

Missouri State University Agricultural Communications Invitational

OVERVIEW

A team of four members will have their skills challenged in all areas of the agricultural communications field. Team members will attend an actual news conference and then use the information gathered to complete individual practicums in web design, journalistic writing, opinion writing and a media plan presentation. Each team member will also complete an editing exercise and a general communications quiz.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the agricultural communications contest is to expose high school students to the world of agricultural communications and skills necessary to be successful in the agricultural communications industry. By utilizing skills developed in this contest, students will be better able to effectively communicate and advocate for the industry of agriculture.

EVENT SPECIFICATIONS

- Teams will consist of four members.
- It is required that participants wear FFA Official Dress for this event.
- The event is limited to one team per chapter.
- The winning team will represent Missouri at National FFA Convention.
- Any participant in possession of an electronic device during the quizzes is subject to disqualification. Recording devices are not allowed during the press conference.
- The 2020 Missouri State University Agricultural Communications Invitational is aligned to the guidelines for the 2017-2021 National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE, including the 2020 media plan scenario.
- Members of the first-place teams in the 2020 Missouri State University Agricultural Communications Invitational will not be eligible to participate in the next year's contest.
- The 2020 Missouri State University Agricultural Communications Invitational will NOT include the video production practicum component of the competition. Therefore, the winning Missouri team will need to develop these components to participate at the national competition.
- The Missouri State University Agricultural Communications Invitational event allows deviation from the national CDE media plan guidelines. This may require the winning team to make adjustments prior to national competition.
- The media plan will be due to Katelyn McCoy by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2020. Send the plan as a PDF document to KMcCoy@MissouriState.edu

COMPETITION COMPONENTS

Editing Exercise (25 points – individual; 100 points – team)

Communications Quiz (25 points – individual; 100 points – team)

Practicums (100 points – individual; 400 points – team)

Web Design, *Journalistic Writing, Opinion Writing, Media Plan Presentation*

Media Plan (200 points – team)

EQUIPMENT

Needed:

- Students must provide pens and/or pencils for the editing exercise and communications quiz.
- For practicums, writers and designers are encouraged to bring a laptop or other device for word processing or design.

Note: Each team is REQUIRED to bring one laptop with a word processing application. For practicums, students are allowed to bring a personal laptop with the appropriate software (i.e. word processing application for writers and web browser for designers).

Provided for Media Plan Presentation Practicum:

- Projector screen
- Table
- Computer

Note: Students may bring additional equipment for the media plan presentation practicum as long as they are able to set up and tear down equipment in the time allowed for the presentation.

Provided for Web Design Practicum:

- Digital photographs and graphics
- Copy text
- Press packet
- WordPress template
- Computer with Internet access (if not provided by student)

Provided for Writers:

- Paper
- Pen
- Press packet
- Computer with Microsoft Word (if not provided by student)

CONTEST ACTIVITIES

Agriculture-Related Media Plan (200 points per team)

Teams will play the role of communications consultants and will develop a media plan for an assigned scenario. The scenario will identify a client with a communications need and a budget.

2020 MEDIA PLAN SCENARIO:

Your chapter's agricultural communications committee has been approached by an organization that represents agriculture, farmers, and ranchers in your state, such as the Farm Bureau or a commodity board, to select, promote, and/or recognize a commodity or commodity group in your state to various media outlets regarding their commitment/service to the agricultural industry, innovative programs or techniques they have developed or promoted, and/or ways they have promoted the agricultural industry through their efforts in your state. Your committee has the option to decide what is included in the promotion of this commodity/ commodity group. This promotion might include one or more of the following; innovative production, harvest, or marketing techniques; service/leadership in local communities or the state; providing a unique solution to a problem facing producers/stakeholders related to that commodity; a commitment to food safety or other attributes associated with the commodity/commodity group; etc. Please remember that the plan should also focus on promoting agriculture and the agricultural industry to consumers in your state. At the national event, the entire team will make a pitch (oral presentation) of the media plan.

