Optimist Design Guide

Lauren Franco

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Optimist Design Guide

An Honors College Project Thesis

Presented to
The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Abilene Christian University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
Honors Associate

by
Lauren Franco

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This Project Thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Honors College of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the distinction

HONORS ASSOCIATE

Dr. Jason Morris, Dean of the Honors College

Date

Advisory Committee

Kenneth Pybus, Committee Chair

Doug Mendenhall, Committee Member

Nil Santana, Committee Member

Kenneth Pybus, Department Head
ABSTRACT

This honors thesis studies the impact of design on readership, and questions whether or not certain design elements have an effect on audience trust and desire to read print or digital publications. Considering large national publications such as the New York Times, Washington Post and USA Today, as well as student publications at well-known universities such as the University of Texas and Texas A&M, I was able to reorganize and develop a design guide for the Optimist.

The guide uses previous Optimist style guides to maintain a cohesive, timeless look while maintaining professionalism. In addition to old guides, a readthrough of the current Optimist design helped recognize changes in structure that needed to be made for clarity.

The last official design guide for the Optimist was published in 1983, thus a new, updated version needed to be created for current and future staffs to understand a more modern design. The guide will increase diligence for designers, and help the team work together on the same page.
OPTIMIST
DESIGN GUIDE
HISTORY
Since 1912, the Optimist has provided coverage of campus and relevant issues as the primary source of information for students and alumni.

Students produced a bi-weekly newspaper, Wednesday and Friday, with news, features, opinions and sports. In 2015, the Optimist cut down to a weekly print edition published on Friday. Now, the Optimist uses social media to encourage readership and expand the range of coverage.

The last official style guide for the Optimist was published in 1983.
DESIGN – The Optimist should be printed on a 66p0 by 132p0 broadsheet. Margins are 3p0 on the top, bottom, left and right sides. One pica should separate each of the six columns.

REASON – Major newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* also work on a six-page grid with the same alignment. This design offers a professional look without overwhelming the reader with too much information packed into a small area. The alignment also avoids spacing acting as a distraction.
FRONT PAGE

DESIGN – Page One should include the top news on campus and in Abilene. The top left should include the Optimist social media handles. The middle should have the Optimist logo on top of the newspaper identification, and the righthand side should countdown an event.

01 NAME PLATE – Bodoni bold, 92 point
02 SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES – Garamond italic, 12 point
03 IDENTIFICATION – Garamond, 12 point
04 COUNT DOWN NUMBER – Montserrat semibold, 43 point
05 COUNT DOWN WORDS – Garamond regular, bold, 18 point
06 VOLUME/ISSUE – Garamond italic, 12 point
07 DATE – Garamond bold (day), regular (date), 12 point
08 WEATHER LETTERS – Garamond italic, 12 point
09 PREVIEW PAGE NUMBERS – Montserrat semibold, 30 point
10 PREVIEWS – Garamond, 12 point
11 HORIZONTAL DIVIDING LINES – 2 point
12 VERTICAL DIVIDING LINES – 1 point
Fire destroys Reporter-News roof, displaces staff

LAUREN FRANCO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Donors of firefighters responded to a fire that destroyed the roof of the Abilene Reporter-News building in downtown and forced the newspaper’s staff to evacuate.

John Bennett, Abilene Fire Department deputy chief, said it is too early to determine the cause of the fire and the extent of damages. Water flooded the basement and the roof was burned through.

"Anytime you get an older building downtown, which has been renovated and remodeled several times over..."
DESIGN – Page two includes news from campus and Abilene when necessary. It is an informative page, and includes the events column and weekly Police Log.

Page Three is also a news page, and should include ads for the week. There is no difference in type of content on each page, but should be organized based on importance – more relevant stories should be on page two.

NEWS PAGES

EVENTS – Montserrat bold, 10 point
EVENTS LINES – 1 point
EVENT DATE – Garamond italic, 10 point
EVENT NAME – Garamond, 10 point
POLICE LOG DATE/TIME – Montserrat bold, 10 point
POLICE LOG CALLS – Garamond, 10 point
POLICE LOG LIST – Montserrat regular, 8 point
POLICE WEEKLY TIP – Garamond, 10 point
CLOSING SQUARE – 1x1 pica, black
FEATURE PAGE

DESIGN – The feature page should include a profile of someone or something relevant to the readers. Because writing is more artistic, design should be consistent and display information creatively.

Features can be formatted on a three-column to six-column grid. The feature page must have a dominant element, usually a photograph of the subject.

01  **HEADING** – Montserrat bold, 60-72 point
02  **SUBHEAD** – Garamond italic, 24-30 point
03  **DROP CAPS** – Garamond, three lines tall
04  **COLUMNS** – Three or six, justify with last line aligned left
05  **SUBHEADS** – Montserrat bold, 11 point
OPINION PAGE

DESIGN – The opinion page, typically page 5, should consist of editorials, cartoons, staff columns, Tweets when necessary and the masthead. This page serves to start conversation for and with the audience about relevant topics on campus and around Abilene.

