2026-2027

the college

# VOICE

# STUDENT NEWSPAPER POLICY MANUAL

*"The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them"*

*-Thomas Jefferson*

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# Introduction

After more than thirty years of oral tradition, in 2008 (and updated regularly thereafter) *The College VOICE* compiled its operating policies in a single easy to navigate web version. Each year, the VOICE's policies may be challenged, argued, created and changed in staff meetings and inter-departmental discussions. Changes are confirmed by the editors after which they are transcribed into this institutional handbook for future *College VOICE* staffers to use and follow. The Manual, like *The College VOICE* Constitution, is reviewed periodically to ensure that it is up-to-date. This handbook serves as a newsroom reference book for writers and editors, a concrete list of what to do and what not to do in specific situations. The book also can be a way of introducing new staffers to *The College VOICE's* accepted methods and protocol. More than just an internal guide, this Policy Manual has been compiled to provide information about the student newspaper to the community at large. As a result, it is hoped that interactions between students and community members will proceed as smoothly as possible.

# General Policies

## The Purpose of *The College VOICE*

*The VOICE* operates independently and is not an arm of any of MCCC's Public Relations or Marketing departments. The opinions expressed in the paper do not necessarily reflect those of the institution. The institution supports the educational mission of the newspaper both materially and philosophically, but does not influence its content.

The purpose of *The College VOICE*, as stated in *The College VOICE* Constitution, is to publish a student newspaper. The paper is directed primarily at the students, faculty and employees of Mercer County Community College and the residents of its neighboring areas, and contains educational and informational articles not normally or frequently contained in the commercial press, along with a significant amount of news and editorial coverage and general student comments of particular interest to the greater college community. A secondary purpose of this organization is to promote interest in the art of collegiate journalism and to educate and train students at Mercer County Community College in the art of new media.

## Editorial Structure

*The VOICE* Editorial hi is as follows:

- ❍ Editor-in-Chief (EIC), and
- ❍ Managing Editor (ME) and
- ❍ all other section editors

## Editor Appointments

Faculty advisers aid in the recruitment, selection, and appointment of Editors depending on need, availability, and GPA eligibility. If an editor must step down in mid-semester for any reason--such as falling below the GPA or credit limit, leaving for health reasons, disciplinary action, policy violation etc.--the adviser(s) may appoint a new editor for the remainder of the semester.

# Compensation

The EIC and MEs are compensated for their work following a formula based on minimum wage with the assumption that they will work 15 weeks each semester. If an editor does not complete their work, they will not be paid and an alternate editor may be appointed. Editors must complete tax forms at the start of the semester to receive pay. The adviser(s) must sign off on timeheets in order for payment to be processed. Editors are asked to use a pay tracking program such as TimeCamp to record their hours. If section editors are needed to step in because either the EIC or ME finds herself unable to complete the number of hours of work required, the section editors may be eligible to receive payment.

Editors are eligible to receive keys for access to the newsroom. This privilege may be revoked if the newsroom safety policies are not met. Editors are expected to hold regular office hours in the newsroom for reporters to come for help and support. They must post their expected hours at the start of the semester and alert the staff and adviser of any changes. Editors typically send a message to the group chat when the newsroom is open. If a class is being held in the newsroom, editors may hold their office hours in the adjacent office ET 123 or ET 120.

No health or other benefits are associated with editorial positions.

# The Role of Faculty Adviser

The Faculty Adviser(s) (FA) and Photography Adviser (PA) along with any advisory assistants are not responsible for the content of *The College VOICE*. They act as mentors, sounding boards and writing and photography coaches. The adviser(s) work to train editors, writers, designers and photographers both in specific journalism classes and during the day-to-day operations of the newspaper. The adviser(s) strive to instill in *VOICE* staffers a sense of what constitutes good writing and good journalism practice and works to increase awareness of the history and legal issues of the press. In consultation with the EIC they work to ensure the students do not publish any article that may contain libel, inaccuracy, lack of depth in reporting, copyright infringement, or plagiarism. Advisers do not participate in censorship.

# Staff Membership

### 1. Anti-discrimination Clause

*The College VOICE* does not discriminate based on age, citizenship, color,

disability, gender, race, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation or status as a disabled veteran.

## 2. Eligibility

In the fall semester of 2023, *The VOICE* changed from being a student activity to an academic news outlet. Eligibility requirements for participation shifted at that time. Currently, students in any Arts & Communication track, and all Honors Students regardless of major, are eligible to participate in *The VOICE* provided they maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher. Students in other majors may apply to participate. Factors evaluated in the application include the student's academic standing, course load, previous experience, relevant course work, and GPA.

## 3. Termination

Any staff member who graduates is automatically terminated from any full and active position at *The College VOICE*. Likewise, any student put on an academic hold is put on a probationary status. A staff member who is deemed to have violated any part of the code or intent of the policies of *The College VOICE,* as expressed in the Policy Manual or *The College VOICE* Constitution, may be removed from their position by the EIC or the FA.

## 4. J Lab Contributors

Students participating in MCCC's non-credit Community Journalism "J Lab" programs may have their work published in *The VOICE* if approved by the Editor in Chief. J Lab students who do not want their work considered for publication must make the FA and Program Director aware prior to submission for feedback. J Lab participants may attend staff meetings, but are not eligible to be staff members unless they are also enrolled in a for-credit track at MCCC. J Lab students' work is not eligible for submission to college media competitions unless the student is also enrolled in a for-credit track at the college and is a staff member. Likewise, J Lab students may only be invited to attend any media conferences provided they are enrolled in a for-credit track and are staff members.

## 5. Alumni Contributors

Alumns who seek to continue contributing to *The VOICE* may do so on an ad hoc basis if approved to do so by the FA and EIC, but alumns may not be compensated or awarded for their work and work of current staff always takes precedence over work of alumni staffers. Alumnix contributions are prohibited from being submitted to journalism competitions. From time to time alumns may be asked to assist in gathering data and reporting for longer and more complex stories and may do so if authorized by the current EIC. In such cases the alumn is consider to be working with and on behalf of *The VOICE* and is bound by all the policies contained in this manual.

