

Section 1021: JOURNALISM PROGRAM AND CONTESTS

- (a) **PURPOSE.** The purpose of the UIL journalism program is not so much to train students to become professional journalists but rather to stress writing and higher order thinking skills.
- (b) **PRACTICAL TRAINING.** Few participants in UIL journalism contests pursue careers in journalism. 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 scholastic publications association (ILPC) and the UIL's journalism contests. Schools need not join the journalism association in order to be eligible for UIL contests.
- (d) **INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE PRESS CONFERENCE (ILPC).** For information regarding the ILPC, see Appendix III.

Section 1023: HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM CONTESTS

- (a) **ENTRIES.** Each member high school may enter as many as three persons in each of the five journalism contests for its conference at the district level. A student may compete in all five contests.
- (b) **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. It is the duty of the contest director to administer the contests in strict adherence to the guidelines set forth by the UIL 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, dictionary and Associated Press stylebook. The contest director or designee shall be timekeeper for the contest and should give periodic 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 contest time elapses, the contest director or designee shall collect all papers.
 - (1) **Contest Roster.** 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. 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 may result in disqualification. The penalty for writing a 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 high school journalism teacher. A host site can request a waiver through the UIL office if it is unable to secure a current or former high school 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 contest packets.
- (5) **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) **Contest Materials.** Contestants may use an electronic or printed thesaurus, dictionary and Associated Press Stylebook during the Copy Editing, News, Feature, Editorial and Headline contest. No other reference materials shall be used.
- (7) **Use of Computers.** Contestants may choose to use their own laptop computers 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). 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 may 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.

- (c) **STATE MEET.** The first place entries in conference A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A and 6A 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."

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.** The contest consists of a fact sheet from which participants develop an article.

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 quotes and news judgment.
 - (2) **Format.** The contest consists of a fact sheet from which participants develop an article.

Section 1026: EDITORIAL WRITING CONTEST

- (a) **THE CONTEST.**
 - (1) **Purpose.** Editorial 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, the ability to think deeply and argue or defend a point of view persuasively.

- (2) **Format.** The contest consists of a fact sheet from which participants develop an editorial.

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) **Format.** The contest consists of a fact sheet from which participants will read six short articles and write prescribed headlines for each.

Section 1028: COPY EDITING CONTEST

(a) THE CONTEST.

- (1) **Purpose.** Copy editing teaches student the vital skills of proofreading and editing to create accurate, clear and succinct writing. Emphasis is placed on the ability to find and correct grammatical, spelling, punctuation, AP style and factual errors.
- (2) **Format.** The contest consists of objective questions, proofreading sentences and editing a news brief.