

AWOL Constitution:

Generated and In Effect as of May of 2019

Preamble - Mission Statement

AWOL Magazine aims to continue pushing both ourselves and American University to be more **critical** of issues that deserve to be understood with nuance; to work **subversively** when dismantling barriers that suppress certain voices; and to love **irrepressibly** when it comes to serving our community. We ignite campus discussions on social, cultural and political issues. We want to make our campus more inquiring, egalitarian and socially engaged.

Our stories have an angle, which is different from having an agenda. Our reporting is impartial and fair, but our analysis is critical and argumentative.

We were independently founded by American University students in 2008. While we are still student-run, today we are housed under AU's Student Media Board. AWOL is a member of the Associated Collegiate Press and Generation Progress Voices Network. This publication has won awards at the National College Media Convention, and its writers have won awards from the Society for Professional Journalists and the College Media Association.

I. Name

AWOL or AWOL Magazine.

II. Affiliation

AWOL is a student-initiated club of Student Activities at American University. This publication is not affiliated with any other student-run publication on campus and is created entirely by American University students. The publication is created for use of all members of the AU community who ascribe to its purpose described in the Mission Statement.

III. Non-Discrimination Clause

AWOL is open to all students and will not discriminate its membership selection on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, physical appearance, disability, family responsibility, political affiliation or source of income, or other rights secured by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

IV. Adherence to Policies/Laws

AWOL will adhere to all university policies as well as local and federal laws.

V. Membership

AWOL is open to all students. In addition, students with no previous activity with AWOL or any other type of publication are welcome at any time to bring ideas and suggestions to the publication. Members have a right to a safe space in which to express ideas, and a duty to maintain that safe space for others.

VI. Officers/Club Leadership Positions

AWOL will have an editor assigned to each writer working for AWOL's print publication, zine, multimedia, graphics, or web departments. The Editors in Chief (EICs), will oversee all positions on the executive board. The two Editor in Chief positions will comprise of the Editorial EIC and the Media EIC. In addition to the EICs, leadership comprises of: Magazine Director, Web Director, Photography/Video Director, PR Director, and Podcast Director.

The Editorial EIC will oversee the Magazine Director and Web Director whereas the Media EIC will oversee the Photography/Video Director and the Podcast Director. PR Director will report to both EICs. In the event that there is only one EIC, they will be in charge of all director positions. These positions are part of the Senior Editor Positions.

A hierarchical outline of all staff is listed in Section VIII. A description of each editorial job and guidelines will be provided to each student serving a position at the beginning of each term.

Executive positions last for one full academic year (Fall and Spring semesters) and are voted upon by the entire board each Spring semester. The executive positions must serve for one full academic year, unless otherwise agreed upon by senior staff. Co-positions are encouraged should a candidate only be available for one semester of a full academic year, as long as one editor will serve the full academic year. Non-executive positions are also held for one academic year, but may request to step down after one semester if agreed upon by majority vote of the editorial board.

Qualifications to be considered for a position on e-board:

Assistant Editors (Copy Editor, Social Media/PR/Web Publishing Assistant, Design, Audio Editor, Video Editor): An American University student, GPA of 2.5 or higher with at least one semester experience with AWOL, and one published piece of written work, drafted 1-month's worth of social media content, created two graphics for online/magazine publication, contributed to the production of one podcast, or contributed to the production of a mini-documentary/photo essay respectively.

Full editor (Staff Editor, Design Editor, Podcast Producer, and Photography/Video Producer): An American University student, GPA of 2.5 or higher, at least one semester of experience with AWOL, as an assistant position; or has completed one published piece of written work, created two graphics for online/magazine publication, contributed to the production of one podcast respectively, or contributed to the production of a mini-documentary or photo essay (respectively).

Senior Editor (Editor(s)-in-Chief, Magazine Director, Web Director, PR Director, Podcast Director, Photography/Video Director): An American University student (if sitting on Student Media Board must be a full time student), GPA of 2.5 or higher, at least one semester of experience as a full editor position in the past.

How do we remove people? Removing people will happen if editors are doing injustice to AWOL, as determined by the editorial board at that time.

