

The

The logo features a large, stylized teal letter 'K' on the left. To its right, the word 'SCOPE' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters 'S', 'C', 'O', and 'P' are a medium green, while the final 'E' is a lighter, lime green.

KSCOPE

Handbook

Welcome to Kaleidoscope, UAB's official student news outlet. Kaleidoscope serves as an instrument for the dissemination of news and information, which is of significant interest to the community of UAB. It provides responsible, vigorous editorial leadership for the campus community.

Once considered staff of Kaleidoscope, each member is responsible for reading and understanding the following document. The following rules, guidelines, and policies apply to those who have joined Kaleidoscope.

Terminology

The Kaleidoscope = outlet = publication

Editorial board = editorial staff members = Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, Social Media Manager, Copy Chief, Campus Reporter, Multimedia Editor

Reporter = staff = staff member = member = non-editorial staff member

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
Responsibilities and Conduct.....	5
All staff.....	5
Workload.....	5
Assignments.....	5
Conduct.....	6
Communication.....	6
Meeting attendance.....	6
Commitment.....	6
Resignation.....	7
Suspension.....	7
Staff Duties.....	8
Contributor.....	8
Reporter.....	8
Press Tickets.....	8
Columnist.....	8
Multimedia Editor.....	9
Social Media Manager.....	9
Copy Chief.....	10
Campus Reporter.....	10
Managing Editor.....	10
Editor-in-Chief.....	11
Policies.....	12
Payroll.....	12
Hiring process.....	12
Conflicts of interest.....	12
Sources.....	12
Anonymous sources.....	13
Outside contribution guidelines.....	13
Social media guidelines.....	13
Accessibility.....	13
Comment policy.....	14
Tagging.....	14
Corrections & Removal of content.....	14
Plagiarism.....	15
Artificial intelligence.....	15
AP style.....	15

Race.....	15
Advertising.....	16
Copyright.....	16

Responsibilities and Conduct

All staff

A staff member or Reporter is a person who is considered a member of the Kaleidoscope. They report to the Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief. The Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief report to the Director of Student Media. The Social Media Manager, Copy Chief, Campus Reporter, and Multimedia Editor report to the Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor.

Workload

Each individual reporter reserves the responsibility to manage their workload. An overload of assignments does not excuse not completing assignments or not turning them in by the assigned deadline. Any assignment must be completed by the given deadline. If the staff member, for whatever reason, believes they will not be able to make the deadline, they must either return the assignment within two days of assignment or let the Editor-in-Chief know why the assignment will be late.

Assignments

An assignment is any type of work that a Reporter agrees to do for the Kaleidoscope. The Reporter is responsible for understanding the assignment and should ask the editorial staff for help if they are unsure of any aspect of the assignment. The editorial staff reserve the right to edit the work submitted by Reporters for publication quality. Assignments are not guaranteed to be published. Kaleidoscope assumes ownership of any material created or produced in its name. The staff member may use the content they provide for the Kaleidoscope if they credit the organization.

A complete assignment includes:

- Enough sources to tell the story fairly (at least three).
- Diverse sources.
 - From different backgrounds, ages, expertise, classification, major etc.
- Articles: 300–2,000 words depending on the assignment.
- Videos: 30 seconds-3 minutes depending on the assignment.
- Photo essays: 200-2,000 words depending on the assignment, includes at least two photos.
- Listicles: 300-2,000 words, includes at least 4 topics.
- Multimedia: consult with the Editor-in-Chief.
- On-time submission.

Articles for the website can be any length longer than 300 words, depending on what is needed to tell the story. Articles for the magazine are expected to be longer because they are features, but exceptions are often made depending on the type of story.

Members should be mindful of how many words are necessary to tell a story, including whether it should be longer or shorter. If the member is unsure, they should seek advice from the editorial staff.

