

Avoiding Bias

We work hard to avoid bias of all types. Our editors are diverse and each day they debate and deliberate over the most important stories for our students. This group keeps political agendas out of the discussions and stories are reviewed by at least four more editors prior to publication. In especially sensitive cases, we expand that group and writers express any concerns regarding bias.

Bias takes many forms and is not limited to just “are you writing positively or negatively about one political position.” We consider multiple factors to prevent bias from creeping into our work.

No sensationalism. We provide context. For example, if we covered a plane crash, we would explain flying safety compared to other modes of transportation.

No coverage or selection bias (bias by inclusion or omission). We don’t just cover stories that are negative to one political party or to a specific politician, while excluding those that are positive. Even if stories were balanced and unbiased, if we only chose stories that were negative to one side or the other, we would show bias.

No presentation bias. We are very careful to not slant stories or cherry-pick facts, angles, or studies that support one side, while ignoring other perspectives.

No tonality bias. We choose words carefully. We don’t use adjectives that would sway the opinion of a reader in favor or against a subject or topic of a story.

Political balance. We tell political stories in a balanced fashion, giving equal time and weight to the different sides.

No false balance or false equivalence. We will not present stories as even-sided if disproportionate amounts of evidence support one side over another.

No opinion. We do not present opinion statements as fact and avoid speculative content. If a story requires opinions to be stated, those opinions will be clearly quoted and attributed, and contrary opinions will be included and similarly attributed. Unsubstantiated claims will be clearly presented as such.