

What to Expect at the 2020 Student Journalism Competition Finals

ADVISER TO-DO LIST

- Plan for transportation via your school's guidelines.
- Register each **competing student, non-competing student, and teacher/adviser/chaperone** by March 15 using this [link](#). (See the list of all students who have qualified for this year's SJsCs [here](#).)
- Please note that each school is invited to bring up to two additional students who are not competing. (We are limited by space in the facilities used for the event.)
- **Have your students create notes of thanks and mail these to PSPA by March 1.** [See link for more information.](#)
- Have students' parents or guardians fill out the [photo release form](#). Bring these forms when you come on March 25.
- **We will announce the topic of the press conference to all participants no later than March 1.** For students whose prompt relies on the press conference, encourage them to start researching this topic so that they will be prepared to ask questions.
- **Pack up some copies of your publications to bring and share at the event.**

EVENT OVERVIEW

Location

- Penn State Hetzel Student Union (HUB), outside the Freeman Auditorium

Parking

- Your registration confirmation has driving directions and information about parking passes. Free parking is available in the Stadium West Lot, which is a 20-25 minute walk from the competition site. Parking for oversized vehicles is available in the Porter North Lot, which is a 25-30 minute walk to the competition site. Parking is available adjacent to the competition site in the HUB parking deck for an hourly fee.

9:30-10 AM — Registration

- Members of the PSPA Board will be setting up and available to answer questions by 9:15.
- Penn State's Bellisario College of Communications will have muffins, danishes, bagels, coffee, and juices ready for you by 9:30.

10-10:30 AM — Welcome + Opening Remarks

- Please plan to arrive and be all checked in before 10 AM.
- The program will start promptly in the Freeman Auditorium at 10 AM.

10:30-11:20 AM — Press Conference

- Shortly after the opening remarks, we will hold a press conference where presenter(s) will introduce all attendees to their field of expertise.
- We will reserve a considerable slot of time for students to present questions to the panel.
- Student questions are vital so that journalists can find their angles for many of the contest prompts.

11:30–12:30 — Student Journalism Contests

Most of the prompts for Finals will reflect the press conference. Below is a breakdown of the prompts, **We will post the finals rubrics for each prompt on the PSPA website by March 1.**

- **1Y – Yearbook Caption Writing** – This category has nothing to do with the press conference. Instead, just like at the Regionals, students will receive a sheet that features four pictures and also a sheet that provides information for each picture. Students will have to create a lead-in and full caption for each shot.
- **2Y – Yearbook Copy Writing** – Students will have to devise an angle and write a story that reflects some aspect(s) about the press conference.
- **3Y – Yearbook Sports Writing** – Students will have to devise a sports angle and write a story that reflects some sports aspect(s) about the press conference.
- **4Y – Yearbook Spread Design** – Similar to what they did at the Regional level, students will have to design a spread to reflect the entire day's events at Penn State. *Note:* Students must bring their own dry color mediums if they wish to use color.
- **5N – Newspaper News Story Writing** – Students will have to devise a news angle and write a story that reflects some aspect(s) about the press conference.
- **6N – Newspaper Feature Story Writing** – Students will have to devise a news feature angle and write a story that reflects some aspect(s) about the press conference.
- **7N – Newspaper Sports Story Writing** – Students will have to devise a news sports story angle and write a story that reflects some sports aspect(s) about the press conference.
- **8N – Editorial Cartoon** – Students will have to create an editorial cartoon on either the press conference as a whole or a particular topic discussed by the presenters. *Note:* Students must bring their own dry color mediums if they wish to use color.
- **9N – Editorial Writing** – Students will have to write an editorial on either the press conference as a whole or a particular topic discussed by the presenters. The writers should determine which information is relevant and important to the editorial. Students should aim ideas at either supporting or opposing a position.
- **10L – Lit Mag Poetry** – This category has nothing to do with the press conference. Instead, just like at the Regionals, students will receive a sheet that prompts the students to create an original poem based on a given subject.
- **11L – Lit Mag Stand-Alone Artwork** – This category has nothing to do with the press conference. Instead, just like at the Regionals, students will receive a sheet that prompts the students to create an original art piece based on a given subject. *Note:* Students must bring their own dry color mediums if they wish to use color.
- **12B – Broadcast Writing** – Students will have to create a script for a school television program that meets a given time requirement and reflects aspects of the press conference and morning events.
- **13YP and 14NP – Yearbook and Newspaper Photography** – Students must submit seven pictures taken at the PSPA SJC Finals full-day event.
 - Make sure to prioritize creating a quality photo caption/cutline for each.
 - Students must log on to the PSPA website paschoolpress.org by Thursday, April 2 at 6:00 PM to submit their photos.
 - One photo should be submitted from each of these categories: 1) depth of field, 2) framing, 3) press conference, 4) emotion, 5) action, 6) angle, 7) best in show.
- **15BV – Broadcast Video** – Students must create a feature package showcasing at least one of the reasons why the HUB is a central location for students at Penn State. Students should explore all of the different facets and activities that go on in the building. Note that regional categories 15BF + 15BN are combined for the state final.
 - Students must log on to the PSPA website paschoolpress.org by Thursday, April 2 at 6:00 PM to submit their videos.

12:30–2:15 PM — Lunch

- **Lunch is on your own.** There are plenty of dining options in the HUB. Advisers and students sometimes also take a short walk to downtown State College. Information stations in the HUB can help with directions.
- *During lunch, behind the scenes, judges score entries and determine the winners.*

2:15–3:15 PM — Afternoon Presentation

- We will announce the presentation topic no later than March 1.

3:15–3:45 PM — Awards

- We will recognize the **Journalism Teacher of the Year, Student Journalist of the Year, and Keystone Winners** for yearbook, newspaper, and literary magazine.
- We will announce and recognize the state winner of each category of the SJs except photography and video. These winners will be announced on our website and social media after entries are judged.
- The ceremony usually ends between 3:45–4:00 PM.

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR PHOTO & VIDEO

Student photographers and videographers should be prepared for all types of weather.

PHOTO

- Make sure that the students familiarize themselves with the seven required shots listed above.
- Students can and should shoot photographs during the press conference and afternoon speaker— but respectfully and without interfering with any activities on stage.
- During the actual contest time, photography finalists will travel once through the room where the other finalists will compete. They will also travel with PSPA Board members around the Penn State campus to get creative shots both there and along the way.
- We welcome the photo finalists to continue taking shots, even throughout the lunchtime on your own.
- **Make sure that student photographers have practiced writing captions/cutlines, as these are assessed in judging.**

VIDEO

- Student contests will shoot a feature package that features showcasing at least one of the reasons why the HUB is a central location for the students at Penn State.
- Music tracks should not be incorporated into the final feature package. (This ensures students will not be disqualified due to improper licensing/copyright violations.) Music is acceptable as natural sound.
- Students are welcome to explore the entire HUB in search of interesting interviews and footage.
- Students should follow all journalistic ethics when filming. Students are expected to act professionally.