

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
FOR THE RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE
BOARD OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

I. Preamble

The Randolph-Macon College Board of Student Publications exists by authority of the Board of Trustees and President of the College to oversee the Yellow Jacket annual and Yellow Jacket newspaper in fulfilling their common mission of providing a means for communication and exchange of ideas among members of the college community. The board encourages members of the two staffs to take journalism courses as well as to obtain practical experience in order to provide publications for the college community that are of the highest quality.

The Board of Publications supports the following statement about student publications in the “Student Bill of Rights” (as published in the Faculty Handbook):

Student Publications

Student publications and the student press are a valuable aid in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and of intellectual exploration on the campus of Randolph-Macon College. They are the means of bringing student concerns to the attention of the faculty and the institutional authorities and of formulating student opinions on various issues on the campus of Randolph-Macon College and in the world at large.

In the delegation of editorial responsibility to students, the institution shall provide sufficient editorial freedom to maintain their integrity of purpose as vehicles for free inquiry and free expression in an academic community such as Randolph-Macon College.

The institutional authorities at Randolph-Macon College, in consultation with students and faculty, shall have the responsibility to provide written clarifications of the role of the student publications, the standards to be used in their evaluations, and the limitations of external controls on the operation of publications. At the same time, the editorial freedom of student editors and managers entails corollary responsibilities to be governed by the canons of responsible journalism, such as the avoidance of libel, indecency, undocumented allegations, attacks on personal integrity, and the techniques of harassment and innuendo. As safeguards for the editorial freedom of student publications, the following provisions are necessary:

- 1. The student press at Randolph-Macon College shall be free of censorship and advance approval of copy, and its editors and**

managers shall be free to develop their own editorial policies and news coverage.

2. Editors and managers of student publications shall be protected from arbitrary suspension and removal because of student, faculty, administrative, or public disapproval of editorial policy or content. Only for proper and stated cause shall editors and managers be subject to removal and then by orderly and prescribed procedures. The Board of Publications shall be responsible for their removal.
3. All Randolph-Macon College student publications shall explicitly state on the editorial page that the opinions there expressed are not necessarily those of the College or of the student body.

This Board of Student Publications Statement of Purpose document defines the range of authority and responsibility of the Board of Student Publications and contains the general framework of operations of the board, the two publications, and their advisors.

II. Duties of the Board of Student Publications

The Board of Student Publications is charged with fulfilling the following specific duties:

- A. To accept and review applications for the positions of editor-in-chief of the Yellow Jacket newspaper and the Yellow Jacket annual and to appoint the editors from among those qualified applicants;
- B. To set the annual salary of each editor-in-chief;
- C. To review the proposed annual budgets for the Yellow Jacket newspaper and the Yellow Jacket annual prior to submission to the president's cabinet for approval. Requests for capital items from the college's operating budget will be made through the board;
- D. To hear and resolve complaints against either publication;
- E. To review the performance of the editors-in-chief. The board may, upon a two-thirds vote (excluding the vote of the editor being reviewed), remove an editor-in-chief from his/her position.

III. Membership of the Randolph-Macon College Board of Student Publications

- A. Permanent membership will be extended to the persons holding the following positions:
 - 1. Dean of Students (or designee)**
 - 2. Advisor to the Yellow Jacket annual**
 - 3. Advisor to the Yellow Jacket newspaper**
 - 4. Editor of the Yellow Jacket annual**
 - 5. Editor of the Yellow Jacket newspaper****

- B. The two faculty advisors serve as faculty representatives on the Board of Student Publications. The faculty advisors are selected by the Provost and appointed by the President of the College.**

- C. There will be two students-at-large on the board who will be appointed to one-year terms by the president of the Student Government Association. Students may be reappointed up to three times. Student members of the board must be enrolled full-time at Randolph-Macon College and may not serve while on academic probation.**

- D. The Board of Student Publications will meet every other month according to a schedule convenient to the majority of members. If there is business to be presented to the board, the chairperson may call an additional meeting at his/her discretion.**

- E. Selection of a chairperson for the academic year will be by majority vote of the committee at the first meeting of the academic year. The chairperson will be voted into the position by the board from among the two at-large student members.**

- F. Director of Marketing and Communications will be an ex-officio member.**

IV. Statement of Expectations

The Board of Student Publications will provide guidance to students working on the Yellow Jacket newspaper and the Yellow Jacket annual. In turn, the student press is expected to adhere to the same standards of responsibility imposed upon the conventional media. Thus, the Yellow Jacket annual and the Yellow Jacket newspaper should avoid expression which:

- 1. is obscene, according to standards generally accepted by the campus community;**

- 2. is libelous, according to current legal definitions;**

3. creates a material interference with and substantial physical disruption of educational activities.

Failure to uphold these standards of expression may result in an editor being called before the board for review of his/her performance. The Board of Student Publications will determine whether a published item is obscene, libelous, or creates a material interference with and substantial physical disruption of educational activities in accordance with the above statement of expectations.

