

**TEXAS STUDENT MEDIA APPLICATION FORM
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE DAILY TEXAN**

Term of Office: June 1, 2019 - May 31, 2020

This application and supporting materials must be submitted to the TSM Business Office (HSM 3.200 / William Randolph Hearst Building, 2500 Whitis Avenue) by **Monday, February 4, 2019 at 12:00 p.m.**

Candidates are due to be certified at the TSM Board meeting scheduled for **Friday, February 8, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.**

Please plan to attend and discuss your application with the Operating Trustees.

Applicant Information

Spencer Buchner
Name

shb665
UT EID

sbuchner@utexas.edu
Email Address

Plan II, Journalism
Major

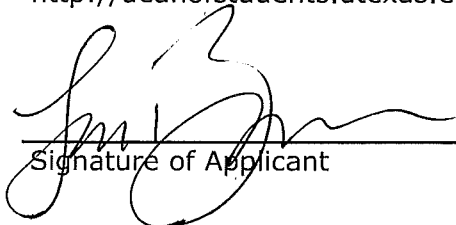
Applicant Attestation / Authorization for Release of Information

(please circle yes or no for each)

- Y / N 1. I am currently enrolled as a UT-Austin student.
- Y / N 2. By the start of my term of office, I will (if an undergraduate) have completed 12 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 2.0 or (if a graduate student) have completed 9 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 3.0.
- Y / N 3. I agree to complete and pass a media law and libel test administered by the Editorial Adviser prior to taking position.
- Y / N 4. By the start of my term of office, I will have completed at least one semester as a permanent staff member of The Daily Texan in opinion.
- Y / N 5. By the start of my term of office, I will have completed at least one semester as a permanent or issue staff member of The Daily Texan outside opinion.
- Y / N 6. I have obtained and included signatures from at least five current permanent staff members of The Daily Texan supporting my application.

Note: The TSM Board may certify candidates by waiving one of requirements 4, 5, or 6 by an affirmative vote of two-thirds majority of the voting members present.

I certify that to the best of my ability I have given true and accurate information concerning my scholastic and experience qualifications, and hereby grant permission for the Office of the Director, Texas Student Media, to verify said information. Further, I understand that this information will be provided to the TSM Board of Operating Trustees and will become part of the public record of TSM. I understand that I am subject to the TSM Election Code, as detailed in Chapter 7 of the TSM Handbook, and to the Campus-Wide Election Code and the Election Timeline (available at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/campuswideelections/>).


Signature of Applicant

1/23/19
Date

Signatures of at least 5 current permanent staff members of The Daily Texan:

John Lindy
AUDIO EDITOR

Keshaw
Associate Sports Editor

Gioster Handler
COPY DESK CHIEF

Ann
Senior Photographer

Carly
Associate Photo Editor

Reyn
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

My experience at The Daily Texan consists of (list positions and dates):

Columnist, September 2017 - May 2018

Associate Editor, May 2018 - December 2018

Opinion Designer, January 2019 -

Producer (Audio Dept.), January 2019

It is recommended that you include supporting materials such as:

A résumé

A letter outlining your qualifications, goals, plans for the position

Letters of recommendation

Samples of published work (on 8 1/2" x 11" paper)

Spencer Buckner

sbuckner@utexas.edu

(281) 468-3997

EDUCATION

The University of Texas at Austin Plan II Honors, Major May 2021
Journalism, Major
Cumulative GPA: 4.00

EXPERIENCE

The Daily Texan - Audio Producer, Austin, Texas Jan. 2019-Present

- Collaborated with columnists and reporters to make written pieces into successful audio pieces
- Edited and mixed professional audio in Adobe Audition and Apple Garageband

The Daily Texan - Associate Editor, Austin, Texas May 2018-Dec. 2018

- Researched, wrote, and edited investigative editorials as a member of the Editorial Board
- Led a team of twenty columnists, providing mentorship and feedback on their columns

MJ for Texas - Intern Fellow, Round Rock, Texas May 2018-Oct. 2018

- Led community outreach and volunteer recruitment efforts as a intern field organizer
- Trained new interns in voter outreach and in the NGP VAN online database

The Daily Texan - Columnist, Austin, Texas Sept. 2017-May 2018

- Wrote over twenty columns on weekly and bi-weekly deadline
- Sparked policy change for mental health and electoral policy through self-written columns

