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POLICY  
MANUAL

Spring 2022

**Talon Marks  
Policy Manual**  
(As amended Spring 2013)

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**FOREWORD**

The following policy is the product of the best thinking of the students on the Talon Marks staff at Cerritos College. The policies of the newspaper are part of what will make the Talon Marks a leader in the country's community college journalism world.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To be a public forum and the voice of the Cerritos College community by accurately portraying the happenings in and around the world, country, state and/or district that affect the everyday life of our readers. In doing so, the Talon Marks acts as the eyes, ears and investigator for its readers.

The Talon Marks brand consists of platforms, including print version, talonmarks.com, social media, digital and audio versions and newsletters, and Wings Magazine. All have equal importance, but because of the changing nature of news distribution, priority should be given to posting news stories online before published in print.

## **A. MANAGEMENT**

1. To afford students a medium of free expression, the newspaper adviser(s), college president and administrative assistants shall refrain from management of the Talon Marks.
2. Because publishing a newspaper is a highly technical process that must operate within certain inflexible deadlines, it is necessary to concentrate executive authority in the hands of one individual — the Editor-in-Chief.
  - a. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible and answerable for the news and editorial content of the Talon Marks.
  - b. The Editor-in-Chief ensures that the campus is adequately covered.
  - c. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the conduct of staff members when they are performing Talon Marks duties. If the Editor-in-Chief believes there are journalistic or ethical reasons for the removal of a subordinate editor, subordinate editors may be removed by the Editor-in-Chief.
3. Selection of the Editor-in-Chief
  - a. Candidates will submit a written statement announcing their wish to be considered as a candidate for Editor-in-Chief to any adviser prior to the announced deadline.
  - b. Selection of the Editor-in-Chief will be by the adviser with advice from a selection committee.
4. Removal of an Editor-in-Chief
  - a. When any two members of the Editorial Board are concerned about the ability of the Editor-in-Chief to continue to perform his/her assigned duties, they may notify the adviser(s).
  - b. The adviser, with advice from the Editorial Board, will have the final decision if the Editor(s) in Chief will be removed or not.
  - c. The Editor-in-Chief will take a leave of absence if he/she is campaigning for a student government position. If elected or appointed to any government position the Editor-in-Chief must resign his/her position as editor after being sworn in to office or taking an appointed or elected position.

## **B. ADVISER'S ROLE**

1. The role of the adviser is to advise the Editor-in-Chief, Editorial Board and individual staff members about news judgment, writing and placement, content, page design, professional ethics and conduct and other journalistic principles and techniques.
2. The adviser can often supply information that may be necessary to understand facts about a story or issue.
3. The adviser shall not impose editorial positions.
4. The adviser determines grading standards and evaluates student performance.

## **C. CONTENT CONTROL**

1. Content selection is reserved for the Talon Marks staff. The staff and the Editor-in-Chief in particular, shall insure that all copy meets the standards set forth in this policy. The Editor-in-Chief is ultimately responsible for the standard by which content is held.

2. The Talon Marks does not print profanity for profanity's sake and does not include racial or religious denigration for titillation sake. Good taste shall be the guideline. Where profanity is used in quotes and/or contributes to significantly to the feeling of the statement, its use shall be permitted.
3. The Talon Marks will not knowingly include libelous statements in stories, editorials, columns, drawings or photos.
4. All photos that may contain objectionable material shall be referred to Editorial Board for a vote.
6. Interruption of circulation
  - a. Only the Editor-in-Chief may interrupt the circulation of the Talon Marks. Advisers may interrupt circulation when necessary due to budgetary reasons.
  - b. It is the responsibility of the Editorial Board to convene as soon as possible to decide whether the interruption of circulation is to be continued.
7. News treatment
  - a. The Talon Marks reserves the right to treat individuals and issues on their merit as may be determined by the facts and the considered judgment of the Editorial Board.
  - b. To protect academic freedom, the Talon Marks will not quote or otherwise cite statements made during and as a part of any class without the express permission of the individual making such statements.
  - c. The Talon Marks shall not publish propaganda in the guise of news.
  - d. Any story containing opinion should be labeled as such.
8. Political involvement
  - a. The Talon Marks is a non-partisan publication and has no campus or off-campus political affiliations.
  - b. The Talon Marks reserves the right, however, to publish in editorials, letters and columns support for or opposition to any candidate or issue in on-campus, local, state or national elections.
  - c. The editorial or column in which a candidate or issue is supported or opposed must appear a minimum of two issues before an election to provide time for rebuttal, or space must be offered for such rebuttal in the same issue.
  - d. Talon Marks editorial staff members can be involved in other clubs, but may not cover that subject or a related issue.
9. Deadlines
 

All staff members are expected to think digital first and should write stories with the mindset of the brand being a digital operation with a print component.

**D. FREEBIE POLICY**

1. Freebies are items of value, either merchandise or special consideration, offered to reporters.
2. The Talon Marks and its reporters shall not accept freebies.
3. Any freebies received or offered through mail or at junkets belong to the Talon Marks, they are to be distributed at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief and advisers.

Items that can be accepted include, but are not limited to:

- a. free records

- b. free books
- c. free admission to movies, plays, concerts, etc. for which admission is charged.
- 4. Reimbursement
  - a. Reimbursements will be made when staff members attend movie, plays, or concerts for reviews or sporting events approved by the Editor-in-Chief and pay with their own money. Editor-in-Chief must talk with Adviser and/or Instructional Lab Technician about reimbursement before final approval.
  - b. Reporters shall not attend entertainment or other events requiring admission on their own initiative with the hope of obtaining reimbursement. Reimbursements shall not be allowed if event was not approved by the Editor-in-Chief.
  - c. A bill for expenses shall be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief when reimbursement is desired. Proof of attendance includes a story and receipt or ticket stub with date.
  - d. A form for reimbursement is available from the advisers or the Editor-in-Chief. Once the request has been approved, reimbursement can be made. The form must be filled out prior to the Talon Marks business.
- 5. Handling freebie offers
  - a. All phone or personal invitations or offers will not be accepted without approval by Editor-in-Chief.
- 6. Any and all violations of the freebie policy shall be considered a serious infraction and violators shall be brought before Editorial Board for disciplinary action.

