

# **RPI TV – Editorial Policy**

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## **Article I Purpose & Meetings**

### Section 1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to serve as additional bylaws and policies for the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Television club and especially it’s Programming Committee, hereafter referred to as RPI TV and the RPI TV Programming Committee.

### Section 2 Meetings

The Programming Committee shall consist of the Vice President of Programming, the Special Events Manager, the News Manager, the Sports Manager, and the Lead Editor. The Vice President of Programming shall be the chair of the Programming Committee. The President shall be an ex-officio member of the Programming Committee.

The Programming Committee shall only hold meetings when there is a Programming item to be discussed and/or voted upon. The Programming Committee is not required to hold regular meetings. The Vice President of Programming can call a Programming Committee Meeting whenever he or she feels a meeting is needed. Alternatively, a meeting shall be called upon the request of any two members of the Programming Committee.

Programming Committee Meetings shall normally be closed. Anyone who is not on the Programming Committee must be invited to a Programming Committee Meeting by one of its members.

### Section 3 Definitions

“Broadcasting” shall be defined as the presentation by RPI TV of a program or event to the general RPI community through any medium, including but not limited to the Campus CATV Television system, public screenings and the Internet.

“Airing” shall be defined as the presentation by RPI TV of a program or event to the general RPI community through the Campus CATV Television system

A “program” shall be defined as any RPI TV affiliated project intended for broadcasting that is proposed to and/or approved by the Programming Committee.

An “event” shall be defined as any RPI TV affiliated project intended for broadcasting that does not require Programming Committee approval because it is explicitly stated in the active budget and/or Job Policy.

“Public Office” shall be defined as any elected position within the RPI community.

The “use of RPI TV” shall be defined as broadcasting a pre-produced segment.

## **Article II Responsibility**

## Section 1 Content Responsibility

The RPI TV Programming Committee will accept the responsibility for the content of everything that RPI TV broadcasts. The decision to broadcast, edit or change submitted material rests with the appropriate members of the Programming Committee. Final decision to broadcast, edit or change submitted material rests with the Vice President of Programming. Specifically, RPI TV reserves the right to edit material in order to conform to broadcast or airing format and requirements. The Programming Committee also reserves the right to determine the placement of any piece within the schedules.

## Section 2 Public Service

RPI TV offers free air advertising on the campus bulletin board system to organizations affiliated with the RPI community. If your club/organization would like to air a slide promoting an event on the campus television bulletin board system, send the slide to [rpitv-slides@union.rpi.edu](mailto:rpitv-slides@union.rpi.edu) at least one week before it will begin airing. We also need to know when to begin and end airing the slide. For submission requirements see our website at <http://rpitv.union.rpi.edu/services.php>. The campus television system bulletin board airs slides on channels 2 and RPI TV Channel 6. The television bulletin board system can only be seen on campus.

## Section 3 Errata

Factual errors will be corrected or retracted in subsequent broadcasts, if such errors are reported to the Vice President of Programming by email.

## **Article III RPI TV Access**

RPI TV reserves the right to choose what material is broadcast on the RPI TV CATV channel or any other medium available to RPI TV.

RPI TV is not required to broadcast anything that it receives, produces, shoots or is offered or suggested. This applies to all materials except as required by the RPI TV rules concerning personal attacks, political editorials and the use of RPI TV by candidates for public office (see Article V Section 1 and Article VI of this policy).

RPI TV is solely responsible for selecting everything it broadcasts and for determining how it can best serve the RPI community.

RPI TV reserves the right to edit, reschedule and rerun all material for broadcast with the exception of editing commercials for political candidates during an election (see Article VI Section 2).

It is the responsibility of the Vice President of Programming to watch every program before it is broadcast by RPI TV. The Vice President of Programming may delegate this responsibility to anyone on the Programming Committee.

## **Article IV Program Approval Process**

### Section 1 Program Proposals

When a member of RPI TV wishes to create, produce, broadcast, or air a program on RPI TV, they shall submit a proposal to the RPI TV Programming Committee. The proposal should be no more than one page in length and must make clear the intended tone and content of the program as well as contain a brief synopsis. While this proposal need not include details, it should outline plans for any potential resources that the program may need, including budget, props, actors, etc.

A program proposal must be submitted as both a paper copy and an electronic copy by emailing the proposal to [rpitv-prog@union.rpi.edu](mailto:rpitv-prog@union.rpi.edu). Any relevant materials, including scripts and tapes, may optionally be included along with the proposal. Examples of show proposals can be found on our website at [rpitv.union.rpi.edu/blank](http://rpitv.union.rpi.edu/blank).

## Section 2 Program Approval

The Vice President of Programming shall call a Programming Committee Meeting within five business days of receiving a paper copy of the proposal in order to discuss and vote on it.

The producer of the show shall be present at the Programming Committee's initial discussion regarding the proposal to answer questions. The producer may then be asked to leave the meeting so the Programming Committee can continue their discussion of the proposal.

Once the members of the Programming Committee have reviewed and discussed the program proposal in regard to its tone and content, the Programming Committee shall vote to approve or disapprove it. A two thirds majority vote of the total Programming Committee membership shall be required for the proposal to pass.

The Vice President of Programming shall notify the person submitting the proposal and the Executive Committee of RPI TV of the results within one business day of the meeting.

If a show proposal is denied, the producer of the show may appeal the Programming Committee's decision to the group of the president and the two vice presidents. This group will decide on the appeal within one week of receiving the appeal. A two thirds majority vote of this group shall be required to appeal the Programming Committee's decision.

