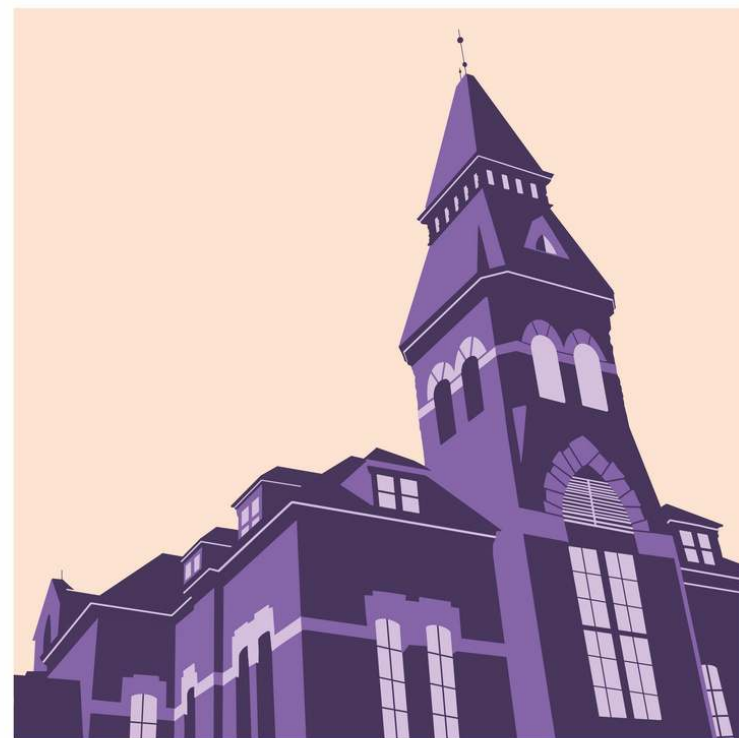
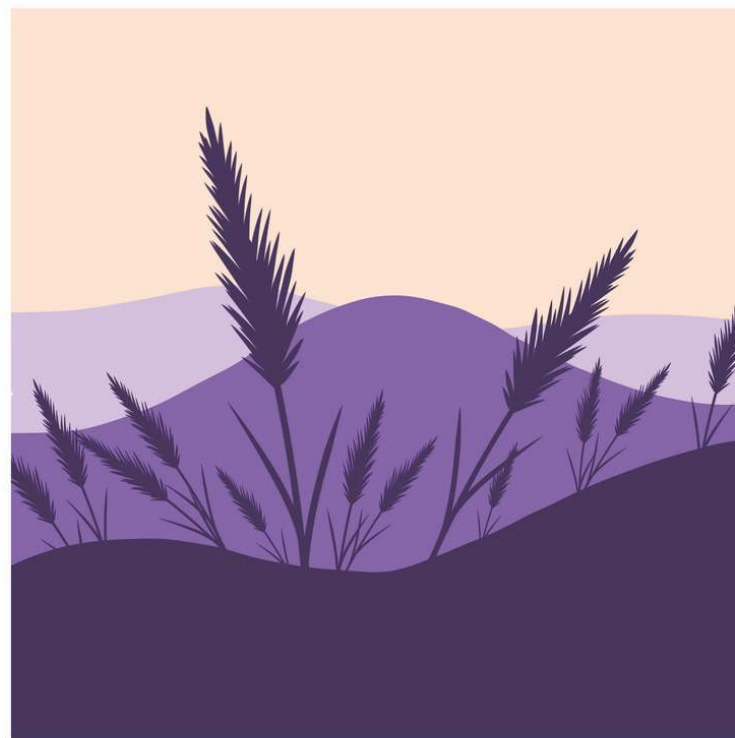
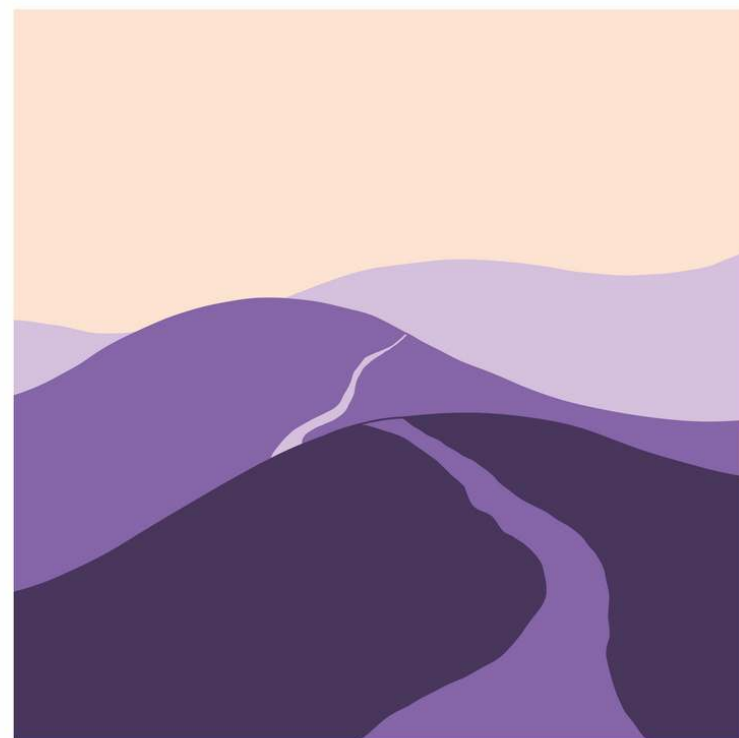


