

**Moot Court: A Student's Perspective**  
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Many college experiences are merely enlightening; few are also profound. In the past two years, Moot Court has served two distinct purposes for me, both strengthening my speaking and legal writing skills while also providing me with a unique lens through which to view current events and national politics.

In one sense, I see my experience with Moot Court as a valuable extension of my earlier speech and debate training. Coming out of a competitive and successful extemporaneous speaking program in high school, I was eager to find some form of competitive debate that embraced similar skills. I quickly felt comfortable with the appellate style of argument found in Moot Court, which often involves speaking without extensive prepared notes. Unlike most forms of debate, Moot Court encourages judges to interrupt a competitor's delivery with questions. While the questions can be somewhat disconcerting at first, I quickly developed an affinity for them, as they sharpened my focus and provided an additional challenge. In preparation for Moot Court tournaments, our coach taught the team how to prepare written analytical and persuasive briefs on the hypothetical case and other cases found within it. This served as excellent preparation for competition, as well as law school in the future.

While Moot Court helped me hone my speaking and writing skills beyond what can be done in a traditional classroom setting, it also provided me with a unique and valuable perspective on U.S. politics and the judicial system. At times, to an undergraduate, the Supreme Court and the rest of the legal system can be incredibly daunting. Cases, lawyers, and justices all seem larger than life, perhaps even inaccessible. Through Moot court, however, I was given a small glimpse of what that world is like. Through participation in tournaments, I argued timely and topical constitutional issues before panels of real-life attorneys, judges, and law students, most of whom were extremely positive and encouraging. Moot Court has shown me that the law is not entirely arcane, antiquated, and apathetic. Rather, the legal system is filled with people who are passionate about improving the world.