

Skidmore News Guidelines for Writers

Reporting and writing your article

Writing the article

- Be objective. Don't editorialize (injecting your opinion) or write promotional-sounding material (for club or business profiles).
- No anonymous sources.
- Avoid cliches.
- Organize the sequence of the article by importance or by how interesting it is, not chronologically.
- Always use quotes whenever possible. Avoid partial quotes.
- Keep paragraphs short (2 to 4 sentences).

Writing the Lede (opening paragraph)

- No longer than 40 words, or 2 sentences.
- Pick the most interesting part of the story and describe it as succinctly and completely as possible.
- Anecdotal ledes can work well if you have a specific example related to the subject of the story.
- Avoid question ledes.

Interviewing:

- Prepare questions before the interview.
- Ask follow-up questions based on the interviewee's answers (not just what you prepared).
- Research your subject beforehand.

General tips

- Always take a headshot photo when possible.
- You can use our cameras, voice recorders and press passes if you need to. Just e-mail your editor and you'll be able to pick up what you need in the newsroom.
- E-mail your editor with any and all questions you may have - we're here to help.

Timeline for your article.

These are some deadlines and suggestions for getting your article in by the Sunday 8 p.m. deadline.

Monday

Article assigned

Tuesday

Contact sources, schedule interview(s)

Wednesday

Conduct interviews

Thursday

Conduct interviews; Editor will e-mail you to check in

Friday

Finish reporting and interviewing (many people will be gone for the weekend by 4 or 5 p.m.)

Saturday

Work on article

Sunday

Submit article via e-mail by 8 p.m.

Monday

Editors will go over edits with you

Tuesday

Submit edited draft of article

Wednesday

Newspaper is laid out

Thursday

Newspaper goes to press

Friday

Newspaper is distributed around campus and downtown

Skidmore News online resources for writers:

You can find this sheet in PDF form, as well as links and the weekly Story Wire at www.skidmorenews.com/writers

Search for past articles at:

www.skidmorenews.com

Skidmore News General meetings

9 p.m. Mondays
In the newsroom
1st floor Case