**E. NEWSROOM CONDUCT**

- 1. Conduct of individuals in the newsroom shall be professional.
- 2. The newsroom shall always be kept neat and clean.
- 3. Any editor that leaves his/her desk cluttered at the end of the day shall forfeit the right of occupancy when requested.
- 4. No one shall sit at a desk assigned to an editor, unless first obtaining permission from that editor.
- 5. No guests are allowed on production day or during class time. Exceptions are made for children of staff members as long as they are not disruptive.
- 6. Students who use school computers, cameras, etc. will be financially responsible for loss or damage resulting from negligence or theft.
- 7. Computers are for use by journalism students for instructional purposes.
  - a. No games should be added to computers, except for review purposes. In such cases the games must be deleted from the computers immediately after the review is written.
  - b. Do not connect to pornographic sites or download pornographic pictures.
  - c. Journalism students may use the computers to complete their assignments, whether for journalism classes or other classes, but journalism assignments have priority. Newspaper, magazines and broadcast news assignments have priority over other journalism assignments.
  - d. You may not use the computers to complete projects you are doing for profit or commercial use.
  - e. You may print a document to be turned in and one duplicate for your files, but additional prints should be avoided.

- f. It is illegal to pirate software.
  - i. No computer applications/fonts/accessories, etc. may be added to the computers without instructor permission. Illegal copies will not be allowed.
  - ii. Do not illegally copy software already residing on the department's computers.
  - iii. Do not deliberately introduce a virus to the department's computers.
  - iv. Violation of these rules may result in suspension from class.
- g. Help maintain the computers in this lab.
  - i. In general, food and drinks should not be consumed near computers. All measures should be taken to prevent spilling food and drinks on computers.
  - ii. Do not touch screens. You leave fingerprints.
- 9. The fax machine and photocopier are for instructional and newspaper use.
  - a. Do not use the fax for personal use. Do not ask for personal faxes to be sent to you at this machine without first asking the instructor.
  - b. The photocopy machine is for single copy use of instructional materials. Do not make multiple copies of documents without first checking with the instructor. Do not make copies of personal documents. Do not photocopy books/textbooks.
- 10. Cameras and related peripherals are for student publication use and for use only by college employees or students enrolled in journalism classes. They may not be checked out for personal use.
  - a. Cameras must be checked out through the instructional lab technician or adviser or designate.
  - b. Cameras should be returned the same day after completion of an assignment or early the next school day when assignments occur during the evening or over the weekend.
  - c. Photographers are responsible for moving images off the storage cards and onto the server. Please delete images after they have been moved so that the next photographer has maximum use of the camera.

## **F. EDITORIAL BOARD**

- 1. General
  - a. Editorial Board is a class. All members must attend: including advisers. Attendance is critical.
  - b. The Managing Editor will lead Editorial Board meetings related to budget meetings.
  - c. If a member of the editorial board is on assignment—press junkets, extended student government meetings, etc. the Editor-in-Chief or advisers must be contacted at least 30 minutes prior to the meeting.
  - d. The Editorial Board is responsible for generating content ideas and for the planning of the paper at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief. The Editorial Board also has the right to vote on and discuss policy, budget and other matters pertaining to the running of the paper.
  - e. Members of the Editorial Board may not write editorials on subject matter they are closely related to, such as clubs, or student government.

2. Membership
  - a. The Editorial Board is composed of all editors, including the Editor-in-Chief, all content editors, news media editors, photo editors, editors magazine, as well as associate editors.
  - b. Any staff member may attend Editorial Board meetings, but they shall not have a vote.
3. Responsibilities of board members
  - a. Attendance at Editorial Board meetings is mandatory. Editors who begin the semester as editor, are enrolled in an additional directed studies class and receive an additional directed studies unit. Attendance to Editorial Board is expected as it is for any other class. It is the responsibility of the board member to inform the Editor-in-Chief of an anticipated absence.
  - b. Board members must present editorial premises on a regular basis.
  - c. All board members are appointed at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief, who as the right to remove an editor from the board at any time for just cause. Members are required to adhere strictly to the attendance policy and to generate ideas and content. The Editor-in-Chief can never lose his vote on the board without first being removed as Editor-in-Chief.
  - d. Editor privileges for the online site will be restricted to all editors. Editor access is primarily for editing of stories. Primary responsibility for placing of stories on the front page of website belongs to the Editor-in-Chief, but other editors may approve placement of stories when the Editor-in-Chief is unavailable.
  - e. No staff member or editor should unilaterally post and approve a story to talonmarks.com. If an editor posts a story, another editor, preferably the Editor-in-Chief or content editor should approve it to go live online.
4. Editorial Board responsibilities
  - a. Conduct of Editorial Board meetings shall be professional at all times.
  - b. The Editorial Board enjoys wide freedom of choice of editorial topics. All subjects must be investigated before publication is allowed.
  - c. While the Talon Marks reserves the right to criticize, all sides should be discussed before criticism is published.
  - d. Inaccuracies and misstatements of fact should not be part of the Talon Marks whether these appear in news stories, columns, editorials or cartoons. Therefore, statements made as fact that are false, inaccurate and/or misleading should be omitted, or the item should not run until corrected. Clarifications, corrections and/or apologies will be published when appropriate.
  - e. The Editorial Board will consider complaints and grievances leveled at the Talon Marks from both inside and outside sources.
  - f. All editors are responsible in seeing that the newsroom is run in a professional manner.
5. Voting
  - a. A voting quorum is 2/3 of the membership.
  - b. Each member of the Editorial Board has one vote. Advisers have no vote. A member may vote yes, no or abstain.

