

Mississippi State University
African American Studies Program
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Oratorical Contest
2014 - 2015

Contest Rules

Section I: General Rules

1. The Oratorical contest will begin at 10:00 a.m. in a designated campus location.
2. All contestants should report to the designated location by 9:30 a.m.
3. The official application for the speech competition must be completed by each contestant and submitted to the African American Studies Program by the close of business on the third Thursday in December of the year prior to the event.
4. Contestants are required to submit a written copy of their speech to the African American Studies Program by the close of business on the second Thursday of January in the contest year.
5. The African American Studies Program reserves the right to make a video/audio recording of each speech to be used solely for educational purposes, especially for the training of future contest participants.
6. While scholarship awards are available for first to third place winners, judges reserve the right to decide whether the orations merit this award in each category. Contestants in each of these categories will receive a trophy. All contestants will receive a certificate for their participation in the oratorical contest.
7. All scholarship awards will be deposited in the MS State accounts of contest winners.

Section II: Qualifications for Contestants

1. The Contest is open to all undergraduates currently enrolled on a full-time basis at Mississippi State University.
2. The contest champion is not eligible to participate in future competitions, but second and third place winners may enter the future contests.
3. Each contestant shall prepare an original speech. The contestant may receive advice in the preparation of the speech and may make minor changes or improvements in the speech at any time.
4. All contestants must present a copy of their current Mississippi State University picture identification to the contest judge on the day of the competition.

Section III: Contest Rules

1. All contestants must speak on an aspect of the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
2. All contest speeches must be delivered in English.
3. All contestants must give the contest judge the title of his or her speech at the beginning of the competition. The contestant must also state the title of the speech at the beginning of the presentation.
4. The contestant is fully responsible for using quoted material, and quotations must be identified verbally during the presentation and in the written copy of the speech. Failure to identify quoted material will result in disqualification.
5. Contestants are not allowed to use props, special costumes or clothing, or the use audio or video equipment.
6. Contestants are not allowed to read their speech, but notes recorded on 3X5 index cards are allowed if desired.
7. The legal time allowed for each speech is 4 to 5 minutes, and judges will disqualify contestants going under or over this time. The timekeeper will report the official time to the judges.
8. Timing will begin immediately after the contestant begins the speech. Time is not allotted for any other remarks; extraneous comments may also result in disqualification.
9. Contestants shall be identified by his or her first and last name only; biographical interviews will take place after all speeches have been given, and the judges and timekeeper have left the room.
10. The decision of the contest judges is final. There are no provisions for protest once the winners have been named.

For more information please contact the African American Studies Program at 662-325-0857 or come to 287 Bowen Hall.