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RECRUITING

101

SPENCER O'DANIEL, MJE
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

DIRECTOR
COLLEGIAN MEDIA GROUP

ADVISER
K-STATE COLLEGIAN

THE TRUTHS OF RECRUITING FOR STUDENT MEDIA IN 2026

- Competing against social media and outside factors
- Competition with the economy and paying bills
- Competition against other opportunities for students through clubs, organizations and groups
- Competition with other employers
- Competition with “escaping” real life, job pressure, class stress and our massive workload



THE BOTTOM LINE?

THERE ARE CHALLENGES AND ENTITIES PUSHING AGAINST YOUR RECRUITING EFFORTS TO BUILD YOUR PUBLICATION STAFFS AND PROGRAM

WHAT'S THIS MEAN FOR YOU AND YOUR PROGRAM?

- Recruiting cannot be an afterthought for the adviser, key leaders and publication
- Intentionality, fresh ideas and a “team approach” towards recruiting and maintaining the pipeline to your journalism staffs
- Week to week, month to month approach through in-person, remote, emails, social media methods to recruit and retain
- The community and environment you create will help retain great staffers and make your classroom and staff a desirable place if healthy, support with high standards and opportunities



FIRST? ASK YOURSELF THE RIGHT QUESTIONS.

- What does our group offer to students outside of just a grade and a paycheck?
- What we currently doing that is working towards recruiting, retaining staff and building the size of our journalism team?
- How would people in our school, community, administration, parents, supports or alumni talk about our publication or journalism program?
- What's our identity? What do we stand for? What's our purpose? Why is working/participating in student media with us one of the single best experiences a student could have at our school or campus?



WHAT WORKS AT TIMES OR COULD MAYBE WORK AT TIMES AND IS SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE?

- Social Media promotion with Q.R. codes to interest forms and make it easy to apply/inquire about staff
- Showcase your jobs, positions, pay, opportunities through social media and not just flyers and promos
- Tabling and events can help you with high foot traffic but you must engage with people, have an activity or game (something exciting!) and it's all about being at the right place at the right times!
- Visits to classrooms with students with like-minded skills and subjects where they demonstrate the kind of abilities you are needing for your staff can usually help you add some great people and pieces to your publication staff!
- Your work, content, storytelling and quality of your program's work can act as a recruiting tool in itself for the high achieving students in your school/campus

