



# Agricultural Communications

PA FFA State Convention  
June 11-13, 2024

*Chairs:*

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# Contest Overview & Rules

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- Teams must consist of 4 members
- Each member should be in Official Dress. Deductions will be made for FFA Members not in complete Official Dress.
- Students must bring their own laptops/devices. ONLY a screen, projector and Jump Drives will be provided to teams for this event. Students will be given internet access.

# Contest Overview & Rules

## Equipment students should bring:

- Computing equipment for each participant. It can be any combination of laptops, tablets, and/or smartphones for word processing and/or design work for creating practicum components. Remember to bring all power cords required for your devices. A power supply will be furnished.
- Pens or pencils
- Privacy screens for laptops (not required, but allowed) are permitted to protect the security of students' work/ideas
- Headphones of your preference
- Participants need to know how to upload/download materials for this contest. Additional help will not be given at the state contest

## The following items will NOT be allowed:

- Desktop computers
- Smartwatches
- Add-on editing software such as AI tools/apps. Photos and videos that were not supplied by contest officials or created by the students within the contest time frame

## The following activities will NOT be permitted:

- Outside assistance during the contest from any person or company
- Text messages, phone calls, emails, or other communication with anyone outside of the contest while the event is in progress
- Leaving the contest area other than a restroom break

# Schedule of Events

## Tuesday, June 11th

| Event                  | Additional Notes/Info                  |
|------------------------|--|
| Writing Mechanics Exam | One Exam<br>Multiple Choice - On paper |

## Wednesday, June 12th

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Press Conference  | Teams will listen to presenters/take notes/ ask questions to prepare for practicums   |
| <u>Practicums:</u> Web Design, Video Producer, Journalistic Writing, Opinion Writing<br><br><u>Presentation:</u> Teams will prepare their presentation together as a team | Teams will have up to 3 hours to complete practicums, put together their presentation and prepare for verbal presentation to judges |
| Presentation of Communication Plan  | Teams will have 10 minutes to present their presentation to a panel of judges followed by 5 minutes of questions.                   |

# Contest Scorecard

|                             | Event   | Individual Points | Team Points |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------|
| 1                           | Writing Mechanics Exam                              | 50                | 200         |
| <b>Team Activities</b>      |   |                   |             |
| 2                           | Presentation of Communication Plan                  |                   | 175         |
| 3                           | Web Design Practicum<br><i>(3 page minimum)</i>     | 100               | 100         |
| 4                           | Video Producer Practicum<br><i>(60-90 seconds)</i>  | 100               | 100         |
| 5                           | Journalistic Writing:<br>News Story                 | 100               | 100         |
| 6                           | Opinion Writing:<br>OP-ED<br><i>(500-750 words)</i> | 100               | 100         |
| <b>Total Possible Score</b> |   | <b>150</b>        | <b>775</b>  |

# Writing Mechanics Exam

INDIVIDUAL EVENT

50 points

Multiple Choice - On Paper

**Description:** Each student will complete a 50-question writing mechanics exam covering general knowledge of the agricultural communications industry and editing questions. Questions may come from any section of the listed references, excluding sports guidelines. Questions that use AP Style editing marks to correct writing mistakes will also be used (see Associated Press Stylebook). Style, grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes will be included. Team members can NOT use the style manual, a dictionary, or any reference materials during this exercise.

## **Resources:**

National FFA Past Tests/Quizzes [HERE](#)

# TEAM ACTIVITIES: *PRESS CONFERENCE*



**Description:** The team activities will begin with a “press conference” or “story assignment on an agricultural topic. All team members will receive a press packet with background information on the agricultural topic and the expert to use during the event. The expert will speak on the agricultural topic for 20 minutes, followed by a 10-minute question-and-answer period. Students will be provided with paper to take notes if they wish. Students’ electronic devices must remain under their chairs during this portion of the event, as note-taking by hand is an essential communication skill. Students will stand to be recognized before asking a question. They may ask multiple questions; however, the expert will attempt to address questions from as many participants as possible. No electronic devices, including tape recorders and cell phones, will be allowed during this portion of the event.

# TEAM ACTIVITIES: *PRACTICUMS*



**Description:** Upon completion of the press conference, the team will be dismissed to a team working area to collaborate on their message, communications package, and the component parts. Students will be allowed up to **3 hours** to collaborate with their team members to determine their message, define responsibilities, complete components, and finalize their practicum elements. ALL communications plan components must be created and submitted for judging during this time. **Teams will not be in a private area** - teams will be working in a newsroom environment with other teams in the same location. Event officials will monitor the teams for outside help and have the authority to disqualify anyone breaking the rules. **Teams should allow a minimum of 90 minutes to complete the practicum components utilizing the remaining time to create and finalize their communications plan** for submission. The committee may designate required and optional components.



# Individual Practicums

## Overview:

- 400 points total
- Each team member chooses one of the 4 practicums to complete. Each practicum must be completed by a different team member. These practicums are completed individually at the contest.
- 4 Practicums include:
  1. Web Page Design (100 points)
  2. Electronic Media Promotional Video (100 points)
  3. Journalistic Writing- News Story (100 points)
  4. Opinion Writing - Op-Ed (100 points)



# Individual Practicums



## Web Design

Design a website for the organization discussed in the press conference.

Minimum of 3 unique pages

Rubric Link [HERE](#)



## Video Production

Create video communicating the message of the organization discussed in the press conference.

60-90 second video

Rubric Link [HERE](#)



## Journalistic Writing: News Story

Based on the information in the press conference, write a news story for an appropriate audience, have a strong focus and lead and include a headline.

Rubric Link [HERE](#)



## Opinion Writing: Op-Ed

Write a piece that takes a position and support it with evidence based on information that was gathered in the press conference. It should be written for an appropriate audience, have a strong focus and lead and include a headline.

500-750 words

Rubric Link [HERE](#)

# Practicum Submission

Each team will be given a jump drive at the contest. Each member will save their practicum to the jump drive when finished. Jump drives will be submitted to contest chairs for grading and evaluation by judges.

# Presentation of Communication Plan

TEAM EVENT

175 points

**Description:** Teams will create a presentation to explain their message, plan and selection of components as if presenting it to a client. This presentation should be a quick overview summary presentation of the message, reasoning and objective of each component included in their plan. Creating the Communications Plan Presentation should be a collaborative effort involving all team members.

Each team will be allowed up to **10 minutes to present to the judge(s) with five minutes for questions from the judges.**



# Presentation of Communication Plan



The Communications Plan Presentation should address the following points:

1. Provide an overview of the Communications Plan.
2. Define the central theme or controlling idea.
3. Pose the main question or narrative inquiry.
4. Specify the intended call to action.
5. Explain the rationale and goal of the news story and its relevance to the audience
6. Explain the rationale and goal of the op-ed and its relevance to the audience
7. Explain the rationale and goal of the video production and its relevance to the audience
8. Explain the rationale and goal of the website and its relevance to the audience

**RUBIC LINK [HERE](#)**