

NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

policies and procedures

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Nexus Publishing Society Board

The role of this student board is to advise the Managing Editor when needed on matters of legal, financial, and operational consequence (e.g. libel, objectives, budget, organizational structure, production).

The Nexus board shall have the authority to institute policy.

The Nexus board shall consist of 5 elected or appointed Nexus members in good standing.

Advertising

Advertising shall be made available to both the college community and the Victoria community at large.

Students will receive the 16-issue discount on display advertising, regardless of the number of insertions, and will receive one 40-word or two 20-word classified ads per semester if the paper is running a classified ad section at that time.

A rate card for display ads will be available outlining costs, sizes and times of publication.

A reasonable amount of space will be made available at the 16-issue discount, regardless of the number of insertions, for the purpose of advertising non-profit events and organizations, particularly those which are student sponsored.

Exclusive rights to advertise in Nexus will not be issued to any person, business, or institution.

Nexus does not exclude any person, business or institution from advertising, except in cases where

(a) past accounts are not paid: These accounts will be denied advertising privileges until accounts are made current and may, thereafter, be subject to certain restriction such as obligatory pre-payment.

or (b) the Managing Editor and Editorial Committee rule an ad to be contrary to the standards set for Nexus. Nexus expects that ads offered will be truthful, in compliance with municipal, provincial, and federal laws, not offensive or detrimental to individuals, groups, or other businesses, and legitimate in purpose.

Current advertising standards exclude ads which are likely to offend the community on the basis of race, creed, colour, place of national origin, sexual orientation, sex, religion and mental or physical disability. Also excluded are ads of products or services which involve animal testing, animal suffering, abortion (either pro-life or pro-choice), or the use of sexuality, or sexual display of the human body.

Nexus does not accept insert advertising.

The Advertising Contract contains an outline of conditions which the client must fulfill and outlines the obligation of the Nexus. Copies of the Advertising Contract are available in The Nexus office.

Nexus shall limit advertising space to under 50% in each issue.

Any revenue generated by Nexus through advertising shall be retained by Nexus and may be used for the purpose of expanding the Nexus operation.

Code of Ethics

Anyone working at the Nexus office or representing the Nexus as a volunteer shall;

- introduce themselves as a Nexus volunteer (reporter, writer, photographer, etc.) whenever on assignment or in a position to collect comment or information for the purpose of publication in The Nexus, unless working on an investigative story which has been approved by the Managing Editor
- ensure that persons who are being interviewed know and understand they are speaking "on the record" and that statements will be attributed to them (all interviews are to be done over the phone or in person; email interviews are not permitted)
- not send sources questions before the interview; they can tell the source what the interview will be about
- demonstrate, through photos or writing, an equitable reflection of the relevant facts and significant points of view in any given event or issue
- adequately research events and issues
- maintain the context of all events and comments
- handle persons on various sides of issues with equal rigor
- not fabricate controversy where none exists
- ensure that one's conduct, in the gathering of information, displays respect and sensitivity to the ambiance of the environment and the opinions of the sources
- ensure that the information published will be as current as possible
- neither glorify nor exploit acts of violence. Violence shall not be used out of context or for purposes of adding controversy or shock value
- not use sexuality out of context or for the purposes of exploitation or titillation
- explore or report upon matters of grief or sorrow with sensitivity and respect to the parties involved
- shall only report upon matters of a person's personal life if it impinges upon or becomes part of their public life and therefore a matter of public concern
- admit and correct a published error or a significant unfairness in the publication following the error or unfairness.
- immediately refer to the Managing Editor any complaints or requests which may have legal implications. Release forms, tapes, notes, transcripts, etc., should be retained and protected for the purpose of responding to such complaints or requests.
- not permit sources to read or edit material scheduled for publication; this includes approval of their quotes, as, to quote Journalist Resource, this "does not serve your audience in an honest way." (<https://journalistsresource.org/tip-sheets/reporting/interviewing-a-source>)

Content

The primary focus will be on news and issues pertinent to the Camosun student; accounting of events which occur on the various Camosun campuses, as well as events which occur in the community which affect students in some significant way. Further purposes and priorities of Nexus are outlined in the Nexus Mission Statement.

