



A Guide to Op-eds & Original Content

Are you interested in writing an opinion piece to submit to a newspaper, magazine, online publication, or blog? Here's what you need to know to get started.

Benefits of Writing an Op-ed

Do you have an informed, passionate opinion about a story or news item related to your expertise? It may be a good time to pen an opinion piece.

There are many benefits to writing an op-ed. Publishing one cements you as an authority on a given topic and indicates to members of the media that you are interested in contributing to the conversation around it. Opinion pieces can highlight current research and connect your scholarship to current events and real-world applications. An op-ed also elevates your media presence, positioning you as a thought leader in your field of study.

What to Consider When Writing an Op-ed

Before you begin writing, review best practices and helpful tips to make your piece as strong as possible.

[The Op-Ed Project "Op-Ed Writing: Tips and Tricks"](#)
[The New York Times "Tips for Aspiring Op-Ed Writers"](#)

Next, consider your audience. Who do you want to reach? Is your message for the general public or for a targeted audience? Evaluating your audience and their needs will help you write a more targeted, persuasive piece.

Based on your audience, consider which media outlet may be most interested in publishing your op-ed. Is there a local angle? Is it more politically-focused? Or, is it trade-specific? Answers to these questions will help you find a potential home for your piece.

Once you have a few outlets in mind, you'll want to consider and research the logistics: does this outlet publish contributed pieces? Is there a word count limit? Most op-eds are between 650 – 700 words.

Lastly, you'll want to have a one-line biography ready to include with your piece.

Working with BU Public Relations on an Op-ed



You've reviewed the op-ed resources and want to pursue an idea.

The BU Public Relations Office has experience submitting op-eds and can provide guidance on topics, timing, outlets and submission process.

If you are interested in exploring an idea, receiving feedback on a written piece, answering a request from a media outlet or submitting an op-ed, please contact your school's or college's communication contact as well as the BU Public Relations staff at 617-353-2240 or pr@bu.edu.

Promoting a Published Op-ed

Congratulations! Your op-ed was accepted for publication. Now what?

Please let the BU Public Relations office as well as your school's or college's communication contact know that your piece has been accepted and published. We will then share the piece on BU social channels as appropriate and evaluate other opportunities to leverage the content.

If you are active on social media, we also encourage you to share the piece on your channels, such as Twitter or LinkedIn. On Twitter, you can tag @BU_tweets, @buexperts and your school or college's account, and we can retweet it to increase your reach.

Additional Op-Ed Placement Options to Consider

If you have trouble placing an op-ed, or cannot find the right outlet to fit your op-ed, you still have several options at your disposal.

BU Today: *BU Today* is the University's news and information website. It serves as an online news source for all things BU. It is also host to faculty commentary on timely issues, in posts called "POVs" (Point of Views). The editorial staff happily accepts pitches from faculty, and occasionally source experts to write pieces on topics they find particularly noteworthy. To pitch your idea, simply email John O'Rourke at BU Today, who coordinates the column: orourkej@bu.edu

Medium: In addition to *BU Today*, BU also has a Medium blog that the PR department runs. The office republishes newsworthy *BU Today* articles, *The Brink* articles, and other relevant content from schools and colleges across campus. The channel also hosts original content. The office often solicits pieces from faculty members, but also



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welcomes pitches in any stage, from a new idea to a fully-written piece. Email the PR office at pr@bu.edu to discuss whether your op-ed might be a good fit for the blog. *The Conversation*: Solely written by academics, *The Conversation* is an international news site aimed at providing opinion pieces grounded in scholarship and research. What's particularly beneficial about writing for *The Conversation* is that they possess an open license, meaning other publications can re-publish their articles. They also have a partnership with the *Associated Press* and their pieces go out on the *AP* wire to papers all over the globe. They have editors looking for articles on a wide range of topics: education, politics, religion, science and technology, arts, math and data, the environment, and more. You can find out more about their editors on their [team page](#). You can pitch editors directly (using the contact info on the team page), or you can work with the BU PR office to pitch.