## Section 3 Rescinding Program Approval

The Programming Committee reserves the right to rescind approval for any program at any time for any reason, such as if the program changes to violate the Editorial Policy or any other policy or bylaw held by RPI TV. To rescind a program's approval, a 2/3 majority vote of the total Programming Committee membership shall be required.

If a program's approval is rescinded by the Programming Committee, the producer of the show may appeal the Programming Committee's decision to the group of the president and the two vice presidents. This group will decide on the appeal within one week of receiving the appeal. A two thirds majority vote of this group shall be required to appeal the Programming Committee's decision.

## Article V Broadcast Limitations

## Section 1 Personal Attacks

Personal attacks occur when, during the presentation of views on a controversial issue of public importance, someone attacks the honesty, character, integrity, or like personal qualities of an identified person or group.

No more than five days after a personal attack, RPI TV must make available the following three things to the person or group attacked: (1) notification of the date, time, and identification of the broadcast of the attack; (2) a tape, video disc, digital video file, script or accurate summary of the attack; and (3) an offer of a reasonable opportunity to respond on the air.

Satires and parodies shall not be considered personal attacks. It is the responsibility of the Vice President of Programming to determine if a program's material falls under this category.

## Section 2 Obscene Material

Obscene material shall not be broadcast at any time. To be obscene, material must have all three of the following characteristics: (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 laws; and (3) the material, taken as a whole, must lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

## Section 3 Indecent Material

RPI TV shall not air indecent material during the hours of 6:00am to 10:00pm.

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

## Section 4 Broadcast Hoaxes

Broadcast hoaxes are false information concerning a crime or a catastrophe. A broadcast hoax occurs when known false information is broadcast; broadcasting the false information directly causes substantial public harm; and it is foreseeable that broadcasting the false information would cause substantial public harm.

Programs including materials that can be viewed as Broadcast hoaxes may still be broadcast provided that the hoaxes are presented as entertainment and/or for humor and include a disclaimer to that effect.

## Section 5 Broadcasting telephone conversations

Before recording a telephone conversation for broadcasting, or broadcasting a telephone conversation live, RPI TV must inform any party to the call of its intention to broadcast the conversation. However, this does not apply to conversations whose broadcasting can reasonably be presumed (for example, telephone calls to programs where RPI TV customarily broadcasts the calls).

## Section 6 Advertising

RPI TV is free to accept or reject any advertising submitted to it for broadcast. However, RPI TV is prohibited from airing any advertising on behalf of individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with the RPI community on the RPI CATV.

#### Section 7 Underwriting

RPI TV may acknowledge contributions over the air, but may not promote the goods and services of for-profit donors or underwriters. Acceptable "enhanced underwriting" acknowledgements of for-profit donors may include (1) logograms and slogans that identify but do not promote; (2) location information; (3) value-neutral descriptions of a product line or service; and (4) brand names, trade names, and product service listings.

#### Section 8 Standard Release

In order for a program to be broadcast on RPI TV, every identifiable person's consent to appear must be accounted for by a video release form signed by each person or their authorized representative.

#### Section 9 Copyrighted Materials

RPI TV shall not broadcast copyrighted material unless otherwise permitted by the policies of RPI or unless appropriate permissions and/or licenses are obtained prior to broadcast.

All materials produced by or submitted to RPI TV for broadcast by anyone, whether it is eventually broadcast or not, becomes the property of RPI TV, and the station reserves the right to unlimited use of the material. The act of voluntarily producing or submitting material to RPI TV indicates approval of this policy.

### **Article VI Political Editorials**

#### Section 1 Political Editorials

A political editorial is when RPI TV endorses or opposes qualified candidates during a broadcast of its own opinion. The opinions of other people are referred to as "comments" or "commentary." Whether a statement of opinion is a political editorial or a commentary will usually be made clear at the beginning or end of a statement. Within one business day after broadcast, RPI TV must make available the following three things to other qualified candidates for the same office, or to the candidate(s) that were opposed: (1) notification of the date and time of the broadcast of the editorial; (2) a script, tape, video disc, digital video file or accurate summary of the editorial; and (3) an offer of a reasonable opportunity for the candidate to respond on the air.

#### Section 2 Political broadcast by candidates for public office

When a qualified candidate for public office has been permitted by the Executive Committee to use RPI TV, RPI TV is required to afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office. RPI TV shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast by the candidate except when it is deemed as obscene or indecent material. RPI TV does not consider either of the following two categories as a "use" that is covered by this rule: (1) an appearance by a legally qualified candidate on a bona fide newscast, interview or documentary (if the appearance of the candidate is incidental

to the presentation of the subject covered by the documentary); or (2) on-the-spot coverage of a bona fide news event (including political conventions and related incidental activities).

**Article VII Archives**

RPI TV shall keep an up-to-date archive list of every event or program aired on RPI TV. This archives list should include the name and date of the event. Any member of the RPI community may view this list by providing the Programming Committee with a written request for a copy.

**Article VIII Comments to RPI TV**

RPI TV encourages viewers to write directly to station officials to comment on our broadcast service. Station officials are the ones who are responsible for selecting the station's programming and announcements. Written letters to RPI TV keep us informed about audience needs and interests, as well as on public opinion on specific material.

Email: [rpitv@union.rpi.edu](mailto:rpitv@union.rpi.edu)  
Website: [rpitv.union.rpi.edu](http://rpitv.union.rpi.edu)  
Mail:  
RPI TV  
c/o The Rensselaer Union  
110 8th Street  
Troy NY, 12180