Articles should, where possible, include the student perspective and should always be written with the Camosun student reader in mind.

Material other than news will be considered but given a lower priority.

Nexus may use content from sources other than Camosun student writers if the material is of significance to Camosun students but shall attempt to use only Camosun student writers whenever possible.

Nexus editorial staff shall determine what is newsworthy and the Canadian Press Stylebook shall be used as a guide on how it should be written. Copies of the style book are available in the Nexus office for use by all employees, staff and volunteers of Nexus.

Nexus recognizes an obligation to gather and print fair and accurate information regarding any subject which affects students at Camosun College, thus enabling students to make their own judgments on the issue. News stories should be written from an objective point of view whenever possible. Favorable or unfavorable phrases in a news story about a person, place, or thing must be facts, not the opinion of the reporter.

Truth should be the standard by which all stories are judged. Every effort must be made to assure that the news content is accurate, in context, and that all sides are presented fairly. Editorials, analytical articles, and commentary should be held to the same standards of accuracy with respect to facts as news reports.

To be impartial does not require the press to be unquestioning or to refrain from editorial expression. Sound practice, however, demands a clear distinction to be made between news reports and opinion. Articles that contain opinion or personal interpretation should be clearly identified.

Reporters should respect the rights of people involved in the news, observe the common standards of decency in their writings, and stand accountable to the student body for the fairness and accuracy of their news reports. The Nexus Code of Ethics presents further details regarding the conduct of Nexus representatives.

Facts in every news story should be attributed to a reliable source. Unless there is a clear and pressing need to maintain confidences, sources of information should be identified. Reporters should know their sources well enough to judge their trustworthiness and authority to comment. Always verify information with another source.

Persons publicly named in any Nexus article should be given the earliest opportunity to respond if they have information or opinions of a nature contrary to those presented in the article.

We value free speech but no homophobic, racist, sexist, etc. opinions will be printed.

Rights to a story revert to the writer upon publication. If another media outlet wants to reprint something from Nexus, credit to the paper must be given.

(Much of the above comment has been derived from the American Society of Newspaper Editors Statement of Principles, available for reading on page 73 of The Complete Reporter.)

Decision-making

Editorial (including production):

All final decisions regarding content, newsworthiness, placement and design shall be the responsibility of the Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief. An Editorial Committee shall provide perspective, suggestions, and direction at regular meetings of volunteers and staff to gather input regarding both content and production.

Deciding what should and what should not be printed is a constant moral dilemma for the Editors and the reporters. The job of the reporter is to gather facts and write stories; the job of the Editor is to decide how much of a story goes in the paper and on what page. In cases of indecision, the Editors shall call upon the advice of the Editorial Committee.

Operational

All final decisions regarding operations shall be the responsibility of the Nexus Board in consultation with the Managing Editor.

Financial

All decisions regarding allocation of finances shall be made by the NPS Board with input from the Managing Editor and be presented in the form of an annual budget.

Financial Procedures

Receipts of invoices shall be kept and presented as proof of expenditure. All cheques are signed by the Managing Editor and one designated NPS executive member.

NPS Board may request clarification of any expenditure. If, after clarification, it is decided that funds have been inappropriately spent, written notification should be given to the Managing Editor along with a directive concerning future expenditures relating to the same or similar circumstances.

Should a serious misappropriation of funds occur (theft, Hawaiian holidays for staff, etc.), the NPS has the right to take legal action and/or terminate the Managing Editor's employment contract according to terms set out in the Collective Agreement.

Editorial Committee

The role of the Editorial Committee members is to advise the Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief on matters of editorial consequence. Members shall consider current and upcoming stories, determining when and how to present them. Decisions reached by the committee shall be taken under advisement by the Managing Editor and implemented according to the policies governing the content, style, and ethics of Nexus as outlined in this document.

Any student attending a Nexus editorial meeting and is a member in good standing shall be on the Editorial Committee for that meeting. Only current contributors may vote on binding decisions.

