

SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT PUBLICATIONS CODE

I. Terms

Student Publications Code hereafter will be the Code.

Student Publications Board hereafter will be the Board.

Student Medium or Media refers to any formal means of mass communication by students to students, such as a newspaper, magazine, yearbook, website, radio or television station. In addition, a student medium is applicable to this Code if it is published at least annually, is intended for general student distribution, and is funded in part or in whole by student fees. Examples of student media as defined by this Code are The Sounds and The Percival Review. Examples that are excluded from this Code are flyers, brochures, club newsletters, digital signage, individual blogs and emails.

College refers to South Puget Sound Community College.

Editor is the student(s) or editorial board that governs a student medium.

Staff refers to all students in a decision-making role for each medium.

Advisor is that faculty or staff member or members hired or appointed to serve as a media advisor and/or program manager.

II. Preamble

Student media provide a channel for information, serve as a public forum for ideas, opinions and creative arts in the college community, and educate interested students in the process of communications. The Code, approved by the College President, exists to protect the students' freedom to deal with any ideas and to express opinions in student media without fear of censorship, as well as to provide any oversight or advisory assistance that may help student media achieve success in serving the student body.

III. Role and Membership of the Student Publications Board

A. Role

1. The Board has no power or authority beyond that granted it by the Code.
2. The primary purpose of the Board is to be a support service for student media.

3. The Board also may provide oversight to ensure that enough process, policy and procedure exists for the routine operation of the medium and to make recommendations that will assist in the resolution of crises not resolvable by the editor, editorial board, or advisor of a medium.
4. The Board will give wide latitude to media staff members in interpreting and applying these broader principles to the specific instances of routine operation; the Board will not concern itself with general content, news judgment or matters of taste. Governing will be accomplished on a basis of periodic meetings and at a level above the daily or routine operations of the medium.

B. Membership

1. In order to recognize the all-college nature of student publications, but at the same time to emphasize the student role, the Board shall consist of:
 - a. An administrator, appointed by the College President
 - b. Three faculty members, appointed by the College President
 - c. Three students, appointed by the Associated Student Body President
2. To minimize potential conflicts of interest, members of the Board shall not, while serving on the board, hold any student publications position and shall not serve on any superior budgetary body.
3. The Dean of Student Life shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board.
4. The advisor(s) of student publication(s) or their representatives may sit on the board as ex-officio, non-voting members to provide information.
5. The Board may invite other resource persons to sit in ad hoc or ex-officio, non-voting capacities.
6. The term of all board members shall be for one calendar year, renewable. Unscheduled vacancies shall be filled immediately to cover the unexpired balance of the term by the same means as the original appointment.

7. The first meeting of the Board each fall shall be called by the appointed Administrative Representative or the previous Chairperson. At that meeting, a Chairperson shall be chosen for the year from among the six members of the Board. The Chair shall preside without vote except in the case of a tie.

IV. Operational Responsibilities of the Board

- A. The Board shall meet a minimum of once per quarter, except for summer quarter.
- B. The Board shall participate in the process of appointing student editor(s) of student media in accordance with the procedures and policies set up by the particular medium.
- C. Review budget requests of each student publication, prior to the submission of those requests, recommending action on funding.
- D. The Board serves as an appellate body to review complaints pertaining to student media not resolved within the particular student medium. The action of the Board may include, if necessary, the editor's censure, suspension from office, or replacement, but only in accordance with the following criteria for removal and system of due process:
 1. The criteria to consider the censure or replacement of a student editor are as follows:
 - a. Violation of the Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities.
 - b. Violation of Local, State or Federal law.
 - c. Violation of the medium's policies.
 - d. Under no circumstances may censure or removal of a student editor be considered on the grounds of content published in the medium.
 2. In any instance when the Board, by majority vote, believes complaints or concerns regarding the publication in question warrant consideration of removal of an editor on the grounds of the former criteria, the following due process shall be adhered to:

- a. The Chair of the Board shall notify the editor of the Board's concern(s) and establish a time for the editor to meet with the board.
- b. The editor shall be afforded the opportunity to respond to complaints or concerns(s), and answer any questions presented by members of the Board. The editor shall also have the opportunity to be represented at the meeting.
- c. Following the Board's deliberations, the Board shall, in open session, inform the editor of the board's intent to dismiss the concern(s) or to remove the editor from office. A two-thirds majority vote is required to remove the editor.

V. Statement of Freedom for Student Media

- A. Student media serve as a public forum and provide an avenue for freedom of expression and debate.
- B. Student media must be free of all forms of external interference designed to regulate content or viewpoint.
- C. Freedom of student media must not be abridged by confiscation of issues or facilities, or suspension of publications, nor may it be abridged by academic, personal, or financial sanctions or arbitrary removal of staff members.
- D. South Puget Sound Community College shall make no rule, regulation or policy that abridges the First Amendment freedoms of student media. College officials, faculty, staff or agencies shall neither directly nor indirectly compel nor prohibit protected speech on the basis of the views expressed. South Puget Sound Community College prohibits any college official from coercing, disciplining, or imposing sanctions against any student media staff member or student media adviser on the basis of the protected content of any student media, or taking any other action that is motivated by an attempt to control or manipulate past or future content. Moreover, college officials shall not withhold funding from any student media based on the content of that media, if that content is protected by the First Amendment and these bylaws.

VI. Responsibilities of Student Media

- A. Administration and management of student media rest with their respective editors. These duties include all editorial and operational decisions, filling out staff positions, and the preparation, presentation and administration of budgets. In the event of the editor's or managers' inability to carry out the duties of the office, the editor and/or the advisor shall notify the Chair of the Board of the situation and recommend necessary interim measures.
- B. The editor must accept final responsibility for the content of the publication and any violations of law or the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities shall be the sole responsibility of the editor.
- C. Each student medium shall submit to the Board for record a Statement of Purpose outlining the following:
 - 1. General policies, objectives, frequency, and method of publication, specifically excluding daily editorial and operational decisions as to the content of each publication.
 - 2. Criteria, hiring process, termination process, and length of appointment for the editor(s) and staff of each publication. Among the criteria to be considered should be experience, interest, and academic ability, but in no case shall a person be selected whom is not in good academic standing with the College.
 - 3. Any changes to a medium's Statement of Purpose must be submitted to the Board.

VII. Role and Responsibilities of Advisors

- A. The advisor is responsible for providing student editors and staff members with professional guidance and leadership.
- B. The advisor is responsible for representing the College and its policies and regulations to the student editor and staff members. The advisor is expected to make every reasonable effort to assure full compliance with all such policies and regulations short of censorship.
- C. The advisor is responsible to the student editor and staff members for providing a working environment in which student media may genuinely reflect student interests, needs, and opinion. Student concerns should be channeled through the advisor to the appropriate college authorities.