01 ISSUE/TAKE ID – Garamond bold, 12 point
02 ISSUE/TAKE PARAGRAPH – Garamond, 10 point
03 CONTACT INFORMATION – Garamond italic, 10 point
04 STAFF LIST NAME – Garamond bold, 9 point
05 STAFF LIST POSITION – Garamond, 9 point
06 CARTOON – Four columns wide, no caption
SPORTS PAGE

DESIGN – The sports page should include recaps from the week prior, previews of the upcoming week and features when available or necessary. In the right column, standings for sports in season should sit on top of players to watch. At the bottom of the page, weekly predictions should include paragraphs and mugshots from four staff members and logos and statistics from both schools.

01 STANDINGS – Montserrat bold, 14 point
02 SPORTS IN STANDINGS – Garamond italic, 12 point
03 TEAMS IN STANDINGS – Montserrat, 7.5 point
04 PLAYERS TO WATCH – Montserrat bold, 9 point
05 PARAGRAPH IN PTW – Montserrat, 7.5 point
06 SPORT PREVIEW – Montserrat bold, 32 point
07 STATISTIC WORDS – Montserrat bold, 12 point
08 STATISTIC NUMBERS – Montserrat, 10 point
09 PREDICTION BYLINES – Montserrat bold, 10 point; Montserrat regular, 7.5 point
10 PREDICTION PARAGRAPHS – Montserrat, 7.5 point
11 PREDICTION SCORES – Montserrat semibold, 7.5 point
DESIGN
LAUREN FRANCO  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

On Wednesday, Student Government Association passed four resolutions regarding elections and another regarding constitutional amendments in its first-ever Constitutional Convention.

C.R. 95.33 formally called for the implementation of the new constitution, which called for a restructuring of SGA and the creation of a judicial branch called the Judicial Board. The resolution passed unanimously after about 30 minutes of discussion.

Ty Kelley, executive president, said the executive cabinet found it necessary to have an unbiased body within the elections and voting process. Previously, the president and cabinet were the residing authoritative body over elections.

The board will consist of two associate justices and one chief justice, and all terms, powers and responsibilities will be established in the bylaws.

Justices will be appointed by the SGA president, and the Senate will confirm them by a two-thirds majority. Board appointments are irrevocable except in cases of misconduct. Kelley said the executive cabinet prefers that board members are appointed during their freshman year and serve until graduation, but can be any classification.

Also, justices will serve on the Disciplinary Review Board in case a student gets kicked out of the university for a disciplinary infraction, and review legislation that might be unconstitutional.

In addition, juniors will now be able to run for president and vice president so they have the possibility of serving consecutive terms.

Congress will now be called the Senate, and each class will have 10 representatives open to any student of no particular area of campus, specific dorm or college. Each class will also have a president and vice president as

BODY COPY

DESIGN – Garamond should be used for all body copy, and should be 10-point type. Leading should be 11.5. Tracking should stay between -30 and 30 to avoid text looking too tight or loose, respectively.

The first paragraph should not be indented, but all succeeding paragraphs should be indented one pica.

All body copy should be locked to the baseline for a cleaner look and easier read.

REASON – Serif typefaces should be used for body copy because they show professionalism, and their purpose serves to inform readers. Not indenting the first paragraph indicates the beginning of a story.
BYLINES

DESIGN – Bylines are at the start of every story and opinion piece.

Bylines for news, features and all sports stories should be all caps, 10-point Garamond. Names should be bold type and sit on top of the author’s title in regular type. Bylines for opinion pieces should have a mugshot on the left-hand side, editorial name in Montserrat semibold, name and position similar to a regular byline and identification in italics. Both should be text wrapped one pica.

REASON – Using all caps establishes a hierarchy above the story, and using bold for the name and regular for the position establishes consistency within the hierarchy. Differentiating between the two is important because it also helps the reader establish an understanding of the different content. Taking a more extensive approach to opinion bylines gives readers more context to the opinion.

REGULAR

LAUREN FRANCO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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OPINION

QUIETE FRANCO-LY

LAUREN FRANCO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Senior convergence journalism major from Eauless

Realizing it was my last game to shoot for the university, I held back tears as I walked from the March Madness stage to the press conference area.

As I listened to head coach Joe Golding talk about the experience and the three seniors express gratitude for the program, the tears started to flow.

Teams were great (or winning, for that matter), but the senior class now arrived in the middle of the Div. I transition, so I expected the common excuse for skipping was how boring it was to watch each team lose so often. I’m pretty sure the chapel hat had more consistent attendance than the student body, except for when
DESIGN – Captions should be 10-point Garamond italics and describe, in detail, the photograph. Text should be right justified. Captions are under the photograph with 1/2 pica of space between the photograph and the text.

