Law Student Writing Contest of the Standing Committee on Armed Forces Law

OFFICIAL RULES

The Law Student Writing Contest of the Standing Committee on Armed Forces Law (the “Writing Contest”) is a competitive writing contest with the goal of recognizing law students who have exceptional written work that focuses on the military’s application of criminal law—also known as military justice. It is also intended to advance interest and attract students to laws, regulations, and practices in the Armed Forces and the court-martial system, along with the protection of the legal rights and constitutional guarantees of personnel in the Armed Forces.

Each entrant must follow the rules of the Writing Contest detailed herein.

1. Eligibility

The Writing Contest is open to law students who are, at the time of entry, (a) enrolled in an ABA-accredited law school and seeking a J.D. degree, (b) members of the ABA, (c) at least 21 years old, and (d) legal residents of the United States. Directors, officers and employees of the ABA and their immediate family or household members are not eligible.

2. Topic

Entries for the Writing Contest must focus on the military’s application of criminal law—also known as military justice. Submissions may advocate a position, educate the reader, or analyze one or more cases. The decision of whether a particular writing qualifies as to subject matter is entirely within the discretion of the Standing Committee on Armed Forces Law (SCAFL).

3. Submission Requirements

All submissions must be the original written work of the law student entrant. Submissions may include papers submitted for a law school course, law review notes and comments, a law school journal, or pieces written specifically for the Writing Contest. The writing must be the work of the submitting student without substantial editorial input from others. Co-authored papers are ineligible. Failure to submit an original essay will result in disqualification and may result in the selection of a new winner. Only one written work, per competition, may be submitted by each entrant.

Submissions must be provided electronically in Microsoft Word. The text of the writing must be double-spaced, in 12-point font, and with one-inch margins; footnotes should be single-spaced, in 10-point font, and with one-inch margins. Citations may be embedded in text or set out in footnotes and should conform to the current edition of The Bluebook—A Uniform System of Citation. Submissions may not exceed 14,000 total words including footnotes, but not including end-notes, the title page, and table of contents, if any. Each page must have a header including the title of the paper and a page number. For
anonymous evaluation of the entries, no information that could identify the author should appear anywhere in the body of the paper, including in the header, footer, or document properties.

4. **Entry Procedure**

Entries must be received on or before **November 16, 2020**, by 6:00 pm Eastern time by email. Entrants must submit two files as email attachments—to SCALF staff counsel Mary Meixner at mary.meixner@americanbar.org—with email subject line “Law Student Writing Contest of the Standing Committee on Armed Forces Law.”

a. The first file should be a cover page with the following information: writing title; author’s name; law school; expected year of graduation from law school to receive a J.D. degree; author’s permanent and temporary addresses, telephone numbers, and email address; and ABA Membership ID number. If the writing was previously published or submitted for publication, such as a law review, the cover page should also indicate to which publication the work was submitted and if the work was published, the publication date.

b. The second file should be the writing with a cover page listing the writing title only. For the purpose of an anonymous evaluation, the entrant’s name and other identifying information, such as school name, MAY NOT appear on any page within this file.

The ABA is not responsible for errors or for lost, late, or misdirected email, or telecommunication or hardware or software failures, including by reason of any bug or computer virus or other failure. Participants acknowledge that ABA will not return any submitted entries. All participants retain full copyright to their entries except that winners are required to license certain rights to the ABA (see paragraph 9 below) as a condition of entry.

5. **Selection and Notification of Winners**

Writings must focus on military justice issues, and entries will be judged based on the following criteria: (1) writing quality; (2) analysis and legal reasoning; (3) originality; (4) quality and use of research; and (5) compliance with the Official Rules.

The entries will be judged anonymously, and the winner will be selected by the SCAFL members. One single winning entry will be selected each year. The SCAFL staff will notify the winner no later than **January 8, 2021**.

SCAFL reserves the right not to select a winner and not to award any prizes if it is determined that no entries are of sufficient quality to merit selection that year. If a potential winner does not respond within ten (10) business days after ABA’s first attempt to contact him or her, or if the contact is returned as non-deliverable, the potential winner forfeits all rights to be named as winner or receive a prize, and an alternate winner may be chosen.
6. **Prizes**

The Writing Contest winner will be eligible to receive up to $750 in reimbursement of travel expenses to attend the 2021 ABA Midyear Meeting, which may include coach airfare, one night at an ABA Midyear Meeting hotel, ground transportation (e.g., taxi to/from hotel), and per diem cap on meals. The SCAFL Chair will formally announce the winner at the SCAFL meeting at the ABA Midyear Meeting. The winner will also be announced, and an electronic copy of the written work will be posted on the SCAFL public website.

