

HENRY FORD COLLEGE

STUDENT NEWSPAPER BOARD CONSTITUTION

Original: February 14, 1989
Amended: April 2010
Amended: April 2015
Amended: February 10, 2017
Next Scheduled Revision: April 2018

Current Revision: February 10, 2017

Preamble

In order to provide an autonomous student press responsible to the college community through its representatives, the College establishes a Student Newspaper Board, hereinafter, referred to as the Board, which has the sole responsibility and authority to publish the official student newspaper on campus, *The Mirror News*.

The Student Newspaper Board of HFC recognizes that students in our free and democratic society have the right to produce student publications as an essential part of their education.

The student newspaper at HFC should accurately and objectively report events, incidents, and information that reflect the diversity of the educational programs offered at the College, as well as the diversity of the students pursuing those programs. The newspaper should encourage creative works of students and elicit timely, informed opinions and editorials, which shall appear on editorial pages.

Further, the College recognizes that student journalists are no less citizens than their counterparts working on private newspapers beyond the academic world.

Therefore, the traditional rights and responsibilities of the press in a free and democratic society must guide both the Student Newspaper Board and the newspaper staff to foster a free exchange of ideas and to preserve the student newspaper as an open forum for everyone within its purview.

A. Membership of The Student Newspaper Board

1. The Board shall consist of ten voting members; five shall be students, two faculty, one administrator, one Academic Coordinator and one person currently active in the field of journalism outside of the College. In addition, two non-voting ex-officio members (the Editor and the Faculty Publications Liaison) shall also be members of the Board.
2. The Student Newspaper Board shall appoint the student members by an affirmative vote of the majority of the Board. Student membership shall be open to all currently enrolled HFC students in good standing.
3. The College Senate shall appoint the faculty members.
4. The administrator shall be appointed by the College President.

5. The active journalist shall be appointed by the other nine members of the Board by an affirmative majority vote.
6. Student Board members must maintain 2.50 cumulative averages; must not be officers of student government or staff members of the student newspaper, *The Mirror News*; and must have completed no less than six credit hours prior to their appointment.

The Faculty Publications Liaison for the student newspaper shall monitor the student Board members' academic standing to assure that they have successfully completed a minimum of six credit hours with a cumulative grade point average of 2.50 or higher at the end of each semester of service.

7. Terms of office of all Board members shall be two years, with the possibility of selection or election for a succeeding term.
8. The initial appointments of Board members shall be so arranged that every year not less than one-half the voting membership of the Board shall be appointed.
9. The primary responsibility of the Faculty Publications Liaison is to be a consultant to the Editor of the student newspaper.

10. Voting members of the Board shall select a chairperson at the first meeting of the Fall semester. The Chair shall retain the right to vote at all times. The Board may select from among the members such other officers as it deems necessary. The Chair of the Student Newspaper Board shall withhold his or her vote in the event of a tie in order to permit student members to cast the deciding vote.
(Note: The Faculty Liaison and the faculty member who serves as the journalism instructor cannot serve as the chair.)
11. Board members shall be appointed at the end of the Winter semester. The term of office shall begin on the first day of the Fall semester and end on the last day of the Summer semester.
12. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as governs original appointments for the remainder of the unexpired term within 30 days after the vacancies occur.
13. In the event that members are not appointed as provided herein, the Chair, with consent, shall have the power to make appointments to the Board. These appointees shall serve as regular members of the Board for the term for which they are appointed. Said members shall have all rights and powers of a regular member on the Board.

In the event that a member has two unexcused absences, as deemed by the

Chair, during any given *year*, that member's seat on the Board shall be declared vacant and shall be filled in the manner set forth above.

B. Responsibilities of the Student Newspaper Board

1. The Board shall be the publisher of the student newspaper, The Mirror News.
2. Every three years the Board shall establish and amend its own constitution by a majority vote. The amended Constitution will be subsequently submitted to the HFC Board of Trustees for review and approval. In the event that the Board develops bylaws, these shall also be subject to approval by the HFC Board of Trustees.
3. All complaints, comments, and suggestions made concerning the student newspaper shall be directed to the Student Newspaper Board. The Board shall have the responsibility and authority to take appropriate action.
4. The Board shall appoint the Student Editor (hereinafter called the Editor) of the student newspaper, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.
 - a. The Editor shall be appointed in April* under the following conditions:

- i) Procedures and criteria for appointing the Editor shall be established by the Board and publicized generally.
- ii) The Editor's term of office shall be one year beginning with the last day of the winter semester* and ending on the second to the last day of the subsequent winter semester.
- iii) The Editor shall be a student in good standing and maintain a 3.0 or higher cumulative average and shall be registered at HFC for a minimum of six credit hours. The Editor shall not enroll in any other institution of post-secondary education without the explicit consent of the Board.

