

job descriptions

Position assignments are subject to change. Weekly time commitments are estimates. Updated November 2018.

Weekly Meetings

All staff members are required to attend certain weekly staff meetings.

Budget Meeting The budget meeting is a weekly staff meeting for all staff members. The current time is 5:45 p.m. every Monday. The meeting provides a time for upper management to communicate with the entire staff and for sections to meet individually. Stories are assigned at this meeting. There are occasionally guest speakers. The meeting typically lasts between 30 minutes to an hour. All staff members are required to attend.

Editorial Board The editorial board consists of upper management and section editors. Attendance by other staff members is at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. The current time is 3 p.m. every Friday. The editorial board decides the topic and opinion of weekly editorials. A majority vote of the editorial board determines the topic and the stance. The meeting typically lasts between 30 minutes to an hour. The editor-in-chief has veto power at editorial board meetings. Each member of the editorial board is required to attend, contribute and pitch ideas that could be used that week. Editorial board will often be used as a section editors meeting.

Section Meetings Section editors will hold section meetings weekly for sections to review their pages and stories from the previous week. The section meeting times vary and will be set at a time that is best for all members of the section. All staff are expected to attend their section's weekly section meeting.

Adviser Meetings Section editors will set up a time to meet weekly with The Plainsman's adviser.

Upper Management

The managing editors will be members of the upper management team, which also includes the editor-in-chief. The trio will be responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and personnel management of The Plainsman.

Editor-in-chief The editor-in-chief is the chief executive officer of the editorial, news and advertising staff of The Auburn Plainsman. The editor-in-chief is solely responsible for the entire content of the paper including news content, art, advertising and guest submissions. The editor-in-chief presides over general staff meetings, any additional staff meetings and management meetings. Upper management and section editors report directly to the editor-in-chief, though the editor-in-chief will be available and accessible to all staff members. The editor-in-chief serves as the ex-officio chair of the editorial board, where he or she has veto power of editorial topics and opinions. The editor-in-chief directs the overall design of the newspaper and responsible for ensuring consistency. The editor-in-chief has ultimate authority in all personnel decisions of the news, editorial and advertising staff. The editor-in-chief is responsible for administration of University and Plainsman policies. The editor-in-chief typically designs the front page and jump pages. The editor-in-chief approves all special section design and takes the lead on Camp War Eagle and Welcome Back special issues. The editor-in-chief will keep office hours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The editor-in-chief is selected by the University Communications Board. The editor-in-chief will assume other responsibilities that are necessary and proper. The position is paid at a rate deemed appropriate by the editor-in-chief and the Plainsman adviser. (20–40 hours per week)

Managing Editor for Operations The managing editor for operations is responsible for ensuring smooth, day-to-day operations of The Plainsman. The MEO will be responsible for special tab budeting, assisting in the design of the front and second pages and assisting in the design of special tabs. The MEO will also be responsible for ensuring that ThePlainsman.com and The Plainsman Daily newsletter are updated and clean. They may also serve as a social media editor, proofing posts and ensuring social media scheduling is consistent and appropriate. The MEO may be asked to help section editors in the design of section pages. The MEO reports to the editor-in-chief and will assume all responsibilities of the editor-in-chief in their prolonged absence. The MEO will set ad lines and prepare pages. The MEO will, along with the managing editor for standards, enforce all copy and production deadlines. The MEO will stay aware of all section statuses throughout the week. The MEO will file a weekly report with the editor-in-chief including all writers who missed deadline and a memo including stories for the upcoming week and what can be utilized on the front page. The MEO, along with the managing editor for standards, will share a final check with copy editors and the editor-in-chief on all pages. The MEO will assume any responsibilities requested by the editor-in-chief. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20–40 hours per week)

Managing Editor for Standards The managing editor for standards serves as the chief copy editor, chief design editor and a top content editor. The MES is responsible for ensuring that all copy published is clean and as error-free as possible and that design meets Plainsman standards. MES will assist in the design of the front and second pages. The MES may be asked to design section pages and special tabs. The position requires detail, experience and fact-checking ability. The MES may oversee assistant copy editors and/or assistant design editors. The MES will also be responsible for reviewing design for all pages of the paper and assisting section editors with ensuring their pages meet Plainsman design and style standards. The MES is responsible overseeing general quality and standards of stories and articles published by The Plainsman. The MES will, along with the MEO, enforce all copy and production deadlines. The MES will stay aware of all section statuses throughout the week. The MES reports to the editor-in-chief and should provide suggestions for improving the quality of The Plainsman when possible. The MES, along with the MEO, will share a final check with copy editors and the editor-in-chief on all pages. The MES will assume any responsibilities requested by the editor-in-chief. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20–40 hours per week)

Section Editors

Campus Editor The campus news editor is a section editor position that is responsible for overseeing the campus news division, which reports on any news that occurs on the campus of Auburn University. The campus news editor coordinates all campus news staff positions, including the campus reporter and any campus writers. The position requires a time commitment to weekly meetings, pagination Monday–Wednesday, weekly editorial board meetings and staff coordination. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. meetings and staff coordination. The campus news editor reports to upper management. The campus editor must be comfortable breaking news and have an interest in on-campus events. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20 hours per week)

