

Governing Documents

Whitman College *Wire*

The Wire is a weekly student-run newspaper published under the auspices of the Associated Students of Whitman College. The governing documents of The Wire are intended as a record of the governing policies of the newspaper.

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About The Wire

The Wire, also referred to as the Whitman *Wire* newspaper or *The Wire*, is an independent, entirely student-run newspaper. With a weekly circulation of 1,100 copies, *The Wire* serves the Whitman College student body and its network of faculty, staff, parents and alumni plus the local Walla Walla community.

In addition to publishing a weekly issue of the latest news, arts and sports as well as student and staff opinions and editorials, *The Wire* annually publishes several special editions, including Family Weekend, Admitted Students' Day, Commencement and Jack (April Fool's Day) issues. *The Wire* maintains a website at whitmanWire.com that features content from the weekly print edition as well as additional reviews, opinions and editorials, and breaking news stories. The staff of *The Wire* also publish a quarterly magazine, *The Circuit*.

The Wire was first published before the turn of the 20th century. The paper has printed almost continually for over 100 years since then, making it the longest-running student organization at Whitman College.

Today, *The Wire* is an established campus media organization published under the auspices of the Associated Students of Whitman College (ASWC). The paper is managed by student editor(s) who are nominated and confirmed by the ASWC Nominations Committee in conjunction with the current *Wire* Editor(s)-in-Chief and input from other *Wire* staff members as well as *The Wire* Board of Advisors. Student Editor(s) are nominated at the end of each academic year to serve for the following year. The Editor(s)-in-Chief are responsible for hiring and managing all other *Wire* staff members.

The student editor(s) of *The Wire* make all editorial decisions independently from the college, student government or other interested party.

Location

The Wire is located in rooms 236-239 of Reid Campus Center at Whitman College. Our mailing address is:

The Wire
280 Boyer Ave.
Walla Walla, WA, 99362.

Our office can be reached by phone at 509-527-5372. Any messages will be returned within 24 hours during regular business hours with the exception of college breaks.

Accuracy and Objectivity

The Wire strives at all times to be accurate and objective in our reporting of campus, community and national news, events and sports. In our effort to maintain the highest standards of fairness, quality and journalistic integrity, *The Wire* is governed by a Code of Ethics.

Responsibility

The Wire is responsible to its readers for the content and quality of the reporting in the paper. Ultimately, the section editors and the Editor(s)-in-Chief are responsible for all News and Editorial content that appears in *The Wire*.

Finances

The Wire annually receives a fixed nine percent of the ASWC budget comprised of student fees. This allocation represents approximately 70 percent of the total operating budget of *The Wire*. The remaining budget comes from advertising and subscription revenue.

Payroll

The Wire maintains a paid staff of student reporters, columnists, editors, illustrators and photographers, as well as production and business staffs. Students are paid according to their position, with all positions divided into two broad categories: stipend and hourly. Editors, Managers, and Production staff members are paid by stipend for the work they complete in a semester. All other positions are paid per assignment—article, column, photo, illustration, etc.—that appears in the paper or online.

The Editor(s)-in-Chief receives compensation through ASWC honorarium.

Printing

The Union Bulletin Printing Services is responsible for printing *The Wire* every Thursday morning to be ready for pick up and delivery by Noon on Thursdays. All printing prices are agreed to prior to the beginning of the fall semester for that academic year and are only change upon proper notification of *The Wire* Editor(s)-in-Chief.

Distribution

The Wire is distributed for free across campus and at select locations in Downtown Walla Walla between 12-1 p.m. on Thursdays during our regular production schedule.

The Wire is published every week during the regular school year with the exception of college breaks and the first week of classes each semester.

Subscriptions

Annually, *The Wire* sells subscriptions to augment its revenue as well as to provide the newspaper to our network of parents, alumni and other readers not in the Walla Walla area. Subscriptions are set at a flat rate at \$40 per semester or \$70 for a year. For an additional \$5 (either for the semester or the year), subscribers receive the quarterly magazine *The Circuit*, published by *The Wire's* staff.

Governing Policies

Bylines and Credit Lines

Bylines appear on every story in both the paper's print and online editions with the exception of editorials and humor pieces found on the "Backpage."

All by lines and credit lines are determined in accordance with *The Wire's* Code of Ethics.

Staff Box

The staff box reflects the full name and title of all current paid staff members of *The Wire*.

Pseudonyms are not printed in the staff box. Any person writing under a pseudonym will have his or her full, legal name in the staff box under the appropriate position.

Contributing staff members do not appear in the staff box.