The Faculty Publications Liaison shall monitor the Editor's academic standing on behalf of the Board to assure that he/she has successfully completed a minimum of six credit hours and maintain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average or higher at the end of each semester of service.

- iv) During the Editor's term of office, the Editor shall not

hold office in any other student activity.

*In the event that an Editor must be appointed in December, the term of office will last for one semester.

5. The Board may remove the Editor after a Board hearing. In the case of a vacancy in the office of editor caused either by resignation or removal, the Board shall appoint a replacement of the editor within 30 calendar days.
6. The Board shall meet in September, February, March, and April during the academic year, with additional meetings to be scheduled by the Faculty Liaison as needed. A quorum shall consist of a majority of current active voting members. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern its proceedings, except where contradicted by this statute.
7. The Board shall maintain and make available a permanent set of minutes of its meetings. Such meetings shall constitute a public record. Meetings of the Board shall be conducted pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act.
8. Within the framework of general College policies and procedures, the Board shall adopt an annual budget for the student newspaper and make the financial records of the student newspaper available for periodic audit.
9. The Board shall make public annually a statement of the financial condition

of the student newspaper at the beginning of the Fall semester, for the previous academic year.

10. The open-forum publishing standards shall include the right of anyone to advertise in the student newspaper, except persons with past-due accounts with the student newspaper. The newspaper may not exclude any advertisements, except for those that violate federal law or College regulations, including the regulation of prohibiting advertisements offering ghostwritten research or term papers and except for those, which do not conform to ordinary standards of good taste. The editor shall have the initial responsibility, and the Board shall have the final authority, to determine conformance.

11. The normal channel of communication between the HFC Board of Trustees and the Board shall be the President of the College.

C. The Responsibilities of the Editor to the Student Newspaper Board

1. The Editor shall be responsible for all the content of the paper, including, but not limited to, news, editorials, commentary, photography, and graphic arts.

2. The Editor shall be responsible for the production of the newspaper and appoint the editorial, business, and production staff. All such staff members

must be in good standing, maintaining a 2.5 or higher cumulative grade point average.

Prospective staff members must sign the Mirror News Staff Agreement (See Appendix A) and shall be registered at HFC for a minimum of three credit hours.

The Faculty Publications Liaison for the student newspaper shall monitor the student staff members' academic standing to ensure that they have successfully completed a minimum of three credit hours and maintain a 2.5 cumulative grade point average or higher at the end of each semester of service.

The Editor may remove any member of the staff for a just cause, subject to normal appeal procedures (See Appendix B) as developed and maintained by the Board.

3. Within the area of the Editor's discretion, and the Mirror News Staff Agreement, he or she is responsible for all material appearing in the student newspaper. The editor shall maintain the highest standards of accuracy, truthfulness, and impartiality; shall respect the rights, confidences, and opinions of others; shall honor the right of rebuttal; shall operate within the general policy framework of the College; and shall ensure those personal

beliefs, opinions, interpretations, or other editorial comments shall appear only on the editorial page and be clearly labeled as such.

4. The editor shall be responsible for the newsroom, including, but not limited to, computer, photographic, and recording equipment.
5. The editor shall have the freedom to establish and implement the editorial policy of the student newspaper within the framework established by the Board and this statute as they may be amended from time to time, provided that editorials are printed on the editorial page, and identified as such. The Editor shall have the responsibility to objectively and accurately report events, incidents, and information primarily related to the College community; to publish the creative efforts of students; and to provide an open forum for student opinion.

D. Responsibilities of the Faculty Publications Liaison

1. Acts as a consultant to the Board and the Editor.
2. Develops agendas for the meetings of the Board in conjunction with the Editor.
3. Develops and maintains the minutes of the Board.
4. Develops an annual budget for the student newspaper in conjunction

with the Editor and submits the budget to the Student Newspaper Board in September each year.

