

2020 USAD Nationals Explanation of Scoring

The United States Academic Decathlon® has 10 events. Each event is evenly weighted at 1,000 points per competitor for a possible 10,000-point total per student. However, only six scores per team are counted for the team ranking (top two honor, scholastic and varsity) making the highest possible team score 60,000.

The social science, music, and literature tests have 50 questions each. The raw score for these tests is converted to 1,000 points with each question worth 20 points. The art, science, and economics tests have 55 questions with each question worth 18.18 points. The math test has 45 questions with each question being worth 22.2 points.

The essay is scored based on a rubric. Each essay is independently read twice. If there is a divergence of 200 or more points in the two scores, the essay is read and scored by a third judge. The third score replaces the divergent score. The two scores are averaged for the final score.

The speech and interview are performed before a panel of judges (usually three). The judges complete the appropriate scoring forms. These are scanned directly into the computer. The scoring program computes an average score based on a maximum of 1,000 points.

The Super Quiz™ will include questions from the subjects of art, economics, literature, mathematics, music, science and social science. In the Super Quiz three students from each GPA category will be asked to come to the stage. Varsity students will be tested with the first 18 questions, followed by the scholastic students answering the next 18 questions, and then the final 18 questions of the competition for the honor students. Questions are worth one point each for a total of 54 points per team. The Super Quiz is a standalone event, and scores will NOT be added to individual or team scores.

Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded in each division, event and category (honor, scholastic and varsity). All ties are awarded.

Team overall ranking is determined by the six team members that make up the top two scores in each category (honor, scholastic and varsity).

There will be four divisions of schools (Division I, Division II, Division III and Division IV) at the USAD Nationals. Divisions I, II and III are determined by the enrollment for grades 9–12 of the schools attending Nationals. However, a division must have at least 25% of the teams participating. Each division, including Division IV, will have a first (gold), second (silver) and third (bronze) place winner. These are the division champions. The Dr. Robert D. Peterson National Championship Award will be awarded to the U.S. team from either Division I, Division II or Division III with the highest number of points. International participants in Division I, II and III compete for many of the same awards as U.S. team participants in Divisions I, II and III. If an international participant earns a medal ahead of a U.S. team participant, then the next highest U.S. team participant will also receive a medal. If an International team wins the Super Quiz award or an overall team award, then the next highest U.S. team will also receive an award.

An award list is emailed following the presentation of awards that indicates the gold, silver and bronze medal winners in each event; special awards; top five teams in the Super Quiz; and top 10 teams in the overall standings. Each coach and state director will be emailed the scores for his/her team.

Special awards are common in Academic Decathlon. At Nationals, they include the Asa Edwin Reaves, Esq. Social Science Prize; B. Franklin Reinauer II Economics Prize; the Jerry Helgeson Community Service Award; the Frank Wurtzel Prize; the Kristin Caperton Inspiration Award for overcoming challenges; the Norman Katz Communications Award; the Rookie of the Year Award; the Founder's Scholarship: Most Improved Varsity Student; the highest scoring student from each team; and the Most Valuable Team Member Award from each team.