Corrections

Just like any organization, *The Wire* occasionally makes mistakes in its content. Therefore, *The Wire* regularly prints corrections as appropriate to any mistakes made by *Wire* staff members in either the content or the layout of any article, page, credit line or other aspect of *The Wire's* print and online editions. Corrections always appear in the news section of the subsequent issue in which the mistake was made.

Mistakes made online are corrected in a timely manner after *The Wire* staff becomes aware of the error.

The Wire will print a retraction or remove a full article, editorial or other piece of content from the website only when it can be definitively proven that the facts of the content in question are objectively untrue or when it can be demonstrated that the content is in violation of *The Wire's* libel policy or Code of Ethics.

Press Passes

The Wire's Associated Collegiate Press (ACP) press passes are only be used by paid staff members of *The Wire* while on official business for the paper.

Press passes should not be used in order to gain free entry into an event or to gain access to restricted areas unless it is necessary for reporting or photographing a story.

All use of *The Wire's* press passes must be approved in advance by the Editor(s)-in-Chief.

Editorial Page Policy

I. Opinions

Opinion columns are written by a *Wire* staff member and reflect the personal opinions, beliefs or endorsements of the individual columnist. The paper is not responsible for the individual ideas or opinions reflected in an opinion column.

II. Editorials

Editorials represent the opinion of *The Wire* as a whole. The topic of every editorial is agreed to by the Editorial Board and may be written by multiple members of the board or by only one member with the consent of the rest of the members of the Editorial Board.

III. Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor may be submitted to *The Wire* via e-mail or by mail to *The Wire*, Whitman College, 280 Boyer Ave., Walla Walla, WA, 99362. All submissions must be received by 4 p.m. on the Monday prior to the week that they are intended to appear.

All submissions must be under 300 words in length, be attributed and may be edited for newspaper style and fluency.

The Wire reserves the right to reject Letters to the Editor when in violation of *The Wire's* policies or guidelines.

IV. Guest Columns

Guest columns can be submitted the same as letters to the editor. Guest columns must run attributed and may be edited for newspaper style and fluency, but may be longer than 300 words. All guest columns are subject to approval by the Editorial Board prior to printing.

Investigative Reporting

As a news organization, *The Wire* has an obligation to hold Whitman College's Administration and the Associated Students of Whitman College (ASWC) as well as other campus groups, clubs and organizations accountable to the larger community of readers. The paper also strives to report on subjects of interest to readers and to inform readers about a variety of issues on campus. To fulfill these obligations, *The Wire* will engage in investigative reporting as deemed necessary by the Editorial Board.

The Wire strives at all times to remain objective in investigative reporting, both when determining possible topics for investigation and when gathering information and writing investigative articles.

The Wire does not investigate the private or personal life of any Whitman student, faculty or staff member or any member of the Walla Walla Community.

Libel

The Wire defines libel as any information which appears in any article, column, or editorial that is defamatory or that maliciously attacks or damagingly misrepresents a person or subject.

Any questions or concerns over libel should be directed to *The Wire* Editor(s)-in-Chief who will address any potential libel claims on an individual basis with guidance as needed by *The Wire* Board of Advisors.

Censorship

The Wire defines censorship as any activity which prevents all or part of any story or entire paper to be distributed to *The Wire's* readers either in print or online. This includes, but is not limited to, direct intervention by ASWC or the school's administration, faculty, staff or students; unreasonable limitation placed on physical space or technology necessary to produce the paper; destruction or hoarding of large quantities of the paper; hacking, redirecting or otherwise limiting access to any part of the whitmanWire.com website.

The Wire is protected in its freedom of speech by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. Any person found in violation of state or federal laws protecting the censorship of the paper could be subject to legal action.

Newspaper Manual

Associated Press Style

The Wire follows the latest Associated Press (AP) style guide at all times. All content, including submitted columns and Letters to the Editor, is edited weekly by our Copy Editors to correspond to AP style guidelines and certain Whitman-specific rules.

Advertising

The Wire maintains a sales staff for the purpose of bringing in advertising revenue to the paper. All advertisements are sold in accordance with the most recent advertising rate sheet which is at all times publicly available upon request or at whitmanWire.com.

All rates are agreed to before printing in a contract signed by both the business and *The Wire* advertising associate. Agreed to rates are final and cannot be changed.

The Wire reserves the right to reject any advertisement before going to print.

Conflict of Interest

At no point will advertisements or advertisers influence *The Wire* in any way, either by receiving special consideration or by affecting the content of either the print or online editions of the paper.

