

# **THE STATEMENT HANDBOOK**

## **Mission Statement**

The Statement student newspaper provides the students of Middle Georgia State University with “all the news that is news” around campus. It is the expectation of the University that the student newspaper will be staffed with well-qualified and responsible editors and staff.

## **Staff Agreement**

All staff members must be registered for at least 3 credit hours and maintain a 2.0 institutional GPA. Those in leadership positions must be registered for a minimum of 4 credit hours. All staff members are expected to attend mandatory training sessions scheduled by the Student Media Coordinator. In order to validate your application, it is necessary for the Student Media Coordinator to check your GPA and Middle Georgia State University Student ID number. For payment purposes, we must also have your Social Security number and a completed W-9 form. Completion of a staff application gives the Student Media Coordinator permission to review this information for business purposes only. Your Middle Georgia State University student ID and Social Security numbers will not be shared with students.

You must also read and agree to abide by our Plagiarism Policy and Ethics Statement below. By signing and submitting this Staff Agreement, you signify that you have read and understand all these materials including Plagiarism Policy and Ethics Statement, as well as the Middle Georgia State University Student Handbook, the Middle Georgia State University RSO Handbook and the Middle Georgia State University Student Media Bylaws. You may not work for or receive payment for the student newspaper until you have done so.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions concerning the information within these documents or any aspect of Middle Georgia State Student Media, please get in touch with the Acting Student Media Coordinator, Dr. Andre Nicholson at [andre.nicholson@mga.edu](mailto:andre.nicholson@mga.edu) or 478-471-5789.

## **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism at Middle Georgia State University student media shall be defined as submitting another person's work, whether previously published or not, as your own, or taking portions of another person's work, whether published or not, and presenting them as your own in your work without properly attributing them to the person who created the work. In terms of the law, if the plagiarized work is then published in the newspaper, on the Web or broadcast, it is called copyright infringement. These rules apply to staff of the student newspaper, both the newsroom and advertising.

Any person caught committing plagiarism and/or copyright infringement will face the following disciplinary action:

1. The employee will be immediately fired from the student media and will never be permitted to work for any Middle Georgia State University student media again.
2. The Editor-in-Chief or any other editor or coordinator may submit the student's name to the University's judicial system for adjudication and punishment.
3. A person who commits copyright infringement must pay all costs related to settling with any aggrieved party. For example, if the writer of a previously published piece demands payment,

the student who committed the plagiarism must pay the requested price to the Student Media, which will then pay the person to whom payment is owed.

4. Any student refusing to fulfill the financial obligations incurred from copyright infringement will have his/her records and registration frozen by the University until the debt is settled.

## **Job Descriptions**

### **All staff members**

- Shall represent the student newspaper in a professional and positive manner
- Are at liberty to work with, or in, other club organizations on campus, as long as there is no conflict of interest (see ethics guidelines), nor conflicting work hours
- Are encouraged to write columns, generate story ideas and editorial ideas.

Payment stipend for this position is a minimal sum for volunteer participation in student publications work that is not considered an employment relationship by the U.S. Department of Labor.

### **Managers and Editors:**

1. Assist the Editor-in-Chief in all assigned duties
2. Create and facilitate an open and inviting atmosphere
3. Attend regularly scheduled meetings and training sessions
4. Be available and a resource for all staff
5. Meet regularly with the Editor-in-Chief to keep him/her updated on progress and any potential problems or concerns
6. Assist Editor-in-Chief in the recruitment of new staff members
7. In conjunction with the executive staff, assist in the determination of content and general layout of the newspaper
8. Act as a liaison between the newspaper and the University community
9. Take pride in and accountability for your area of responsibility
10. Maintain a minimum (but announced) schedule of office hours in order to address all potential concerns of the staff and Middle Georgia State University community.

### **Editor-in-Chief Application and Appointment Process**

The list of qualifications and the application process is designed to promote participation from all members of the student body and to secure the services of an individual who is motivated to provide positive leadership to the members of the staff:

1. Be enrolled at Middle Georgia State University for a minimum of 6 credit hours and have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5.
2. Have successfully exited all Learning Support requirements.
3. Be willing to complete training as assigned, including the Middle Georgia State University Recognized Student Organization training session and mandatory student newspaper fundamentals training sessions.
4. Work with the Student Media Coordinator to schedule staff training sessions in the various aspects of newspaper production.
5. Have strong communication skills and ability to motivate staff.

