

# OFFICIAL RULES | 2012 National Student Speech Contest

## *Students of Agronomy, Soils and Environmental Sciences*

### 1. Eligibility

Any undergraduate student who is a member of ASA, CSSA, and SSSA shall be eligible to compete in this contest except those having won first, second, or third prize in a previous contest. Only one contestant from any one student section club will be permitted to enter the contest. An alternate, listed and certified on the same certification sheet as the primary contestant, may participate in lieu of the primary contestant. If you do not have a club but have students who are interested in participating, please contact the 2012 Speech Contest Advisor to develop a plan to prepare students for this contest.

To be eligible in the national contest, a student must have been a contestant in a local club contest. The student must qualify for the national contest as an undergraduate student. Participation in such local contests must be verified by submitting the title of the speech used by the contestant, along with contestant's name and the number of participants in the local contest, to the National Faculty Speech Contest Committee Chair by September 19 2012). Please use the attached certification sheet for official entry in the contest and send to:

Dr. Keith Ingram  
University of Florida  
Tel: 352-392-1864 | Fax: 352-392-4092  
ktingram@ifas.ufl.edu

Please hold local contests during the spring semester or early fall semester at the latest. Contest titles from previous years can be used for local contests and can be obtained from the web at:

**[www.agronomy.org/students/contests](http://www.agronomy.org/students/contests)**  
**[www.crops.org/students/contests](http://www.crops.org/students/contests)**  
**[www.soils.org/students/contests](http://www.soils.org/students/contests)**

The national speech contest titles will be provided to prepare for the national contest only. Please do not wait for these titles in order to hold local contests.

### 2. Rules and Procedures

Each contestant shall give one speech for not less than five (5) minutes, but not more than seven (7) minutes. Speech titles shall be of a specific nature, rather than of a general nature. The speech contest chair shall notify all contestants of the time and place for drawing of subjects and their speaking position.

Each individual's speech title shall be selected as follows:

On the day of the contest, approximately six hours prior to the contest, the contestants shall draw slips containing titles for speeches and order of presentation. These slips shall be prepared by the National Faculty Speech Contest Committee in advance and in sufficient number for all contestants.

Each contestant shall draw one slip, containing three titles, from which shall be chosen the title for the speech. The contestant's choice shall be limited to the three titles shown on the slip which was drawn. Contestants are allowed one more chance to draw another title slip if they choose not to use the titles from the first draw.

The titles on these slips will be chosen by the National Faculty Speech Contest Committee and submitted to all clubs approximately two months prior to contest time and will be posted on the web at **[www.agronomy.org/students/contests](http://www.agronomy.org/students/contests)**, **[www.crops.org/students/contests](http://www.crops.org/students/contests)**, **[www.soils.org/students/contests](http://www.soils.org/students/contests)**. The contestant must select a title and report that title to the contest chair within one hour after receipt of the slip containing three titles.

The speech must be an original product of the contestant. Factual information may be obtained from virtually any source such as reference materials brought to the contest, local libraries, internet, and interviews with authorities at the contest. The contestant must then formulate and write the speech without any assistance. The finished speech may be critiqued by the contestants' friends and advisors, but the critique may only deal with aspects related to the speaker's voice, physical manner, use of notes, visuals, and props. These include voice volume, speaking speed, pronunciation, eye contact, gesture, mannerisms, and effectiveness of visuals and props. Under no circumstances can any portion of the speech be written for or dictated to the contestant by anyone.

### 3. Chair of the Contest

The chair or session moderators chosen by the student or faculty chair will make no preliminary remarks about any speaker or subject, nor shall the name nor the location of the club to which the contestant belongs be mentioned, nor place of residence. The contestant's name and title of the speech shall be announced twice, slowly and clearly. A short interval (not less than one minute) shall be allowed between talks to allow the judges to complete their notes.

The chair or moderator will permit NO applause or photographs during or after each speaker's presentation. An opportunity will be provided for pictures and recognition by applause after all the speeches for that preliminary or final session are concluded and the speakers are reassembled to be applauded and photographed (if they so chose). The contest is open to the general public.

The chair or moderator will NOT permit speakers' to request questions from the audience.

### 4. Judging and Judges

- All speech training is directed toward audience appeal and the effectiveness of presentation of subject matter.
- At the end of the contest, worksheets and ballots will be collected intact, and one withdrawn and placed in an envelope and sealed as the tie-breaking ballot.
- Research in speech contest work indicates that seven judges are a sufficient number to reflect the average reaction of an audience and of any number of judges selected for a contest.
- Judges shall be appointed well in advance of the contest by the National Faculty Speech Contest Committee Chair.