Disclaimer: The Missouri State University Agricultural Communications Invitational has developed revised guidelines for the media plan outline. Teams are welcome to follow the National Agricultural Communications CDE media plan outline found online, if they choose.

A media plan is a written document that describes the following items:

- **Objectives:** What the group wants to accomplish with the media plan.
- **Target audience:** A description of who the client is trying to reach, including demographic data.
- **Strategic plan and tactics:** The ways in which the objectives can be accomplished, including a social media plan.
- **Timeline:** When the objectives will be accomplished.
- **Evaluation:** How the results will be measured.
- **Budget:** Teams may not go over a maximum of \$5,000.
- **References**

Guidelines for media plan:

- Length: 5-page minimum (typed), not including the cover page, table of contents, references or appendices. (*National guidelines indicate eight to 10 pages*)
- Double-spaced with 1-inch margins.
- Paginated (numbered pages not including cover page).
- 12-point Times New Roman font (not including display text or headings).
- Submitted electronically in PDF format to KMcCoy@MissouriState.edu by 5:00 p.m. on April 7, 2019.
- Formatted and edited according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* when citing sources.

Media Plan Outline

Cover Page (*required*)

- Must include the title of the media plan, CDE name, state, chapter name, team member names and year
- May include a creative design

Table of Contents (*required*)

Introduction and Overview (*required*)

- Introduction

A brief background of the issue/topic and a statement of the problem establishing the need for this media plan.

- Overview:

A brief preview of what is contained in the plan and how it will benefit the client. Also includes the objectives of the media plan.

Audience (*required*)

- Who the client is trying to reach (target audience) with the media plan
- The demographic characteristics of the intended audience
- Note: teams may have a primary and a secondary audience

Strategic Plan (*required*)

- Key messages or themes to communicate to the audience
- Explanation of how the objectives will be met
- Plan to attract media attention using social media
- Description of how the plan will be executed
- Selection and justification of media chosen

Social Media Tactic of the Strategic Plan (*optional*)

A social media plan is optional that addresses the following items:

- Social media platforms to be used
- Plan to gain followers
- Plan to engage followers
- General idea for the messages to be posted
- One-page example post must be provided as an appendix (can include Facebook posts, tweets, Instagram photos and others)
- Content of the "About" section of pages

Timeline (*optional*)

- Explanation of the duration of the plan and the timing of the media tactics

Evaluation (*required*)

- Description of proposed methods to determine if the media plan objectives were met
- What are the key performances? (How will you measure that you are successful?)
- Examples may include number of participants, impressions, likes, shares, retweets, circulation of publications and number of video views.

Budget and Justification (*required*)

- Table of all costs associated with implementing the media plan
- Explain why you have allocated this amount for each activity

Conclusion (*required*)

- A final summary of key points related to the strategic plan and a statement persuading the client that the plan is a good solution to the communication problem.
- Not a restatement of the introduction and overview

References

- Formatted and edited according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)*. (required)
- Appendices/Examples
- One page of social media posts
- Three to five other communication examples
- Suggestions include mockup or example of website, links to student-created video, press releases, blogs and op-eds

Appendices (optional)

- Include three to five examples in the appendices.
- Examples of tactics include but are not limited to:
 - Broadcast advertising
 - Print advertising
 - Press releases
 - Fliers
 - Brochure
 - Website
 - Blogging
 - Displays

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

Tests

Editing Exercise (25 points/individual; 100 points/team)

Because editing is a critical skill for all communicators, each team member will complete an editing exercise. They will be given a printed document that contains 25 mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, team members will be required to use correct proofreading marks (see Associated Press Stylebook). Style, grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes will be included. Team members will NOT be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise. Thirty minutes will be allotted to complete the editing exercise.

