Test format and Standards for Journalism Educators

The Journalism Education Association wants its CJE test to be an effective way for you to demonstrate your knowledge of the basics in journalism and media advising. We want you to be able to speak to multiple aspects of this career, including journalistic writing and editing, graphics and design, legal and ethical considerations and more. And we hope this test allows the Certification Commission to assess fairly and consistently the abilities of JEA members who seek CJE status.

About the test: The exam has three components: 50 multiple choice questions, 20 short answer questions and seven to 10 demonstration activities, which involve writing and sketching exercises. Feel free to complete the sections in any order. You will have 2.5 hours to complete the exam, so please plan accordingly. You will be able to answer most of the short answer questions in 3-4 sentences, and you may use bullet points as appropriate. You will use word processing software to type your answers. You will not be permitted to use notes or other resource materials. In writing your answers, do not use your name, the name of your school or any other form of identification of yourself or your program. The evaluators should not be able to determine who you are based on your answers; such answers will be invalidated. More than one Commission member will be involved in evaluating your answers. Consequently, each answer must be able to stand alone. Do not refer to your statements in a previous question when answering another question. The rubric and sample answers provided later in this study guide should help you better understand an appropriate length for your responses.

The Journalism Education Association’s primary mission is to support journalism teachers and advisers. The Certification Commission believes that support is rooted in a comprehensive exam measuring basic knowledge and application of the JEA teaching standards. Of those, the law and ethics standards are the foundation upon which all scholastic journalism programs are built. In addition, the Commission has determined that passing the law and ethics questions is essential for earning Certification. Candidates must score 75 percent or higher from the law and ethics questions—in both multiple choice and short answer sections—to pass. Your cumulative score also must be 75 percent or higher to earn Certification.

Standard #1A – Knowledge of Curriculum and Content/Classroom
1A.4. A solid foundation in law and ethics as it applies to scholastic media, including First Amendment-related rights and responsibilities

- important court cases related to scholastic journalism and media law (visit http://www.jeasprc.org/)
  - Tinker v. Des Moines, Hazelwood v. Kulhmeier, Bethel v. Fraser, Morse v. Frederick, Dean v. Utica, Yeo. v. Town of Lexington,

- censorship and prior review
- forums
- editorial policies
- unprotected speech: libel, slander; invasion of privacy; obscenity, profanity; fighting words (imminent danger)
- time, place, manner limitations
- copyright
- FERPA
- codes of ethics (JEA, SPJ and others)
Standards and study topics

1A.5. The history and evolution of media; functions, limitations and influences of media in society
   • role of journalism in a democratic society (trustee model)
   • five freedoms of the First Amendment
   • role of student media in secondary schools
   • Yellow Journalism, penny press and other historical trends, including recent history such as the Pentagon Papers, Watergate, innovations like the advent of television, 24-hour news networks, USA Today, web-based journalism
   • John Peter Zenger, William Randolph Hearst, Joseph Pulitzer, Stephen Glass, Jason Blair, Edward R. Murrow and other historical figures
   • digital media and its impact on traditional media

1A.6. News values for today’s media consumers
   • hard and soft news

1A.8. A variety of forms of journalistic writing (i.e. news, features, opinion, etc.) and their appropriate style (i.e. Associated Press, multiple sources with attribution, punctuation, etc.); additional forms unique to journalism (i.e. headlines, cutlines, plus visual presentations, etc.)
1A.9. Importance of matching language use, angle and style with intended audience
   • inverted pyramid
   • headlines and cutlines/captions
   • lead/lede
   • AP style: capitalization, titles, numbers, commas, times, dates, attribution, city/state
   • direct and indirect quotes
   • characteristics of news, feature, opinion
   • types of opinion writing: editorial, commentary, column, review, news analysis

1A.10. Value of and skills needed to package media products effectively, using various forms of journalistic design utilizing a range of visual, auditory and interactive methods for a variety of media
1B.7. The importance of effective information design for all media
   • maestro concept
   • principles, elements of design: contrast, dominance, proportion, rhythm, unity, alignment, linkage, balance
   • visual entry points
   • grid/column structure
   • typography
   • use of legally obtained images/sound
   • alternative story forms
   • readability/navigation
   • basic Web design, including themes and content management system (CMS)

1A.11. Value of photojournalism to tell stories in compelling ways
   • telling the whole story: before, during, after
   • variety of angles, distances: close, medium, wide, high, low
   • aperture, ISO, shutter speed, light
   • basic photo manipulation
   • photo vs. photo illustration

(continued on next page)
Standards, continued

• rule of thirds
• photo types: environmental portraits, mug shots
• compositional techniques: framing, repetition, leading lines, simplicity, silhouette
• color modes: RGB, CMYK, grayscale
• file types: JPEG, TIFF, PDF, PNG, etc.
• resolution

1B.4. The value of technology for today’s and tomorrow’s media
1B.6. The role of leadership training, fiscal responsibility, conflict resolution and time management in student publications production

• staff management, including deadlines, conflict resolution
• staff manual
• business and advertising practices, including budget, purchasing, sales and marketing practices
• scholastic journalism organizations, including their programs, services
• working with administrators, peers, faculty, parents, community, professionals, alumni
• value of journalism program: professional research regarding performance of journalism students, connection of journalism to 21st century skills

