Howard University seeks to establish, afford and sustain an environment conducive to each student’s development as a unique individual. In furtherance of this goal, the University strives to cultivate in its students the traits of leadership and to impart to them information basic to the skills which are essential to leadership in the various areas of endeavor.

The student newspaper, *The Hilltop* should serve as an example of the importance of the freedom and responsibility of the press in an educational environment. The university through The Hilltop Boar entrusts the student editors and staff with the canons of responsibility for their actions rather than being totally dependent on administrative direction and control. This relationship reflects an institutional desire to provide support and professional assistance to the newspaper without diminishing the role in counting development of The Hilltop. The student is thus exposed to situations where at the same time gaining a great understanding of what it means to be held accountable for one’s actions. Any duly enrolled student in good standing and possessing the requisite skills is eligible to be considered for positions on the newspaper staff.

Since its initial publication in January, 1924, The Hilltop has enjoyed a history and a tradition of freedom of expression under the guidance and support of the University, The Hilltop is a medium for the careful and unbiased dissemination of news, information, and opinion of interest to the Howard University community. Its staff is expected to strive for excellence in all of its operations and practices. The Hilltop is an integral part of the educational program at the University, serving as a laboratory for the students who wish to learn, through their involvement, the craft of Journalism and/or the related business and management skills relevant to publications. The student newspaper serves to further the education of its readers by expanding their horizons, enhancing their understanding of the world in which they live and by stimulating intellectual growth through free and responsible exchange of information and ideas. Content of articles, editorials and other materials appearing in the newspaper does not necessarily represent the opinion of Howard University and its student body. Editorial judgments of the student editors and the managers entail responsibilities which must be governed by the tenets allegations, and attacks on personal integrity, harassment and innuendo.

The university may institute policies to promote the freedom of expression for the newspaper and to protect the university from law suits arising out of materials published in the newspaper. This document, expressing the longstanding philosophy and commitment of the university regarding freedom and responsibility of the student press, delineates and clarifies the special relationship of The Hilltop to the Howard University.

The Hilltop Board is the university-wide committee established by and responsible to the president through the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Director of Student Life is the University Administrator who has direct responsibility for general oversight of the operation of The Hilltop. The Associate Director of Student Activities assists the Director for Student Life and serves as liaison for administrative support for the newspaper.

The Hilltop Board has the responsibility for developing and recommending to the president policies and procedures governing the operations of The Hilltop and is charged with responsibility for ensuring the implementation of approved policies.

 **I. Name**

The name of this Committee shall be “The Hilltop Policy Board”

**II. Purpose**

The purpose of The Hilltop Policy Board shall be to:

1. Advise the President through the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Director of Student Life and Activities concerning *The Hilltop*
2. Maintain The Hilltop as an integral part of the educational program of Howard University
3. Promote continuity of publication
4. Encourage programs and activities designed to strengthen the newspaper
5. Ensure a responsible student press
6. Provide a mechanism for continuous evaluation of *The Hilltop*

**III. Membership**

The membership of The Hilltop Policy Board shall be composed of the following individuals who shall be entitled to one vote:

1. One full-time student from each of the university’s schools and colleges to be annually appointed by the presidents’ of respective student councils
2. The President of the Howard University Student Association
3. The Editor-in-Chief of *The Hilltop*
4. The Business Manager of *The Hilltop*
5. The Vice President for Student Affairs
6. The Chairman of the Department of Journalism
7. The Assistant Vice President for Communications
8. The Director of Student Life and Activities

**Non-Voting Members**

1. Editorial Technical Consultant
2. Business Technical Consultant
3. Office of Student Activities Hilltop Advisor
4. Dean of the School of Communications
5. Dean of the School of Business

**IV: Terms of Office**

The term of **office for members shall be as follows:**

1. **Appointed student members shall serve a term of one academic year (May 15- May 15) and must be enrolled and in good academic standing in their respective school or college throughout their term. They may be reappointed.**
2. The At-Large faculty member shall serve a term of one academic year and may be reappointed.
3. Other members, except for those in IV, A and B above shall serve as long as they occupy their respective positions.