Conduct

UAB Student Media organizations and outlets serve as a public forum for the university students. The organizations shall conduct operations independent of and free from censorship and economic interference from administration, faculty, staff, and students. However, the right of these individuals to post-publication criticism and objection is recognized.

Each member of the Kaleidoscope is expected to behave in a respectful manner among other staff members as well as outside the organization. Any inappropriate, rude, or disrespectful behavior toward someone within or outside Kaleidoscope is grounds for dismissal. Each instance must be reported to and will be individually considered by the Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor.

Communication

All members are expected to keep a clear line of communication with editorial staff. This entails informing them about the status of their assignment when asked or whenever there has been a major change in the assignment. Kaleidoscope uses GroupMe, Slack, and iMessage for communication, and all staff members are expected to have at least one of the applications on some device (laptop, tablet, phone, etc.) to ensure communication.

Messages are also often sent via UAB Outlook email, which should be checked regularly by staff members. Members are expected to respond to messages from editorial staff within at most 24 hours unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Meeting attendance

All staff members are required to attend meetings set by the Editor-in-Chief. They must communicate at least 24 hours prior to the set meeting if they are unable to attend. Members who miss two meetings in a row without permission are subject to receiving a verbal warning. If a member is permanently unavailable for the meeting time, they must communicate this to the Editor-In-Chief as soon as possible.

Staff meetings are conducted in-person in the Student Media office, Hill Student Center 130. When conducted remotely, they take place on Zoom. Meeting location is dictated by university guidelines, the recommendations of Student Affairs and the Director of Student Media, and the Editor-in-Chief. When in-person, university and Student Affairs guidelines must be adhered to.

Commitment

Each reporter who undertakes an assignment, verbally or in writing, is responsible for its completion and submission to editorial staff before the agreed deadline. If the reporter has trouble with their assignment in a way that will affect its completion, they are responsible for communicating that with editorial staff two days before its deadline to accommodate the complication.

Failure to communicate and inability to maintain a commitment may result in a warning,

suspension, or dismissal as outlined under “Suspension.”

Resignation

Upon resignation, the editorial staff member must notify the Editor-in-Chief with a two-week notice. In addition to the two-week notice, they suggest a successor. If an editorial staff member is graduating, they must notify the Editor-in-Chief during the first month of their last semester at UAB.

Suspension

If a staff member fails to adhere to the rules, guidelines, and policies in this handbook, they may be subject to suspension or dismissal. The staff member may receive a verbal warning if they are underperforming in their duties or violating the rules presented in this handbook. If the member cannot be contacted for a verbal warning, a written warning will be issued. If the member's performance and/or behavior does not improve by one week after the first verbal/written warning, the member will receive a second written warning. If their performance and/or behavior has not improved a week after the second warning, the member faces one month of suspension from any activities relating to the Kaleidoscope.

The suspension must be communicated in written form by the Editor-in-Chief. After the suspension period, the member is responsible for contacting the Editor-in-Chief to request their return to Kaleidoscope. The Editor-in-Chief will determine if the member should return to the Kaleidoscope. If the staff member does not reach out to the Editor-in-Chief, they will be dismissed and no longer considered a member of Kaleidoscope. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for sending a written notice of dismissal.

Staff Duties

Contributor

A Contributor is anyone who collaborates with the Kaleidoscope but is not on staff.

Contributed articles should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief or forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief if received by another staff member. Contributed articles are reviewed by the Copy Chief and Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor. They will determine if it is appropriate for publication. Publication propriety includes accuracy of facts, professionalism in writing style, relevance to the audience, and overall appeal of the argument.

Guidelines on submitting articles are expanded upon under “Outside contributions.”

Reporter

Reporters are responsible for arranging interviews and finding sources for their assignments. Their assignment must include enough sources to represent the story accurately and fairly. The minimum number of sources is three.

