

COLLEGE STUDENT PUBLICATIONS BOARD

Constitution

I. Mission

The College Student Publications Board shall be the policy making body for all student publications at the college, including the student newspapers, the literary magazines and any other publications approved by the Board of Directors of the Suffolk Community College Association, Inc. The role of the College Student Publications Board is to (1) promote excellence in student publications, (2) develop consistent college-wide standards, policies and procedures, and (3) serve as a grievance/appeals board when issues cannot be resolved at the campus level or are of college-wide significance.

The following document defines the scope and duties of the College Student Publications Board. This document has been developed to assist the student publications staff and advisors in effectively conducting business and overall operations.

II. Authority

The College Student Publications Board is established by the Board of Directors of the Suffolk Community College Association, Inc. Responsibility for the operation of the student newspapers and the literary magazines is delegated to the College Student Publications Board and the Campus Student Publications Boards from the Board of Directors. The Campus Student Publications Boards are charged with the general supervision and operation of the student publications. The College Student Publications Board is charged with the policy making authority for student publications, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

III. Purpose of Student Publications

Collectively, student publications provide students with learning opportunities through the exploration and expression of issues and ideas. The publications provide the campus community with a student perspective of events, issues and activities at the campus, the college, the local community and the nation. In addition, the publications provide students with unique opportunities for personal and professional growth and development. Students are encouraged to practice and apply skills learned in the classroom while taking responsibility for the management of the publication program. Students learn to work cooperatively toward a common goal in service to the campus community.

IV. Statement of Policy: Freedom of Speech and Corollary Responsibilities

It is undeniable that students are protected in their exercise of freedom of expression by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Accordingly, college officials are responsible for ensuring freedom of expression for all students.

It is the policy of the Board of Directors of the Suffolk Community College Association, Inc. that the student newspapers and the literary magazines, the official Association-sponsored student publications of the College, have been established as forums for student expression and as voices in the uninhibited, robust, free and open discussion of issues. Each publication should provide a full opportunity for students to inquire, question and exchange ideas. Content should reflect all areas of student interest, including topics about which there may be dissent or controversy.

It is the policy of the Board of Directors of the Suffolk Community College Association, Inc. that student journalists, as editors, shall have the right to determine the content of official student publications. The student publications are free of censorship and advance approval of copy. Editors and managers are free to develop their own editorial policies and news coverage or content, within the bounds of approved codes of ethics. Accordingly, these guidelines and policies relate only to establishing grounds for disciplinary actions subsequent to publication.

Along with the above freedoms come responsibilities. All publications are expected to adhere to journalistic standards, to exercise good judgment and to be accurate, fair, truthful and impartial in their reporting. Student publications are expected to conform to journalistic and literary standards and all approved codes of ethics.

V. Board Composition and Terms of Membership

The College Student Publications Board shall be chaired by the Vice President for Student Affairs, who shall serve as a non-voting member of the Board.

The voting membership shall be:

the Director of Student Activities from each campus;

one faculty member from each campus (selected by the governance bodies);

one Dean/Associate Dean of Student Services (serves on a rotating basis);

one community representative with experience as a professional journalist selected by the President's Cabinet;

one faculty member/administrator appointed by the Vice President for Academic and Campus Affairs;

one representative appointed by the President;

one student representative from a member publication from each campus (selected by the Campus Student Publications Boards); and

one faculty/staff advisor from a member publication from each campus (selected by the Campus Student Publications Boards).

All members shall serve a one-year term.

VI. Relationship of Board to Administration

The College Student Publications Board is the duly appointed and designated representative of the administration in all matters pertaining to its responsibilities. The College Student Publications Board shall report all actions and recommendations to the President of the college and other administrators as may be appropriate.

VII. Responsibilities of the Board¹

The functions of the College Student Publications Board are:

- a. to develop consistent policies, procedures and guidelines for student publications in such areas as business practices and procedures, grievance procedures, personnel issues and other college-wide issues;
- b. to adopt ethical codes and standards for student media organizations and faculty advisors;
- c. to serve as a grievance and/or appeals board for college-wide issues, removal of advisors, and campus-based concerns that cannot be resolved by the Campus Student Publications Boards, and to make recommendations to the appropriate college administrator(s); and
- d. to encourage student publications to be responsive to all segments of the college community without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation or disability.

VIII. Vacancies and Removal of Board Members

The College Student Publications Board may recommend that a member be removed for just cause by a majority vote of the Board. Recommendations for removal shall be forwarded to the appropriate individual or organization responsible for the initial appointment. Should a vacancy occur due to resignation or other circumstances, the chair shall notify the appropriate individual and/or organization to request a replacement.

IX. Meetings

The Board shall meet as often as necessary, with a minimum of one meeting per year. Meetings shall be called by the Vice President for Student Affairs as deemed necessary. Board members can make a request to the Vice President for Student Affairs that a meeting be called to address specific issues and concerns. A quorum shall consist of more than 50% of the voting membership. Motions need a simple majority of those present to pass.

X. Amendments

Provisions of this document may be amended by two-thirds vote of the membership of the College Student Publications Board. Such amendments shall be effective upon approval by the Board of Directors of the Suffolk Community College Association, Inc.

¹ Note that in the event of a conflict of interest, members shall recuse themselves from the Board's deliberations and actions.