Communications Quiz (25 points/individual; 100 points/team)

Each team member will complete a 25-question quiz that covers general knowledge of the agricultural communications industry. Questions may come from any section of the listed references excluding sports guidelines. Team members will NOT be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise. Thirty minutes will be allotted to complete the communications quiz.

Practicums (100 points/individual; 400 points/team)

The practicums will consist of four individual events. Each team must assign a member to one of the following areas prior to arriving at the contest:

- Web design
- Media plan presentation
- Journalistic writing
- Opinion writing

All teams will meet in a central location for an orientation and press conference. Teams will be seated by practicum group. All team members will be given an orientation at the beginning of the practicums to last no more than 10 minutes.

Note: Media plan presenters will not attend the press conference. They will draw for presentation order and be dismissed to the holding room until their turn to present. Depending on the number of teams competing, testing and presenting may be staggered among student presenters.

The press conference will be held immediately before the scheduled practicums. 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. After the 20-minute presentation, the web designers will be dismissed to a different area to complete their assigned practicum.

The writers will then be involved in a 10-minute question and answer period with the expert (speaker). 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 electronic devices of any kind, including tape recorders and cell phones, will be allowed during this portion of the event. Upon completion of the 10-minute question and answer session, remaining participants will be dismissed to complete their assigned practicums.

Web Design

Each designer will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop a WordPress site. The objective is to communicate the press conference speaker's organization through appropriate design, navigation and use of provided photos, graphics and copy. The designer will use the provided WordPress template or customize the template. Each participant will have 90 minutes to complete the practicum.

Journalistic Writers

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. Participants will have 90 minutes to complete the practicum. Participants will NOT be able to use a style manual, dictionary or online reference during this practicum.

The activity will rotate annually through the following journalistic pieces:

- **Press release (2020)**
- News Story (2021)
- Feature Story (2019)

Opinion Writers

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. Participants will have 90 minutes to complete the practicum. Participants will NOT be able to use a style manual, dictionary or online reference during this practicum.

The activity will rotate annually through the following opinion pieces:

- **A blog post (250-300 words) (2020)**
- An op-ed (500-750 words) (2021)
- A letter to the editor (300-500 words) (2019)

Media Plan Pitch – Presentation

- The individual should present the media plan as if pitching it to the client identified in the scenario.
- The presentation should follow the structure of the written media plan.
- Each individual will be allowed 10 minutes to present the team’s media plan to a panel of judges, who will play the role of the client. Five points will be deducted for each major fraction of a minute over the 10 minutes allowed for the presentation. Following the presentation, judges will be allowed five minutes to ask questions.
- Individuals will have a total of 10 minutes for setting up and tearing down equipment (e.g., five minutes to set up and five minutes to tear down).
- Provided equipment includes a projector screen, computer and table.
- In the case of equipment failure, the individual may be asked to move forward with the presentation. A backup plan is recommended.
- *Optional: Individuals are allowed to bring examples of materials that would be used in the execution of the plan (e.g., social media, broadcast advertising, print advertising, press releases, fliers, brochures, website, blogging and displays).*

Note: Individuals may bring additional equipment for the presentation as long as they are able to set up and tear down in the time allowed.

SCORING

Participants will be ranked in numerical order based on the final score to be determined by each judge without consultation. The judge's ranking of each participant shall then be added, and the winner will be the participant whose total ranking is the lowest. Other placings will be determined in the same manner (use the low-point method of selection). Weighted rank scoring will be implemented to maintain point value emphasis between individual and team events. The criteria and points can be found on the scorecards.