Reporters are responsible for providing suggestions for a visual (video, illustration, photo, etc.) to the Multimedia Editor that will accompany the assignment, contacting the appropriate persons who would provide a visual, or for creating (photographing, illustrating, etc.) visuals themselves. Reporters are responsible for adhering to the deadline and communicating potential changes as soon as they occur.

Reporters should include one headline suggestion in each article submitted.

Reporters can utilize a variety of methods to cover stories, including video interviews, written articles, and informational graphics. Reporters are responsible for reaching out to the Multimedia Editor if needed to facilitate coverage.

Press Tickets

When assigning Reporters for stories facilitated by Kaleidoscope (e.g., coverage of concert or theatre performance where press tickets are provided), preference will be given to Reporters who have recently or frequently worked on stories not facilitated by Kaleidoscope.

Columnist

Reporters can also be Columnists at times or always. Columnists are responsible for providing their own opinion ideas. The opinions must be able to be backed up by reason and outside sources, such as scientific studies and other articles from reputable sources. Kaleidoscope will not be held accountable for statements made in the opinion section. Columnists will act respectfully and professionally in taking responsibility for their work.

Opinion writers must recognize that Kaleidoscope is only a platform to advocate for their opinion. However, their interactions with any individual because of their work must also be

representative of Kaleidoscope.

For example, if an opinion writer receives an email regarding any of their work, regardless of the tone or language usage of the other individual, opinion writers are expected to communicate in a respectful manner. Additionally, whether the opinion writer responds to any additional feedback on their work is up to the writer themselves.

Columnists should include a headline suggestion in each article submitted. They are also responsible for obtaining a visual (video, illustration, photo, etc.) that will accompany the assignment or providing suggestions for a visual to the Multimedia Editor.

Multimedia Editor

The Multimedia Editor is responsible for overseeing multimedia productions of the Kaleidoscope.

The Multimedia Editor is expected to coordinate all visuals that accompany the outlet. The Multimedia Editor is also expected to create visuals in the absence of visuals from reporters, or if illustrations would better represent the story being covered. They are responsible for editing all visuals that are not photos (illustrations, videos, podcasts, etc.) before sending them to the Social Media Manager and Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor.

The Multimedia Editor is responsible for coordinating with the reporter or columnist to portray an illustration that matches the angle of the story. The Multimedia Editor is also responsible for showing their work to the reporter to ensure that ideas have been transferred correctly. The Multimedia Editor is to send the illustration to the Social Media Manager by the same deadline as the reporter.

The Multimedia Editor also oversees the design of the magazine in collaboration with the Editor-in-Chief. This includes creating a creative vision for the issue and assisting in putting together the magazine. The Multimedia Editor will collaborate with members, the Editor-in-Chief, and, potentially, graphic designers outside of the outlet to assign magazine pages and give design direction.

Social Media Manager

The Social Media Manager is responsible for posting to all of Kaleidoscope's social media platforms. The Social Media Manager is expected to have a clear social media plan every week, including how many times and which stories are being promoted on what platforms, and should communicate that plan to the Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor. The method of how each story or production is shared must be tailored to the platform it is being shared on.

The Social Media Manager is also responsible for selecting or creating article headlines.

The Social Media Manager is expected to create visuals for outlet productions that are not related to reporting, such as promotional material for events. The Social Media Manager is expected to communicate with the Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor to create visuals that accurately represent these events. The Editor-in-Chief will notify the Social Media Manager of events necessitating visuals at least two weeks in advance.

The Social Media Manager is also expected to monitor the progress of social media analytics.

including number of likes, followers, shares, and engagement. This includes generating monthly analytics reports, with the timing of those reports during the month to be determined by the Editor-in-Chief. The Social Media Manager is also responsible for attending the weekly department-wide social media manager meetings.

Copy Chief

The Copy Chief is responsible for overseeing the copyediting of Kaleidoscope. This includes ensuring AP style is followed, as well as any guidelines issued by the Editor-in-Chief.

Copyediting is necessary for the professionalism of the outlet and clarity for readers.

