

CITRUSTV CODE OF BROADCAST STANDARDS AND ETHICS

Amended November 9th, 2025

I. OVERVIEW

The following Code of Broadcast Standards and Ethics (the “Code”) has been adopted by CitrusTV (the “Studio”) to guide Studio members in the creation and production of programming to be distributed by the Studio. All members of the Studio are expected to be familiar with all elements of the Code, which will be enforced as described herein and pursuant to the Bylaws of the Studio. One of the primary goals of the Studio is to provide experience in all aspects of the production of programming and the operation and management of a television studio. The Studio therefore expects all members to exercise mature and professional judgment with respect to the content of programming produced for distribution by the Studio. Moreover, the Studio recognizes that it is part of the Syracuse University and SUNY-ESF community. In addition to the standards set forth in this Code, all members of the Studio are expected to be familiar with the Syracuse University and SUNY-ESF Codes of Conduct, which are nearly identical, and all programming produced for distribution by the Studio is expected to comply with said Codes of Conduct. In addition all members are expected to adhere to state, local, and federal law.

II. APPLICABILITY

The Code applies to all programming produced for distribution by the Studio and all programming actually distributed by the Studio, regardless of whether or not such programming was *originally* produced for distribution by the Studio. Live, live-to-tape, social and digital media content, and any other programs or segments of programs for which scripts cannot be prepared before broadcast or posting are subject to the same standards under this Code as are programs that are completely scripted. The standards set forth in the Code remain applicable regardless of whether the programming distributed by the Studio is distributed by the Studio via broadcast, cable, internet, social media, or other means of distribution. Pilots produced for consideration by the Studio management must meet the standards set forth in this Code. Song lyrics included in programming material are subject to the same standards under this Code as other elements of programming that are subject to the Code.

III. ENFORCEMENT & INTERPRETATION

The Code shall be enforced by the Department Directors and the General Manager and

as provided in the Bylaws of the Studio. Enforcement decisions shall be made in the first instance by the relevant Department Director, who may consult with the University Advisor. The decision of the Department Director may be immediately appealed to the General Manager, who shall consult with the University Advisor. The decision of the General Manager is final. For any such appeal to the General Manager, there is a strong presumption that the decision of the Department Director is appropriate under this Code.

The interpretation of the specific standards set forth in the Code necessarily shall be made by the Department Director or General Manager on an individual, case-by-case basis, and shall depend on a number of variables. In particular, the full context in which material is presented is critical for reasoned evaluation of programming material. In evaluating programming material, the following factors shall be considered: (1) the context of the material in the program taken as a whole, (2) the genre of the program, (3) the objective intent of the writers or producers of the material, and (4) the extent to which the potentially offensive nature of the material can be mitigated by the use of advisory announcements and/or audio or video edits pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Code.

IV. ADVISORY ANNOUNCEMENTS

When deemed necessary by the Department Director or the General Manager, any program or program segment may be required to append an advisory announcement at the beginning of the programming material in question to afford viewers a reasonable opportunity to exercise their discretion to avoid program material they do not wish to view. If an advisory announcement is deemed necessary, the Department Director or the General Manager shall determine its content.

V. ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND DRUG USE

The Studio will not accept programming in which the use of alcohol or illegal drugs is gratuitous or over emphasized. In the context of news programming, the depiction of the use of alcohol or illegal drugs should be reasonably consistent with and necessary to a legitimate news story. In the context of entertainment programming, the depiction of the use of alcohol or illegal drugs should be reasonably consistent with and necessary to plot and character development. The Studio recognizes that there is a place for responsible journalistic, dramatic, humorous, or satirical programming relating to the use of alcohol or illegal drugs. Such programming, however, should be presented in good taste and should consider the negative consequences that may result from the abuse of alcohol or illegal drugs.

In addition the following is expected of members:

No member shall use illegal drugs or possess or consume alcohol, even if of legal age, in the Studio's offices or facilities. Any programming content that involves the on-camera use of alcohol or illegal drugs must comply with the Code. Further, the alcohol or illegal drugs used on-camera must be non-functional props.

No member shall bring a dangerous weapon of any kind into the Studio's offices or facilities. Any programming content that involves the on-camera use of a dangerous weapon must comply with the Code. Further, the weapon used on-camera must be a non-functional prop. The Syracuse University Department of Public Safety must be notified in advance of any use of a prop weapon outside the studio, on or near the University campus. DPS must be contacted through appropriate channels by the General Manager.

