

Constitution and By-Laws of PCCC Visions Newspaper

Article I. Name of the Organization

The name of this organization shall be *Visions* Newspaper.

Article II. Purpose and Objectives

The *Visions* Newspaper shall be committed to producing a paper as long as there is the support to do so once a month or at least four times a semester for the benefit of the PCCC community. *Visions* is an independent student-run publication of Passaic County Community College that serves as a medium of mass communication for the PCCC's campuses. *Visions* seeks to inform, educate, and entertain its readers while serving as a form of discussion of critical issues on and off campus. It is produced entirely by students: the opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writers and are not necessarily representative of the college in any matter.

Visions seeks to maintain professional standards and ethics reflecting the best in American journalism, and staff members recognize not only the rights granted to them by the First Amendment but also responsibilities that accompany those rights. In an effort to produce news that is accurate, objective, and sensitive, the *Visions* staff will adhere to the *Associated Press Stylebook*, the *Associated Collegiate Press Model Code of Ethics*, the *Society of Professional Journalist Code of Ethics* and guidelines in all aspects of production of the student newspaper. Any mistakes in the above are solely the responsibility of the students and staff of *Visions*. In the event of a published error, *Visions* will include a retraction in the following issue.

Article III. Qualifications for Membership

Section 1: Membership is open to all PCCC students in good academic standing. In order to be a member:

- A. Officers and staff members must maintain at least a 2.5 GPA and be registered for a minimum of (6) credits. Membership ends at graduation or at any time the student is not taking at least 3 credits at PCCC.
- B. Alumni are not eligible for *Visions* positions.
- C. Only Members who have a story or material in any given issue of PCCC *Visions* shall be recognized as contributing staff in that particular issue.
- D. **All *Visions* staff members must comply with deadlines.**

Article IV. Officers and Staff

Section 1: Officer Positions shall consist of the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, Editor(s), Layout Manager.

Section 2: The term of office for Officer's position shall run from May thru April of the following year.

Section 5: The student serving as one of the Officer positions must be registered for at least (6) credits and be in good academic standing.

Clause 1: Those who want to take on a position will be appointed by the *Visions* team and Faculty Advisor(s)

- A. There shall be one Editor-in-Chief. If no current member from the staff wants to take the position, then the Editor-in-Chief will be appointed by the Faculty Advisors(s). If the interested Editor-in-Chief is not a member of *Visions* or has not been appointed, they must adhere to the guidelines that are stated in the recruitment process.
- B. There shall be one Managing Editor. If no current member from the staff wants to take the position, then the Managing Editor will be appointed by the Faculty Advisors(s). If the interested Managing Editor is not a member of *Visions* or has not been appointed, they must adhere to the guidelines that are stated in the recruitment process.
- C. There shall be one Layout Manager. The Layout Manager shall be appointed by the Editor-in-Chief, Production Editor, and/or Faculty Advisor(s) after a review of the student's portfolio and at least one recommendation from a Graphic Design professor. If staff not possess a member with expertise in layout and design, *Visions* will outsource.
- D. The max number for Layout Assistant(s) is two. Assistants must adhere to the guidelines that are stated in the recruitment process.
- E. The Cartoonist is not an officer position; however, the Cartoonist will be appointed by the Editor-in-Chief, Production Editor, and/or Faculty Advisor(s) after a review of the student's sample work. If staff not possess a member with expertise in drawing, *Visions* will outsource.
- F. The max number of Editor(s) is three. Editor(s) shall be appointed by the Editor-in-Chief, Production Editor, and/or Faculty Advisor(s) after a review of student's sample work, which is stated in the recruitment process.

- G. The max number of Reporter(s) is eight. Reporter(s) shall be appointed by the Editor-in-Chief, Production Editor, and/or Faculty Advisor(s) after a review of student's sample work, which is stated in the recruitment.
- H. Anyone can be a Contributing Writer. Writers must adhere to the guidelines that are stated in the recruitment process.

Section 6: Duties and Responsibilities

Clause 1: Editor-in-Chief

- A. The Editor-in-Chief is charged with staying up to date with events, assigning stories to reporters, attending meetings, conducting meetings, maintaining contact with staff, advising and guiding the team, participating in related events; making decisions on article submission, layout, edit articles; and help manage operations.
 - The Editor-in-Chief must attend meetings with SAC and the Financial Committee or designate a representative.
- B. The Editor-in-Chief and other editors are responsible for writing at least one article/editorial for each issue. The design, layout, and copyediting are also the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief, although staff members and Faculty Advisor(s) will assist with these duties.
- C. The Editor-in-Chief must be aware of what is going on inside the college and what affects the college so that she or he can select from all available material and decide on the content of the paper, encouraging staff members to write on those issues.
- D. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for making sure that the entire staff is doing its job during the year before bringing any serious problems to the Faculty Advisor(s) attention.
- E. The Editor-in-Chief makes decisions regarding layout and design and other expenditures based on the budget in consultation with the Faculty Advisor(s) and the Director of the Office of Students Activities.
- F. The Editor-in-Chief provides the vision and management for each issue of *Visions*. This is a heavy and challenging responsibility, but probably one of the most rewarding student leadership roles on campus as well.