To remove a member serving as EIC:

1. Three members go to the other EIC (if there is one) and the media advisor.
2. The next week, there will be a sit down with the other executive members and media advisor.
3. The week after, the e-board discusses this and there will be a panel interview
4. After the interview, the e-board will determine sanctions, which can range from a probation period to removal. To remove this person from EIC, it will happen with a vote of approval by 75% from the editorial board. The e-board will then vote on whether or not to elect a new second EIC or continue with just one.

To remove a member in an executive position:

1. Three members go to both EICs and the media advisor.
2. The next week, there will be a sit down with the other executive members and media advisor.
2. The week after, the e-board discusses this and there will be a panel interview
3. After the interview, the e-board will determine sanctions, which can range from a probation period to removal. To remove this person (director positions), it will happen with a vote of approval by 75% from the editorial board.

To remove a staff member:

1. Three members go to the EIC(s). The EIC(s) inform the person in question.
2. The next week, the senior editors discuss this and there will be a panel interview.
3. After the interview, the senior editors will determine sanctions, which can range from a probation period to removal. To remove this person, it will happen with a majority vote of approval from the editorial board.

VII. Advisor

The staff advisor serves as a resource to AWOL in feedback on ethical or logistical decisions, and guidance and support as we strive to connect our efforts with campus community members, faculty, administrators, and fellow students. The staff advisor may pitch story ideas, suggest angles, and assist in any other aspect of the editorial process.

VIII. Organizational Structure

AWOL's Editor in Chiefs will oversee all decisions, edits, and amendments to the publication. All other senior editors will have the power to influence and change any aspect of the publication.

If a decision by the Editor in Chief is not widely received by the executive board, then the decision will be overturned. All writers, photographers, and copy editors will have the opportunity to help out with ideas, plan the publication's content, and assist in the publication's aesthetic.

The executive board is comprised of the senior editors, full editor, and assistant positions. The hierarchy goes as such:

Magazine Director oversees the Design Editor and Staff Editor(s). The Design Editor oversees artists and Staff Editors oversee writers. There is an optional Copy Editor position between Staff Editor and writer if a newer AWOL member wishes to partake in a mentorship program where the Copy Editor will be paired with a Staff Editor and serve as a shadowing position for the

semester before becoming a Staff Editor. The staff under Magazine Director solely work with writers on print magazine content (with the option of taking on a zine project). The Design Editor or team may work with other departments if/when necessary. However, the staff editors under Magazine Director work with the magazine writers.

Web Director oversees Web Editors. As the Staff Editors work with writers for the magazine, Web Editors work with writers for publishing online content. There is also an optional Copy Editor position between Web Editor and web writer if a newer AWOL member wishes to partake in a mentorship program where the Copy Editor is paired with a Web Editor and serve as a shadowing position for the semester before becoming a Web Editor.

PR Director oversees assistant positions which may alternate semester to semester. These assistant positions may include Social Media Assistant, Web Publisher, Event Assistant, or PR Assistant. Being an island department, PR Director reports to both the Editorial EIC and the Media EIC.

Podcast Director oversees (in this order) Podcast Producer, Audio Editor, and Podcasters. Producers are seen at the same level as Staff Editor/Web Editors/Video Producers. Audio Editors are seen at the same level as other assistant positions.

Photography/Video Director oversees Video Producer, Video Editor, and the general photo/video team members. Video Producers are seen at the same level as Staff Editors/Web Editors/Podcast Producers. Video Editors are seen at the same level as other assistant positions.

The overall executive board is as follows:

Senior editors include: Editors-in-Chief, Magazine Director, Web Director, PR Director, Podcast Director, and Photography/Video Director.

Full editors include: Design Editor, Staff Editor, Web Editors Podcast Producer, and Photography/Video Producer.

Assistant Editors: Copy Editor, Audio Editor, Video Editor, Social Media Assistant, PR Assistant, Web publisher.

The remainder of the staff includes contributors, such as magazine writers, web writers, photographers, illustrators, artists, designers, podcasters, or video makers.

Only senior editors have voting privileges. Full editors, Assistant editors, and contributors do not.