Deadlines

All advertising orders must be received no later than 4 p.m. on the Monday of the week they are intended to print. The final version of the advertisement must be in to *The Wire's* production staff by Tuesday at 4 p.m.

Invoicing

The Wire sends invoices to advertising clients at the beginning the month for all the ads that have gone in the previous month. All payment must be received within 15 days of receiving the invoice.

Special considerations for billing and payment may be made on a case by case basis.

Organizational Structure

Chief Officers

Position

The chief officer(s) of *The Wire* is the Editor(s)-in-Chief (EIC). It is the responsibility of the EIC to be in charge of editorial continuity, content and organization of the paper as well as hiring and managing the entire staff. In addition, the EIC is responsible for management and creation of the budget, as well as business development and external relations.

Terms of office

The EIC serves for a minimum of one academic year.

Appointment

The EIC is appointed by the ASWC Nominations Committee in conjunction with the current EIC and Publisher and with input from other *Wire* staff members as well as *The Wire* Board of Advisors at the end of each academic year to serve for the following year.

The Wire Board of Advisors shall have the ability to solely appoint the chief officers in the case of a vacancy in office during the regular term as determined by the ASWC bylaws.

Review

At least once per year, *The Wire* staff as well as the campus community and *The Wire's* network of readers should be given the opportunity to provide feedback to the editors and managers of *The Wire* including the current EIC. This feedback will take the form of an internal survey to be distributed to all current *Wire* staffers as well as a readership survey to be distributed to *Wire* readers via the Whitman students listserv.

Concerns over misconduct or inability of the EIC to perform the necessary duties of the position should immediately be brought to the attention of *The Wire* Board of Advisors.

Editorial Staff

The editorial staff is responsible for managing and creating the content of the paper and ensuring the content of each issue is complete and accurate. The specific positions and their duties are as follows:

Managing Editor

- Reports to the EIC.
- Manages the weekly production of the paper including the Copy Editors, Section Editors and Production Manager.
- Supervises layout and production nights including regulating deadlines, staying in communication with Section Editors, Reporters and Production Staff.
- Sends necessary reminders to the staff.
- Monitors late and poor quality content to ensure that it is completed in a timely manner.
- Takes attendance at all staff and editor meetings.
- Keeps the official minutes at all staff and editor meetings and makes them publicly available in a timely manner.
- Actively participates in editors' meetings.

Section Editor(s)

- Reports to the EIC and Managing Editor.
- Manages staffers for their section, including holding a weekly meeting of the section staff.

- Coordinates with other Section Editors to avoid conflicts.
- Coordinates with the Photography and Illustration editors to get the appropriate graphics for their section each week.
- Writes articles or does other work as needed for their section.
- Edits articles for content on Sundays and again through the week as needed.
- Works with the appropriate Production Associate to manage and check over the layout of the paper on Tuesday and Wednesday nights including writing headlines.
- Uploads articles for their section to the website.
- Actively participate in meetings of the Editorial Board.
- Attends all other *Wire* meetings relevant to the news section or editing.

Photo Editor

- Reports to the EIC and Managing Editor.
- Manages the photographers, including holding a weekly meeting of the photographers.
- Coordinates with Illustration Editor, Production Manager and EIC to ensure a balance of graphics in the paper each week.
- Collects, catalogs, and edits photographs for each Issue.
- Monitors and checks in on production nights to ensure that photographs are being properly placed, credited and cropped.
- Attends all other *Wire* meetings relevant to photography or editing

Illustration Editor

- Reports to the EIC and Managing Editor.
- Manages the illustrators, including holding a weekly meeting of the illustrators.
- Coordinates with Photo Editor, Production Manager and EIC to ensure a balance of graphics in the paper each week.
- Collects, catalogs, and edits illustrations for each Issue.
- Monitors and checks in on production nights to ensure that illustrations are being properly placed, sized and credited.
- Attends all other *Wire* meetings relevant to graphics or editing

Staff Writer

- Reports to the appropriate Section Editor(s).
- Writes articles each week for their section, including getting interviews, doing research and editing articles after the draft has been returned.
- Attends weekly meetings of their section and all other *Wire* meetings relevant to Staff Reporters.

Reviewer

- Reports to the appropriate Section Editor.

- Writes reviews each week for their section including getting interviews as needed, doing research and editing reviews after the draft has been returned.
- Attends weekly meetings of their section and all other Wire meetings relevant to Reviewers.

Blogger

- Reports to the web content editor.
- Writes posts on an agreed-upon schedule (generally weekly) about a particular topic or theme.
- Communicates with web content editor about possible post ideas.
- Engages in research prior to writing posts.