WHAT REALLY WORKS AND IS IMPACTFUL WITH PULLING STUDENTS TO YOUR PUB

- Word of mouth buzz about the community and culture of your program is built over time. Make your program undeniable with the opportunities it provides (contest, travel, fun days, student recognition, etc.)
- Have staffers talk to classmates, other interested students, their roommates or other like-minded students that can contribute immediately with their skills and what they could bring to staff.
- Your intro class as a high school or college adviser must translate towards a pipeline to your publication staffs. If that isn't happening already, build an intro j-level class pipeline to publication staff that's undeniable, true and a standard.
- On the path towards building a great program, you're going to ruffle feathers and upset others that are jealous of your success and what you're doing. Do not lose focus on the mission at hand.

NEW POSITION/ NEW ROLE

HOW COULD THIS LOOK FOR YOUR TEAM?

- Have a recruitment manager or marketing manager
- The face of the program that helps find new members
- Responds to emails, forms and digital communication
- Plans events, gathering, teambuilding opportunities and ways to bring your staff together outside of work hours
- Tracking retainment by interested student to active staffer, active staffer to publication leader, etc.
- Helps with promoting open positions, contest opportunities, travel, conferences and the great parts of your program that are important to know about
- The right person in this role will make a significant impact on your program and you will feel it
- High school staffs can rotate this position monthly or quarterly to give everyone a shot at this unique and really fun new position!
- Could incentivize with goals for new staffers, retainment, etc.



HOW DO YOU KEEP STAFFERS ENGAGED, EXCITED AND IN YOUR PROGRAM FOR 3-4 YEARS TO MAXIMIZE THEIR POTENTIAL?



New staffers

- Get to know them and learn about them outside of your staff
- Ask them what they would like to do? Ideas? Teambuilding ideas? How do they want to contribute to your pub and team?
- Lay out expectations, guidelines and how your team does things very early as they begin in your class as your publication staff
- Showcase opportunities to be paid, conferences, travel, leadership opportunities and walk them through Year 1 to Year 2, etc.
- Mentorship of new staffers with experienced staffers, editors and advisers along their first year journey

