



DIGITAL CINEMA PRODUCTION



SkillsUSA Championships Technical Standards

PURPOSE

To evaluate each competitor's preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the development, pre-production, production and post-production of a short film.

First, download and review the General Regulations at: <https://updates.skillsusa.org>.

ELIGIBILITY (TEAM OF TWO)

Open to a team of two active SkillsUSA members enrolled in a program with filmmaking/video production as the occupational objective. Each state may send one high school and one college/postsecondary entry.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

Class E: Competition Specific — Business Casual

- Official SkillsUSA white polo shirt
- Black dress slacks or black dress skirt (knee-length minimum)
- Black closed-toe dress shoes

Note: Wearing socks or hose is no longer required. If worn, socks must be black dress socks and hose must be either black or skin-tone and seamless/nonpattern.

These regulations refer to clothing items that are pictured and described at www.skillsusastore.org. If you have questions about clothing or other logo items, call 1-888-501-2183.

Note: Competitors must wear their official competition clothing to the competition orientation meeting.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. Supplied by competitor:
 - a. USB thumb drive with self-addressed envelope if you want it returned
 - b. DSLR or video cameras
 - c. Up to two computers to be used for editing and music composition
 - d. Two 6' multiple-outlet surge protectors
 - e. Copyright-free music or licensed music (must bring proof of license for each song or sound effect used)
 - f. Optional equipment that may be used:
 - 1.) Audio
 - a.) Boom pole for microphones
 - b.) Wireless microphones
 - c.) Lavalier microphones
 - d.) Multiple microphones
 - e.) Shotgun microphone
 - f.) Portable mixer
 - 2.) Lighting
 - a.) Reflectors
 - b.) Camera-mounted lighting
 - c.) Handheld lighting units
 - d.) Hot lights (on stands)
 - e.) LED lights (on stands)
 - 3.) Camera
 - a.) DSLR that shoots video
 - b.) Video camera
 - c.) Cellphone camera
 - d.) 16x9 format
 - 4.) Production equipment
 - a.) Mono or tripods
 - b.) Steadicam-type system
 - c.) Sliders
 - d.) Body mount straps
 - e.) Drones
 - f.) Dolly
 - g.) Jib or crane
2. All competitors must create a one-page resume. See “Resume Requirement” below for guidelines.

RESUME REQUIREMENT

Competitors must create a one-page resume to submit online. SkillsUSA national competitors should submit their resume by June 1. The link for resume submission will be published on <http://updates.skillsusa.org> on May 1. Failure to submit a resume will result in a 10-point penalty.

Your resume must be saved as a PDF file type using file name format of “Last Name_First Name.” For example, “Amanda Smith” would save her resume as **Smith_Amanda**. If you need assistance with saving your file as a PDF, visit [the Adobe website](http://updates.skillsusa.org) for more information.

Note: Check the Competition Guidelines and/or the updates page on the SkillsUSA website at <http://updates.skillsusa.org>.

PROHIBITED DEVICES

Cell phones or other electronic devices not approved by a competition’s national technical committee are **NOT** allowed in the competition area. Please follow the guidelines in each technical standard for approved exceptions. Technical committee members may also approve exceptions onsite during the SkillsUSA Championships if deemed appropriate.

Penalties for Prohibited Devices

If a competitor’s electronic device makes noise or if the competitor is seen using it at any time during the competition, an official report will be documented for review by the SkillsUSA Championships director. If confirmed that the competitor used the device in a manner which compromised the integrity of the competition, the competitor’s scores may be canceled.

SCOPE OF THE COMPETITION

The competition is defined by the current industry technical standards. The competition overall will take on the format of a film festival. The films will be shot, edited and uploaded prior to the national convention. During the initial days of the national convention there will be additional competition activities that will be outlined upon arrival at nationals. Additionally, while at the convention, the films will be screened and will be followed by a short Q&A with the filmmakers. Using this format, all the filmmakers will be able to see the work of their fellow filmmakers, which will allow for them to be inspired by their peers. Adding to the experience at nationals there will be industry standard workshops wherein professional filmmaking techniques and best practices will be taught to both students and teachers.

