

All-Kansas Video News Critique 2010-2011

KANSAS SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

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V VIDEO NEWS

Evaluation Guide

- This guide is designed to be an educational device to improve the quality of your video news programs.
- This guide is intended to point out positive aspects of your program as well as to point out possible deficiencies.
- Judging comments are designed as suggestions for improvement. Keep in mind that these comments represent just one individual's opinion.
- Comments should represent current trends in video news production.
- Judge's comments may not apply to all school situations. Please understand that it would be impossible for your judge to be aware of the specifics of each school.
- Each of the five sections contained in this guide book has an overall evaluation where the judge must rate the section according to an overall set of criteria. The final evaluation is based on an average of the five section evaluations.
- Each section calls for a specific ranking with a (3) for strong work in the area; a (2) for being adequate, a (1) for needing improvement and an (NA) for not applicable.
- A two-page critique should accompany this booklet.

Video news program name: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

City & Zip Code: _____

Adviser: _____

School Classification: _____

Judge: _____

COVERAGE & CONTENT

Evaluation Criteria

- ___ Does the program include a variety of news stories, including features, breaking news, issues and newsworthy profiles?
- ___ Are the stories relevant to the primary audience, whether its just the student body and faculty of the school, or whether it extends to the greater community and beyond via cable and/or the web?
- ___ Are the day-to-day lives of students reflected in the stories?
- ___ Do stories cover timely issues of interest to student viewers and others?
- ___ Does news coverage take precedence over features and sports, unless it's appropriate for it not to?
- ___ Do reporters place an emphasis on the "why" and "how" of stories?
- ___ Are feature stories varied to include both school-sponsored and non-school activities?
- ___ Does sports coverage include a mix of breaking news and features?
- ___ Do both sports and features include a mix of issue stories and profiles?
- ___ Is the subject matter significant and appropriate for the time allotted?

COVERAGE & CONTENT

Final Evaluation

All-Kansas:

Coverage is complete and thorough, and it helps tell the story of the school, primarily its students, but also the faculty and surrounding community.

Award of Commendation:

Coverage is generally complete and adequately serves a broad viewership, but it may not fully take advantage of its forum to inform its audience of key stories and issues.

Award of Merit:

Coverage tends to be somewhat shallow, and the staff needs to place more emphasis on providing news of use to its viewers.

Comments:

WRITING & EDITING

Evaluation Criteria

- ___ Do stories have strong opens that entice viewers?
- ___ Are scripts written in active voice, emphasizing simple sentences with only one thought per sentence?
- ___ Are transitions effective? Do they make the object of the previous sentence the subject of the next sentence or vice versa?
- ___ Do writers effectively use devices like repetition of key words to help readers understand?
- ___ Do writers write to the video, using “hit-and-run” writing to remind viewers of the relationship of the words to the pictures? Do writers then “run” from the video by providing additional information in the script?
- ___ Do scripts exhibit the hallmarks of grammatical writing that follows Associated Press broadcast style?
- ___ In VOs, do writers still remember to attribute information to a source?
- ___ In VO/SOTs, do writers properly balance VOs with sound bites, not relying on sound bites to tell the entire story?
- ___ Are sounds bites effective and revealing of the subject or the issue at hand?
- ___ Do stories have strong “closes” that effectively summarize the story and remind viewers of the important points in the stories? Do the closes avoid stating the reporters’ opinions?

WRITING & EDITING

Final Evaluation

All-Kansas:

The staff understands that writing video news is different than writing for print media, and stories are crisply told and feature all the hallmarks of good video news presentation.

Award of Commendation:

Writing and editing show that the staff understands a bit about how video news writing differs from print writing, but there are still a few stories that don’t follow good video news writing standards.

Award of Merit:

Writing and editing show little or no understanding that video news writing differs from print writing. Staff needs to work much harder on editing stories so they are more accessible to viewers.

Comments:

C ONTINUITY & ON-AIR PERFORMANCE

Evaluation Criteria

- ___ Does the show have an effective open that clearly brands the program as something of value to the primary audiences?
- ___ Does the staff report on important news, sports and features from program to program in a consistent manner?
- ___ Is there continuity also from story to story in the manner its introduced and presented by anchors and reporters?
- ___ Are more important stories given more time and prominent placement in the run-down than less important stories?
- ___ In there continuity within a story: meaning stories flow smoothly, pictures and words match, and all stories have beginnings, middles and ends?
- ___ Are stories balanced, with all credible sides presented? Are stories objective in their choice of words and pictures?
- ___ Are anchors confident and do they appear natural in front of the camera?
- ___ Are reporters confident and do they appear natural in front of the camera?
- ___ Does all "talent" speak in a concise, clear, authoritative manner and at a proper pace so that the audience can understand what is being said?
- ___ In the event of interviews, is there a proper balance between shots of the interviewer and the interviewee? Are questions fair and easy to understand?