Columnist

- Reports to the appropriate Section Editor.
- Writes columns each week for their section including getting interviews as needed, doing research and editing columns after the draft has been returned.
- Attends weekly meetings of their section and all other *Wire* meetings relevant to Columnists.

Photographer

- Reports to the Photo Editor.
- Takes photos each week in accordance with the assignment(s) given to them.
- Attends a weekly meeting of the Photographers and all other *Wire* meetings relevant to Photographers.

Illustrator

- Reports to the Illustration Editor
- Draws illustrations each week in accordance to the assignments given to them.
- Attends a weekly meeting of the Illustrators and all other *Wire* meetings relevant to Illustrators.

Puzzlemaster

- Reports to the appropriate Section Editor.
- Creates the crossword puzzle or other puzzles for *The Wire* each week.

Production Staff

The Production staff is responsible for laying out the paper each week as well as checking the paper for factual, grammar and style errors. The specific positions and their duties are as follows:

Production Manager

- Reports to the EIC and Managing Editor.
- Manages the Production Associate(s), including holding a weekly meetings of the Production Associate(s) to address relevant issues.
- Approves the layout of each section before going to print every week.
- Creates and approves any major design changes to the overall paper.
- Ensures the continuity of design elements across issues.
- Attends all other relevant *Wire* meetings that relate to production

Production Associate

- Reports to the Production Manager.
- Lays out a section(s) of the paper every week on Tuesday and Wednesday nights.
- Communicates with the appropriate Section Editor(s) and with the Photo and Illustration Editors to ensure the appropriate content is laid out and accurate on the page.
- Attends weekly production meeting held by the Production Manager and all other *Wire* meetings relevant to Production Associate(s).

Copy Editor

- Reports to the Managing Editor.
- Is sufficiently familiar with AP style to be able to perform duties of the office
- Reviews every article each week before layout for AP style, grammar mistakes and coherency.
- Reviews the laid-out pages of the paper each week for AP style, grammar mistakes and coherency.
- Checks for obvious factual errors and corrects them before printing.
- Attends all *Wire* meetings relevant to the Copy Editor(s).

Business Staff

The business staff is responsible for the distribution of the paper, creating advertising and subscription revenue, maintaining the website and other electronic equipment and managing payroll. The specific positions and their duties are as follows:

Business Manager

- Reports to the EIC.
- Manages the Circulation Associate.
- Approves and reports on all expenditures made by *The Wire*.
- Actively seeks to sell subscriptions and maintains subscription database.
- Tracks the annual budget to ensure *The Wire* does not exceed its budget.
- Keeps up-to-date records of all *Wire* revenue and expenditures.
- Meets regularly with the EIC to report on all business.

- Attends all *Wire* meetings relevant to the Business Manager.

Advertising Manager

- Reports to the EIC.
- Manages the Advertising Associate(s), including holding weekly meetings with the Advertising Associate(s) to discuss advertising strategy.
- Works with the EIC and Business Manager to create new advertising strategies to increase the quality of the paper and the revenue from advertising.
- Responds or ensures that the Advertising Associate(s) respond to any ad inquiries.
- Actively seeks new advertisers to sell advertisements for *The Wire*.
- Reviews advertising revenue to ensure all advertisers are paying the full amount for their advertising.
- Monitors and checks in on production nights to ensure that all advertisements are being properly placed and sized.
- Attends all other *Wire* meetings that relate to advertising

Advertising Associate

- Reports to the Advertising Manager.
- Actively seeks new advertisers to sell advertisements for *The Wire*.
- Keeps open relations with businesses who have advertised in *The Wire* in order to ensure long-term interaction.
- Attends weekly advertising meetings held by the Advertising Manager and all other *Wire* meetings relevant to the Advertising Associate(s).

Web Staff

The web staff is responsible for updating and maintaining the *Wire* website at whitmanWire.com. This includes regulating published content, organizing web-exclusive content, managing social media and managing any technical issues that arise. The specific positions and their duties are as follows:

Webmaster

- Reports to the EIC.
- Maintains and develops *The Wire* website.
- Deals with any problems that arise on the website or other technology matters in a timely manner
- Manages the “@whitmanWire.com” email accounts.
- Attends all *Wire* meetings relevant to the Webmaster.

Web Editor

- Reports to the EIC.
- Maintains the style and organization of content published on *The Wire* website.

- Deals with any problems with the WordPress platform
- Manages the *Wire* social media accounts with the Web Content Editor.
- Attends all *Wire* meetings relevant to the Web Editor.

