endnotes, followed by a bibliography (if included)
- Name your file as follows: Firstname Lastname.ext (example: John Smith.doc; John Smith.pdf)

Entry Submission and Deadline

Essays must be emailed to FBAMaryland@gmail.com on or before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 31, 2021. Winners will be notified no later than June 1, 2021.

Judging

Essays will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Understanding of legal principles – 45 points
- Clarity and effectiveness in expressing the argument – 30 points
- Grammar, spelling and composition – 20 points
- Use of footnotes, bibliographies – 5 points

Prizes

First place: \$1,000; Second place: \$500; Third place, \$250

Publication Release

As a condition of entry acceptance, all publishing rights are retained by the Maryland Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and the association reserves the right to copyright material in its name and to reprint it in any publication or media as it sees fit.

Copyright

Adherence to all U.S. copyright laws and fair use practices is required.

Disqualification

Reasons for disqualification include: incomplete or improperly formatted entries, off-topic essays, providing false information, committing plagiarism, not meeting the submission deadline, and not providing a release form if requested. Evaluators must recuse themselves from any entry that would present a potential conflict of interest (i.e., submissions from a friend or family member).