

The Chicago-Kent Commentator By-Laws

I. Mission statement

The Commentator is the official student newspaper of the Chicago-Kent College of Law and has been serving the Chicago-Kent community for over 50 years. It is entirely student-generated and managed and aims to report on Chicago-Kent events as well as issues pertinent to its community of future lawyers and established professionals. The Commentator covers Chicago-Kent news and events; highlights achievements of students and faculty; keeps students up-to-date on the activities of student organizations; provides a forum for student and faculty opinion pieces and letters to the editor; features a variety of columns, from music and restaurant reviews to sports; and includes material geared toward reader enjoyment, such as polls and puzzles.

II. Organizational structure

1. All Journal members: (A) must be in good academic standing; and (B) must be an enrolled student at Chicago-Kent College of Law.
2. The Journal consists of two classes of members: (A) Management Committee members; and (B) Journal Staff.
3. The Management Committee consists of: (A) the Executive Board members; and (B) the Senior Editors.
4. The Executive Board consists of the following positions: (A) Editor-In-Chief, (B) Managing Editor, (C) Executive Articles Editor 1, (D) Executive Articles Editor 2, (E) Executive Submissions Editor 1; (F) Executive Submissions Editor 2; and (G) Executive Cases/Controversies Editor.
5. Journal Staff Members include (A) Associate Editors, (B) Citation Assistants; and (C) Cases/Controversies Authors.
5. The Editor-In-Chief has the following responsibilities:
 - To ensure the overall quality of journal content, including final review of all articles for content and editing. The Editor-In-Chief has final editorial discretion.
 - To actively solicit articles for publication and to delegate related responsibilities and tasks to Journal members.
 - To supervise the functions of all Executive Board members.
 - To organize all Journal meetings and to provide timely notice to all Journal members of meeting times and locations. The Editor-in-Chief also must ensure that minutes are taken and must communicate the minutes to members.
 - To advise Journal members of the Journal's production status.

- To work with the faculty advisor to communicate status and receive input.
- To oversee the selection of the successive Executive Board.
- To establish the format for all articles to be published.
- To read and respond to general Journal emails and postal mail, in conjunction with the Managing Editor.

6. The Managing Editor has the following responsibilities:

- To assist the Editor-in-Chief as needed.
- To assign cite references to articles, notes, and comments, and to post content on the Journal website.
- To oversee technical updates to the Journal website as needed.
- To coordinate the setup for meetings, editor training, recruiting events, social functions, and travel.
- To manage the Journal's funds, including:
 - § Checking on the status of the Westlaw and Lexis contracts and ensuring royalty payments are deposited in the Journal Chicago-Kent account;
 - § Gathering and submitting budget requests to the Student Bar Association for funding for every Fall and Spring semester,
 - § Establishing a budget for each semester;
 - § Approving or rejecting Executive Board member expense requests; and
 - § Submitting expense check reimbursements for any Executive Board member who spends money on a board related activity.
- To read and respond to general Journal email and postal mail, in conjunction with the Editor-in-Chief
- To assign any article, note, or comment submissions to the appropriate Executive Board member.
- To administer the fall sample edit competition for all first-year students who wish to be student editors.

- To create Editing Teams consisting of two Associate/Senior Editors and one or more Citation Assistants, and to assign each team to an Executive Articles Editor.
- To attend all meetings called by the Editor-in-Chief, or to make reasonable accommodations with the Editor-in-Chief to ensure that a status update is provided.
- To be responsible for the production and posting of any web content (transcripts of phone conferences, etc.) as needed.

7. The Executive Articles Editors have the following responsibilities:

- To edit articles received for publication for content, style, grammar, citations, format, etc.
 - § To either perform the editing directly or assign it to an Editing Team.
 - § To supervise and review any work assigned to an Editing Team, which includes setting deadlines, milestones, etc.
- To communicate with authors as necessary to further the editing process.
- To attend all meetings called by the Editor-In-Chief, or to make reasonable accommodations with the Editor-In-Chief to ensure that a status update is provided.
- To provide regular editorial status updates to the Managing Editor.
- To submit and provide a review of all edited articles to the Managing Editor for final review and posting.
- To complete any other assignments given by the Editor-In-Chief or the Managing Editor.

8. The Executive Submissions Editors have the following responsibilities:

- To review and make a recommendation to the Executive Board whether articles assigned by the Managing Editor should be published.
- To ensure that all article authors sign the Journal Publication Agreement, which should then be forwarded to the Managing Editor for filing.
- To serve on an Editing Team for at least one article, as staffing needs dictate.

