

The Pitt News

Columnist Application

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in being a columnist for The Pitt News. Hopefully, this application will provide you with the information needed to understand the expectations of being a columnist.

As the independent student newspaper of the University of Pittsburgh, The Pitt News is able to reach about 30,000 readers everyday. We publish Monday through Friday, offering many opportunities for our writers.

Writing for the Opinions section is a great opportunity to contribute to the forum of ideas. We are looking for people that are committed to raising the quality of the Opinions section by addressing issues that will not only provoke thought, but perhaps start a discussion in our community.

This job is demanding. As a columnist, you will be required to meet strict deadlines, with quality as the top concern. You will be expected to turn in clean, well-edited copy and be available to meet with editors to discuss your work. When you commit to being a columnist, you commit to meeting your deadlines.

Columns vary in focus and style. We've had a number of writers make names for themselves in the past simply because they were funny or satirical. Others have received attention for their strong political stances. Still, others enjoyed writing about issues in daily life. Our goal is to organize a group of strong writers with differing views that will serve to incite discussion at Pitt.

Please submit a cover letter, resume, two column samples, and a conflict of interest disclosure form to The Pitt News office, 434 William Pitt Union. Please refer to the remainder of the application for detailed specifications on these requirements.

We appreciate your interest and look forward to reading your application.

Sincerely,

Keith Gillogly
Opinions Editor

Dave Beitzel
Assistant Opinions Editor

E-mail: tpnopinions@gmail.com

This application should the following items clipped together, please **DO NOT STAPLE**:

1. A **single-spaced** cover letter that addresses your interest in writing for The Pitt News and what unique perspective or voice you will bring as a columnist. **Please be sure to include at least three column ideas in your letter.** You should provide a short but specific example of each idea. While three ideas is the minimum, keep in mind that quality will outweigh quantity.
2. A Resume. Make it includes your year, major, minor or certificate, e-mail address and phone number.
3. Two columns, **each 4200-4800 characters (including spaces) and single-spaced.**
 - a. At least one must be an “evergreen,” meaning that it cannot be time specific. It must be something that could be printed months after it was written and still be relevant. For example, a piece on the trials and traumas of college dating would most likely be evergreen, whereas one about the trials and traumas of finding your way around campus for the first time would not. (Please feel free to ask us questions or seek advice about this should you need it.)
 - b. The second column can be on any topic of your choosing. Also, should some topic end up all over the news, for example, the healthcare debate, please remember that while you can write about it, you will likely not be the only one doing so. We will be unable to publish more than one column on the subject.
 - c. **All the columns you submit for this application must be new.** In other words, they cannot be anything you have published previously anywhere or submitted to The Pitt News in the past.
 - d. Columns that do not meet the required character count or topic specifications will not be considered. Without two sample columns, your application will be incomplete. If you have concerns, contact us.
4. Conflict of interest disclosure form (attached).