

JOURNALISM 101

KYLIE IRVINE – FALL 2022



SO, YOU WANNA BE A WRITER?

or you already are, idk. I can't read
the room when I'm not in the room.



WRITING AT THE BEACON...

ASSIGNED/CHOOSE A
STORY OFF THE
STORYBOARD

CONDUCT INTERVIEWS,
MAKE A DRAFT, ASK
QUESTIONS OF EDITORS

INTERNALLY....

- 1) Editor reviews
- 2) Copy desk reviews + posts
- 3) Copy desk reviews again
- 4) If going in print, article is prepped for print, reviewed again

TURN IN YOUR FIRST
DRAFT TO YOUR
EDITOR; MAKE EDITS



STEP 1: GET A STORY

- 1) Storyboard - Place where story ideas have been culminated for selection
- 2) Pitch a story - Contact your editor(s) with a story idea
- 3) Find a story - Listen, observe + dig deep for stories that matter





STEP 2: RESEARCH

Writing doesn't start with an interview or a show or a song.

- 1) Background / History
- 2) Biographical
- 3) Context

Make sure **EVERYTHING** is credible....

RELIABLE SOURCES

- What are the biases of the source?
- Are the places you are looking for sources potentially skewing the range of viewpoints?
- How does the source know something?





STEP 3: DEVELOP QUESTIONS

Once you've done your research, you're ready to interview your source.

STEP 4: INTERVIEWS

Interviews should occur with at least two sources...

- In-Person
- Over the phone
- Via Zoom
- Via Email

Remember to tell your source that you are recording!



And you should dress like you care, too.



STEP 5: POST-INTERVIEW

- Transcribe your interviews
- Choose good sound bites

"The Vols won 100-0."

OR

"I ain't never seen anything like this!
It's a great day to be a Vol when you
see a 100-0 score like we did today!"



STEP 6: DRAFT

From your head/notes to
final product.

- At least 450 words
- At least two sources



"The Lead": The most important info

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Approximately 30 words (1-2 thin paragraphs)

May include a "hook" (provocative quote or question)

"The Body": The crucial info

Argument, Controversy, Story, Issue

Evidence, background, details, logic, etc.

Quotes, photos, video, and audio that support, dispute, expand the topic

"The Tail": extra info

Interesting/Related items

May include extra context

In blogs, columns, and other editorials: the assessment of the journalist

THE LEAD AKA WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT

"Tennessee's offensive line is one of its deepest and most experienced units entering the 2022 season."

"The undergraduate senate of UT's Student Government Association (SGA) has successfully introduced and passed a resolution that will encourage administration to increase the student minimum wage. It was signed and submitted to lobbyists by 2021-2022 Student Body President Claire Donelan on April 6."

THE BODY AKA WHAT IS CRUCIAL TO KNOW

"The Vols are returning four of their five starters from a year ago, with Cade Mays' selection by the Carolina Panthers in the NFL Draft the only notable departure of the group. The four returners are primed for an important role in Tennessee's up-tempo offense, and paired with a second season under touted offensive line coach Glen Elarbee, the Vols' line has an opportunity to be one of their biggest strengths.

'It's fun. I love the (offensive line) room. I love walking into it, being around the guys,' Elarbee said in a preseason media availability. 'That sense of comfort knowing where they're at, and the guys that are getting better.'

THE BODY AKA WHAT IS CRUCIAL TO KNOW

"The bill's summary reads, 'The University cannot run without its student workers and financial support is needed to assist the people who are both studying and working as they are impacted by inflation, a rising cost of living, and time focused on the university.'

The current minimum wage for students working on campus is \$7.25 an hour, which complies with the federal minimum wage set in 2009, as well as the minimum wage in the state of Tennessee.

In May of 2021, UT Chancellor Donde Plowman authorized a minimum-wage increase for UT Knoxville staff and faculty to \$13 an hour. Then, after continued concerns expressed by staff, system President Randy Boyd further increased the minimum wage for UTK workers to \$15 an hour in January of this year. These raises did not affect student workers."

THE TAIL AKA THE EXTRA STUFF

"Even with one position up for grabs, Elarbee feels confident that his line can succeed at the tempo that Heupel's offense demands. He mentioned that their conditioning, as well as their understanding of the system, has made large strides in the right direction with a year of experience under their belts.

'They see the whole picture. They understand the whole scheme,' Elarbee said. 'They can correct one another. They can help young guys . . . The technique that goes with the play starts to clean up because they know what they're doing and they're not having to think as much. It's just all of those things that happen in the second year.'