## The Editor in Chief (EIC)

Duties include, but are not limited to:

- Reading rough drafts of staff articles and submitting comments in a timely manner
- Encouraging staff reporters to take on ambitious reporting assignments and mentoring them throughout the reporting/ writing process
- Holding regular office hours and helping reporters figure out whom to interview and prepping them for interviews
- Providing assignments and feedback to photographers and designers
- Reviewing J1 and J2 students' work and selecting which articles are appropriate for inclusion in *The VOICE*
- Leading by example
- Writing articles and submitting them on time
- Maintaining consistent, strong academic work
- Helping to prepare for, plan, coordinate and execute community service and convention events
- Selecting final topics for *The VOICE* issues, helping to edit and prepare them for online and print publication
- Uploading *The VOICE* articles for the online publication in a timely manner
- Establishing policies and working to ensure that the processes by which *The VOICE* issues are created, function effectively
- Maintaining consistent communication with the FA and with all staffers and EB members
- Working with the advisors in a respectful and thoughtful manner to everyone's mutual benefit
- Being receptive to critique and feedback from EB members and the advisers and using it to improve their work

## The Managing Editor (ME)

The Managing Editor's chief responsibilities overlap with those of the EIC but are not identical. They include:

- Acting as the EIC's second in command in getting things done in a timely manner and helping to maintain communication with all staffers
- Holding regular office hours and helping reporters figure out whom to interview and prepping them for interviews
- Line editing final drafts of all articles to make them ready for layout
- Mentoring new reporters.
- Reading rough drafts of staff articles and submitting comments

in a timely manner
- Encouraging staff reporters to take on ambitious reporting assignments and mentoring them throughout the reporting writing process
- Being receptive to critique and feedback to improve their work
- Reviewing J1 and J2 students' work and helping the EIC determine which articles are appropriate for inclusion in *The VOICE*
- Leading by example
- Writing articles and submitting them on time
- Maintaining consistent, strong academic work

## Section Editors

Section Editors (including sports, news, a&e, viewpoints) duties include:

- Finding good topics on their beat for junior staffers to cover
- Holding regular office hours and helping reporters figure out whom to interview and prepping them for interviews
- Mentoring reporters to write articles in the correct journalistic style for the section
- Writing articles of their own and submitting them in a timely manner
- Being receptive to critique and feedback to improve their work
- Leading by example
- Maintaining consistent, strong academic work

# Editor Training

Editorial training at all levels consists of three parts:

1. Mentoring from out-going editor in the weeks and months prior to assuming the role,
2. On boarding from EIC and faculty adviser at the start of the editor's term, and
3. Check-ins with the other editors and faculty adviser at least once a month during each semester.

# Editorial Support for J Lab

The Community Reporting "J Lab" program works along side the for-credit degree track programs at MCCC. The J Lab has its own editorial obligations. The J Lab Editor--who may be a current or previous VOICE editor our visiting editor--must attend J Lab meetings, help train J Lab students in the fundamentals of reporting, work to help them with all aspects of their projects, and help edit their work. The J Lab Editor is compensated through separate funds and payment mechanisms than the regular VOICE editors.

## Community Journalism - J Lab Programs

The Community Journalism "J Lab" non-credit program was initiated in fall of 2023 with grant funding from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities and The New School: Journalism + Design. The J Lab certificate program trains community residents in the journalistic fundamentals of research, interviewing, writing, editing and fact checking. It emphasizes ethical responsibility and solutions reporting. The J Lab workshop is an on-going professional development program for those who have completed the certificate or who have had at least two articles published in local media outlets. The "J Lab Jr." program is a version of the certificate aimed specifically at high school aged students. All participants registered in any J Lab program are expected to follow the policies in this manual. Those who violate any of these policies will be removed from the program. J Lab certificate participants are invited to attend weekly *VOICE* staff meetings. J Lab certificate students' final projects may be published in The VOICE if approved by the editors.

## CMA Conference Participation

When it is logistically feasible, 6-10 of the most ambitious, hard working students from *The VOICE* staff are invited by the FA to attend a College Media Association conference that is attended by 800+ student journalists from around the country (travel, hotel and registration fees paid). To be invited is a high honor that acknowledges the staffer's leadership skill, progress in reporting, ability to learn from critique and overall dedication. Any student whose GPA has fallen below the mandatory 2.5 level is not eligible to attend. Conferences offer dozens of training sessions and opportunities to network with industry professionals. Students who attend are held to the highest standards of comportment and will be sent home if they fail to represent *The VOICE* with appropriate professionalism. Note: Students must be 18 years of age to attend conferences.

## NJPF Conference

The New Jersey Press Foundation conference and awards gala is held in April and all editors and any student who has won an award is eligible for invitation and participation in this half-day event.

## The Newsroom

### 1. Basic Use –

The VOICE's newsroom is housed in the MCCC Conference Center on the West Windsor campus in ET 128. The room can be accessed by the Faculty Adviser and the VOICE editors with swipe cards provided by the Security office. All staffers are allowed to use the space when an adviser or editor is on hand and a class is not in session. The primary function of the newsroom is to provide a professionalizing space to teach and learn journalism. It is overseen by the Journalism & New Media program coordinator who is also the VOICE faculty adviser.

### 2. Classes –

The Journalism & New Media program classes, including Journalism 1, Journalism 2, and Community reporting, as well as the J Lab classes, are often held in the newsroom. A schedule of when the room is in use for classes is shared with staffers at the start of each semester.

### 3. Office Hours –

The VOICE faculty adviser/Journalism & New Media program coordinator, as well as the editors hold office hours in the newsroom throughout the week for students to come get help with their work.

### 4. Safety –

The newsroom is locked unless editors or the adviser are in it or someone gets special permission from the editors or adviser to keep it open. The VOICE is not responsible for items left unattended in the newsroom.

## AI Policy

The VOICE's policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is constantly in development. Core principles remain in place. First and foremost, any use of AI will be accompanied by transparency. Second, all use of AI must be overseen by humans from start to finish.

### 1. Images –

Any images generated in full or in part by AI must be clearly labeled to indicate as much.

### 2. Research –

Reporters may use AI for research purposes but must fact check their work as always.

### 3. Content –

Journalists may never use AI to do their writing for them. However, AI may

be used in the following contexts: to generate story outlines and SEO headlines, to assist in copyediting and interview question generation, and to summarize old coverage or create summaries for social media posts. These are currently the only approved usages where content is concerned.

## Protocol

### 1. Code of Ethics –

All *College VOICE* staff members adhere to *The College VOICE* Code of Ethics. (Appendix A)

### 2. Conflict of Interest Guidelines –

All *College VOICE* staff members adhere to *The College VOICE* Conflict of Interest Guidelines. (Appendix B) The EIC has final say in all situations involving possible conflicts of interest.

### 3. Dress –

All reporters dress and act professionally at all meetings, games, interviews and other newsworthy events where professional attire is expected.

### 4. Petitions –

To preserve objectivity, writers who sign petitions may not cover any subjects related to the petition's topic. To prevent the appearance or existence of conflict of interest in the assignment and editing of stories, department editors never sign petitions. Managing Board members never sign petitions individually in order to prevent the appearance of any official endorsements by *The College VOICE*. Actual official endorsements will be carried out in editorials.

