

# **INDIVIDUAL CONTEST CATEGORIES:**

## **News**

### News article

Summary (succinct) lead; inverted pyramid structure; direct quotes.

### Sports article

Summary or feature lead; factual; no editorial statements; direct quotes.

### Feature article

Creative yet factual lead; engaging details throughout; direct quotes.

### Personality Profile

Creative yet factual lead; engaging details throughout; direct quotes; focuses on a single aspect of the subject's personal or professional life.

### News photograph

Storytelling photograph; strong subject matter; imaginative composition; not posed.

### Sports photograph

Storytelling photograph; may, but need not, capture action; strong subject matter; imaginative composition; not posed.

### Feature photograph

Storytelling photograph; uses creative composition techniques; may, but need not, be posed.

### Editorial

Staff (usually unsigned) editorial; focus on a single issue; discussion of opposing arguments; use of strong supporting arguments; accurate throughout.

### Cartoons

Clear message; precise focus; usually (but not necessarily) hand-drawn.

### Graphics

Infographic, logo, or illustration; usually (but not necessarily) designed on computer.

### Sports column

Signed opinion column focused on any area of athletics; accurate throughout.

### General/Editorial column

Signed opinion column printed in any section of the newspaper; accurate throughout.

### Reviews

Opinion piece usually concerning (but not limited to) music, film, video game, restaurant, or a television show; include headline with submission.

Front page design

Full-page design from the front page of the print newspaper.

Inside page design

One full-page design from the print newspaper; clear, cohesive design packages with a dominant visual and story package.

Inside spread design

Two-page design spread from the print newspaper; clear, cohesive design packages with dominant visuals and story packages.

Video/Multimedia

Short video or interactive graphic on the news website.

## **Literary magazine**

Poetry

One piece of original poetry.

Fiction

One piece of original fiction writing.

Feature

Nonfiction story told in a creative manner; includes engaging details throughout.

Review

Opinion piece that critically assesses music, film, video games, restaurants, or a television show; include headline with submission.

Personal Essay

Original nonfiction story based in a personal experience or narrative.

Drama

One piece of a play narrative.

Photography/Art Layout

A collection of artistic photography designed as a unit; engaging subject matter; creative composition techniques.

Graphic

One piece of original illustration; may be hand-drawn or designed on computer.

Poetry Layout

Design of a spread that contains poetry; submit entire spread (at least two facing pages).

#### Fiction Layout

Design of a spread that contains fiction writing; submit entire spread (at least two facing pages).

#### Nonfiction Layout

Design of a spread that contains nonfiction writing; submit entire spread (at least two facing pages).

#### Individual Art

One piece of original art, any medium, in the format it appeared in the magazine; attributed to one artist.

#### Individual Photograph

Artistic photograph; engaging subject matter; creative composition techniques; attributed to one photographer.

## **Yearbook**

#### Theme Copy

Copy that introduces, advances and concludes the theme or concept of the book; usually found in the opening, divider and closing pages; include headline with submission.

#### Feature copy

Any article published in the book (except for sports); should consist of a creative yet factual lead, engaging details, and direct quotes; should not include editorial statements; include headline with submission.

#### Sports copy

An article pertaining to sports; should consist of a creative yet factual lead, engaging details, and direct quotes; should not include editorial statements; include headline with submission.

#### Captions

A set of captions from one spread; submit entire spread (two facing pages).

#### Sports Captions

A set of captions from a sports design spread; submit entire spread (two facing pages).

#### Theme Spread Design

Design of an opening, a divider, or a closing spread; submit one entire spread (two facing pages).

#### Sports Spread Design

Design of a sports spread; submit one entire spread (two facing pages).

### Feature Spread Design

Design of a spread focusing on any topic (excludes theme, sports, and advertising spreads); submit one entire spread (two facing pages).

### People Section Design

Two-page spread from the portrait section of the yearbook.

### Feature Photograph

Storytelling photograph; uses creative composition techniques.

### Sports Photograph

Storytelling photograph; may, but need not, capture action; strong subject matter; imaginative composition.

### Theme Photograph

Storytelling photograph that relates to the theme of the yearbook.

## **TV News/Multimedia**

### Spot News

Coverage of a single, unplanned news event; submit a single segment.

### Hard News

Coverage of a single planned news event or an investigative report; submit a single segment.

### Feature News

Human interest story or profile that is not investigative; submit a single segment.

### Sports

Sports report (could be spot, hard, or feature); submit a single segment.

## **Radio/Podcast**

### News Story

Coverage of a single news story; straight forward; submit a single segment.

### Feature Story

Human interest or profile that is not investigative; engaging details throughout; creative use of sound, interviews and narration to convey the nature of the story.

### Sports Story

Sports report (could be news or feature); can be analysis/commentary or recap.

## Longform Platform

Investigative and feature pieces that focus on one subject and makes creative use of audio elements.

## **OVERALL CONTEST CATEGORIES:**

### Achievement

Publications, websites and newscasts awarded the “Achievement” rating meet some general journalistic standards but lack depth in coverage and writing and excellence in design, photography and visuals.

### Honor

NCSMA’s “Honor” rating is awarded to publications, websites and newscasts that demonstrate a basic understanding of journalistic principles.

### Distinction

Scholastic newspapers/websites/magazines/yearbooks/newscasts that receive NCSMA’s “Distinction” rating demonstrate excellence in most areas of scholastic journalism. Any weaknesses are generally limited to one area.

### All-North Carolina

This is NCSMA’s highest rating. “All-North Carolina” scholastic newspapers/websites/magazines/yearbooks/newscasts demonstrate excellence in all areas of journalism.