When describing contents in the photograph, all people should be identified by their name, classification, major and hometown.

Photograph credit should have two lines, the top “Photo by” in Garamond italic and the bottom should be the photographer’s name in Garamond bold, a vertical line and the photographer’s position in Garamond regular.

REASON – Using three different typefaces establishes a hierarchy. The caption does not take away from the photo, but complements it.
HEADLINES

DESIGN – Headlines should be Garamond bold. Three-to-six column headlines should not be smaller than 24-point and not exceed 36-point. One-column headlines should be 18-point. Type size should be in increments of 6.

The leading of multiple-line headlines should be the type size plus three.

The tracking of headlines should not go beyond -10 and 10.

REASON – The type size of headlines should be representative of their importance. The larger the headline, the more important the news and/or information. Headlines should decrease in type size as they go down the page.

01 SGA proposes constitutional amendments, judicial branch
02 SGA proposes constitutional
03 SGA proposes constitutional amendments, judicial branch
04 SGA proposes constitutional amendments, judicial branch
05 SGA proposes constitutional amendments, judicial branch

01 Garamond bold, 36 point
02 Garamond bold, 30 point
03 Garamond bold, 24 point
04 Garamond bold, 24 point
05 Garamond bold, 18 point
LAUREN FRANCO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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Justices will be appoint-ed by the SGA president, and the Senate will confirm...

MUGSHOTS

DESIGN – Mugshots should be six lines of body copy in height and half of a column wide (7p0 by 4p1). Only last names should be used to identify the subject, and should be Garamond italic, 10-point and right justified.

Mugshots should be tightly cropped, excluding the shoulders and only showing the neck and face.

REASON – Mugshots identify a speaker without having to use a full photo.
PAGE NUMBERS & FOLIOS

DESIGN – Page numbers should be at the top of the page within the margin.

Even-numbered pages should have “Page XX” in Garamond regular, 10-point on the left side of a vertical line. On the right side of the vertical line should be the page category in Garamond italic, 10-point. On the right side of the page should be the date (Weekday, Month, DD, YYYY) in Garamond regular, 10-point.

Odd-numbered pages should have the date on the left-hand side and the page category, vertical line and page number on the right-hand side.

REASON – Even and odd pages should mirror each other for a sense of consistency and easier readability.
“The goal of that was to prevent loopholes, but also to just hold candidates accountable and make sure that everyone is playing on the same playing field,” Kelley said.

The problems became prevalent to him when he and Rachel Jones, executive

Continued from Page 1

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PULL QUOTES

DESIGN – Pull quotes should be aligned with the top of the body text in the third or fourth column. The quote should be Garamond italic, 10-point. The quotation mark on the left should be Garamond regular, 60-point. The gray box should be black, tinted at 50 percent, and the text should be Montserrat semibold, 10-point. The text should identify the speaker with relevance to the quote. The content of a pull quote should remain in the story.

REASON – Pull quotes give readers a break in the text and a visual to understand the story better. Pulling the most relevant quotes and putting them in graphic form emphasizes their importance to the story.

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Also, justices will serve on the Disciplinary Review Board in case a student gets kicked out of the university for a disciplinary infraction, and review legislation that might be unconstitutional.

“Obviously there’s problems that we probably missed but for the most part, I feel like we made huge progress.”

TY KELLY, SGA PRESIDENT

well as a multicultural representative. Kelley said the roles and responsibilities are the same.

“We felt like it was necessary and about time we made a sweeping change that helped clarify everything,” Kelley said.

“Obviously there’s problems that
Hines returns to crown

ALLAYNA FORD
MANAGING EDITOR

Lauryn Hines, 2007 Homecoming Queen, will crown this year’s Queen at the football game on Saturday afternoon.

Every year the homecoming queen is crowned by the returning queen from 10 years ago, which is referred to as the coming home court.

Hines was crowned queen in 2007, but graduated in 2008. While a student, she was the historian for Sigma Theta Chi, participated in Sing Song every year, served as a Welcome Week director, an ACU camp counselor and worked in the admissions office.
FULL SPREADS
THE CREATION CREATES
Santana uses creative passions to unify campus

The story of Santana's efforts to integrate art into the campus.
We’re here to endorse endorsements

ACU Athletics: Thank you for the best four years

QUITE FRANCO-LV

Read more at News & Sports Online: app.fisher.edu/news
HYPING THE TEAM

How Hupfer's excitement energizes the team
Thank you to Kenneth Pybus, Doug Mendenhall and Nil Santana for helping me create this guide, and inspiring me to challenge myself to be the best I can.
REFERENCES