### 5. Spokesperson –

NO *College VOICE* staff members may speak for *The College VOICE* in an official capacity except for the EIC. All other staff members must acknowledge, when speaking in public and associated in any way with *The College VOICE*, that their views are their own and not those of *The College VOICE*.

### 6. Responsiveness –

Staff members will respond to, or report to the EIC, all requests for information, or queries and concerns of the campus community and the general public.

### 7. Ownership –

All article submissions made to *The College VOICE* by students --including

editors, full-time staff members, probationary staff members, non-staff contributors, freelancers and alumni contributors-- automatically become property of The VOICE and may be edited and printed as the EB sees fit. All submissions are final and cannot be withdrawn. Any article, drawing, photo, mulitmedia or layout spread is considered to be submitted if it is presented to the editors for consideration in hard copy, on a computer disc, or via email. No submission is guaranteed to run in the print or online versions of *The VOICE*. *The VOICE* retains exclusive rights to submitted work. Any republication must receive proper approval from the EB a note must run with the publication saying: "Originally printed in *The College VOICE* on {date}. Reprinted by permission." Unauthorized reprints constitute violations of copyright law and will be pursued as such.

## Coverage

### 1. Topics –

*The College VOICE* covers as many newsworthy events in the college community as possible, recognizing that coverage decisions will be based on comparative newsworthiness of story ideas and space and resource constraints. We do not refrain from covering events that already have been covered by a mainstream media outlet in the area.

### 2. Requesting Coverage –

Any campus or community member who believes they have an topic worthy of newspaper coverage is encouraged to bring it to the attention of the editor; the easiest way to do so is to e-mail the paper with a description of the event including dates and times along with contact information. The editor will evaluate all ideas brought for its consideration, and, provided there are enough human resources to do so, will assign a reporter to cover any story that is deemed newsworthy.

### 3. Complimentary Tickets –

As is standard in the journalism industry, when an event planner wants to ensure that a particular event receives coverage in *The College VOICE*, they should contact *The College VOICE* in advance to request coverage and should provide complimentary tickets or an entrance pass for press. The provision of tickets does not ensure a "positive" article. Except in the case of opinion pieces such as reviews and editorials, all articles will be balanced in their coverage without any positive or negative bias whatever. Opinion pieces are the exception and represent only the personal opinion of the reviewer. All opinion pieces are clearly identified as such by appearing on the Op/Ed or Reviews pages of the paper.

### 4. Participation –

To preserve objectivity, staffers who cover events or groups may not participate in those events or groups. Editors must refrain from editing content relating to groups or events in which they have participated.

## 1. Accuracy –

Reporters must always attempt to verify the accuracy of their quotes and information after or during an interview or by e-mail.

## 2. Events –

When covering large scale events such as fund-raisers, galas and performances, reporters will make every effort to interview the organizers ahead of time to get ample background information. When reporters attend events they are expected to arrive at least five minutes early and stay for the entire event in order to ensure thorough reporting. They will attempt to avoid inconveniencing event participants and will not disrupt any formal proceedings. They may, however, talk to all participants as opportunities arise during the course of any event. Set interview times and places are made only for talking one-on-one with event coordinators or school administrators, faculty, staff or trustees.

## 3. Questions –

Reporters will supply a list of questions to any interview subject ahead of time if requested, but additional questions may be added during the interview process. Reporters' questions are aimed solely at recording the truth in its entirety. Questions should be polite whenever possible, but may be pointed or firm if necessary.

## 4. Calling at Home –

Reporters will not call sources at home or late at night unless there is an emergency or they are invited to do so.

## 5. Email Interviews –

Time constraints sometimes require that interviews be conducted via e-mail correspondence, but this method must be used only as a last resort. Face-to-face interviews are always preferable. Zoom or phone interviews are also preferable. When conducting an interview via e-mail, the reporter must make it clear that the responses made will be "on the record" and may be quoted for the article. E-mail interviews must be identified as such using the phrase "In an e-mail interview [person's name] said" before any quote or paraphrase given in the text.

## 6. Advance Copies –

***Advance copies of articles are NEVER sent to interview subjects or College administrators for their approval under any circumstances.*** However, all interview subjects may request that an editor or senior writer accompany any junior reporter on an interview. Furthermore, interview subjects

may call or e-mail the editor-in-chief to go over any direct quotes or paraphrases that may appear in the article to ensure accuracy. Note: the reporter must also check facts with the interview subject; if the subject believe this has not occurred, or additional information has come to light, the subject may contact the EIC and ask that the article not appear in print until fact checking has been completed. The EIC's response will depend largely on publication deadlines.

### 7. Private Meetings –

Reporters use the phrase "in an interview with *The College VOICE*" when describing interviews with prominent figures who have met or spoken privately with *College VOICE* reporters and/or editors. Reporters may use the phrase "in an exclusive interview with *The College VOICE*" when *The College VOICE* is the only member of the media interviewing that figure.

### 8. Audio recorders –

Reporters are encouraged to use audio recorders in addition to taking hand-written notes during interviews, but, in accordance with journalistic ethics, will ask the subject(s) for permission to record before doing so.

## Names & Identification

### 1. Names & Titles –

When individuals are identified for the first time in an article, their professional title should be given followed by their first and last name (for example: Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. Diane Campbell). All names and titles must be double checked by reporters. When students are interviewed, their title is given as their year at Mercer followed by their major (for example: sophomore Liberal Arts major, Jorge Sanders-Ramirez). When Mercer County or other local residents are interviewed they are identified by name and residence location (for example: Sgt. Andrew Atkins of West Windsor Township).

### 2. Charged or Convicted –

To provide stories that are fully informative, the names of suspects identified by the police or those charged with crimes are printed. Persons who have been convicted also will be named.

### 3. Suspects –

For safety reasons, suspects at large are identified in news stories by all known characteristics, including race. Stories will refer to a suspect's charges as "alleged" until guilt is determined by the appropriate court of law.

### 4. Victims/Survivors –

To avoid further public injury, the victims/survivors of assaults are not named, unless they are public figures.

### 5. Sexual Identity –

Transgender and nonbinary individuals will be referred to by the pronouns of their choice.

## Sources & Citations

### 1. Anonymity –

Reporters can quote sources without naming them in their stories only if they know the sources' names, and the sources offer firsthand knowledge of an event or conversation which could not be obtained elsewhere. Sources who offer information cannot be quoted if they refuse to give their true identities to *The College VOICE* and cannot offer a sufficient explanation why they do not want their names to appear in the paper. Sources who make legitimate requests that their names not be used and offer important information will be cited anonymously. Their true identities will not be revealed to the outside community. Reporting based on anonymous sources has the potential to undermine credibility and should be rare. An anonymous source must be cleared by the EIC.

