

FIU HSPC Competition Rules

Teams, contest format, judging, scoring, and conduct

Teams

Each team may consist of up to three students currently attending the same school.

A school may have more than one team. However, we may limit the number of teams to a maximum of three per school to provide opportunities for more schools to participate.

Contest Format

At least ten programming problems will be provided at the beginning of the competition. Teams will have 4 hours to solve as many problems as possible.

Teams may work on the problems in any order and may submit multiple attempts until a solution is accepted. Penalty points may apply; see the Scoring section below for details.

The Contest Coordinators may extend or adjust the competition period if technical difficulties or other unexpected circumstances occur.

Computers and Materials

Each team will share one computer provided by the contest staff.

Contestants may bring printed books, notes, and other paper-based reference materials. The following items may not be used during the competition:

- Personal computers or tablets
- Calculators
- Smart watches
- Smart glasses
- Other unauthorized electronic equipment

Cell phones must remain stored away during the competition, except when needed for an emergency.

Teams may use only the software and systems provided or approved by the contest organizers. These will include:

- Programming editors and compilers
- C/C++ (Version?)
- Java (Version?)
- Python (Version?)
- A system for submitting programs
- A system for requesting clarifications
- A system for viewing contest standings

Installing additional software, modifying the competition environment, or accessing unauthorized programs or files is prohibited.

Submissions and Judging

Teams may submit programs at any time during the competition. Each submission will be compiled and tested on the judges' computers using official test data.

After a judged run, the team will receive one of the following responses:

Judge Response	Meaning
Correct	Your program has passed all the test data. You have solved the problem.
Compile-Time Error	Your program did not compile successfully.
Time-Limit Exceeded	Your program ran longer than the allowed time.
Run-Time Error	Your program terminated abnormally or caused the judging system to lock up.
Wrong Answer	Your program gives an incorrect answer, a missing answer, or extra output.
Presentation Error	Your program gives a correct answer but not in the format specified in the problem.

Judges will not provide hints, review code, or answer questions about how to solve a problem. Coaches will not remain in the competition area but will rest in the room next door.

If a team believes that a problem statement is unclear or incomplete, it may submit a clarification request. The judges may answer the request, decline to answer it, or provide the clarification to all teams when appropriate.

Scoring

Teams are ranked first by the number of problems solved. If two or more teams solve the same number of problems, the team with the fewest penalty points ranks higher.

Penalty points are calculated only for solved problems. Each solved problem receives:

- One penalty point for every minute from the start of the contest until the problem is solved;
- Twenty additional penalty points for each judged submission, excluding one correct submission.

Additional correct submissions to the same problem will also receive a twenty-point penalty. No penalty points are given for problems that remain unsolved.

To maintain suspense during the final stage of the competition, the scores will be “frozen” for the last hour, meaning score updates will not be publicly displayed.

Contest Conduct

Contestants may discuss competition problems only with their own teammates and authorized contest staff.

Contestants may not:

- Communicate with other teams or outside individuals about the problems
- Use unauthorized software, websites, or electronic assistance
- Access another team’s computer, files, or source code
- Run programs intended to damage, disrupt, or slow the competition system
- Interfere with the judges, staff, or other teams
- Behave in a manner that disturbs other contestants

All participants must follow applicable computer laws, FIU policies, and instructions given by contest staff.

The Contest Coordinators may issue penalties or disqualify a team for violating these rules.