5. Submits requisitions to expend College funds for the student newspaper to the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Vice President of Financial Services & Auxiliary Services for their review and approval.

APPENDIX A

MIRROR NEWS STAFF AGREEMENT

The following is an agreement between the Mirror Student Editor in Chief and the Mirror staff member. By initializing the appropriate line and signing this form you are agreeing to its terms.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Student ID _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____

Interns for the Mirror News

Per Article C.2, the Editor shall be responsible for appointing the business manager and editors for the student newspaper, The Mirror News. The following interns must be in good standing, maintaining a 3.0 or higher cumulative grade point average, and must fulfill the requirements of the respective internship. All staff members, including interns, are expected to attend weekly meetings and have one extra duty, such as helping distribute papers and newsroom maintenance. Interns must enroll in the respective internship class and meet the requirements of that class.

Business Manager (JOUR 295: Business Manager Internship)

Agreement: The business manager shall track the Mirror's advertising income. The business manager shall continually solicit new advertising, send out invoices, follow up on any unpaid bills, and mail papers to advertisers and all people and institutions on the Mirror's mailing list.

Layout Editor (JOUR 297: Layout Editor Internship)

Agreement: The Layout Editor is responsible for the layout and design of the newspaper during the days and times as agreed upon between the Layout Editor and the Editor.

Copy Editor (JOUR 296: Copy Editor Internship)

Agreement: The Copy Editor is responsible for reading all articles submitted by staff before they are placed in the paper. The Copy Editor shall follow the schedule designated by the Editor.

Creative/Online Editor (JOUR 298: Creative/Online Editor Internship)

_____ Agreement: The Creative/Online Editor is responsible for managing the content and layout for the arts section of *The Mirror News*, and for managing content on the online version of *The Mirror News*. The Creative/Online Editor shall follow the schedule designated by the Editor.

Co-op Staff Positions

Per Article C.2, the Editor shall be responsible for appointing the co-op staff for the student newspaper, The Mirror News. The following co-op staff members must be in good standing, maintaining a 2.5 or higher cumulative grade point average, and must fulfill the requirements of Co-op. All staff members are expected to attend weekly meetings and have one extra duty, such as helping distribute papers and newsroom maintenance. Co-ops must meet the cooperative education requirements of the college, including enrolling in the respective co-op class, and meeting weekly with the co-op supervisor.

_____ **Assignment Editor (COMM 190/290)**

Agreement: The Assignment Editor shall be appointed at the discretion of the Editor. Responsibilities include writing at least two stories per issue, generating

story ideas, working with reporters, and following up with staff to track progress of story assignments to meet deadlines.

Special Section Editor (COMM 190/290)

Agreement: The Special Section Editor shall be appointed at the discretion of the Editor. Responsibilities include generating story ideas pertinent to their designated section, writing at least two stories per issue, working with reporters on stories that relate to their special section, following up with staff to meet deadlines, and giving them to the Assignment Editor for review.

Reporter (COMM 190/290)

Agreement: The reporter shall be assigned to at least two beats, to be determined by the editor. The reporter shall contact their beats weekly for story ideas. Each reporter is expected to submit a minimum of two articles per issue. Editor shall assign stories for each issue, with input from reporter.

Columnist (COMM 190/290)

Agreement: The columnist shall generate a column and one story for each issue. The columnist shall be assigned to one additional beat, to be determined by the editor, which they shall contact weekly for story ideas.

Photographers (SSCO 190/290)

Agreement: The photographers shall follow photo assignments provided by editors. When the photographer is on an assignment he/she shall record names (left to right), and other necessary information to accompany photos per Associated Press guidelines. The photographer is expected to write captions for any photos that are planned for publication.

Sports Editor (COMM 190/290)

Agreement: The sports editor shall be responsible for the Sports section of The Mirror News. The sports editor shall be expected to generate at least two sports stories per issue. The sports editor shall work with staff on the Sports section of The Mirror News.

Sports Reporter (COMM 190/290)

Agreement: The sports reporter shall be expected to generate at least two sports stories per issue. The sports reporter shall work with staff on the Sports section of The Mirror News.

Circulation/Marketing Manager (BCO 190/290)

Agreement: The Circulation Manager is responsible for the campus-wide distribution of the current issue of the Mirror News on the date of delivery. The manager can request the help of other staff members and coordinate the actual distribution; however, the ultimate responsibility for distribution of the newspapers is the responsibility of the Circulation Manager. The Circulation

Manager shall also be responsible for replenishing the newspaper racks as needed during the two-week period before the next publication date. In addition, the Circulation/Marketing Manager will help market the newspaper, including campus and community outreach.