Web Content Editor

- Reports to the EIC.
- Maintains content published exclusively on *The Wire* website (content that is not published in the print edition).
- Oversees a team of reporters and bloggers that contribute web-exclusive content
- Manages the *Wire* social media accounts with the Web Editor.
- Attends all *Wire* meetings relevant to the Web Editor.

Editorial Board

The Editorial Board is comprised of the EIC, the Managing Editor, the Section Editors, the Production Manager and the Chief Copy Editor.

The current EIC presides over meetings of the Editorial Board.

Board Responsibilities

The Editorial Board meets at least once per month to discuss the editorial vision of the paper, create and approve new editorial policies and review business actions. The specific duties, responsibilities and membership of the Editorial Board are:

Editorial Vision

- Reviewing and critiquing old issues of *The Wire*.
- Discussing changes to the editorial composition of the paper, including sections and types of articles allowed.
- Reviewing design changes to the layout of *The Wire* or to its website.
- Discussing and writing any mutually agreed-upon Board Editorials.

Institutional Structure and Development

- Discussing staffing changes, including changes to the Nominations process for the EIC.
- Reviewing major business development projects of *the Wire*.
- Discussing internally new ways to improve the paper.
- Discussing any changes to *Wire* policies or governing documents (i.e. this handbook, the Board Charter, the Code of Ethics, etc).

Staff Meetings

The Wire holds weekly meetings on Sunday evenings. All current paid staff members, with the exception of advertising associates and circulation associates, are required to attend. The purpose of this meeting is to keep all staff members aware of developments within the paper and to foster a sense of community between the different sections and departments of the paper.

Other meetings of the staff are held as appropriate by the relevant editors or managers in order to ensure *The Wire* is produced efficiently and to the highest quality possible each week during the production schedule.

Appendix I: Code of Ethics

I. PREAMBLE AND PURPOSE

The Wire is a weekly student-run newspaper serving the Whitman College student body and community, as well as its network of parents, alumni, and supporters. The Wire is dedicated to expanding open discussion on campus about the issues with which students are most concerned. We provide coverage of Whitman-related news as well as featured local and regional events, and strive to maintain a standard of utmost fairness, quality, and journalistic integrity while promoting freedom of the press. In addition, the Wire strives to be a learning tool for students who are interested in journalism.

Purpose of the Code of Ethics

This code of ethics serves as The Wire's established guidelines for the practice of responsible journalism on campus, within reasonable interpretation of the editorial board for any given situation in need of address.

These guidelines should be regarded as an incomplete work subject to constant review and amendment by the editorial board. As new ethical considerations arise and technology continues to advance, this document shall evolve to provide appropriate solutions.

Responsibility for amending the code of ethics is assigned to the Editor-in-Chief, in conjunction with the editors; the code of ethics should be reviewed at least every semester.

Scope of the Code of Ethics

The code of ethics and all policies therein shall apply to the entire contributing staff of The Wire including, but not limited to: reporters, editors, photographers, illustrators, Webmaster, directors and business staff, when applicable.

II. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Wire staff shall make a concerted effort to avoid any and all conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest shall be judged primarily on their potential to reflect bias or the appearance of bias. In accordance with this effort, reporters shall refrain from interviewing close personal acquaintances unless circumstances demand their inclusion. Photographers shall avoid covering friends or family members. Coverage of advertisers who sign contracts with us should be considered carefully; the Editor-in-Chief and Publisher should ensure that major issues are not overlooked based on their connection to the advertisers, nor are articles written in order to promote advertisers.

Potential conflicts of interest should be immediately brought to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief, Publisher and the editorial board, and all decisions reached promptly.

Blogger Conflicts

Bloggers are expected to provide commentary and critical thought on the subject of their blog. No blog shall be used as a vehicle to promote organizations with which the author is affiliated. Blog posts may mention organizations which the author is affiliated when they are relevant to a larger point. Any purely promotional material is inappropriate for the Wire's website and shall be removed. Bloggers who repeatedly violate this policy may lose their position.

Any questions concerning conflicts of interest should be addressed to the Web Content Editor and Web Editor. The Editor-in-Chief shall have the final say in all matters related to blogger conflicts of interest.

Affiliations and Club Membership

Reporters, photographers and illustrators shall not cover a campus organization to which they belong, including but not limited to Greek groups, political or activist organizations, athletic teams and outside media outlets. Staff members may provide story ideas about groups to which they belong under the condition that they cede ownership of the story. Editors shall disclose all extra-curricular involvement and may not be involved in any decisions regarding organizations in which they participate. Contributors to the paper should fully disclose and report any affiliations to section editors and the Editor-in-Chief if their coverage may appear biased as a result.