Event	Points
Media plan — proposal	200
Media plan pitch — presentation	175
Tests — 200 points possible	
Communications quiz	100 (25 pts/member)
Editing exercise	100 (25 pts/member)
Practicums — 400 points possible	
Web design practicum	100
Video producer practicum	100
Journalistic writing practicum	100
Opinion writing practicum	100
<i>Total individual score possible</i>	<i>150</i>
TOTAL TEAM SCORE POSSIBLE	975

Tiebreakers

Team tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:

1. Combined individual practicum rank score
2. Proposal rank
3. Presentation rank
4. Media plan

Individuals tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:

1. Practicum score
2. Communications quiz score
3. Editing exercise score

Media Plan – Proposal Scorecard

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Overview (Executive Summary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately explains the proposal/ plan in enough detail that it can be understood without having to read the entire document Adequately details what is contained in the plan and how it will benefit the client Clearly details the objectives of the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains the proposal/plan fairly.. well, but does not provide enough detail to fully understand it without reading entire document Details only some of what is contained in the plan and how it will benefit the client but is lacking in some detail Does not clearly or fully detail objectives of the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete overview provided; does not provide enough detail to understand the proposal/ plan without reading the document Lacks detail on much of what is contained in the plan and how it will benefit the client Does not provide any detail on objectives of the plan 		X 2	
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not exceed 2 pages (combined with overview) Provides adequate, but brief background of the issue/topic Clearly states the problem and objectives to be addressed by the plan Clearly establishes a strong need for plan Describes how the plan will benefit the client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds 2-page limit (combined with overview) Provides only partial, incomplete background of the issue/topic Problem and objectives to be addressed by the plan are not clear to reader Need for the plan is not clearly stated or is not well established Plan’s benefit to the client is not well supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction section is missing or incomplete Background of the issue/topic is not well defined or is missing Problem statement is unclear or missing Objectives are unclear or missing Need for the plan is not established or addressed No mention is made of plan’s benefit to the client 		X 3	
Description of Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not exceed 1-page limit Clearly describes who the client is targeting with the media plan Detailed demographics of target audience(s) are included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds 1-page limit Who the client is targeting with the media plan is not well defined Only partial demographics of target audience(s) are included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of audiences is missing or incomplete Who the client is targeting with the media plan is not stated Little or no demographics of target audience(s) are included 		X 3	
Detailed Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not exceed 2-3 page limit Key messages or themes proposed to communicate with target audience(s) are clearly presented Clearly restates objectives and adequately explains how they will be met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds 2-3 page limit Key messages or themes are not clearly presented Objectives not restated clearly and explanation of how they will be met lacks clarity Chosen mediums are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key messages or themes are not presented Objectives are not restated and no explanation of how they will be met is provided Chosen mediums are not appropriate for plan and no 			
Detailed Strategic Plan						

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
(cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen mediums are suitable and appropriate to meet objectives and their use is clearly justified Clearly describes how plan will be executed Clearly states and explains social media plan and tactics used to attract media attention using social media, including: platforms to be used, plan to gain followers, plan to engage followers, and general ideas for messages to be posted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not well suited for plan and/or justification of their use is not well explained How plan will be executed is unclear Social media plan and tactics used to attract media attention using social media are somewhat unclear. Some key information is missing from social media tactics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> justification of their use is provided How plan will be executed is not provided Social media plan and tactics used to attract media attention using social media are incomplete and lack many of the key details needed. 		X 6	
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not exceed 1 page limit Clearly and adequately explains duration of plan and timing of media tactics Easy to view and understand; well organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds 1 page limit Unclear or missing some items of plan and media tactics Unrealistic timeframe for plan execution Confusing to view and/or understand or not well organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeline is missing Mostly incomplete and does not contain the majority of items in plan or media tactics 		X 2	
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not exceed 1 page limit Clearly describes adequate methods to determine if plan objectives were met Clearly details key performance indicators and measures of success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds 1 page limit Methods to determine if plan objectives were met are not clear or are not appropriate for the plan Key performance indicators and measures of success are unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation plan is missing No clear methods to determine if plan objectives were met are presented No key performance indicators or measures of success are provided 		X 3	
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not exceed 1 page limit Clearly details and explains all costs associated with implementing the media plan Clearly explains how/why amount allocated to each activity was determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds 1 page limit All costs associated with implementing the media plan are not well explained or some are missing Explanation of how/why amount allocated to each activity was determined is incomplete or unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget and justification are missing Few costs associated with implementing the media plan are explained No explanation of how/why amount allocated to each activity was determined is provided 		X 4	
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not exceed 1 page limit Clear and well-articulated final summary of key points related to strategic plan is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds 1 page limit Final summary of key points related to strategic plan is incomplete or not well stated Final statement lacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclusion is missing Final summary simply restates introduction and/or overview No final statement 		X 2	