_____ **Graphic Artist (SSCO 190/290)**

Agreement: The Graphic Artist will work with staff to create graphic content for The Mirror News.

_____ **Other:**

Other positions may be created as needed.

APPENDIX B

MIRROR NEWS APPEAL PROCESS

1. Any *Mirror News* staff member who believes he/she has been unfairly terminated by the *Mirror News* editor may submit a written grievance and any supporting evidence to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Any grievance, along with any supporting evidence, must be submitted within seven working days of the termination, or is barred.
2. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, or its designee, shall promptly forward the grievance to the Student Newspaper Board Chair. Upon receiving the grievance, the Chair shall notify the *Mirror News* editor in writing

and attach a copy of the grievance and any supporting evidence. Within seven working days of receiving the grievance, the editor shall respond to the grievance in writing and attach any evidence that supports his/her decision. The editor shall deliver his/her written response to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs to be promptly forwarded to the Student Newspaper Board Chair.

3. Within five working days of receiving the editor's decision, the Student Newspaper Board Chair shall deliver copies of the grievance and the editor's decision to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs for distribution to the Student Newspaper Board members.
4. Using the *Mirror News Staff Agreement* as criteria, the Board shall vote, within seven working days of receiving the copies of the grievance and the editor's decision, to determine if a grievance hearing shall be convened. The decision of the Board as to whether to convene a grievance hearing shall be made by a majority vote of the Board members present and voting, and is final. If a majority of the Board votes to convene a grievance hearing, the Newspaper Board Chair shall, within ten working days, schedule the hearing.
5. The Board shall promptly present in writing, to the editor and the grievant-through the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs or its designee-its decision to either a) uphold the editor's decision, or b) hold a grievance hearing. If the decision is to hold a grievance hearing, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, or its designee, shall notify the grievant and editor of the time, date, and place of the hearing.

6. During the hearing, only the grievant and the editor shall be allowed to make verbal presentations and present evidence. At the conclusion of the hearing, The Board shall vote to either uphold or deny the grievance, and if the grievance is upheld, to fashion an appropriate remedy. The decision of the Board shall be made by a majority vote of the Board members present and voting. The Board's decision is final.

The Student Newspaper Board Chair, through the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, or its designee, shall present the Board's decision in writing within seven working days to the grievant and editor.

APPENDIX C

Pay for Submissions to the *Mirror News*

This amendment seeks to address the inability to recruit volunteers to submit articles for the *Mirror News*, which has been an ongoing issue since the creation of the *Mirror News*. In fact, the chronic lack of volunteer submissions has meant cancellation of scheduled publications, which costs advertising revenue.

The current expense budget from advertising revenue of the *Mirror News* will support compensation for article submissions. The Student Newspaper Board will review the funding source annually.

The rationale for this amendment is that a modest financial incentive to students who have acquired first-semester experience working on the *Mirror News* or other journalism setting (i.e., the college's journalism courses), or have shown themselves to be proficient in writing news (per the judgment of the Editor-in-Chief), will contribute to the overall quality and success of the newspaper.

The following parameters define the criteria for compensation of submissions.

Compensation Criteria: Submissions

Who would be paid?

Any currently enrolled HFC student who submitted work that was assigned by the Editor-in-Chief, and who turned the work in by its deadline would be paid; this work would have to be satisfactory in terms of content and story guidelines (See Appendix A). Decisions about whether or not the work is satisfactory are made by the Editor-in-Chief. The advisor will mediate in case of a disagreement. The work will have to be published in the *Mirror News* in order for the writer to receive payment. In other words, the reporter will be paid upon publication.

How much will be paid to reporters?

Upon publication, a fee according the following criteria will be awarded:

\$25 – Investigative Reporting/Feature Story Submission (e.g., Sports or Event Reporting, Review, Opinion)

\$15 – Non-Reporting Submission (e.g., Creative Writing/Poetry, Cartoon, Photo)

\$75 –Video Reporting (edited and pre-approved by newspaper staff)

The fee is limited to \$75 per person per issue, and will be subject to what the *Mirror News* can support through advertising revenues. The fee will be reviewed annually by the Student Newspaper Board.