Editors shall not hold any elected or paid position within the Associated Students of Whitman College (ASWC), while serving their term. Exemptions from this rule will be considered on a case by case basis by the Editor-in-Chief.

Reporting on The Wire

The Wire shall not be a primary presence in any of its own reporting, with the exceptions of board editorials, letters to the editor, citation of prior coverage and instances in which The Wire itself plays an operative role in the news.

To avoid compromising the integrity of The Wire, editors should not be quoted in stories. Reporters should avoid quoting fellow Wire staff, unless extenuating circumstances arise. Section editors will consider exemptions to this rule on a case-by-case basis, depending on the topic of the article in question.

Gifts and Expenses

Gifts of any implicit or explicit value should not be accepted. Staff members reviewing restaurants or covering any other applicable business or organization shall not accept free meals, merchandise or services from that establishment. With the exception of press passes, promotional material for advertising purposes or expressly editorial intent (i.e. CDs sent to A&E editor), gifts from sources must be refused or returned to sender.

Personal Relationships

Staff members shall not in any way cover individuals with whom they are personally involved. Types of coverage prohibited include reporting, photography and illustration. Editors and executive board members shall disclose personal relationships with staff members under their express or perceived jurisdiction.

III. INTERVIEWS AND SOURCES

The Wire shall strive to maintain objectivity and exercise discretion in discerning the news worthiness of its content. Sources shall be treated with respect and any conflicts or misunderstandings should be reported to the appropriate section editor. Plagiarism, the fabrication of quotes and alteration of quoted material is expressly prohibited.

Identification

Reporters must identify themselves to sources, and make clear their direct affiliation with The Wire. Sources should not be misled or given false information on any given subject. Reporters are expected to record interviews for the sake of accuracy, and must notify sources that a recording device is being used. Sources who do not consent explicitly should not have their interviews recorded.

Anonymity

Sources may be granted anonymity when they have legitimate concerns about personal safety, job security or other extenuating circumstances. Sources may also be granted anonymity when telling personal stories about sensitive topics, such as sexual assault. The intention of this provision is to allow for in-depth reporting while remaining cognizant of the realities of social life on a small college campus.

The use of anonymous sources in investigative articles is strongly discouraged unless that individual is the only verifiable source of essential information. Reasons for anonymity should be provided in the story. Names and contact information of anonymous sources in investigative articles must be disclosed to the section editor as well as the Editor-in-Chief and Publisher; sources seeking anonymity should be made aware of this policy in advance. Reporters may withhold names and contact information for anonymous sources on sensitive article topics unless special circumstances arise. Anonymous sources should not be allowed cheap shots on individuals or organizations.

All staff should respect the following standard journalistic policies:

Information supplied on the record is considered admissible with attribution to the appropriate source.

Information supplied off the record is unusable even if the name of the source is unattached, and should be considered only as a means for reporters to verify information later provided on the record.

Information supplied without attribution may be included in a story but the source must remain anonymous or identified only through general affiliation, i.e. as a member of a campus organization.

College Administration

From time to time, the editors of The Wire may meet with the President of the College and other members of the administration to receive background information about the day-to-day affairs of the College. This policy shall apply only to such meetings, and not to interviews which occur in the course of writing regular articles for the paper.

Unless otherwise explicitly stated by the officials in question, information from these meetings is considered off-the-record and may not be quoted in stories or attributed to any member of the administration. Information from these meetings may be used as the basis for stories, provided that the reporter finds other sources who are willing to speak on the record about the subject in question.

If, through the course of these meetings, any editors of The Wire become privy to information which the administration has reason to believe will be damaging to the College if published, the administration should inform the editors in question of their concerns and, if possible, explain the reasons behind them. In these cases, the editors shall determine, in accordance with The Wire's Code of Ethics and Investigative Reporting Guidelines, whether the subject warrants further investigation.

Members of the administration shall be made aware of this policy prior to meeting with editors of The Wire. Members of the administration should be aware that any information supplied to the editors of The Wire may be written about in future articles, in accordance with the guidelines outlined above.

Communication

All quotations should be verified prior to publication, and sources should be given the opportunity to review their own quotations. An exception to this rule will be made for lectures, public meetings and other events where individuals are speaking to a large group of people. However, sources shall not be granted prior review of any article, column, photograph or illustration.

Reporters should maintain impartiality when dealing with sources at all times. Reporters shall refrain from sharing personal opinions during the interview process. Sources should be made aware that there is no guarantee regarding the publication of a story.

Transcript material should be made available for public broadcast only with the permission of the source.

IV. NEWSROOM CONDUCT

Conduct during meetings and production should reflect professionalism and be conducive to a positive working environment.