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE AND ACTIVITIES

KVRX - DJ and Host, Austin, Texas Sept. 2018-Present

- Co-hosted "The Roundup," a weekly political analysis radio show
- Co-hosted "Three Guys (Burgers and Fries)," a weekly pop-culture and music radio show

Longhorns for Voting Reform - Communications Director, Austin Texas Nov. 2017-Dec. 2018

- Assisted in passing legislation to reform UT's Student Government voting system to Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)
- Developed action plans and contacts for reforming the City of Austin's voting system to RCV

HONORS

- Second Place, 2018 Policy Writing Challenge November 2018
- Ron Gibson Award for Journalism Excellence May 2018
- Lake Travis High School Salutatorian June 2017
- Speech and Debate State Champion, National Finalist April 2017

To the Texas Student Media Board,

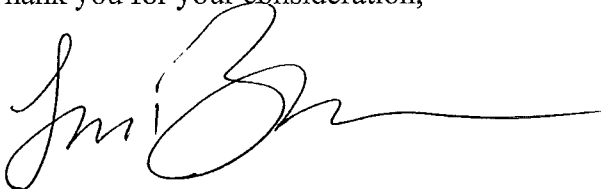
I am writing you to announce that I hope to serve as editor-in-chief of The Daily Texan this next academic year. Since my first semester at The University of Texas, the Texan's Opinion department has become a second home to me as I have served as a columnist, associate editor and designer. I sincerely hope that I am able to continue to live in the Texan basement this upcoming year and bring my vision to the paper that means so much to me.

I believe that for the Opinion department to better serve the paper and our audience, we must emphasize collaboration within The Daily Texan. Though it can often feel that Opinion staffers are a world all their own at the paper, this doesn't have to be and should not be the case. As editor-in-chief, I would work to strengthen the power and reach of our investigative editorials by working directly with leaders in the News and Projects departments to ensure that we're working together and not racing against each other. In tandem with that, I would help direct the editorial board in dedicating more time and energy to writing and investigating editorials, given their unparalleled ability to bring light to issues at our university. In addition, I will seek greater collaboration with our Video, Audio and Photo departments to bring Opinion pieces to life in formats that are exciting and engaging.

The Texan's recruiting process is also an area that demands improvement. The Texan still fails to be truly representative of UT's campus, and efforts to change this are moving slower than one would hope. As editor-in-chief, I would aim to not only increase visibility and direct recruitment to communities that are underrepresented at the Texan, but also continue and revive project partnerships with other student media organizations. Through these projects, our paper has helped to elevate marginalized voices on campus and build connections with our fellow student media organizations. The path to a more representative Texan is one that we can't forge alone, and I hope to continue to work within our paper and campus community to reach it.

Through my experiences at The Daily Texan and in organizations around campus, I believe that I will be a trusted, collaborative, and progressive voice for the Texan. I hope to work with the board in the future to ensure the Texan serves and represents all students.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Spencer Buckner', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Spencer Buckner

When Gage Krause and Tailai Liu applied for on-campus housing their freshman year, they were both on the late end of the application timeline. Neither were shocked, then, when they received a notice that they would be placed in supplemental housing, temporary rooms made available when the university runs out of regular dorms.

While Liu's experience is a supplemental housing success story, Krause's reflects the system's greatest weaknesses. For two students entering the same type of housing, their stories should not show this much discrepancy in their experiences.

"I wasn't really notified about where I would be living," Krause recalls. When he eventually got his assignment, a repurposed TV room in Roberts Residence Hall, he found that while the room was massive: He had five roommates instead of one, bunks instead of beds and dining tables instead of desks.

As the noise and conflicting schedules of six people rendered the room unusable for studying and often sleeping, Krause, now a government and philosophy junior, often found himself leaving his dorm for long periods of time. Liu, a business freshman who currently lives in supplemental housing, says it is "horror stories" like this that made him anxious when he got the notification that he was on the supplemental list.

Without much of an option, Liu decided to sign the Division of Housing and Food Service's supplemental contract and was pleasantly surprised at the result. Liu currently lives in the San Jacinto Dormitory and only has two roommates, but his room is nevertheless much larger than a regular dorm room. There are no bunk beds, no dining tables either and Liu and his roommates each have their own desks.

