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Happy Medium High School Magazine Development Program

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High School Magazine Development Program

Happy Medium's High School Magazine Development Program (HSMDP) provides high school students with the skills and opportunity to start a politics magazine at their school.

High school students participate in a series of workshops led by members of Happy Medium, a student-run political publishing group at Binghamton University. The new magazine is published by Happy Medium, and undergraduate members provide ongoing mentorship to the high school students.

A pilot program was facilitated at Chenango Valley Middle/High School (CV) during March and April, 2023.

- The program walked the high school students through the process of creating a politics magazine at their school.
- CV implemented HSMDP as a supplement to the New York State Seal of Civic Readiness initiative, of which they are in the pilot program.
- The CV students created a name, brand, and editorial guidelines for their new publication.
- Three high schoolers were selected to serve as copy editors and learned about the production process of creating a print edition.
- These three students will serve on the editorial board of the magazine next year and will continue the publication as an extracurricular club.
- The pilot program was funded by a Community Engagement Faculty Teaching and Research Enrichment Grant from the Binghamton University Center for Civic Engagement.

Valley Unveiled—a new politics magazine at Chenango Valley Middle/High School—will release its first print edition in early May, 2023.

All articles are opinion pieces written by CV students. Topics covered include:

- TikTok's affect on teenagers' mental health
- Consumerism and its effects on the environment
- Nuclear fusion as a solution to the energy crisis
- Poverty in Broome County
- The positive mental benefits of beauty in architecture
- Book banning in US schools

These articles and more will be published electronically on a website built and designed by the students.

Workshop 1: Introduction to Political Journalism

Students learned about ethical journalism, the give-and-take that comes with working with editors for a publication, and the rules that publications set for themselves to ensure journalistic quality.

Workshop 2: Research Practices

Students were introduced to concepts of research in the context of credible political journalism. A chart illustrating the bias of various news outlets was used to facilitate discussion on the differences between accurate political reporting and political entertainment media. Finally, students were briefed on citation format, proper paraphrasing techniques, and how to utilize the Happy Medium style guide.

Workshop 3: Productive Political Discourse

Students engaged in a discussion on the importance of respectful and productive political discourse. Students learned how to write opinion pieces that are well-sourced, well-argued, and digestible to the magazine's student readership.

Workshop 4: The Editing Process

Students gained exposure to the ins and outs of copy editing and peer review. Topics included strategies for fact-checking, correction of mechanical errors, and how to edit articles to best represent the desired style of the magazine and maintain a respectful and productive tone.

Producing Scholarship: This program is meant to serve as research into how professors from other departments or disciplines might implement similar programs. One of the main concerns for education that has emerged from the pandemic is a disruption in learning, leading to students who are less prepared for college work than in the past. For this program specifically, students are doing the research and civic writing that we continue to cover in the Binghamton University Writing Initiative, including in our first-year writing courses. This program helps bridge the gap between where students are after this educational disruption and them being better prepared to enter our classrooms at Binghamton University or other colleges. Other departments or disciplines might find similar workshops helpful.