### 2. On or Off the Record –

Any information a source gives while speaking "on the record" can be cited or used in a news story. Information gathered from sources who explicitly say all or part of an interview is "off the record" cannot be attributed to that source. A reporter may, however, use the off the-record information when speaking to other sources without identifying the initial source. If those other sources confirm or give the same information as the initial source while speaking on the record, that information can then be used or cited in the story.

### 3. Contact –

If a reporter repeatedly calls and leaves messages for a source without successfully making contact before deadline time, the reporter may indicate that the source "could not be reached for comment." When a source is provided an opportunity to respond, but does not do so, the reporter will indicate this by saying "refused to comment."

### 4. Number –

Reporters must cite at least two sources in every news story. The only exception is a story that involves a subject only one source can discuss.

## Editing

### 1. Process –

Every article appearing in *The College VOICE* must undergo a lengthy editing process intended to prevent all mistakes in grammar, accuracy and omission. All pieces, including those appearing in the opinion section are edited by at least two editors for style and content. Articles that cover issues that are particularly sensitive receive additional scrutiny. The EIC is responsible for all matters of taste, libel and any other potential legal issues, but may convene the other editors to go over every aspect of an article and will consult with the FA when there are questions about adequate sourcing, accuracy or other legal or ethical matters. The FA works to clarify and questions and provide journalistic guidance so that articles not fit for print are revised or spiked.

### 2. References –

a. **AP Stylebook** - *The College VOICE* follows the Associated Press Stylebook in all references to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and national origin. Such language reflects that conventionally considered most accurate, unbiased and representative.

b. **Sexual Crimes** - In cases of sexual crimes, the word "rape" is always used when appropriate; "Sexual assault" is used to define all forms of sexual crimes other than rape. The policy matches the police department's policy for description of sexual crimes.

## Layout

### 1. Lead Stories –

The lead story always is placed on the top, left-hand corner of the page - the area that tends to attract the human eye's attention first.

### 2. Positioning –

Positions of stories on each page are determined by the editors based on the stories' newsworthiness and appeal.

## Graphical Elements

All graphics express the artist's own interpretation of the column or article they are illustrating and may not editorialize. The exception to this rule is made for editorial cartoons which are clearly identified as such. Images created in total or in part by AI are always illustrations and are identified as such.

## Correction & Retractions

### 1. Circumstances –

Corrections will be printed when *The College VOICE* has made a significant spelling, typographical, reporting or editing error.

### 2. When to Print –

*The College VOICE* will print all verified corrections, retractions and clarifications as soon as possible. Such corrections, retractions and clarifications will include the headline of the original story, its date of publication and the correct information. Corrections, retractions and clarifications are approved by the editor-in-chief. If a question of accuracy is raised, *The VOICE* is obliged to look into it with speed and diligence, but *The VOICE* will not correct, retract or apologize for stories that are verifiably accurate.

### 3. Online Edition –

In addition to posting all clarifications, corrections and retractions online, *The College VOICE* edits the original story on the Web site to be as accurate as possible.

### 4. Retractions –

*The VOICE* will issue a retraction if presented with credible and verifiable information indicating that the findings or facts reported are wholly unreliable or inaccurate as a result of misconduct or honest error. Retractions are not made when stories are verifiably accurate or when a correction will suffice.

## Copyrights & Reproduction

All material featured in *The College VOICE* or *The College VOICE Online Edition* is copyrighted and the exclusive property of *The College VOICE*. No portion of these publications may be copied or reproduced without the express written permission of the EIC. The EIC will consult with the staff member producing the work before permission to reprint or otherwise copy a piece is given.

## Online Policy

### 1. General –

*The College VOICE Online Edition* follows all general policies except where otherwise noted.

### 2. Digital First –

In Spring of 2023, The VOICE became a digital first publication, meaning

work is published online and then may be considered for print publication in one of the two annual print digests. No Associated Press or syndicated stories, graphical elements or photos appear online.

## 3. Print Version –

Elements in *The College VOICE Online Edition* may be different from those in the print version. Stories, headline and captions may be cut for space considerations in print editions.

## 4. Special Features –

*The College VOICE Online Edition* may carry special features that do not occur in the print edition. Multimedia is commonly included, along with related documents and links to outside sources that support or augment information presented in articles.

## 5. Maintenance –

*The College VOICE Online Edition* may be assembled and maintained by a section editor or ME, but the final authority over all content on *The College VOICE Online Edition* rests with the EIC.

## 6. Links –

When *The College VOICE Online Edition* features links to several external Web sites such as other online publications for the benefit of its users. The College VOICE is not responsible for the content of any Web sites linked from The College VOICE Online Edition.

## 7. Updates –

*The College VOICE Online Edition* is updated as often as possible. Some stories may appear online only, and may be posted between print editions, particularly when there is breaking news.

## 8. Article Removal and Added Statements –

As a rule *The College VOICE* does not remove articles from the Online Edition. A core journalistic principle is that history cannot and should never be rewritten, covered up, nor amended.

Under specific circumstances a statement may be included at the bottom of a column indicating that the views expressed no longer coincide with the author's current perspective, but that newspaper policy prohibits removal of the article. Former contributors can request up to three such notes and must make the request(s) within five years of the original publication date in order to be considered. The circumstances under which a note might be considered include how incendiary the original article was/is, how much potential impact on the safety or livelihood of the writer it may now have, and any other aspect as the Editorial Board deems relevant in the specific case. Final say on whether or not a statement may be added lies with the current Editor in Chief.

## Complaints

At first, complaints about the behavior of a member of *The College VOICE* staff or about the content of an article should be made in writing to the Faculty Adviser within one month of any incident or the publication date. The complainant must clearly identify him or herself and provide contact information if a response is anticipated.

The FA in consultation with the PA and any other assisting advisers will consider the complaint and reply in writing within 10 working days, provided the complaint is lodged by an individual or group with a direct interest.

If the complainant is unhappy with the Faculty Adviser's response and course of action, they may ask the Vice President of Academic Affairs of Mercer County Community College to call a meeting with *The College VOICE* Editorial Board and Faculty Adviser(s) to consider their complaint.

If no amicable settlement can be reached, the VPAA--in conjunction with any other administrators she deems appropriate-- will convene within fourteen working days of having received the complaint. In conjunction with the Faculty Adviser she may advocate for whatever remedy is most efficient for remediating the problem, providing it does not involve any financial penalty nor the removal from office of the Faculty Advisers, nor cause any First Amendment or other legal violation.