Employees, Staff & Volunteers

EMPLOYEES (union)

A full-time paid Managing Editor shall be hired to direct the editorial, operational, and financial decisions of the Nexus. The Managing Editor shall be accountable to the Nexus Publishing Society and shall conduct him/herself consistent with the Collective Agreement and relative job description. Their job description is outlined in Attachment I. They shall be expected to adhere to the purposes and priorities of the newspaper as outlined in the Nexus Constitution.

A Layout Editor, Assistant Editor, and Student Editor, in any combination, can be hired to provide assistance to the Managing Editor. Their job descriptions are outlined in the Collective Agreement CUPE Local 2018 (copies are kept in the office). All employment policies are determined by the Collective Agreement CUPE Local 2018.

STAFF (non-union)

Students may be hired as staff of the Nexus. The Managing Editor is responsible for the hiring and recruitment of all staff who are subject to Work On Campus grant regulations or paid by honorarium or commission. Sales reps may be hired on contract to sell advertising on a commission basis.

STAFF HIRING POLICY

Hiring/recruitment and termination of staff is the responsibility of the Managing Editor, who shall maintain ethical hiring and termination procedures. As much as is possible, staff shall be students at Camosun College. Awarding of contracts for work (i.e. printing, technical support, training seminars, etc.) shall be based upon such factors as performance, cost, efficiency, quality. Family members of the Managing Editor or other Nexus staff may not be awarded contracts without prior approval from the NPS board.

VOLUNTEERS

- any student at Camosun who is paying student fees and has contributed to the Nexus in any of the following ways: written or researched a published story, taken or developed a published photograph, provided typing, design, layout or research assistance, provided office maintenance, sold or designed a published advertisement, provided promotion or distribution services, or any other function deemed necessary to the Nexus operation.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Camosun students shall be the primary contributors to the newspaper. In cases where Camosun students cannot be recruited to maintain adequate contribution levels, contributions may be accepted from individuals outside the Camosun student body on a case-by-case basis. The Managing Editor shall have the authority to terminate the participation of any volunteer who has contravened the policies, standards, or code of ethics of Nexus.

VOLUNTEER MEETINGS

Meeting of the Nexus volunteers shall be held at the discretion of the Managing Editor. It is recommended that at least one meeting be held monthly. Volunteers are encouraged to express their opinions and offer suggestions. Meetings will be chaired by one of the Nexus Editors. Decisions made by the volunteers shall be taken under advisement by the Editors.

Freedom of the Press

Freedom of the press must be defended. Newsmakers must not have the power or right to dictate how their story will read. This decision must rest solely with the editors, editorial staff and writers of Nexus.

Attempts to manipulate, coerse, intimidate, blackmail, or threaten writers or editorial staff should be viewed as attempts to limit or deny freedom of the press. Steps must be taken to protect Nexus against such attempts.

Freedom of the press is essential to a democratic society.

Freedom of the press is a constitutional right, entrenched in the Canadian Charter of Rights.

Funding

Primary funding of the Nexus is from Camosun student fees, collected from students and given to Nexus by the Camosun College Student Society. The Camosun College Student Society and Camosun College do not fund Nexus in any way. Funds are allocated on a regular quarterly basis to cover both operational and salary expenses. Minimum funding obligations are provided in the Separation Agreement with the CCSS (available in the office).

Advertising revenue is the secondary source of income for the Nexus. This form of revenue fluctuates from year to year and is not a consistent form of income. However, it provides for computer upgrades, technical support, and educational opportunities for staff. Other fundraising activities may be undertaken by the Nexus Board at their discretion.

Locations

OFFICES

The main Nexus office is located at Lansdowne, in Richmond House, room 201. The Lansdowne office serves as the production centre of the newspaper. Space may be secured at Interurban if available.

The CCSS is responsible for providing Nexus with adequate space to carry out the functions of the newspaper. Minimum space is allotted according to the terms indicated in the Separation Agreement.

DISTRIBUTION LOCATIONS

The Nexus newspaper is distributed in display boxes at both campuses and off campus. An updated list of locations is available in the Nexus office.