- c. An editor may give his/her assistant editor a proxy in the event of an anticipated absence.
    - i. Proxies will be written and shall include the following information: the names of the editor and assistant editor or approved proxy, the date and any instructions to vote in a particular way on an issue.
    - ii. An approved proxy must attend the designated meeting.
  - d. An Editorial Board decision requires a majority vote, unless otherwise specified hereinafter.
  - e. A 2/3 vote of quorum is necessary to change any name of publication.
  - f. The Editor-in-Chief has the power to override any vote and all decisions.
6. Confidentiality
- a. All proceedings of the Editorial Board and the Talon Marks staff are strictly confidential and shall not be discussed with the individuals who are not members of the Talon Marks staff.
  - b. No Editorial Board member or Talon Marks staffer shall indicate to non-staffers his/her non-agreement with Editorial Board or with decisions of the editorial staff.
  - c. If a staffer is approached by someone expressing dissatisfaction with an editorial stand or with the treatment of news, the staffer shall refer the critic to the Editor-in-Chief or suggest that the critic write a letter to the editor or a guest column.
7. Editorials
- a. All editorials must be produced for presentation to each member of Executive Editorial Board if one exists.
  - b. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for making sure the editorial is written and for imposing deadlines.
  - c. Discussion of editorial ideas is confidential. The editorial represents the viewpoint of the brand (even should there be differing viewpoints to the editorial's passage) and is unsigned.
  - d. The name of the editorial writer shall not be made public except in cases of competition.
8. Opinion page
- a. The masthead will always run.
  - b. Conflicts among columns, letters and/or editorials caused by space limitations on the opinion page shall be resolved by the Editor-in-Chief and the opinion editor or production editor.
    - i. In general, letters have priority over all other items on the opinion page.
    - ii. Columns and letters may be run on news pages depending on circumstances and at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief as long as they are clearly labeled.
  - c. All art expressing an opinion come before the production editor and opinion editor (or Editor-in-Chief).
  - d. The opinion page is the result of the effort of the entire Editorial Board and not of the opinion editor alone.



9. Blogs
  - a. Any staff member may write a blog and have it featured on talonmarks.com, but topics should relate to campus issues or issues of interest to the campus audience.
  - b. The same standards of quality and taste that apply to the brand should apply to blogs. Because most blogs do not go through an intermediate editing process, it is up to the writer to check spelling, style, grammar and taste.
  - c. Blogs should be updated at least on an issue-by-issue basis.
  - d. Blogs that fail to meet Talon Marks standards will not be featured on talonmarks.com.
  - e. All blogs should be managed by one blogging server, such as: blogger.com
10. Changes of policy and/or specifications and production procedures
  - a. Any and all changes of Talon Marks policy and/or specifications must come before the Editorial Board for approval.
  - b. Staff members and editors are encouraged to make recommendations, and may appear before Editorial Board to present arguments in favor of or in opposition to a change the Editor-in-Chief presents to the board.
  - c. No changes shall be made unless members of the Editorial Board are given the opportunity to express an opinion on the proposal.
  - d. A favorable vote by 2/3 of the quorum of Editorial Board is required to approve the proposed change. Proxies may not be used.
  - e. All changes to the Editorial Board policy will take effect at the first board meeting AFTER the current issue's publication.

## **G. LETTERS POLICY**

1. General
  - a. The Talon Marks brand recognizes its position on campus as a printed medium for the expression of current student opinion. Therefore, the letters to the editor shall always be conducted in as fair and responsible a manner as possible.
  - b. The Talon Marks brand accepts all letters addressed to the editor, but reserves the right to determine the content of its publication, including the letters section.
  - c. The decision to publish a letter shall not be based on the letter's agreement with Talon Marks editorial positions.
  - d. The letters section shall not become a propaganda outlet for any individual or pressure group.
2. Submission of letters
  - a. Any person other than staff members may submit a letter.
  - b. All letters must be accompanied by some form of identification. If a letter is submitted in person, the letter must be submitted by the writer of the letter.
  - c. Every attempt will be made to run all letters received prior to the publication deadline.
3. Acceptance of letters
  - a. The Talon Marks brand accepts all letters initially, but requests revisions of letters that are not publishable as submitted. Letters that are not publishable include the following:

- i. Letters that are obscene, libelous and/or racially, sexually or religiously offensive.
    - ii. Literary endeavors, poetry and publicity releases.
    - iii. Any other material that the Editorial Board may deem not to be a letter.
    - iv. Letters rejected by the Editor-in-Chief for specific reasons to be stated in writing.
  - b. The Talon Marks brand also may request revisions of letters that would be publishable as submitted, but may reflect badly on the Talon Marks because of language structure and/or usage or because of verbosity.
    - i. Letters are generally published as submitted although minor corrections may be made if the content is not violated by such changes.
- 4. Selection of letters for publication
  - a. The Talon Marks brand publishes as many letters as possible and appropriate that are not in violation of this policy. Publication may take place in print and/or online.
  - b. However, because of space limitations, it may not always be possible to publish all acceptable letters. In such cases, the letters to be published will be selected by the Editor-in-Chief and the opinion editor.
    - i. Letters have priority over all other items on the opinion page.
    - ii. Letters also may be published on other pages.
  - c. The proper use of logic and the accuracy of facts as well as probable reader interest and consequence shall be of primary importance in the selection of letters for publication when space restrictions prevent publication of all letters. Inaccuracies and/or improper use of logic shall constitute grounds for exclusion from publication.
    - i. Inaccuracies may be pointed out in an editor's note. Faulty logic, if it misleads readers on an issue of importance, also may be pointed out.
  - d. If two or more letters on the same subject are received, and space is a problem, the letter(s) to be published shall be selected in accordance with the foregoing and the following criteria and procedures:
    - i. If there are both pro and con letters, those that best present the arguments for their respective sides shall be published.
    - ii. If only one side of an issue is addressed, then that (or those) that best present the issues shall be published.
    - iii. The Editor-in-Chief and the opinion editor may seek the advice of other editors, Editorial Board and/or the advisers in selection of letters for publication.
  - e. If limited space makes it impossible to publish all letters, those letters that will be of most immediate interest and/or consequence to the community shall have priority. Those letters not published may be held for the next issue.
  - f. In general, letters from on campus have priority over off-campus letters.
- 5. Editor's notes
  - a. Editor's notes shall be kept as brief as possible and are to be avoided.
  - b. The purpose of the editor's note shall be
    - i. To correct inaccuracies
    - ii. To respond to questions or requests for information
    - iii. To provide further explanation of the issues discussed in the letter

