

The official student newspaper publication for Rochester Community and Technical College shall be the Echo.

This publication shall be subject to oversight by the department of Mass Communications. Department faculty will oversee and maintain acceptable journalistic practices and standards. The adviser, except in extraordinary circumstances, will be a member of the Mass Communications Department.

**Part 1. Statement of Purpose:** The purpose of the newspaper is:

- To provide a news, editorial and entertainment medium for students, faculty, staff and administration.
- To open a channel for free and responsible discussion to college students, faculty, staff and administration.
- To constructively criticize and make suggestions in editorial matters.
- To serve as an activity for students interested in publication work.
- To provide a stimulating activity environment, challenging students to the task of organization, responsibility and teamwork.

**Part 2. Responsibility:** The newspaper has a basic responsibility to its readers to present material that is well-written, timely, factual, meaningful, constructive and in good taste. Meaningless gossip shall not be printed because it is undignified and journalistically valueless. Copy that is defamatory, abusive or libelous will not be used. The newspaper shall not be used as a means of self-glorification. Editorial comments and opinion will be placed on the editorial page and clearly marked outside the editorial page by typographical means. Rumor or hearsay is never to be misrepresented as news. The misquotation of statements shall be avoided, and in case of error, a correction shall be printed in the next issue. The newspaper must always endeavor to present impartially both sides of an issue in its news columns, but it may favor one or the other side in its editorial columns. Equal opportunity for coverage will be given to all clubs, departments, activities, sports, etc., but the extent and frequency of the coverage will be dependent upon the journalistic value of the material, the availability of information and the availability of the newspaper staff.

**Part 3. Operational Policy:** The newspaper has a responsibility to point out to its readers the meaning of news. It must work to improve the college by pointing out injustice and the needs of students, faculty, staff and administrators. Furthermore, the paper should offer constructive criticism to alleviate or improve the situation. The newspaper will adhere to the following operational policies:

- Student leaders will work with the adviser to ensure high journalistic standards regarding writing, reporting, objectivity, accuracy and ethics as prescribed by the Society of Professional Journalists.
- News articles, both "straight" and feature news regarding any event, policy, organization, student, faculty, staff or administrator may be provided, depending on space and the availability of staff members.
- Sports columns may make comment and criticism pertaining to individual or team effort, but must not be malicious when referring to individual players or coaches. Constructive suggestions should be offered.
- Any action that deprives students, faculty, staff or administrators of their rights may be brought to the attention of the college, as long as the allegations contained in the article are accurate.
- Headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles to avoid misleading the reader.
- Sensationalism for the sake of sensationalism will not be tolerated, and controversial material must be justified in its use.
- Pictures and cartoons shall be of good quality, shall adhere to standards of good taste and shall not be libelous.
- Letters to the editor are subject to editing for space requirements and for violation of newspaper policies, procedures and the SPJ Code of Ethics. Letters must be signed and material, depending on space, may be published.
- The Echo will use the Associated Press Stylebook.
- Advertising and want ads should be of high journalistic standards and be in good taste. The newspaper will not accept pornographic material or advertisements for illegal acts or situations. Decisions regarding questionable materials will be made by the Editorial Board in consultation with the adviser.

**Part 4. The Editorial Board:** The Editorial Board will serve in an advisory capacity and will meet weekly to discuss college events. Board members will discuss the "play" of current stories and will offer suggestions for appropriate news and editorial coverage. The editor-in-chief will chair this meeting. If the EIC is absent, he/she will appoint a member of the board to

serve as chair. In no case will a non-member of the board serve as chair. Board members will strive to reach consensus, but the editor-in-chief, in consultation with the adviser, will make final decisions. The board also will meet with the adviser within five days of the last issue to discuss adherence to journalistic standards. This meeting shall be constructive in nature.

- Board members will consist of the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, the news editor, the arts and entertainment editor, the sports editor, the business manager and the adviser (on an ad hoc basis). The members may choose a senior writer to serve on the board.

