

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR THE LION'S ROAR**

*The Lion's Roar* is a local news media organization serving the Southeastern Louisiana University campus and the greater Hammond area. *The Lion's Roar* editorial content focuses on the best of Southeastern's people, places, academics, news, events, and culture.

We have high standards for our writers and photographers. In order to have your submission considered for publication, you must be a good writer, researcher, and reporter and demonstrate the ability to learn *The Lion's Roar's* basic style and scope. We work primarily with writers and photographers who are members of our regular student staff and who do not regularly write or shoot for other media outlets in our market. Our primary goal is to publish work created by Southeastern students, but any member of the campus community is welcome to submit work for consideration. Because of the distinct line between public relations and editorial/news writing, we prefer not to work with contributors who are PR professionals unless identifying the content as "sponsored content."

### **CONSIDERING A STORY FOR PUBLICATION**

Some of the questions we ask when considering a story are:

- Does the writer's pitch or submission indicate an understanding of *The Lion's Roar* and the stories we publish?
- Is this writer in clear control of his or her subject and the language?
- Who and what are the source materials?
- Is the writer providing accurate attributions?
- Does the writer include good sources and lively quotations?
- Is this submission enjoyable to read and informative?

*The Lion's Roar* articles and stories cover a wide range of topics. We are always interested in establishing relationships with new contributors who can help us tell Southeastern's story.

If you are interested in submitting an article for our consideration, please submit a detailed pitch or finished story. One of the best ways for a potential writer to get our attention is to submit a completed story for us to look at (in the industry, this is known as submitting a story "on spec"). If we like the piece, we'll consider publishing it. If we pass on it, you're free to submit it elsewhere.

## How to Get In

Read our newspaper. Follow our social media @lionsroarnews. Visit our website at [www.lionsroarnews.com](http://www.lionsroarnews.com). Subscribe to our weekly newsletter. Download our App. Keeping up with what goes on in our community and on our campus is the best way to write stories we can use. Be patient; we are a small editorial team, and it takes time for us to respond to submissions.

### 1. Deadlines

*The Lion's Roar* has regular deadlines for the publication of content, particularly in the print version but also in our other mediums. With the clear exception of breaking news and regular unplanned news, content is often planned well in advance, so stories submitted may not appear for a week or more. Submit timely stories well before production deadlines. *The Lion's Roar*, in its printed form, is published weekly during the Fall and Spring semesters and monthly during the summer. Our website and social media are updated far more often, but deadlines still apply for those mediums as well. Some of our issues have a specific theme (i.e., Back-to-School Issue or Homecoming Issue), in which the vast majority of editorial content must fit.

### 2. Story Guidelines

Stories will range in length from a few hundred words for shorter pieces to 3,500 words for major features. The average is in the range of 450-750 words.

### 3. Rates/Payments

No payment is given for submitted or contributing works. Only regular members of *The Lion's Roar* staff working within the office of Student Publications are paid for their published work. All published submissions or contributions are voluntary work performed on spec. Upon acceptance and publication, the writer or photographer will be given byline credit and acknowledgement for the content created in whatever medium the work was published.

### 4. Policies and Procedures

*The Lion's Roar* takes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, artwork, or photography.

Articles should use our online [submission form](#) or be emailed to [lionsroar@selu.edu](mailto:lionsroar@selu.edu), preferably as a Google Doc or Microsoft Word attachment.

Rejected material will not be returned.

## REPORTING STANDARDS

*The Lion's Roar* requires its writers to conduct their reporting according to the newspaper's high standards of truth and accuracy. To that end, we have adopted the following guidelines. Of course, all stories are unique. Editorial judgment is always the final arbiter and will be exercised on a case-by-case basis by *The Lion's Roar* editors.

### Our Guidelines

**1. The Lion's Roar won't publish any statements that haven't been documented to its satisfaction.**

**2. The Lion's Roar requests primary sources for all previously unreported facts and for all other facts important to the story.**

Any fact that might be contested should ideally have at least two primary sources. Although *The Lion's Roar* typically does not publish controversial material, the more controversial a fact, the higher the standard of sourcing that will be required. Countervailing opinions should be weighed by the writer and brought to the editor's attention if appropriate. An example of a primary source is a credible person in a position to know the fact in question. A properly filed public document is also a primary source. Other documents uncovered in reporting may be considered primary sources.