While on assignment, members, even of legal drinking age, are recommended to abstain from drinking, including in social settings such as dinners or receptions to avoid questions as to the member's ability to serve as a credible, objective reporter. Participants should not accept free drinks at events unless drinks are free to everyone in attendance. This is to avoid the perception of being "wined and dined" by sources or groups.

VI. AUDIO AND VIDEO EDITS

When deemed necessary by the Department Director or the General Manager, any program or program segment may be required to use audio and/or video edits to obscure material that is deemed unacceptable. When audio edits are deemed necessary, all bleeps and/or sound drops must cover the entire unacceptable audio element with no portion remaining audible. When video edits are deemed necessary, images that are deemed unacceptable shall be thoroughly obscured through appropriate means.

VII. INDECENT OR PROFANE MATERIAL

The Studio will not accept programming that includes indecent material (as defined by federal law) that has not been edited pursuant to Section VI of the Code to eliminate or obscure such material.

Indecent Material generally is defined as language or materials "that, in context, depicts or describes sexual or excretory activities or organs in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium."

In determining whether material is patently offensive, the following factors shall be considered: (1) the explicitness or graphic nature of the description; (2) whether the material dwells on or repeats at length descriptions of sexual or excretory organs or activities; and (3) whether the material appears to pander or is used to titillate or shock.

Profanity generally is defined as “including language so grossly offensive to members of the public who actually hear it as to amount to a nuisance.” The use of the “seven dirty words” identified in *FCC v. Pacifica Foundation*, 438 U.S. 726 (1978) (fuck, shit, piss, motherfucker, cocksucker, cunt, and tits), and similar words, should be avoided or edited pursuant to Section VI of the Code, unless the use of such words, taken in context, is necessary for plot or character development and is not gratuitous, excessive, or in any way intended or used to pander, titillate, or shock.

VIII. NUDITY AND SEXUAL ACTIVITY

The Studio will not accept programming that contains material containing nudity or explicit depictions of sexual activity. For the purposes of this Code, “nudity” is defined as the depiction of exposed male or female genitalia, female breasts, and the buttocks of a male or female.

IX. OBSCENE MATERIAL

The Studio will not accept programming that includes obscene material (as defined by federal law). In order to be deemed obscene, the following must be found to be true: (1) an average person, applying contemporary community standards, must find that the material, as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; (2) the material must depict or describe, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable law; and (3) the material, taken as a whole, must lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

X. OFFENSIVE MATERIAL

A. Material Concerning Physical or Mental Impairments

The Studio will not accept programming that is intended to ridicule or attack any individual or group based on physical handicaps, developmental disabilities, and/or deformities. The Studio recognizes that there is a place for responsible journalistic, dramatic, humorous, or satirical programming that relates to or touches upon these subjects, provided that such programming is done in good taste and so that a reasonable person would not conclude that it was intended to attack or ridicule any group of people.

B. Material Concerning Age, Creed, Ethnic or National Origin, Gender, Marital Status, Political Affiliation, Race, Religion, or Sexual Orientation

The Studio will not accept programming that is intended to ridicule or attack any individual or group based on age, creed, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, political affiliation, race, religion, and/or sexual orientation. The Studio recognizes that there is a place for responsible journalistic, dramatic, humorous, or satirical programming that relates to or touches upon these subjects, provided that such programming is done in good taste and so that a reasonable person would not conclude that it was intended to attack or ridicule any group of people.

XI. VIOLENCE

The Studio will not accept programming that includes gratuitous and/or excessive depictions of violence. In particular, depictions of violence should not be used to shock the audience or advocate the use of violence against specific individuals or groups of people. Programming should not include depictions of excessive gore, pain, or physical suffering. The Studio recognizes that there is a place for responsible journalistic, dramatic, humorous, or satirical programming that relates to or touches upon the subject of violence, provided that such programming is done in good taste. In the context of news programming, depictions of violence should be reasonably consistent with and necessary to a legitimate news story. In the context of entertainment programming, depictions of violence should be reasonably consistent with and necessary to plot and character development or within the presentation of material whose overall theme is clearly anti-violent.

In addition to the foregoing, any programming element that mixes sex and violence must be approached with extraordinary care and consideration. Rape, non-consensual sexual acts, and other forms of sexual assault are violent, not sexual, behaviors. Depictions or descriptions of such behaviors shall take into account the impact such depictions may have on all members of the viewing audience.