**Part 5. Staff Members:** Staff members serve at the discretion of the current adviser and will be selected each spring for the following academic year. These appointments shall be made in consultation with the current editor-in-chief. Staff members may be dismissed by the adviser, in consultation with other Mass Communications faculty, for failure to adhere to journalistic standards as prescribed by the SPJ. Staff members work with the adviser to produce a publication that reflects outstanding learning and journalistic values/principles of excellence.

**Subpart A. Duties and responsibilities of various positions.**

- The Editor-in-Chief. The editor-in-chief is the senior leader of the executive team. He/she will represent and embrace excellence in journalistic practice, standards and techniques. The EIC will consult with the adviser to direct and oversee the day-to-day operations of the newspaper. The EIC also
  1. Will assign duties to staff writers.
  2. Will oversee all copy, pictures and advertising.
  3. Will adhere to accepted journalistic practices consistent with the SPJ code of ethics.
  4. Will guide the staff in their duties, must offer advice and suggestions and make assignments.
  5. Shall be responsible for the front page and the editorial page.
  6. Will make final decisions on all copy matters, pictures, etc. with consultation of the adviser.
  7. Shall determine, with the adviser's assistance, the frequency of distribution of the paper and the proposed budget.
  8. Shall criticize, praise and attempt to help the staff with publication problems.
  9. Will produce a newspaper that adheres to journalistic standards of excellence regarding coverage, reporting, writing and layout and design
  10. Will assist the adviser in choosing next year's editor.
  11. Will oversee the layout and design of the entire newspaper but will specifically design and layout page one, page two and the editorial page(s). This workflow may be changed, depending on the strengths of other editors.
- The Managing Editor.
  1. Will oversee staff production, including writers, photographers, graphics and advertising.
  2. Assists in copy editing all assignments to conform to acceptable Associated Press, grammar and punctuation styles.
  3. Reviews cut lines and photos with an eye to journalistic excellence.
  4. Oversees layout and design for the entire newspaper, but is directly responsible for the layout and design of page 2 and all other campus news, state, national and international pages.
  5. Works with the editor-in-chief to conduct editorial board and staff meetings.
  6. Assists the editor in assigning all stories, photos and artwork.
  7. Oversees staff assignments and checks with other editors to resolve problems and verifies that deadlines are met.
  8. Writes stories and headlines, rewrites headlines and cut lines as necessary. Checks to assure that everyone in photos is identified.
  9. Serves as an inspirational leader who assists writers with stories, assists other editors with management and assists the editor-in-chief with management of the newspaper.
  10. Will, in consultation with the editor-in-chief, oversee the layout and design of the entire newspaper but specifically design and layout campus news pages and the state/nation pages.
- The Graphics and Design Editor.
  1. Designs working templates and style sheets for newspaper pages.
  2. Designs and places text, in consultation with other editors.
  3. Works with the business manager to design and place advertising.
  4. Sends completed publication files to the printer and assures that problems are addressed. He/she remains on call with the printer to address problems.

5. Trains editors and appropriate staff members to operate all publishing and editing software.
  6. Provides technical support for staff.
  7. Assists in analyzing computer equipment and software needs, suggesting updates whenever appropriate.
  8. Coordinates all visual materials (photos, graphics and ads) for each issue.
- The Sports Editor. The Echo sports editor will work with the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, photographers and the adviser to produce an informative sports section. The section will include inclusive sports coverage of RCTC's sports programs and include appropriate photography and graphic design. The sports editor will oversee all aspects of the sports section. She/he will assign stories, photographs and graphic depictions and will oversee the layout and design of the section. The sports editor will work with the editors and the adviser to achieve outstanding journalistic sports quality in coverage, writing and layout and design. The sports editor will defer to the editor-in-chief regarding sports stories of a magnitude that warrant front-page or other straight news treatment. These decisions will be made in consultation with other editors.

The sports editor will complete the assignments listed above and those enumerated below. Additionally, the sports editor will complete tasks other than those specifically listed here as assigned by the editor-in- chief or the adviser.