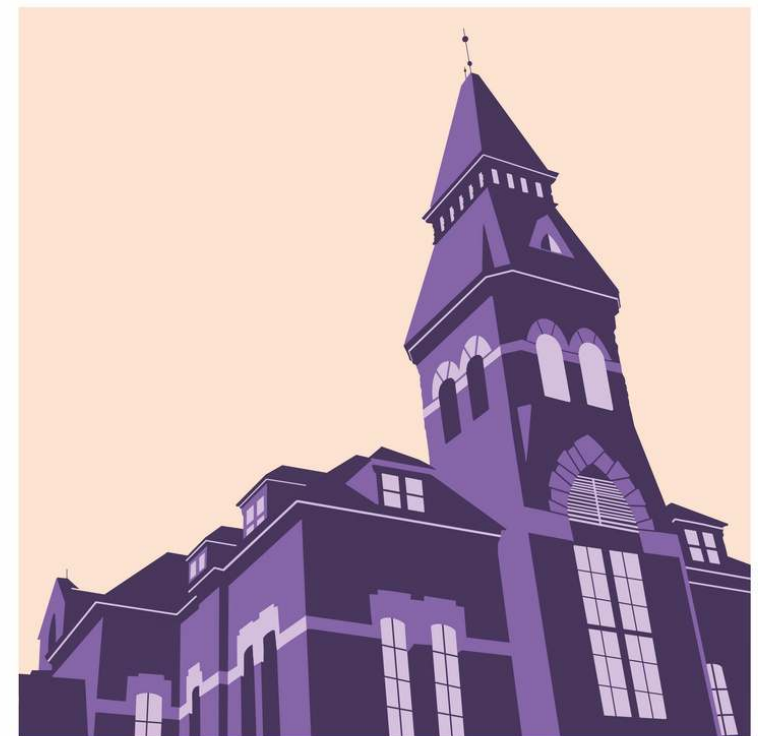
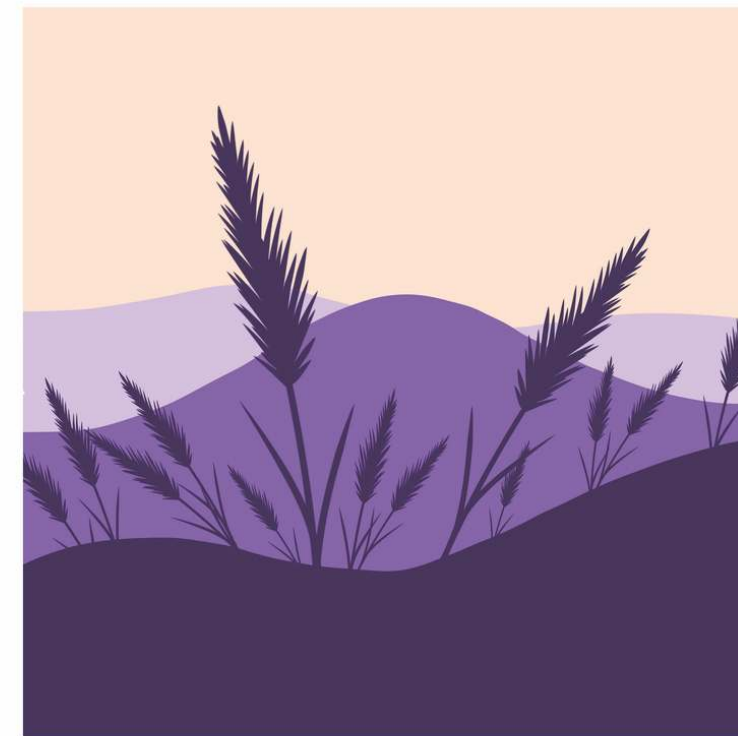
Returning staffers

- Follow up after their first year? Successes? Failures? Goals for next semester or new project ideas they are excited about?
- What's their why on coming back and being a key member of your team? What are their hopes, dreams and what do they want to accomplish in Year 2 or before they leave your staff?
- Connect them with internships, jobs, other classes and opportunities to build their skills for staff outside of your team
- Provide training, 1 on 1 meetings, share resources through Slack and show investment into their development and growth after Year 1

