

# **AGRICULTURE COMMUNICATIONS**

## **Official Dress Mandatory – 3 Member Team**

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### **I. Purpose**

The following information includes changes to the Texas FFA Agricultural Communications Career Development Event. These changes align closely with the changes proposed by the National FFA CDE Committee, as well as the requests of agriscience teachers in Texas.

### **II. Event Rules**

1. Teams will consist of three members.
2. Participants must wear FFA Official Dress for this event.
3. During the practicum portion of the event, one team member will be responsible for completing a written communication activity, one team member will be responsible for completing an electronic media activity and one team member will be responsible for completing a visual design activity.
4. Students are allowed to only bring a pen or pencil into the contest. Notebooks, clipboards, loose-leaf paper, and bags will not be taken into the contest and will be deposited with a designated event volunteer.
5. Only students are allowed in the testing, press conference, and practicum rooms.

### **III. Event Format**

By January 15th of each year, the state agricultural communications CDE provider will release event specifications for the upcoming event. The specifications will outline the specific practicum activities, rules, detailed rubric, and software to be used.

The event begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. The schedule of events is as follows:

- 7:30 - 8 a.m. - Event registration (teams must pre-register to participate)
- 8:00 - Orientation
- 8:10 - Editing exercise
- 8:20 - Communications quiz
- 8:40 - Break
- 9:00 - Press conference
- 9:20 - Q & A (only writers ask questions)
- 9:30 - Dismiss to practicums

### **IV. Equipment**

No equipment, other than a pen or pencil, is needed to participate in this contest. However, in order to prepare students, it is recommended that teachers acquire the software to be used in the contest.

## V. Activities

### 1. Tests

#### **a. Editing exercise** – (25 points - individual; 75 points – team)

Because editing is a critical skill for all communicators, each team member will complete an editing exercise. Each contestant will be provided printed document that contains 25 style, grammar, punctuation or spelling mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, team members will be required to use correct proofreader's marks (see Associated Press Stylebook). Team members will NOT have access to the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

#### **b. Communications quiz** - (25 points - individual; 75 points - team)

Each team member will complete a quiz that covers the content of the current Associated Press Stylebook. Questions may come from any section excluding sports guidelines. Team members will NOT have access to the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise

### 2. Practicums (100 points - individual; 300 points - team)

The practicums will consist of three individual events. Each team must assign a member to one of the following areas PRIOR to arriving at the state event:

1. Design
2. Electronic Media
3. Writing

All teams will meet in a designated location for an orientation and press conference. Teams will be seated by event practicum group. Each team member will receive a press packet with background information on the agricultural topic and expert to use during the event. An expert will speak on a current agricultural topic for 20 minutes. Students will be provided with paper to take notes if they wish. The contestants designated as writers will then be involved in a 10-minute question and answer period with the expert (speaker). The other team members may listen to the Q and A, but cannot ask questions. Each writer will stand to be recognized before asking a question. Writers may ask more than one question; however, the expert will attempt to address questions from as many different participants as possible. No recording devices of any kind will be allowed. Upon completion of the 10-minute question and answer session, participants will be dismissed to complete their assigned tasks.

#### **a. Design**

Each designer will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop a graphic design layout. The specific details, rules, and scoring rubric will be announced by January 15th each year. The objective is effective communication or information sharing through visual tools. Each participant will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.

#### **b. Electronic Media**

Each electronic media specialist will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop an electronic media message. The specific details, rules, and

scoring rubric will be announced by January 15th each year. Participants will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.

**c. Writing**

Writers are to write a journalistic piece based on the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference. The specific details, rules, and scoring rubric will be announced by January 15th each year. It should be written for an appropriate audience, have a strong focus and lead, and include a headline. The story will then be word processed by the student on a computer and turned in to be scored. Participants will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum.

All Ag Communication activity themes will be posted on the website at: [www.texasffa.org](http://www.texasffa.org) → Events → CDE → Ag Communications

**VI. Scoring**

Participants will be ranked in numerical order on the basis of the final score to be determined by each judge. The criteria and points can be found on the scorecards in the National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE proposed changes. Note that the national scorecards are suggested by National FFA and will be used only as a basis for the scoring rubric that the Texas FFA contest will use. Due to the unique nature of the rotating practicum activities, the scorecards will be adjusted to fit the students' assigned tasks. Rubrics will be released to teachers by January 15th each year.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Points</b>
<i>Tests - 150 points possible</i>	
Communications Quiz .....	75 (25 pts/member)
Editing Exercise .....	75 (25 pts/member)
<i>Practicums - 300 points possible</i>	
Writer Practicum .....	100
Electronic Media Practicum .....	100
Design Practicum .....	100
<b>Total individual score possible .....</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Total team score possible.....</b>	<b>450</b>

**VII. Tiebreakers**

1. Team tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:
  - a. Combined individual practicum rank score
  - b. Proposal rank
  - c. Presentation rank
  
2. Individuals tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:
  - a. Practicum score
  - b. Communications quiz score
  - c. Editing exercise score

## IX. References

This list of references is not intended to be inclusive. Other sources may be utilized, and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available.

The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation:

National FFA Core Catalog—Past CDE Material (<http://shop.ffa.org/cde-qas-c1413.aspx>)

*Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*

Microsoft ® Office computer program

Adobe ® Creative Suite (most current edition)

Bivins, T. *Public Relations Writings: The Essentials of Style and Format*, 4th edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-844-20351-3

Calver, P. (editor). *The Communicator's Handbook*. 4th edition. Maupin House, Gainesville, FL 32607 <http://www.maupinhouse.com>

Harrower, T. *Newspaper Designer's Handbook*, 5th edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. ISBN 0-07-249291-0

Kalbfeld, B. *Associated Press Broadcast News Handbook*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-07-136388-2

Agriculture Communications in the Classroom; Shannon Hartenstein, advised by Tracy A. Ruth-erford, Ph.D. Agricultural Communications and Journalism, Kansas State University on behalf of the National FFA Organization Copyright 2002, National FFA Organization. This guide can be found on the CDE webpage at [https://www.ffa.org/documents/cde\\_agcomm\\_resources.pdf](https://www.ffa.org/documents/cde_agcomm_resources.pdf).