**3. The Lion's Roar discourages reporting that relies too heavily on secondary sources.**

However, we accept that certain facts—mostly, minor facts that serve as background for a story—may be established via secondary sources. Other media outlets/publications will be accepted as secondary sources on a case-by-case basis. Common sense and skepticism will be our guides. In the field of medicine, for example, the *New England Journal of Medicine* would be accepted as authoritative. In most cases, *The Lion's Roar* will regard the following media outlets/publications as acceptable secondary sources:

- *The Advocate*
- *The Times-Picayune | Nola.com*
- Other state dailies/weeklies
- *New York Times*
- *Los Angeles Times*
- *Washington Post*

•*Wall Street Journal*

•*USA Today*

•*Time*

•*Newsweek*

Why these particular publications? Because they're journals of record, widely available and widely read, with a good record for correcting mistakes. We don't necessarily believe they are more accurate than other publications. But we do believe it's reasonable to assume that if one of these publications reports something and it's not corrected, it's accurate. Reports in publications that aren't deemed acceptable secondary sources by your editors should be verified with a primary source—or more than one primary source, if appropriate.

#### **4. The Lion's Roar believes in giving credit to other media outlets for original reporting.**

It is unethical to use another publication or writer's work without acknowledgement. Even if we re-establish the facts first reported by another media outlet, we give credit if credit is due. The guidelines here are common sense and generosity.

#### **5. The Lion's Roar expects its writers to take responsibility even for so-called common knowledge.**

For matters of general and historical background, we rely on established encyclopedic reference and other general sources. But we will accept citation to any source that, in our opinion, can reasonably be called authoritative. Wikipedia is not a source to cite.

#### **6. The Lion's Roar requires its writers and editors to keep unpublished drafts of assigned articles confidential.**

We believe sharing any unpublished version of your article with the subject or a source is inappropriate. Soliciting approval from your subject or source compromises the editorial integrity of the piece and thus the publication. Many sources will ask you to share with them a version of your draft. Please explain the newspaper's policy and refer those requests to your editor. You may verify facts and quotations with a source but it is against our policy to share the entirety of the unpublished article. If you feel you need feedback on a draft, please contact your assigning editor. The newspaper has a rigorous in-house factchecking process, and we are committed to getting everything in a story right. There is always a small margin of error, but we strive to keep that margin as minimal as possible.

## **7. The Lion's Roar requires its writers to supply an annotated factchecking manuscript that reflects these guidelines.**

Writers and editors will work together to decide which sources should be cited in final copy and how they should be cited. Meanwhile, writers must submit material that provides appropriate documentation of their reporting.

### **8. Here's what we need, specifically:**

- Any notes, transcripts, or recordings of interviews
- All magazine or newspaper stories used in reporting
- All other supporting material, with relevant parts clearly marked
- Phone numbers and/or email or other contact information for sources

Please be understanding of the factchecker's work and cooperate fully with his or her efforts. Highlighting quotes, supplying page numbers, or correct internet links helps enormously—and reduces the amount of time you'll spend corresponding with a factchecker. Any questions about these guidelines? Ask your editor.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY GUIDELINES**

### **About Digital Photographs**

The vast majority of images we utilize are digital (if you are interested in a film or print submission, separate considerations apply and must be discussed with an editor beforehand). Although the digital process appears simple, digital images potentially can create a number of quality issues. Please look over the following list of guidelines regarding submission of digital images so that we can keep our quality high and reproduce your images in the best way possible.

### **About *The Lion's Roar* Photography**

We are known for our high-quality photos. The one common denominator we seek in photographs is for them to evoke a sense of connection with the subject and/or capture a unique moment in time. We also know that people are a very important asset to stories and like to see them in photographs when appropriate.

When deciding on a subject, you need to focus on the extraordinary and be willing to take professional measures to get the shot. Our photographers usually find themselves on location early in the morning, very late in the evening, or maybe even just before or after a storm to capture a place in a different way that will enhance any normal scene.

Follow strict journalistic standards. Doctored photographs or composites are not appropriate. These are called “photo illustrations” and are distinctly different from pure photography and must be identified as such. Be able to identify where you took the photograph down to the address. Subject matter, such as locations and important objects, should be identified, as should all people who appear as subjects in your photos. We appreciate great photography, and we believe in giving photographers the space they need to shine. We are always looking for superb images of the people, places, and events in our community.

## **1. Formats**

All images submitted digitally must be original digital files. Scans of printed photos made on a digital scanner are often too low in quality for reproduction.

