

Proposed Recommendation by
UIL Review Advisory Committee
to
Standing Committee on Academics

A. Brief Explanation of Proposed Recommendation

This recommendation amends the language of journalism Sections 1021-1027 of the *UIL Constitution and Contest Rules* to include only the structure of the contest and removes specific contest procedures and operations that will be placed into a handbook for each event.

B. Factual and Policy Justifications

The academics portion of the C&CR contains contest structure, rules, contest procedures and operational details. This amendment would more closely align academics with the structure of athletics and music and clarify the language in the C&CR so that it truly becomes a book about the structures and rules of the competition. Handbooks for each event would become the interpretation of the rules in the C&CR.

C. Proposed Recommendation

Section 1021: JOURNALISM PROGRAM AND CONTESTS

- (a) PURPOSE. The purpose of the League's journalism program is not so much to train students to become professional journalists but rather to stress writing and higher order thinking skills and to teach them the basics of communications necessary later in life.
- (b) PRACTICAL TRAINING. Few of the participants in League journalism contests pursue careers in journalism or communications. But more are trained toward critical evaluation of media, and this training eventually spawns a continuous pressure upon these institutions to better serve our nation.
- (c) PROGRAM. The journalism program consists of the voluntary member state high school publications association (ILPC) and the UIL's spring meet journalism contests. Schools need not join the journalism association in order to be eligible for UIL spring meet contests.
- (d) INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE PRESS CONFERENCE (ILPC). For information regarding the ILPC, see Appendix IV.

Section 1023: SPRING MEET JOURNALISM CONTESTS

- (a) ~~REPRESENTATION ENTRIES.~~ Each participant high school may enter as many as three persons in each of the four journalism contests for its conference at the district level. A student may compete in all four contests.
- (b) ~~ELIGIBILITY.~~ Each student entering the journalism contests shall fulfill the eligibility requirements set forth in Subchapter M.
- (c) ~~AMATEUR STATUS.~~ The League has no amateur rule for the academic contests. A student who has worked on a newspaper or in another journalism field for pay is eligible to compete in any League academic contest.
- (d) ~~QUALIFICATION; SUBSTITUTES; ALTERNATES.~~ First, second and third place contestants in individual competitions will advance to the regional and state meets. If an individual qualifier cannot compete at the next higher meet, the alternate shall be notified and allowed to compete.
- (e) ~~CERTIFICATION.~~ Eligibility certification for spring meet journalism contestants is made as

- ~~follows: the academic coordinator or principal is responsible for entering the contestant(s) in the district meet 10 days prior to the meet. See Section 902. The four journalism contests are separate and conducted at different times so that no student will be denied the opportunity to participate in any journalism contest. Journalism contestants qualifying at the district level will be certified directly to the next higher meet by the district meet director, in accordance with Section 903.~~
- ~~(f) CONTEST PREPARATION MATERIAL. A *Journalism Contest Manual*, outlining the objectives and nuances of the four journalism contest areas, is available from the League office. The purpose of this manual is to place the spring meet contests in context with the school's overall publications program. Also available from the League is a list of journalism contest judging criteria as well as a packet of district, regional and state contests from previous years for practice use.~~
- (c) ~~(g)~~ STATE MEET. The State Meet journalism contests are the same as described in Section 904. First place winners in each contest in all conferences will be rated and the school with the top entry in each contest will be awarded a state championship plaque. Thus, in each contest, ~~the first place entries in conferences A, 2A, 3A, 4A and 5A will be subjected to a second judging. The contestant with the top entry will receive a championship plaque, commonly referred to as "Tops in Texas."~~
- ~~(b)-(h)~~ ADMINISTRATION AND JUDGING OF JOURNALISM CONTESTS. The director of the district and regional meets shall appoint a journalism contest director to conduct and supervise the journalism contests. ~~For the district meet, contest materials will be sent from the League office upon requisition by the district director. See Section 902. For the regional meet contests, materials will be sent directly to the regional meet director. A list of contest judging criteria will be provided to each contest director.~~ It is the duty of the contest director to administer the contests in strict adherence to the guidelines set forth by the League office. Instances of variances from the guidelines should be reported to the UIL Director of Journalism immediately. The contest director shall be responsible for preventing any communication between contestants or any reference on the part of contestants to notes, books or printed material other than a printed or electronic thesaurus and/or dictionary and an Associated Press stylebook. The contest director or designee shall be timekeeper for the contest and should give PERIODIC ~~a 15, 10 and 5 minute~~ warnings of the time limit, even if the contest is held in a room where a clock is clearly visible to the contestants. When the 45 minutes have elapsed from the time the contestants have been instructed to begin the contest, the contest director or designee shall collect all papers.
- (1) *Contest Roster.* ~~Contest directors will be provided with a roster from schools' online entries.~~ The contest director should assign a contest number to each contestant.
 - (2) *Identification.* The assigned numbers will be the only identification on the contest papers and will be retained for each event of the contest. Judges shall not have access to the master list of number assignments on the Contest Roster until all judging has been completed. Failure to write the identification number on an entry results in disqualification. Penalty for writing student's name or name of school on entry is disqualification.
 - (3) *Judges.* Judges for each journalism contest shall be secured by the journalism contest director before the contest is administered, subject to approval by the meet director. It is recommended that the judging panel have three members and that at least one member be a current or former journalism teacher. At the regional and state level, at least one member of the judging panel shall be a former or current journalism teacher. A host site can request a