### 5. Manner of Judging

Each judge will be provided with a combined speech contest worksheet and ballot, and a list of contestant names.

At the conclusion of the speeches, each judge shall indicate on the official ballot the choice for first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth place. Judges shall disregard overtime or overtime. The worksheet and ballot shall be kept intact and handed to the counters.



## 6. Timers

There will be at least one timer per session or room for both the preliminary and final rounds of the contest. They shall keep the official record of the time of each contestant's speech and will provide the counters with a written report of the timing of each speech, clearly setting out information as to undertime or overtime. The timers shall be seated in such a place that the warning signal will be clearly visible to the speakers.

### Timing the speech:

The timers shall warn the speakers at 5 minutes by a green light and/or green sign which shall be left on for 1 minute.

The timers shall hold up an amber sign at 6 minutes which shall be left up for 1 minute.

The timers shall hold up a red sign at 7 minutes, leaving it up until the speech is concluded.

Timing shall be started when the speaker addresses the chair.

## 7. Penalties

Penalties shall be computed as follows:

- a. If the talk runs 15 seconds under five minutes or 15 seconds over seven minutes. . . . . No penalty
- b. Under 4-3/4 or over 7-1/4 minutes. . . . . 5% penalty
- c. Under 4-1/2 or over 7-1/2 minutes. . . . . 10% penalty
- d. Under 4-1/4 or over 7-3/4 minutes. . . . . 15% penalty
- e. Under 4 or over 8 minutes . . . . . 20% penalty

## 8. Counters

Prior to the contest, the chair shall appoint three members as counters, with one designated as chair. At the conclusion of the contest speeches, the judges shall be asked to rise. Each judge shall be seated as soon as the ballot has been picked up by the counters. The counters shall retire from the room and shall post each speaker's points on a form previously prepared for that purpose. In posting points, the counter shall allow six points for first place, five points for second place, four points for third place, three points for fourth place, two points for fifth place, and one point for sixth place as shown on the judges' ballots. The penalty described by Rule 7, if any, shall be applied against the total ballot points of the speaker involved. Any judge's ballot which shows a tie for any position, or which does not contain the names of six speakers, shall not be counted.

## 9. Announcement of Winners

The National Faculty Speech Contest Committee shall announce the winners based on the findings of the judges, whose decision shall be final, in conjunction with the Student Awards Program.

### 2012 Speech Contest Advisor

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### 2012 Student Contest Members

Jeri Sigle, Kansas State University  
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# Judging

The following are brief descriptions of the speech components upon which contestants will be judged:

**Voice:** Pitch, flexibility, volume, use. Sometimes a speaker's voice loses its effectiveness by being too high; this tends to suggest immaturity, tenseness, or even aggressiveness. Sometimes a voice seems forced, guttural, nasal or uncontrolled. The effective voice is flexible, moves easily from pitch level as needed in the delivery. The good voice is always loud enough to be easily heard; the utterance is always understood.

**Physical Manner:** Appearance, gestures, poise, movement. Some television experts claim the idea can be told better through pantomime than words. How does the speaker look? Does the speaker seem to be in control of the situation? Is the speaker physically calm and alert? Do the speaker's movements help to paragraph ideas and to make the speech easier to follow? The manner in which speakers carry or project themselves from the time of the introduction until returning to their seat is part of the effectiveness of the speech. The effective speaker is interested in the listeners and wants them to accept with assurance the words presented.

**Speech Structure:** Opening, body, conclusion. A good speech has an opening that provokes interest and introduces the subject, a body of material organized to reinforce and to clarify the ideas, and a conclusion that applies or appeals.

**Development:** Use of examples, illustrations, and data. The idea that is developed with examples or illustrations, with concrete and vital data, will hold interest and influence thinking. There must be logic in the use and organization of this material for the speaker's message to be understood.

**Language:** Grammar, pronunciation, style, appropriateness. The choice of words and their arrangement will determine the clarity of the message. The language should fit the occasion, be accurate in connotation, lively in style, and be the property of the speaker.

**Speech Value:** Ideas, logic, contribution, impressiveness. The speaker has a responsibility of expressing fresh and important thoughts. Listeners must feel that the speaker has influenced their thinking on an important topic.

**Effectiveness:** Achievement of purpose, listener appeal, reception. Listeners should ask: "Was I able to see the purpose of the speaker?" "Did the speaker make it clear to me?" "Did the speaker succeed in affecting my thoughts and feelings as he/she desired?" "Was the effect on me similar to that of others?" "Could I follow the line of thinking?"

### Contest Score Sheet | go to:

[www.agronomy.org/students/contests](http://www.agronomy.org/students/contests)  
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## Contact Information

### Membership Representative— Student & Early Career Activities

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