The Copy Chief is responsible for directing reporters to relevant sources on AP style, including the AP style guide, and for providing reporters with writing advice.

Campus Reporter

The Campus Reporter is responsible for arranging interviews and finding sources for their assignment weekly or twice-weekly. Their assignment must include enough sources to represent the story accurately and fairly. The minimum number of sources is three.

The Campus Reporter can utilize a variety of methods to cover stories (articles, live social media coverage, informational graphics, etc.).

The Campus Reporter is also expected to make time to cover breaking news stories (developing stories that warrant immediate coverage). Coverage of these stories may be given to another member or the Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor if the Campus Reporter has a predetermined conflict.

The Campus Reporter is expected to inform the Editor-in-Chief of conflicts that would prevent them from covering one to two stories per week at the beginning of that week. If the Campus Reporter will be unable to cover one to two stories per week due to an expected conflict, they should inform the Editor-in-Chief as soon as they are able to.

Managing Editor

The Managing Editor's responsibilities overlap with those of the Editor-in-Chief but are not identical. The Managing Editor is responsible for the day-to-day operations of Kaleidoscope. This includes overseeing the entire staff and coordinating assignments.

If reporters or editorial staff need additional training, the Managing Editor is responsible for either training staff directly or directing them to the appropriate editorial staff member or Editor-in-Chief

The Managing Editor should also encourage staff members to take on ambitious assignments and mentor them throughout the storytelling process.

Editor-in-Chief

The Editor-in-Chief is ultimately responsible for the content in the Kaleidoscope. They are the main representative for the outlet. Their tasks include focusing on the vision, quality, advancement, and overall flow of the outlet. They must measure long-term and short-term goals for the staff and outlet. They must set the general tone of the staff, both professionally and socially. All conflicts or disagreements within the staff, or with anyone outside the Kaleidoscope that involves the Kaleidoscope, must be handled by the Editor-in-Chief or delegated to the Managing Editor.

The Editor-in-Chief has the right to admit, hire, suspend, and fire staff.

The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the overall operations of the outlet. It is their responsibility to ensure that all necessary tasks for the outlet's maintenance and advancement are completed.

The Editor-in-Chief must guide staff members or provide them with guiding resources whenever staff members show or express the need for it.

The Editor-in-Chief is a student leader and represents the student newspaper at any and all functions. They are responsible for the tone of the outlet, as well as the direction of all the sections and elements underlying the Kaleidoscope.

If the Editor-in-Chief repeatedly fails to fulfill the listed duties, shows a lack of competence to act as Editor-in-Chief, or displays inappropriate behavior that negatively impacts the members of the outlet or its image, they may be subject to removal. A consensus of at least 70% of the staff needs to be reached for the Editor-in-Chief to be removed from their position.

Policies

Payroll

Paid positions for Kaleidoscope include the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, and three additional editorial board positions proposed by the Editor-in-Chief and approved by the Student Media advisor. This is subject to change based on the budget of Student Media and the discretion of the Student Media advisor.

The Editor-in-Chief receives a stipend of \$2,000 a semester; the Managing Editor \$1,500 a semester; and the three additional positions receive a stipend of \$750 a semester. The Editor-in-Chief is the only staff member that receives payment in the summer semester.

Hiring process

To be hired, a student must fill out an official UAB application. If a student was previously employed on campus, the name of the previous supervisor must be provided. All applications should be submitted to the Director of Student Media. Students who have not previously worked on campus will be contacted by the UAB Career Center to complete an I-9 form. The prospective student employee must present physical originals of their driver's license and Social Security card; or other accepted combinations. Once employment has been verified, log in to Oracle via Admin Sys to complete direct deposit. Students employed directly by one of the outlets must be listed by the outlet head as a paid employee. Professional staff will not process any hiring paperwork without outlet head approval.