waiver through the state office if it is unable to secure a current or former journalism teacher for the judging panel. The panel may be asked to judge more than one of the journalism contests. Journalism coaches accompanying their contestants to regional meets may serve on judging committees, provided no coach is assigned to judge entries from the same event in which his or her contestant is competing. It is best to select judges who have no vested interest in the contest and whose integrity is above reproach. It is appropriate and recommended to pay judges a stipend for each contest judged.

- (4) *Judging Criteria.* Judges should have on hand a list of contest judging criteria, which will be provided to the meet director with the spring meet packets. ~~Additional copies can be obtained from the UIL state journalism office. Journalism contest directors at all levels should make every effort to secure judges with journalism education backgrounds.~~
- ~~(5) *Points.* Points shall be awarded through sixth place in accordance with Section 902.~~
- ~~(5)-(6) *Ranking the Papers.* Judges shall read and critique all papers and rank the top six places. There can be no ties in these contests.~~
- ~~(6)-(7) *Contest Materials.* Contestants may use a thesaurus and/or (electronic or printed) dictionary and an Associated Press stylebook during the contest. No other reference materials shall be used.~~
- ~~(8) *Reporting Winners.* It is the responsibility of the director of each meet to certify contestants to the next higher level of competition through the online system.~~
- ~~(9) *Return of District Entries.* If the district journalism contests are held on Saturday of the district week, entries may be returned after final results are announced. If the district meet is held Monday through Friday, entries should not be returned until contests are completed on Saturday of the respective district meet. District directors should recycle or destroy all extra contest materials.~~
- ~~(10) *Return of Regional Entries.* If the regional journalism contests are held on Saturday of the regional week, entries may be returned after final results are announced. If the regional meet is held Monday through Friday, entries should not be returned until contests are completed on Saturday of the respective regional meet.~~
- (7) ~~(4)~~ *Use of Computers.* Contestants may choose to use their own computers, which shall be laptops, in the news, feature and editorial contests. If contestants choose to use their own computers, they shall bring a portable printer, associated hardware, software and paper. Spell check, thesaurus and Associated Press stylebook functions may be used if available on the computers. Students who opt to compose their entries on computers accept the risk of computer malfunction. In case of computer malfunction, the contestant may use the remaining allotted time to complete the composition in handwriting or compose on another computer (if available). ~~The typed entry should be single sided and double spaced, using any standard 12-point font and one-inch margins on regular-sized computer paper.~~ When printing the contest on an electronic printer, the print command shall be started by the time contest time expires. Once time has expired, participants and coaches shall not disconnect or connect computer equipment or enter new commands in an effort to print the entry. District or regional host sites are not forbidden to provide computers for contestants but are not expected to make those provisions. Computers will not be provided at state, but contestants may use their own laptops and portable printers.

(MOVED FROM EACH INDIVIDUAL CONTEST)

- (d) ~~(g)~~ UNOFFICIAL RESULTS. Unofficial results of individuals who appear to have placed first through sixth place should be announced.

- (e) ~~(h)~~ VERIFICATION PERIOD. Prior to the announcement of official results, contestants and/or coaches shall be permitted no more than 15 minutes to identify contestants' papers. Judging decisions and rankings are subjective and shall not be subject to protest. Coaches or contestants not present for the viewing period forfeit their opportunity to identify entries.
- (f) ~~(i)~~ ANNOUNCING OFFICIAL RESULTS. The contest director should announce the name and school of first through sixth place individuals. Official results, once announced, are final.

