GLOBAL COMPASS

Media Communication Advisors Stacey Klimczak and Spencer Lee

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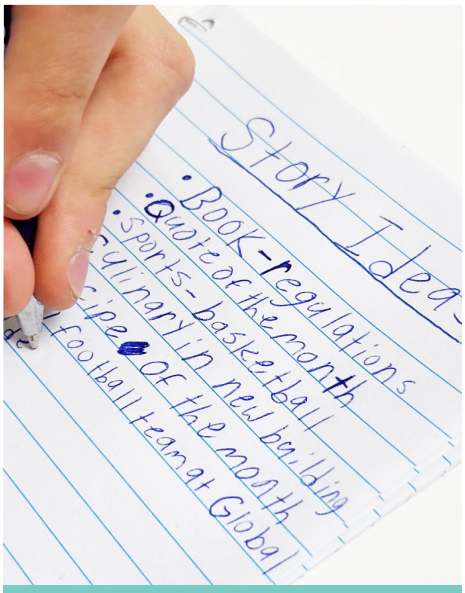


A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS STUDENT

By Breadan Peoples, Austin Miller, Grey Martinez, and Logan Rivera

BRAINSTORMING

To begin our monthly newsletter, we spend an entire class enjoying snacks and brainstorming new topics. We discuss important and exciting events we see and topics we hear about at school. These become the stories we will tell our readers.

"Our collaboration efforts have helped develop stronger communication skills with the class," said Stacey Klimczak, co-teacher of the media communications class. "The improvement of writing and public speaking skills have spilled over into real life experiences, building student confidence."

Each individual student picks what they are most interested in researching, along with a couple other potential stories. Out of those, we collectively choose four topics to divide up between us. If the story is something people want to hear about, need to hear about, or always relevant, that will take priority in our list. Once we have our plan, we have the administration approve of our stories before we proceed. If any of them do not pass, the story gets "killed."

The next phase of our process includes validating resources, writing interview questions, and setting up interviews. Deciding whom to interview makes me nervous because I need to make sure I ask the right question to write the story. To make sure I don't forget anything, I always carry my notes and questions as well as a recording device with me. This helps me stay organized, so I can complete my article by deadline.

INTERVIEWS & DRAFTING

After I collect my questions, I meet with my source to talk about student and teacher conflict. I want to know about her personal connection with her students because she always greets them with handshakes and fist bumps outside her room before class.

When we begin talking, I'm feeling really nervous. I can hear my heart race, and my face is turning red because I have a social anxiety disorder. However, as we get farther into our small talk before the interview, the nerves go away suddenly, and I say to myself everything is okay.

I take out my phone and open the voice recording app. A big red record button stares at me obnoxiously until I press it. Once I do, the interview begins.

I ask her questions about her bond with students and listen closely for my cue to ask follow up questions. Our vibe made this interview go very well, and I now have some great quotes to use. I take a deep breath at the end, knowing the interview was a success. I send the file to Mr. Lee and wait for my transcripts, anxious to get started.

"Our stories come from our peers," said Spencer Lee, co-teacher of the class. "Our class may hear what is going on, but other students and faculty have the details we need to tell the story. Without them, there is no story; it's just rumor, and that is not what we are about."

Once I receive the document, I can see my entire conversation with my source in written form. I use the best quotes that suit the story, and my fingers float over the keyboard as though I am running a race in the Olympics, filling in the details.

Before I know it, my article is written out completely, ready for review. Mr. Lee or Mrs. Klimczak scan for spelling and grammar errors until it is officially ready for print. Adrenaline flows through my veins as I wait for the final printout of the newsletter. I am proud of myself.

The future belongs to those who prepare for it today."