6. Be computer literate and willing to learn additional computer skills.
7. Maintain office hours (19.5 hours per week).
8. Be willing to work closely with the Student Media Coordinator and the Student Media Advisory Board.
9. Understand that Dean of Students will be asked to provide information related to the candidate's disciplinary history.

**It is preferred that candidates have previous experience with the student newspaper or other newspaper (high school, college, or other)**

### **Application process**

1. Candidates are required to submit three examples of previously published work. All writing samples should be submitted in hard copy. One sample should be a graded paper from a class.
2. Candidates must submit a statement describing his/her vision for the student newspaper.
3. Candidates must submit a current resume.
4. Résumé, copies of previous work, and vision statement must be delivered to the attention of Andre Nicholson, Acting Student Media Coordinator, [andre.nicholson@mga.edu](mailto:andre.nicholson@mga.edu) by the posted deadline.
5. The chair of the Student Media Advisory Board will convene a meeting of the Board for review and selection of the successful candidate. The Student Media Coordinator will advise the successful candidate in writing of his/her appointment.

\* The successful applicant will receive a stipend roughly equivalent to the salary of a student assistant working 19.5 hours per week.

### **Editor Statement of Understanding and Acceptance**

Let it be known that \_\_\_\_\_ has been appointed by the Student Media Advisory Board of Middle Georgia State University to the position of Editor of the student newspaper. The term of this appointment will be from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

This position is directly advised by the Student Media Coordinator.

[http://www.mga.edu/arts-sciences/docs/mca/student\\_media\\_bylaws\\_MGSC\\_2013.pdf](http://www.mga.edu/arts-sciences/docs/mca/student_media_bylaws_MGSC_2013.pdf)

With the signing of this "Statement of Understanding and Acceptance" the person named above:

- 1) Has read and agrees to abide by Middle Georgia State University Student Media Bylaws ([http://www.mga.edu/arts-sciences/docs/mca/student\\_media\\_bylaws\\_MGSC\\_2013.pdf](http://www.mga.edu/arts-sciences/docs/mca/student_media_bylaws_MGSC_2013.pdf)) before the term of appointment begins.
- 2) Has read and agrees to follow the position description for this position.
- 3) Knows that attendance at board meetings, retreats, and/or training sessions may be required. Has read the established procedures for organizations receiving allocations from student activities fees.
- 4) Will enforce all deadlines as established by staff and contracts.
- 5) Understands that the payment for this position is a minimal sum for volunteer participation in student publications work that is not considered an employment relationship by the U.S.

Department of Labor. The successful applicant will receive a stipend roughly equivalent to the salary of a student assistant working 19.5 hours per week.

Commission payment for advertisements sold and for reimbursements is permitted but the Editor cannot accept payment for doing the work designated for any other positions, whether filled or unfilled.

- 6) Clearly understands that Middle Georgia State University publications are published for all students and other segments of the University and not just a small group.
- 7) Is expected to have read and to abide by the laws of libel, right of privacy, obscenity, and similar existing laws, as well as the current staff manual and Student Media Bylaws.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Editor Position Description**

The Editor is responsible for the overall operations of the newspaper. The Editor oversees production of newspaper, develops and implements production schedule, determines and implements budget, recruits and trains staff, and selects/hires/fires editorial staff. The Editor must keep staff/managers/editor information confidential and secure according to the **HIPPA act**. The Editor may receive college credit for work, under internship guidelines. It is the Editor's responsibility to ensure that all tasks, from planning to distribution, are completed.

The Editor must be familiar with and meet the requirements of the Student Media Bylaws, the application and appointment process and statement of understanding and acceptance.

The Editor is a Middle Georgia State University student leader and represents the student newspaper at any and all functions.

