

Quick hits: Writing Standards – Last updated spring 2025

Welcome to The Globe – we appreciate your interest in continuing the goal of acting as watchdogs for our campus and Downtown Pittsburgh. The Globe publishes weekly and hits the news racks and our online presence at 8:00 a.m. every Wednesday (except for the November election issue and any week the university is on break). This page is an abbreviated version of the official Globe writing standards. Please use this as a guide as you write your stories and contact your section editor or the Editor-in-Chief with questions or concerns.

- Pitch meetings are held **every Monday**.
- **Deadlines are Fridays at 5 p.m.** unless otherwise noted by an editor. We can be flexible – just talk to us.
- All stories must contain a **minimum of 500 words** unless otherwise noted by an editor. Breaking news stories are typically an exception.
- All stories **must contain at least three live sources**. Live sources are interviews that are conducted in person or by phone/virtual conference. (OPINIONS, A&E, COLUMNS ARE EXCEPTIONS)
- All stories are expected to have an accompanying photo/graphic.
- Please write a **potential headline** that may be used with your story. The Globe has the right to use a different headline than what is given based on space and wording.
- Please include the following information at the top of each story:
 - Year, major, phone number, story section and Point Park email address.
- At the end of your story, please include a source list – see full writing standards below.
- If proof of the use of a friend, roommate, teammate, significant other or professor that you've had for class is found, that source will be removed from your story, making it ineligible for publication. This is a **conflict of interest**. Likewise, you are not permitted to write about a club you are actively involved with unless otherwise noted.
- Any member of The Globe staff is not to be quoted or mentioned unless otherwise noted. If they are quoted, a disclaimer **MUST** be used at the end of the article. If the editor or staffer is not significant to the story, any mention of them will be removed.
- Please **proofread** your own story **BEFORE** sending it. Fact checking your own story is crucial – if there are too many factual inaccuracies, the piece may not be eligible for publication.
- All stories should have a specific Point Park/Downtown hook. Keep the audience in mind when writing – do our readers care about a random concert in Ohio or do they care about major changes on campus? Reviews (music, books, restaurants, etc) have some leeway here but it should still be relevant to the average college student. For example, if a restaurant outside of Downtown is reviewed, it should at least be easy to get to from campus and/or relatively close-by.
- Communicate all issues immediately with an editor.
- Act professionally and respectfully toward fellow staff and the community while in The Globe. Harassment and/or bullying toward the editor-in-chief, editor-elect, ANY section editor and/or staff member is grounds for immediate termination. Section editors are also bound by this rule – harassing and/or bullying your fellow editors and/or the editor-in-chief and/or editor-elect is also grounds for immediate termination.
- Articles written for publication must be respectful of the audience, avoiding insulting, offensive, or incendiary language.
- Plagiarism of any sort will result in immediate termination from The Globe. This includes using AI Large Language Models to write a piece for you, as it is not your work. Additionally, having a barebones story and telling an AI model to add words to it also counts as plagiarism. The Globe reserves the right to check every submitted piece for AI writing via GPTZero, a proven accurate tool.

The full writing standards can be found in the complete writing standards packet. Please review all writing standards before submitting content. All stories are subject to editorial review and open discussion among the editorial staff. Submitting a story does not guarantee print publication. By submitting a story or photograph, the writer and/or photographer consent to allowing the Globe to use all content in print and across all digital platforms.

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Writing Standards

Last updated fall 2025



Welcome to the Point Park Globe – we’re happy to have you writing for us! The Globe is a weekly publication covering news, entertainment, the arts and sports of the Point Park University community and the city in which we live. The guide below is to inform and remind writers of the procedures and style we use.

Times and Deadlines

- The Globe’s pitch meetings are held **every Monday at 2:40 p.m. in the CMI newsroom in West Penn Hall**. Please try to arrive on time, as this is the meeting in which stories are assigned. We understand if you can’t make it, but please communicate beforehand. Editors cannot constantly miss pitch meetings.
- **Deadlines are Fridays at 5 p.m.** If you take a story at the Monday pitch meeting, your deadline is the same Friday of that week at 6 p.m. unless otherwise noted by an editor. Please contact the Editor-in-Chief, Editor-Elect and/or appropriate section editors if you need an extension. Failure to notify the editors of late work will result in a missed deadline and a story that can’t be published.
- **Three missed deadlines WILL result in termination from The Globe.** If you are an editor, you lose your position and are not permitted to submit any stories or photos to The Globe. This is easy to avoid if you communicate beforehand and long before the deadline about any potential problems with sources. We do not like surprises.