Interpersonal conflicts

Although debate over important decisions is encouraged, staff should maintain professional attitudes and avoid allowing personal disagreements interfere with work. Conflicts that arise should be resolved as expediently as possible to avoid dissension.

The newsroom should foster inclusiveness and a sense of fair play, and staff members should be encouraged to voice their opinions even if they disagree with a decision. All matters pertaining to The Wire should be discussed openly and the input of all staff members respected within reasonable limits.

No discrimination shall be tolerated on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Statements of a derogatory nature are unacceptable.

Public relations

The executive board and editorial staff shall be receptive to meeting with the public on a regular basis or whenever it is appropriate to do so.

Editors shall strive to fulfill all editorial duties before taking on further commitments such as article writing. Reporters should always be given the opportunity to write stories.

The names of individual staff members responsible for writing board editorials shall not be disclosed under any circumstances.

V. RESPONSIBLE REPORTING

The Wire strives to provide fair, balanced, and accurate coverage of issues that concern our readership.

Information Gathering

Quotations should be accurately attributed with correct spellings of names, academic years, and titles or positions if applicable.

Stories should include a minimum of three sources and convey diversity of opinion.

Face to face interviews are strongly encouraged over phone interviews, and e-mail interviews are generally discouraged, except when necessary. Any interviews conducted via email should be noted as such. Any individual or organization referenced in an article should be given ample opportunity to comment. Reporters and/or section editors shall demonstrate exhaustive effort in their pursuit of counterarguments, and if no representative is able or willing to comment, this shall be noted in the story with explanation.

Writers and editors shall be prepared to defend the validity of their claims at all times. All published material should be substantiated and verifiable. Reporters and/or editors are required to keep a copy of their interview notes or recording for at least a month after publication.

Editing Procedure

Everything published in print or online is considered the ultimate responsibility of the section editor, Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief. These three parties will be responsible for ensuring proper review of content. Any questionable content, particularly in the Op-Ed or Humor sections, should be discussed with involved parties prior to publication. If any of the individuals involved are asked about the printing of the content, all should be able to explain the rationale behind the decision.

In the event that erroneous information is published, the section editor and Managing Editor should be informed promptly, and a correction noting the mistake issued as soon as possible.

Editors must contact reporters before making major changes to stories. Reporters and columnists should be notified prior to publication if stories or submissions are cut.

Headlines and captions should accurately reflect the content of articles, and layout should maintain consistency with jumps and captions.

No error of any kind will knowingly be sent to print.

Publishing

No content shall run unattributed unless extenuating circumstances arise and are approved by the Publisher and Editor-in-Chief. Pseudonyms will be used for aesthetic purposes only, and only after the authors identity has been published in the inaugural column. Any inquiries as to the identity of the writers will be disclosed.

All printed content will be published online.

Social Media

All content posted by a Wire staff member to The Wire's Twitter or Facebook accounts shall meet basic standards of acceptability. These postings shall not include profanity that may be deemed offensive to some members of The Wire community. Furthermore they should maintain a base level of objectivity that does not portray a subjective opinion about a topic covered by The Wire.

Website Comments Policy

A comment violates the whitmanwire.com user policy if it:

contains profane, obscene or offensive language;

contains an advertisement or other spam;

targets or otherwise singles out an individual or group of individuals who are the subjects of an article, a Whitman Wire staff member or a Whitman community member for a personal attack. A personal attack is that which maliciously targets the character of or signifies an intent to harm an individual or group of individuals.

does not come from a valid email address. You may be contacted to verify your identity.

Such comments will not be published. Furthermore, no personal information about commenters will be distributed, except when in violation of this policy. You are responsible for your own words, and may be held accountable for them.

Please allow up to 48 hours for comment moderation.

VI. VISUALS

Visuals in The Wire should reflect an honest representation of the subject.

Accuracy and Objectivity

Visuals should not reflect opinions, with the exception of illustrations appearing in the Op-Ed section. Graphics should not be partisan.

While photographing subjects, Wire photographers should not intentionally contribute to, alter, or seek to alter or influence events. All subjects should be treated with respect and dignity.

Any photograph manipulated beyond the darkroom should be labeled as a “Photo Illustration” in the photo credit. Photographs should not be flipped and should only be edited for clarity. This is ultimately the responsibility of the Photography Editor.

All individuals appearing in photographs should be identified with first name, last name, class year and/or title. It is the responsibility of the photographer to procure this information.

The Wire should not publish photographs depicting any staff members, unless the staff member is the only possible subject for the photo or extenuating circumstances arise.