### **Specific Duties:**

1. Motivate and maintain entire staff by assisting the other editors and managers in creating and facilitating an open and inviting atmosphere.
2. Oversee the organization of the staff and the assignment of tasks so that the paper is published in an orderly manner and by deadline.
3. Supervise all positions to ensure the fulfillment of job responsibilities, explaining and enforcing all deadlines and policies with the staff.
4. In conjunction with the executive staff, determine procedures for the submission of press releases
5. Hold regularly scheduled meetings for all staff and act as chair at these meetings.
6. Meet regularly with the Student Media Coordinator to keep him/her updated on progress and any potential problems or concerns (i.e., legal, ethical, internal discipline, budgets, equipment needs, etc.). Provide a bi-annual report (or specifically a semester-by-semester report) of duties and send to Student Media Coordinator.
7. Maintain a minimum of 19.5 scheduled office hours per week in order to address all potential concerns of the staff and Middle Georgia State community and for the on-campus production of the newspaper.

8. With the Student Media Coordinator, organize workshops for students, staff writers, editors and managers and organize campus and off-campus events for The Statement staff and recruits.
9. Represent the newspaper at all Student Media Advisory Board meetings, or provide a substitute. In conjunction with the editorial board/executive staff, determine content and general layout of the newspaper.
10. Employ techniques that ensure accuracy (fact checking/verification) and since this is a learning environment, meet with the Student Media Coordinator weekly to go over the previous week's issue.

### **Layout/Design Editor**

The Layout/Design Editor for the student newspaper is responsible for all production functions and operations of the newspaper. It is the Layout Editor's responsibility to ensure that all tasks of the production assistants, from planning to deadlines, are completed. The Layout Editor is responsible for all layout and design responsibilities as defined by the Editor-in-Chief. While not involved in editorial/news value decisions, the Layout Editor may be asked for input by the editorial staff.

### **Specific Duties:**

1. Consult and work with the Advertising Manager and Editor-in-Chief to determine space reservations for advertising and ensure that advertising commitments are accounted for. Based on advertising, determine the number of pages of the paper, in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief.
2. Motivate, train, and maintain production staff; create and facilitate an open and inviting atmosphere; supervise production positions to ensure the fulfillment of job responsibilities. Actively participates in layout and design workshops.
3. Oversee the photo cropping and placement and layout and paste-up of editorial and advertising copy so that the paper may be completed and published in an orderly manner and by deadline. Makes final decisions for story and picture layout with consultation from EIC and proofs pages for grammar, word usage and spelling according to the Associated Press Style Manual. Writes headlines. Makes corrections to proofed pages.
4. Maintain regular contact with Publishing Company. Ensure the newspaper is properly formatted and delivered to Publisher on time.
5. Collaborate with the Managing Editor in terms of receiving articles in a timely manner and general layout of content and graphics.
6. Meet regularly with the Editor-in-Chief to keep him/her updated on progress and any potential problems or concerns
7. Maintain a minimum schedule of office hours in order to address all potential concerns of the staff in production manager capacity
8. Act as a liaison between the Editor-in-Chief and production staff.
9. The Layout & Design Editor will be offered a monthly stipend of \$125. Bonuses or additional pay is at the discretion of the EIC, with consultation and approval from the Student Media Coordinator.

### **Managing Editor/Copy Editor**

The Managing Editor oversees staff including Photo Editor/Art Director, section editors, writers and cartoonists. The Managing Editor works closely with Editor-in-Chief on content, writes editorials, assist writers with feature stories, and makes story, beat and photo assignments. The Managing Editor duties also include working with EIC, advisers and Student Media Coordinator in the training staff in the proper usage of grammar and AP style as used the newspaper; training staff in writing skills; assisting Editor-in-Chief and section editors in final copy review, editing, and alterations (to include AP style, grammar, spelling, correct titles and fact checking).

The Managing Editor shall attend at least one meeting a week and must notify the Editor-in-Chief by e-mail or phone if he/she cannot attend. The Managing Editor is required to write only two stories a month. The Managing Editor serves on the editorial board and acts as Editor-in-Chief, when Editor-in-Chief is not present. The Managing Editor is paid a monthly stipend of \$100. Bonuses or additional pay is at the discretion of the EIC, with consultation and approval from the Student Media Coordinator.

### **Art Director/Photo Editor**

Duties of the Art Director/Photo Editor include supervising and ensuring completion of photo assignments for the newspaper. He/she is responsible for The Statement photo equipment; training photo personnel; processing digital photos through applicable software; creating and maintaining photo files. Art Director/Photo Editor and Photographers will receive e-mails from the Managing Editor and/or Editor-in-Chief regarding assignments. Story ideas are welcome and photographers are encouraged to attend meetings, workshops and off-campus events and activities. Art Director/Photo Editor is paid a monthly stipend of \$100. Bonuses or additional pay is at the discretion of the EIC, with consultation and approval from the Student Media Coordinator.

