

The Berkeley Beacon Constitution

AMENDMENTS

Article I: Name

The name of this organization is The Berkeley Beacon of Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts.

Article II: Purposes

1. The Berkeley Beacon exists to inform, educate, and entertain the college community, to work for the betterment of this community, and to stimulate student interest in campus affairs.
 - a. Any endeavor the college enters into as an organization is a topic for examination, discussion, and interpretation by The Berkeley Beacon and the college community.
 - b. Any endeavor a member of the college community enters into may be a topic for examination, discussion, and interpretation by The Berkeley Beacon and the college community.
2. The Berkeley Beacon exists to provide a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism within the college community using the proper editorial/opinion page as a medium.
3. The Berkeley Beacon exists to provide experience and mentorship to members of the college community interested in any facet of working at a newspaper, and an outlet for the creativity of members of the college community.

Article III: Membership

1. Any student, full-time or part-time, undergraduate or graduate, may work for The Berkeley Beacon.
 - a. Elected members of the Student Government Association may contribute to the Beacon but cannot report on SGA-related topics, events or meetings.
 - i. Op-eds and columns may be written by SGA officials as long as their position appears in their bio on the piece.
2. Any non-student member of the college community may contribute to The Berkeley Beacon.
 - a. Non-student members of the college community working for The Berkeley Beacon cannot be rewarded with a non-tuition credit.
3. Editors will meet weekly.

- a. Editors will discuss the status of their sections, critique the newspaper's recent performance, discuss possible improvement, and exchange story ideas.
 - b. The editorial board will discuss ideas for unassigned editorials and editorial policies.
 - c. Meetings will be attended by all editors and assistant editors unless prior notice is given.
 - d. Anyone may attend staff meetings, but only editors will be allowed to decide on newspaper policy. Individuals may be asked to leave for the editors' discussions.
 - e. Meetings of the editorial board will be open to only those members of the editorial board. However, with the exception of the staff editorial, the editorial board shall vote on no policy without consulting the full editorial staff.
4. There will be general meetings weekly.
 - a. General meetings will bring editors together with anyone wishing to work for The Berkeley Beacon in any capacity. Reporters may pitch stories or receive assignments from section editors.
 - b. Editors are required to attend general meetings unless prior notice is given. When prior notice is given, the assistant/co-editor or managing editor will handle the missing editor's duties.

Article IV: The Editorial Board

1. The Berkeley Beacon's editorial board will consist of the opinion editor and assistant/deputy opinion editors.
 - a. The above editors will discuss ideas for unsigned editorials.
 - i. Unsigned editorials reflect the views of the editorial board and must be approved by at least two thirds of the editorial board.
 - b. The editorial board is different from the editorial staff, which consists of all newsroom editors.
2. Unsigned editorials do not reflect the views of those editors or writers who are not members of the editorial board.

Article V: Powers and Responsibilities

1. The powers and responsibilities of the editors are the following. They are limited to the powers explicitly granted in this Constitution.
 - a. The editor-in-chief has two primary responsibilities: To get the paper out on schedule; and to put out the best newspaper possible. The editor-in-chief also runs general and editorial board meetings (or designates who is to run the meetings in their absence); directs the newspaper's operation; and makes decisions on newsroom policies with the managing editor(s). These decisions can be overridden with a two-thirds vote of all editors. The editor-in-chief will work

closely with the Business Manager to ensure the business department is running smoothly.