Even when Liu was given the opportunity to move to a permanent dorm room in Whitis Court earlier this month, like 75 percent of students in supplemental housing he turned it down, as he and his roommates prefer their room to a permanent one. Krause, on the other hand, took the opportunity to leave as soon as he got it — a decision that's hard to fault him for.

About two weeks before spring break, Krause got an email saying that he could move to a permanent dorm. Even though his freshman year was almost over and he would be paired with a new roommate, he took the offer, rejecting the temporary housing that nearly became permanent.

Ryan Colvin, assistant director of occupancy management at DHFS explained that "over time, (DHFS) gathered student feedback and worked with staff to determine which rooms make good supplemental rooms." The feedback Colvin cites has turned Roberts F005, Krause's old room, back into a TV lounge — but it won't necessarily stay that way forever. The past two years have seen less on-campus applicants than normal, meaning that for lasting improvement we need a change in *policy, not luck.*

With Creekside Residence Hall likely being replaced (<http://www.dailytexanonline.com/2017/08/06/university-considers-replace-of-all-male-creekside-dormitory>) in upcoming years, Colvin anticipates the DHFS will have to “maximize” supplemental housing space, either finding new rooms to house students in or adding more beds in current rooms. While out of commission now, Krause’s room could easily end up housing future Longhorns, and rooms like Liu’s that are currently comfortable could wind up being claustrophobic.

Progress has been made toward bettering UT’s supplemental housing experience, but still a quarter of those in supplemental housing opt out when given the chance. With possible shortages on the horizon, the DHFS must not jeopardize consistency of quality for a temporary housing fix.

Buckner is a Plan II and government freshman. He is a columnist.

0 Comments The Daily Texan

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“If you suspect this student has engaged in scholastic dishonesty, you are urged to report the matter to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.”

This was the only message from the University that professor Lee Walker received when a student dropped his class this semester for mental health reasons.

“Why is that our only question?” Walker asked. The answer, it appears, is a continued denial of the importance of student mental health. As UT’s administration continues to grapple with the continued reckoning over campus mental health, it should look into empowering its professors to take a more active role in supporting their students.

Due to her struggle with OCD, psychology sophomore Haley Virella is diligent in working with professors to get the accommodations she needs to be comfortable in class. These accommodations aren’t always enough, though. After a mental health crisis, Virella dropped her Italian class last semester.

“My professor emailed me in concern a few weeks after I stopped showing up,” Virella said. “Her support helped me feel like I was doing the right thing ... she helped me feel justified in my actions, and not guilty (about them).”

When Virella dropped her UGS course this semester? Silence.

Professors are often the most vital promoter of student mental health, but when the University doesn’t provide clear means for professors to help, students like Virella can fall through the cracks.

Kelly Soucy, director of Student Emergency Services, said that over 60 percent of callers to the University’s Behavioral Concerns Advice Line are faculty and staff — often calling about their students. The BCAL, a 24-hour number that anyone can call regarding concerns about any Longhorn, helped direct service to over 2,600 Longhorns last year alone.

“Someone called in because their friend was suicidal,” Soucy recalls. “UTPD did a welfare check and made sure that person was safe. That person didn’t harm themselves because of that call.”

It would seem like a service that saves lives would be heavily advertised to both students and staff. The BCAL, however, is primarily advertised through word of mouth — something Soucy noted was being worked on.

While Walker didn't know about the BCAL, he nonetheless followed up with the student that dropped his class to ensure that he was healthy. Not all professors have the time or energy to do the same. Why not, then, add a single sentence to the automated email that Walker received that informs professors on how to call the BCAL when a student drops? A simple reminder of the under-advertised resources that we have available could help professors ensure a student gets the help that they need.

"It ought to be simple," Walker implored. "It's like a fire alarm. Break the glass and hit the button."

"The email comes from the academic side, but we would love to collaborate and be a part of that message," Soucy told me. With Student Emergency Services on board, it's on the registrar to modify the "drop notice" email that professors across campus receive. The registrar's office, however, was unavailable for comment.

The stories of Haley Virella, Lee Walker and Kelly Soucy are telling. Our University has a potential solution at its hands that could bring a Longhorn in crisis the care they need. All it needs is to ensure that our professors are not only aware of it, but able to use it to help their students.

Maybe the next time Walker, or another professor, receives a "drop notice" email, it will also say the following:

"If you have any concerns about the mental health of this student, call (<https://besafe.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>) the BCAL at (512) 232-5050."

Buckner is a Plan II and government freshman from Austin.
