

General Excellence

Guidelines for newspaper and newsmagazine entries

Newspaper and newsmagazines are judged twice in the General Excellence critique service and competition each year. During the contest, one set of judges evaluates the entire publication, provides comments for the staff and assigns a score. Another set of judges rates portions of the publication such as the front page, editorials or sports, and awards "best of" recognition.

Staffs that follow a newsmagazine format should note that on their entry form. Newsmagazines, as defined by the National Scholastic Press Association, are publications that consistently use cover art devoted to one story and/or a dominant piece of artwork. Newsmagazines also tend to use longer, more feature-style writing. The same criteria is used for judging both newspapers and newsmagazines.

Individual students do not submit their work in the General Excellence category. Instead, they compete in a separate competition (see information on pages 6-9).

Newspaper General Excellence

Judges for this category review three entire issues of an entered newspaper from the 2008-2009 school year. Typically, they review the most recent issue critically, and evaluate the other two newspapers for issues of consistency. An evaluation book is filled out for each school. Based on the judges evaluation, the newspaper will receive a general excellence rating: merit, achievement, excellent or superior.

Ratings will be announced at the GSPA Awards Ceremony. Categories, based on school size and type of publication, are:

- *High School Printed Newspapers*

Schools are divided based on school size (using the Georgia High School Association classification) and awards will be given within each division.

- *Newsmagazines*

All newsmagazines, regardless of school size, are judged in a separate category using the same criteria for newspapers with special emphasis on feature reporting and design.

- *Online Newspapers*

Online newspapers are judged by the same criteria as newspapers, with special emphasis to issues such as timeliness, ease of navigation and design.

Newspaper "Best of" Awards

Judges also award first place prizes in the following special categories as part of General Excellence judging:

- **Best News Writing:** Articles report, but do not interpret, events that have news value and timeliness to the readers.

- **Best Features Writing:** The story or series of stories includes human interest, entertainment or information.

- **Best Editorial Page:** Editorial pages will be judged on reader interest, originality, appropriateness, clarity of purpose and effectiveness. Editorials should represent the opinion of the staff and editors on a timely news matter of concern to the school, community, state, country or world.

- **Best Use of Photographs:** Use of photographs throughout an issue will be evaluated.

- **Best Sports Coverage:** Effective and equal coverage of men's and women's sports as well as freshman, junior varsity and senior varsity sports will be evaluated. In addition, topics will be evaluated for obvious impact on the student audience.

- **Best Use of Advertising:** Creativity, content, design and overall use of space will be evaluated.

- **Best Front Page Layout:** Front pages will be evaluated for content, design, photos, the use of graphic elements and the effective use of space.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN ENTRY:

NOTE: GSPA Contests are provided as both a learning tool and a way to recognize the excellent work produced by Georgia students and their advisers throughout the school year. Guidelines are set to ensure efficiency in processing of entries.

All entry materials must be postmarked by March 6, 2009. No late entries will be accepted.

Staffs competing in this contest must be 2008-2009 members of GSPA. If your staff is not a current member, please submit a membership form (available at www.gspa.uga.edu) and the late membership fee.

Complete a contest entry form (page 3).

Complete a media information form (Page 5).

Submit the \$40 contest entry fee (or \$30 critique only fee).

Send two copies of your best **three** issues printed during the 2008-2009 school year.

There's no need to select entries for the special categories contests, such as "Best Editorial Page." Your paper will be judged automatically in the special categories.

Questions? Send an e-mail to: jodennis@uga.edu.

Official Entry Form

GSPA General Excellence Contest 2009

Please attach this form to your contest entry materials. Use a copy of this form for each contest you intend to enter. Individual student entries require a separate form. **Type or print neatly.**

School Name: _____ Adviser's Name: _____

Publication Name: _____

School Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP: _____

School/Staff Room Phone: (_____) _____ School/Staff FAX: (_____) _____

Adviser or Staff E-mail Address: _____

Please indicate which contest(s) you are entering:
(NOTE POSTMARK DEADLINES -- NO LATE ENTRIES ACCEPTED!)

- Newspaper (March 6, 2009)
- Newsmagazine (March 6, 2009)
- Broadcast TV News Program (March 6, 2009)
- Literary Magazine, Round One (March 6, 2009)
- Literary Magazine, Round Two (June 30, 2009)

Please indicate what materials you are sending with this entry form:

Contest Entry Materials and Fees:

- Media Information Form
- \$40 Contest Entry Fee
- \$35 Critique Only Fee*

*member will not receive a rating certificate, have their rating published or be recognized at the Awards Ceremony

Materials to be Evaluated:

Two copies of the three best newspapers or news magazines for the 2008-2009 school year:
(Please list publication dates.)

_____ , _____ , _____

- Two copies of a published Literary Magazine.
- Two DVD copies of television news program.

**Return this form, along with a media information form and contest materials to:
GSPA Contests, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, 120 Hooper Street, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-3018.**

*GSPA is not responsible for entries lost in the mail.
Use of a certified mail delivery service is recommended.*

For office use only:

Date rec.	Check#	Total Amt. Paid/Late fee	Processed?	Initials
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Media Information Form

GSPA General Excellence Contest 2009

A separate media information form MUST be attached to each contest entry. Please type or print neatly.

Name of Publication or Broadcast Program: _____

School: _____ City: _____

MEDIA CATEGORY:

Newspaper/News magazine Broadcast News Literary Magazine Yearbook

Frequency of Publication/Program: _____ per _____ Total Circulation or Audience: _____

Number of students on regular staff (not including contributors/freelancers): _____

METHOD OF PRODUCTION FOR PRINT MATERIAL:

Commercial Printer (Printer does all from set type to layout to press run.)

Commercial Printer

In-School Offset Press

In-School Office Duplication Machine

Other (explain) _____

PRODUCTION INFORMATION FOR BROADCAST PROGRAMS:

What is the purpose of this broadcast? _____

What format do you use? _____ What is the average length of program? _____

Please describe your method of production: _____

FINANCING:

Cost per issue/program: \$ _____ Cost per year: \$ _____

Amount from school/administration: \$ _____ Amount from sales/subscription: \$ _____

Amount from advertising per year: \$ _____ Base ad rate: \$ _____ per _____

Amount from other sources (explain): \$ _____

WORK DISTRIBUTION:

Percentage of work done by students: _____ Percentage of work done by adviser: _____

Percentage of work during class: _____ Percentage of work after school hours: _____

Percentage of photos taken by students: _____ Percentage of photos taken by professionals: _____

PRIMARY SOURCE OF PRODUCTION:

First-year journalism class Experienced journalism class Student volunteers/extracurricular

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (Example: printer errors, etc.)

Return this form with your entry form & materials to: GSPA Contests, Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication, 120 Hooper Street, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-3018