Assistant Campus Editor The assistant campus editor serves as the second-in-command to the campus editor on the campus desk of the newsroom. The assistant campus editor assists the campus editor where needed, including with managing the campus section, designing and paginating campus section pages. The position requires a time commitment to weekly meetings, pagination Monday–Wednesday, weekly editorial board meetings and staff coordination. The assistant campus editor reports to upper management. The assistant campus editor must be comfortable breaking news and have an interest in on-campus events. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20 hours per week)

Community Editor The community news editor is a section editor position that is responsible for overseeing the community news division, which reports on any news that occurs off campus and relates to the Auburn, the University or its students. The community news editor coordinates all community news staff positions, including the community reporter and any community writers. The position requires a time commitment to weekly meetings, pagination Monday–Wednesday, weekly editorial board meetings and staff coordination. The community news editor reports to upper management. The community editor must be comfortable breaking news off campus and have an interest in politics, crime and other off-campus news events. A vehicle is required. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20 hours per week)

Assistant Community Editor The assistant community editor serves as the second-in-command to the community editor on the community desk of the newsroom. The assistant community editor assists the community editor where needed, including with managing the community section, designing and paginating community section pages. The position requires a time commitment to weekly meetings, pagination Monday–Wednesday, weekly editorial board meetings and staff coordination. The assistant community editor reports to upper management. The assistant community editor must be comfortable breaking news off campus and have an interest in politics, crime and other off-campus news events. A vehicle is required. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20 hours per week)

Lifestyle Editor The lifestyle editor position is responsible for overseeing the lifestyle division, which reports arts, entertainment and feature stories relating to Auburn, the University and its students. The lifestyle editor coordinates the lifestyle division staff positions, including all lifestyle writers. The position requires a time commitment to weekly meetings, pagination Monday–Wednesday, weekly editorial board meetings and staff coordination. The lifestyle editor reports to upper management. A vehicle is suggested. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20 hours per week)

Sports Editor The sports editor is responsible for overseeing the sports division, which reports all sports and athletics stories relating to Auburn University Athletics and some off-campus sports. The sports editor coordinates the sports division staff positions, including sports reporters and any sports writers. The position requires a heavy time commitment to weekly meetings, sporting events, pagination Monday–Wednesday, weekly editorial board meetings and staff coordination. The sports editor reports to upper management. Sports staff may be asked to cover away sporting events. A vehicle is suggested. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20–25 hours per week)

Assistant Sports Editor The assistant sports editor reports to the sports editor and serves as the second-in-command to the sports editor in the sports division of the newsroom. The sports editor assists the sports editor where needed, including with designing and paginating special sports tabs. The position includes a time commitment to the weekly meetings, weekly editorial board meetings and those applying should have flexible schedules. A vehicle is suggested. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (15-20 hours per week)

Photo Editor The photo editor is responsible for overseeing the photo and graphics divisions, which provide artwork for stories from all sections. The photo editor coordinates the photo and graphics staff positions, which include staff photographers, any photographers and graphics artists. The position includes a heavy time commitment to weekly meetings, weekly editorial board meetings, event coverage and staff coordination. The photo editor is usually not involved with pagination on Monday–Wednesday, though they will review cutlines and bylines for accuracy and correctness on Wednesday mornings. The photo editor reports to upper management.

The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (20 hours per week)

Video Editor The video editor is responsible for overseeing the video division, which provides videos for stories from all sections and independent video projects. The video editor coordinates video division staff positions including videographers. The position includes a heavy time commitment to weekly meetings, weekly editorial board meetings, event coverage and staff coordination. The video editor is usually not involved with pagination on Monday–Wednesday. The video editor reports to upper management. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. The section should produce at least 1 to 2 videos per week. (20 hours per week)

Opinions Editor The opinions editor is responsible for overseeing the opinions division, which provides editorial and opinion coverage of University, community and other stories. The opinions editor serves as the chairperson of The Auburn Plainsman’s Editorial Board. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings, weekly editorial board meetings and pagination Monday–Wednesday. The opinions editor reports to upper management. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. (15-20 hours per week)

Online and Social Media Manager The online and social media manager is responsible for all Plainsman social media accounts. They will develop a protocol for posting online stories on social media using social media publishing and scheduling tools. The online and social media manager will develop a social media plan to be used during their tenure. Minimum requirements include at least five Facebook posts a day and 10–15 Twitter posts a day. The online and social media manager will work with the photo editor to run The Plainsman’s Instagram account. The online and social media manager may be asked to assist in updating ThePlainsman.com. The position is paid at the discretion of the editor-in-chief. The OSMM is required to attend budget and editorial board meetings. (10 hours per week)

