FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

‘Deflategate’ topic of Moot Court National Championship hosted by UH Law Center on eve of Super Bowl

Nation’s 16 best teams will argue Tom Brady’s ‘appeal’ before ‘Supreme Court’ on Jan. 26 – 28

Jan. 9, 2017 — Days before Super Bowl LI is played in Houston, another national championship will be decided in the city: 16 of the nation's top law school moot court teams will square off over the hypothetical question of how they would have argued the NFL's "Deflategate" controversy if the case had gone all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Hosted by the University of Houston Law Center, the Andrews Kurth Kenyon Moot Court National Championship draws teams from across the country to compete for the crown Jan. 26-28. Super Bowl Sunday is Feb. 5 at NRG Stadium.

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady was accused of violating league rules by conspiring to deflate footballs prior to the start of a 2015 playoff game in order to give him a better grip in cold weather. The league ordered a four-game suspension for Brady, which was upheld by NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell. The suspension was vacated by a federal judge, but reinstated by an appeals court after which Brady declined further appeals and agreed to sit out four games at the beginning of the 2016 season.

The legal issue facing the young lawyers is how they would have presented the case for and against the suspension if Brady had taken the case to the highest court.

Over the course of three days, local, state and federal judges and attorneys will hear arguments at the Bob Casey Federal Courthouse in downtown Houston.

"People have heard a lot about "Deflategate" and what actually happened. But this is the perfect "what if" opportunity to argue what might have happened, especially with the Super Bowl occurring in Houston the following weekend," said Jim Lawrence, director of the Law Center's Blakely Advocacy Institute which conducts the tournament, held annually since 2009. Lawrence devised the system by which law school teams qualify for the championship based on points earned at major national tournaments during the previous year. "Who knows," mused Lawrence, "maybe Brady will show up to hear how his appeal might have turned out?"

The law firm of Andrews Kurth Kenyon LLP sponsors the competition and a symposium related to sports law that will be held during the day on Jan. 26 before competition starts that evening.

Media contacts: Elena Hawthorne, interim UH Law Center Executive Director of Communications and Marketing, 713-743-1125, ehawthor@central.uh.edu; John T. Kling, UH
Law Center Communications Manager, 713-743-8298, jtkling@central.uh.edu; and John Brannen, Senior Writer, 713-743-3055, jtbranne@central.uh.edu

About the University of Houston
The University of Houston is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized by The Princeton Review as one of the nation’s best colleges for undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city, UH serves more than 42,700 students in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region in the country.

About the University of Houston Law Center
The University of Houston Law Center (UHLC) is a dynamic, top tier law school located in the nation's 4th largest city. UHLC’s Health Law, Intellectual Property Law, and Part-time programs rank in the U.S. News Top 10. It awards Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees, through its academic branch, the College of Law. The Law Center is more than just a law school. It is a powerful hub of intellectual activity with more than 11 centers and institutes which fuel its educational mission and national reputation. UHLC is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.