Story Format Specs

- All stories must contain a **minimum of 500 words** unless otherwise instructed by an editor. Failure to meet the minimum word count will result in a missed deadline.
- All stories, including profiles, **must contain at least three live sources** unless given permission to use less. Otherwise, the story will not be published, and the writer will be given a missed deadline. Live sources are interviews that are conducted in person or by phone. Websites or email interviews do not count as live sources. Please try to find a variety of sources.
 - If you are writing a breaking news story, review, opinions piece or a column, you are not required to have three live sources, but the editor will communicate exactly what is expected.
 - Briefs must be a **minimum of 250 words** and **one live source is preferred but not required** if secondary sources back up the main idea and relate the story back to Pittsburgh/Point Park.
- **Please write a potential headline that may be used with your story.** Please note, editors maintain the right to change or not use submitted headlines, but suggestions are always welcome. Headlines are typically changed due to spacing, not so much that the given headline was bad.

- Please include the following information at the top of each story: year, major, phone number, story section and Point Park email address.
- At the end of your story, please include a source list that includes the name of each source, their title (or pertinence), phone number and/or email address. This information is used for fact checking.
- All stories must follow AP and Globe style. **Please proofread your own story BEFORE sending it.**

Avoid and advance

- **If one of your sources in a story is a friend, roommate, teammate, significant other or professor that you've had for class, that source will be removed from your story, potentially making it ineligible for publication.** The second offense of using an acquaintance as a source will result in an automatic missed deadline. This is a **conflict of interest**. Likewise, you are not permitted to write about a club you are actively involved with. There are rare exceptions to this rule, but we typically do not want someone in a club writing about the same club (this includes SGA).
- **Revision of a story by a professor is NOT a valid excuse for missing a deadline,** unless otherwise informed by an editor OR if the writer asked for an extension in advance.
- **Plagiarism of any sort (INCLUDING AI WRITING) will result in immediate termination from The Globe.** If the reporter submitted work as part of a class requirement, the issue will be taken to the professor and could result in expulsion from the University. *Plagiarism includes any material taken word-for-word or changed words/phrases from a source that is not your own, without proper attribution.*
- All stories must have approval by the Editor-in-Chief, Editor-Elect and/or appropriate section editor. We welcome each writer to work on their stories on their own, but do not drop a story on us last minute and expect it to fit in the layout – it won't. Just tell us!

Noteworthy

- All stories will be discussed openly at meetings to determine what further editing, if any, is needed and what photos or artwork is needed to accompany the story.
- **Any member of The Globe staff is not to be quoted or mentioned** in any article, unless said staff member is imperative to the subject matter of the story. On the rare chance this happens, their affiliation with The Globe **MUST** be stated in a disclaimer at the top of the story.
- **All writers are expected to communicate with photographers** – every story should have an accompanying photo when possible. If a photographer calls you, please contact them ASAP – photographers are expected to adhere to deadlines like writers. If a writer

causes a photographer to miss their deadline, it will count as one of the writer's missed deadlines as well.

- If a story idea is of concern or relevance to a collegiate audience, it may be pitched and published. However, you should find specific Point Park students to interview relating to your story. This is known as the "Point Park hook" and is not required for every story but is strongly encouraged.
- The Globe's coverage area is the Point Park University community and Downtown Pittsburgh. **Please keep the audience in mind when writing a story.**
- **Act professionally.** Disrespectful emails, texts, calls, or communication in real life toward any editor, fellow reporter or source will not be tolerated. Such behavior WILL result in termination from The Globe if it is brought to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief and the situation warrants termination – it is determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Represent The Globe in a professional and respectful way when out in public and on social media. If you can't say it to your editor or your highly respected journalism professor, don't post it.
- Point Park and the City of Pittsburgh are diverse areas. **Respect everyone regardless of your personal views and be mindful of your word choice.** If any article or section of an article comes across as derogatory and/or disrespectful and/or singles out an individual/group of people, you will be asked to alter the piece, or it will be cut from publication entirely.

