Otaku U 2026 Cosplay Contest Categories

The 3 Class Categories:

Tadpole: This class category is for contestants who are ages 12 & under.
Tadpole Class Contest Entry Fee-Free

Teen: This class category is for contestants who are ages 13-17 - percentage for the costumes that's been made (craftsmanship) 30% or more.
Teen Class Contest Entry Fee-$5

Adult: This class category is for contestants who are ages 18+ - percentage for the costumes that's been made (craftsmanship) 50% or more.
Adult Class Contest Entry Fee-$5

Otaku U Contest Sign-ups will be online as well at the convention. Online Cosplay Contest Sign-Ups will close on *November 19th @ midnight*. If there are any spots available participants will be able to sign up inside the Prejudging/Screening Room on the day of convention.

All Teen Class & Adult Class Contestants will pay their Contest Entry Fee upon check in/sign up on the day of convention.

Cosplay Contest Prejudging/Screening for All Class Categories will be taking place in VT 460 from 11am-3:35pm.

All Cosplay Contest On Site Sign Ups Close: 3:00pm

Prejudging/Screening Block Open for the Adult Class Contestants: 11am-12:15pm
Prejudging/Screening Block Open for the Teen Class Contestants: 12:30pm-2pm
Prejudging/Screening Block Open for the Tadpole Class Contestants: 2:15pm-3pm
Prejudging/Screening Block for All Class Contestants: 3pm-3:35pm

All Contestants must be in the Anime AMV Playlist Viewing Area in the Vendor Hall @ 4:30pm

The Cosplay Contest itself will be in the Vendor Hall: 5pm-6pm

If any participant ends up missing their assigned Prejudging/Screening Class Time Block, they are to come to to sign up in the Prejudging/Screening Room so we can accommodate them with a different Prejudging/Screening Block from 3pm-3:35pm, failure to do so will result in disqualification.

Otaku U 2026 Cosplay Contest Guidelines & Rules

1. Costumes shall not be used as political, religious, etc. statements.

2. All contestants must be respectful of one another.

3. The use of inappropriate language or hand gestures are NOT allowed. Violation of this rule may cause you to be disqualified from the competition.

4. All contestants must abide by Schoolcraft College policies, including, but not limited to public intoxication (alcohol, marijuana, contraband substances, etc.), no open alcohol, disorderly conduct, and the pistol-free zone policy.

5. Weapons of any kind are NOT allowed.

6. Solo Entries Only. We are not accepting any couple entries or group entries at this time.

7. All Teen & Adult Class Contestants MUST pay the Contest Entry Fee in order to participate.

8. Contestants are not allowed to throw anything off the stage, nor use anything on stage that will leave a mess. This includes (but is not limited to) liquids, glitter and confetti.

9. Children that are participating in the Tadpole Class Category MUST have a parent or guardian to accompany them on site and if needed on stage. Ages under the age 18 also must either have a legal guardian on site or check them off for possible picture sign off.

10. All contestants must complete the online registration form or sign up on site and pass a pre screening questioning with the Cosplay Judges to participate. Contestants are to do their best to arrive at their assigned Class Prejudging/Screening Blocks but in the event that they can't make their Block there will be an Open Block for All Class Contestants once on site sign ups have closed. All Contestants must provide a reference for their costume(s) in their prejudging/prescreening. It can be a picture, a figure, drawing, card, etc.

11. The max contestant capacity for the overall Cosplay Contest is 60. In the Adult Class Category the max capacity is 20. Next, in the Teen Class Category the max capacity is 30. Finally, in the Tadpole Class Category the max capacity is 10.

12. No sandbagging - even if they compete in a different cosplay, contestants who have previously won in a Otaku U Cosplay Contest are not eligible to win whether you had entered solo, as a couple, or group. You may still participate if you wish but past winners cannot win any prizes. This is to give opportunity to those who have yet to win our contest or any other Cosplay Contest.

13. All costumes must cover "swimsuit areas" – no nudity.

14. Only contestants that come in 1st Place as or Best in Show will receive gift cards.

Otaku U 2026 Cosplay Contest Prizes

Best In Show winner who will receive a $75 Amazon Gift Card*
The 1st Place Winners will each receive a $50 Amazon Gift Card for each Categories*
3 Judges Choice Awards
Best Wig
Best Prop
Cosplaying on A Budget

All Cosplay Contest Winners will receive winner certificates

***Only contestants that come in 1st Place as or Best in Show will receive gift cards**