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provided Well-reasoned final statement is presented to persuade client the plan is a good solution to their communication problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> persuasiveness to client and is not well supported by the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to persuade client is provided 			
Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 – 5 examples/items provided At least 1 example social media post is provided Thoughtful, well-designed, and well-written, and relevant communications documents provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 3 examples/items provided No example social media post is provided Quality of communications documents provided could be stronger Examples provided are only somewhat relevant to plan objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No examples provided No example social media post is provided Poor quality of communications documents provided ; poorly designed or contain many errors Examples provided are not relevant to plan objectives 		X 6	
Proposal is Relevant to Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entire proposal narrative focuses on addressing client’s specific public communication needs Focuses specifically on current scenario provided to teams Plan and all items within it are extremely relevant to provided scenario and client Creatively interprets scenario 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal mostly focuses on addressing client’s specific public communication needs but sometimes loses focus or stray from client needs Lacks specific focus on current scenario provided to teams Is only somewhat relevant to scenario Some items within plan are not directly related to scenario or client Lacks creativity in interpretation of scenario 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal lacks a focus on addressing client’s specific public communication needs and often loses sight of client needs Strays from current scenario provided to teams Plan and items contained within it are not at all relevant to current scenario or client 		X 2	
Plan Includes All Requirements and Follows Formatting Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan includes a creatively designed cover page with a title for the plan, CDE name, chapter name, participant names, and year Table of contents is complete and does not exceed one page Plan formatting guidelines are followed: double spaced, one-inch margins, page numbers included, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, PDF format, required section headings used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover page is missing 1-3 required pieces of information Cover page is not creatively designed Table of contents is incomplete Table of contents exceeds one page Plan formatting guidelines are mostly followed, but 1-3 formatting errors are present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover page is missing more than 3 required pieces of information Cover pages is disorganized and not well designed Table of contents is mostly incomplete or missing altogether Plan formatting guidelines are not well followed with more than 3 errors present 		X 2	

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Quality of Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very well-written plan • Excellent use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure • Correct use of APA citations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly well-written plan • Adequate use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure with some errors present • Some APA citation errors present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poorly well-written plan • Poor use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure with many errors present • Many APA citation errors present or no use of APA at all 		X 5	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF 200 POSSIBLE						

MEDIA PLAN PITCH - PRESENTATION

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples are vivid, precise and clearly explained Examples are original, logical and relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples are usually concrete, sometimes need clarification Examples are effective, but need more originality or thought 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples are abstract or not clearly defined Examples are sometimes confusing, leaving the listeners with questions 		X 5	
Confidence in speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks very articulately Never has the need for unnecessary pauses or hesitation when speaking Speaks at the right pace to be clear Pronunciation of words is very clear and intent is apparent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes speaks articulately Occasionally has the need for a long pause or moderate hesitation when speaking Speaks at the right pace most of the time, but shows some nervousness Pronunciation of words is usually clear, sometimes vague 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely articulate Frequently hesitates or has long, awkward pauses while speaking Pace is too fast; nervous Pronunciation of words is difficult to understand; unclear 		X 3	
Being detail-oriented; provide details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is able to stay fully detail-oriented Always provides details that support the issue to communicate the key concepts of the plan; is well organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is mostly good at being detail-oriented Usually provides details that are supportive of the issue to communicate the plan; displays good organizational skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has difficulty being detail-oriented Sometimes overlooks details that could be very beneficial to the issue; not enough detail provided; lacks organization 		X 3	
Speaking unrehearsed and naturally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks unrehearsed with comfort and ease Speaks effectively without losing focus and with organized thoughts and concise answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks unrehearsed mostly with comfort and ease, but sometimes seems nervous or unsure Speaks effectively, but has to stop and think and sometimes gets off focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows nervousness or seems unprepared when speaking unrehearsed Seems to ramble or speaks before thinking 		X 3	