Where First Amendment and other legal issues are at stake the media outlet relies on advice from the Student Press Law Center to assist and guide them.

# Business & Advertising Policies

## Ad Rates

Rate cards are updated regularly and posted online at mcccvoice.org/adrates. Download complete rate card PDF online.

## Advertisements

### 1. Advertising Editor –

The advertising editor (or the editorial board if there is no current advertising editor) decides the placement of all display advertisements in *The College VOICE*. The student reporters' work always takes precedence over advertisements.

### 2. Prepayment –

Prepayment of an advertisement does not guarantee publication, because all advertising is subject to review by the advertising manager and the Editorial Board. The Editorial Board reserves the right to refuse any advertisement, including inserts, or to label any ad that does not identify its sponsor clearly as "Paid Advertisement."

### 3. Rate Adjustment –

*The College VOICE* reserves the right to adjust advertising rates with 30 days notice.

### 4. Materials –

*The College VOICE* is not responsible for materials submitted for use in ad production unless given prior instructions for return when submitted.

### 5. Rejection –

*The College VOICE* reserves the right to reject ads for reasons of taste, suitability for its readership, or if there are significant concerns about the business practices of the advertising entity. In all such cases the matter must be settled by a majority vote by the Editorial Board.

### 6. Tearsheets –

Along with invoices, *The College VOICE* will send tearsheets to advertisers to confirm that an ad has appeared in print so long as a request for tearsheets is made in advance of publication.

## Corrections for Advertising

### 1. Make-Goods –

Adjustments for material errors or omissions will be made at the

discretion of the advertising manager. No adjustments will be made unless the error or omission is reported to the advertising manager within two weeks of the ad's publication. Liability for adjustments is limited to the cost of the advertisement. *The College VOICE* is not liable for printer error.

### 2. Ads –

Any changes in copy must be submitted in writing prior to the advertising deadline.

## Ad Cancellations

### 1. Deadlines –

All cancellations must be made prior to the advertising deadline.

### 2. Refunds –

Advertisers who pull an advertisement after the deadline will be charged the full cost of the ad. There is no refund for canceled classified ads.

## Ads and Liability

The advertiser assumes all liability for any ad it places in *The College VOICE* and agrees to hold *The College VOICE* and its agents harmless for the content of all advertising authorized for publication, including any photograph, likeness, name, logo, trademark, representation or any other material the advertiser provides. Responsibility for libel is joint and several between *The College VOICE* and the advertiser.

## Copyright

By placing an ad *The College VOICE*, advertisers are purchasing space and circulation only. All artwork and typesetting produced by *The College VOICE* becomes the newspaper's property and cannot be used by the advertiser in other publications without written permission from *The College VOICE*. Distribution Requests - Any local business or institution that would like *The College VOICE* distributed at their venue should contact the paper directly. *The VOICE* seeks to ensure access to the paper to our community.

# The News Department

## Seniority

All new reporters begin at the status of junior reporter (labeled "Reporter" in their byline). If a reporter continues to write for *The College VOICE* for two semesters, he or she is automatically promoted to the rank of senior reporter (labeled "Senior Reporter" in their byline). In certain exceptional cases, an EIC may decide that a writer has gained enough experience to become a senior reporter; the EIC has the authority to make such promotions regardless of the number of semesters the reporter has served. Senior reporters are assigned more complex stories and given more latitude to select their own story ideas.

## Coverage Issues

### 1. Bomb Threats –

Unlike professional newspapers in large, unenclosed communities, *The College VOICE* considers bomb threats in the college community newsworthy and reports on them.

### 2. Deaths and Suicides –

Provided there are enough reporters to do so, *The College VOICE* covers all deaths of members of the College community, even when the cause of death is suicide. In cases of suicide, the Society of Professional Journalists ethical principle of "minimizing harm" guides all coverage. Editors take special care in positioning stories, graphics and hotline information appropriately, and work diligently to ensure the focus of the story is the community, on mental health needs and resources and not on individual families' trauma.

## Features

### 1. Cover Stories and Investigative Reporting –

The front page and news pages often include investigative and longer form journalism. *The VOICE* has come to be known for this type of work which is the result, in part, of the monthly rather than daily or weekly production schedule that allows for more in-depth and group work. These stories always are made to look distinct and recognizable as features.

### 2. News Analyses and Opinions –

A story that examines a news event or

issue from an interpretive or critical angle must be labeled as a "News Analysis" or "Op/Ed." These analyses generally rely on informed sources and unbiased data to illustrate a viewpoint on an issue or event.

### 3. Editorial Cartoons –

Any editorial cartoon reflects only the opinion of the cartoonist, not that of the EB. Syndicated cartoons are intended for entertainment only.

## Graphic Art

Graphical elements are assigned to columns at the EIC's discretion.

## Outside Submissions

### 1. Acceptance –

Submissions critical of *The College VOICE* are considered along with all other submissions and have the same chance of being printed as any other submissions. See Protocol section for information on ownership.

### 2. Editing

Outside submissions always are subject to editing for grammar, brevity and elements of *The College VOICE's* style guide. Submissions longer than 400 words will be edited for length unless they are over 650 words in length and give in depth treatment to a certain topic, in which case they will be considered for publication as "guest viewpoints," or given in relation to an election, to prevent partisans for one side going unanswered.

### 3. Responding to Authors –

Outside submissions that respond to all material on the opinion page and to opinion pieces on other pages (e.g. reviews, perspectives, sports columns) must name *The College VOICE* writer. All other responses will not mention the writer.

### 4. Contact –

The appropriate editor always calls an author whose submission will require substantial editing or cutting. If time permits, the author is offered the opportunity to make changes himself. Editors make an effort to contact all letter writers to confirm their identity and to let them know when their submissions are scheduled to appear.

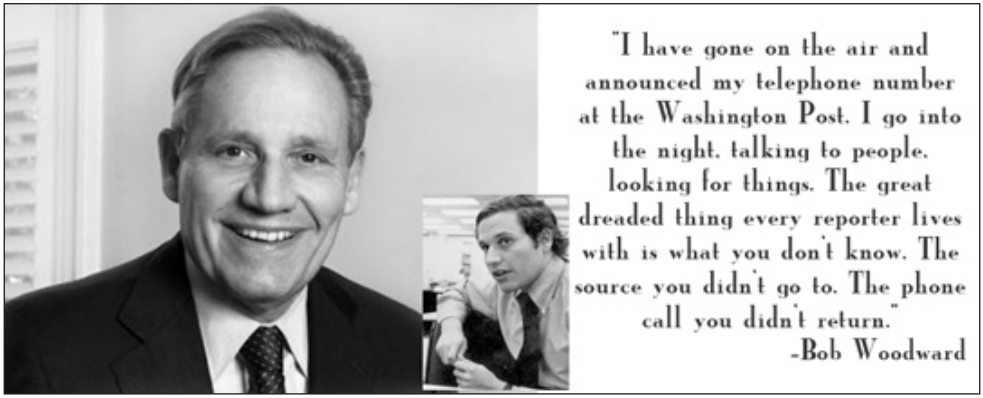
# Letters to the Editor and Website Comments

## 1. Acceptance –

Priority is always given to letters and comments fewer than 400 words. Hate speech, speech which may incite violence, and speech that disparages or attempt to intimidate any person or group will not be accepted. Letters must include the author's name, email address, accurate telephone number, school, year and title. Website comments must include the author's name and email. As a condition to posting the comment, the author will be required to verify their identity.