Specific duties:

1. Assign in a timely manner, sports stories, photographs and artwork
  2. Oversee selection of all sports copy and artwork
  3. Direct and oversee layout and design of all sports pages
  4. Contribute in staff meetings as a member of the executive team to direct and facilitate the goals of The Echo
  5. Attend conventions and regional conferences and attend sessions as a member of the executive team
  6. Submit stories, photos and other sports inclusions for judging in national and regional conventions and conferences
  7. Strive to achieve excellence in sports coverage by studying benchmark student and professional publications
  8. Strive to achieve excellence by collaborating with the adviser and other staff members to enhance and improve sports coverage, writing and reporting
  9. Execute and complete other assignments from the editor-in-chief or the adviser that may be necessary to efficiently and effectively perform as The Echo's sports editor.
- The Chief Photographer. The Echo chief photographer (ECP) will work with the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, other section editors and the adviser to produce photographs and artwork that demonstrate excellence in photojournalism and coverage of RCTC events. The ECP will shoot news, sports and feature photographs as assigned by various editors. The chief photographer should be consulted by the editors regarding potential stories and complimentary photographs. The ECP will oversee all aspects of the publication's photographic depictions. She/he will assign photographs and graphic depictions and will work with the editor-in-chief and the layout and design editor regarding Echo's design. The ECP will work with the editors and the adviser to achieve outstanding journalistic photographic quality in coverage, writing and layout and design. The ECP will defer to the editors regarding selection and placement of photographs. However, the ECP will have a strong voice when decisions are contemplated.

The ECP will complete the assignments listed above and those enumerated below. Additionally, the ECP will complete tasks other than those specifically listed here as assigned by the editor-in-chief or the adviser.

Specific duties:

1. Complete assignments in a timely manner.
2. Oversee selection of all photographs and artwork
3. Contribute to layout and design
4. Contribute in staff meetings as a member of the executive team to direct and facilitate the goals of The Echo
5. Attend conventions and regional conferences and attend sessions as a member of the executive team
6. Submit photos for judging in national and regional conventions and conferences
7. Strive to achieve excellence in photographic coverage by studying benchmark student and professional publications
8. Strive to achieve excellence by collaborating with the adviser and other staff members to enhance and improve photographs and their presentation
9. Execute and complete other assignments from the editor-in-chief or the adviser that may be necessary to efficiently and effectively perform as The Echo's chief photographer

- The Business Manager. The Echo's business manager will work with the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, student staff members and the adviser to produce/sell advertisements that are appropriate to RCTC's audiences. The business manager will maintain an office in The Echo office and will maintain appropriate communication with advertisers and potential advertisers. The business manager will work with the adviser to establish a yearly budget. Achieving or exceeding the budget will justify RCTC's honorarium for the position, which may be raised or lowered if the budget goal is met or exceeded. The business manager will oversee, direct and create the layout of all individual ads. Prior to each publication, the business manager will provide the editors with page dummies showing the placement of all advertising. She/he will assign photographs and graphic depictions and will work with the editor-in-chief and the layout and design editor regarding Echo's design. The business manager will work with the editors and the adviser to achieve outstanding journalistic quality in advertising design and layout. The business manager will adhere to nationally recognized principles of layout. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the business manager will determine the placement of advertising. In no case will advertising be placed on the front page or the back page without consultation with the adviser and appropriate editors.

The business manager will work with the adviser to develop an advertising policy for The Echo – one that defines the appropriate content for acceptable advertising. In no case will advertisements be sold that are contrary to state or federal laws. No copy will be accepted that is libelous. No copy, photographs or graphic depictions will be accepted that are contrary to the standards outlined in this policy

The EBG will complete the assignments listed above and those enumerated below. Additionally, the EBG will complete tasks other than those specifically listed here as assigned by the editor in chief or the adviser.