We prefer all digital submissions from a file-sharing website such as Dropbox or Google Drive. Because of necessary file size, emailed images are a last resort. If emailing is necessary, please submit photos to lionsroar@selu.edu.

Send only “original” files. Please do not Photoshop or edit the images in any way. Do not convert color images to black and white. Also, please send a good representation of your work. Do not edit your selections based on your opinion of what will work. Often, the perfect photo for publication may not be your first choice. You are the harshest critic of your photography. Where we’re concerned, more is better.

Resolution must be of the highest quality for printed reproduction. You need at least 5.1 megapixels to produce a full-page image, and even then, you don’t have the luxury of cropping.

### **\*A note about cellphone photography\***

While it is true that we’d prefer an image to accompany just about any article, quality is important. Some of today’s smartphones can take images that rival a DSLR. But this is not true for every cellphone brand or model. If your image was taken with a cellphone, please note this to the editor immediately so extra attention to quality and cropping may be given at the onset. Additionally, “live” photos or short 1-3 second videos present additional technological concerns that must be taken into account. Make sure these are brought to an editor’s attention when submitting your work.

We cannot accept highly compressed files. Please use low compression or no compression for optimum detail.

Our preferred file format is .jpeg or .jpg.

Please back up all submissions prior to sending them. We will not be responsible for lost images.

## 2. Video

*The Lion's Roar* does accept videography that is appropriate and important to the subject matter being reported. Our focus, however, is on the content of the composition. This means most of our videography is in short form rather than in full broadcast or long-form video. Videography should adhere to all the same requirements as still photography contained in these guidelines. Due to technological concerns, video format and length will need to be discussed with an editor prior to publication.

## 3. Releases/Credits

Images submitted must have an accompanying information of the photos. Please provide caption information and preferred photo credit. A caption sheet or embedded metadata should be included with all of the following:

1. I.D./file number of each photograph
2. Detailed caption of image which includes the location and subject
3. Date photograph taken
4. Photographer's name for photo credit

When it comes to photojournalism and news content, rarely will a photo release form be required for your work. The term photo release form is an umbrella term for various releases. Its most common use is for photographers granting their client the use of photos for commercial purposes. If you are submitting photography for use in *The Lion's Roar*, it should be your work, not photography taken by someone else. By submitting the images, you are granting the publication the ability to use the work for journalistic purposes.

## COPYRIGHT AND OWNERSHIP

Any stories, designs, graphics, artwork, photos, and other media commissioned for use in *The Lion's Roar* or created by staff while under the direction of and being paid for by Student Publications, whether published or unpublished, are considered works for hire and are therefore the property of *The Lion's Roar* and Student Publications. This work is considered work-for-hire under the United States Copyright Act of 1976. All concepts, ideas, copy, sketches, artwork, electronic files and other materials related to such work will also become the property of Student Publications. The department will own full copyright of the created works and will administer it accordingly. These works cannot be reprinted or reproduced in any other publication or form, including digital, without the written permission of the Director of Student Publications. This does include unsolicited submitted works that are published, even if those works are not "paid" for in the traditional sense.

The creator of any content may retain and use the work published in *The Lion's Roar* for personal and non-commercial purposes. Any republication of the work in additional

media outlets or for any other non-personal use will need authorization and written permission from Student Publications in order to meet the above requirements.

## **CLASSWORK FOR SUBMISSION**

Recognizing that many students may create news content in the course of their academic studies, *The Lion's Roar* does accept submissions that originate as class assignments.

All work of this nature should be identified as such at the time of submission. The course name and instructor assigning the work should be included as part of the submission. With rare exceptions (e.g., breaking news) the submission should be a fully completed and turned-in class assignment **PRIOR** to it being submitted to *The Lion's Roar* for consideration. Once submitted to the newspaper, the course instructor will no longer be included in editorial or content decisions and should not be involved in the editing and publication process unless an editor gives permission to do so.

Any classwork content submitted for publication in *The Lion's Roar* should adhere to all other considerations noted in this policy. If questions arise, they should be discussed with an editor prior to publication to avoid any conflicts or misunderstandings.

## **QUESTIONS?**

Questions about this policy in general or specific concerns about an individual submission may be directed to the Editor of *The Lion's Roar* at [lionsroar@selu.edu](mailto:lionsroar@selu.edu) or the office of Student Publications at [stupub@selu.edu](mailto:stupub@selu.edu)