- To communicate with authors as necessary to further the editing process.
- To attend all meetings called by the Editor-In-Chief, or to make reasonable accommodations with the Editor-In-Chief to ensure that a status update is provided.
- To provide regular editorial status updates to the Managing Editor.
- To complete any other assignments given by the Editor-In-Chief or the Managing Editor.

9. The Executive Cases/Controversies Editor has the following responsibilities:

- To oversee the Cases/Controversies writing program for first-year students, including locating appropriate sources for current issues, suggesting issues to the Cases/Controversies Authors, establishing required deadlines, etc.
- To establish a standard format for Cases/Controversies summaries and to provide the Cases/Controversies Authors with a sample summary completed in the standard format.
- To review summaries for content, style, grammar, citations, format, etc., and to provide feedback to the student authors.
- To oversee the posting of new material to the Cases/Controversies section of the Journal website, either by executing the technical changes to the website or by delegating those changes to a Journal member.
- To attend all meetings called by the Editor-In-Chief, or to make reasonable accommodations with the Editor-In-Chief to ensure that a status update is provided.
- To complete any other assignments given by the Editor-In-Chief or the Managing Editor.

10. Cases/Controversies Authors have the following responsibilities:

- To work with the Executive Cases/Controversies Editor to locate relevant internet sources, to identify current issues, and to edit issue summaries.
- To write student summaries of current issues in international and comparative law. The Cases/Controversies section of the Journal website is to remain current, and therefore the written summaries must be concise, may contain web links to other materials, and need not be in bluebook format.

- To conform written summaries to the format designated by the Executive Cases/Controversies Editor.
- To attend all meetings called by an Executive Board member, or to make reasonable accommodations with that board member to ensure that all business at the meetings is resolved.
- To complete any other assignments given by an Executive Board member.

11. Senior Editors have the following responsibilities:

- To participate as one of two student editors on an Editing Team; to determine which editor will take primary responsibility for content editing and which editor will take primary responsibility for citation editing.
- To edit articles, notes, and comments as assigned by the Executive Articles Editors.
- To delegate the responsibility for locating any hard-to-find international resources to the assigned Citation Assistant and to establish reasonable deadlines for source location.
- To serve on the Management Committee and respond to any issues presented to the Management Committee.
- To attend all meetings called by an Executive Board member, or to make reasonable accommodations with that board member to ensure that all business at the meetings is resolved.
- To complete any other assignments given by an Executive Board member.

12. Associate Editors have the following responsibilities:

- To participate as one of two student editors on an Editing Team; to determine which editor will take primary responsibility for content editing and which editor will take primary responsibility for citation editing.
- To edit articles, notes, and comments as assigned by the Executive Articles Editors or the Notes and Comments Editor.
- To delegate the responsibility for locating any hard-to-find international resources to the assigned Citation Assistant and to establish reasonable deadlines for source location.

- To attend all meetings called by an Executive Board member, or to make reasonable accommodations with that board member to ensure that all business at the meetings is resolved.
- To complete any other assignments given by an Executive Board member.

13. Citation Assistants have the following responsibilities:

- To serve on an Editing Team along with two student editors.
- To locate any hard-to-find international resources assigned by the Student Editors by searching on-line and/or by soliciting the assistance of the library staff and/or by contacting the author directly.
- To attend all meetings called by an Executive Board member, or to make reasonable accommodations with that board member to ensure that all business at the meetings is resolved.
- To complete any other assignments given by an Executive Board member.

14. The Management Committee consists of the Senior Editors and the Executive Board members. Management Committee members have the following responsibilities:

- To provide feedback on any changes to Journal policies, procedures, format, etc.
- To participate in the Executive Board selection process for the following year.

15. The Student Editors, Citation Assistants, and Cases/Controversies Authors are encouraged to apply for Executive Board positions, but these staff members shall not be involved in the Executive Board selection process. All Journal members are still encouraged to attend general membership meetings and provide their input, and all Journal members shall be informed of Management Committee actions and decisions.

III. Selection of Executive Board members

1. Eligibility for Executive Board positions is limited to (A) students who have successfully served on the Journal for at least two semesters; and (B) students who have completed at least fifty credit hours at Chicago-Kent.
2. In March of each year, the Editor in Chief will solicit candidates for Executive Board positions. Any person who is eligible may indicate his or her interest in one or more Executive Board positions.

3. The current Executive Board will ask for information, such as a resume or an interview, to determine each candidate's qualifications.