Who will score my exam?
Members of the JEA Certification Commission will serve as evaluators for the exam. At least two members will read your answers and answers will be scored holistically. The rubric and sample answers included below represent the scoring criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 - .5 (unsatisfactory)</th>
<th>1 (partially proficient)</th>
<th>1.5 (proficient)</th>
<th>2 (exemplary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A significant part of the answer is incorrect; several misconceptions exist</td>
<td>• Some of the answer is correct; at most one misconception or error exists</td>
<td>• Entire answer is correct; no misconceptions exist</td>
<td>• Entire answer is correct; no misconceptions exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Answers concepts with limited detail, examples, support; critical components of the answer are missing</td>
<td>• Answers some key concepts with limited detail, examples, support; more than one critical component of the answer is missing</td>
<td>• Answers most key concepts with adequate detail, examples, support; a critical component of the answer is missing</td>
<td>• Thoroughly answers all key concepts with strong detail, examples, support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Response is unclear and wordy</td>
<td>• Response is generally unclear and wordy</td>
<td>• Response is generally logical, clear and concise</td>
<td>• Response is logical, clear and concise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample answers scored with the rubric

Question 1:
1. List and explain two ways students can use (1) photos that will not violate copyright laws (if they are producing a newspaper, yearbook or online news site) OR (2) music that does not violate copyright laws (if they are producing a broadcast or online news site). Choose to answer either option 1 or option 2.

Answers:
Exemplary:
For either ... get specific written permission from the copyright owner.  
1. Use photos from government sites (FEMA, for instance), use photos from Creative Commons sites, take their own photos. 
2. Create their own music (using something like GarageBand), use only a small portion of a song under fair use (e.g. if you are indicating the top five songs selected for the prom theme, you could use a short clip of each).

Proficient:
For either ... get specific written permission from the copyright owner. 
1. Use photos from government sites, use photos from free websites, take their own photos. 
2. Create their own music, use only a small portion of a song.

Partially Proficient / Basic / Developing:
1. Use non-copyrighted photos; use your own photos. 
2. Use a small portion of a song.

Unsatisfactory:
2. Borrow your own music you downloaded from a for-pay site, such as iTunes.

Question 2:
How have reporting and the role of reporters changed in the last 20 years?

Answers:
Exemplary:
The economy and the demand today’s audience has for more visual and interactive presentations have led to changes in coverage and presentation. Backpack journalism means reporting is more efficient and reporters often need to be able to use video, audio and still photography to augment their reporting. To be successful, reporters need to be multimedia literate and deliver stories across platforms, including such emerging venues as Twitter and blogs, sometimes a challenging expectation. In addition, the 24-hour news cycle means constant deadlines and a need to be both fast and accurate and willing to update continually.
Sample answers scored with the rubric

**Proficient:**
Reporters are faced with learning new technologies and delivering information in new ways like websites. They may be required to deliver stories not only in their newspapers but also on television and websites. This means they have to learn how to use new equipment and software (and quickly) because of a 24-hour news cycle.

**Partially Proficient / Basic / Developing:**
Reporters are using new technologies to combine different kinds of journalism. A reporter may not just write a story, but he may also have visuals and audio to go with it. News cycles have changed so reporters have to file stories more frequently.

**Unsatisfactory:**
Reporting and the role of reporters have changed a lot in the last 20 years. With changes in technology, reporters’ roles are easier and they actually do less of the work themselves.

[Second sentence of answer is incorrect/has a misconception.]

Point totals and earning a passing score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>Point Total</th>
<th>Percentage of Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Choice</td>
<td>1 point each</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Answer</td>
<td>2 points each</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration</td>
<td>1-2 points each</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What if I don’t pass the law and ethics part but score well on everything else?
You may take an alternate version of the law and ethics questions within one year for a small administrative fee. You will not have to retake the other parts of the test if you earned a 75 percent or higher in those areas.
Suggested reading materials

Please visit the JEA Bookstore to get a great deal on journalism-education resources.
store.jea.org

Journalism textbooks and workbooks


Multimedia Guidebook, National Scholastic Press Association
Newspaper Guidebook, National Scholastic Press Association
Yearbook Guidebook, National Scholastic Press Association
Magazine Guidebook. National Scholastic Press Association
http://www.studentpress.org/pubs.php

Scholastic Newspaper Fundamentals, Columbia Scholastic Press Association
Scholastic Yearbook Fundamentals, Columbia Scholastic Press Association
Available on CD from CSPA: http://cspa.columbia.edu/

The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law

Quill & Scroll News Media Evaluation Scorebook
(Quill and Scroll is using a downloadable News Media Evaluation Form now.)
http://quillandscroll.org/news-media-evaluation

websites

JEA Development and Curriculum Commission
http://jea.org/blog/category/resources-for-educators/development-and-curriculum/

JEA Digital Media Committee
http://www.jeadigitalmedia.org/

JEA Scholastic Press Rights Commission
http://www.jeasprrc.org/

Poynter Institute's NewsU
http://www.newsu.org/tools

Student Press Law Center
http://www.splc.org/