Section 1024: FEATURE WRITING CONTEST

- (a) THE CONTEST.
 - (1) PURPOSE. FEATURE WRITING TEACHES STUDENT TO READ CRITICALLY, TO DIGEST AND PRIORITIZE INFORMATION QUICKLY, AND TO WRITE CLEARLY, ACCURATELY AND SUCCINCTLY. EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON THE SAME WRITING SKILLS AS OTHER UIL JOURNALISM CONTESTS, AS WELL AS THE ABILITY TO WRITE DESCRIPTIVELY.
 - (2) ~~FORMAT OF CONDUCTING THE CONTEST.~~ The Feature Writing Contest at the district and regional levels is a one hour contest. Test materials at the district and regional level will consist of a fact sheet from which participants develop an article.
- ~~(b) SEATING AND INSTRUCTIONS.~~ Contestants shall be assembled and seated sparsely over the room(s). Test material shall be distributed so that all participants begin the contest at the same time.
- ~~(c) OPTIONS FOR WRITING.~~ Contestants who are handwriting their compositions may use ruled or plain white paper, standard notebook or typing paper. The written entry should be single-sided and composed in pencil or ink. Contestants may choose to use their own computers, which shall be laptops. If contestants choose to use their own computers, they shall bring a portable printer, associated hardware, software and paper. Spell check, thesaurus and Associated Press stylebook functions may be used if available on computers. Contestants shall not include their names or the names of their schools on the contest entry. Papers will be identified by numbers assigned by the contest director.
- ~~(d) CONTEST DIRECTOR.~~ The contest director shall be responsible for preventing any communication between contestants or any reference on the part of contestants to notes, books or printed material other than a printed or electronic thesaurus and/or dictionary and an Associated Press stylebook. The contest director or a designee shall be timekeeper of the contest and should give 15 minutes warning of the time limit, even if the contest is held in a room where a clock is clearly visible to the contestants. When the one hour has elapsed from the time the contestants have been instructed to begin the contest, the contest director or designee shall collect all entries.
- ~~(b) (e) STATE MEET CONTEST.~~ At the State Meet level only, feature writing contestants shall be given a biographical sketch of a person who then will be interviewed by the contestants as a group. The live interview will last 30 minutes. The contestants then will have one hour in which to develop their stories from the information in the biographical sketch and from the interview.
- ~~(f) JUDGING THE CONTEST.~~ A properly qualified and impartial judging panel should be selected by the contest director. The papers shall be graded in accordance with the list of journalism contest judging criteria for the contest.
- ~~(g) JUDGING CRITERIA.~~ A list of feature writing judging criteria shall be provided to the contest director, who shall see that copies of the list are made available for review by judges prior to the

~~contest.~~

- ~~(h) UNOFFICIAL RESULTS. Unofficial results of individuals who appear to have placed first through sixth place should be announced.~~
- ~~(i) VERIFICATION PERIOD. Prior to the announcement of official results, contestants and/or coaches shall be permitted no more than 15 minutes to identify contestants' papers. Judging decisions and rankings are subjective and shall not be subject to protest. Coaches or contestants not present for the viewing period forfeit their opportunity to identify entries.~~
- ~~(j) ANNOUNCING OFFICIAL RESULTS. The contest director should announce the name and school of first through sixth place individuals. Official results, once announced, are final.~~

Section 1025: NEWS WRITING CONTEST

(a) THE CONTEST.

(1) *PURPOSE.* NEWS WRITING TEACHES STUDENTS TO READ CRITICALLY, TO DIGEST AND PRIORITIZE INFORMATION QUICKLY AND TO WRITE CLEARLY, ACCURATELY AND SUCCINCTLY. EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON MECHANICAL AND STYLISTIC PRECISION, LEAD WRITING, USE OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT QUIRES AND NEWS JUDGEMET.

(2) *FORMAT OF CONDUCTING THE CONTEST.* The News Writing Contest at the district, regional and state levels is a 45 minute contest. Test material shall consistS of a fact sheet from which participants develop an article.