## 2. Submission –

Letters to the editor and web comments can be submitted by anyone - student, faculty members, staff members, administrators, College affiliates, Mercer residents, etc. Unsigned letters are never printed. *VOICE* staffers cannot submit letters to the editor.



Schneider · KREUZNACH
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# Photography Policies

## Captions

Except in the case of stock photos, photos are never run without a caption identifying the main group, person or people featured in the photo. Unless the photo size does not permit, students are identified with their name, and title if applicable; faculty members are identified with name and title; all others are identified with name and place of residence.

## Coverage

### 1. General –

Staff photographers will generally be assigned to beats and paired with staff writers in so far as possible, but their beat assignment may shift from issue to issue.

### 2. Tip-offs –

Photographers generally cover events on the basis of departmental assignments. When *The VOICE* receives phone tip-offs, however, the editors use their discretion in sending photographers to cover the event.

## Credits

### 1. Photo Illustrations –

Posed pictures will be labeled in the credit as "Photo Illustration" and are used for graphical artwork to present the general concept of a story. Except for photo illustrations and portraits, all photographs are candid shots.

### 2. Placement –

Except in the case of stock photos, credits always appear in small capital letters at the lower right-hand corner of the photograph unless the photograph is smaller than two inches.

### 3. Timeliness –

Photos taken during the semester of publication or from the most recent relevant event are credited with the photographer's name. Photos more than a week old or earlier are credited with the photographer's name or *College VOICE File Photo*. Sports photos of a different game than

described in the article are credited with the photographer's name or "*College VOICE File Photo*."

## Features

Photo essays, collections of photos presented to illustrate a theme, occasionally appear. They may also appear on *The College VOICE Online Edition*.

## Photo Use

### 1. Distortion –

All published photos are accurate representations of reality. Photo techniques that distort the image will be identified in the caption (e.g. multiple exposure or use of a wide-angle lens). Ideally, published photos will be in focus, exposed well and free of glaring scratches or imperfections.

### 2. Color & Brightening –

Because newsprint darkens photos, photos may be color balanced in Photoshop prior to placement.

### 3. Duplication –

The same photo will never be published twice except in cases of small mug shots or file photos.

### 4. Photography of Children Under 16 –

Requests of parents who ask that their child photograph not be taken or used are honored, provided the child is under 16 years of age and not in a public place. Children over age 16, but not yet 18, can give (or not) their own permission.

### 5. Public Photography –

When a person is in a public space (including a public community college campus) reporters may take photographs of them and run them in print as the law permits. *VOICE* photographers will not interrupt classes in progress to take photos or in any other way cause a classroom distraction. *VOICE* photographers may photograph security officers at any time provided their picture taking does not interfere with the security officer's ability to carry out his or her regular duties.

### 6. Currency –

Whenever possible, photos should be taken as close to the day the paper is assembled as possible. It is always preferable to take and publish recent photos rather than older photos. Old or file photos are used only when it is otherwise impossible or inconvenient to use a more recent photo, or if a current high-quality photo cannot be obtained. The most recent and most relevant photo will be printed.

## Reproduction

### 1. Reprints –

*The College VOICE* may send digital copies of pictures to other publications as a professional courtesy subject to the permission of the EIC. The publication is authorized to publish the picture only once with credit to both the photographer and *The College VOICE*. At the photographer's discretion, staff members may send digital copies of pictures to individuals for their personal use.

### 2. Rights –

All photo submissions made to *The College VOICE* by students --including editors, full-time staff members, probationary staff members, non-staff contributors, freelancers and alumni contributors-- automatically become property of *The VOICE* and may be edited and printed as the EB sees fit. All submissions are final and cannot be withdrawn. Any article, drawing, photo, convergence media or layout spread is considered to be submitted if it is presented to the editors for consideration in hard copy, on a computer disc, or via email. No submission is guaranteed to run in the print or online versions of *The VOICE*. *The VOICE* retains exclusive rights to submitted work for six months. Students who wish to submit the same work to other publications must wait 6 months from the date of submission to *The VOICE* before doing so.

## AI Generated Images

Images created in total or in part by Artificial Intelligence are always identified as such. AI generated images may only be used to represent the general concept of a story, not to supplant actual photos or create a faulty appearance of reality.

# Appendix A - Code of Ethics

## The Code

*The College VOICE* believes the duty of an independent student newspaper is to act as a carrier of information and a forum for discussion for the community.

WE BELIEVE the duty of student journalists, as agents of independent student newspapers and as American journalists, is to serve the truth. WE BELIEVE student newspapers contribute to public enlightenment, acting on their Constitutional freedom to learn and report the facts and seeking truth as a part of the community's right to know the truth. WE BELIEVE those responsibilities carry obligations requiring student journalists to perform with intelligence, objectivity, accuracy and fairness. To these ends, we declare acceptance of the standards of practice here set forth:

## Responsibility

Serving the community's right to know the truth concerning events of public importance and interest is the unifying mission of any independent student newspaper. The motive behind gathering and distributing accurate news and enlightened opinion is to serve the general welfare of the community. Student journalists who use their status as representatives of that community for selfish or other unworthy motives violate a trust without which independent student journalism cannot operate.

## The First Amendment

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."*

## Ethics

- ❍ Student journalists must be free of obligation to any interest other than the community's right to know the truth.
- ❍ Gifts, favors, free travel, special treatment or privileges can compromise the integrity of student journalists. Nothing of value should be accepted in exchange for special coverage, free advertising or endorsements.
- ❍ Use of a position with *The College VOICE* to gain personal advantage or to make inquiries for any other purpose than work for *The College VOICE* is strictly prohibited.
- ❍ Staff members are not permitted to use information not yet made available to the public for personal gain.

- Staff members may not use *College VOICE* equipment, supplies, services, resources, or other materials owned, purchased, or designated as property of *The College VOICE* for any purpose other than work for *The College VOICE*.

