

I. Purpose

Student publications serve as a medium for student written and visual expression and provide opportunities and experiences for students interested in developing writing and journalism skills. These publications are operated for and by students and the views expressed are not necessarily the views of the College, the Board of Regents or the student body as a whole.

The standards established by the policies and procedures attempt to encourage student publishers to maintain a high standard of performance and to provide consistency and stability for the benefit of the student staffs, readers and the college community regardless of any changes in personnel or positions. All student publications are expected to conform to good taste, taking into account wide distribution of the publication. Student publications must adhere to libel, postal and other laws and regulations governing the American commercial press.

The Board of Regents and the college recognize and guarantee First Amendment freedom and extend full editorial control of the content of student publications to the student editors. A Code of Ethics recognized by professional journalists will be observed by the student editors and faculty advisors. In accordance with the laws of the State of Tennessee and the federal government no agent of the college is authorized to censor, to exert prior restraint of content, or to impose punishment for the content of protected speech.

II. Organization and Responsibilities

The Board of Regents through the Office of the President of Pellissippi State Community College has financial and administrative authority for student publications. Our responsibility for editorial content for student publications is limited to maintaining the appropriate level of journalistic standards.

Student publications are a function of Student Life. The director of student life will recommend a faculty advisor for each student publication in accordance with established policy. The two principal parties for each student publication are the faculty advisor and the student editor-in-chief. The student editor-in-chief is selected by the faculty advisor. The student editor-in-chief will be a part-time or full-time Pellissippi State student who has earned and maintains a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5

The student editor-in-chief will recruit student publication staff members as necessary to fulfill the duties and requirements of the publication. All student staff members must be currently enrolled students at Pellissippi State. All student staff members should keep themselves informed of policies and procedures regarding student publications and should seek advice of the student editor-in-chief, faculty advisor, director of Student Life, or Dean of Students in matters of importance concerning the publication.

A. Responsibilities of the Student Editor-in Chief

1. To consult regularly with the advisor regarding the operation of the publication.
2. To ensure that the publication schedule is met and to take responsibility for news and editorial content.
3. To organize and direct the publication staff and student writers, including the appointment and dismissal of staff members after consultation with the faculty advisor. A dismissed member has the right of appeal to the faculty advisor and ultimately to the Dean of Students.
4. To establish and ensure a system for the campus-wide distribution of the publication.
5. To ensure AP style of writing is used along with making sure that stories are written in news format.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Advisor

- a. To be available for and to encourage regular consultation with the editor-in-chief.
- b. To provide by advice, teaching and example, the highest ethical and professional standards.
- c. To have the authority to dismiss the editor-in-chief should it be necessary, for reasons other than content considerations. Such reasons may include plagiarism, failure to publish, repeated failure to meet deadlines or proven violation of institutional policies or local, state, or federal law. The dismissed editor-in-chief has the right of appeal to the Dean of Students.

The following organizational chart is proposed as a model for each student publication staff. (Individual publications, at the discretion of the faculty advisor, may vary from this model.)

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Faculty Advisor
Editor-in-Chief

Production Manager

Creative Writers
Student Writers

Business Manager

Marketing
Distribution

III. Operational Procedures

Each student publication, prior to being recognized by the college must submit to the student life office written documentation of the operational procedures for the respective student publication or syllabus.

The document must include the following elements:

- A. Preamble - brief, yet concise statement of mission and scope of publication.
- B. Organization

1. Name of publication
2. Structure of publication staff

Section 1. Job Descriptions: description of the qualifications (GPA, minimum credit hours, other), responsibilities of the position, and to whom each reports.

- Advisor
- Student Editor-In Chief
- Managing Editors
- Publications Staff

Section 2. Term of Office

Section 3. Staff Selection Process

Section 4. Removal from Publication Staff

- C. Amendments: Description of procedures by which the publications staff can amend established policies set forth in this document.

IV. Code of Ethics

Student publications at Pellissippi State Community College are to look to the Code of Ethics of the American Society of Newspaper Editors as a guide. Although the following statements pertain primarily to newspaper journalism, all student publications will adhere to the principles stated in the Code of Ethics.

A. Preamble

The First Amendment, protecting freedom of expression from abridgment by any law, guarantees to the people through their press a constitutional right, and thereby places on news people a particular responsibility. Thus journalism demands of its practitioners not only industry and knowledge but also the pursuit of a standard of integrity proportionate to the journalist's singular obligation. To this end the American Society of News Editors sets forth this Statement of Principles as a standard encouraging the highest ethical and professional performance.

B. Responsibility

The primary purpose of gathering and distributing news and opinion is to serve the general welfare by informing the people and enabling them to make judgments on the issues of the time. Newsmen and women who abuse the power of their professional role for selfish motives or unworthy purposes are faithless to that public trust. The American press was made free not just to inform or just to serve as a forum for debate but also to bring an independent scrutiny to bear on the forces of power in the society, including the conduct of official power at all levels of government.

C. Freedom of the Press

Freedom of the press belongs to the people. It must be defended against encroachment or assault from any quarter, public or private. Journalists must be constantly alert to see that the public's business is conducted in public. They must be vigilant against all who would exploit the press for selfish purposes.

D. Independence

Journalists must avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety as well as any conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict. They should neither accept anything nor pursue any activity that might compromise or seem to compromise their integrity.

E. Truth and Accuracy

Good faith with the reader is the foundation of good journalism. Every effort must be made to assure that the news content is accurate, free from bias and in context, and that all sides are presented fairly. Editorials, analytical articles and commentary should be held to the same standards of accuracy with respect to facts as news reports. Significant errors of fact, as well as errors of omission, should be corrected promptly and prominently.

F. Impartiality

To be impartial does not require the press to be unquestioning or to refrain from editorial expression. Sound practice, however, demands a clear distinction for the reader between news reports and opinion. Articles that contain opinion or personal interpretation should be clearly identified.

G. Fair Play

Journalists should respect the rights of people involved in the news, observe the common standards of decency and stand accountable to the public for the fairness and accuracy of their news reports. Persons publicly accused should be given the earliest opportunity to respond. Pledges of confidentiality to news sources must be honored at all costs, and therefore should not be given lightly. Unless there is clear and pressing need to maintain confidences, sources of information should be identified.

These principles are intended to preserve, protect and strengthen the bond of trust and respect between American journalists and the American people, a bond that is essential to sustain the grant of freedom entrusted to both by the nation's founders.

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Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, April 10, 1995
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