

THE GAZETTE

CODE OF ETHICS

The Gazette's Code of Ethics is adapted from the Canadian Association of Journalists Statement of Principles.

Preamble

The Gazette is a daily, student-funded, student-operated newspaper at The University of Western Ontario. It serves the student readership by reporting the news, entertaining readers, and promoting debate on issues involving the Western community and the City of London.

Inclusiveness

Our newsroom fosters an environment of inclusiveness for all, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities or gender. Statements of a derogatory nature are not acceptable in our newsroom. The door to our office is open at all times — we encourage students to come in, volunteer and contribute to the only daily student newspaper in Canada.

Independence

The Gazette must be free of any obligation to any interest other than informing Western students and serving our readership's right to know. We will remain free of associations that may compromise integrity or damage our credibility. We will also be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.

Discrimination

The Gazette will not refer to a person's race, colour or religion unless it is relevant to the story. We will avoid stereotypes of race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or social status.

Accuracy

The Gazette must guard against inaccuracies, bias, distortions or omissions. Gazette Staff and Gazette Writers must confirm the accuracy of their stories before they are published. Editors are also responsible for the accuracy of any facts they add or changes they make to a story.

Fairness

Our reporting must be fair, accurate, honest, and in context. When we make mistakes we will correct them, and we must not ignore or temper the facts for our own interests. We must hold ourselves to the same high standard as professional journalists.

Gazette Staff and Gazette Writers should clearly identify themselves as members of the paper to avoid misleading sources in any interviewing context. Reporters should only go undercover in rare cases when the public interest justifies it as a last resort.

Balance

There are at least two sides to every story, and sometimes there are more. Our duty, as a responsible newspaper is to print all sides of any controversy or dispute. We must make every effort to contact all sides and to notify our readers if one side did not wish to comment.

THE GAZETTE

Impartiality

To be impartial does not require a newspaper to be unquestioning or to refrain from editorial expression. *The Gazette* must maintain a clear distinction for the reader between news and opinion. Articles that contain explicit opinion or personal interpretation should be clearly identified.

Privacy

Every person has a right to privacy. There are inevitable conflicts between the right to privacy and the public good or the right to be informed about the conduct of public affairs. Each case should be judged in the light of common sense and humanity.

Conflict of Interest

In accordance with the aforementioned preamble and responsibilities of the newspaper, editorial staff and contributors to *The Gazette* must make a tireless effort to avoid conflict of interest in a story. Conflicts of interest, bias — and the appearance of bias — must be avoided in all instances to maintain high standards of journalism.

Gazette Staff or Gazette Writers should neither accept anything nor pursue any activity that might compromise or seem to compromise their integrity or that of the newspaper.

Affiliations and Organizations

Editorial staff may not be involved with the executive of a political party or be involved with organizing events for political parties on campus. Neither shall editorial staff hold membership in the University Students' Council, be it as a councillor, an executive member, on the Board of Governors or Senate, during their term on the editorial staff or in the year preceding their term.

Furthermore, editorial staff should not hold elected or paid positions in any student-run clubs, organizations or societies while serving their term. Contributors to the paper should disclose any affiliations to organizations to section editors and/or the Editor-in-Chief, in which their coverage may appear to be biased as a result.

Editors should not be participating, campaigning, organizing or sponsoring any specific cause, within reasonable limitations, (ex. participating in a food drive would be acceptable) about which they are reporting.

Sources

The Gazette strives to treat everyone — reporters, editors, sources and readers — in the most fair and open manner. We will treat sources and subjects of stories as human beings deserving of respect, not merely as means to our journalistic ends.

Fairness also requires that sources of information should be identified, except when there is a clear and pressing reason to protect their anonymity. If anonymous sources are used, reporters will independently corroborate facts. We will not allow anonymous sources to make malicious and destructive comments about individuals or organizations.

Persons publicly accused should promptly be given the opportunity to respond.

THE GAZETTE

Visuals

While photographing subjects, Gazette photographers should not intentionally alter, seek to alter or influence the events. Strong photography is about capturing the moment, and it is the photographer's task to capture this; if they fail to do so, "the moment" cannot be re-created.

Any photograph that is manipulated should be labelled as a "Photo Illustration" in the photo credit.

It should be borne in mind that no policy can anticipate every eventuality in the day-to-day operation of the newspaper. Common sense and good judgment should govern conduct at all times as we strive to adhere to these principles.