Conflicts of interest

Staff members may not accept an assignment related to clubs, teams, and organizations they are members of or are affiliated with, nor can they accept assignments related to family members or friends. Staff should not cover an entity or person that they have publicly shared their opinion about as a private citizen. In the event that a reporter is assigned a story related to an organization or person they are affiliated with, the story must be reassigned to someone else.

Sources

When interviewing sources, staff should get any relevant information about the source. This includes their first and last name, pronouns, credentials, and position at the university. If they are a student, their year and major should also be obtained.

After completing a source interview, Reporters must provide sources with a link to a survey allowing them to report their experience with the member. Responses are read by the Director and are utilized to ensure and maintain professionalism in staff.

Kaleidoscope does not permit any member of Kaleidoscope to share any article with a source before publication. Additionally, providing interview questions before a face-to-face interview is typically not permitted unless discussed with the Editor-in-Chief.

Anonymous sources

Anonymous sources are not permitted unless by the Editor-in-Chief. Interviews with sources that wish to remain anonymous may not take place until anonymity is discussed with the Editor-in-Chief. If a source requests anonymity after an interview has already taken place, anonymity is not guaranteed.

Outside contribution guidelines

Submissions may be sent to kscope@uabblazermmedia.com as a PDF, Word document, or Google Doc.

Submissions should include the writer's first and last name, pronouns, titles, and contact information. If the writer is a student, submissions should also include their major and year.

Kaleidoscope reserves the right to edit submissions for style, content, brevity, and clarity, and pieces may be returned to writers for major revisions.

Publishing submitted works is at the discretion of the outlet. Anonymous publication is at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief, but anonymous submissions are not accepted.

Letters to the Editor should be less than 400 words.

Columns and Op-eds should be 300-2,000 words.

Social media guidelines

Staff are not to disclose social media credentials to anyone outside of the Kaleidoscope.

A social media post must abide by AP style rules and must be free from factual or grammatical errors, or it must be removed immediately. A social media post must be relevant, purposeful, and clear to the audience. When uploading stories, they must include the place and subject of the content in the video or photo in the form of text. Posts about stories must include a prompt for where the audience can find the story.

Staff are encouraged and expected to share Kaleidoscope content, including their own and that of other staff. This is because Kaleidoscope staff represent the outlet and are expected to fully participate in the endeavors of the outlet. It is also important because it cultivates a healthy and uplifting newsroom where staff are attentive to the content created by others.

Accessibility

All social media posts should include alt text with an image description for the accessibility of all persons. This includes transcribing any text on the image, descriptions of persons in photos, what is happening in the photo, etc., as well as closed captioning for all videos and transcriptions for podcasts. All posts with text should have alt text included for screen readers for every individual slide that includes text.

Comment policy

The comment policy is to be enforced for readers and staff. The policy is the following:

Dos

- Be respectful of others when commenting.
- Leave a comment if you have something to say. We love to hear from our readers.
- Make sure your comments are thoughtful.

Don'ts

- Attack the personhood of anyone you disagree with. This means don't attack anyone based on gender, race, sexuality, religion, etc.
- Post suspicious links.
- Violate the privacy of others.
- Post false information.
- Comment information about a story you want us to cover. Please contact the Editor-in-Chief to do this.

Comments that violate these terms are subject to removal. When you post a comment on our website or social media, you are agreeing to follow. If you see a comment that violates these rules, you can contact the Editor-in-Chief.

Comment privileges can also be removed from offenders. While we will try to give a warning, we reserve the right to do this without warning.

Kaleidoscope staff will identify themselves as staff when commenting and should avoid engaging in arguments or debates in the comment section.

Tagging

Kaleidoscope does not typically tag sources from stories. This is to ensure sources do not speak with Kaleidoscope for self-promotion reasons. Writers are allowed to notify sources when the article in which they are mentioned is posted.