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
All team members participated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All team members took an active role in the presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two to three team members took an active role in the presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One team member took an active role in the presentation. 		X 3	
Use of visual aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids add clarity and support what is being said during the presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids add some clarity and support to what is being said during the presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids add little to no clarity and support to what is being said during the presentation. 		X 3	
Media plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key elements of the media plan are clearly communicated Strong understanding of chosen media is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key elements of the media plan are vaguely communicated Vague understanding of chosen media is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key elements of the media plan are not communicated Little to no understanding of chosen media is present 		X 3	
Questions and answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly responds to judges' questions Answers show familiarity with subject matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is somewhat able to correctly respond to judges' questions Answers show vague familiarity with subject matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is unable to correctly respond to judges' questions Answers do not reflect any familiarity with subject matter 		X 12	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF 175 POSSIBLE						

JOURNALISTIC WRITING

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Lead/focus	Lead is accurate, draws in audience, engaging, catchy, original	Lead has 1 or 2 strong elements but fails in others, shows some signs of originality	Misses point of story, buries lead, neither original or catchy, too long, inaccurate		x 3	
Accuracy of information and quotes	Adequately uses multiple sources, ideas, and facts, tells complete story, information is properly attributed	Minor inaccuracies or sources improperly used, info or opinion given without attribution, missing key sources, quotes used with weak connection	Missing information, holes, no or weak quotes, unfounded opinions, inaccuracies		x 3	
Clarity and conciseness	Focus of story is clear, makes use of effective words, descriptive, nothing detracts from focus of story, everything contributes to angle of story	Clear writing with some poor word choice, passive voice, slightly wordy or confusing, lacks sense of unity, some areas detract from angle	No clear angle, story rambles, is awkward, poor word choice, unclear statements, dull writing		X 2	
Correct style (AP)	0-2 errors in AP style, attributions done correctly	3-5 errors in AP style, 1 attribution error	6 or more errors in AP style, 2 or more attribution errors		X 2	
Depth of coverage	Strong evidence of good research, adequately presents all sides, all in story are identified, info is accurate and thorough, overall fairness to subjects and sources, bias free	Quotes are interesting and storytelling, presents sides mostly equal, quotes lead to question of bias, minor insertions of opinions	Quotes are short, absent, or weak, ineffective use of quotes, displays unjustifiable bias, relies on stereotype, involves unwarranted opinion		X 2	
Header/headline	Headline is catchy, is positive and specific, contains strong, active verbs and short, simple words	Headline is slightly mechanical, slightly longer or slightly shorter than needed, headline is slightly vague	Headline is mechanical, too long or too short, has no connection to the story at all, left out or forgotten		X 2	
Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice	Largely error-free, well edited, no spelling errors, includes proper spelling of all names	Minor errors but still readable, story is spell checked but contains several grammatical errors	Errors interfere with comprehension, names are misspelled, spelling errors, contains many grammatical errors		X 2	
Organization and format	Information flows seamlessly from one point to next, effective transitions, appropriate length of story, inverted pyramid order with information descending in order of importance	Information generally well ordered with a few confusing jumps, weaker transitions, readable with inconsistent flow, somewhat abrupt or not using inverted pyramid fully	Structure does not move logically from one point to another, no or poor transitions, choppy or confusing, not in inverted pyramid		X 2	
Accomplishment of purpose	Story conveys the full intended message to audience, no doubt about any information	Story has a few confusing parts but mostly leaves readers with a feeling of full information and understanding	Creates confusion among readers, has information missing and is overall unclear		X 2	
TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE						