**V: Officers and Duties**

1. The Chairman shall be a student, elected by the Board each academic year from among the appointed student members representing schools or colleges and shall:
	1. Chair The Hilltop Boardmeetings
	2. Call emergency and special meetings when required
	3. Prepare agenda for the meetings
	4. Appoint committee chairmen
2. The Vice Chairman shall be elected by the Board each year from among The Hilltop Board membership and shall serve in the absence of the Chairman. The Editor-in-Chief of ***The Hilltop*** and Director of Student Activitiesare not eligible.
3. The Executive Secretary shall be the Director of Student Activities and shall
	1. Record and maintain official minutes of The Hilltop Board
	2. Provide notices of each meeting
	3. Reserve the meeting place
	4. Assist the Chairman in Hilltop Board related business
	5. Prepare all necessary correspondence

**VI: Responsibilities**

In addition to the responsibility set forth herein above The Hilltop Board shall:

1. Develop the criteria and procedures for selection, discipline and/or removal of the Editor-in-Chief and Business Manager
2. Appoint and/or remove the Editor-in-Chief and/or Business Manager
3. Establish and approve additional responsibilities of the Editor-in-Chief and Business Manager
4. Develop procedures for resolving differences between the staff of The Hilltop and the Editor-in-chief, and differences between the Editor-in-Chief and the Business Manager
5. Approve a new Editor-in-Chief or Business Manager can no longer perform his or her duties
6. Recommend to the President an annual budget for the operation of The Hilltop
7. Approve major changes within the authorized budget
8. Ensure that the financial operation of The Hilltop is in compliance with established University policies and procedures.
9. Approve advertising policies and rate schedule
10. Approve the publication schedule
11. Continuously evaluate the quality of The Hilltop
12. Review and approve The Hilltop staff positions and stipends recommended by the Editor-in-Chief in accordance with the approved formula
13. Require appropriate reports from the Editor-in-Chief and Business Manager

VII. Meetings

1. The Hilltop Board shall meet regularly at least three times each semester with the first meeting being held no later than the third week of classes.
2. A quorum shall consist of nine (9) members of the Board (with a minimum requirement of 2 students and 2 administrators).
3. Members of The Hilltop Board may be represented by a proxy
4. Each member of The Hilltop Board is expected to attend all regular meetings. If two (2) consecutive meetings or a total of three (3) meetings are missed, The Hilltop Board may declare that position vacant and request another appointee. Notification of all absences must be sent to the Chair and/or Executive Secretary.
5. Emergency or special meetings shall be called at request of three or more members of the Board
6. Notice of the regular meetings shall be in writing and sent at least one week in advance to all members of the Board.
7. Meetings of The Hilltop Board may be closed after the Board votes to do so at the meeting that immediately precedes it.
8. Proceedings of The Hilltop Board may, at the discretion of the Board, be published in The Hilltop

Editor-IN-Chief

Editor-in-Chief is the student who has the primary responsibility for the production and editorial content of The Hilltop newspaper and is accountable to the Hilltop Board.

1. General Eligibility Criteria

The Editor-in-Chief must meet the following general eligibility criteria:

1. Must be currently enrolled as a full-time student and have a 2.7 cumulative average at the time of selection.
2. Must be of Junior Status with sixty (60) hours or more from the campus of Howard University.
3. Must remain in full-time status, in good standing, and earning at least a 2.7 for the duration of the term of editorship
4. Must provide evidence of having successfully completed a course, seminar or workshop in the ethical and legal aspects of journalism prior to beginning production of The Hilltop Newspaper. The cost of the course will not be covered by the Hilltop Newspaper.
5. Howard University policies and procedures are the governing document and supersede all items listed in this policy.

