Hi folks, here is a friendly guide to what OTE is expecting form its writers. If you have any questions please mention it in our WhatsApp group chat.

House Style Guide

General Notes:
Any submissions will be treated as final drafts; the work submitted to Over the Edge should be of the same quality as the work submitted to professors. Consistently good submissions have multiple benefits; they get the writer in the habit of quality work, which will ensure professionalism in all aspects of life, and also benefit the newspaper, as the copy editor cannot be expected to catch all mistakes.
In general, we use Canadian English according the CP Style Guide, and CP Caps and Spelling. If unsure, ask the Editor in Chief to set precedent.

Submission Guidelines
Font: Arial, size 9
No indents on or spaces before paragraphs.
Format: .doc or .docx
Single spaced.
Everything – including headings – aligned left.

Concise articles:
Unless asked to expand, articles should be no more than 700 words. Submitting articles of various lengths are good, but the word count for all your submissions every issue should be approximately 2000 words in total

Audience:
Remember that the majority of people reading your articles are of university age and education. Do not write down to them, but do not be precocious. Also ensure that you are writing about what people are interested in.
We do not offer free advertising – avoid using specific place names whenever possible. This can be tricky – when reviewing a band that played at Nancy O's, focus on the band and music, rather than the venue, food, or drinks.

Figures of Speech:
Try, whenever possible, not to use metaphors.
Use the active voice as much as possible.
Dates are to be written as Monday, September 1, 2024.

Clarity:

In general, if a sentence doesn't make sense, do not include it.
Be concise, and use as few words as possible to get your point across.
Avoid using "yesterday," "today," and "tomorrow," to avoid confusion.
Dates are to be written in the following order: Monday, Sept. 1, 2014.
Write in the present tense whenever possible.
Be formal; do not use contractions, or the personal pronoun (I, you, we, etc).

Images:
Photographs must be of high quality, and large (600x700). Whenever original photography can be used, it should; photographs taken from the Internet should be sourced. Photos can be sent to ote-prod@unbc.ca with an article keyword and editorial section in the title.

Lists:
Whenever possible, items in a list should form a complete sentence, begin with a capital letter, and end in punctuation.
When writing an interview, the article should include context and analysis, and should not simply be a "q&a" style transcript.

Citations:
If you are not sure whether to source something, please source it. Make citations seamless and clean, so that the reader does not have to stop reading. Using more of your own research and work means that you will not have to do, and source, outside research. Use proper formatting. For example:
"As reported by the BBC…"
"The CBC was first on the scene…"
"The Globe and Mail was the first to discuss this issue…"

OTE Specific:
• Avoid the use of the ampersand (&)
• Most citations used within Over the Edge will require italicization. Sub-titles will be in quotations. EG: the album is italicized, while the "song" is in quotes.
• Use the serial (or oxford) comma. EG: One, two, and three.
• Follow the company's preference for publication names. EG: iTunes.
• Punctuation goes inside of quotations. Do not use block quotes – they disappear in the production process. Single quotations are used only to note quotations within quotations. Capitalize the first word in the quote. EG: "He went to 'the store' for some milk."
• Capitalize acronyms; do not insert periods. EG: HTML

• Dates will be written: month day, year. Historical events will be written as "20th century." EG: It happened on November 11, 1918, in the 20th century."
• Courses and languages will be capitalized. EG: He took English, history, and Political Science 100.

AI Usage Policy:
While we recognize the potential benefits of AI tools, Over the Edge values originality and authenticity in our writers' work. We encourage you to rely primarily on your own ideas, research, and writing skills. However, we understand that AI can be a useful tool when used responsibly. Here are our guidelines for AI usage:

- Original Content: Your articles should be predominantly your own original work. AI should not be used to generate entire articles or substantial portions of your content.
- Research Assistance: AI can be used as a starting point for research or to find relevant sources, but all information should be independently verified and properly cited.
- Grammar and Style Checks: We encourage the use of AI tools for proofreading, grammar checks, and ensuring adherence to our style guide. However, the final editing should be done by you to maintain your unique voice. PLEASE AVOID USING THE CHATGPT TONE; None of us like that.
- Idea Generation: AI can be used for brainstorming or generating article ideas, but the development and execution of these ideas should be your own.
- Transparency: If you use AI in any significant way in your writing process, disclosing it to the audience reader is encouraged.
- Final Responsibility: Remember, you are responsible for the accuracy, originality, and quality of your work, regardless of any AI tools used.
- Ethical Considerations: Be aware of potential biases in AI-generated content and ensure your work aligns with journalistic ethics and OTE's values.
- Continuous Learning: As AI technology evolves, so may our policy. Stay informed about best practices in AI usage in journalism.

We trust our writers to use their judgment in applying these guidelines. If you have any questions about AI usage, please consult with us be emailing ote@unbc.ca .