### **Section Editors/Copy Editors**

Assist Editor-in-Chief in determining story coverage; supervise, train, and motivate section writers; actively and aggressively seek and assign stories for respective section; enforce and meet deadlines; format and design assigned section; review, edit, proof, and take responsibility for all copy in assigned section. Attend staff meetings including virtual meetings. Let Managing Editor or Editor-in-Chief know if you cannot attend. Each editor is paid a monthly stipend of \$70. Bonuses or additional pay is at the discretion of the EIC, with consultation and approval from the Student Media Coordinator.

### **Online Editor**

The Online Editor is responsible for updating the student newspaper website and placement of all Web content. The Online Editor will also assist as needed with other aspects of newspaper production as needed, including graphics, building ads and other duties as determined by the Editor-in-Chief.

### **Specific Duties:**

1. Oversees production and maintenance of newspaper's website.
2. Ensures all stories and images are posted in a timely fashion.

3. Helps to establish online-only content, including contests, multimedia presentations, surveys and other appropriate components and spearheads all website endeavors.
4. Ensures that important breaking news stories are updated between editions.
5. Responds to e-mail related to the newspaper's website.
6. Serves as a member of the editorial board, assisting in developing opinions and researching editorials, and attends all editorial staff meetings.
7. Keeps in consistent contact with the Editor-in-Chief, informing him/her of changes implemented to the website.

The Online Editor is paid a monthly stipend of \$100. Bonuses or additional pay is at the discretion of the EIC, with consultation and approval from the Student Media Coordinator.

### **AP Stylebook Policy for all editors**

All editors will be given an AP Stylebook, have to sign for it and are expected to return it at the end of the school year or once no longer an editor. The books are property of the Middle Georgia State University student newspaper and are for use by editors and staff. Editors may purchase their books for \$10 at any time, and staffers may purchase any remaining books at the same price, with the money going to the purchase of new AP Stylebooks. Additional copies will be available for use by student newspaper staffers, who also have to sign the books out and be given the option to purchase. At least one copy should remain in the office at all times. There also are older volumes available as reference materials in the office as well. Those who sign out, but do not return the books will be fined \$20 and all stipends/reimbursements will be held and/or garnished to recoup the fine. A hold will also be placed on academic records until the fine is paid or the book is returned.

### **Staff Reporters**

Cover beats regularly, providing ongoing story ideas and stories on a regular basis by deadline. Reporters are responsible for improving the quality and content of all stories, as directed by supervising editors. Reporters are paid a stipend of \$7 per on-time story (no cap). All staff reporters report regularly on campus news, on assigned beat (department/division/office) and meet regularly assigned department/division/office chairs and/or directors. Reporters may be paid more for taking a regular beat (at the discretion of the EIC).

All staff writers must generate story ideas, attend one meeting a week or notify editor why not; participate in workshops and training provided by the student newspaper and Student Media Coordinator; participate with collaborating media organizations. Senior Staff Writers work closely with Managing Editor; work closely with Junior Staff Writers; and act as a mentor for assigned Junior Staff Writer. This includes providing feedback to Managing Editor regarding mentorship; Senior Staff Writers participate in aiding Managing Editor and Student Media Coordinator with writing workshops.

### **Cartoonists**

Cartoonists shall contribute both ideas and art for the publication. Cartoonists shall consult with the Editorial Board. Pay is \$7 per cartoon published. Cartoonists may submit work for any publication and as often as possible; however, there is NO guarantee that the work will be



published, unless otherwise stated. Content is at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor.

### **Photographers**

Photographers shall contribute both ideas and art for the publication. Photographers shall consult with the Editor, Managing Editor and Photo Editor as well as writers for assignments. Pay is \$7 stipend per photo assignment published. Photographers may submit work for any publication and as often as possible; however, there is NO guarantee that the work will be published, unless otherwise stated. Content is at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor.

