

DREAM WEEK

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. COMMEMORATION 2024



ORATORICAL CONTEST

"I have a dream that one day this nation will live out the true meaning of its creed. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal"

Martin Luther King Jr.

SUBMISSIONS DUE
Thursday, January 11th
at 12:00 p.m. CST
(diversity@law.northwestern.edu)

This contest is open to all Chicago campus students and staff.

Eligibility

The competition is open to all Chicago campus students and all Chicago campus staff. Students must be currently enrolled in a program on the Chicago Campus of Northwestern University, including the Feinberg School of Medicine, The Graduate School, the Kellogg School of Management, the Pritzker School of Law, the School of Professional Studies, and Allied Health Programs. All contestants must be available to participate in the Oratorical Competition on **Friday, January 19, 2024, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. CST**. The competition will take place on Zoom.

Application

Submissions should be sent to diversity@law.northwestern.edu no later than **12:00 p.m. CST on Thursday, January 11, 2024**, and must meet all criteria outlined below. For questions, contact diversity@law.northwestern.edu.

Prizes

Chicago Campus Students: The first-place student winner will receive \$300, the second-place finisher will receive \$200, and the third-place finisher will receive \$150.

Chicago Campus Staff: The first-place staff winner will receive \$300, the second-place finisher will receive \$200, and the third-place finisher will receive \$150.

Competition Structure

All submissions will be reviewed by the committee and finalists will be invited to participate in the Oratorical Competition where they will read their essay. The competition will be held on **Friday, January 19, 2024, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.** and will take place on Zoom. Judges will score the contestants on their oral presentation *and* essay.

Essay Topic

On August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his iconic "[I Have a Dream](#)" speech at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

In his remarks, Dr. King spoke of his hope for the future of America. He described his dream for freedom and equality as follows:

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal. I have a dream that one day in the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by their character.

...

This is our hope . . . With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to climb up for freedom together, knowing we will be free one day.

...

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews, Gentiles, Protestants, and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old spiritual, "Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."

Reflecting on Dr. King's words, describe 2-3 specific ways in which our nation has either achieved or fallen short of Dr. King's dream of freedom and equality? What change would you want or need to see in order to feel that we have made progress towards Dr. King's dream?

Essay Format

1. The essay should be no longer than 1,000 words.
2. The type font must be Calibri, 12 point, double-spaced.
3. The margins must be 1" and text must be fully justified.
4. The essay must be sent electronically in PDF format to diversity@law.northwestern.edu.

General Competition Rules

The Essay Question: The speaker must incorporate the topic and/or answer the essay question. Failure to incorporate the topic and/or answer the essay question will result in points being deducted.

Essays will be evaluated according to four categories: (a) quality, (b) content, (c) organization, and (d) creativity. The maximum number of points each contestant may receive per category is five points, for a maximum of twenty points for the essay. Finalists will have the opportunity to score an additional ten points for their oratorical performance.

- a. *Quality:* Well prepared arguments that are clear and make the essay interesting.
- b. *Content:* The body of the essay is complete: it includes all information needed to persuade readers of the validity of the argument. This argument and its claims are well supported by the appropriate data.
- c. *Organization:* The essay is structured to aid the reader's retention: it provides a brief overview of what will be covered in the introduction; foreshadows what's coming next; uses bridging between chunks of the talk; uses backtracking to review what's been covered; and closes by summarizing the main points.
- d. *Creativity:* Uses original phrases, quotes, or analogies to make arguments more persuasive.

Judging: Finalists will be selected by a panel of Judges. Judges will render their final decisions independently of one another and without consulting with other individuals.