

A Guide for Readers and Contributors

Almanac is normally published weekly, in print and online, during the academic term and once in mid-July, by the University of Pennsylvania. While serving the needs of the University community for news and opinion affecting the governance and the intellectual life of the University, *Almanac* is dedicated to and edited primarily for faculty and staff. It is budgeted by the Office of the President and reports editorially to the Almanac Advisory Board described below (under *As Journal of Opinion*).

As Publication of Record

1. A fundamental principle guiding the editor in deciding what to print and when to print it is the University community's need to know in order to make informed decisions on pending actions affecting University governance. The editor assigns priorities, therefore, to the following items, generally in the order given. Such items are normally published in full as released to the editor.

- Plans and proposals released in advance before action is taken by official governance bodies.
- Responses or counter-proposals to plans and proposals pending actions by official components of the University.
- Messages from the Chair of the Faculty Senate.
- Policies and procedures adopted by official governance bodies.
- Advance notices of meetings and agendas of governance bodies.
- Events which the University community can attend and services of which the community may avail itself (subject to deadlines and with priority given to items of broadest interest).
- Minutes of meetings of governance bodies as supplied by the secretaries or summaries of such meetings prepared by the *Almanac* staff.
- Notices of personnel matters which the University has legal or quasi-legal responsibility to publish.

Other items are published or summarized as space and time permit:

- Honors, appointments and related items; death notices.
- Weekly Crime Reports and Annual Crime Report from Public Safety, as well as safety tips and crime alerts, as appropriate

Publication of the above items, according to the priorities noted, constitutes *Almanac's* basic obligation to the University community as a weekly journal of record.

2. The editor acknowledges that documents and reports incorporating plans, proposals or actions dealing with the academic, fiscal, or physical development of the University are the property of the originators until released for publication.

The editor also understands that the University community expects to be fully and authoritatively informed of such matters. Consequently, when such documents, reports or actions appear in partial form in other media, the originators are expected to cooperate with the editor in informing the University community through *Almanac* as to the accuracy of such documents, reports or actions, and in announcing that the originators will furnish such full and authoritative information as soon as possible.

3. The editor may decide that a contribution, document, report or other item which is otherwise acceptable is too long to be accommodated in a normal issue of *Almanac*. The editor, in such a case, may ask the originator to prepare a shortened version; or, the material may be published in one of the following at the originator's option:

- A normal issue of *Almanac* may be increased in size.
- An issue of *Almanac* may include a supplement.
- An extra issue of *Almanac* may be published.

Or if the originator and editor agree:

- The item may be placed online at [www.upenn.edu/almanac/...](http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/), and a notification to that effect is published in print,

In any of the first three options, the originator will be asked to pay the full incremental costs. If an originator believes that length is being used by the editor as an instrument for censorship, the originator has the right to appeal to the Almanac Advisory Board.

As Journal of Opinion

Almanac, in addition, provides a forum for open expression, balanced by the editor in the interests of fairness and reasonableness, to all individuals and groups (including alumni) in the University community.

The editor, in administering this forum, is assisted by the Senate Committee on Publication Policy for *Almanac* and by the Almanac Advisory Board, which includes the Senate Committee on Publication Policy for *Almanac*, plus one designated representative from the PPSA, one from the A-3 Assembly, one from the Librarians Assembly and one from the administration. The chair of the Senate Committee on Publication Policy for *Almanac* is the chair of the Almanac Advisory Board.

Almanac welcomes and encourages the robust clash of opinion which marks a vigorous intellectual University climate, in accord with the following guidelines:

1. Relevance to the governance and intellectual life of the University community is the fundamental criterion for access to *Almanac's* pages. If in the editor's judgment a contribution or part of a contribution is irrelevant, or otherwise unsuitable for publication—for example, redundant or factually incorrect—the editor may reject the contribution or require appropriate changes. In making this decision:

- If the contribution relates exclusively to faculty matters the editor will consult with the Senate Committee on Publication Policy for *Almanac*. A faculty contributor has the right to appeal to the Senate Executive Committee. If the Senate Executive Committee upholds the decisions of the Committee on Publication Policy for *Almanac*, the contributor has access to *Almanac's* Speaking Out column to announce that he/she has sought full access and has been refused.
- If the contribution relates to matters affecting other constituencies than the faculty the editor will consult with the Almanac Advisory Board. The contributor has access to *Almanac's* Speaking Out column to announce that he/she has sought full access and has been refused.

2. Contributions will not necessarily be published in the order received. The editor may give priority to contributions judged more important or urgent to the University community. Letters should normally be no more than 400 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions. The contributor will be notified of any substantive changes prior to publication. A contributor who objects to the limitation or changes may appeal them as outlined in 1. above.

3. The editor, making the initial judgment that a contribution may open the Trustees of the University to suit in court for libel and/or defamation, consults with the Almanac Advisory Board. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, the editor consults with the General Counsel, who may ask the contributor to make changes. If the contributor finds this unacceptable, the matter is referred to the University's legal counsel whose decision to reject is final.

4. The editor does not reject a contribution containing alleged obscenity or profanity if it is otherwise acceptable.

5. Anonymous contributions are not considered, but requests to publish with "Name Withheld" will be reviewed individually, provided that the contributor's identity is known to two persons mutually agreed upon by the editor and the contributor, usually the editor and the chair of the Almanac Advisory Board. The two persons who know the contributor's identity shall thereafter not reveal that identity unless required to do so in a legal proceeding.

6. If a contribution involves an attack on the character or integrity of individuals, groups or agencies in the University community, the editor immediately notifies the individuals, groups or agencies attacked and offers space for reply of reasonable length in the same issue in which the attack is to appear. If there is no response, the contribution is published, normally with a notice that the individuals, groups or agencies have been notified and offered an opportunity to reply.

7. If a contributor makes serious charges against individuals, groups or agencies, which do not involve attacks on character or integrity but which involve factual questions or interpretation of policies, the editor may notify the individuals, groups or agencies in advance of publication and offer an opportunity to respond.

As Reference Resource

Almanac's website contains back issues, calendars and *Almanac* Between Issue (ABI) postings from the past five years. *Almanac's* website is searchable.

Almanac also maintains a computerized database subject index for reference to past articles and reports from April 1971 through October 1997. Requests for extra copies and back issues will be honored as supplies permit.

As Distribution Vehicle

Self-contained inserts prepared independently by University originators and not bearing *Almanac* identification, but clearly bearing the identification of the originator, may be distributed with issues of *Almanac* as a service, subject to the approval of the Senate Committee on Publication Policy for *Almanac* or the Almanac Advisory Board, whichever is appropriate. The originator will bear the cost of preparing the insert as well as labor cost for insertion and incremental postage.