Other specific duties (not inclusive):

1. Sell and maintain revenue-producing Echo advertising in a timely manner
  2. Oversee selection of all photographs and artwork included in advertising
  3. Contribute to layout and design of all ECHO advertising
  4. Contribute in staff meetings as a member of the executive team to direct and facilitate the goals of The Echo
  5. Attend conventions and regional conferences and attend sessions as a member of the executive team, if appropriate.
  6. Strive to achieve excellence in business practices by studying benchmark student and professional publications
  7. Strive to achieve excellence by collaborating with the adviser and other staff members to enhance and improve public relations with RCTC publics.
  8. Execute and complete other assignments from the editor in chief or the adviser that may be necessary to efficiently and effectively perform as The Echo's business manager
- The Echo Arts/Entertainment Editor. The arts/entertainment editor will work with the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, photographers and the adviser to produce an informative section. The section will include coverage of RCTC's entertainment, arts and cultural events and will include coverage of other community events. The editor of this section will include appropriate photography and graphic design. The arts/entertainment editor will oversee all aspects of the arts/entertainment section. She/he will assign stories, photographs and graphic depictions and will oversee the layout and design of the section. This section editor will work with other editors and the adviser to achieve outstanding journalistic coverage, writing and layout and design. The arts/entertainment editor will defer to the editor in chief regarding stories of a magnitude that warrant front-page or other straight news treatment. These decisions will be made in consultation with other editors.

The arts/entertainment editor will complete the assignments listed above and those enumerated below. Additionally, this section editor will complete tasks other than those specifically listed here as assigned by the editor in chief or the adviser.

Specific duties:

1. Assign in a timely manner, arts and entertainment stories, photographs and artwork
2. Oversee selection of all copy and artwork
3. Direct and oversee layout and design of Echo Arts/Entertainment pages.
4. Contribute in staff meetings as a member of the executive team to direct and facilitate the goals of The Echo
5. Attend (by invitation) conventions and regional conferences and attend sessions as a member of the executive team

6. Submit stories, photos and other featured topics for judging in national and regional conventions and conferences
7. Strive to achieve excellence in coverage by studying benchmark student and professional publications
8. Strive to achieve excellence by collaborating with the adviser and other staff members to enhance and improve sports coverage, writing and reporting
9. Execute and complete other assignments from the editor in chief or the adviser that may be necessary to efficiently and effectively perform as The Echo's arts/entertainment editor.

#### **Part 6. The Adviser:**

- Shall be a journalist whose chief responsibility is to give competent advice to student staff members.
- Shall be responsible to teach, explain, demonstrate and pass judgment on the work done by the staff.
- Shall commend excellence as well as point out fault.
- Be firm in his/her opinions and convictions and be reasonable toward the views of others.
- Shall direct a staff toward editing an outstanding publication that adheres to the highest journalistic standards of excellence.
- Shall never be a censor, but when the staff is intent on violating good taste, the laws of libel, or the newspaper's code of ethics, be firm in pointing out such errors.
- Be responsible for the budget, financial solvency and sign all appropriate requisitions for the newspaper.

#### **Part 7. Financial Configuration.** The Echo budget shall reside in two RCTC administrative areas:

- 1) Student Life: Funds for student honorariums (the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, the news editor, the sports editor, the arts/entertainment editor, the business manager and the chief photographer) shall be allocated via RCTC's Office of Student Life.
  - a) Mass Communications/Journalism: The Echo will sell advertising to support operational costs (printing, conventions, etc.). The Echo's Business Manager and other staff members shall sell advertising. Revenues will be held in an Echo Revenue cost center within the Mass Communications department.

**Park .8 Student Participation:** All students of Rochester Community and Technical College shall be free to work on the newspaper regardless of race, creed or opinion he/she may hold. Previous experience on newspapers is not required, but students must embrace standards of journalistic excellence. Students most qualified by journalistic background and experience shall serve in editorial positions. Staff workers may be dismissed for deliberately failing to complete assignments or by violating standards established by the SPJ.

*Date of Implementation:*                      *Immediate*

*Date of Adoption:*                              *8/25/2009*