- iv. To make any comment about the letter that the Editorial Board shall deem necessary.
  - c. All editors' notes shall come before Editorial Board for advisement but final decision shall be made by the Editor-in-Chief.
6. Miscellaneous
- a. In order to promote diversity in subject matter, the Talon Marks brand (at the discretion of the Editorial Board) shall normally limit discussion of any one subject to two consecutive issues of the paper.
  - b. If an organization submits a letter as an organization, it must be signed by the organization president in order to be published.

## **H. ADVERTISING POLICY**

1. General
  - a. The Talon marks shall accept advertising in accordance with this policy.
  - b. Advertisements and advertisers shall not influence Talon Marks policy.
  - c. Advertisers shall not receive special editorial consideration.
  - d. Advertising inserts will not be accepted.
2. Advertising space
  - a. In general, no more than 25 percent of the Talon Marks shall be devoted to advertising.
    - i. 258 column inches per 8-page issue
    - ii. 194 column inches per 6-page issue
  - b. The 25 percent limit may be waived by the Editor-in-Chief for any particular issue.
3. The advertising deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday preceding production.
  - a. Copy and payment for classified ads must be received prior to the deadline.
  - b. Camera-ready copy for display ads must be received prior to the deadline.
  - c. Copy and payment for online ads (banners, buttons, towers and text links) must be received prior to the deadline.
4. Solicitation of ads
  - a. Any member of the Talon Marks staff may solicit ads, but shall do so only with the knowledge of the advertising manager and advisers.
  - b. Professional advertising services, such as advertising agencies may be used.
5. Advertising content
  - a. The copy, artwork and design of ads shall meet the same standards of good taste that are applied to other material appearing in the Talon Marks.
  - b. Any ad in possible conflict with Talon Marks policy shall be submitted by the ad manager to the Editorial Board for discussion and a vote.
  - c. The Talon Marks shall not knowingly accept the following:
    - i. Any ad that fosters prejudice
    - ii. Indecent or vulgar ads, offensive directly or by suggestion
    - iii. Ads that may mislead
    - iv. Offers of homework or research papers
    - v. Any ad that may cause monetary loss to the reader through fraud or injury to health.

8. Procedure for taking ads
  - a. Follow the telephone and message-taking procedures outlined earlier in the Policy Manual.
  - b. All messages should be placed on the ad manager's desk.
  - c. All staffers should be familiar with the advertising rates published by the ad manager on the rate card in order to give advertisers basic information in the absence of the ad manager. Verification of rates should be mentioned to advertiser, suggested speaking with advertising manager.
  - d. No money can be accepted by staffers only by the ad manager and advisers.

## **I. EDITOR AND STAFF JOB DESCRIPTION**

The following is a list of all positions for the Talon Marks brand. All positions DO NOT have to be filled each semester and new positions can be created at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief. However, any created position must be defined clearly to the position bearer, the Editorial Board and the staff by the Editor-in-Chief. Positions that SHOULD be filled are the Editor-in-Chief, managing or production editor, and content editors. All positions may be required, at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief, to take on additional duties. The Editor-in-Chief has the authority to reassign duties if necessary due to staffing and logistical issues, but must make clear the new duties. The following editors are listed in order of hierarchy.

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

1. The Editor-in-Chief serves as the main coordinator and leader for all areas of the brand. He/she sets the tone for the brand and serves as an ambassador for the Talon Marks, talonmarks.com and journalism magazines and liaison among constituent readership groups.
2. The Editor-in-Chief is the leader of the editorial board and is responsible for selection and demotion of other editors, including editors of the talonmarks.com online site and magazine.
3. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for all aspects of the Talon Marks online publication and is responsible for ensuring that it is updated regularly.
4. The Editor-in-Chief is also a producer of content for the student publications and should lead by example by accepting and completing important assignments for the brand.
5. The Editor-in-Chief must give final approval by signing off on each page before publication of each page of the print version of the Talon Marks and should work closely with the editors of the talonmarks.com and magazine publications to insure quality publications.
6. Early each semester, the Editor-in-Chief should establish relationships with the college president and the president of the Associated Students of Cerritos College.
7. The Editor-in-Chief serves as the interim president of the Talon Marks Press Club for the first two weeks of the semester until the club elects a president.

## **Managing Editor**

1. The Managing Editor is second-in-command and is responsible for supervising the brand's staff and administering the day-to-day operation of the brand.
2. The Managing Editor is expected to be on time, especially since the enforcement of deadlines is among his/her primary duties.
3. Helps the Editor-in-Chief in being responsible for ensuring that all stories are of interest to Talon Marks readers.
4. Works closely with the Editor-in-Chief on production nights to ensure that the print edition is successfully completed each week that a print edition is scheduled.
5. The managing editor should edit copy, headlines and cutlines to avoid spelling and grammar errors, AP Style errors, libel and poor taste.
6. Enforces the brand's policies and procedures, including deadlines and style.
7. In conjunction with the Editor-in-Chief, the Managing Editor handles internal staff disputes.
8. Provides the Editor-in-Chief with weekly reports on performance strengths and weaknesses of the staff.
9. At the request of the Editor-in-Chief, the Managing Editor will make suggestions as to the promotion and demotion of staff.
10. Acts as the Editor-in-Chief in his/her absence
11. As a part of the Managing Editor's continual communication with all staff and editors to ensure that deadlines are met, the Managing Editor will head up all Editorial Budget Meetings only pertaining to assigned stories and new content.