Meetings

Nexus Publishing Society Board

- weekly or every two weeks

Editorial Committee/Volunteer

- weekly or every two weeks, scheduled by the Editors in consultation with committee members

Employee

- as requested by employees or employer

Staff

- as required, scheduled by the Managing Editor

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Nexus is:

- 1) to publish informative, analytical and entertaining materials with focus on issues affecting Camosun College students; in pursuit of which the society will strive to maintain current journalistic standards of truth, fairness, and accuracy.
- 2) to provide Camosun College students with a publication that is consistent with and in support of the society's primary purpose.
- 3) to do all such things as are incidental to and ancillary to the attainment of the foregoing purpose stated and the exercise of the powers of the society.

Priorities

The priorities of The Nexus are:

- 1) to maintain editorial autonomy as the highest priority at all times; the Nexus will not permit editorial decisions to be unduly influenced or dictated by the lobbying of any special interest group
- 2) to maintain truth as the highest standard of journalism
- 3) to maintain common standards of decency, fairness, accuracy and objectivity
- 4) to respond to the sensitivities, opinions and diversity of the Camosun student community
- 5) to maintain an anti-discrimination policy as it relates to age, race, creed, colour, national origin, political or religious views, sex or sexual orientation, disability
- 6) to maintain a policy of mutual respect relating to the conduct of contributors and participants at the Nexus towards each other and members of the College community

Publisher

PUBLISHER

The publisher of the Nexus shall be the Nexus Publishing Society.

Resolution of Conflict

Matters of action, method, or procedure which are in dispute may be resolved by way of arbitration.

Any chosen arbitrator or arbitration committee shall not be in significant conflict of interest with any of the parties in dispute.

The arbitration process shall be concluded as quickly as possible (30 days or less).

Decisions of the arbitrator shall be binding upon the parties in dispute.

Only matters of grave significance should be brought forward to arbitration and only after other forms of communication and resolution have been exhausted.

At present, the Camosun College Ombudsperson shall be designated as the official arbitrator.

Parties which may access resolution of conflict via the arbitration process may be (but not limited to) Nexus employees, Nexus staff, Nexus volunteers, Nexus Editorial Committee, CCSS, and Camosun College administration.

USE OF ANONYMOUS NAMES

Any stories where it is thought that names must be protected (author or subject) must be reviewed by the Managing Editor, with input from the editorial committee.

Letters to the Editor shall be accepted for consideration from any reader of the Nexus pertaining to any issue brought up in the Nexus or any other issue pertaining to students.

DEADLINE POLICY

All stories and photos are due by the deadline outlined by the Nexus Publishing Schedule unless otherwise authorized by the Editors. If the contributor anticipates a problem with the deadline, an extension must be approved by the Managing Editor or the Editor-in-Chief prior to the deadline. Where an extension has not been sought and approved prior to deadline, the Editors have the right to accept or refuse the contribution, reassign it, or push it to another issue. The Editors also have the right to refuse further submissions from the contributor who has not met deadline or obtained appropriate extensions. The only late submission should be ones where an event is scheduled after the deadline but before going to the printer.

SPECIFIC DEADLINE POLICIES

- All submissions should be complete, in proper Nexus style and assigned word count.
- Those who miss deadline once will be given a verbal warning.
- Those who miss deadline a second time will not be given further assignments in that area.
- Extensions will ONLY be granted with approval of Managing Editor or Editor-in-Chief at least 48 hours prior to deadline.
- Only three extensions will be given per semester per student.
- When late assignments are taken, the same rules above apply with a new deadline set by the Editors.

POLICY ON EMAIL INTERVIEWS/STATEMENTS

Nexus newspaper has a policy to not allow sources to give us email statements instead of doing an interview.

The reason for this policy is that as journalists we need to have a chance to question people we are interviewing—Camosun staff, government workers, student groups—and hold them accountable. We need them to answer specific questions.

We need to do more than just print one side's chosen narrative, or to reprint press releases.

We also need to know the person we're quoting actually said what we're quoting them as saying, otherwise we're doing a disservice to our readers. There have been times when we've found out that emailed statements that were to be attributed to someone were not in fact said or typed by that person.

These are the reasons why we insist on an interview and will no longer run emailed statements. The intent is never to ambush or catch an interviewee off guard; it's to give our readers an honest and complete story.

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