V. Statements of Purpose

- A. **Yellow Jacket Annual** - The staff of the **Yellow Jacket** annual will strive to produce an informative, accurate, and entertaining account of the year's activities. While focusing on student and campus life, the annual will ensure representation from all aspects of the college community to provide an historical account of the year's events.
- B. **Yellow Jacket Newspaper** - The staff of the **Yellow Jacket** newspaper will strive to bring to the college community a timely forum for the exchange of ideas and the dissemination of news and other topics of general concern. In so doing, the staff will adhere to the ideals of sound, professional journalism.

VI. Advisors' and Editors' Authority and Responsibility

- A. The advisors will be available to counsel staff members on a day-to-day basis, to provide advice when requested and/or when the advisor feels it is warranted, and to act as a liaison with the campus community, particularly the administration.

The advisor will serve "primarily as a teacher whose chief responsibility is to give valid advice to staff members" and "to guide students to an understanding of the nature, the functions, and the ethics of the student press." Further, the advisor will be prepared to give "instruction that will result in a better publication" (from The Code of Ethics of the National Council of College Publications Advisors).

Additionally, the advisors will assist student editors in developing an annual budget and help them to develop and maintain high professional standards of fiscal responsibility.

- B. The editor-in-chief of the **Yellow Jacket** annual shall have the following responsibilities and duties:

- to appoint a staff of qualified persons. For example, an editor may appoint a managing editor, photo editor, and layout editor. Specific positions may be created or deleted at the editor's discretion;
- to create a theme for the annual and oversee its production, i.e., layout and design;
- to set up regular meetings, at which time the editor will make assignments and keep staff informed on production progress, ensuring that events from all aspects of campus life are represented in the annual;
- to alert the campus community of upcoming photographers' visits through advertisements, etc. and to assist the visiting photographers while they are on the campus;
- to provide assistance to the staff for production of the annual, on how to use the website tools, and for working within the limitations of the annual budget;
- to be available during a 12-month period, beginning in the summer preceding the academic year of employment. During the first summer, the editor will attend a one-week yearbook workshop (if one is available within a reasonable distance from campus) and plan the theme and general design of the annual. All materials will be submitted to the publisher by the end of June of the second summer. The editor will be responsible for approving page proofs and the final blue line;
- to represent the Yellow Jacket annual at various campus meetings, including the Board of Student Publications and the Student Executive Committee. If the editor-in-chief is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, he/she should appoint someone from the staff to attend in his/her place.

C. The editor-in-chief of the Yellow Jacket newspaper shall have the following responsibilities and duties:

- to appoint a staff of qualified persons; For example, the newspaper staff usually includes a managing editor, news editor, features editor, photography editor, sports editor, and advertising manager. Positions can be created or deleted at the pleasure of the editor-in-chief; however, all aspects of running the newspaper should be covered with a fully-qualified staff;
- to meet on a regular basis with the editorial staff to determine editorial policy and discuss issues relating to the content of the newspaper;

- to produce a newspaper on a timely schedule, as agreed upon by the editor and the Board of Student Publications;
- to establish a beat system so that events from all aspects of the campus are covered;
- to oversee the layout of the newspaper and to work closely with the printer to insure that his work meets with the satisfaction of the editor;
- to learn to use the desktop publishing system and teach the system to one or more other persons on the staff;
- to work with the advisor to assure the responsible handling of revenues and expenses;
- to represent the newspaper at meetings of the Student Executive Committee, Board of Student Publications, Board of Directors of the Randolph-Macon Parents Association, the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, and any other specially called meetings on campus requiring his/her attendance. If the editor-in-chief is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, he/she should appoint someone from the staff to attend in his/her place;
- to work with the current editor-in-chief between the time of selection and the end of the spring term;
- to produce a student newspaper that informs the campus community of current issues and events on the campus and reflects the high standards of ethics and professionalism as outlined under section IV of this document.

VII. Selection of the Editors

- A. The editors-in-chief of the Yellow Jacket annual and Yellow Jacket newspaper shall be selected each spring prior to assuming their duties in the following manner:
- The new editor-in-chief of the Yellow Jacket annual will begin planning the following year's annual during the preceding spring and summer and begin actual work with the new staff in September. The editor will remain on the job until the last deadline has been met.
 - The new editor-in-chief of the Yellow Jacket newspaper will work with the outgoing editor between the time of selection and the end of the spring semester. During this time, he/she will attend weekly and special meetings, layout sessions, and computer training sessions. The new editor will also use this time to learn all aspects of the editor's job and

to begin recruiting people to serve in staff positions for the following year. The new editor will officially take over as editor of the newspaper when the responsibilities of the outgoing editor have been fulfilled.

- B. Qualifications:** Students desiring to be editor-in-chief of either publication must be full-time students at Randolph-Macon College, have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 at the end of the fall semester preceding appointment, and not be on active social probation.

VIII. Procedure for Complaints

Members of the College community who have complaints regarding the operation of either publication may request to speak to the board at one of its regular meetings or may request in writing that such complaints be investigated. Complaints should be forwarded to the chair of the Board of Student Publications, whose name will be published on the Provost's website.

VIX. Summary

The Board of Student Publications will promote and foster the ideals of sound journalism among staff members of the Yellow Jacket newspaper and Yellow Jacket annual. This may include, but not be limited to, sponsoring educational programs on its own or in conjunction with the Society for Collegiate Journalists, encouraging the formal study of journalism, and setting high standards of ethics and responsibility for student journalists.

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