

2017 NACTA Ag Communications Contest Rules

Hosted by Kansas State University

Date and Time: Friday, April 7, 2017, 1:00 pm

Location: K-State Student Union, Rooms K and S (on campus)

Contest Coordinator: Jason Ellis <jdellis@ksu.edu>

Teams and Eligibility

1. All contestants must be currently enrolled in a two-year or a four-year institution and pursuing an undergraduate degree. Two-year and four-year teams will evaluate the same contest components. Separate awards will be made for both team and overall individuals in each division.
2. Teams will consist of three members designated in advance and all three team members' scores will count toward the team score. Individuals may also participate as official contestants for individual awards if a school does not have a full team. No additional individual contestants from schools with full teams may compete for individual awards.
3. A competing individual may not compete in this contest if he/she has participated as a scored, official contestant in a national NACTA Ag Communications contest in any previous year in the same division. If he/she previously competed in the two-year college division, he/she may compete once more in the four-year college division.
4. No communication with contestants or anyone else except superintendents will be permitted once the contest has started. Coaches may not communicate with a team or individuals until the contest is finished. No cell phones, text messaging, or conferring during the contest will be allowed. Contestants observed in violation of this WILL be disqualified from the competition.
5. Contestants should bring a pen or pencil and blank notebook for notes during the press conference. All other required materials will be provided by the contest coordinators.

Event Description and Guidelines

I. Overall Event Timeline

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Testing | 60 minutes |
| a. Editing Exercise | |
| b. Communications Quiz | |
| 2. Practicum | |
| a. Orientation | 10 minutes |
| b. Press Conference | 10-15 minutes |
| c. Questions-and-Answer Period | 15 minutes |
| d. Complete Practicum Tasks | 60 minutes |

Total Time: 2 hr. 40 min.

II. Tests

II A. Editing Exercise

Each participant will be given a news release containing 25 identified sections. Students must determine whether an 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 other references during this exercise.

II B. Communications Quiz

Each participant will complete a quiz that includes questions regarding AP Style editing, journalistic writing, broadcasting, public relations, graphic design and ethics of communication. Students specifically should review the (2016) Associated Press Stylebook or any of the preparation materials available on the Kansas FFA CDE and National FFA CDE website. Participants will NOT be able to use a style manual or other references during this quiz.

III. Practicum

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

- A. Designer – Two-page magazine spread that effectively promotes the speaker's topic
- B. Multimedia Reporter – Blog/Social Media Posts – Content that promotes the speaker's topic
- C. Electronic Media Specialist – Promotional video that promotes the speaker's topic

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 for an orientation, communication exercises and press conference. Teams will be divided so that all designers sit together, all electronic media specialists sit together and all multimedia writers sit together.

All team members will be given an orientation at the beginning of the practicum that lasts no more than 10 minutes. The press conference will follow the orientation. Each team member will receive a press packet with background information on the agricultural topic and expert. The expert will speak on a timely agricultural topic for 10-15 minutes. Students will be provided with paper on which to take notes if they wish. **Students should bring their own pens or pencils.**

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

Detailed descriptions of each team member's assignment follows:

III A. Graphic Designer

Each graphic designer will use the press packet and information gathered in the press conference to develop a 2-page magazine spread. Using the paper provided, participants will sketch a layout for the spread that promotes the speaker's topic. Students will indicate where they would place visual elements (photos, graphics, etc.) and write a description of each visual's content/focus. The object of this exercise is to display effective communication or information sharing through visual tools.

Participants will have 60 minutes to complete the task.

Specific technical skills for practicum:

- Magazine spread that effectively promotes topic
- Overall aesthetics of design
- Neatness and creativity
- Choice and placement/cropping of photo(s) and graphics
- Writing and editing (specific to activity)

III B. Multimedia Reporter

Each multimedia writer will use the press packet and the information gathered in the press conference to write a 200-to 300-word blog post. The post should be written as if it were being posted on the expert's organization's website. Participants should indicate where they would place visual elements (photos, graphics, etc) and write a description of each visual's content/focus.

In addition, participants must create at least one post for each of the expert's organization's Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts that promote the blog post.

Participants will have 60 minutes to complete the task.

Specific technical skills for practicum:

- Lead/focus
- Accuracy of information and quotes
- Clarity and conciseness
- Correct style (AP)
- Depth of coverage
- Header/Headline
- Organization and format
- Choice and placement of photo(s) and graphics
- Correct stylization of information for social media outlets
- Social media posts that effectively promote blog post

III C. Electronic Media Specialist

Students participating in this practicum will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop a 30- to 60-second video that promotes the speaker, the speaker's topic/content or the speaker's organization. The video should be developed on behalf of the company or organization giving the press conference and should meet the following criteria:

- Use two-column format for video script writing
- Identify visuals (b-roll footage, charts, graphs, text, etc.) that will accompany the audio and the visual's content
- Write out the narrative audio script to accompany the visuals described

Participants will have 60 minutes to complete the task.

Specific technical skills for practicum:

- Promotes the speaker or speaker's organization
- Power of expression
- Clarity and conciseness
- Organization
- Accuracy of information and quotes
- Neatness and creativity
- Use of video visual principles

IV. Panel of Judges

Professionals in the industry and other members of the agricultural communications community

V. Placings

1. Overall team rankings
 - 2-year schools
 - 4-year schools
2. Overall individual rankings
 - 2-year schools
 - 4-year schools

VI. Tiebreakers

1. Team
 - a. Total Editing Exercise points
 - b. Total Communication Quiz points
 - c. Total Practicum points
2. Individual
 - a. Editing Exercise
 - b. Communication Quiz