The contest administrators are carefully monitoring the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation. To protect the health and safety of its attendees, the ABA reserves the right to hold its 2021 ABA Midyear Meeting in a virtual format. In such event, no reimbursement of travel expenses will be given, but winner(s) will be invited to attend the virtual meeting and given a free registration to attend. At its sole discretion, the contest administrators may elect to invite the Writing Contest winner to attend the 2021 ABA Annual Meeting. In such event, the Writing Contest winner will be eligible to receive $750 in reimbursement of travel expenses in accordance with the same limitations and rules in the preceding paragraph.

No prize substitutions or transfers will be permitted, and a winner may not receive the value of any portion of the prize in lieu of the prize. Cash equivalent for prizes is not available. Winner must submit a completed IRS Form W-9 to receive the cash prize. The full fair market value of the prize, including travel and accommodations, may be reported on an IRS Form 1099. Winner is responsible for all taxes in connection with receiving a prize. All forms must be completed and returned via email to SCALF staff counsel Mary Meixner at mary.meixner@americanbar.org within 15 business days of receipt, or prizes will be considered forfeited and another winner may be named. The decision of SCAFL, including the judging committee, is final.

7. **Odds of Winning**

Chances of winning will vary depending on the number and quality of entries. However, SCAFL reserves the right not to award any prize if the judges determine that no entries are of sufficient quality to merit selection that year.

8. **Announcement of Winners**

For a list of prize winners, send a self-addressed stamped envelope by January 22, 2021 to the American Bar Association, Standing Committee on Armed Forces Law, 321 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60654. A list of prize winners can also be found on the SCAFL website.

9. **License/Grant of Rights**

By entering, the winning entrant consents to the publication of her/his entry by the ABA, understands that such publication is not guaranteed, and grants the ABA the following rights: (1) the exclusive worldwide right of first publication of their entry in any and all ABA media or form of communication (unless previously published or scheduled to be published in a law school publication and disclosed at the time of entry pursuant to these rules); (2) the non-exclusive worldwide right, in ABA’s sole
discretion, to use, transcribe, publish reproduce, distribute, sell (as part of an ABA publication) or display the entry, alone or in conjunction with other materials; (3) the right to edit the essay to conform to the publication’s standards of style, technological requirements, language, grammar and punctuation, provided the meaning of the essay is not materially altered; and (4) the non-exclusive worldwide right to use the winner’s name and likeness in connection with the essay or this Writing Contest without further compensation. By entering, all entrants warrant that their entry is original and not subject to any third-party copyright; that publication of the entry will not libel anyone or infringe or invade the rights of others; and that the entry has not been published elsewhere in whole or in part.

10. Deadline for Submissions

Entries must be submitted by email on or before November 16, 2020, by 6:00 pm Eastern time.

11. Laws and Regulations

This contest is governed by U.S. law and all relevant federal, state, and local laws and regulations apply. By entering, all participants agree that the competition shall be governed by the laws of the State of Illinois, that the courts of Illinois shall have exclusive jurisdiction, and that Cook County, Illinois shall be the venue for any dispute or litigation relating to or arising from the competition. Void where prohibited by law.

12. Conditions of Participation

By participating, each entrant agrees to these Official Rules and the decisions of the Sponsor, and releases and discharges the ABA, subsidiary and affiliated entities, and each of their respective officers, directors, members, employees, independent contractors, agents, representatives, successors and assigns (collectively “Sponsor”) from any and all liability whatsoever in connection with this promotion, including without limitation legal claims, costs, injuries, losses or damages, demands or actions of any kind (including without limitation personal injuries, death, damage to, loss or destruction of property, rights of publicity or privacy, defamation, or portrayal in a false light) (collectively “Claims”). Except where prohibited, acceptance of a prize constitutes a release by any winner of the Sponsor of any and all Claims in connection with the administration of this promotion and the use, misuse or possession of any prize. All entries become the property of Sponsor and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsor is not responsible for errors or for lost, late, or misdirected mail or email, or telecommunication or hardware or software failures, including by reason of any bug or computer virus or other failure. Sponsor may cancel, modify or terminate the promotion if it is not capable of completion as planned, including by reason of infection by computer virus, tampering, unauthorized intervention, force majeure or technical difficulties of any kind.

13. Opt-Out Option

Any individual may elect to opt out of receiving future contest mailings by calling the ABA Service Center at 800-285-2221.

14. Privacy Policy/Data Collection
Information provided by entrants in connection with this Writing Contest is subject to Sponsor’s privacy policy, available at http://www.americanbar.org/utility/privacy.html

15. Sponsor

American Bar Association, Standing Committee on Armed Forces Law, 321 North Clark St., Chicago, IL 60654.