XII. LOCATION AND TALENT RELEASES

The Studio will not accept programming that violates the following policies regarding location and talent releases.

If a program intends to include material shot at or on a private or commercial location that is not owned or controlled by Syracuse University and/or SUNY-ESF, then a written or on

camera release must be obtained from the owner of the location before taping.

Whenever the likeness of a real person, who is not (1) a member of the Studio or (2) a public figure or celebrity, is to be used in a program in more than an incidental way, then a written or on camera release should be obtained from that person either before or after taping. Permission should be obtained for use of a person's face within a crowd shot, if the crowd shot emphasizes the actions or presence of one individual. People under the influence of alcohol or drugs generally are not considered capable of granting a release.

The Studio reserves the right to require producers to provide proof that the foregoing written releases were obtained. It is the responsibility of Producers to ensure they have permission to shoot at a particular event or location on campus. Members should never assume they have permission to shoot on or around campus.

XIII. COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL¹

The Studio will not accept programming that violates the copyright laws of the United States.

Copyright is a form of protection to authors of original works, whether published or unpublished, including literature, music, art, video, film, and other intellectual works. With certain exceptions detailed below, producers are required to obtain written permission or a license from the copyright holder to use copyrighted material.² The provision of an acknowledgment of the copyright holder does not eliminate this obligation.

If written permission or a license is obtained to use copyrighted material, then the program must courtesy the source.

Exceptions in which no written permission or license may be needed:

With funding from the Student Activity Fee, the Studio maintains a license for music from Warner Chappell Production Music. Songs listed in these song libraries may be used without obtaining further permission from Warner Chappell Production Music, as well as copyright free music from YouTube Music Library. Use of songs that are not listed in these song libraries or created by Studio members for use in Studio programming is not permitted without receiving written permission or a license from the copyright holder.

Depending on the way in which copyrighted material is used, permission may not be required; this is sometimes referred to as the "fair use" of the copyrighted material. The factors that determine whether the use of copyrighted material is considered a "fair use"

include: (1) *the transformative nature of the use*—i.e., whether the use is simply copying the source material or whether it is creating something new through, for example, parody, review, or commentary; (2) *the nature of the copyrighted material*—e.g., there may be wider latitude in the use of factual works than fictional works, and there may be more latitude in the use of published works than private works; (3) *the amount and substantiality of the portion used*; and (4) *the effect of the use on the potential market*—e.g., the use actually competes with the copyright holder or otherwise deprives the copyright owner of income.

General examples of “Fair Use” include:

1. Using excerpts of a work in a review of the work for the purposes of illustration, comment, or criticism.
2. Summarizing an address or article or using excerpts of an address or article with quotations in a news report.
3. Parodies of the work, ridiculing the work by imitating it in a comic way.

¹ This section is intended to be used merely as a guide for Studio producers, Department Directors and the General Manager. This section does not purport to represent a complete and thoroughly accurate statement of the copyright laws of the United States. In some instances, the Studio’s policies may be more stringent than the copyright laws.

² The procedure for obtaining a license can be found in section IX of the Studio’s Bylaws.

XIV. FREE TRAVEL AND GIFTS

Members of the Studio should never benefit from content the Studio produces through free travel or gifts. To do so is in violation of the Code. CitrusTV journalists should not accept free travel or gifts in exchange or return for a story, coverage, or content they produce. Gifts from current or potential news sources should not be accepted. Gifts, favors, fees, free travel or special treatment is in violation of the Code. Members should avoid political and other activities that may compromise integrity, impartiality, or the overall credibility of the Studio.

XV. EMPLOYMENT AT OTHER CAMPUS ORGANIZATION WHILE WORKING AT CITRUSTV

Employment at other campus organizations, including but not limited to other campus or local media organizations, should not conflict with a member's schedule or responsibilities at the Studio.

Members should report employment to their department heads to avoid conflicts of interest, and department heads are responsible for requesting this information at the start of the semester. Members may not cover a campus or local organization they belong to, work for, or participate in. Members should not report on a legislative student organization they are a part of and should disclose conflicts of interest with their department head.

XVI. SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Social Media use should be compliant with standards set forth at the beginning of the semester by the General Manager and Social Media Director. Members are expected to follow the social media bylaws set forth in the Bylaws. Failure to do so may result in warning or in certain cases, termination of membership of that member.