~ Malcolm X

"Before you act, before you react, think. Before you criticize, wait. And, beofre you quit, try."
~Peter Muller

TAKING PHOTOS

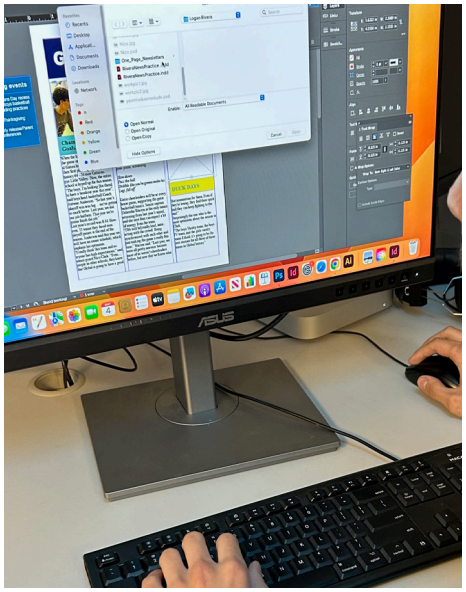
When we are ready for photos, we will start making plans and deciding as a team what to shoot. In order to decide what kind of picture would work with the articles, I find out more about the contents of the story: specific people, setting, or just a vibe that comes across. I then have to create an image to match that. Usually, we take a multitude of pictures so we have more than one option, angle, and poses. Then we will sift through them later to decide which one will go to press.

For today's article, we made plans to meet with our source during eigth period. Together as a team, we decided it would be best to get a picture of her at her desk for the photo.

"The goal of any journalistic photo is to have one image help tell the entire story," Lee said. "The thousand words from one photo help our writers fill in the blanks that we do not have enough space to cover."

My source grabs a folder from her desk, thumbs through a few papers, and types information on her computer. I moves a few chairs out of the way, and crouches down on the ground so I can get a better angle of her. I take the best pictures when I create a rapport with my subject, so I make sure to engage in some small talk while I work. With the right framing, lighting, and camera settings, you can make a photo look amazing.

Once we decide on what photos we want to use, we take a closer look at them to see if any editing needs to be done. For this class, we were taught how to use the photo editing software Photoshop. Photo editing involves looking for blemishes that need to be removed, color correcting so the picture looks more natural, and seeing if the picture looks better through a filter. We then send the final, touched-up photo to our leads, Mrs. Klimczak and Mr. Lee, to decide if it works with the article. If so, the photo will move on to print.



FINISHING THE LAYOUT

I sit at the computer and open up a project file in Adobe InDesign. As a team, we built the template for the newsletter as a team earlier in the year to speed up the process, so now we just place in our text and photos.

"Creating a specific look and feel for the *Global Compass* is key to making it recognizable," Klimczak said. When you are looking to recreate a newsletter each month, you can use a template to make shortcuts."

Everyone emails me their final draft of their article. I move a textbox into a column and place the article in the placeholder space, or text box, with a quick copy and paste.

After I finish laying out the text, I go to the *"GlobalCompassFinal"* folder to pick the pictures I want to use. I look at the picture to see if it needs to be edited—is it too bright or dark, unfocused, or tinted? This will help ensure the printed picture does not look too odd. For example, if the picture color is really orange, the color needs correcting, so I edit it in Adobe Photoshop. When we finish editing the picture, we save the file as a JPEG. I always make sure to go to the taskbar regularly to save the file to make sure I do not lose any of my progress.

After the photo is saved, I print a sample of it to check it for clarity. If the photo needs more work, I repeat the process. Then, when I feel the photo is ready, I add it into the template, replacing the placeholder field that is designated for photos.

Finally, I create a mark-up of the newsletter by printing a sample copy. If there are any errors, I draw circles around them with a pencil. After I finish my corrections, I download the newsletter into a PDF file. It is now ready for printing and distribution.

Upcoming events

MAY 12 Prom
12 Early release (pm-day sched)
16 Early release *(full-day sched)*
19 Girls Night
26-29 No Classes
JUN 2 Senior Class trip
6-9 Senior Week
7 Early release *(full-day sched)*
8 Spring Concert K-8, 7 p.m.
20 Graduation rehearsal 12 noon
22 Graduation
23 Last Day of School