## **Online Editor**

1. The Online Editor is third-in-command and serves as the Editor-in-Chief ONLY on production night if both the Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor is not available. The Online Editor is also responsible for enforcing Talon Marks policies with the authority of the managing editor, in unison with the policies of the editor-in-chief.
2. The Online Editor serves at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief as the main coordinator for talonmarks.com.
3. The Online Editor coordinates daily posting of stories and artwork on the talonmarks.com site.
4. The Online Editor is responsible for the design and quality of the talonmarks.com site and should edit copy, headlines and cutlines to avoid spelling and grammar errors, AP Style errors, libel and poor taste.
5. The Online Editor coordinates presentation of online-exclusive content of interest to the talonmarks.com audience and should constantly seek new and creative content features for the site. This may include monitoring other web sites, such as the college public information site, the college sports information site, community news sites, the MCT campus site, etc., for articles not part of the Talon Marks publication but important to the college audience.

6. The Online Editor should propose a minimum of two “online exclusive” assignments per week.
7. The Online Editor is responsible for monitoring subscription numbers and developing promotional ideas to meet semester subscription goals.

### **News Editor**

1. Works with the Editor-in-Chief in coordinating news content and news features for the brand, including assigning of stories and soliciting timely submissions and editing before publication.
2. The news editor is responsible for story selection and placement. Coordinates presentation on “inside” news pages.
3. The News Editor will directly oversee the content team of news, arts, sports, and opinion. Working together with the Editor-in-Chief and the Managing Editor, the News Editor is responsible for working with the other content editors to effectively produce each print issue.

### **Other Editors**

1. Serve at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief. Section editors should check with Editor-in-Chief before assigning events that will happen off-campus.
2. Are responsible for making sure that Talon Marks policy is followed at all times.
3. Coordinate aspects of the overall production process associated with their area of responsibility, including developing content budgets, working with reporters to assure timely and accurate development of content, and supervising presentation of content in print, online and social media forums.
4. Edit the content of staff members’ efforts before they are published.
5. Are expected to serve as leaders by example for the rest of the Talon Marks staff
6. Have one vote on the editorial board.
7. May earn an extra unit of credit in the Editorial Board course or Directed Studies course.
8. Keep respected online pages up to date.

The number and distribution of editors and associate editors will vary from semester to, though there should always be an Editor-in-Chief as well as editors for news, opinion, sports and arts. Specific job duties of other editors, if the positions are filled, include:

### **Production Manager**

Coordinates the use of photo illustrations, infographs, student-designed ads, and video stories for the Talon Marks brand to insure the visual consistency of the product. Helps serve as traffic cop on print production nights.

### **Magazine Editor**

Works in conjunction with the adviser(s) to establish publication schedules for the magazine and to determine the technical elements of the magazine, including the number of pages, use of color, size of pages and selection of

paper. Assumes a lead role in publishing the magazine or its contents online, either through talonmarks.com or independently.

### **Opinion Editor**

Coordinates a diversity of opinion content –editorials, opinion columns, letters to the editor, cartoons, guest columns, etc.— from staff members and other contributors to the paper. Verifies authenticity of letters to the editor and keeps a file of signed letters.

### **Community Editor**

Coordinates coverage of off-campus local community stories of interest to the college community.

### **Arts Editor**

Coordinates arts and entertainment coverage. Primary coverage should include Cerritos College theater, music and art activities and include a mixture of previews, reviews and features. Maintains a list of college arts and entertainment activities on campus to insure complete coverage.

### **Sports Editor**

Coordinates campus sports coverage. Weekly coverage should include all Cerritos sports. Maintains a list of college sports schedules to insure complete coverage.

### **Life Editor**

Coordinates features coverage relating to students, faculty, staff and other aspects of campus life.

### **Multimedia Editor**

Coordinates the creative development and uploading of photos essays (slide shows), graphics, cartoons and multimedia projects to the talonmarks.com web site. The Multimedia Editor should post a minimum of two multimedia packages per week.

### **Social Media Editor**

Coordinates updates and maintain the content of the Facebook, Twitter, and any other social network pages. Adds “friends,” monitors comments and adds artwork to both Twitter and Facebook. Follows social media and technology trends and applies them to the Talon Marks distribution process. Also is responsible for crowd sourcing when necessary and is responsible for posting the Facebook and Twitter “photo’s of the day.”

### **Photo Editor – Print**

Is liaison among the content editors, the production editor and the photographers to develop photographic assignments that illustrate key stories on pages for print publication. Supervises photographers in the completion of

their assignments in a timely fashion and assures that photos are properly pre-pressed –color, black and white, and web/web photo gallery—and that appropriate cutlines/captions accompany photos.

The print photo editor works in conjunction with the section editors in the selection of photos for the print edition. Will ensure that all photos used in the print edition are pre-pressed and attached to the story in which the photo was taken for. While the print photo editor is expected to give suggestions on photos to appear in print, the final decision rests with the section editor and the Editor-in-Chief.

Will also be responsible for assigning photo assignments for the print edition. Will also work closely with the Photo Editor-Digital in the assigning of photo assignments for use in each section of the brand.

### **Photo Editor – Digital**

Is responsible for all photography related aspects of talonmarks.com. Will assign photo assignments for use in aspects of talonmarks.com such as Online Exclusives and “Photo of the Day.” Is responsible for pre-pressing all photos for use online. Will also be responsible for working with the multimedia editor in producing slideshows.

Will be responsible for taking all photos taken and creating a gallery in Ellington. Will communicate with the content editor – print in the assigning of photo assignments for use in each section of the brand.

### **Audio/Podcast Editor**

Is responsible for ensuring that the staff understands the process for editing its own audio. Will communicate daily with the staff regarding the assigning of audio assignments and work toward the goal of each staff member editing their own audio.

