

2016 Agricultural Communications CDE

May 13, 2016

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

CDE Superintendent: Cheryl Matthewson

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Purpose: The purpose of the Agricultural Communications Career Development Event is to provide individuals with practical communication skills necessary to pursue career opportunities in agricultural communications. Public communications about agricultural products, practice, and policies are essential to the future of agriculture. Students who are equipped with strong communication skills, have developed team work skills and who can use a variety of media to help the public understand issues related to the industry of agriculture have a bright future in the job market.

Event Rules:

1. Teams will consist of 3 members.
2. It is highly recommended that participants wear FFA Official Dress for this event.
3. Any participant in possession of an electronic device other than equipment provided and approved for the event is subject to disqualification.
4. Team members will work together to prepare a written media plan prior to the state CDE. The team will also be responsible for presenting the plan at the state CDE and completing individual practicums and tests.
5. During the practicum portion of the CDE, 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.

Event Components:

A. Team Activities

1. Agricultural-related Media Plan (200 points per team)

- a. 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 budget.
- b. Please refer to the National FFA Agricultural Communications Career Development Event Handbook for requirements and guidelines for the media plan (page 2, section B Team Activities) as well as the Media Plan Proposal Scorecard (page 8).
- c. Each coach must submit their team's media plan electronically in PDF format to the contest superintendent 14 days prior to the CDE date. Coaches will receive a confirmation of receipt email from the contest superintendent.
- d. 2016 Media Plan Scenario: As the communications committee of your chapter you have been approached by the members to help develop publicity for an innovative agricultural practice in your school, region or state (it can be a company, group, organization, practice, class project or technology that is being developed). Your chapter can decide what the project will be. You have a \$10,000 budget for this media plan. Be sure the plan focuses on promotion of the project.

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2. Media Plan Presentation (125 points per team)

- a. The team should present the media plan as if pitching it to the client identified by the scenario.
- b. The presentation should follow the structure of the written media plan.
- c. Teams are encouraged to bring examples of materials that would be used in the execution of the plan (i.e. social media, broadcast advertising, print advertising, press releases, fliers, brochures, website, blogging, and displays).
- d. Each team member must participate in the presentation.
- e. Each team will be allowed 15 minutes to present its media plan to a panel of judges, who will play the role of the client. Teams will be stopped at 15 minutes if they have not already done so, and not permitted to finish presenting. Following the presentation, judges will be allowed 5 minutes to ask questions. Teams will have 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to tear down equipment.
- f. Provided equipment includes: an easel, projector screen, and a table.
- g. Teams may bring additional equipment including electronic devices (including cell phones) for the presentation, as long as they are able to set up and tear down equipment in the time allowed. Additional equipment used during this portion of the CDE may NOT be used in other portions of the CDE.
- h. In the case of equipment failure, the team will be asked to move forward with the presentation. A back-up plan is recommended.
- i. The Media Plan Presentation will be judged using the Ag Communications CDE Scorecard found on page 9 of the National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE Handbook.
- j. The average score will be calculated from the three judges to determine scores for both the proposal and for the presentation.

B. Individual Activities

1. Tests

a. Editing exercise: (25 points per individual; 75 points per team)

Each team member will be given a printed document that contains 25 mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, contestants 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.

b. Communications quiz: (25 points per individual; 75 points per 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 be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

2. Practicums (100 points per individual; 300 points per team)

The practicums will consist of 3 individual events. Each team must assign a member to one of the following jobs PRIOR to arriving at the CDE:

1. Design
2. Electronic Media
3. Writing

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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 a brief orientation at the beginning of the practicums. The press conference will be held following the orientation meeting. Each team member will receive a press packet with background information on the agricultural topic and the expert to use during the event. An expert will speak on the current agricultural topic for 15 minutes. Students will be provided with paper to take notes if they wish. The writers will be involved in a 10 minute question and answer period with the expert (speaker). **ONLY the designated writers may ask questions of the speaker.** Each writer must 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 question and answer session, writers will be dismissed to complete their assigned practicum.

a. Designer: Each designer will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop a magazine cover layout. The objective is effective communication through visual tools. Each designer will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum. The designer practicum will be judged using the Ag Communications CDE Scorecard found on page 10 of the National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE Handbook.

- 2016 Activity – Magazine Cover Layout for *Connecticut Magazine*
- 2016 Software – Microsoft Word
 - Flier will effectively promote speaker, organization and/or topic
 - Specific technical skills for practicum: Overall aesthetics of design, use of graphic design principles, neatness and creativity

b. Electronic Media Specialist: Each electronic media specialist will use the press packet and information that was gathered in the press conference to develop an electronic media message. Each electronic media specialist will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum. The electronic media specialist practicum will be judged using the Ag Communications CDE Scorecard found on page 11 of the National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE Handbook.

- 2016 Activity – Propose an idea for a 30-60 second promotional video (clearly communicate ideas for visuals, sounds, message)
- 2016 Software – Microsoft Word

c. Writer: Writers are to 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. Each writer will have 60 minutes to complete the practicum. The writer practicum will be judged using the Ag Communications CDE Scorecard found on page 10 of the National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE Handbook.

- 2016 Activity – News Release
- 2016 Software – Microsoft Word

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Scoring and Tiebreakers:

The team scorecard will be completed using the Ag Communications CDE Scorecard found on page 13 of the National FFA Agricultural Communications CDE Handbook.

Total team score possible = 775 points

Total individual score possible = 150 points

Team tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:

1. Combined individual practicum rank score
2. Proposal rank
3. Presentation rank

Individual tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:

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

Results:

Results will be posted on the CAAE website in accordance with the General Rules for Connecticut Career Development Events. All questions and concerns in regards to this CDE should be directed to the CDE Superintendent.