Would all pieces that appear in the paper be work for pay?

No. Faculty, staff, co-ops, interns, non-students, and volunteers earning service hours are not eligible for pay. Editors who have responsibilities to turn in columns or other news pieces for their scholarships would not be able to “double-dip” and also receive pay. However, once the editors’ regular writing duties are satisfied, nothing would prevent them from receiving other assignments beyond their obligations, thereby getting paid.

Who would keep track of pay?

This duty would be added to the Business Manager’s job description.

Would freelance writers be able to work for pay?

The *Mirror News*'s long-standing policy is to accept work by contributing writers; if such work is assigned by the Editor, then the writer would be eligible for pay.

Does this policy extend to the spring and summer?

No, unless the publication schedule for the *Mirror News* should change to include the spring and summer semesters.

What kinds of paperwork would be needed?

General fund check requests indicating that the reporters are independent contractors and/or freelance workers ought to satisfy the requirements of such pay for work. Copies of the fund request will be given to the Business Manager. The Advisor's signature is also required. Documentation as to what kind of work has been done needs to be a part of the check request.

Are there any guidelines as to the amount of money a writer could make?

Writers need to know that if they make over \$600 a calendar year, either by writing, or selling ads, or doing other work for the college that is not part of the regular payroll, then a 1099 form will be issued to the student. This form will have to be filed as part of the student's income tax.

Would writers be paid for columns?

If such pieces are beyond the scope of an Editor's responsibility and are assigned, then writers would be paid.

What are the policies of other community colleges regarding paying student contributors?

Almost all other college newspapers compensate writers either through scholarship, college credit, pay or a combination thereof. According to advisors and editors at other institutions, freelance submissions are paid either by the column inch, or a flat rate. This information has been gathered by the Michigan Community College Press Association, a conference that HFC hosted in April 2010.

When are student contributors paid?

Payments will be scheduled after the publication of the 3rd, 6th, 9th, and 12th issues. Adjustments may need to be made based on the number of publications.

Are there other ways a writer or practicum student may be paid?

Yes. The Student Newspaper Constitution allows for scholarships to be issued based on remaining funds at the end of the fall and/or winter semester.

Managing Paper work?

To avoid hassles over work assigned and being paid for or not, a contract will be created for “stories assigned” by the Editor; signatures of all affected parties will be required. (See “Guidelines for Article Submission” below.)

The Business Manager will be responsible for the paper work and insuring reporters are paid.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

1. Use both spell check and the dictionary; spell check will not correct for meaning or wrong word usage. For instance, it will not correct the misuse of “there” and “their.”
2. Publication of articles may depend on attendance at staff meetings. Please contact the Editor for a schedule of staff meetings.
3. The top of your copy should include: **Title** (suggestion for headline)
Your full name (no nicknames/pen names)
Contributing Writer
4. Articles need to be emailed in either Microsoft Word or “rich text format.”
5. Use “Arial” 12 point as the font size.
6. The copy editor will not check the spelling of the sources’ names; be sure all information is accurate and factual; verify the sources to prevent misquoting or wrongful representation of the information.
7. All articles are to be submitted on or before the day they are due.
8. If you do not have a deadline, see the Editor to ask for a deadline.
9. Articles may be edited for space. The Editor’s decision is final.
10. Save a copy of your article both electronically and in hard copy in case it needs to be retrieved at a later time, or in case your submission did not go through.
11. Make sure the file name matches the title of your article before you email your submission.
12. Use the college’s Email system, which is preferred.
13. If there is a problem with the article, it will be returned; please make the appropriate corrections and re-submit by the indicated new deadline. If the Editor does not receive the corrected copy, most likely, it will not be in the paper.
14. Feel free at any time before deadline day to contact the Editor or any of the staff at the *Mirror News* if you are having difficulty with the assignment.
15. The Editor’s email is: editor@hfcc.edu

Please note: The criteria for article submissions may change pending recommendations by the Editor and review by the Student Newspaper Board.

Submission Compensation Contract

I have read and agree to the guidelines for submissions. I understand that failure to comply with the guidelines will mean forfeiture of any agreed upon compensation. I understand that I am only eligible for compensation if my submission is published in the Mirror News.

Name of Contributing Writer: _____

(Please Print Legibly)

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Editor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Advisor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Business Manager's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Submission Deadline: _____