The details of the competition are as follows:

THE PROMPT

The prompt will be designed in such a way that will not only make it very difficult to cheat but will push the filmmakers to emulate the best filmmakers in the world. In the prompt there will be a specific genre or style assigned (e.g., drama, comedy, thriller, romance, film noir, spaghetti western, etc.) and a filmmaker to emulate, which could be a renowned director, cinematographer, screenwriter, production designer, editor or others.

THE JUDGING

The films will be judged in five areas of competency: directing, writing, editing, cinematography and acting. Each of the different areas of competency will encompass all the standards of competencies based on industry standards. Details of the judging are outlined further in the “Skill Performance” section, #7.

THE COMPETITION

To increase the focus on the core filmmaking competencies, the competition will be divided into five portions: development, pre-production, production, post-production and a written exam that will assess knowledge from the standards and competencies. The final deliverable of the competition that will be judged will be a short film (up to five minutes including the credits). The short film will be developed, filmed and edited during the predetermined timeline of the competition which will be given prior to the commencement of the competition. The development, pre-production, production and post-production portions of the competition will all be completed and turned in prior to the SkillsUSA convention. All competitors will be notified or asked to attend a briefing prior to the commencement of the competition wherein they will receive specific instructions as to the details and duration that will be allowed for the completion of the short film.

All screenwriting and footage must be written or filmed after the competition has begun unless otherwise specified in the prompt.

Upon arriving to nationals, there will be a schedule outlined wherein additional competition activities will be announced along with their required details. For this portion of the competition the student filmmakers should bring to the national convention the equipment necessary to shoot, light and edit additional content. The details of what will be filmed will be outlined in a mandatory briefing at the opening of the national convention.

THE ADDITIONAL INDUSTRY TRAINING

During the schedule of the national convention, time will be outlined for the young filmmakers along with their teachers to receive industry standard instruction in the form of a workshop. The goal with this instruction is to have the best young filmmakers coming together at nationals and returning with more knowledge than they came with as filmmakers.

RESOURCES

During the SkillsUSA Championships, [SneakOnTheLot.com](https://www.sneakonthelot.com) will be used as the platform for the competition. The competition will be hosted and outlined on the website. Competition support curriculum will be created specifically for the competition. This is where the examination will take place along with the location where the short films will be uploaded and where the judging will take place. Free access to the website will be provided to all competing schools during the competition. All the resources on the site (rights free music library, sound effects library, curriculum and tutorials) will be made available to competitors. These same resources can be made available to state competitions upon request.

KNOWLEDGE PERFORMANCE

The competition will include a written exam covering basic cinema knowledge. The team members will complete the test individually. The exam will be given online within the structure of the “Sneak on the Lot” website curriculum that will be created for the competition.

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

1. The 4 phases of the filmmaking process may be drip-fed through the website to assure the filmmakers focus on each step of the process assuring more attention to the details of the process that are often skipped due to the filmmakers rushing to the production phase of the filmmaking process. These phases of the competition will all happen and be completed prior to arriving at the national convention.
2. An additional competition activity will be outlined and happen in the initial days of the national convention.
3. Q&A: After watching the team's film in a film festival setting a short 5-to-10-minute question and answer session will be conducted. Competitors will be asked about their process, methods and techniques for making their film.

SKILL PERFORMANCE

1. The competitors will submit a short film up to five minutes in duration, which will be created during the predetermined time of the competition by a team of two students. Additional students may be used as crew members and cast but they cannot fill the roles of the following: writer, director, cinematographer, producer or editor. These roles must be fulfilled by the two competing filmmakers.
2. All footage must be shot within the timeframe of the competition unless the prompt or the focus of the competition dictates otherwise.
3. The teams may be asked to study certain filmmaking artisans (directors, writers, cinematographers, editors or other roles or styles of filmmaking) prior to the competition, wherein they will be asked to reflect the studied styles in their short videos. The filmmaker or style may also be given at the beginning of the competition and time will be allotted within the schedule of the competition for the filmmakers to do their research. All these details will be given out at the competition orientation. Orientation attendance is mandatory.
4. Participants must turn in the finished video via digital upload in the required format to be announced at orientation. The upload must be submitted to the judges by the time specified during the orientation.
5. The submission is to be a creative narrative piece. It is not in the form of a PSA, documentary, news story or promotional video.
6. The scoring rubric will include (but is not limited to and will be adjusted according to the available competition time) the following criteria:
 - a. Written exam
 - b. Writing: beat sheet, log-line, synopsis, screenplay, narrative story structure.
 - c. Directing: blocking, shot list and schematics, storyboards, production design, overall creativity and execution.
 - d. Cinematography: composition, depth of field, exposure, camera movement, coverage, lighting (set lighting & practicals), use of color and leading lines.
 - e. Editing: cutting for emotion, pacing, structure, advancing the story through cutting, titles, graphics, execution of visual effects if applied, and use of score to advance the story.
 - f. Acting: performance, believability and casting.