Will also work closely with the Multimedia Editor to create weekly podcasts. Will be responsible for ensuring that the staff record its own audio for use on podcast shows.

### **Presentation Editor**

Is responsible for assisting in the aesthetics of the print edition of the brand. Will work with the Content editors, Managing Editor, and the Editor-in-Chief to ensure that design mistakes mentioned in critique are corrected in future issues and will constantly consult the Talon Marks Style Guide as well as the Newspaper Design Handbook for the purposes of making sure the design of the print edition is consistent with industry standards.

### **Copy Chief**

Heads the copy editing duties on production nights. Must make sure errors found in critique are being corrected online.



### **Utility Editor**

Acts as an editor in waiting. Knows all the necessary skills needed and is prepared to fill in a role, should one become available. Is required to attend editorial board meetings and participate in the production of the paper on Tuesday nights.

### **Associate Editors**

Commonly referred to as assistant editors, associate editors are responsible for assisting the editor to who they are assigned as needed as is related to content, assignment, and the production of the brand.

Associate Editors are also responsible for assisting the editor in tasks as needed in relation to the brand. Some of the responsibilities will be to assist in copyediting, fact checking and researching for stories. Will also provide administrative support to the editor only in relation to brand specific items.

Associate Editors are selected by the Editor-in-Chief.

### **Editorial Board Teams**

\*\*\* Editors will be assigned to a team at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief.

#### **Executive Team**

The Executive Team enforces Talon Marks policies and procedures and also ensures positive work flow through the editorial board and staff.

#### **Content Team**

The Content Team is responsible for producing content ideas for their sections, editing and posting of stories and photos and possibly design for their sections.

#### **New Media Team**

The New Media Team handles all issues related to the new media side of the brand.

### **Editorial Team Leads**

\*\*\* Leads will be assigned to a team at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief.

#### **Executive Team Lead**

Usually the Editor-in-Chief, is responsible for ensuring that members of the Executive Team act as an example of professionalism for the rest of the staff. Will lead weekly meetings with the other team leads to discuss strengths and weaknesses present with the brand.

#### **Content Team Lead**

Is responsible for the daily supervision of the Content Editors including the Photo Editor. While maintaining a digital-first mindset, the team lead for content is responsible for the print edition of the Talon Marks brand by ensuring that stories and page design make deadline. The team lead for

Content Team serves as a motivator regarding all aspects of the print edition. The Content Team Lead answers directly to the Managing Editor.

### **New Media Team Lead**

Addresses questions, comments, or concerns related to any media related position within the Talon Marks. Will assist the other editors when necessary and will also assist in ensuring that deadlines for New Media assignments are being met. The New Media Team Lead answers directly to the Managing Editor.

### **Reporters**

1. Are responsible for covering stories deriving from story lists
2. Are responsible for informing editors about future stories.
3. Should seek out opportunities to write the widest variety of material possible.
4. Should seek out opportunities to learn the production side of the newspaper operation and help out under the supervision of the Managing Editor.
5. Must keep confidential all discussions in the Newsroom, Editorial Board meetings or during class time.
6. Should take care that the appearance of the Newsroom is professional at all times.
7. Are responsible for posting assignments on the talonmarks.com web site in timely and publishable manners.

### **Photographers**

1. Are responsible for photographically covering news and feature events on campus.
2. Are responsible for informing the Photo Editor of photo possibilities.
3. Take on more than one assignment per week.
4. Are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the information accompanying any assignment.
5. Must provide cutlines or cutline information for all assignments.
6. Must keep confidential all discussions in the Newsroom, Editorial Board meetings or during class time.
7. Should take care that the appearance of the Newsroom is professional at all times.
8. Are responsible for posting assignments on the talonmarks.com web site in timely and publishable manners.

## **J. USING YOUR PRESS CARD**

Each staff member of the Talon Marks is issued a press card for use during the course of the semester. The press card is similar to a student ID card, but is designed for use exclusively by the Talon Marks staff.

Your press card is entrusted to your care because you are considered an important member of this staff and the Talon Marks wishes to identify itself with you, as we hope

you wish to identify with it. It is used primarily as a way for you to prove to sources and campus officials that you are an active member of the staff in good standing.

Obviously, a press card can be abused and used in violation of Talon Marks policies or the professional code of ethics. Any violation of the press card could lead to the Editor-in-Chief asking you to forfeit your press card or the advisers taking action against your grade.

If you have any questions about how the card is to be used, please check with an adviser before putting yourself and your journalism future in jeopardy.

## **K. FREELANCERS**

Students who want to contribute stories, photographers, graphics, etc., for either the traditional print version of the Talon Marks or the online edition should always be encouraged to sign up for a Talon Marks course, especially if it is early in the semester. In some cases and at the discretion of the adviser, students may sign up for a Directed Studies course if signing up for a regular course is not possible or feasible. Failure to sign up for a Talon Marks course usually denotes a lack of commitment to the publication and to its values.

Recognizing the fact that signing up for a course is not always possible and that some individuals may prefer to work as freelancers to the publication, it is the policy of the Talon Marks to accept freelance assignments under the following conditions only. In all cases, however, the Editor-in-Chief has the final say on whether freelance work from a qualified individual will be published or not.

1. Students enrolled in Cerritos College journalism classes who can earn credit in the courses for the assignment may accept freelance assignments from the editor. The editor will work with the instructor and students in journalism courses to help make freelance assignments available for students who need them for required class credit.
2. Students not enrolled in a journalism course or in a course where credit for the assignment is not available may qualify as a freelancer and accept assignments from the editor. However, the individual may qualify as a freelancer under this provision for only one semester. To continue contributing the brand for more than one semester while at Cerritos College the individual must enroll in a qualifying journalism/Talon Marks course.
3. Former Talon Marks staff members may accept freelance assignments from the Editor-in-Chief. However, the former staff member may qualify as a freelancer under this provision for only one semester. Directed Studies should not be used to extend tenure on the newspaper staff beyond the allowable repetitions of Journalism 107 unless specific, new responsibilities will be explored.

