

Academic Awards and Recognitions

Senior Awards Evening

Newton High School may choose to honor Newton Robotics Team members who achieve success at the high school's annual Senior Award evening. Only students who are in good standing, have a solid record of attendance at team meetings, outreach events, and tournaments throughout the season will qualify for such recognition. The coach and faculty will make the judgment of which students qualify for recognition at the award evening jointly.

Varsity Letter Requirements

All FRC team members may qualify for a Varsity Letter in Robotics. This section outlines the requirements to achieve this honor. It is not expected that every member, or even most team members, will qualify to letter in robotics. Only the most committed who concretely contribute to team success are expected to qualify. In general, in order to earn a letter, a team member must achieve all of the following requirements, however, there may be cases in which the coach may choose to recognize a team member's specialized efforts with this honor even though not all of the requirements have been met.

Build Meeting and Attendance

FRC - The team member must have an excellent record of attendance at meetings from the beginning of the robotic year; build meetings, at least 70% attendance through the final championship tournament for a given season. This includes the Pre Season (September through December) and Post Season (May through August). The NRT will continue to track attendance at all events. Some adjustment may be made for extraordinary circumstances at the coach's discretion. Sickness, injury, and family emergency would be taken into consideration when evaluating the team member's participation.

FTC - For future FTC (*FIRST* Technical Challenge) members, who have a much longer season than FRC, this may mean an attendance of 100 hours or more of build and team meetings over the course of the entire season. FRC members have a shorter more intense season and can similarly expect to spend many hours building and practicing to achieve this requirement.

Outreach and Community Event Attendance

The team member must volunteer for at least three outreach and community service events during the course of the season and must perform their duties at such events in a satisfactory manner as determined by the coach or appointed supervising mentor. Such events include but are not limited to:

- Newton Day, NJ *FIRST* sponsored outreach events
- demonstrating robots for potential sponsors
- helping at FLL Qualifier tournaments
- demonstrations at area schools
- helping to run programs and camps
- NJ State Fair/Sussex County Farm and Horse Show

- events to encourage other area schools to start teams and mentor teams, or conduct other similar activities

There are normally six or more such opportunities available during a season for both FLL and FRC members.

Full Participation at a Championship Tournament

The team member must attend all days of at least one MAR District, Regional, or Championship tournament and must execute their duties at that tournament in a satisfactory manner as determined by the coach. Duties will vary depending on the team member's roles on the team. Duties may include for example, driving the robot, making repairs in the pits, scouting other teams, speaking with judges, cheering on the team, setting up the pit, photographing and videotaping the competition, updating the website, managing team logistics, etc. These are *“hard fun”* events which rely on team unity and participation. Reading a book, playing cards or video games, does not constitute effort and will not be counted as participation.

The FRC season may involve only two official MAR competitions, and therefore the coach has some leeway in the case of an extraordinary circumstance that may prevent an otherwise outstanding letter candidate from attending the one official event. For example, in a case of illness that prevents the letter candidate from attending the one event, the coach may allow that candidate to make up the missed event by attending additional outreach or post-season events beyond the minimum required.

Full Participation at a Scrimmage, Qualifier, or Post-Season Tournaments

Scrimmages and post-season tournaments are also opportunities to gain skills that will contribute to team success. Qualifier tournaments, which occur more at the FTC level, may be required in some states before attending Championships. These activities, therefore, are crucial to a team's success even if they are not the official championship. Letter candidates should attend a minimum of one such event during the season, and must fulfill their duties at the event in a satisfactory manner as determined by the coach. Again, the coach has some leeway in the case of an extraordinary circumstance.

Leadership Role Requirement

Candidates holding a leadership position must demonstrate the ability to fulfill the requirements of the position in order for leadership to count towards the application for a varsity letter.

Though not prohibited by rules to hold a leadership position as a freshman, it is not common, thus making the leadership requirement a more difficult one to achieve. This requirement however, is not necessary to earn varsity status if all other criteria are met and the team member can demonstrate merit. A team member is rewarded with a leadership position for being a valuable participating member at meetings and events not just for being there.

Varsity letter candidates must make concrete, observable, significant contributions to the team's success. Examples of ways to fulfill this requirement might include:

- being selected as a primary drive team member based on merit and fulfilling that role well at a major tournament
- being the lead programmer who develops an outstanding autonomous mode program
- being a lead builder who oversees implementation of a successful mechanism that gives the team some advantage

- consistently creating outstanding engineering notebook entries that leads to judged awards or nominations
- coming up with a fundraising idea that works well and following through to implement it
- coordinating scouting activities at a major tournament that results in crucial information that aids the drive team
- creating a successful Chairman's Video that showcases the team and can be sent to sponsors
- effectively speaking with judges while representing the team at competitions
- securing a valuable sponsor(s)
- creating and implementing a unique system that enhances the team imagery and identity
- creating a business plan that aids in attaining entrepreneurial awards
- designing an effective and easy to use website which is updated during competitions
- create safety guides and seminars to be shared with other teams and receives recognition
- discover and implement an innovation that aids the robot or team, etc.

The coach and mentors will monitor activities of the team looking for these kinds of concrete contributions as well as the ability of a team member to mentor other members.

Teamwork and Gracious Professionalism Requirement

The letter candidate should be an outstanding team player with a positive attitude who would rather work hard to make great things happen than complain about bad luck. A person who would rather teach a fellow member something new than blame them for doing something wrong, and who would rather lend a brand new battery to a competitor the team is about to face in an elimination round than take a win by default.

In short, the candidate strives, even under the pressure of intense competition, to uphold the values embodied in *Gracious Professionalism*. The candidate treats mentors, fellow teammates, referees, and competing teams alike with respect at all times especially when under stress, and willingly and graciously apologizes if an offense has occurred. The candidate observes NHS policies and Newton Robotics Team rules of conduct and safe work habits at all times and make every effort to help others to do the same. Mentors will observe team members during build sessions, outreach events, and competitions to judge whether each team member and letter candidate adheres to these ideals consistently. Letter candidates may be asked to write a description citing specific examples of how they have upheld the principles of teamwork and *Gracious Professionalism* for consideration by the coach and faculty advisors.

Team members are required to bring issues to the coach and involved parties before presenting them in a public forum. All disputes will be reviewed by the coach and any actions mandated will be implemented by all concerned. Failure to comply may result in the team member's removal from the team for a period of time up to and including being asked to leave the team permanently. An incident report will be completed and kept in the team member's file should an issue occur.

Infractions include but are not limited to:

- foul language
- general disrespect towards team members and adults
- tarnishing the reputation of a fellow team member in person or through the internet or email
- threatening violence or enacting violence
- physically tampering with a team member's work
- willfully undermining and sabotaging a team member's or sub team's project

- tampering with school equipment by bypassing protocol and willfully engaging in tampering or switching parts inside any electronic devices whether owned by NHS, NRT or another organization.

Transition Period

Because NRT FRC Varsity Letter program started with the 2010/11 season, team members who were critical in the team's creation, or that of varsity status, and who have fulfilled the above requirements before the status was granted to the team, may be, by coach and the advisory panel's approval, granted varsity letter status. It is preferred that the team member continues to be an active team member or alumni member and a continued outstanding contributor to the team's success.