

# Student Newspaper

Students – Student Life and Activities

---

**EWU Policy 502-03**

**Authority: EWU Board of Trustees**

**Effective June 30, 2017**

**Proponent: President's Office**

---

**Purpose:** This policy prescribes university standards relative to the student newspaper, The Easterner, at Eastern Washington University.

**History:** This policy revises the previous version dated June 26, 2015. It was adopted by the Board of Trustees on June 30, 2017.

---

## I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

1. Eastern Washington University (EWU) recognizes that freedom of expression and debate by means of free and vigorous student press is essential to the effectiveness of an educational community in a democratic society.

2. The Easterner is a student-led organization that publishes a student newspaper for the EWU campus community. The Easterner provides a public forum for students to disseminate news and discuss issues and activities relating to the EWU community.

3. EWU assumes no liability for the content of The Easterner, as it does not exercise any editorial control over the content of the newspaper. All editorial staff shall be EWU students. The editor and editorial staff are responsible for making a final decision as to whether material will be published.

4. The following types of expression are not protected by this policy or the First Amendment, and may result in disciplinary or remedial action:

- a) Obscene material, as defined by state and federal law;
- b) Libelous material, as defined by state law;
- c) Material that unlawfully invades a person's right to privacy, as defined by state law;
- d) Incitement of imminent lawlessness; and,
- e) Material that will cause a material and substantial disruption of university activities. "Disruption" includes acts such as student rioting, unlawful seizures or destruction of property, or other related form of serious disruptive, physical activity.

## II. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Easterner is a student-led organization. Students who work on The Easterner staff have the right and responsibility to determine the content of the newspaper. These students strive to:

- a) Produce the newspaper based upon professional standards of accuracy, objectivity and fairness;
- b) Review material to improve sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
- c) Reasonably check and verify all facts and the accuracy of quotations; and
- d) In the case of editorials or letters to the editor concerning controversial issues, determine the need for rebuttal comments and opinions, if appropriate.

2. The day-to-day editorial decisions of The Easterner shall be the responsibility of the editor and the editorial staff, in consultation with the applicable EWU advisors.

The editorial staff shall establish procedures and policies for handling complaints from readers concerning the content of the Easterner.

3. At the time of application and throughout their term on the editorial staff, the editor and advertising manager must:

- a) Be full-time students at EWU;
- b) Have an overall grade point average of at least 2.0; and,
- c) Have served at least two quarters as a paid staff member of The Easterner prior to application for the editor and advertising manager position.

## III. STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

1. Funding for the Easterner is provided through a combination of advertising revenue and allocation of services and activity (S&A) fees. Each year, The Easterner shall submit to the S&A Fee Committee a budget proposal detailing the S&A fees needed to support the Easterner in accordance with the S&A Fee Committee Guidelines and RCW 28B.15.045.

2. For content and editing issues, the editorial staff is assisted by a faculty advisor from the EWU Journalism Program. The faculty advisor does not exercise editorial control over The Easterner. The editorial staff is responsible for maintaining regular communication with the faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is responsible for guiding editorial staff in ethical and professional values of journalism. The faculty advisor is responsible for instructing the editorial staff of their legal obligations concerning print media and shall assist the editor in maintaining responsible and professional standards for all staff.

3. For operational and personnel issues, the editor and advertising manager report to and are supervised by Student Affairs. Student Affairs is responsible for managing and guiding the staff in areas such as general program management and student development/support functions for The Easterner, including, but not limited to, administrative and employment matters, development of a staff procedural manual, budget management, facilities/technology resources, travel and training opportunities, revenue and contract management, and training and supervision of advertising staff. There may be one or two professionals assigned to fulfill this role (hereinafter "Director").

4. Students who work on The Easterner may receive credit or pay, consistent with EWU Policy 407-01 (Temporary Employment). Hiring and any possible termination of the editor and advertising manager will be the responsibility of the Director, with input from the faculty advisor and subject to the approval of the Board of Student Publications. Hiring of all other staff for The Easterner shall be the responsibility of the editor and Director, or their designees. The Director shall oversee hiring procedures for all Easterner staff. All reporters will report to the editorial staff, who then reports to the editor, who reports to the Director for non-editorial matters. All Easterner staff must comply with EWU policies, but shall not be disciplined or terminated based on the substantive content of the newspaper unless the content is not

protected by section I(4) and the First Amendment. All discipline and terminations pertaining to Easterner student staff must be approved by the Director and be in accordance with state and federal law, university policy, and Easterner procedures.

a. A Board of Student Publications (BSP) is established to approve selection of the editor and advertising manager, review the annual proposed budget and give feedback, and respond to complaints and concerns about the newspaper that have not been resolved by the editorial staff. Membership on the BSP shall be as follows:

#### **Voting**

(1) One (1) student appointed by the Associated Students of Eastern Washington University (ASEWU) president to serve for terms of one (1) academic years, renewable by the ASEWU. The student member shall not be a council member, executive or staff of ASEWU;

(2) The faculty advisor to The Easterner, who serves as the chair of the BSP;

(3) Two (2) members of the EWU faculty, with a rank of at least assistant professor, appointed by the faculty organization president to serve for a term of two (2) academic years; and,

(4) One (1) member of the EWU administration appointed by the university President to serve for a term of two (2) academic years.

**Non-voting** members of the BSP shall be the student editor, student advertising manager, and the Director.

b. Final actions of the BSP may be taken only upon majority approval of a quorum of the BSP.

c. The BSP shall meet on at least a quarterly basis.