



The North American Computational Linguistics Open Competition (NACLO) announces the winners of the 2021 Invitational Round

Top scoring students in the Invitational Round of the 2021 North American Computational Linguistics Open Competition (NACLO) qualify to represent the USA and Canada at the 2021 International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL) to be held virtually in July, 2021.

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The NACLO contest consists of 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 topics in linguistics, from phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics to writing systems and natural language processing.

In the Open Round of this year's contest on January 28, 2021, 907 students from across the U.S. and Canada competed at more than 200 university and high school sites. The top 10% (approx.) of the Open Round participants, 106 students, were invited to participate in the Invitational Round on March 11. The two rounds featured problems about Malagasy, Waama, Kongo in the Mandombe script, Dime, Sauk, Old and Middle Chinese, the Tamazight languages, Hawu, Dhao, Tawala, Dagaare, Vengo, Yaṅomamö, Jamsay, English phonology as well as computational topics, such as algorithms for cross-linguistic stress assignment,

eye tracking in psycholinguistic experiments, data compression, natural language generation, and vector representations of word semantics.

The Anglophone Canadian team is chosen through NACLO while the Francophone Canadian team is chosen through the Olympiade linguistique canadienne francophone (OLCF). The OLCF first round featured problems on Zapotec, Medieval French, Moksha, Thai, and South Arabic writing, while the second round had problems on Classical Arabic, Samoan, Cuzco Quechua, Bulu, and a problem involving body part names in Tiriyo, Laotian, and Kuuk-Thayorre. Though the selection of problems for the OLCF did not overlap with NACLO problems this year, the two organizations collaborate in producing challenging and varied linguistic problems.

The organizing committee of NACLO is pleased to announce the top U.S. students and Anglophone Canadian students.

The top four US students (Team Red) are Lydia Wang (Individual Round winner) of Milpitas, California; Jonathan Huang of San Jose, California; Evelyn Sun of Frederick, Maryland; and Riley Kong of San Jose, California. The next four students (Team Blue) are Jeremy Zhou of Houston, Texas; Benjamin Neithardt of Exton, Pennsylvania; Adithya Kalanam of Reminderville, Ohio; and Jonathan Song of Cary, North Carolina.

The top Anglophone Canadian student was Daria Kryvosheieva of Ontario, who is not eligible for the Anglophone Canadian IOL team this year. The next four Anglophone Canadian students, and the team qualifiers, are Thomas Frith of Oakville, Ontario; Kunaal Chandrashekar of Mississauga, Ontario; Ellina Zhang of Maple, Ontario, and Leonardo Tenenbaum of Toronto, Ontario.

The Canadian Francophone team is composed of Aron Szocs (top scorer in the national contest), Ariel Soucy, Bogdan-Alexandru Sava, all of Montréal, and Yiyuan Isabella Zhang of Toronto. Szirina Ismail of Montréal is the team alternate. Their team leader is Corinne Soucy, participant at the 2017 and 2018 IOL and team leader in 2019.

Four students are alternates for the US teams: Stephanie Liu of Queens, New York; Kripa Kini of Fremont, California; Ellie Bultena of Sublette, Kansas; and Luke Robitaille of Euless, Texas. Two students are alternates for the Anglophone Canadian team: Zhening Li of Waterloo, Ontario, and Jia Lin (Ariel) Wang of Coquitlam, British Columbia.

NACLO was partially funded by the US National Science Foundation, the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics, and the Linguistics Society of America.

The International Linguistics Olympiad:

All US and Canadian team members will participate remotely in the Eighteenth International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL) organized virtually in Ventspils, Latvia from July 19 to July 24, 2021.

The IOL will involve an individual competition, structured similarly to NACLO, as well as a team round in which team members collaborate to solve a more in-depth linguistics challenge. Past team challenges have featured problems from a wide range of languages including Mongolian, Lao, Hawaiian, Northern Sotho, and American Sign Language. The IOL has grown from six countries in its founding year (2003) to 34 in 2021. The U.S. has participated since 2007, the Anglophone Canadian team has participated since 2011, and the Francophone Canadian team has participated since 2017. The location of the IOL changes each year; in the past five olympiads it has taken place in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria; Mysore, India; Dublin, Ireland; Prague, Czech Republic; and Seoul, South Korea.

Registration for the 2022 NACLO and OLCLO competitions will start in September 2021.

More Information

NACLO - <http://www.nacloweb.org/> - practice problems, contest rules, and registration details

Results: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_American_Computational_Linguistics_Open_Competition

OLCLO - <https://olcclo.wordpress.com/> - practice problems and registration details

IOL - <http://www.ioling.org/> - all past IOL problems and results

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