VII. ETHICAL BREACHES

Any perceived ethical breaches should be brought to the immediate attention of the Editor-in-Chief and Publisher. The Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, in consultation with the Advisory Board, shall determine the appropriate actions.

This document was adopted from [The Charlatan's Handbook of Ethical Values and Practices](#).

Charter of the Board of Advisors

This charter is intended to give a detailed explanation of the responsibilities of the Whitman *Wire* Board of Advisors, especially as it relates to specific duties, member positions and overall management.

I. General Responsibilities

The organizational and leadership responsibilities of *The Wire* are the sole responsibility of the Editor(s)-in-Chief (EIC). However, it is the responsibility of the Board to provide support, guidance, ideas and instruction to *The Wire*. As an Advisory Board, this charter allows for the Board to act only as a supporting body for *The Wire*. The Board does not to have any voting power over *The Wire* or direct influence over the daily operations of the paper, especially as it relates to editorial content. Specific tasks for completing these general responsibilities include:

Strategic Planning

- Meeting at least one time per semester to conduct its business.
- Reviewing the annual budget created by the Editor(s)-in-Chief.
- Ensuring continuity between EIC terms while still balancing short-term goals and needs of each current EIC.
- Reviewing any major *Wire* organizational or staffing changes that fall outside of the weekly operations of the paper (changing nominated positions, revising *The Wire* Code of Ethics and Staff Handbook, etc.).

Budget Concerns

Though all *Wire* financial matters are ultimately the sole responsibility of the EIC, in addition to reviewing the budget annually, the Board may review any purchases or expenses that fall outside of the normal operating budget or exceed the established budget. This includes purchases made from other accounts under the control of the *Wire*, such as the Salzman-Medica *Wire*/Journalism Fund.

Educational and Journalistic Support

The Board shall have no oversight of editorial content in *The Wire* or any ability to influence weekly production of the paper. However, the Board shall support the EIC in:

- Providing insight into business problems or concerns that *The Wire* faces.
- Supporting the development of the EIC in learning the duties of their respective offices

and the management of the rest of the staff.

- Reviewing the merit of issues that arise from controversial content published in the paper and providing guidance in dealing with those issues.
- Providing journalistic expertise into the functioning of *The Wire* in order to help staff members gain from their experience on the paper.

II. Structure and Function

Composition of the Board

All members of the Board must be free from any interests, business ties or other relationships that could, or could reasonably be perceived to, interfere with the member's ability to act in the best interests of *The Wire*. No paid staff member other than the current EIC of *The Wire* may serve on the board at any time except as ex-officio members.

The Board is to be composed of six to ten members to be selected by the following criteria:

- The current *Wire* Editor(s)-in-Chief and Publisher as the Board Chairs.
- At least three members to be selected from among the Whitman College faculty or staff.
- At least one member to be selected from candidates within the Walla Walla Community and not to be directly associated with Whitman College.
- At least one other qualified member to be selected from candidates with knowledge of, or interest in, *The Wire*.

Board Member Duties

- Regularly attends Board meetings and any related meetings of importance.
- Stays informed about Board and other *Wire* matters.
- Responds promptly to matter raised to the Board through official channels.
- Gets to know other Board members and builds a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus.

Ex-Officio Members

Ex-officio members are members who attend specific Board meetings and may participate in discussions conducted by the Board but are not required to attend meetings on a regular basis.

Candidates may serve on the Board as ex-officio members with the general agreement of a majority of the current Board. All ex-officio members must still meet the general requirements listed under the Board composition.

Wire staff members may serve as an ex-officio member with the general agreement of the current Board.

Terms and Conditions of Office

Each Board member must serve for a minimum of one academic year. Medical or other select personal reasons may exempt Board members from serving a full term. Each Board member must be re-elected by a majority of the current Board at the end of each academic year for the following year.

Board members will be elected or re-elected according to the following criteria:

- Candidates must be in accordance with the rules regarding the composition of the Board.
- Candidates must be reviewed and accepted by a majority of the sitting board at the meeting of the spring semester.

Openings that occur in the Board anytime during the academic year will be filled according to the same criteria at a special meeting of the Board.

Meetings

The Board is to meet at least one time per semester in order to discuss its business. Special meetings may be called by the Board Chair upon reasonable notification of all Board members.

III. Reporting

Board proceedings are to be recorded in the minutes and distributed to all Board members as well as the EIC and Publisher after each Board meeting

IV. Review of the Charter

The Charter of the Board of Advisors is to be reviewed at the end of each academic year in order to make sure it remains consistent with Board responsibilities and goals.