II. Major Responsibilities of the Editor-IN-Chief

The major responsibilities of the Editor-in-Chief shall be to:

1. Produce The Hilltop newspaper on schedule and supervise its operation in accordance with accepted canons of journalism and the policies established by The Hilltop Board
2. Develop job descriptions for The Hilltop staff positions and select the sub-editors and staff other than Business Manager
3. Review all material prior to publication to make sure it is not potentially defamatory
4. Supervise staff and manage facilities
5. Provide reports of The Hilltop operation to The Hilltop Board
6. Assist the Business Manager in developing the yearly operating budget for consideration by The Hilltop Board.
7. Report to The Hilltop Board on the following:
	1. Staff changes
	2. Structural changes in the relationships between The Hilltop and off-campus entities
	3. Changes is previously approved policies, procedures, or production

Business Manager

The Business Manager of The Hilltop is the student who has primary responsibility for the fiscal and accounting operation of The Hilltop and is accountable to The Hilltop Board and Editor in Chief of the Hilltop Newspaper. In discharging these responsibilities the Business Manager is expected to work with assistance of the Editor-in-Chief to report to The Hilltop board.

I.GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT

The Business manager must meet the following general eligibility criteria:

1. Must be currently enrolled as a full-time student and have a 2.7 cumulative average at the time of selection.
2. Must be of Junior Status with sixty (60) hours or more from the campus of Howard University.
3. Must remain in full-time status, in good standing, and earning at least a 2.7 for the duration of their term as business manager.
4. Must provide evidence of experience and ability in accounting, sales, and general business practices prior to selection.
5. Must meet any additional criteria established by The Hilltop Board.

II. MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BUISNESS MANAGER

The major responsibilities of the Business Manager shall be to:

1. Maintain the fiscal records of The Hilltop in accordance with established University policies and procedures
2. Account for all income and expenditures
3. Assist the Editor-in-Chief in carrying out all business and fiscal policies
4. Report to The Hilltop Board on the following:
	1. Hilltop account activity including: advertising space, reservations sold, revenue collected, and outstanding revenue.
	2. Changes to previously approved policies and procedures.

SUB-EDITORS AND STAFF

The Hilltop Sub-editors and staff must be students in good standing, maintaining at least a 2.7 cumulative average, and duly enrolled at Howard University at the time of selection and throughout their period of service. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for making hiring recommendations for all staff members and the Business Manager is responsible for making hiring recommendations for the business staff. All hiring recommendations are made by the Hilltop Leadership Team with the approval of the Hilltop Advisory Team to the University via the Director of Student Life and Activities. The University has the final authority to hire all Hilltop staff.

SPECIAL PROVISION

LEGAL COUNCIL

Howard University shall provide to *The Hilltop* legal counsel only for the purpose of consultation with the Editor-In-Chief and Editorial Staff to ensure that no defamatory or obscene material is published in the newspaper. Counsel will review articles which present a risk to libel suit.

HANDLING OF POTENTIAL DEFAMATORY MATERIAL

The Editor-in-Chief is primarily responsible for preventing material, which could present a risk of exposure to a claim of libel, from appearing in *The Hilltop*. If the Editor contemplates printing such potentially defamatory material, the legal counsel shall be consulted in order to ensure that the appropriate, legally accepted journalistic standards are followed. If counsel determines that the material presents a risk of exposure to liability for deformation, counsel’s opinion shall immediately be given to the Editor-in-Chief and the Dean for Student Life and Activities. The Editor must inform the Dean for Student Life and Activities of his/her decision relative to plans to prior or not print the material in question.

INSURANCE

It shall be the policy of the University to provide libel insurance for *The Hilltop*. All legal fees incurred by *The Hilltop* are to be paid from *The Hilltop* budget.

DISCLAIMER

The following disclaimer shall be included in the Editor’s Box in all issues of *The Hilltop*:

“The opinions expressed on the Editorial page of *The Hilltop* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Howard University, its administration, the Hilltop Board or the student body.”

THE TECHNICAL EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

There shall be a Technical Advisor to Student Publications, under the supervision of the Director of Student Activities, whose assignment is only to provide technical assistance and guidance to the student newspaper’s editorial office.

1. GENERAL CRITERIA

The general criteria for the Technical Advisor shall include training and/or demonstrated experience in:

1. Editing and design
2. Professional practices of journalism
3. News judgment, news gathering and news writing
4. Photo journalism
5. Editorial, caption, opinion, and column writing
6. MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The major responsibilities of the Technical Advisor shall be to:

1. Assist students in gaining a broad understanding of the nature, functions and ethics of the student press
2. Provide for training of the student newspaper staff that will result in better publications through improved staff skills
3. Encourage the enhancement of the quality of the publication
4. Provide weekly critiques of the newspaper
5. Work with the Editor-in-Chief to establish and maintain an effective working relationship with the business officer.