C ONTINUITY & ON-AIR PERFORMANCE

Final Evaluation

All-Kansas:

Staff uses the intimacy of video news to establish a rapport with its viewers and to present information in an engaging manner. The staff also practices a commitment to consistency from story to story and from show to show.

Award of Commendation:

Staff only occasionally uses the intimacy of video news to inform readers about important news in an engaging manner. The staff's commitment to consistency sometimes seems missing.

Award of Merit:

Staff rarely, if ever, uses the intimacy of video news to inform readers about important news in a timely and accurate fashion. Continuity from show to show and from story to story is lacking.

Comments:

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Evaluation Criteria

- ___ Are all shots steady and is it clear that photographers (almost always) used tripods to capture images?
- ___ Are shots in focus and properly white-balanced?
- ___ Is there proper contrast in all shots, and are subjects properly lit?
- ___ Do photographers capture compelling establishing shots that immediately capture viewers' attention?
- ___ Do photographers use a variety of shots (close-ups, medium and wide shots) to provide different perspectives for the audience?
- ___ Do photographers limit gimmick shots like zooms and pans, and if they do use them, do they do them slowly?
- ___ Do photographers effectively use the rule-of-thirds to create a center of visual interest for their subjects?
- ___ In shooting sports, do photographers capture the events' pivotal moments?
- ___ Are shots edited to avoid jump-cuts in the story?
- ___ When editing, do photographers allow shots to remain on screen for the proper amount of time — long enough for viewers to understand, but not so long that they become bored?

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Final Evaluation

All-Kansas:

Staff photographers consistently capture compelling images that are also technically sound and edited crisply to tell great stories.

Award of Commendation:

Photographers generally capture compelling images that are also technically sound and edited crisply to tell great stories, but the quality suffers occasionally in some stories.

Award of Merit:

Photographers regularly have trouble capturing images that are in focus, lit properly or that capture pivotal moments. Work and instruction is needed in these areas.

Comments:

TECHNICAL QUALITY

Evaluation Criteria

- ___ Does the staff take advantage of a studio to provide a “home” for the show, even if the show goes “on location” for a show?
- ___ Is the studio set-up, no matter how rudimentary, appropriate to the tone and quality of the show?
- ___ Does studio lighting provide proper contrast, accurate color reproduction and proper exposure?
- ___ Does lighting for all stories provide proper contract, accurate color reproduction and proper exposure?
- ___ Does the staff take advantage of post-production to enhance the viewers’ experience and understanding of stories?
- ___ Are video editing techniques consistent from one story to another?
- ___ Are audio levels clear and crisp and properly balanced in the studio?
- ___ Are audio levels consistent from source to source and from story to story?
- ___ Are transitions from story to story appropriate and glitch free?
- ___ Do graphics — both OTS graphics and lower-third graphics — enhance stories and explain significance to viewers?

TECHNICAL QUALITY

Final Evaluation

All-Kansas:

Staff makes full use of available technology to make its program as professional-looking and sounding as possible.

Award of Commendation:

Staff occasionally uses available technology, but doesn’t always meet professional technical standards.

Award of Merit:

Staff rarely uses available technology, and rarely reaches professional technical standards for video news presentation.

Comments:

FINAL EVALUATION

Video News Evaluation

All-Kansas:

This is a great video news program. It engages its audience and tells important stories that reflect the life of the school and its students. The program's technical quality and photography reflect the highest standards of scholastic journalism, and its reporters and anchors seem committed to maintaining that professional standard.

Award of Commendation:

This is an overall good video news program. It tells important stories about its school and students, but it may occasionally lapse into trivia. Further, its technical aspects and photography, while strong, can use some improvement in order to meet the highest standards of scholastic journalism.

Award of Merit:

This is a video news program that has too many flaws to be rated at the top. It may be a new enterprise, and because of that, the staff and the adviser may just be learning about the nuances of video news presentation. Further, the program may have some strong areas, but it also has many areas that need significant improvement.

Comments:

FINAL EVALUATION

Video News Evaluation

Coverage & Content

- All-Kansas
- Award of Commendation
- Award of Merit

Writing & Editing

- All-Kansas
- Award of Commendation
- Award of Merit

Continuity & On-Air Performance

- All-Kansas
- Award of Commendation
- Award of Merit

Photography

- All-Kansas
- Award of Commendation
- Award of Merit

Technical Quality

- All-Kansas
- Award of Commendation
- Award of Merit