- G. The Editor-in-Chief may consult the Managing Editor on ethical/technical issues regarding *Visions*.
- H. The Editor-in-Chief and Faculty Advisor(s) will train students without journalistic experience in matters of ethics and article structure.
- I. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for creating/assigning fillers.
- J. The Editor-in-Chief must make sure that the Layout person receives articles/pictures for the next issue a week in advance.
- K. The Editor-in-Chief is allowed to suggest submitting an article/editorial to Etutoring for revision.

Clause 2: Managing Editor

- A. The Managing Editor is responsible for assisting the Editor-in-Chief.
- B. The Managing Editor must take minutes and keep track of budget
- C. The Managing Editor will run staff meetings in the event that the Editor-in-Chief is unable to attend.
- D. The Managing Editor will attend meetings with SAC and the Financial Committee in the event that the Editor-in-Chief is unable to attend.
- E. The Managing Editor will assist the Editor-in-Chief with copyediting.
- F. The Managing Editor may hold office hours if they are necessary.
- G. The Managing Editor must consult with the Editor-in-Chief on ethical/technical issues when needed.
- H. The Managing Editor must write at least one article/editorial per issue.
- I. The Managing Editor will assist in the training of students without journalistic experience in matters of ethics and article structure.

Clause 3: Editor(s)

- A. Editor(s) assist the Editor-in-Chief with article revisions. They are responsible for fact-checking, proofreading, and context edits of AP style.
- B. Editor(s) must write at least one article/editorial per issue.

- C. Editor(s) are responsible for assisting the Editor-in-Chief in all of his/her duties as delegated by Editor-in-Chief.
- D. Editor(s) will work with individual writers, helping them with the process of writing their stories.
- E. Editors must comply with deadlines

Clause 4: Reporter(s)

- A. Reporter(s) are responsible for the coverage of PCCC events and on-campus happenings. They must comply with deadlines and write articles/editorials that relate to forthcoming events in the media or on campus.
- B. All Reporters must submit verbal/written proposals for prospective *Visions* articles to Editor-in-Chief and Faculty Advisor(s) via email or in person.
- C. New reporters without any journalistic experience must partake in training sessions with the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, and/or Faculty Advisor(s) to be taught to adhere to journalistic standards in writing, ethics, and structure.
- D. All reporters must write at least one article/editorial per issue.

Clause 5: Layout

- A. The Layout Manager is responsible for the layout and design of *Visions*' newspaper. He/she layout every element (pictures, articles, ads, titles, and other material) on the newspaper through design software. They are also responsible for managing their trainees and hosting training sessions for them.
 - Layout Assistant(s) is responsible for assisting the Layout Manager and complying his/her instructions and assignments.
- B. Layout must be responsible for designing pages for the approval of the Editor-in-Chief and Faculty Advisor(s) in a timely manner.
- C. Layout is responsible for submitting at least one article/editorial per issue.

Clause 6: Cartoonist

- A. The Cartoonist is responsible for drawing cartoons for *Visions*.

- B. Cartoonist is responsible for submitting at least 2 comic strips per issue.
- C. Cartoons must relate to politics or issues at the college/issues of the day.

Clause 5: Contributing Writers

- A. Contributing Writers can submit any articles or editorials. They must follow the guidelines on the website.
- B. The *Visions* staff holds the right to reject articles from contributing writers in the event that their articles are deemed inappropriate for publication or any other reason, such as lack of quality, space, budget, etc.
- C. Contributing Writers will be considered *Visions* staff members only for the issue in which their articles/editorials are published.

Article V. Advisor(s)

Section 1: The position of the Primary Faculty Advisor(s) shall serve in an advisory capacity to *Visions*. They must assist with the planning and production of *Visions*, as well as assist with other officer positions when necessary.

Section 2: The Advisor(s) must attend all general staff meetings. If the Advisor is unable to attend, a representative of the Student Activities department will be appointed as substitute.

Section 3: The Primary Advisor(s) can be removed from their position by majority vote of the full time *Visions* staff members.

Article VI. Meetings

Section 1: *Visions* staff must meet a minimum of twice a month. The meetings are to be chaired or presided over by the Editor-in-Chief or the Managing Editor in his/her absence.

Section 2: All staff members must adhere to all meeting guidelines of Robert Rule of Order.

Section 3: All staff members must attend all meetings and on time unless notified of reasonable absence and/or lateness via email or phone.

Clause 1: Reason of reasonable absence and/or absence lateness must be sent to the Editor-in-Chief at least three days in advance.

