Dear Class Secretary,

Thank you for agreeing to serve! You play a vital role in the function of the Skidmore College Alumni Association by linking classmates with the College and with each other. The most effective way to do this is through Class Notes. Class Notes is one of the first sections people turn to when they receive their Scope; it enables them to catch up on the latest news in the lives of classmates and other Skidmore graduates. A newsy class notes column in Scope is the primary goal of a class secretary.

You do great things! The efforts of class secretaries often drive the attendance at reunions, reunite old friends, and help alumni network professionally and socially. Reading about alumni who volunteer for the College inspires others to get involved as regional event coordinators, admissions contacts, career mentors, and class officers. Some of the connections fostered by class secretaries have even resulted in marriages (You’d be surprised how many!)

Ways to reach out. Ask me to send out a card, letter, e-mail or e-card (you provide the text) asking for news. (See Appendix A, Sample Communications.) Order a current class list (includes contact data, birthday, spouse’s name, profession, etc. Connect with your class president, agents, and other volunteers who may be interacting with classmates. Reach out to classmates individually by phone or e-mail. Send out a newsletter featuring expanded, class-specific communication like memories of Skidmore days, pre-reunion news, or topics relevant to your particular class (babies, travels, etc.).

Style and length. Class note columns are written in a third person journalistic reporting style, except for the opening and closing paragraphs, where typically the class secretary uses his or her own first person voice to share a bit about personal news. The style is clear and concise, with enough detail to answer the questions, “who, what, where, when, and why?” Personal commentary on another alum’s news is best avoided; instead include an alum’s own direct quote to enhance the item.

Here’s how. The attached Class Secretary Handbook outlines your duties in detail, lists the Scope publication deadlines and style guidelines, and provides useful information to help you fulfill your role. Again, don’t hesitate to call me if anything in the handbook is confusing or you have concerns about something—for any reason at all really! I’m thrilled that you’re on board and I’m sure you’ll find your position a lot of fun and very rewarding. Thanks again!

Sincerely,

Mary Monigan

Mary Monigan
Alumni News Editor
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FOR INFORMATION/ASSISTANCE, CONTACT:

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518-580-5669  fax  
1-800-584-0115  toll free phone  
mmonigan@skidmore.edu
CLASS SECRETARY—THE JOB

TERM OF OFFICE
After election in the spring of senior year, at Reunion, or after appointment to fill an unexpired term, the class secretary serves until the next scheduled class reunion and plays a vital role in continuing alumni interest in the College and each other.

DUTIES
The secretary's duties include submitting news columns for the four issues of Scope that are published yearly. These columns may be augmented with two other communications from the secretary, which consist of news not included in Scope columns or other greetings or information. Detailed instructions and materials for preparing copy, along with guidelines for style, are included in this booklet.

- Solicit news from classmates via postcards, e-mail, letters, and or telephone.

- Work with Advancement editorial associate to coordinate schedule for news plea mailings and annual class secretary letter.

- Follow Scope editorial guidelines for selecting and editing news items.

- Submit work electronically (preferred) to Advancement editorial associate on publication deadlines.

- Share significant items with key class officers, i.e., fund chair, president.

DURING A REUNION YEAR
During reunion celebration year, secretaries are encouraged two other forms of communication—newsletter, e-card, a class web page (created for you to use) or Facebook group posting (created by you or a classmate)—for the purpose of encouraging attendance and updating classmates regarding reunion developments. Web postings and e-cards are an excellent means of getting classmates’ attention and conveying bits of information. These communications may be planned with your Reunion committee and spaced appropriately or included along with correspondence from the committee.
RESIGNATION

If the secretary finds it necessary to terminate the specified term of office, resignation in writing is to be submitted to the class president as well as the Office of Alumni Affairs.

AFTER ELECTION OR APPOINTMENT

Each new secretary should prepare a letter of introduction and submit it to the Office of Alumni Affairs shortly after taking office. This letter is printed on campus and mailed to all members of a class, along with a form for reporting news back to the secretary. News that will not fit within the parameters set by the Scope editors may be used in a class communication. The new secretary should thank the previous secretary in the introductory letter.

The secretary continuing in office after Reunion is not expected to submit a letter of introduction but may wish to prepare a letter to the class in June, highlighting Reunion activities and asking for news for the next Scope deadline.