IX. Meetings

Weekly meetings should comprise of a brief senior editor meeting followed by an executive board meeting. Biweekly general staff meetings should occur for any new business or general announcements. Weekly department based meetings should occur with their own management under the Director's structure. Writers should attend their Staff Editor's office hours the weeks opposite of the bi weekly staff meetings.

In addition to the group's general meetings, editors will have additional meetings to discuss editorial decisions and other logistical issues with the publication. Finally, a production meeting will take place prior to submission to the printer.

X. Succession

Every editorial position will have open applications each Spring. The current executive board will vote democratically on the next term's senior editors and editors-in-chief. Graduating members of the executive board will not have a vote but may endorse a candidate running for their current position. If two or more members are running for the same position, the person currently holding that position may provide an endorsement of one candidate; this endorsement does not influence the vote or serve as a tiebreaker. If an editor has already served one full academic year, she/he has precedence in obtaining an editorial position.

Two people may hold the editor-in-chief position. Each member of the board will be allowed to vote for two people; the two candidates with the highest number of votes will be co-editors-in-chief.

If the removal or resignation of a senior editor position shall occur once a semester has begun, the full editors and assistants will vote for the new senior editor position. If the team is smaller than 5 people, the senior editors will vote based off of an application process of the team's members.

If a senior editor goes abroad, transfers, graduates or otherwise is not in attendance at American University for the spring semester after holding the position during the fall, they may appoint a full editor into their senior editor position at the end of that fall semester. That senior editor, however, gives up their position and must re-apply for that position upon returning to American University. If this person is abroad but applying for a position in the following semester, they may vote in upcoming elections.

If an Editor-in-Chief goes abroad, graduates, or otherwise is not in attendance at American University for the spring semester, the executive board must first vote on whether or not to adjust the structure of the two EIC positions to being one for the spring semester. If this person is abroad but applying for a position for the following semester, they may vote in upcoming elections. The EIC staying may choose to be the sole EIC but must have 75% of the executive board vote in order to do so. If the EIC wishes to have a Co-EIC or the vote passes to have two EICs, the application process must be followed and executive board votes following traditional procedure.

XI. Commitment to Accuracy

AWOL emphasizes fairness and accuracy and is proud of its commitment to the truth. While articles published in the magazine or its affiliated website may have an angle, meaning they explore an issue through a specific lens, they do not have an agenda. The purpose of AWOL's content is not to deceive, manipulate, or distort the facts. If a reader suspects an ulterior motive behind content produced by the organization, or believes that a correction or clarification of published content is necessary, she/he should submit a formal complaint using the format below and the matter will be investigated promptly and with the utmost respect to all parties involved.

Editors, writers, and AWOL staff who are concerned about potential corrections or clarifications should report to the originating editor and writer prior to publication, if possible, or after publication when the concerns immediately arise.

The organization respects the difference between a correction and a clarification, and will act accordingly in regards to that difference. A *correction*, or formal acknowledgement of fault accompanied by the rectified information, shall be issued in response to a factual error. A *clarification* may be inserted into an article via parenthesis, strikethroughs or addendums to adjust potentially misleading language.

It is the belief of all representatives of AWOL that the organization exists to serve its readership, facilitate insightful conversation, and be a vehicle for positive change. This cannot happen without trust, and AWOL is dedicated to preserving its credibility.

XII. Content Corrections Policy

AWOL is a student publication at American University and is editorially independent from the university.

Part of AWOL's mission is to serve as a historical record of the news and events and content created by the American University community. Therefore, American Way of Life Magazine generally does not remove content from its website, including its online Archives. In case of a factual error, the AWOL's created content will be corrected and updated with an editor's note, *but not removed*.

If you feel there is a factual error regarding an article, column, photo or other material created by the AWOL, please submit your formal request to the below address, including with your request 1) the name of the written work, 2) its author, 3) the date of publication, 4) a hyperlink to the online version, 5) the factual error in question and 6) any supporting documents.

Requests should be submitted to awolau@gmail.com.

XIII. Ratification and Amendment Process

The Constitution can be amended at any time by a consensus vote of all AWOL executive members. Additionally, as the publication develops and expands, the Constitution may have to be updated and amended.