- ~~(b) SEATING AND INSTRUCTIONS. Contestants shall be assembled and seated sparsely over the room(s). Test material shall be distributed so that all participants begin the contest at the same time.~~
- ~~(c) OPTIONS FOR WRITING. Contestants who are handwriting their compositions may use ruled or plain white paper, standard notebook or typing paper. The written entry should be single-sided and composed in pencil or ink. Contestants may choose to use their own computers, which shall be laptops. If contestants choose to use their own computers, they shall bring a portable printer, associated hardware, software and paper. Spell check, thesaurus and Associated Press stylebook functions may be used if available on computers. Contestants shall not include their names or the names of their schools on the contest entry. Papers will be identified by numbers assigned by the contest director.~~
- ~~(d) CONTEST DIRECTOR. The contest director shall be responsible for preventing any communication between contestants or any reference on the part of contestants to notes, books or printed material other than a printed or electronic thesaurus and/or dictionary or an Associated Press stylebook. The contest director or designee shall be timekeeper for the contest and should give 15 minutes warning of the time limit, even if the contest is held in a room where a clock is clearly visible to the contestants. When the 45 minutes have elapsed from the time the contestants have been instructed to begin the contest, the contest director or designee shall collect all entries.~~
- ~~(e) JUDGING THE CONTEST. A properly qualified and impartial judging panel should be selected by the contest director. The entries shall be graded in accordance with the list of journalism contest judging criteria for the contest.~~
- ~~(f) JUDGING CRITERIA. A list of judging criteria shall be provided in the contest material packet requisitioned from the League office. The contest director shall make available copies of the list for review by judges prior to the contest.~~
- ~~(g) UNOFFICIAL RESULTS. Unofficial results of individuals who appear to have placed first through sixth place should be announced.~~

- ~~(h) VERIFICATION PERIOD. Prior to the announcement of official results, contestants and/or coaches shall be permitted no more than 15 minutes to identify contestants' papers. Judging decisions and rankings are subjective and shall not be subject to protest. Coaches or contestants not present for the viewing period forfeit their opportunity to identify entries.~~
- ~~(i) ANNOUNCING OFFICIAL RESULTS. The contest director should announce the name and school of first through sixth place individuals. Official results, once announced, are final.~~

Section 1026: EDITORIAL WRITING CONTEST

- (a) THE CONTEST.
 - (1) PURPOSE. THE EDITORIAL WRITING CONTEST TEACHES STUDENTS TO READ CRITICALLY, TO DIGEST AND PRIORITIZE INFORMATION QUICKLY, AND TO WRITE CLEARLY, ACCURATELY AND SUCCINCTLY. EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON MECHANICAL AND STYLISTIC PRECISION, NEWS JUDGMENT, AND THE ABILITY TO THINK DEEPLY, TO COMPARE AND CONTRAST AND TO ARGUE OR DEFEND A POINT OF VIEW PERSUASIVELY.
 - (2) CONDUCTING THE CONTEST FORMAT. The Editorial Writing Contest at the district, regional and state levels is a 45-minute contest. Test material shall consist of a fact sheet from which participants develop an editorial.
- ~~(b) SEATING AND INSTRUCTIONS. Contestants shall be assembled and seated sparsely over the room(s). Test material shall be distributed so that all participants begin the contest at the same time.~~
- ~~(c) OPTIONS FOR WRITING. Contestants who are hand writing their compositions may use ruled or plain white paper, standard notebook or typing paper. The written entry should be single-sided and composed in pencil or ink. Contestants may choose to use their own computers, which shall be laptops. If contestants choose to use their own computers, they shall bring a portable printer, associated hardware, software and paper. Spell check, thesaurus and Associated Press stylebook functions may be used if available on computers. Contestants shall not include their names or the names of their schools on the contest entry. Papers will be identified by numbers assigned by the contest director.~~
- ~~(d) CONTEST DIRECTOR. The contest director shall be responsible for preventing any communication between contestants or any reference on the part of contestants to notes, books or printed material other than a printed or electronic thesaurus and/or dictionary and an Associated Press stylebook. The contest director or designee shall be timekeeper of the contest and should give 15 minutes warning of the time limit, even if the contest is held in a room where a clock is clearly visible to the contestants. When 45 minutes have elapsed from the time the contestants have been instructed to begin the contest, the contest director or designee shall collect all entries.~~
- ~~(e) JUDGING THE CONTEST. A properly qualified and impartial judging panel should be selected by the contest director. The papers shall be graded in accordance with the list of journalism contest judging criteria for the contest.~~
- ~~(f) JUDGING CRITERIA. A list of editorial writing judging criteria should be provided in the contest material requisitioned from the League office. The contest director shall make available copies of the list for review by judges prior to the contest.~~
- ~~(g) UNOFFICIAL RESULTS. Unofficial results of individuals who appear to have placed first through sixth place should be announced.~~