HOW TO SOLICIT NEWS

- Request a detailed class list from Mary Monigan at the Office of Alumni Affairs at 518-580-5617 or via e-mail at mmonigan@skidmore.edu. You will receive current information including birthday, nickname, marital status, spouse’s name, business and home address, professional title, etc., as well as a list of your class officers and class agent volunteers. You can use the list to phone or e-mail classmates to solicit news.

- Send an e-card*. Same general idea and process as a class letter, but a much faster method that features color photos or campus and/or other graphics, and can include links to your class Web or Facebook page. People tend to respond within a day or two. Ask Mary Monigan to send out an e-card to your class (she will do this via a class list serve under your signature). Let her know if you’d like to provide your own text. Note: You will receive a class secretary reminder e-mail from Mary about six weeks prior to every Scope deadline asking you if you’d like her to send out an e-card for you.

- For classes prior to 1965, Mary will, upon your request, mail out hardcopy, preaddressed, detachable postcards* that classmates can fill out and return to you directly.

- Send a class letter*. If you or (your class president or reunion chair) plan to send out a class letter, consider including a news plea form and incorporating a request for news. Contact Mary to get the process started. You supply the message; Mary will take care of the formatting and mailing.

- If you have a class social networking site, you may want to ask classmates if they would be willing to have all or part of their postings published in Scope.

- Phone or e-mail your class agents, who often have regular contact with classmates or their own news to report. (Note: long distance phone charges will be reimbursed by the Office of Alumni Affairs). Ask your fund chair and class agents to take an extra moment when making fundraising calls to find out what classmates are doing. They can then report that information to you for use in class notes.

For all news pleas, contact Mary Monigan at 518-580-5617 or mmonigan@skidmore.edu. Tell her what you’d like the card to say, and she will take care of the rest!

* See Appendix A for samples of class letters, e-cards, and postcards
THE CLASS SECRETARY’S VOICE

Class notes are essentially news items, written in a third-person reportorial style, with brief quotes from classmates to personalize them. (Please do not submit a note that consists entirely of a quote from a classmate.) The class secretary uses his or her own voice (first-person) when sharing about his or her own life in first and last paragraphs. Read sample columns in Appendix A for examples.

PUBLISHABLE ITEMS

Suggested items for publication in Scope: achievements, honors and awards, career data, education, volunteer work, travel experiences, events of interest to the general constituency, marriages, births (first names only), and adoptions. Scope will also include e-mail addresses.

The secretary may use the column in Scope to report other items, such as information regarding reunion (e.g., a save the date reminder), class fund, lost classmates, etc. The secretary should follow up with classmates regarding any items that seem incomplete or vague.

Information received in the Office of Alumni Affairs about deceased alumni is written up and mailed to the class secretary, who may although not required to write a brief expression of sympathy, including a personal remembrance by a classmate(s) of the deceased at the end of the class notes column if possible. Obituary notices written by the Office will appear separately under In Memoriam at the end of Scope. (See sample condolence expression on page 9.)

NON-PUBLISHABLE ITEMS

Items that will not be published in Scope include: pregnancies (report the birth after it occurs); future plans, including vacations, graduate school, relocations (again, report after the fact); and lengthy commentary about trips, weddings, parties, etc. (please summarize the classmate’s comments in a quote or two, and mention any other alumni involved).

QUOTING LETTERS

It should be understood by your classmates that parts of their letters or comments may be omitted in the class news column. A brief quote or excerpt, or an accurate paraphrase, is usually sufficient. If a classmate has something to say that is particularly clever, you may quote it in your column.
GUIDELINES FOR STYLE

CHICAGO STYLE MANUAL

Like all magazines and newspapers, Scope utilizes a specific style guide for class note reporting, which is the most lengthy single section of the magazine. The guide, which follows, is based on the Chicago Style Manual.

NAMES OF CLASSMATES AND OTHER ALUMNI

Include classmates’ complete names (first, maiden, and married) if you know them. (Louise Smith Allen). If the alum is a member of another class, include the class numeral after the name (John Smith ’76). Use boldface for all alumni names.

For married couples when only one is an alum, include the name of the spouse and the complete name of the alum. It is preferred that the name of the non-college spouse appear first to avoid confusion (Henry and Louise Smith Allen). If both are alumni, include the class year where appropriate (Henry ’52 and Louise Smith Allen ’53).

SENTENCE SPACING

Scope uses newspaper style spacing between sentences, that is, just one space at the end of each sentence, rather than two. (He was married in June. Alumni in attendance were…)

ABBREVIATIONS

Spell out “and” except in cases like “AT&T.”

Spell out “percent” (not %).