Senior Graphics Artist The position is responsible for creating graphics and cartoons for the newspaper and the website each week. The senior graphics artist is responsible for coordinating the graphics team, assigning graphics team assignments, and notifying editors when assignments are completed. The senior graphics artist reports to the photo editor and upper management. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

General Staff

Copy Editor Copy editors are responsible for ensuring clean, concise, accurate, style-adherent copy in every section of the newspaper and online. Copy editors assist in managing copy deadlines. Copy editors read all pages and check for basic copy and grammatical errors, inaccuracies and potential legal issues. They are responsible to the managing editor for standards for the overall quality of the paper. Copy editors should know what is going on in every news environment and should know the names and titles of key newsmakers. Copy editors must be present for pagination Monday through Wednesday. Copy editors may be asked to work on-call shifts for online copy editing. Copy editors should be present during deadline on Wednesday to help in emergency copy editing situations. Copy editors help maintain the Plainsman style guide and will, as a group, submit a weekly report to the MES and subsequently the editor-in-chief that includes the most common mistakes made by staff. The position includes an additional commitment to weekly meetings. (5 hours per week)

Online and Social Media Assistant Online and social media assistants assist the online and social media manager in scheduling and publishing posts on Plainsman social media pages. Assistant may be asked to help keep ThePlainsman.com updated.

Campus Reporter The campus reporter is the senior writer in the campus division of the newsroom. The campus reporter covers on-campus events and reports to the campus editor. The position requires a contribution of two or more articles per week, and those applying should have flexible schedules. The position includes a time

commitment to weekly meetings.

Community Reporter The community reporter is the senior writer in the community news division of the newsroom. The community reporter covers off-campus events and reports to the community editor. The position requires a contribution of two or more articles per week, and those applying should have flexible schedules. The position also includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Sports Reporter The sports reporter is the senior writer in the sports division of the newsroom. The sports reporter covers sporting events and reports to the sports editor. The position requires a contribution of two or more articles per week, and those applying should have flexible schedules. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Graphics Artist The position is responsible for creating graphics and cartoons for the newspaper and the website each week. Graphics artists report to the senior graphic designer. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings. (5 hours per week)

Editorial cartoonist The position is responsible for creating the cartoons for the weekly editorial. The position is not an editor position but is a member of the weekly editorial board meeting. The editorial cartoonist will create a cartoon that fits the editorial. The editorial board and editor-in-chief will direct the editorial cartoonist on what is appropriate for the cartoon. While the editorial cartoonist has artistic freedom when it comes to the cartoon, the cartoon must fit the topic and position of the editorial, and the editorial board may direct the cartoonist about the contents of the cartoon when controversial issues are at hand. (5 hours per week)

Staff Photographer The staff photographer is a senior photographer at the newspaper and provides art for the entire newsroom. The staff photographer reports to the photo editor, and those applying should have flexible schedules. The staff photographer is generally assigned a heavier workload than a photographer and should have previous photography experience. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Staff Videographer The staff videographer is the senior videographer at the newspaper and provides videos for the news division. The staff videographer reports to the photo editor, and those applying should have flexible schedules for various assignments. The staff videographer is generally assigned a heavier workload than a videographer and should have previous video experience. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Campus Writer Campus writers are general assignment writers who generate content for the campus news division of the newsroom. Campus writers report to the campus editor and cover on-campus events and other news stories. The campus writer position is an entry-level position and applicants are not required to have previous experience. Writers should have somewhat flexible schedules to report on various events. Writers are assigned one–two stories per week, though they can take on more if they wish. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Community Writer Community writers are general assignment writers who generate content for the community news division of the newsroom. Community writers report to the community editor and cover off-campus events and other news stories. The community writer position is an entry-level position and applicants are not required to have previous experience. Writers should have somewhat flexible schedules to report on various events. Writers are assigned one–two stories per week, though they can take on more if they wish. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Lifestyle Writer Lifestyle writers are general assignment writers who generate content for the lifestyle news division of the newsroom. Lifestyle writers report to the lifestyle editor and cover entertainment, culture and arts events and other news stories. The lifestyle writer position is an entry-level position and applicants are not required to have previous experience. Writers should have somewhat flexible schedules to report on various events. Writers are assigned one–two stories per week, though they can take on more if they wish. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Sports Writer Sports writers are general assignment writers who generate content for the sports division of the newsroom. Sports writers report to the sports editor and sporting events and other sports stories. The sports writer position is an entry-level position and applicants are not required to have previous experience. Writers should have somewhat flexible schedules to report on various events. Writers are assigned one–two stories per week, though they can take on more if they wish. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Photographer Photographers are general assignment photographers who generate artwork for all areas of the news division. Photographers should have flexible schedules and report to the photo editor. Photographers are given assignments by the photo editor. Photographers are assigned several assignments per week. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.

Videographers Videographers are general assignment videographers who generate videos for all areas of the news division. Videographers should have flexible schedules and report to the photo editor. Videographers are given assignments by the photo editor. Videographers are assigned several assignments per week. The position includes a time commitment to weekly meetings.