4. Selection of all Executive Board members will take place between April 1st and April 15th and will follow this procedure:

- The Editor-in-Chief will solicit written feedback from the Management Committee on each of the board candidates. Management Committee members who have had personal experience with each of the candidates will submit a written evaluation of that candidate.
- The Editor-in-Chief will set the date and time of the meeting of the Management Committee.
- The Editor-in-Chief or Managing Editor will notify all Journal members of the date/time and content of the meeting.
- The Editor in Chief will propose Executive Board appointments based on the Management Committee evaluations.
- The Management Committee will discuss the proposed Executive Board appointments and will reach a consensus.
- Any conflicts concerning the Executive Board Appointments will be resolved by a vote of the Management Committee.

5. In the event that an Executive Board member resigns before March of the school year, the Editor in Chief will solicit candidates and will select a replacement based on each candidate's qualifications and the quality of each candidate's previous Journal work.

6. The period between the Executive Board appointments and commencement will be a transition period when current Executive Board members will train newly appointed Executive Board members in their duties and responsibilities.

7. Upon commencement:

- The newly appointed board takes over responsibility for the Journal.
- Any Associate Editor who: (1) successfully served on the Journal for two semesters; (2) has not been appointed to a board position; and (3) wishes to remain on the Journal staff shall be appointed to the position of Senior Editor.
- Any Citation Assistant who: (1) successfully served on the Journal for two semesters; (2) has not been appointed to a board position; and (3) wishes to remain on the Journal staff shall be appointed to the position of Associate Editor.

- Any Cases/Controversies Author who: (1) successfully served on the Journal for two semesters; (2) has not been appointed to a board position; and (3) wishes to remain on the Journal staff shall be appointed to the position of Associate Editor.

IV. Admission of new staff members

1. New staff members can join the Journal at any time while they are validly enrolled students at Chicago-Kent College of Law.
2. At the beginning of the Fall Semester, the Executive Board should solicit new members from the law school by means of e-mails, posters, informational meeting, etc.
3. New staff members may choose between the following positions: (A) Citation Assistant; (B) Cases/Controversies Author; (C) Associate Editor (if the student has completed legal writing 1 and 2); and (D) Senior Editor (if the student has completed Legal Writing 3)
4. Students who have not completed Legal Writing 1 and 2 may be appointed to the position of Associate Editor only upon successful completion of a Sample Edit. The Managing Editor will make the Sample Edit assignment available in September, and the Executive Board will decide which, if any, Sample Edits are of such quality as to warrant a student's appointment to the position of Associate Editor.

V. Publication structure

1. The Journal consists of two distinct published products: (1) a forum for scholarly writing on international and comparative law topics ("articles/notes/comments"), and (2) an Internet website resource for current topics in international and comparative law (the Cases/Controversies section).
2. The articles, notes, and comments will be published solely on the Journal's website.
 - A. Articles, notes, and comments will be published online in a manner that is similar in style to the print version of equivalent academic journals.
 - B. Publication to the website will be on a rolling admissions (published when ready) with articles, notes, and comments added to a numbered volume/issue that ends on the last day of classes for a school year.
 - C. Every article, note, and comment will be assigned a specific and unique citing reference that will be used by both Westlaw and Lexis.
3. Web content will include any subject matter deemed appropriate, such as transcripts from conference calls, links to web sites, etc.
4. Sources of articles and web content include solicitation of articles from practitioners and academics, student-written articles, and student-written summaries produced for the Cases/Controversies section of the Journal website.

VI. Dismissal of members

Dismissal will be upon the decision of the Executive Board for good cause. Dismissed members will be notified in writing prior to any binding vote by the Executive Board. Such notification will include date of vote and reason(s). Member may respond to the notification by writing to the Executive Board challenging any of the reasons stated in the notification. Member will have the opportunity to appeal a dismissal to the Faculty Advisor.

VII. Dismissal of Executive Board members

Dismissal will be upon a unanimous vote of the remaining Executive Board members for good cause. Dismissed Executive Board members will be notified in writing prior to any binding vote by the Executive Board. Such notification will include date of the vote and reasons(s). The Executive Board member may respond to the notification by writing to the Executive Board challenging any of the reasons stated in the notification. The Executive Board member removed by a binding vote may appeal to the Faculty Advisor.

VIII. Duty of confidentiality

No duty of confidentiality exists except: (1) any discussion that the Executive Board deems confidential or not available for outside discussion; 2) any discussion during Executive Board meetings related to the appointment of future Executive Board members, and 3) any discussion concerning the acceptance or refusal of articles, notes or comments or web content.

IX. Procedure for amendment

Amendment to these By-laws may be made by a three-step procedure. First, a Management Committee member may suggest a change to the by-laws or any other Journal policies or procedures. Second, the Management Committee member must post the suggestion to the entire Committee for consideration and comment. Third, the suggestion will be adopted only on approval of the majority of the Management Committee.