Exceptions to tagging can include tagging official university accounts (such as dining, student health, wellness promotion, etc., if it is relevant to the article) or if a person's Instagram is important to a feature (only if the account is relevant, such as if it is about someone who posts to Instagram, i.e., if interviewing a UAB meme page, you may tag the page). If a staff member believes tagging an account is relevant, they should discuss it with the Editor-in-Chief directly. Any and all tags, including those in the exceptions, should be approved by the Editor-in-Chief.

Corrections & Removal of content

The Kaleidoscope shall never knowingly publish anything that is not true or that lacks accreditation and/or verification. If such a mistake is to take place, it must be brought to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief immediately, who will issue an immediate correction.

Fact, grammar, or any other mistakes that either misrepresent the truth or affect the credibility of the organization must be corrected in the following issue of the print paper or removed/corrected immediately from the web or social media.

Corrections should be made according to AP style guidelines. For social media, this includes posting that a mistake was made and what was wrong. When a correction must be made, the reporter should be contacted when the correction is issued. Corrections must always be labeled corrections.

If a correction is needed for an article from the magazine, the correction must be issued once the article is uploaded to the website, with an indication that a correction was made and what was corrected.

Plagiarism

To use material from someone else's finished work without accreditation is a form of stealing and is in no way acceptable. In the event of plagiarism, the Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Editor will weigh the circumstances and come to a decision. Any form of plagiarism may be grounds for termination.

Artificial intelligence

In accordance with UAB and the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism's approach to generative AI, Kaleidoscope emphasizes "ethical conduct, integrity, and responsible decision-making" in the use of artificial intelligence. Given the negative environmental impact of generative AI, reporters are encouraged to utilize it reasonably.

Reporters utilizing artificial intelligence must adhere to ethical and journalistic standards, like those outlined in the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics. Reporters and editorial staff must fact-check all content generated or modified with AI for accuracy, and content will never be entirely written, edited, or published by AI.

Reporters may not utilize AI to process sensitive source data unless given explicit informed consent.

AP style

Here is a short list of AP style notes. Staff should consult the AP style guide or editors for further information.

Race

Race is not to be listed unless directly relevant to the story (e.g., studies show African American women have the highest risk for developing breast cancer, interviewing African American women about issues specific to or related to their experiences). White is not capitalized.

Race is written according to AP style guidelines. This includes capitalizing Black, African American, Indigenous, Native American, Asian, Asian-American, and Pacific Islander. Ethnicities should also be capitalized, such as Latino, Latina, Latinx, and Latine.

Do not use black or white as a singular noun and phrase plurals as Black people or white people.

Profane Language

Profane language may only be used if it is a part of a direct quote and if that quote provides an important part of the story. In this situation, the sensitive word, or the part of the word that is sensitive, shall contain the first letter, and the rest of the word shall be spelled out in dashes. Examples: “f—”, “bulls—.”

Sources

Majors are not capitalized. When referring to a student, it should be formatted the following way: [First name] [last name], a [classification/year] majoring in [major]. For example, John Smith, a senior majoring in chemistry.

For underclassmen not yet in nursing school, the major should be labeled as pre-nursing. Only include other pre-professional indicators (pre-med, pre-law, etc.) when necessary for the story.

For students in professional schools, indicate their year in the professional school. For example: John Smith, a third-year medical student.

Advertising

Kaleidoscope does not engage in free promotion of any organizations outside of UAB Student Media. Outside parties and organizations can request coverage, but all coverage is at the discretion of the outlet and its members.

Kaleidoscope does offer paid advertisement services on its website and social media. To request paid promotion, interested parties can reach out to the Editor-in-Chief or Director of Student Media.

Copyright

Reporters reserve all rights to work created for the outlet.

Reporters must credit responsible parties for the use of any of their non-copyrighted work.

To use copyrighted work, members must obtain permission from the copyright holder and credit the work to that copyright holder. To use works protected under Creative Commons licenses, reporters must follow the specific guidelines outlined by the license.

Last reviewed June 30, 2026