- Staff members may not threaten sources or promise favorable coverage or money in exchange for information.

- Staff members must fully disclose their identity to all sources. [All *VOICE* staffers carry *VOICE* issued press passes when they are reporting and gathering information. If you are uncertain if someone is a *VOICE* staffer, ask to see his or her press pass.]

- Staff members must ask sources before recording conversations.

- Staff members must obey the law.

- Involvement in student politics, holding student government office and service in college organizations should be avoided if it compromises the integrity of student journalists. Student journalists should conduct their personal lives as college students in a way that protects them from conflict of interest.

- *The VOICE*, its reporters and advisers may not receive awards from any MCCC campus group or organization in recognition of its coverage if such an award might create a real or perceived conflict of interest.

- So-called press releases from government or private sources, student organizations or college officials should not be published without substantiation of their claims and evaluation of their news value.

- Student journalists will seek news that serves the community's interest, despite the obstacles.

- They will make constant efforts to assure that the community's business in conducted in public and those public records are open to public inspection.

- Student journalists acknowledge the ethic of protecting confidential sources of information.

- Any staffer who is found to have committed an academic integrity violation will be dismissed from *The College VOICE* and not permitted to return.

- ❍ Plagiarism is an ultimate violation of trust and credibility with our readership and will not be tolerated at *The College VOICE*. Any and all material taken from another source must be appropriately cited and attributed, including:
    a. Information from press releases
    b. Little-known facts from authoritative sources
    c. Unique stylistic traits, devices or wording
    d. Both widely available news and news not widely available obtained from other sources
    e. Information from another media outlet's exclusive story or scoop
    f. Information obtained through the efforts of another party or source
    g. Written content generated by Artificial Intelligence

## Accuracy and Objectivity

Just as good faith with the public is the foundation of all worthy journalism, so is good faith with the community the basis of all worthy student journalism.

**Truth is the ultimate goal.**

Objectivity in reporting the news is another goal, which serves as the mark of an experienced professional. It is a standard of performance toward which we strive. We honor those who achieve it.

There is no excuse for inaccuracies or lack of thoroughness and reporters should make every attempt to get a story right, correct it if it appears to be wrong, and note corrections.

Headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles they accompany. Graphic elements should depict an event's happenings accurately. Photographs should never be altered for any reason except for brightening when printing on newsprint.

News reports should be free of opinion or bias and represent all sides of an issue.

Partisanship in editorial comment, which knowingly departs from the truth, is unacceptable.

Student journalists recognize their responsibility to offer informed analysis, comment and editorial opinion on public events and issues in the community.

News analyses, reviews, opinion columns and perspectives pieces should be labeled as such, so as not to mislead.

## Fair Play

Student journalists at all times will show respect for the dignity, privacy, rights and well-being of people encountered in the course of gathering and presenting news.

The student newspaper should not communicate unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without giving the accused a chance to reply.

The student newspaper must guard against invading a person's legal right to privacy.

The student newspaper should not pander to morbid curiosity about details of vice and crime.

It is the duty of the student newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of its errors.

Student journalists should be accountable to the College community for their reports and the College community should be encouraged to voice its grievances against the student newspaper. Open dialog with our readers should be fostered.

## Pledge

*The College VOICE will make every attempt possible to prevent violations of these standards, and will encourage their observance by all members. Adherence to this code of ethics is intended to preserve the bond of mutual trust and respect between The College VOICE and the Mercer County Community College community.*

**NOTE:** *Portions of this code of ethics, as well as the following conflict of interest guidelines, were adapted from the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists: Sigma Delta Chi, the New York Times "Ethical Journalism: Code of Conduct for the News and Editorial Departments," and "Second Takes," a product of the Oregonian Publishing Company.*

# Appendix B - Conflict of Interest Guidelines

This newspaper is committed to avoiding conflict of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest whenever and wherever possible. On a general level, this means staff members make every reasonable effort to be free of obligation to news sources and special interest groups. Although collegiate journalism sometimes deviates from mainstream newspaper work, *The VOICE* strives for the highest level of professionalism. There are particulars associated with collegiate and community journalism that require more specific guidelines. Certain restrictions are more binding than others. Staff members who sense they may be in a potentially conflicting situation are expected to discuss the circumstance with the editor-in-chief immediately. Decisions are made in correspondence with the following guidelines:

## Outside Activities

Staffers at all levels should not cover or write about events in which they play official roles or organizations in which they are members. (Examples: Members of any student group cannot write about that student group. Members of a sports team cannot write about that sport.)

If reporters or photographers acquire or intend to acquire leadership roles within other organizations (such as PTK or NJSTARS) who advocate positions on college or other policy, they must inform the editors.

Editorial columnists may not argue for organizations in which they are members.

Any appearance of bias will not be tolerated in restaurant reviews, fashion columns, music and movie reviews/previews, and any other feature story regarding college events or groups, particularly upcoming events. The strictest care must be taken to avoid conflicts of interest in these areas, and to avoid even the appearance of "advertising" or in any other way promoting one event and/or group over another, even if actual participation in the group or event has not occurred. All ideas for these stories should be generated in-house, and suggestions for story ideas from outside sources must be thoroughly scrutinized by the appropriate editor before a balanced decision is made on coverage choices.

Freelance writers and photographers, and guest columnists appearing in *The College VOICE* are also bound to these rules.

## Work for Other Publications

Freelance work for media organizations outside the College community is permissible as long as it does not interfere with responsibilities to *The*

*College VOICE* and is not completed with information or resources made available to the staffer through his or her work for *The College VOICE*. If freelance work becomes frequent (more than once a month, for example), staff members should discuss the work and any potential conflicts of interest with the EIC.

## Whom to Interview, Photograph:

Reporters and photographers should not interview, quote or photograph other *VOICE* staff members, family members, apartment-mates, roommates or friends, unless explicit permission is granted by the editor-in-chief. Requests of parents who ask that their child's photograph not be taken or used are honored provided the child is under 16 years of age and in a private rather than public space. Social media is consider a public space. When a person is in a public space (including a public community college campus) reporters may take photographs of them and run them in print as the law permits. *VOICE* photographers will not interrupt classes in progress to take photos or in any other way cause a classroom distraction. *VOICE* photographers may photograph security officers at any time provided their picture taking does not interfere with the security officer's ability to carry out their regular duties.