- b. The managing editors will work with section editors. The managing editor's focus is making the newspaper run efficiently and on schedule, and assisting the editor-in-chief in whatever way necessary. The managing editor will also work with, and attempt to improve, sections having difficulties. The managing editor is a member of the editorial board.
- c. The opinion editor will organize letters to the editor; arrange for artwork for the editorials and opinion pages; arrange for opinion articles to arrive by deadline; and formulate unsigned editorials as a member of the editorial board.
 - i. Opinion articles represent the diversity of the college community. Opinions expressed on the opinion pages do not represent the views of the editorial board.
 - ii. Letters to the editor will be published after verifying the name signed to the letter is actually that of the person who wrote it. Letters will not be published if they are deemed by the editor to libel or maliciously damage someone's reputation. Personal attacks will not be published. Anonymous letters will not be published, although a letter writer may request anonymity from the editorial board, which they may publish without a name with a vote of at least two-thirds. Editing must not affect the letter's message
- d. The news editor will work with assistant editors to assign stories covering all campus (and relevant community, local, state, national, and international) news and/or assign beats; edit all news copy for content, style, and accuracy; give photography assignments to the photo editor; rate the importance of news stories; and ensure all news copy arrives by deadline. The news editor should encourage the section to be a watchdog for the Student Government Association and college administration.
- e. The living arts editor will work with assistant editors to assign stories covering all campus (and relevant community, local, state, national and international) features; edit all copy for content, style and accuracy; give photography assignments to the photo editor; and ensure all your life copy arrives by deadline.
 - i. The living arts editor will work with assistant editors to assign stories covering all campus and/or community arts and entertainment happenings and trends; edit all arts and entertainment copy for content, style, and accuracy; give photography assignments to the photo editor; and ensure all arts and entertainment copy arrives by deadline.
- f. The sports editor will work with assistant editors to assign stories covering all campus (and relevant community) sports; edit all sports copy for content, style, and accuracy; give photography assignments to the photo editor; and ensure all sports copy arrives by deadline.
- g. The chief copy editor will train the copy editors in AP and Berkeley Beacon style and assign them office hours, either in person or remotely, and assist in copy editing when needed.

- i. Copy editors will read all copy being published in The Berkeley Beacon to ensure proper style is being used as well as good grammar and correct spelling of all words and names. Questionable content should also be challenged. Copy editors should refer to The Beacon style guide and the AP style guide.
 - h. The photography editor will work with assistant editors to accept photo assignments from all section editors and assign them to photographers. Photos will be taken as far in advance as possible. The photography editor will be responsible for ensuring there is a good supply of photographic equipment.
 - i. The layout editor will ensure the print newspaper layout is comprehensive and attractive. The design director will be responsible for keeping layout templates up to date, and innovating new ideas for the look of the paper.
 - j. The business manager will work with the business team to ensure the newspaper is making semesterly revenue and circulation goals. The business manager, along with whatever assistant positions they create, will be responsible for managing filing of paperwork with the publisher (Emerson College), meeting advertising revenue goals and maintaining accurate records of ad sales, and overseeing social media and website maintenance and traffic. In the event there is no business manager, the editor-in-chief will accept these duties.
- 2. All members of the Berkeley Beacon will adhere to the newspaper's [Ethics and Standards Guide](#), a living document.
- 3. Weekly Section Meetings
 - a. Each section—news, living arts, sports, opinion, copy, photo, and multimedia—are required to meet once weekly without the managing team. This means the section editor, deputy editors, and assistant editors within any section must meet at a determined time via video call or in person to discuss stories and functionality within the section. The group may choose to ask a managing editor and Editor-in-Chief to attend at any point.
 - i. Section editors are responsible for scheduling the meetings weekly with team members through Slack, email, or another communication tool throughout their term.
 - ii. If a section does not have a section editor, a managing editor, EIC, or a staff member collectively chosen by members of the section may schedule and lead the meeting.

Article VI: Transition of Power

- 1. Editor-In-Chief
 - a. The incoming Editor-in-Chief will be nominated by a member of the editorial staff, and chosen through a staff wide election process.
 - i. Nominations will take place at an editorial staff meeting, preferably the third to final meeting of the semester.

