

Student Television Network Code of Ethics

Preamble

Members of the Student Television Network believe in the importance of a free news media in a democratic society, including the academic/school setting. We believe the duty of student journalists is to seek truth and report it fairly and thoroughly to their audience, both in school and in the community. We understand that journalistic integrity is the basis of public trust and is developed and maintained by adherence to ethical principles. As members of STN, we adopt this code as the statement and evidence of our principles and our commitment to them.

Seek Truth and Report It

STN journalists should search for the truth. Student Journalists should:

- Be accurate in reporting information.
- Make every effort to avoid distortion of information.
- Identify sources of information as accurately as possible.
- Be objective in reporting both sides of a story.
- Avoid stereotyping.
- Never plagiarize.

Minimize Harm

STN journalists should value news subjects and news as topics and people who deserve respect.

Student journalists should:

- Be compassionate when covering stories that may be painful to subjects.
- Be sensitive to those in grief or affected with tragedy.
- Be cautious and aware of the law in identifying minors involved in crime or victims of crime.
- Recognize the privacy of individuals.
- Avoid reporting that is libelous or slanderous.
- Avoid reporting that may endanger students or school personnel.
- Show good taste in reporting, avoiding vulgarity or obscenity.

Act Independently

STN journalists should aspire at all times to fulfill their obligation to their audience and the public, and maintain their independence of any attempts to obstruct or hinder these efforts.

Student journalists should:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, and disclose any unavoidable conflicts.
- Hold those in power accountable.
- Resist pressure from individuals or groups to influence coverage.
- Seek to maintain the integrity and credibility of themselves and the organizations they represent.

Be Accountable

STN journalists are accountable to their audience and to their peers. Student journalists should:

- Understand they are a supervised group, just as their counterparts in the business world are.
- Seek and encourage open dialogue with the public about their coverage and conduct.
- Admit and correct any mistakes, promptly and publicly.
- Follow the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior.

*Adapted from the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation (RTNDF) and SPLC codes of ethics.
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