

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Trial Team?

Trial team is a competition program wherein students audition for a spot on a team. Teams compete in trial competitions nationwide.

Why would I want to be on a Trial Team?

Students get the best possible real-life trial training to be litigators. Our students graduate law school as trial-ready attorneys. The skills students learn in trial team will serve them throughout their legal careers. Our students have an exceptional bar passage rate and are easily employed. Law firms routinely seek out our program to hire our graduates. Some of our students have received on-the-spot job offers during their competitions. The friends students make on Trial Team will be friends for life.

How do you audition for a team?

We have one audition in November and another in April. November auditions select students for the Spring Trial Teams and April auditions are for the Fall Trial Teams.

How many students are selected to be on Trial Team?

Anywhere from 12-25 students each semester, depending on the number of competitions we are attending.

How many competitions do we attend?

From 3-7 competitions per semester.

How many students are on each individual team?

It depends on the rules of the competition, some competitions have 2-person teams, 3-person teams, and 4-person teams.

Where are the trial competitions held?

All across the nation: Florida, California, Manhattan, Michigan, Washington DC, Texas, and more! And right here in Buffalo – the Buffalo Niagara Trial Competition is the nation's biggest competition!

Who teaches/coaches Trial Team?

Jennifer Scharf, Esq., is the program director. We have about 30 practicing attorneys and judges who coach teams (approximately four (4) coaches per team). Many of our trial team graduates come back to UB Law to coach teams.

When can I get involved with the trial teams?

Right now! You can be a volunteer to assist a team or act as a bailiff for a Trial Technique class or competition.

When can I be on a team?

You can try out in November for a Spring team. 2Ls and 3Ls can be on competition teams. 1Ls can assist!

What can I do to prepare to be on a trial team?

Volunteer to help out at a competition; meet with current trial team students (there will be some upcoming meetings); take Evidence and Trial Technique as soon as you can!

Are there course credits for Trial Team?

Yes, you can receive three (3) course credits per semester, for a maximum of two (2) semesters (a total of six (6) credits during your law school trial team career). Many students participate in Trial Team for all four (4) semesters of their 2L and 3L years, however only two (2) of the semesters can be for course credit. You can also enroll in Advanced Trial Skills for three (3) credits. Advanced Trial Skills is tethered to trial team case problems and is an intensive trial and evidence skills course.

What kind of commitment is required for Trial Team?

It is a big one. While students are not required to miss class, Trial Team is a major time commitment. Teams meet with coaches 3-4 weeknights and on the weekend. We expect students to prepare, work with teammates, and practice outside of the sessions with coaches.

How do I get more involved now?

Email Jennifer Scharf JRScharf@buffalo.edu