OPINION WRITING

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Lead/focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strong lead that draws in audience – Lead is engaging, catchy, and original – Leads shows strong focus to topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lead has 1 or 2 strong elements but loses some focus to topic – Shows some signs of originality, but lacks hook to audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lead is buried in the writing – Lead lacks clear focus of topic – Lead is neither original or catchy, too long, etc. 	x 3		
Accuracy of information and quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion pieces adequately uses multiple sources, ideas, and facts – Sources/quotes used are appropriate and have good connection to topic – Piece tells a complete story – Information is properly attributed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Minor inaccuracies or sources improperly used in opinion piece – One or two pieces of information or opinion given without attribution – Missing one or two key sources – Sources/quotes used have a weak connection to topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is missing information or has major holes – Weak or no sources/quotes used – Sources/quotes used have no connection to topic – Piece contains multiple unfounded opinions or inaccuracies 	x 3		
Clarity and conciseness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus of opinion piece is clear – Piece makes use of effective words and is descriptive – Nothing detracts from focus of the piece – Everything contributes to angle/opinion of the piece and its topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus of opinion piece is only somewhat clear – Some poor word choice found in piece, passive voice used, slightly wordy or confusing – Piece lacks sense of unity throughout – Some areas detract from angle/opinion of the piece and its topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No clear angle/opinion of the piece and its topic – Piece rambles, portrays awkward wording or poor word choice – Piece contains multiple unclear statements – Writing is dull and unfocused 	X 2		
Correct style (AP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 0-2 errors in AP style – All attributions/citations use correct AP style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 3-5 errors in AP style – 1-2 attributions/citations errors in AP style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 6 or more errors in AP style – 3 or more attributions/citations errors in AP style 	X 2		
Takes a position that is supported with evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece takes a strong, clear position on the topic – Position is well supported with facts/statistics from press materials to back it up – Opinion of writer is well supported by accurate, thorough information connected to the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece takes a mild, sometimes unclear position on the topic – Position is only partially supported with facts/statistics from press materials – Opinion of writer is only sometimes supported by accurate information or information is only somewhat connected to the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece has no clear position on the topic and position is weakly argued – Position is not supported with any facts/statistics from press materials – Opinion of writer is does not support position with accurate information or information used is not connected to the topic 	X 2		
Header/headline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Headline is catchy, original, and unique – Headline shows clear connection/tie to position and topic discussed in opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Headline is slightly mechanical and does not show much originality – Headline is weakly tied to position and topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Headline is dull and not original – Headline makes no connection to position and topic discussed in opinion piece 	X 2		

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> piece – Headline is specific, contains strong, active verbs and uses short, simple words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussed in opinion piece – Headline is not specific enough, is slightly longer or shorter than needed, or does not contain strong active verbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Headline is missing 			
Grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is largely error-free and is well edited – Piece contains no spelling/grammatical errors – Piece includes proper spelling of all names 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece contains minor errors but is still readable – Piece contains several (3-5) spelling/grammatical errors – Piece contains 1-2 misspelled names 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece contains major errors that interfere with comprehension, – Piece contains several (6 or more) spelling/grammatical errors – Piece contains 3 or more misspelled names 	X 2		
Organization and format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is well organized – Information flows seamlessly from one point to the next and makes use of effective transitions – Makes use of inverted pyramid with information descending in order of importance – Piece is an appropriate length (within word count limit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is mostly organized – Information flows somewhat well with a few confusing or weak transitions, – Piece is somewhat abrupt or does not use inverted pyramid fully – Piece is slightly shorter/longer than designated length 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is not organized – Information does not move logically from one point to the next and has no or poor transitions – Piece is choppy or confusing and does not use inverted pyramid – Piece is much shorter/longer than designated length 	X 2		
Accomplishment of purpose/ Impact/Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is effective and conveys a well-supported message to readers – Reader is left with a strong call to action and has no doubt about any information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is somewhat effective but may leave readers with some questions – Piece has a weak call to action or ending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opinion piece is not effective but may leave create confusion among readers – Piece has no call to action or not clear ending 	X 2		
TOTAL POINTS OUT OF 100 POSSIBLE						

