

SIPA Mail-in Writing Contest Instructions

SIPA offers a mail-in writing contest with **more than 25 categories for members**. Entries must be **published between Dec. 1, 2010 and Nov. 30, 2011**.

Each individual staff that enters the contest **must be a SIPA member**.

So if the school newspaper is a SIPA member and that same school's yearbook wants to enter in the mail-in contest, the yearbook must join SIPA as well.

Memberships are by publications not by school or adviser.

Entries are limited to one student per category, but unlimited per staff and publication.

So Jane Doe from the Columbia HS newspaper can only enter the Sports Story category once, but other Columbia HS newspaper staff members can enter the Sports Story category as well. Jane Doe can also enter other categories. Jane just can't submit two stories in one category.

The cost of this contest is \$5 per entry or 11 for \$50.

Entries will not be returned to the school. Awards will be presented during the closing ceremony Sunday morning at the SIPA Convention, and first place winners will be posted online after the convention.

Below is a description of each of the categories broken down by publication type: **broadcast script writing, literary magazine, newspaper, photo cutlines and yearbook.**

Email Leslie Dennis at schopres@mailbox.sc.edu with any questions.

Entry forms and last year's winners can be found online at http://sipa.sc.edu/mail_ins.html

SIPA Mail-in Contest Category Descriptions

Broadcast Script Writing

The script should be complete in directions for audio, video and timing. Students may enter their scripts in one of the following categories:

- Academic Script
- News Script
- PSA Script
- Sports Script

Literary Magazine

- Drama – The skit should contain the proper conventions of staging and dialogue. As with any narrative work, clear character, plot, setting and theme development should be evident.
- Poetry – Works should exemplify conciseness and rhythm in lines and, hence, in form. Figurative language devices and active word choice mark good poetry.
- Prose Fiction and Narrative – Entries should demonstrate originality in thought that permeates the character, plot, setting, and themes of pieces. Submissions in this category should employ catchy openings, clever endings and engaging diction.
- Prose Non-fiction – The non-fiction entry may manifest in many forms: the feature article, the review, and the simple expository or persuasive essay. Any form must have a clear focus that is supported by engaging detail and logical organization.

Newspaper

- Editorial Column – These bylined columns should have the logical development and conscious of an unsigned editorial. The writer's voice should be clear, showing an original style as well as respect and freedom from petty prejudices.
- Entertainment/Feature Column – These bylined columns should show keen observation and sound judgment of the writer. They should appeal to the reader's emotions. They may deal with a serious or lighthearted topic. Often they are autobiographical or reflective in nature. They divulge a significant autobiographical moment or share the author's exploration of a question or insight about human condition. Devices such as anecdotes, figurative language and dialogue should be evident.
- Feature Story – The focus of a feature should be human interest. It may have a newspeg, but timeliness is not the most important element. Sources are important in this type of story.
- News Feature – This has a strong newspeg, but reveals the human side of the news. It puts an entertaining spin on a topic and avoids reporter opinion.
- News Story – These stories cover a timely topic. They have strong summary leads or an indirect lead followed by clear nutgraph. Stories should include quotes both direct and indirect with appropriate attribution and strong organization. No reporter opinion.
- Personality Feature – These stories should indicate an original interview with an attention-getting lead, correct use of quotations, effective revelation of character and an unusual angle. They are profiles

of individuals or groups whose lifestyles and or accomplishments are of interest to the reader.

- Reviews – These articles should evaluate a book, CD, concert, event, movie, play, restaurant, TV program or Web site, etc. While the plot may be included, it should not be the primary focus of the article. All artistic aspects of the genre, (such as style, directing, acting and cinematography, etc.) should be considered.
- Sports Story – May include all types of sports news including advance game or issue oriented story. Sports stories should contain ample quotes and avoid editorializing.
- Sports Column – The sports column should show keen observation and sound judgment. Should be timely and make concrete, unique points showing the writers knowledge of the subject. These may be tied to sports news, but should not be the athlete of the issue.
- Sports Feature – The reporter should go behind the scenes to find out the why and convey the background or mood of a sport either scholastic, intramural or life sport. Sources are important.
- Staff Editorial – These pieces should be the voice of the publication. They should not have a byline, but may use the pronoun "we." Editorials should state a purpose and use logical development. Triteness and wordiness should be avoided. Facts must be carefully verified by reliable research.

Photo Cutlines

Students must submit a photograph printed in their publication and the cutline. Cutlines need to be at least two sentences in length. Winners will be selected based on only on the written cutline- not on the visual photograph.

- Feature Cutlines
- News Cutlines
- Sports Cutlines

Yearbook

- Academics Copy – Copy should reflect the interplay and blending of academics into the daily life of the school.
- Advertising/Community Copy – Copy should integrate community activity and involvement with the school and the school's various outreach programs into the community.
- Groups Copy – Copy should focus on groups that give, groups that honor, and groups that contribute to the school.
- People Copy – Copy should capture individual achievement, interest, background, contributions, goals — in short, human interest.
- Sports Copy – Copy should highlight players, coaches, and fans and their contributions and reactions to various sports games.
- Student Life Copy – Copy should concentrate on people and their stories which take them beyond the regular school day.
- Theme Copy – Copy should incorporate the yearbook theme with specific details from and about the school year.

SIPA Mail-in Contest Entry Form

Please fill out this sheet and attach it to the front of your entry.
All entries must be published between Dec. 1, 2010 and Nov. 30, 2011.

Publication must be a member of SIPA to enter.

Students may enter only one entry per category.

Cost: \$5 per entry or \$50 for 11 entries

Postmark Deadline: Dec. 5

Student Name _____

School Name _____

Publication Name _____

Entry Categories

Broadcast:

- Academic Script News Script PSA Script
 Sports Script

Lit. Magazine:

- Drama Poetry Prose Fiction and Narrative
 Prose Non-Fiction

Newspaper:

- Editorial Column Staff Editorial Entertainment/Feature Column
 Feature Story News Story News Feature
 Personality Feature Review Sports Column
 Sports Feature Sports Story

Photo Cutlines:

- Feature Cutline News Cutline Sports Cutline

(Photograph must accompany the cutline as printed in the publication.)

Yearbook:

- Academic Copy Advertising/Community Copy
 Groups Copy People Copy
 Sports Copy Student Life Copy
 Theme (Opening, Divider, Closing)

Mail entry to:

Southern Interscholastic Press Association
University of South Carolina
School of Journalism and Mass Communications
Columbia, SC 29208