FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

Why did you change the format of the festival last year?

The High School Festival was conducted for over thirty years without any substantial changes. We felt that it was time to freshen up the format to reflect more accurately what we teach in the Division of Communication and to transition from a simple competition to more of a true festival atmosphere. We want to focus more on enrichment and learning and to give our guests more opportunities to interact with our faculty and students in a non-competitive environment.

Does that mean that there are no competitive events?

Not at all! We continue to have events for individuals and groups in speech, drama and video. Some categories and formats have changed, but we continue to feature competitions.

I can’t find the scripture or poetry competitions. Can students perform a passage of scripture?

Yes! The Solo Performance event includes dramatic readings, poetry and scripture.

What about poetry?

We have combined poetry, dramatic reading and scripture into one category called Solo Performance. This is a reflection of how we currently teach the genre of drama called "One-Person Show" or "Solo Performance" here at BJU. A student is free to choose poems or excerpts from novels, short stories, scripture or plays to perform in this category. They can even combine several different genres in the same performance. Last year we reduced the number of separate events gives us the freedom to add valuable classes, workshops and events to the schedule for the festival.

What kinds of classes and workshops will be part of the festival?

We will offer classes and workshops on several topics related to the dramatic arts. We hope to offer something for everyone from acting to worldview to teaching speech and drama. Our faculty will present interactive 45 minute sessions to appeal to students and sponsors alike.
What is the Twenty-Four Hour Playwriting Competition and how can my students participate?

The Playwriting Competition is an event for student writers and actors. Even if a student has never attempted to write a play, any student with an interest in writing can be successful.

Students who wish to write a short play will need to arrive on campus by Monday, November 2 by 1:00 pm to attend the organizational meeting for writers. At the meeting they will receive instructions and prompts (details that every contestant must include in their ten-minute play).

The writers will have until noon on Tuesday to complete their plays and submit them to the judges. Four plays will be selected on Tuesday evening that will be directed and staged for an audience later in the week.

Students who wish to participate as actors in this event will audition to be a part of the event from 4:30-5:30 on Monday, November 2. There are a limited number of slots available for actors and they must be available to rehearse on Tuesday evening and most of the day on Wednesday. Actors who are selected will meet on Tuesday, November 4 for an organizational meeting at 4:30 pm. Rehearsals will begin after the meeting with directors from the BJU Theatre Arts department.

The four winning plays are rehearsed on Tuesday night and Wednesday and are presented for the festival audience on Wednesday night, November 4 at 7:30 pm in Performance Hall. Awards will be given for best play, best performance of a new play and best actors.

Won't it be difficult for participants to be fully involved in the Communication/Drama Festival as well as in music, art and preaching competitions?

Yes. We realize that these changes will create more conflicts with other events than in years past. One of the strengths of the old format was that multi-talented students could run from one side of campus to the other and take part in several different competitions. We are encouraging this year’s participants to think carefully about which events they are most interested in. Perhaps a student could focus on music one year and drama the next. Of course, it is still possible for many students to participate in multiple competitions but sponsors may wish to help students plan their events to avoid too many conflicts.

Note: Student actors in the Twenty-Four Hour Playwriting Event will not be excused from rehearsals except on a very limited basis. They should not plan to be involved in large group musical events or multiple solo events.