### **Marketing/Advertising Manager**

The Advertising Manager of *The Statement* student newspaper is responsible for the advertising operations of the newspaper. It is the Advertising Manager's responsibility to ensure that all advertising tasks, from sales to placement to collections, are completed. This position, unlike editorial positions, is directly supervised by the Student Media Coordinator

#### **Specific Duties:**

1. Develop advertising/marketing projects for the newspaper. Target businesses within the community and generate revenue for the newspaper in a professional manner. Work closely with the Student Media Coordinator and Editor-in-Chief to ensure advertising revenue is collected.
2. Train, motivate, and maintain entire advertising staff in creating and facilitating an open and inviting atmosphere. Oversee the organization of the advertising staff and the assignment of tasks and clients so that the paper is published in an orderly manner and by deadline.
3. Supervise all advertising positions to ensure the fulfillment of job responsibilities, explain, enforce, and meet all deadlines and policies with the staff.
4. Proof all advertisements placed to insure accuracy in placement and production.
5. Regularly check message box and follow-up.
6. Know and instruct all advertisers of all newspaper and Middle Georgia State University policies and procedures. In conjunction with the publications coordinator and the Editor-in-Chief, determine advertising procedures. Meet regularly with the Editor-in-Chief to keep him/her updated on progress and any potential problems or concerns.
7. Hold regularly scheduled meetings for advertising staff and act as chair at these meetings.
8. Marketing/Advertising Manager and staff are paid 30 percent commission for advertisements sold and published. Payments are issued after advertising is published.

### **Circulation Manager**

The Circulation Manager supervises and ensures the timely distribution of the newspaper; distributes marketing materials as directed; performs/assists in strategy formulations as deemed necessary. This position, unlike editorial positions, is directly supervised by the Student Media Coordinator.

### **Specific Duties:**

1. Collaborates with Student Media Coordinator, Marketing Manager, and/or Editor-in-Chief regarding distribution routes.
2. Responsible for distributing newspapers on each campus and/or within the community (as agreed upon between Student Media Coordinator, Editor-in-Chief and Circulation Manager), replacing old publications with new ones, and returning old publications to the newspaper office. Also provides reports on circulation and readership (number of papers taken from each box/stand location).
3. The Circulation Manager shall represent the student newspaper in a professional and positive manner, to include not driving on campus walkways.
4. The Circulation Manager will receive a stipend of \$25 per issue for distributing papers to the Macon Campus and other destinations as assigned. Additional duties may be required as the year progresses.

### **Non-Competition**

As an educational institution, the Middle Georgia State University student newspaper encourages staff members to express themselves and to work to further their journalistic goals. This can include publication in national magazines and interviews in local or national news sources or other publications. It is not appropriate, however, for any Middle Georgia State University student newspaper staff member to work or volunteer for an organization that may be seen as, or actually is, a competitor. It is also improper for any staff member to publish materials in such publications. The Student Media Coordinator will define competitor. Internships at professional news organizations not considered competitors are acceptable and are encouraged. A Middle Georgia State University student newspaper staff member's primary responsibility and obligation is with the Middle Georgia State University student newspaper; however, opportunities for staffers to work freelance or full time for other media (and make better money) do arise. Approval to work for an off-campus medium and/or any freelance work off- or on-campus (External Affairs) must be sought from the Student Media Coordinator and Editor-in-Chief in advance of the commitment. It is permissible only in noncompetitive media, on a staffer's own time, and should not conflict with the staffer's obligations to the Middle Georgia State University student newspaper.

Students who work or intern at other on- or off-campus news organizations must distinguish between whom they are working for on each individual story. They cannot cover one event or issue for more than one organization. KnightTVision is the only exception. Staff can write, photograph, edit or perform any other duties for KnightTVision, as long as there is no conflict of interest, and they identify themselves as working for both or the likelihood the story may appear in both media.

### **Ownership of Work**

Regardless if a staffer is paid or is a volunteer, the student newspaper, as represented by the Student Media Advisory Board "owns" the published and unpublished work done by the staffers, if the work was done as a staff assignment. All published work is copyrighted by the student newspaper. Ownership of unpublished work may revert to the staffer upon petition to and approval of the Editor-in-Chief and the Student Media Coordinator. The student newspaper has

unlimited use of the work. The act of voluntarily joining a publication staff indicates approval of this policy.

### **Photo Resale Rights**

The Student Media Coordinator is authorized to permit reselling of a single copy of published or unpublished staff-created photographs. Requests for multiple copies of published or unpublished staff-created photographs must be approved by the Student Media Coordinator with the advice of the photo editor and Editor-in-Chief. In all cases, copyright of reproduced published or unpublished photographs remains with the student newspaper. Only the Student Media Coordinator is authorized to sell or otherwise transfer copyrighted material.