Talk with your editors

- **If an issue arises in your story, please contact your editors via phone or email immediately.**
- If your story is moved last minute due to space issues, it may be published online or held until the upcoming issue. Editors should contact the writer immediately if a story must be pushed to another week.
- **If the editor you are communicating with is unavailable or not responding, please contact the Editor-in-Chief or Editor-Elect in a timely manner.**
- **If you are having issues with an editor** that cannot be resolved by speaking with said editor, **inform the Editor-in-Chief.** A meeting will be scheduled between the section editor and the Editor-in-Chief to discuss and resolve any issues.
- Any student currently enrolled in Newsgathering and Reporting who wishes to submit content to The Globe is permitted to do so. Be mindful that stories submitted as part of class credit will receive the same critique and edits that any other story would. You will hear about it.
- Remember that editors maintain the right to rearrange or edit any story, even if it has been edited and submitted following a professor's review. However, this is only done when necessary – section editors are not permitted to rewrite a story just because they want it to sound like it was written by them. If the writing is done well and makes sense, don't change it.
- Hired staff writers are required to write a minimum of one story each week. If this requirement cannot be met, please speak with the Editor-in-Chief so arrangements can be made.
- Any writer who submits three stories to The Globe may be considered a staff writer, pending the majority approval from the Editor-in-Chief, Editor-Elect and section editors.

Online Standards:

- At weekly Globe meetings, the present editors will decide if a story requires an **early online deadline** that would require a brief. Stories subject to this typically are events, government meetings, sports and breaking news.
- In these cases, **writers will have 24 hours following the event** being covered **to turn in an online brief of 200-500 words.**
- Online briefs will NOT be expected to have three live sources but should have a full grasp of the information available as well as the event.
- Some writers may be assigned online-only content. These articles will follow the traditional writing standards, or another format established by the online editors.
- Online content should be sent to the online editor(s), the section editor and the Editor-in-Chief. In the subject line of the email, please write a brief description of the story and indicate that it is for online publication.
- Writers will still be expected, unless otherwise noted, to turn in a long-form full article for the printed publication by the regular Friday 6 p.m. deadline.

What should you expect of your editor(s)?

All editors are expected to be accessible through their Point Park email. Editors are to give you clear direction regarding how to cover a story. Editors should contact you before your deadline to check your progress. Editors are not expected to write the story for you, but they should be able to point you in the right direction for possible sources. Editors should give you accurate deadlines for stories that you, the writer, are responsible for meeting.

We will have a great semester at The Globe because we always do great things regardless. Take the opportunity to strengthen your resume and your writing! Get involved with Point Park's most accessible news source. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our editors.

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STYLE REMINDERS AND MISC. TIPS

- Do **not** write in the second person (i.e. you, we) or first person (i.e. I, my) unless writing an opinion piece or unless directed to by the editors.
- Attribution comes at the end of the first sentence of the quote and should always be in a format like this: “This is a sentence,” Folio said. – remember, last name only after you mention who the person is in a previous graf!
- Punctuation ALWAYS goes inside of quotes.
- Titles are generally capitalized before the person’s name, not after.
- Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr., Mrs. or Dr.
- Most majors are not capitalized, except for languages (e.g. dance major, English major, etc.) *Note:* It is sports, arts and entertainment management.
- The Globe does not underline, bold or italicize anything except disclaimers.
- There is only one space after a period, not two.
- Point Park Globe ... The Globe
- Make sure to break up your paragraphs so that it does not look like an essay.
- Quotations should be separate paragraphs.
- Only spell out a month if it is on its own. Abbreviate if a specific date is included (October, or Aug. 20.)
- WE DO NOT CARE ABOUT YOUR OPINION IN A NEWS PIECE. That’s what the opinions section is for!
- Try not to use the words “very,” “really” or “thing” – all useless in journalism. Also, the word “that” can often be eliminated to shorten sentences.
- Do not use clichés! Be original.
- The three required sources must be live sources (i.e. people, not the Internet). Other sources beyond the three are, of course, encouraged. -- The only exception for this rule is when writing for the opinions section.
- When writing any story, keep in mind it is not your duty to promote an event or provide PR/free advertising for any business. Steer clear from “this new restaurant is fantastic” type of writing and just tell readers what they need to know.
- Proofread articles before submitting them! Editors can check for style and grammar, but you are a much better fact checker for your own story.
- When saving your story, make the file name something specific.
- When submitting a story to a section editor, include your name, contact information (preferable a phone number), a possible headline and a list of your sources