Clause 2: In the event of an emergency, absence and/or lateness should be notified at least a half hour prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Section 4: Minutes should be taken by the Managing Editor and later typed. The staff member must use the same Minutes template unless approved by Editor-in-Chief and/or Primary Advisor. Copies of the Minutes shall be made available to everyone on staff and anyone in the PCCC community who requests them through the Office of Student Activities.

Section 5: Completed Minutes must be checked by the Primary Advisor and/or Editor-in-Chief so it can be approved and sent out to staff members.

Section 6: Minutes must be sent out to staff members no later than 72 hours after the meeting by Editor-in-Chief.

Section 7: The Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor must submit the agenda to every member no later than 48 hours before the scheduled meeting.

Section 8: All members are held responsible for all materials and information delivered in the meetings.

Section 9: A quorum for all meetings shall be 50% plus one (1) of all current membership.

Article VII. Committees

The Editor-in-Chief shall create ad-hoc committees when necessary and shall appoint their chairs. All ad-hoc committees shall be dissolved upon completion of their appointed duties.

Article VIII. Preliminary Authority

Section 1: Robert's Rule of Order, latest edition, shall be used as a reference guide for all preliminary authority when necessary or deemed appropriate.

Clause 1: Minutes must be taken at each *Visions* meeting. The minute taker must write down the exact time the meeting is called to order as well as the time the meeting is adjourned.

Clause 2: Roll call is to be taken at every meeting either verbally, or in written form.

Clause 3: Suggestions or ideas of relevance must be brought up during open floor or when asked.

Clause 4: When necessary, voting will be used as means to reach difficult decisions requiring member input. Majority vote rules.

Article IX. Amendment

Section 1: The Primary Faculty Advisor(s), any staff member or officer can submit a proposed amendment to be voted upon. A majority vote is needed for the amendment to pass.

Section 2: The constitution shall be revised, if extremely necessary, through the consent of the Primary Advisor.

Section 3: The constitution must be updated at least every 5 years.

Article X. Discrimination Policy

The editors, staff and faculty advisers will not discriminate against anyone, including writers and other staff members with regard to race, gender, religion, national origin, age, disabilities, sexual orientation, or any legally protected characteristic.

Article XI. Removal from Office

Section 1: The Editor-in-Chief, any of the officers, and staff members may be asked to step down or resign according to the following procedures for any of the following reasons:

- Continuous of absence and/or lateness of (4) meetings and duties without notification
- Abuse of responsibility
- Inappropriate treatment of staff
- Poor performance of duties
- Failure to adhere to the constitution and the college's rules and policies
- Failure to comply and/or adhere to deadlines without valid excuse
- Failure to qualify for membership

Clause 1: Disciplinary Process

A. **First Offense:** Verbal warning from the Editor-in-Chief

B. **Second Offense:** Conference with the Editor-in-Chief and alerting the Faculty Advisor(s)

C. **Third Offense:** Removal from office with the consent of the Faculty Advisor(s)

Section 2: The Editor-in-Chief in consultation with the Faculty Advisor(s) may remove any staff member and with notice to the Office of Student Activities.

Section 3: The Editor-in-Chief may be removed by a majority vote of the other editors with the agreement of the Faculty Advisor(s).

Section 4: Failure to behave in a respectable manner during meetings, which includes verbally/physically attacking a member, will result in immediate termination of membership and will be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs.

Article XII. Review of Document

Reviewed: July 2005	By: Editor-in-Chief, Melanie L. Turner; Editors: Gisell Bejarano, Enrique Carlos and Sue Sadik; Faculty Advisors Lucia Gheorghiu and Pat Hanahoe-Dosch.
Reviewed: July 2007	By: Editor-in-Chief, Naib Teferi and Staff Michelle Martin and Miguel Valentine; Faculty Advisor Christine Redman-Waldeyer
Reviewed: July 2009	By: Editor-in-Chief, Nowriz Karashai; Editors, Walfrin Batista, Jerry Gutierrez, and Abe Sharkas; Faculty Advisors Elizabeth Nesius and Christine Redman-Waldeyer
Reviewed July 2011	By: Editor-in-Chief, Jerry Gutierrez; Editors, Sadia-Adu Phillips, Steve Cuello and Maria Ann Paguero; Faculty Advisors Elizabeth Nesius and Christine Redman-Waldeyer
Reviewed April 2015	By: Editor-in-Chief, X'Zaviour Johnson; Senior Editors, Albert Bustos and Nicole Richardson; Faculty Advisors, Walter Behr and Christine Redman-Waldeyer
Reviewed July 2015	By: Editor-in-Chief, Naftaly Hiraldo; Managing Editor Yolanda Fraser; Visions Staff, Brian Gomez and Darien Gabriel Jones; Student Activities Representative Tanisha McKinnon; Faculty Advisor Christine Redman-Waldeyer