- ~~(h) VERIFICATION PERIOD. Prior to the announcement of official results, contestants and/or coaches shall be permitted no more than 15 minutes to identify contestants' papers. Judging decisions and rankings are subjective and shall not be subject to protest. Coaches or contestants not present for the viewing period forfeit their opportunity to identify entries.~~
- ~~(i) ANNOUNCING OFFICIAL RESULTS. The contest director should announce the name and school of first through sixth place individuals. Official results, once announced, are final.~~

Section 1027: HEADLINE WRITING CONTEST

- ~~(a) THE CONTEST.
 - (1) PURPOSE. HEADLINE WRITING TEACHES STUDENTS TO READ CRITICALLY, TO DIGEST AND PRIORITIZE INFORMATION QUICKLY, AND TO WRITE CLEARLY, ACCURATELY AND SUCCINCTLY. EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON THE ABILITY TO DISCERN KEY FACTS AND TO WRITE WITH FLAIR AND STYLE IN ORDER TO TELL AND SELL A STORY.
 - (2) DESCRIPTION FORMAT. The Headline Writing Contest at the district, regional and state levels is a 45 minute contest. Test material shall consist of a fact sheet from which participants will read six short articles and write prescribed headlines for each.~~
- ~~(b) SEATING AND INSTRUCTIONS. Contestants shall be assembled and seated sparsely over the rooms. Test material shall be distributed so that all participants begin the contest at the same time. Contestants may use ruled or plain white paper as scratch paper. Entries may be written in pencil or ink. Contestants shall not write their names or the names of their schools on the contest entry. Papers shall be identified by numbers assigned by the contest director.~~
- ~~(c) OPTION FOR WRITING. Students shall write and submit headlines on the headline count sheet. Use of computers is prohibited.~~
- ~~(d) CONTEST DIRECTOR. The contest director shall be responsible for preventing any communication between contestants or any reference on the part of contestants to notes, books or printed material other than a printed or electronic thesaurus and/or dictionary and an Associated Press stylebook. The contest director or designee shall be timekeeper for the contest and should give a 15, 10 and 5 minute warning of the time limit, even if the contest is held in a room where a clock is clearly visible to the contestants. When the 45 minutes have elapsed from the time the contestants have been instructed to begin the contest, the contest director or designee shall collect all papers.~~
- ~~(e) JUDGING THE CONTEST. A properly qualified and impartial judging panel should be selected by the contest director. The entries shall be graded in accordance with the list of journalism contest judging criteria for the contest.~~
- ~~(f) JUDGING CRITERIA. A list of Headline Writing Contest judging criteria shall be provided to the contest director, who shall see that copies of the list are made available for review by judges prior to the contest.
 - ~~(A) Contestants may use upstyle or downstyle in headlines.~~
 - ~~(B) Contestants need not complete all six headlines in order to win. The selection of winners is a subjective process and therefore, it is possible for five good headlines to win over six mediocre headlines and so on.~~
 - ~~(C) Headlines that are not within the prescribed count, whether too long or too short, will be disqualified.~~~~
- ~~(g) UNOFFICIAL RESULTS. Unofficial results of individuals who appear to have placed first~~

- ~~through sixth place should be announced.~~
- ~~(h) VERIFICATION PERIOD. Prior to the announcement of official results, contestants and/or coaches shall be permitted no more than 15 minutes to identify contestants' papers. Judging decisions and rankings are subjective and shall not be subject to protest. Coaches or contestants not present for the viewing period forfeit their opportunity to identify entries.~~
- ~~(i) ANNOUNCING OFFICIAL RESULTS. The contest director should announce the name and school of first through sixth place individuals. Official results, once announced, are final.~~

D. Potential Fiscal Impact of the Proposed Rule to Member Schools

Handbooks would need to be created for each contest, which will be made available in digital download format for a fee.

E. Standing Committee Consideration

The UIL Review Advisory Committee recommends that the Standing Committee on Academics approve this proposal to the UIL Legislative Council for consideration.