### **Editorial Policy**

Editorial policies are reviewed every term of office by the incoming Editor-in-Chief, but the following general policies apply, unless amended by the Editor-in-Chief. The student newspaper subscribes to the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists, which was adopted in 1926 and revised 1973, 1984 and 1987, and the Associated Collegiate Press Model Code of Ethics for Collegiate Journalists, 1992. Although these codes generally will be enforced, the Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with the Student Media Coordinator may decide in certain instances to vary from the code.

### **Training & Workshops**

The student newspaper requires attendance at yearly orientation sessions and quarterly/monthly training updates provided by the Student Media Coordinator. The purpose of these meetings is to provide essential, fundamental training in the skills required of newspaper management, ethics, writing, computer production, layout and design, photography and advertising. This training also permits clear discussion of policies, goals, and social activities. Training may be called by the Editor-in-Chief and/or Student Media Coordinator as needed. Students join the publication with the understanding that these staff workshops are required.

### **Editorial Board**

The Student Newspaper Editorial Board is an eight-member\* board which consists of the Editor-in-Chief, Layout Editor, Managing Editor, Copy Editor, section editors, Online Editor and Photo Editor/Art Director. Two staff members to represent general staff and reporters may be chosen by the staff at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief. The board will meet once a week to discuss issues and the newspaper will take on these issues, news value, and future stories. Topic(s) will be selected each week, with one person writing for the majority opinion on a particular issue (not unlike the Supreme Court). These editorials will be the newspaper's official stand on the issues considered by the board. For that reason, representatives to the board must be representative of the entire staff. Representatives are expected to spend extra time each week working with the board. At least one more than one half of the members of the editorial board must be present each week to warrant an editorial decision. A simple majority vote is need for the board to write a specific opinion or make a decision.

\*Actual editorial board size is determined by executive positions filled or utilized.

## **Opinion/Viewpoints Policy**

The opinion section of a newspaper is, in its purest sense, an open forum for the community that the paper serves. More so than any other section of the paper, the opinion section belongs to the readers, and except for the unsigned staff editorial, should stay objective – or at least fair – and allow readers to present their viewpoints. The section editor is responsible for actively seeking guest columnists and expert opinion.

## **Letters to the Editor**

Letters Policy: The student newspaper will try to print all letters received. Letters should be, at maximum, 250 to 300 words long. The writer must include full name, professional title, if a Middle Georgia State University employee, Georgia resident, or year and major, if a student. An address and phone number are required with all letters sent, but will not be published. The student newspaper reserves the right to edit letters for style, possible libel, or length. The newspaper will not withhold names under any circumstance. Please address all correspondence to Letter to the Editor at [editor@mga.edu](mailto:editor@mga.edu). Priority will be given to those letters written by students, faculty and staff of the University on current events. Staff members should not inform writers as to whether the letter will run or when. The Editor-in-Chief and staff members should not use the letters sections as a forum for rebuttal, although concise clarifications or correction of erroneous material can be made if absolutely necessary. All student newspaper staff members are strongly discouraged from using the letter to the editor forum.

## **Staff Editorials**

The unsigned staff editorial of the student newspaper is the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief, who will supervise the writing of all editorials, commentaries and opinion columns. Unless unusual circumstances are involved, reporters will not write editorials concerning their beats but will advise the Editor-in-Chief about facts not readily apparent in a story. A reporter may write a column about a story on his/her beat, but said columns should only give insight into the news gathering process and should not be used to print what the reporter suspects but cannot prove. Reporters and editors will be expected to meet the same standards of accuracy and proof in columns and editorials that must be met in news stories. An editorial is defined as an article that discusses a situation or event but does not suggest a course of action. In questionable cases, the editor makes the decision on whether an article should be designated as a column or an editorial. Working with the Editorial Board, the Editor will determine which editorial will be printed. If there is strong disagreement on a particular topic, the Editor may authorize a column in the same issue to defend the opposite point of view. The student newspaper does not run guest editorials, but in some instances, the student newspaper will print editorials from other professional or collegiate newspapers if the topic merits attention in the Middle Georgia State community. In that case, the editorials will be attributed to the appropriate publication.

