The Weekly Ringer Operating Procedure

The University of Mary Washington recognizes the educational and societal value of encouraging the uninhibited, robust, free and open discussion of issues and ideas on America's college and university campuses, as well as the legal protections afforded students' exercise of freedom of expression and press freedom, especially by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

The Weekly Ringer, the student newspaper, is defined to include the print product and related digital platform and social media accounts, and shall be under the exclusive editorial control of the students. All decisions regarding the publication and distribution of journalistic content in The Weekly Ringer shall be made by The Weekly Ringer editorial board. No University administrator, faculty member or employee shall determine content or discipline a student for the publication of content that is protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and consistent with university policy.

The newspaper will provide its student members with the opportunity to inquire, question and exchange ideas. Students and editors will strive to reflect all areas of student interest, including topics about which there may be dissent or controversy.

The University urges all student journalists to recognize that with editorial control comes responsibility, accountability, and potential liability for all content and newsgathering decisions. Student journalists exercising editorial control have sole responsibility and accountability for content and newsgathering decisions, and accordingly must be mindful of all potential consequences of those decisions, including potential liability and/or responsibility for violations of applicable University policy.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in The Weekly Ringer shall be open to any interested undergraduate students, full-time or part-time, at the University of Mary Washington. The Weekly Ringer does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religious and political beliefs or sexual orientation. Writers participate through joining The Weekly Ringer or taking the JOUR 380 Practicum Journalism class. Most writers are termed "staff writers." Writers returning to JOUR 380 who develop a specialty (a beat) are termed "senior writers." Students who are not staff or senior writers are termed "contributing writers."

EDITORIAL STAFF

The editor positions of The Weekly Ringer are Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor, Business Editor, News Editor, Life Editor, Sports Editor, Opinion Editor, Online Editor, Copy Editor and Photography Editor. Only UMW undergraduate students, full-time or part-time, may serve as editors. The duties of the editors are as follows.

- Editor-in-Chief
    - Running a weekly staff meeting.
    - Chairing all meetings for and providing leadership to the staff.
    - Editing and providing final approval of all content.

    - Working with the Adviser to ensure the newspaper is acting in accordance with the First Amendment and The Weekly Ringer Statement of Policy.
    - Functioning as the chief spokesperson for the paper.
    - Establishing an effective relationship with Inter-Club Association, Student Activities and Engagement and other University administrative departments.
    - Attending all Inter-Club Association-required events.
- Associate Editor
    - Assisting the Editor-in-Chief with the fulfillment of their duties.
    - Editing all articles and assisting section editors with layout.
    - Providing support for the development of additional content, programs and events.
    - Working with the Business Manager to establish a budget.
- Business Editor
    - Keeping a record of financial transactions.
    - Managing advertisements.
    - Preparing budgets, including financial budget requests/appeals, etc., and presenting necessary documents to the Finance Committee.
    - Meeting the deadlines of the Finance Committee and responding to audit requests of the Finance Committee of Student Activities and Engagement.
- Section Editors (News, Life, Sports, Opinion)
    - Hearing pitches from writers, developing their ideas and assigning stories.
    - Preparing the layout of their respective sections.
    - Providing content to the Online Editor for publishing on the website.
    - Editing 2-8 articles a week each.
- Online Editor
    - Putting content on The Weekly Ringer website.
    - Working with the contracted Web hosting company.
    - Managing social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat).
- Copy Editor
    - Editing the final layout of the newspaper.
    - Assisting other editors with editing articles as needed.
- Photography Editor
    - Working with photographers, distributing photo assignments and hearing photographer's pitches, developing their ideas and assigning stories.
    - Assisting section editors with photo editing as needed.

EDITOR ELECTIONS

All editors are elected to serve for one year. Elections are held prior to the end of the spring semester.

- Nominations will be held the meeting prior to the scheduled date of elections. Any active member may nominate a fellow member for an editor position; however, it is strongly recommended that the nominee be consulted beforehand. Nominees can decline the nomination. Candidates can be nominated for more than one position and may nominate themselves. Nominations will only be accepted during the meeting prior to elections.

- Only members currently holding an editorial position shall be eligible to run for the senior editor positions: Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editor, and Business Manager. These three positions must be nominated from the current editorial staff, and senior elections will take place one week prior to section editor elections.
- Elections consist of each candidate speaking for up to five minutes, followed by up to three minutes of questions and answers. Members of the current editorial staff vote, and candidates are elected to office if they receive more than half the votes cast. In the event that no candidate receives more than half the votes cast, a run-off election shall be held between the two candidates receiving the most votes.
- In the event that an editor is judged to be deficient in their duties by at least 75% of editorial staff, the Adviser will ask the Journalism Advisory Committee to preside over the decision to remove the editor through a procedure providing appropriate due process.

ADVISER

The Adviser will be the instructor of record for JOUR 380: Practicum Journalism. The Adviser does not have voting rights in editorial elections and does not review articles prior to publication. The Adviser does have veto power over any decision made by The Weekly Ringer staff, which is in direct violation of The Weekly Ringer Statement of Policy.