Abbreviate the name of a state after the name of a city (Phoenix, AZ), but spell it out when referring to the state alone. (“She lives in Arizona.”)

Spell out the names of schools and universities (College of William and Mary), except in the case of nationally recognized abbreviations (MIT, Penn State, UMass). If you refer to the institution more than once, subsequent references may be abbreviated.

Use acronyms for names of organizations, agencies, etc., if they are well known (NATO, UNICEF, NASA).

Abbreviate degrees (PhD, MA, BS, BA, MD, MSW)

PUNCTUATION OF ABBREVIATED DEGREES AND STATES

Do not use punctuate abbreviated degree titles (PhD, MA, BS, BA, MD, MSW) or states (NY, MA, CT, AL, IA, MT)
CAPITALIZATION

Academic degrees are capitalized when abbreviated (MA, PhD), but not when spelled out (master’s degree, doctorate).

Capitalize place names (Middle West and East Coast, but not northern city or southern route). The correct forms for geographic features and political divisions are listed in atlases and gazetteers, and the most common are in dictionaries.

Capitalize formal titles of offices and organizations, but in some cases distinguish between federal and state bodies, major and subordinate bodies and so on (Senate, House, Finance Committee, Supreme Court, Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, Juvenile Court). However, such terms can be generic terms as well (the states have senates, houses of representatives, supreme courts, etc.).

Do not capitalize titles of officials unless they appear directly before a proper name (President Bill Clinton; Al Gore, vice president). Similarly, don’t capitalize terms denoting job status (director of social services).

NUMERALS

Numbers from one through nine should be spelled out. (There were seven classmates at the luncheon). Use figures for all others and for ages of children or grandchildren (Daughter Mary, 7, plays soccer).

Use figures with abbreviations of measurement and with decimals, fractions, and percentages (3 oz., 3.5, 3-1/2, 3 percent).

Always use cardinal numbers for days of the month (October 3), not ordinal numbers (October 3rd, October third).

Spell out numbers that begin sentences (One hundred and forty people attended) or reword the sentence so that the year isn’t first.

Use numerals to describe decades, (the ’60s, the 1960s)

ITALICS and QUOTATION MARKS

Use italics for titles of books, published poems, plays, movies, newspapers, periodicals, musical compositions, ships, paintings, works of art, etc.

Use “quotation marks” for the titles of articles appearing in books or magazines, or to indicate a coined, ironic, or slang word or term not accompanied by a definition.

The period and comma should be placed inside quotations marks; the colon and semicolon are placed outside quotation marks.

Use quotation marks for unusual nicknames (“Hoddy,” “Fluff,” “Shorty”).

Use ‘single quotation marks’ to enclose a quotation within a quotation. (We received the
following instruction: “Proceed cautiously until you hear ‘All clear’ from the guard.”

Use quotation marks to enclose text following such terms as entitled, the word, marked, designated, referred to as, etc.

COMMAS

Use a comma before “and,” “or,” “nor,” in a series of three or more words or phrases. (“The safe contained coins, jewelry, and documents.” “He came in, sat down, and began to tell his story.”)

A NOTE ABOUT SCOPE EDITING

Scope editors reserve the right to edit copy for length, style, and content and to maintain a general consistency with its style sheet. If scribes want to have a more personal, class-specific, or diary style column, it is best to publish this as a class newsletter.

PREPARING A Scope COLUMN

Copy should be typed on paper, in a word processing document, or in the body of an e-mail. Copy submitted in legible handwriting is also acceptable.

Begin your column with your full name, class, address, and e-mail. If desired, you can include a phone number or fax number for classmates’ use. Note: personal contact information will not appear in the online version of Class Notes.

Include material on all the classmates for whom you have received information; there is no page or word limit for your column. Bear in mind, however, that Scope publishes columns from all alumni classes, and the editorial staff may edit news for clarity, length, and style.

For content this is more personal and class specific, you may want to consider producing a newsletter, print or electronic, or starting a Facebook or other social networking class group. These are better options for detailed information from your classmates’ notes, messages to one another, photos, and editorial comment. See page 6.

Please make every effort to determine the correct spellings of names, schools, companies, and correct titles of positions attained by alumni. Alumni names are always double-checked by the class notes editor for completeness and correct spelling.

E-mail, snail mail, or fax your Scope column to the class notes editor (contact data on front cover) before the scheduled deadline.

