

Guideline and handbook for the editors and staff of

The Signal

The student-published newspaper of the University of Houston-Clear Lake

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INTRODUCTION

Media Production is designed to introduce you to the various phases of newspaper publishing including fact gathering, journalistic writing, copy editing, cutline writing, headline writing, photography, design, advertising sales and circulation. A series of lectures on these topics held early in the semester will help you with the basic techniques. But your real learning will take place on the job as you produce six issues of the university newspaper, The Signal.

You will be responsible for all phases of The Signal's production. You will select the stories to be covered, write the articles, copy edit the content, take the photographs, design the paper and its cover, take the camera-ready proofs to the printer, circulate the issues when they arrive, and sell advertising to support publication. The Signal now belongs to you.

Each person in the class will be assigned an editorial position, according to skill and preference. Positions available include: editor, assistant editor, design editor, assistant design editor, reporter, photographer, web master and videographer. Staff members also take turns copy editing the newspaper.

This manual is designed to help you fulfill your role on the staff. It contains information about newsroom procedures and rules, submission guidelines, style guidelines, story guidelines, photographer guidelines, graphic guidelines, and advertising guidelines. It also includes sections on media law and ethics as well as the shared governance process at UH-Clear Lake.

AUTHORIZATION FOR PUBLICATION

Excerpted from the UH-Clear Lake Student Rights and Responsibilities published August 1992, pages 20-21:

Student Publications

The university recognizes the contributions that can be made to the university only by a student-managed and student-operated newspaper. Accordingly, UH-Clear Lake fully endorses the concepts of freedom of press and freedom of speech as established by the Constitution of the United States as well as federal and state laws. Within these boundaries, the university is committed to the support of a student newspaper that serves the various needs of the academic community at large and secondarily, the needs of the surrounding community. The following rights and responsibilities, as well as the above-mentioned constitutional guarantees, become the framework by which the recognition of the UH-Clear Lake student newspaper is initiated and maintained.

- The UH-Clear Lake student newspaper must be a vehicle of communication for all segments of the university (i.e., student, faculty and staff); it must, therefore, be an organ of the university at large. Accordingly, editorial policy should permit soliciting input for the paper from all interested parties within the university. Newspaper operational policy need not require the newspaper to publish all such input, but there shall be no arbitrary exclusion of input from any given individual or groups within the university.
 - In meeting the above criteria, the newspaper must be responsive to the needs of the university at large and the surrounding community. It also follows that it must be responsible to the university-at-large as is any other recognized student organization. Accordingly, the student newspaper is accountable to the Student Life Council in matters pertaining to its rights and responsibilities.
 - Editorially, the paper must adhere to accepted journalistic ethics and standards of good taste as they relate to the responsible reporting of views or events.
4. Within these parameters the paper has the freedom to:
- f. Organize in whatever way is deemed internally efficient.
 - g. Publish without threat of censorship (although this in no way negates collective and individual responsibility for what is published).
 - h. Establish whatever editorial policy is deemed appropriate and/or necessary.

THE SIGNAL MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the UH-Clear Lake student newspaper, The Signal, is to inform, educate and entertain our readers.

As a student newspaper, it is primarily a medium of communication for students, and we encourage all students to participate in this communication. Consistent with the shared governance philosophy of this university, it is also our goal to provide a forum to which all constituents of the university community have access.

At a secondary level, it provides an opportunity for students who participate in newspaper publication to gain expertise in journalistic writing, editing, photography and computer technology.