In all three cases above if freelance students accept an assignment, they are expected to complete the assignment in acceptable publishable form by the stated deadline. Failure to do so will disqualify their eligibility to contribute as freelancers.

Freelancers must be made aware of this policy and must sign a Freelancer Contract Form indicating they understand the policies and that they will uphold the conduct standards of the Talon Marks while representing themselves as Talon Marks representatives before they are given assignments. It is the responsibility of the Instructional Lab Technician to keep all contracts on file and to advise the editor and adviser when individuals are ineligible to serve as freelancers.

#### **L. EDITOR SELECTION**

1. The faculty adviser to the Talon Marks newspaper and to the Wings magazine will name the Editors-in-Chief for the brand by following the following guidelines. Appointment will be made on a semester-to-semester basis. The adviser is also responsible for removing the Editors-in-Chief for due cause.
2. The Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with the adviser, will name other editors based on need and availability, and will be responsible for removing them when necessary.
3. No later than two weeks before the last issue of the semester, the adviser will seek applications for Editor-in-Chief for the following semester. The application should list the applicant's qualifications for editor, willingness to be an editor, and reasons for wanting to be editor. Applicants should have completed a minimum of one semester working for the Talon Marks. The Request for Applications will include a deadline for receiving of applications. No late applications will be accepted.
4. A committee consisting of former Talon Marks editors or other appropriate outsiders will interview any and all applicants and suggest finalists to the adviser. Members of the committee should no longer be on the staff at the time of interviews.
5. If no applications are received, or if all applications are subsequently rejected, the Editor-in-Chief selection process may be rescheduled for the beginning of the next semester.
6. **Qualifications of Editor-in-Chief**
  - a. Candidates for Editor-in-Chief should have served a minimum of one semester as a Talon Marks staff member. Service on the Editorial Board is not required, but is desirable.
  - b. Editors-in-chief who have not completed Beginning Newswriting with a C or better must enroll in Beginning Newswriting while Editor-in-Chief and maintain good standing in the course while serving as Editor-in-Chief.
  - c. The successful candidate(s) must enroll in the College Newspaper course (if eligible) and Editorial Board (if eligible) while serving as Editor-in-Chief. Failure to do so is grounds for dismissal. If ineligible, the Editor-in-Chief must arrange his or her schedule to be available during those class and board meeting times.
  - d. To avoid a conflict of interest or an appearance of conflict of interest, the successful candidate(s) may not serve in student government in any capacity while serving as Editor-in-Chief. This does not preclude an Editor-in-Chief from serving on a short-term task force established for the college good.
  - e. The successful candidate must meet the academic requirements set by the ASCC for participation in conferences. These include:
    - Must be enrolled in five units

- Must have a GPA 2.0
- Must not be on Academic Probation
- Must have paid all fees.

## **M. PHOTO POLICY**

1. The Talon Marks often gets asked to supply copies of photos it takes. While the brand likes to help the members of its community, the printing of photos creates several problems, including:
  - a. Sometimes we no longer have the images available to us.
  - b. The Talon Marks recognizes that copyright of photos belongs to the photographer and it has rights only to use photographs for Talon Marks purposes.
  - c. As we don't always print photos in our process any more, printing a copy amounts to work outside our normal procedures.
  - d. If we do print a photo we want to keep the original in our files for a variety of archival purposes.
2. The policy for printing/supplying photos will be as follows:
  - a. We never loan negatives/archives.
  - b. If we have scanned the photo we can print a copy for our laser printer at a cost of \$2 each. When possible, \$1 will be paid to the original photographer and \$1 will be deposited in the Talon Marks Press Club account.
  - c. If we actually print a photo, which will be done as time permits, the cost will be \$5 per print. Again, when possible, \$2 will be paid to the original photographer and \$3 will be deposited in the Talon Marks Press Club account.
3. Staff members should not make individual arrangements in conflict with the above regulations as it causes long-term problems for the paper.
4. All photo orders should be placed through the Instructional Lab Technician, who is responsible for collecting and depositing monies.
5. All photos received from source outside the Talon Marks staff or freelancers will be given the byline of the department or organization that it is taken by not the individual.

## **N. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Social networking sites, such as blog, Facebook and Twitter have become an integral part not only of the evolving media industry, but everyday life for millions of people around the world. As Talon Marks grows to serve its community audience across multiple platforms, social media is becoming an interesting aspect of our interaction with our audience. Properly used, social networking sites can also be valuable newsgathering and reporting tools. Staff members are encouraged to take advantage of them.

The line between private and public activity has been blurred by these tools. Whether you intend it or not, the content you place on social media sites represents both you and the brand. Staff members have their own online identities, but once they join the staff their identities become intertwined with the identity and reputation of the Talon Marks as a professional publication. Staff members are encouraged to consider this in their online communications, especially those directly or indirectly tied to Talon Marks.