PREFERRED

Submitting your Scope column via e-mail is preferred. Include your column as an attachment or in the body of your e-mail message. The e-mail address is: mmonigan@skidmore.edu. If you don’t receive a response confirming receipt of your e-mail within two days, e-mail Mary again or phone her. Also, please mail a backup hardcopy of your column to Mary at the Office of Alumni Affairs & College Events. (Phone and address on cover page.)
FORWARDING INFORMATION UPDATES

All source material should be sent to the Office of Alumni Affairs as soon as possible after news has been compiled for your Scope column. Death notices and address changes, especially, should be forwarded at the earliest possible convenience. Classmates presume that the information they submit for publication is passed on to the Office of Alumni Affairs for the records. If necessary, make a copy for yourself and mail the original to the Office.

DEADLINES AND OVERLAP OF ISSUES

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<thead>
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<th>Scope Issue</th>
<th>Delivered to your mailbox</th>
<th>Class Secretary Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>Delivered in January</td>
<td>September 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Delivered in April</td>
<td>January 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Delivered in September</td>
<td>June 10</td>
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As you can see, columns are due several months in advance of when the magazine is printed and mailed. Scope is published three times a year and laid out from back to front, so that Class Notes and In Memoriam are sent to layout first. It is often confusing to classmates when they sent you some news, say, in late August and then expect to see that news printed in the fall issue that they receive in September.

You may find yourself fielding questions about this time lag and the overlapping of issues. Always feel free to refer queries or concerns to Mary if you’d like. The Alumni Affairs toll-free number is 1-800-584-0115, just ask for Mary Monigan or extension 5617. Her direct number is 1-518-580-5617.
SENDING OTHER CLASS COMMUNICATIONS

The class secretary may send two additional communications yearly, whenever they’d like, to augment Scope columns.

THE NEWSLETTER- PRINT OR ELECTRONIC

The traditional newsletter is appropriate when the class secretary has been bombarded with news from classmates and wishes to supplement her Scope column with detailed accounts of classmates’ activities. Newsletters may include detailed information of weddings, travels, work-related and volunteer activities, and news of children and grandchildren. This is also an appropriate means of conveying class jokes, anecdotes, poems, etc. Newsletters may also include photographs from weddings and mini-reunions. Include the original photograph with your newsletter copy; it will be scanned and reproduced with your newsletter. Be as creative as you like with your class newsletter.

Mail your newsletter to the class notes editor. You may also submit your newsletter via e-mail (mmonigan@skidmore.edu) or by copying it onto CD and mailing it to the office. A printed copy should be included in the event that the diskette is damaged in the mail. Allow three weeks to process and mail your newsletter.

HOLIDAY CARDS, E-CARDS, LETTERS

Alternative communications may be chosen over the traditional newsletter. These may include holiday cards, postcards, flyers, letters, or essays. These are most frequently hardcopy communications, but many alumni find it quicker and easier to respond to an e-card. These communications may report classmates’ news of life experiences, marriage and family, career changes and goals, travels, challenges, and successes. They can be a means of encouraging your classmates to write, to come to Reunion, to pass on information that may be of interest to everyone, or simply to say hello. Photos, clippings, and drawings can be reproduced if the secretary wants to include them in a newsletter or communication. Again, creativity is encouraged.

Note: In order to ensure timely processing, class communications should be sent to the Alumni Office during the weeks between Scope deadlines. Do not submit class communications along with your Scope column since processing of your class communication may be delayed.

CREATE OR POST ON THE CLASS FACEBOOK OR OTHER SOCIAL NETWORK SITE

This is a great way to share news, photos and stories with classmates 24/7 with no lag time for publication. If you are unfamiliar with how to start a group, reach out to a classmate who is active on social networking sites and ask if he or she would either show you how to create a class group or do so for you. You may also contact me directly at mmonigan@skidmore.edu.
EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO DECEASED CLASSMATES IN SCOPE

The class secretary often expresses condolences to the families of recently deceased classmates (or to classmates whose spouses have passed away) in the second to the last paragraph. Of course, this is not required, especially if the class secretary did not personally know the deceased. It is up to the individual secretary’s discretion on a case by case basis.

*Scope* prefers a personal specific remembrance of the deceased classmate (you can ask another classmate who knew the deceased to do this if you’d prefer) rather than a generic statement of sympathy. For example, a preferred expression would read something like this:

“Our condolences to the family of Sue Brown, who died on August 21. Sue is remembered for her love of sharing care packages during freshman year, her watercolor artistry, and most of all, for her dedication to family and friends.”