WEB PAGE DESIGN

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Overall Attractiveness of Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is very aesthetically pleasing, nice to look at, and captures attention Appropriate and attractive use of color, images, and fonts throughout All content on sight is easy to read and consume Consistent feel throughout all site pages with consistent use of color, fonts, and font size All pages have good flow and are easy to skim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site look is average, but does not capture viewer attention Most colors, images, and fonts are appropriate Some content on sight is not easy to read or consume Some consistency throughout site pages, color or fonts, but not as cohesive as it could be Site pages have some flow, but one or more elements are out place Not all pages are easily skimmable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site does not draw viewer attention and is not pleasing to look at Inappropriate use of color, images, and fonts – makes the sight difficult to view Content on sight is not easy to read and consume No consistency throughout site pages, color or fonts Pages have little or no flow and no pages are easy to skim 		X 4	
Technical skills specific to activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site contains 3 unique pages Site has an appropriate and relevant title Site is appropriate and relevant for speaker's organization/topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site contains only 2 unique pages Site has a title, but it lacks appropriateness or relevancy to site content Site is only loosely tied to speaker's organization/topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site contains only 1 unique page Site does not have a title Site does not fit with speaker's organization/ topic 		X 4	
Use of design principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All elements on site have good contrast which make them easy to view and read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more elements on site have poor contrast, making them difficult to view or read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many elements on site have poor contrast which make them difficult to view and read 		X 3	
Contrast Repetition Alignment Proximity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All elements on site display good use of repetition/consistency All elements on sight are aligned well to aid in viewing and reading All elements on sight have good proximity with appropriate spacing between items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more elements or pages on site does not fit repetition/ consistency established throughout One or more elements or pages on site has poor alignment making them difficult to view or read One or more elements or pages on site has poor proximity with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site has poor repetition/consistency amongst sections and pages Many elements on sight have poor alignment which make it difficult to view or read Spacing between elements on sight shows poor proximity 			

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
		inappropriate spacing between items				
Neatness and creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is well-organized Site displays creative or unique design and layout Site creatively portrays elements of speaker's organization/topic No GSP errors found in site text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is somewhat organized but could be improved to aid in viewing Site design or layout is average (lacking creativity) Minor GSP errors found in site text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is disorganized and needs to be restructured Site design or layout is poor Major GSP errors found in site text 		X 3	
Choice and placement of photo(s) and graphic(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate and relevant images, graphics, and photos were used Placement of images enhances look of site Images help to promote the speaker's organization/topic and help tell an appropriate story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more images, graphics, and photos used are not relevant or appropriate Placement of one or more images distracts from look of site One or more images do not help to promote the speaker's organization/ topic or do not relate to story being told 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No images, graphics, and photos used are relevant or appropriate Placement of images is poor and distracts from look of site Images do not promote the speaker's organization/topic or distract from story being told 		X 3	
Usability and navigation of site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site navigation is easy to find, use, and understand Site navigation flows well between pages and is consistent All links on site work correctly and can be easily seen All files are name properly Site is effective and easy to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site navigation is somewhat easy to find, use, and understand Site navigation has some errors or is not consistent between pages One or more links on site do not work correctly Links cannot be easily seen Some files are name properly Site is somewhat effective, but usability could be improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site navigation cannot be found or is confusing to use and understand Site navigation does not flow between pages No links present on site or all links on site are broken No files are name properly Site is difficult to use 		X 3	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF A 100 POSSIBLE						