- ii. An Editor-in-Chief will be voted on one week following nominations. Those who accept nominations are unable to cast a vote.
 - iii. An Editor-in-Chief must have at least one semester of staff experience on the Beacon to be considered for the position.
 - iv. An editor-in-chief cannot serve more than two semesters.
- 2. Managing Editors
 - a. Once the Editor-in-Chief-Elect is appointed, a Managing Editor Appointment Committee will be reformed to review managing editor applications.
 - b. The Managing Editor Appointment Committee will consist of the current editor-in-chief and the incoming editor-in-chief.
 - i. The management team has the right to dictate what determines a “section” each semester. There must be at least four—news, living arts, opinion, and sports. Additional sections may be accounted for if management sees fit and the sections have a strong presence. Additional sections may include, but are not limited to: podcast, radio, photo, video, multimedia, etc.
 - c. The new managing editors will be announced one week after the Editor-In-Chief is elected.
 - d. The outgoing and incoming editor-in-chief are able to determine the amount of managing editors necessary for the upcoming semester. At least one content managing editor, operations managing editor, and visual/multimedia editor is required.
- 3. Other Staff Positions
 - a. All editorial staff positions, excluding that of the editor-in-chief, will be open to applicants each semester.
 - i. The sitting and incoming editor-in-chief will review applications, conduct interviews, and appoint applicants to editorial staff positions.
 - ii. Appointments must be made at least one week before the end of the semester.

Article VII: Staff removal

- 1. For an appointed editor to be removed before the end of a semester, two editors must together present a case to the managing editor(s) and editor-in-chief outlining the alleged offenses. The managing editor(s) and editor-in-chief will then consider the matter privately and vote on whether to proceed. A two thirds vote is necessary for proceeding. The managing editor(s) and editor-in-chief must consult with the newspaper’s advisor and a SEAL representative.
 - a. If the editor-in-chief is the accused, then the two editors will discuss the matter solely with the managing editors and the advisor. The advisor is given the third vote and the same procedural rules apply.

- b. If one of the managing editors is the accused, then the two editors will discuss the matter solely with the editor-in-chief, the other managing editor, and the advisor, who will be granted the third vote. The same procedural rules apply.
2. If the editor-in-chief and managing editors decide in a two-thirds majority vote to proceed with the dismissal, then the issue will be brought to the full staff. The charges and issues will be raised with the accused present. The accused will have an opportunity to defend themselves.
3. The full staff will then vote on whether to dismiss the editor. A two-thirds majority vote is required for dismissal.
4. Any failure to properly follow these guidelines will void any and all charges

Article VIII: The advisory and executive boards

1. The Advisory Board
 - a. The Beacon Editor-in-Chief, managing editors, and faculty advisor will create an advisory board of at least three (3) professional working journalists or faculty members—in addition to the advisor—to help the organization create a more equitable and supportive newsroom experience. The board will be chaired by the current college-recognized advisor and shall have no editorial control.
 - b. Members of the board may be called on to advise staff members; review select content prior to publication; and/or settle inter-staff disputes. The board exists strictly as a consulting tool for the organization and does not retain any power in the independent student newspaper's oversight and management.
 - c. The board is decided through a vote from the EIC, managing editors, and section editors that must occur no later than the third week of publication each semester. To be considered, potential candidates must be nominated by a member of staff. Each member must undergo the nomination process for reactivation.
 - d. The board is to meet monthly with the Beacon editors to discuss the paper's operations and coverage. Meetings will be held remotely.
 - e. The advisory board shall operate separately from any executive board, approved fall 2024. The advisory board does not have access to financial documents and can not make fiduciary decisions on behalf of The Beacon. Members of the board, outside of the college designated advisor, are not paid to be compensated for their work.

Article IX: Nontuition credit

1. A contributor must submit five articles, photographs or pieces of art accepted for publication each semester to receive a single nontuition credit. All editorial and business staff members are eligible immediately for the credit, but it is subject to their performance. The editor-in-chief may decide to withhold a credit from an editor if he or

she resigns before the end of the semester or neglects their duties, but this must be approved by two-thirds of the editorial staff. The advisor will be responsible for turning in a complete list of people eligible for credit to the registrar's office.

Article X: Amendments

1. Amendments to this Constitution will be made only at editorial staff meetings when a majority of all members are present. They will be passed by a two thirds majority vote of all editors.

Drafted: September 1995 Amended: April 2000; March 2007; April 2017; Fall 2020; May 2024