XVII. OBJECTIVITY

It is the responsibility of all Studio members to remain objective in their reporting. Every effort should be made to report objectively on all stories and in all coverage and reporting. If a member feels they are unable to remain objective on a story they should remove themselves from that story, newscast, situation, etc entirely. Journalists should understand their own biases on all issues and keep them separate from their reporting in order to provide our audience with the most factual, unbiased information and stories.

XVIII. PLAGIARISM AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Plagiarism of any kind is unacceptable under any circumstances and prohibited. Plagiarism is defined as taking someone else's work and passing it off as one's own, with or without the owner's consent and may be intentional or unintentional. Any members found to have knowingly plagiarized any part or portion of coverage or work which they claimed to be their own will be removed from their position effective immediately and subject to disciplinary action. Accidental plagiarism is also subject to disciplinary action and consequences.

Generative artificial intelligence, or "AI", may be used in studio programming, but each instance of its use must be made explicitly clear to the Department Director and Executive Producer of the program featuring it, as well as to the audience. The Studio recognizes that there is a place for responsible journalistic, dramatic, humorous, or satirical programming relating to the use of AI. However, generating any work with AI, written, spoken, video, image, or otherwise, and attempting to pass it off as one's own is considered plagiarism and is subject to disciplinary action and consequences.

XIX. ERRORS AND CORRECTIONS

Every effort should be made to avoid errors in reporting, including but not limited to in writing for broadcasts, in breaking news situations, and in social media reporting. If errors are made they should be corrected as soon as they are deemed to be incorrect and unfactual. Errors should never be left in a broadcast, article, or digital/social report without being corrected. Failure to correct an error represents the studio poorly and does not uphold the ethical expectations held for all journalists at the Studio.

XX. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is prohibited. As a Recognized Student Organization on the Syracuse University campus, all of the University's Sexual Harassment Policies apply to all members of the Studio, whether they are at the studio, on scene with fellow Studio members, or anywhere on campus. Participants who experience sexual harassment at the Studio are encouraged but not required to notify the General Manager and/or University Advisor. For information on how to file a complaint via the University visit:

<https://policies.syr.edu/policies/university-governance-ethics-integrity-and-legal-compliance/sexual-harassment-abuse-and-assault-prevention/student-procedures/>

XXI. DISCRIMINATION AND BIAS

No form of discrimination or bias will be tolerated at the Studio towards members nor towards story subjects. The Studio and its members shall not discriminate against people for reasons of age, creed, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, marital status, political or social affiliation, race, religion or sexual orientation. This policy will include, but not be limited to, recruiting, membership, organization activities or opportunities to hold office. Participants should avoid sexist language. Such language should be replaced by neutral terms and descriptions. Participants also have a responsibility to avoid negative stereotyping. If members see, hear or experience bias in any way, they should bring this matter to the attention of the General Manager and Associate General Manager either in person or by filling out an incident form: citrustv.com/incident. For more information on bias from the University, and how to avoid and report bias visit: <https://experience.syracuse.edu/community-standards/stop-bias>

XXII: FABRICATION

Knowingly fabricating anything from storylines, events, individuals, or any facts which contribute to the overall reporting of or stories told by the Studio is an ethical breach and is considered unacceptable. Fabrication is subject to disciplinary action.

XXIII: CORE VALUES

The Core Values of the Studio in regards to reporting are as listed below in no particular order:

1. Objectivity
2. Accountability
3. Transparency
4. Accuracy
5. Timeliness
6. Safety

The Core Values of the Studio in regards to members, how members can expect to be treated, and the overall environment at CitrusTV are as listed below in no particular order:

1. Inclusivity
2. Respect
3. Responsibility
4. Community
5. Collaboration
6. Creativity

XXIV: SUMMARY

The Code is meant to provide, in writing, a description of the overall goals, morals, ethics, and core values of CitrusTV. All members will be provided with the Code prior to each semester, and expected to read through it in its entirety, and sign on in acceptance to the terms herein. If and when there are disagreements at the Studio, the Code should be used to reference and be the basis on which issues are debated. CitrusTV journalists must follow the Code to the fullest, and any violation of the Code is subject to disciplinary action, or at the discretion of the Executive Staff, removal of membership from the Studio entirely. This Code has been approved by the Executive Staff and remains in effect until amended or replaced by the Executive Staff. Failure to comply with the Code should be reported immediately to the General Manager or Associate General Manager, or if those individuals are the ones in question, to the University Advisor or Organizational Consultant.