

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS

Monday April 29, 2024

Location: Durland Hall 1066

Check-in: 7:00-7:20 a.m.

Event: 7:30-10:00 a.m.

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Last updated: January 9, 2024

General Information

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Team information: Individuals and/or teams will be eligible to participate in the Kansas FFA Career Development Event in Agricultural Communications. Schools may enter 1, 2, 3, or 4 individuals as a team, and schools may enter only one team each (or a maximum of 4 students from each school). The team members' scores will constitute the team score.

Test form used: In 2024, students complete exams on paper that are scored by live judges, and practicum activities are completed digitally and scored by live judges.

Official dress is required for this event.

Equipment needed: Students must bring their own pens or pencils. Each team must bring one laptop (with laptop charger and any desired accessories, like a mouse). The laptop must be able to connect to K-State's guest WiFi network. Each team must also bring at least one pair of headphones (for the video practicum).

Announcements:

Our goal for the Agricultural Communications Career Development Event at K-State is to showcase agricultural communications careers to as many FFA members as possible, as well as to select the team to represent Kansas FFA at the national competition. To attain this goal, we have made the following decisions related to the competition.

- The 2024 Kansas FFA Agricultural Communications Career Development Event will be **partially** aligned to the guidelines for the 2024 event at the national level.
- The Agricultural Communications Career Development Event will combine scores from all **four** team members as the team score. We will not drop the lowest individual score in calculating team scores. Because we use 4+ judges to score the practicum activities, overall individual scores are calculated using the Z-score method.
- The 2024 Kansas event will NOT include the Media Plan and Media Plan Presentation components. Therefore, the winning Kansas team will need to develop these components to participate at the national competition.
- **This year (2024) is the first year the Kansas CDE practicum activities will be completed digitally (on a computer).** There is no need to bring markers or scissors, etc., unless students want to sketch up ideas on scratch paper (this is allowed). Computer lab space and computers will be provided for the journalistic writer, opinion writer, and web designer; each needs to bring one laptop, with for the video production student.
 - The CDE check-in, quizzes, and press conference speaker will occur in Durland Hall Room 1066.

- After the press conference, CDE participants will disperse down the hall to work in computer lab spaces (DUE 1113, 1116, 1117).
- Each practicum activity will be completed on a computer. The news writer and opinion writer will type their activity; the web designer will create a real webpage; and the video team member will compile a short video using b-roll, audio and other content provided to them.

I. Tests

A. Editing Exercise

Because editing is a critical skill for all communicators, each participant will complete an editing exercise. They will be given a printed document containing 25 identified sections. Students must determine whether each identified section is correct or incorrect. For the incorrect items, participants will be required to correct the mistakes using appropriate copy editing marks. Style, grammar, punctuation, and spelling mistakes will be included. Participants will **NOT** be able to use a style manual or dictionary during this exercise.

B. Communications Quiz

Each participant will complete a quiz that covers general knowledge of the agricultural communications industry or from any of the preparation materials available on the National FFA Ag Comm CDE website. Questions may come from any section excluding sports guidelines. Participants will **NOT** be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

II. Practicum

The practicum will consist of four specific activities with **no more than one team member per activity**. Participants can participate in one of the following activities:

1. Web Design – Develop a webpage to communicate the speaker’s organization through appropriate design, navigation, and use of provided photos and graphics.
2. Video Production – Develop a 60- to 90-second video that promotes the speaker’s product or service using provided photos and graphics.
3. Journalistic Writing – Develop a news release about the speaker’s organization or topic for an appropriate audience; include a strong focus and lead, including a headline.
4. Opinion Writing – Develop an op-ed that takes a position, and support it with evidence based on the speaker’s presentation. Should be for an appropriate audience.

Each team should assign a member to each of these activities when checking in for the event. Individuals who are not participating on teams will designate in which activity they plan to participate when they enter the event.

All teams will meet in the Durland Hall 1066 for an orientation, the tests and the press conference.

All team members will be given an orientation at the beginning of the practicum to last no more than 10 minutes. Each team member will receive a press packet with background information on the agricultural topic and expert. The press conference with an expert speaker will follow the orientation. The expert will speak on a timely agricultural topic for 10-15 minutes. Students will be provided with paper for notetaking if they wish.

A 15-minute question-and-answer period with the expert (speaker) will take place after the press conference. Upon completion of the question-and-answer session, all competitors will be allowed 60 minutes to complete their assigned tasks.

Detailed descriptions of each team member’s assignment follows.

1. Web Design

Each designer will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop a website (WordPress or other platform). The objective is to communicate the press conference speaker's organization through appropriate design, navigation and use of provided photos and graphics. The designer may use the templates provided through the web design platform, or customize the template. The objective is effective communication or information sharing through visual tools.

Each participant will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.

Specific technical skills for practicum:

- Overall aesthetics of design
- Use of graphic design principles
- Neatness and creativity
- Choice and placement of photo(s) and graphics
- Writing and editing (specific to activity)

2. Video Production

Students will be given a selection of video clips, photos, and music and will create a 60 to 90 second video that promotes the client's product or service. Students may use software of their choice, but the software must be loaded on their devices prior to the event and capable of exporting a video in a common format such as mp4 or mov. They will not be recording a voice track. Students will need to provide their own headphones.

Each participant will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.

Specific technical skills for practicum:

- Solid promotional value (strong hook, features/benefits, etc.)
- Tells a story
- Use of provided materials (numerous clips or images, appropriate for topic, etc.)
- Creativity, clarity of communication, organization and format
- Accuracy of information
- Stayed within the length requirement

3. Journalistic Writer

Writers will write a journalistic piece based on the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference. It should be written for an appropriate audience, have a strong focus and lead (opening paragraph) and include a headline. The story will then be word processed by the student on a computer and turned in to be scored.

Each participant will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.

Specific technical skills for practicum:

- Lead/Focus
- Accuracy of information and quotes
- Clarity and conciseness
- Correct style (AP)
- Depth of coverage
- Header/Headline
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice
- Organization and format
- Accomplishment of purpose

4. Opinion Writer

Writers are to write a piece that takes a position and support it with evidence based on the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference. It should be written for an appropriate audience, have a strong focus and lead (opening paragraph) and include a headline. The story will then be word processed by the student on a computer and turned in to be scored.

Each participant will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.

- 300-500 words
- Headline

Specific technical skills for practicum:

- Lead/Focus
- Accuracy of information and quotes
- Clarity and conciseness
- Correct style (AP)
- Takes a position that is supported with evidence
- Header/Headline
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice
- Organization and format
- Accomplishment of purpose

Overall CDE Timeline

1. Testing (60 minutes total for both quizzes)

Communications Quiz

Editing Exercise

10 minute break

2. Practicum (1 hour and 40 minutes)

Speaker/press conference

Question and answer session

Practicum activity: Web Design, Video Production, Journalistic Writing, Opinion Writing

Total = 2 hours and 20 minutes

Equipment

The following equipment and supplies **will be provided**:

- K-State will provide three computers per team (for news writing, opinion writing, and web design. The video student must bring a laptop with the video software ready for them to use).
 - Word processing and Internet will be provided on the K-State computers; guest wireless Internet will be provided for the laptop brought from each school