## Community Reporting "J Lab" Specific Guidelines

J Lab reporters are not exempt from these Conflict of Interest Guidelines and should strive to adhere to them wherever possible, however, *The VOICE* acknowledges that reporting from within a community raises unique challenges where conflicts of interest are concerned. J Lab Participants are encouraged to leverage their knowledge as insiders within their community which leaves them susceptible to accusations of conflict of interest. To that end, J Lab students are advised to do the following:

1. If the J Lab reporter knows of a topic that is newsworthy but that they are directly connected to, they should try to find another reporter to take it on. They can help that reporter with their background research.
2. If the first option is not viable, the J Lab reporter must provide a parenthetical notation in the text of their writing or at the bottom of any multimedia content that briefly spells out the conflict. The fact that this solution breaks up the flow of a narrative should serve as a reminder for why writing about topics where conflicts exist are best avoided.

# Appendix C - The College VOICE Constitution

## Article I – Name

The name of the newspaper shall be *The College VOICE* also referred to as *The VOICE* or *College VOICE*.

## Article II – Purpose

The purpose of *The College VOICE* is to publish a student newspaper. The paper is directed primarily at the students, faculty and employees of Mercer County Community College and the residents of its neighboring areas, and contains educational and informational articles not normally or frequently contained in the commercial press, along with a significant amount of news and editorial coverage and general student comments of particular interest to the greater college community. A secondary purpose of this organization is to promote interest in the art of daily collegiate journalism and to educate and train students at Mercer County Community College in the art of print and new media journalism.

## Article III – Principles

**Truth is our ultimate goal.**
Objectivity in reporting the news is another goal. News reports should be free of opinion or bias and represent all sides of an issue. The content of *The College VOICE* should never intentionally or knowingly mislead. Student reporters, who are gaining experience and skills, must be guided by the Faculty Adviser. When errors occur they must be discussed and analyzed to ensure improvement and movement toward the ideals of journalism.

## Article IV – Membership Anti-discrimination Clause -

*The College VOICE* does not discriminate based on age, citizenship, color, disability, gender, race, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation or status as a disabled veteran. *The College VOICE* actively seeks a diverse staff.

**Eligibility** - In the fall semester of 2023, *The VOICE* changed from being a student activity to an academic news outlet. Eligibility requirements for participation shifted at that time. Currently, students in any Journalism, Communication, Photography, Advertising, or Digital Media track, and all Honors Students regardless of major, are eligible to participate in *The VOICE* provided they maintain a GPA of 2.5 or higher. Students in other majors may apply to participate. Factors evaluated in the application include the student's academic standing, course load, previous experience, relevant course work, and GPA. All editors who do not maintain the minimum grade point average of 2.5 will be dismissed from their post

until the semester grade point average is brought back up to a 2.5.

**Vacancies** -When staff positions become vacant new staffers may be admitted by the EIC and/or ME. Positions may also be filled by the Faculty Adviser(s) in consultation with the EIC and ME. *The College VOICE* is an equal opportunity entity, and reserves the right to restrict membership based on an ability to perform the activities related to the organization's purpose.

**Staff Positions** – Staff positions include:

- Editor-in-Chief (EIC)
- Managing Editor (ME)
- Section Editors
- Senior Reporters
- Junior Reporters
- Senior Photographers/Artists/Designers
- Junior Photographers/Artists/Designers

Section editors are appointed by the EIC and Managing Editor with input from the FA. All others are considered junior if they are in their first semester contributing to the staff, or senior if they have completed a semester and had multiple pieces published. Status is noted in print bylines.

## Article VI – Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Editor in Chief, Managing Editor and section editors are many. Typically the editors work together to determine what topics will be covered in each issue of the newspaper. Each editor is responsible for generating topics for his or her own section and assigning them to staff writers in cooperation with the Faculty Adviser. The editors work together to make sure that all key campus and local events are covered by the paper and that every issue of the paper features a balanced variety of articles on topics of interest to their audience.

Editors also literally edit the articles that are submitted by their staff writers. Editors decide which articles are good enough to appear in print, and which are not. The editor-in-chief can refuse to run any article that she feels is unfit. Final responsibility for the content of the paper rests with the editor-in-chief. The managing editor is second in command and stands in for the editor-in-chief when he or she is not able to govern. Editors also write the headlines for articles. Finally, they work to organize special issues, they put together community service events, they nominate writers and photographers for recognition, and they have input into how funds are directed.

## Article VII – Termination

Any staff member who graduates is automatically terminated from any full and active position at *The College VOICE*. Likewise, any student who

ceases to maintain the 2.5 GPA and 3 credit minimum course requirement for membership is automatically put on a probationary status. A staff member who is deemed to have flagrantly violated any part of the code or intent of the policies of The College VOICE, as expressed in the Policy Manual or *The College VOICE* Constitution, may be removed from their position by agreement of the EIC and ME or the FA. Alumni who seek to continue contributing to *The VOICE* may do so on an ad hoc basis if approved to do so by the FA and editors, but alumni may not be compensated or awarded for their work and work of current staff always takes precedence over work of alumni contributors. Alumni contributions are prohibited from being submitted to journalism competitions.

## Article VIII – Compensation

Provided they are not currently enrolled in either Journalism 1 or Journalism 2, the EIC and ME are compensated for their work following a formula based on minimum wage with the assumption that they will work 15 weeks each semester. If an editor does not complete their work, they will not be paid and an alternate editor may be appointed. Editors must complete tax forms at the start of the semester to receive pay. The adviser(s) must sign off on timeheets in order for payment to be processed. Editors are asked to use a pay tracking program such as TimeCamp to record their hours. If section editors are needed to step in because either the EIC or ME finds herself unable to complete the number of hours of work required, the section editors may be eligible to receive payment.

Editors are eligible to receive proximity swipe cards for access to the newsroom. This privilege may be revoked if the newsroom safety policies are not met. Editors are expected to hold regular office hours in the newsroom for reporters to come for help and support. They must post their expected hours at the start of the semester and alert the staff and adviser of any changes. Editors typically send a message to the group chat when the newsroom is open. If a class is being held in the newsroom, editors may hold their office hours in an alternate location

No health or other benefits are associated with editorial positions.

## Article IX – Meeting Procedures

Staff meetings are held at least once a week during the fall and spring academic semesters. An editor must attend each meeting.

## Article X – Miscellaneous

When the rules and policies of this organization, the content of its Constitution, or the actions of its members conflict with College regulations, the latter shall prevail.

Established and ratified by:
*Editor-in-chief: Alex Hough Date: 4/18/2008*
*Reratified by Editor-in-Chief Susana Sanchez Date: 8/31/2008*
*Reratified by Editor-in-Chief David Hoyt Date 8/31/2009*
*Reratified by Editor-in-Chief Sara Gatling 1/15/2010*
*Reratified by Editor-in-Chief Kelly Smith 9/20/2010*
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