THE TAIL AKA THE EXTRA STUFF

"SGA is now in what Angelaccio calls a 're-build period,' in which student representatives are struggling with legitimacy in the eyes of administration and students.

SGA Student Body President Jordan Brown will be leading these re-building efforts this year, and will seek to rejuvenate student interest in engagement on campus. Since COVID-19 forced many students to attend classes virtually, there has been record low participation in on-campus events.

According to Angelaccio, it remains unclear whether his minimum-wage resolution will be taken seriously by administrators.

'I do think that it is possible,' Angelaccio said. 'But in all honesty, it probably won't.'"

CHECKLIST FOR AN ARTICLE

- ☐ AT LEAST two sources
- ☐ Lead aka the most important info (usually 1-2 thin paragraphs)
- ☐ Quotes properly attributed
- ☐ Necessary background info to give the article context
- ☐ Sound ending: a quote, next meeting, final thoughts, etc.

THINGS TO REMEMBER: BIAS

- Everyone is biased. But you must remain (as) UNBIASED (as possible) in your reporting.
- If you interview someone on the far right, interview someone on the far left.
- If you can't get in contact with an important source, be sure to say they did not comment.
- Keep your composure in biased situations....

REMEMBER: ETHICAL CANONS

The University of Tennessee Office of Student Media has adopted the Code of Ethics of the American Society of Newspaper Editors as its guide to professional journalism.

- Responsibility
- Freedom of the Press
- Independence
- Sincerity, truthfulness + accuracy
- Impartiality
- Fair play
- Decency

SOME COMMON MISTAKES - AP STYLE

Here are a few things Beacon editors see often in articles...

- Using Oxford commas
- Using "Dr." for someone with a Ph.D.
- Capitalizing titles after a name
- Spelling out long month names
 - March, April, May, June, and July are exceptions)
- Spelling out numbers above nine
 - Should use numerals for 11, 12, 58, etc.)
- Writing "black" instead of "Black" when referring to a person's racial identity

SOME COMMON MISTAKES - GRAMMAR

Here are a few things Beacon editors see often in articles...

- Putting commas outside quotation marks!
- Comma splices
 - "The new club will let members join on a rolling basis, new members will have to pay a small fee."
- Subject/pronoun agreement
 - "Like many events on campus, she will plan to have all CEB arts events inside."
 - Should say: "Like many student leaders, she will plan to have all CEB arts events inside" OR "Like many events on campus, the arts fair will be hosted indoors."

SOME COMMON MISTAKES - STYLE

Here are a few things Beacon editors see often in articles...

- Using passive voice
 - "The band will be playing three more shows, with those dates being Aug. 3, 4 and 8."
 - NO! Should say "The band will play three more shows, on Aug. 3, 4 and 8."
 - Some research into passive voice may help — best giveaway is an unnecessary "to be" verb
 - The subject of the sentence should be doing the action verb (active voice)
- Overly long quotes/choosing the wrong quote
- Quoting a source before introducing them, OR quoting a source without ever saying who they are
- Incomplete ledes — most pertinent info should be in first sentence

SOME COMMON MISTAKES - STYLE

Here are a few things Beacon editors see often in articles...

- Too many simple sentences in a row
 - "Hughes will start work on July 1. He came to UT from Virginia Tech. His focus at UT will be on student life. He has a background in fraternity and sorority life."
- WORDINESS — cut the fat
- Not going to the best sources for a story
- General lack of creativity in profiles/features? There is room to play around with these stories.
- Stitching small quote fragments into the story — quotes should be paragraphs with full sentences, wherever possible.

STEP 7: ABANDON (UNLESS YOU'RE ON DEADLINE)



STEP 8: REVISE

Read through your article again. Read it out loud to your pet. Read it to your grandma. Read it to yourself.

STEP 9: EDITOR

Once you've read it to everyone you know, it's time to turn it into your editor. BE OPEN TO EDITS! We are all learning, even me.



THREE SPECIAL CASES

Breaking news - typically handled by the EIC, Managing Editor and section editors; requires quick-paced fact checking and often multiple follow-ups (Chancellor/coach gets fired; building floods/catches fire; COVID cancels classes)

Staff report - information that isn't breaking, but doesn't have enough information for a full article (sports drafts; immediate event coverage; initial policy adjustment)

Investigative report - lengthier process; requires lots of information, interviews, sources (Food waste on campus; fraud; misconduct; campus accessibility)



STEP 10: PUBLISH

Once edits have been made, the article will be posted by copy editors or your editor.

WHAT YOU DO IS IMPORTANT

- Informs society of information it may not have otherwise known
- Develops sense of belonging on UT's campus
- Brings to light information that is hidden in the shadows





HAVE FUN WRITING!