1. Talon Marks will maintain one or more Twitter and Facebook accounts that serve as official sites for the publication. The Editor-in-Chief and selected editors will have posting privileges.
2. All postings to these sites should be news related or community-building related and not personal entries. Relevant commentary is acceptable.
3. No foul language will be used on these sites. Good taste shall be the guideline.
4. Use complete sentences and follow AP style for all postings.
5. Postings should be parceled out throughout the day and throughout the week as opposed to batch posting at one point during the production cycle.
6. Remember that quality counts more than quantity. As a general rule, do not post updates more than three times for any news story. However, if something significant happens at any event, use your own discretion to post more often.
7. When associating or representing the Talon Marks in social media forums, you should conduct yourself with an eye to how your behavior or comments will reflect on the Talon Marks' professional reputation.
  - Integrity is our most important commodity: Avoid writing or posting anything that would embarrass the Talon Marks or compromise your ability to do your job.
  - Assume that your professional life and personal life will merge online regardless of your care in separating them.
  - Even if you use privacy tools (determining who can view your page or profile, for instance), assume that everything you write, exchange or receive on social media site is public.
8. All staff members are encouraged to sign up for individual Twitter accounts. Talon Marks staff members must identify themselves as being from Talon Marks brand if they are using their accounts for reporting in any way. Twitter accounts should follow the firstnamelastname guideline. Please do not include TM in your username. You should use a personal image (not TM logo) for profile photo. From these accounts they can post breaking news by including the #tmnews or #tmsports hash tags. Such posts should follow Talon Marks guidelines. Editors may wish to repost some of these posts to the publication's official sites.
9. If you use social media forums for newsgathering the presumption is that information is off the record unless you specifically identify yourself as a reporter and the purpose of your interview in advance.
10. The usernames and passwords for all social media accounts for Talon Marks publications must be given to the instructional aide when created. When usernames/passwords need to be changed, please inform the instructional aide and he/she will change usernames/passwords for publications. He/she is responsible for maintaining a list of accounts and passwords for publications.
11. Retweeting – Retweets, like tweets, should not be written in a way that looks like you're expressing a personal opinion on the issues of the day. A retweet with no comment of your own can easily be seen as a sign of approval of what you're relaying. Must use RT in front of the retweeted message. Make it clear that you're simply reporting it.
12. Friending/Following – It is acceptable to extend and accept Facebook friend request from sources if necessary for reporting purposes.

## **O. CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS CODE OF CONDUCT BEHAVIOR POLICY**

This Policy was created to prevent loss of focus and to prevent harm to students attending future conferences, and to first and foremost, uphold a reputable name for Cerritos College, and all who are involved with the Talon Marks and Cerritos College.

There will be no purchasing or consumption of alcohol allowed at journalism events or conferences. This includes the time frame of before, during or after an event attended on behalf of Cerritos College. Those that cannot refrain from drinking during the conference are suggested to stay home.

### **Code of Conduct:**

If students who want to attend conference, they must also agree that he/she is a representative of Cerritos College and the Talon Marks.

### **Criteria to go to conference:**

1. Priority will go to Journalism students in the following order: College Newspaper; Beginning Newswriting; and other journalism/broadcasting courses, including journalism majors and freelancers not currently enrolled in journalism courses but working closely with the program.
2. Former journalism students that wish to attend the conference.
3. Any other Cerritos College students that wish to attend conference.

### **Requirements to attend a conference:**

- Must be enrolled in five units
- Must have a GPA 2.0
- Must have paid all student fees and tuition.
- Must be enrolled in a journalism class or Freelance with discretion of the adviser.

### **Payment for conferences:**

Payment for conferences will be paid at the time of sign up. Students will pay a portion of the conference fee and will leave a mandatory deposit for the remaining cost of the conference in the form of cash or check (the money will either be return or cashed after the conference depending on if passport is complete). Students will be expected to pay for food and parking that is not a part of the conference. Payment for students with financial need will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**For So Cal JACC conference-** Students will be responsible for paying 40 percent or a minimum of \$25 of the total cost of JACC registration.

**For JACC State Conference-** Students will be responsible for paying 10 percent or a minimum of \$50 of the total cost of JACC registration, travel and lodging.

**Out of State Conferences-** Students will be responsible for paying 50 percent of the cost of the conference, lodging and travel.

**Workshops in the State of California-** If the conference is under \$50 the Journalism Program will pay for the cost of the conference. Otherwise, students will be responsible for a minimum of 25 percent of the cost of the conference, lodging and travel.

**Meetings for Conference:**

**Pre-conference meeting:**

- There will be a pre-conference informational meeting for interested students to attend.
- At the time of sign-up: all students must read and sign behavior contract.

**Mandatory Meeting:**

There will be mandatory meeting for all students who plan to attend conference and have paid his/her cost of the conference including deposit for the rest of conference.

- All students must read and signed a behavior contract by the registration deadline.
- Mandatory lunch/dinner group activity with adviser during the conference.
- There will be a set amount mandatory workshops to attend at the discretion of the adviser. The amount will be approximately 2/3 of what is offered at the conference.
- Each student that has attended previous conferences is responsible for providing an activity such as going over Talon Marks Behavior policy, JACC policy, workshops, other activities, and contests.
- Students must agree not to stay at hotels at the So Cal Conference.
- If for any reason, they act inappropriately as a group or individuals; the Adviser of the Talon Marks will reprimand them all. The Adviser can decide prior to each event what standards of "inappropriate" are, and make clear to students and staff members what the punishment will be in the event of breaking the rules.
- Student(s) shall stay in your assigned room, unless Adviser changes the rooms.
- Passports need to be signed by speakers at workshop; not doing this will result in payment for the workshops not attended at conference. It is highly recommend that you see the adviser multiple times each day during conference.

**Failure to complete passport will result in the following:**

- For every workshop not attended at So Cal or State JACC conferences the cost will be \$20.
- For every workshop not attended at out of state conferences \$40.



**After Conference meeting ...**

After conference everyone is to attend a mandatory debriefing meeting. Attendees will receive his/her check back. Passports must be turned in at the time of the meeting. There will be written report on workshops attended, if student does not attend debriefing meeting. At the meeting students will discuss what they learned at conference.

**The Adviser reserves the right to ...**

Adviser has the final say on who will attend the conference and to change any of the above requirements due to any unforeseen circumstances.

The Adviser may consult with Editors or school officials or both to discuss issues with said student(s) and make a decision if that student(s) can or cannot attend.

**Punishments**

If a student breaks any of the rules within the Code of Conduct (as stated above), they can/will be subject to any of the following:

- \* If you are found drinking and doing drugs at the conference you forfeit your deposit and may be subject to expulsion from the college.
- \* Editors should be held more strictly responsible for their actions. If an editor violates the policy and contract, he or she should have to step down from his/her editor position.
- \* Students are also subject to the punishments and behavioral code of JACC and Cerritos College.