

OP-ED GUIDELINES

Opinion editorials (or op-eds) are short commentaries on a specific topic usually written by a guest author who has authority on that issue. News outlets, both online and print, accept unsolicited op-eds, generally on timely and interesting issues

NAST will often write drafts and then seek Treasurers to personalize and submit to national publications, but we encourage every Treasurer to write and send op-eds to your home state's newspapers, especially if an issue is of personal interest to you.

LEDE

The lede is the first impression. It's what makes the reader decide – or decides *for* the reader – whether or not to read your column further. The lede sets the stage and tone of your op-ed. There is no one “correct” kind of lede, but some are surer bets than others. Put yourself in your reader's shoes and think about what it would take to hold your interest. Start with a question, an anecdote, or personal story.

THESIS

Your thesis is the statement of your case; it's your main idea or message. This is where you crystallize and clarify your message in a nutshell, with the inherent understanding that what's to follow will support and flesh out your message. Your lede set the stage; the spotlight is now on the thesis.

CALL TO ACTION

The ultimate purpose of an op-ed is to influence – to change minds or sometimes to reinforce beliefs, to influence or inspire readers to think, re-think, or act. The call to action states the writer's goal in this regard. What do you want the reader – or other people or entities – to do, think, or say? The call to action does not necessarily have to be placed after the thesis, but it is generally a logical place. In fact, the thesis can end with a call to action.

ARGUMENT(S)

This is where you present the arguments to support your thesis, backed by evidence (facts, stats, studies, reports, examples).

COUNTER-ARGUMENT OR OPPOSING VIEW(S)

You want to be fair. You want to show your readers that you've done your homework and have considered other points of view. Here, present a counter-argument or opposing view, and then prove – again, with evidence to back it up – why you believe your argument is correct, strong, or valid.

CONCLUSION

Circle back to your lede and thesis to reinforce your argument. Summarize your POV without being redundant.