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**Political journalism**

This document is intended for both professional and new journalists as a reference to appropriate political journalism in the world of new media. In this day and age, various platforms on the internet has emerged to encourage participatory journalism. The incredible speed and vast amount of information can be overwhelming, which is why it is even more important to be accurate, fair, and respectful in such an environment. Though this document might not cover specific scenarios, I ask journalists to use it as a general guideline for their work.

Accuracy

* Journalists have an obligation to the truth. Therefore, stay neutral at all times. It is easy to take sides in a political environment, but do not write something the general public could agree with. Give a original perspective even though it might be controversial.
* It can be hard to stay neutral and construct a meaningful argument at times. Try to present your findings for each argument one after another. This could avoid confusion for your readers.
* Seek for a diverse range of voices. Always engage with an alternative argument that could inspire readers to think differently.
* Unless extreme circumstances, let your readers know about your sources. State their full name, occupation, and other relevant information to the issue.
* Avoid manipulating any multimedia involved (images, videos, audio etc.). Let the media speak for itself, even if it is not entirely coherent with the argument you’re making.
* Distinguish facts from opinion. Though Donald Trump is labeled “racist” by several press, do not adopt that term as it is a journalist’s job to present facts without manipulating them. It is up to readers to give their own opinion.

Privacy and safety

* In a political environment, there is information that is sensitive for the government to release. When one encounters such a situation, find other ways to present the truth. Respect a country’s policy to confidentiality.
* If the issue involves a rape victim or other similar cases where their lives could be in danger if their names are revealed, they have the full right to remain anonymous.
* When a child is involved in a story, do not publish unless parents or a responsible guardian gives consent. With that said, if the children do not wish his/her identity to be revealed, we must respect their own right to privacy.
* We do not encourage journalists to venture into areas that are prohibited from public access such as backstage, private property and closed construction sites.
* If a story involves sensitive military information, check with an attorney and the responsible federal officer that it is legal to publish the story. Try your best to compromise with different parties so the information can be presented to the public responsibly and accurately.

Community involvement

* Journalists are welcomed to get involved with organizations they are covering. It is important to show a range of perspectives rather than from a bystander point of view.
* Though journalists are encouraged to get involved in various communities, they are to report their social position in a story that conflicts with the involvement in the community.
* Any propaganda stories should not be published as journalism is not the appropriate platform.

Social media

* Journalists have the right to express their opinion and political standing on social media.
* Retweeting, sharing, and reposts are encouraged as long as the journalist addresses the proper source.
* Journalists should state they only represent their individual view and not the news organization they work for.
* Though we don’t encourage journalists to publish rumors at all on their social media site, they have the freedom to do so. With that said, if a journalist decides to publish unconfirmed information, they should make this clear to their readers.
* Under any circumstances, journalists must identify themselves on all social media platforms. They need to take responsibility for everything they publish.

Financial

* Under any circumstances, journalists must not accept money from politicians for exclusive coverage. This is treated as a form of bribery as politicians are using the journalist to gain publicity.
* If there is an exclusive event that requires money to enter, it is up to the journalist to provide their own funding. Though their respective journalism organizations could decide to reimburse them after the event, it is not their responsibility for such actions.
* When conducting an interview with politicians, witnesses or any other participants, the journalist is responsible for paying for the meal or renting the space. However, it is acceptable for journalist to ask for reimbursements from their respective journalism organizations.

Controversial politicians

* This section is particularly important in our current political state. Please follow this guide carefully.
* When a journalist is reporting a bold statement from a politician, such as “Mexicans are rapists” by Donald Trump, they are free to reference other sources who claim the politician to be racist. However, it is unnecessary to report his or her own position because it interferes with the reader’s understanding of the situation.
* Stories that are intended to defame a politician by exploiting their private lives are prohibited. With that said, the extent of privacy is information that involves children, infidelity, and personal health conditions. We trust journalists to act upon these guidelines to determine what is appropriate.
* It is important to report both positive and negative stories of a politician as if the journalist does not have a social position in the political arena.
* Do not focus too much energy on one politician. Report stories that contribute to every aspect of the current political situation.

Legal circumstances

* In any circumstances, journalists should not publish stories that have conflict with the law of the respective country. With that said, journalists can publish that information elsewhere if they feel the story concerns basic human rights, wellbeing of people and environmental injustice.
* When a journalist is using public archives from the federal government or user generated content online, it’s best to seek an attorney for assistance to avoid any legal issues. Sometimes, there is sensitive copyright to public records. Make sure everything you publish is legal and referenced to the correct source.