## **Disclaimer**

Required to be published on a regular basis: “*The Statement* is the recognized student newspaper of Middle Georgia State University and is published biweekly (Mondays) during fall and spring semesters. Opinions and ideas expressed in (the student newspaper) are those of the individual artists, authors, or student editors, and are not those of Middle Georgia State University, its Board of Regents, the student body or the advertisers. *The Statement* is paid for, in part, through

student activity fees. For a review of all Middle Georgia Statement policies, see *The Statement Handbook* at [http://www.mga.edu/arts-sciences/docs/mca/student\\_newspaper\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.mga.edu/arts-sciences/docs/mca/student_newspaper_handbook.pdf).”

### **Correction Policy**

*The Statement* student newspaper never knowingly publishes inaccuracies. If any error is found, the student newspaper is obligated to correct the error as soon as possible, regardless of the source of the error. A consistent location, signature and style for corrections will be used.

### **Manipulation of Archives**

*The Statement* and its website, <https://mgamedia.wordpress.com/category/mgsc-news/>, strive to report the truth as accurately as possible on news events of the day. Online archives are a part of the institutional memory of the newspaper and a historical record of our community. As such, we will not remove nor attempt to hide from commercial search engines any material in our online archives – news stories, story comments, editorials, opinion columns, photographs or graphic illustrations. If an error in our archived content is brought to our attention and documented to our satisfaction, we will append the original article with an editor’s note acknowledging the change made to the original archive. That decision is solely at the discretion of the current student editorial management.

To make a complaint that archived content is inaccurate, contact the Editor-in-Chief in writing by letter or e-mail with the following information:

- Name, telephone number and e-mail address
- The URL address of the content in question
- The specific content with an explanation of how the information is inaccurate.

In the case of content published more than one year ago, the complainant must provide reasonable proof to the Editor-in-Chief that the content in question is no longer accurate. For example, a copy of expungement papers should be provided in case any criminal charges are dropped. If published more than a year ago, contested quotes are highly unlikely to be amended without written or audio documentation. If the contested content was published less than a year ago, normal internal procedures for checking the material’s accuracy will apply, and you may be asked to provide written documentation. Updates or corrections may be added if the material is factually inaccurate, but nothing will be removed. In the event of a correction, a note detailing the date and time of the change will be included. The request will be reviewed and checked by the editor and if the editor determines it to be valid, an update or correction will be posted.

## **COMPLAINTS BROUGHT AGAINST STUDENT NEWSPAPER LEADERS**

### **Editor-in-Chief**

#### *Charge*

- When a charge is brought against the Editor-in-Chief, the Student Media Coordinator will investigate the charge and determine if reasonable grounds exist to warrant a sanction. If so, the Student Media Coordinator will provide the Editor-in-Chief a written sanction.

*Appeal*

- The Editor-in-Chief may file a written appeal of the Student Media Coordinator's decision to the chair of the Student Media Advisory Board within two University business days following the date of the decision.
- The chair of the Student Media Advisory Board will schedule a hearing with the voting members of the committee or designees.
- The decision of the Student Media Advisory Board in this matter will be considered final, except that any student has the right to appeal to the Vice President for Student Affairs and ultimately to the President of the University if he or she believes that due process has not been followed.

**Student newspaper staff**

*Charge*

- When a charge is brought against any other member of the student newspaper staff, the Student Media Coordinator will meet with the Editor-in-Chief and the staff member to determine if reasonable grounds exist to warrant a sanction. If so, the Editor-in-Chief will provide the staff member a written sanction.

*Appeal*

- With the exception of a written warning, the staff member may file a written appeal of the Editor-in-Chief's decision to the Student Media Coordinator within two University business days following the date of the decision.
- The Student Media Coordinator will arrange a meeting between the Editor-in-Chief and the staff member to discuss the Editor-in-Chief's actions, and seek to mediate any disagreement.
- Subsequently, the Student Media Coordinator will issue a written opinion regarding the sanction.
- The staff member may file a written appeal of the Student Media Coordinator's decision to the chair of the Student Media Advisory Board within two University business days following the date of the decision.
- The chair of the Student Media Advisory Board will schedule a hearing with the voting members of the committee or its designee.
- The decision of the Student Media Advisory Board in this matter will be considered final.