- g. Producing: Adherence to the prompt, organization, production audio quality, pre-production elements (call sheets, script breakdown, etc.)

STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES

DCP 1.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills necessary to describe the production overview

- 1.1. Describe cinema production careers
- 1.2. Explain production overview
- 1.3. Complete program proposal and treatment for a production
- 1.4. Explain the four production steps
 - 1.4.1. Development
 - 1.4.2. Pre-production
 - 1.4.3. Production
 - 1.4.4. Post-production
- 1.5. Complete storyboards for a production
- 1.6. Define script writing guidelines
- 1.7. Explain costing out a production
- 1.8. Define world video standards
- 1.9. Define HDTV standards

DCP 2.0 — Implement the knowledge needed to develop a screenplay and pre-production

- 2.1. Describe the process of identifying underlying rights and how to obtain them
- 2.2. Demonstrate the creation of a beat sheet
- 2.3. Demonstrate the creation of a log line
- 2.4. Demonstrate the creation of a brief synopsis
- 2.5. Demonstrate the creation of a synopsis
- 2.6. Demonstrate the creation of a treatment
- 2.7. Demonstrate the creation of a screenplay
- 2.8. Describe the elements of a screenplay
- 2.9. Describe the element of story structure
- 2.10. Demonstrate how to breakdown a script
- 2.11. Demonstrate how to schedule a script
- 2.12. Demonstrate how to hold a production meeting
- 2.13. Demonstrate how to create a call sheet
- 2.14. Demonstrate how to create a shot list & schematic
- 2.15. Describe the importance of blocking with your actors and camera
- 2.16. Demonstrate the creation of storyboards

DCP 3.0 — Apply the knowledge needed to describe and demonstrate lens operation and control

- 3.1. Describe the type of lenses
- 3.2. Define various camera angles
- 3.3. Describe zoom lenses
- 3.4. Demonstrate f-stops and iris
- 3.5. Demonstrate control of depth of field
- 3.6. Illustrate focusing/follow focus/rack focus/macro focus
- 3.7. Explain the application of filters

DCP 4.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills necessary to describe and demonstrate camera operation and control

- 4.1. Define video resolution
- 4.2. Describe and demonstrate camera mounts and tripod use
- 4.3. Operate camera pan heads
- 4.4. Demonstrate basic camera moves (e.g., pan, tilt, dolly, pedestal)
- 4.5. Illustrate black balancing and white balancing
- 4.6. Describe shutter speed
- 4.7. Demonstrate exposure using f-stops
- 4.8. Explain frame rates
- 4.9. Demonstrate use of camera viewfinder

DCP 5.0 — Implement the skills and knowledge needed for describing and demonstrating composition

- 5.1. Describe leading lines
- 5.2. Demonstrate insert and cutaway shots
- 5.3. Describe static composition
- 5.4. Describe dynamic composition
- 5.5. Define single center of interest
- 5.6. Describe shifting the center of interest
- 5.7. Demonstrate leading the subject
- 5.8. Describe the Rule of Thirds
- 5.9. Define balance of mass
- 5.10. Demonstrate frame central subject matter

DCP 6.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills needed to describe and demonstrate cinema lighting

- 6.1. Describe hard and soft lighting
- 6.2. Define color temperature
- 6.3. Demonstrate intensity control through varying distance
- 6.4. Identify lighting instruments
- 6.5. Identify lighting modifiers
- 6.6. Demonstrate three-point lighting (e.g., main, fill, back light)
- 6.7. Describe lighting ratios
- 6.8. Describe back light intensity
- 6.9. Describe subject-to-background distance
- 6.10. Describe area lighting
- 6.11. Apply the uses of existing (natural) light
- 6.12. Demonstrate drawing of a light plot
- 6.13. Identify lighting controls
- 6.14. Calculate on-location power needs

