

Results of the 2014 North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad (NACLO)

The NACLO contest has two stages, an Open Round and an Invitational Round. Students solve problems in language analysis drawn from languages around the world. The problems range widely across traditional and computational linguistic topics — from orthography and transcription systems to syntax, semantics, morphology, and phonology. In the Open Round of the Olympiad on January 20, 2014, 1,645 students from across the U.S. and Canada competed at university and high school sites. The Open Round featured problems from Estonian, Maori, Cameroon Pidgin English, and Buginese as well as several problems that required analysis of English from computational perspectives. 165 contestants (the top 10% of scorers) were invited to the Invitational Round on March 13, 2014, and 144 competed (131 from the U.S. and 13 from Canada). This round contained problems from Turkish, Hungarian, Kiswahili, the Tangkhulic family of languages, Tok Pisin, and Yidiny, as well as several problems dealing with computational tools such as finite state transducers and combinatorial categorial grammars. The grading for the Invitational Round is now complete, and the organizing committee of the Olympiad is pleased to announce the selection of the U.S. and Canadian teams.

US Team Selection:

The top four contestants in the invitational round, Darryl Wu of Bellevue, Washington; Jackie Bredenberg of Royal Oak, Michigan; Alexander Babiak of Ithaca, New York; and Deven Lahoti of Houston, Texas, are invited to the first American team for the IOL.

The next four contestants, Brandon Epstein of Dix Hills, New York; James Bloxham of Marblehead, Massachusetts; Kevin Li of San Diego, California; and Catherine Wu of San Diego, California, are invited to the second American team.

Four U.S. students have been selected as alternates.

Canadian Team Selection:

The top four Canadian contestants in the invitational round, Daniel Lovsted of Toronto, Ontario; Stella Lau of Mississauga, Ontario; Yan Huang of Toronto, Ontario (residing in West Windsor, New Jersey), and Simon Huang of Toronto, Ontario, are invited to the Canadian IOL team.

Two Canadian students have been selected as alternates.

The International Linguistics Olympiad:

All US and Canadian team members are invited to participate in the twelfth International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL) in Beijing, China, on July 21-25, 2014. The IOL will involve individual competition, structured similarly to NACLO, as well as a team round in which group members collaborate to solve a more in-depth linguistics challenge. Past team challenges have featured problems from a wide range of languages including Georgian, Lao, Sanskrit, Hawaiian, and American Sign Language. The IOL has grown from six countries in its founding year (2003) to twenty-six in 2013. The U.S. has participated since 2007 and Canada since 2011. NACLO is currently raising money for the trip and will contact team members and their parents about travel arrangements. For more information about the IOL, visit www.ioling.org.