WEEKLY CRITIQUE

The Technical Advisor for Student Publications is responsible for conducting a weekly post-publication critique of *The Hilltop*. Written comments are to be submitted to The Hilltop Board, the Editor-in-Chief, and Office of Student Activities no later than one week after the editions are published.

The weekly critique is designed to improve the performance of The Hilltop editorial staff. The critique may include comments on a particular issue’s new judgment, balanced reporting within an article, page layout, picture quality, headline selection, grammar, proof-reading, clarity, style, story structure, and other elements.

THE BUSINESS Technical Consultant

There shall be a Business Advisor to *The Hilltop* whose assignment is only to provide technical assistance and guidance to the student newspaper’s business office.

GENERAL CRITERIA

The general criteria for the Business shall include training and/or demonstrated experience in:

1. Print advertising sales and marketing
2. Business ethics
3. Graphics editing and design
4. Professional practices of advertising

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The major responsibilities of the Business Advisor shall be to:

1. Assist students in gaining a broad understanding of the nature, function and ethics of newspaper advertising
2. Provide for ongoing training for an evaluation of the business staff that will result in better publication through improved skills and knowledge.
3. Encourage the enhancement and overall quality of the newspaper as it pertains to the business office.
4. Provide weekly critiques of the newspaper, including the overall production and printing quality.
5. Work with the Business Manager to establish and maintain an effective working relationship with the editorial office.

WEEKLY CRITIQUE

The Business Advisor for Student Publications is responsible for conducting a weekly post-publication critique of The Hilltop. Written comments are to be submitted to The Hilltop Board and the Business Manager no later than one week after the editions are published. The weekly critique is designed to improve the performance of The Hilltop staff. They are to provide oversight for the Business Office including the clarity of ads, incidents of incorrect ads and the effectiveness of ad placement.

THE FUNCTION OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Office of Student Activities shall act as liaison between The Hilltop Policy Board and the Editor-In-Chief and Business Manager. The Editor-In-Chief and Business Manager and their respective advisors shall report directly to the Director of Student Activities OR THEIR DESIGNEE, whose assignment is to provide assistance and guidance to the student newspaper in an effort to meet the organizational objectives as determined by The Hilltop Board. The role of the Office of Student Life and Activities shall be:

1. Assist in the administrative duties at The Hilltop including hiring, administering payroll, dealings with Interdepartmental charges and facilities maintenance.
2. Negotiate with parties outside of the University on behalf of The Hilltop
3. Supervise the overall production of The Hilltop Newspaper in accordance with the policies outlined by The Hilltop Policy Board.
4. Make recommendations to the Editor-In-Chief, Business Manager, and/or The Hilltop Policy Board for the enhancement of the Publication
5. Receive weekly reports from the Editor-In-Chief and Business Manager outlining and activities of their perspective offices.
6. Approve all Hilltop Policy Board reports prepared by the Editor-In-Chief and Business Manager before they are submitted to the Policy Board.
7. Maintain a record of all Hilltop financial transactions including deposits and expenditures, within the Office of Student Activities
8. Maintain a record of all hiring, policy changes, and Hilltop Board Reports within the Office of Student Activities
9. Work with the Editor-In-Chief, Business Manager, and their respective advisors to encourage a positive working relationship among all staff.

MASTHEAD

An appropriate permanent masthead shall be adopted by The Hilltop Board. The masthead should readily identify The Hilltop its tradition, history, and heritage.

**Addition Adoption 9-13-07:** The Hilltop Flag shall be adopted by the Hilltop Policy Board and should readily identify the Hilltop and reflect its tradition, history, and heritage. The masthead and flag cannot be altered or changed without prior consent or permission from the Hilltop Policy Board.

REVIEW

The Director of Student Life and Activities shall be responsible for ensuring periodic review of this document and making recommendation through appropriate channels for modification hereto.