DCP 7.0 — Implement the skills and knowledge needed to describe and demonstrate audio

- 7.1. Describe the frequency/loudness relationship
- 7.2. Define room tone
- 7.3. Differentiate major microphone designs
- 7.4. Describe directional characteristics

- 7.5. Define handheld and personal microphones
- 7.6. Position microphones
- 7.7. Identify audio connectors
- 7.8. Describe uses of wireless microphones
- 7.9. Describe methods of creating the stereo effect
- 7.10. Describe digital audio
- 7.11. Demonstrate operation of audio mixer controls

DCP 8.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills needed to describe and demonstrate video recording media

- 8.1. Describe hard drive-based recording
- 8.2. Define solid state memory storage
- 8.3. Define digital compression
 - 8.3.1. Describe MPEG-2
 - 8.3.2. Describe MPEG-4
 - 8.3.3. Describe H.264
- 8.4. List professional video formats

DCP 9.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills needed to describe and demonstrate video editing

- 9.1. Describe continuity editing
- 9.2. Demonstrate cutaways
- 9.3. Define relational and thematic editing
- 9.4. Demonstrate bridging jumps in action
- 9.5. Illustrate shooting angles
- 9.6. Describe or demonstrate audio continuity
- 9.7. Demonstrate operation of software-based editors
- 9.8. Explain timecode
- 9.9. Define editing with proxies

DCP 10.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills needed to describe and demonstrate graphics

- 10.1. Describe titling
- 10.2. Describe character generator
- 10.3. Describe opening credit sequence
- 10.4. Describe end credit crawl

DCP 11.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills needed to describe and demonstrate a location scout & tech scout

- 11.1. Discuss the potential issues with nearby potential ambient sound issues
- 11.2. Discuss power needs (Need of house power or generator power)
- 11.3. Identify bathroom availability
- 11.4. Identify lunch location or facilities
- 11.5. Identify ownership of location
- 11.6. Discuss camera and lighting placements
- 11.7. Identify production needs (hair, make-up, wardrobe, photo copies, changing rooms)
- 11.8. Identify parking needs and restrictions

SCREENING OF SUBMISSIONS

Some of the submissions may be screened following the debriefing on Friday. These will be the best videos submitted but will not be presented in a way as to reveal scores. Competition winners will be announced at the final awards ceremony.

COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED ACADEMIC SKILLS

The technical committee has identified that the following academic skills are embedded in this competition.

Math Skills

- Measure angles
- Apply transformations (rotate or turn, reflect or flip, translate or slide, and dilate or scale) to geometric figures
- Find slope of a line

Science Skills

- Use knowledge of mechanical, chemical and electrical energy
- Use knowledge of heat, light and sound energy
- Use knowledge of temperature scales, heat and heat transfer
- Use knowledge of sound and technological applications of sound waves
- Use knowledge of the nature and technological applications of light
- Use knowledge of static electricity, current electricity and circuits

Language Arts Skills

- Demonstrate use of such verbal communication skills as word choice, pitch, feeling, tone and voice
- Analyze mass media messages

CONNECTIONS TO NATIONAL STANDARDS

State-level academic curriculum specialists identified the following connections to national academic standards.

Math Standards

- Numbers and operations
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data analysis and probability
- Problem solving
- Communication
- Connections
- Representation

Source: NCTM Principles and Standards for School Mathematics. For more information, visit: <http://www.nctm.org>.

Science Standards

- Understands the structure and properties of matter
- Understands the sources and properties of energy
- Understands forces and motion
- Understands the nature of scientific inquiry
- Understands the scientific enterprise

Source: McREL compendium of national science standards. To view and search the compendium, visit: www2.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp.

Language Arts Standards

- Students adjust their use of spoken, written and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
- Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
- Students use spoken, written and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion and the exchange of information).

Source: IRA/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts. To view the standards, visit: www.ncte.org/standards.