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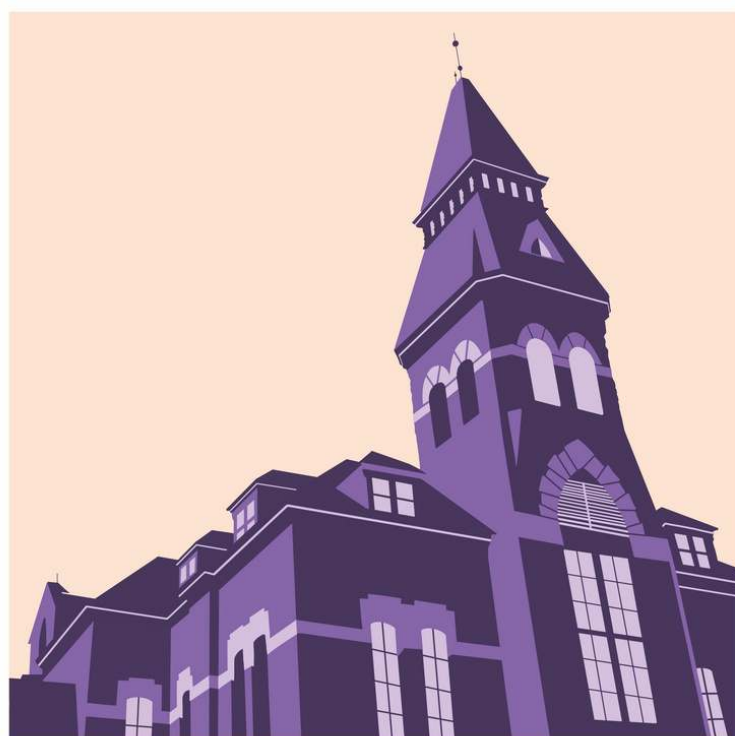
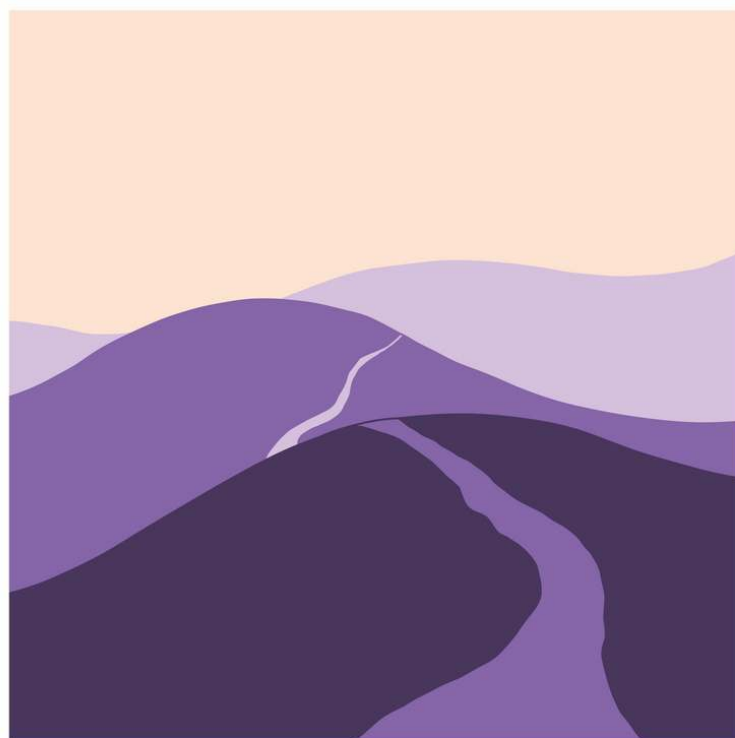
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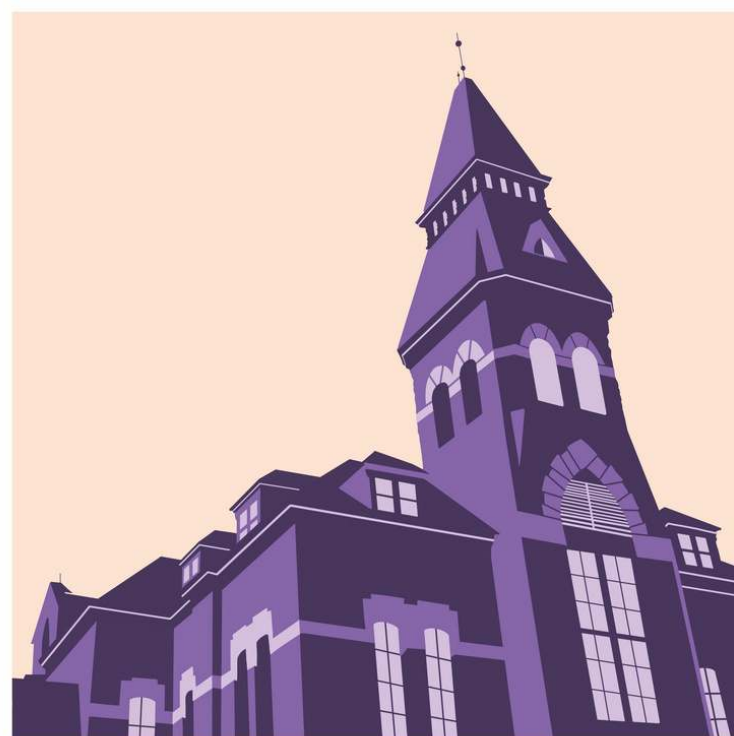
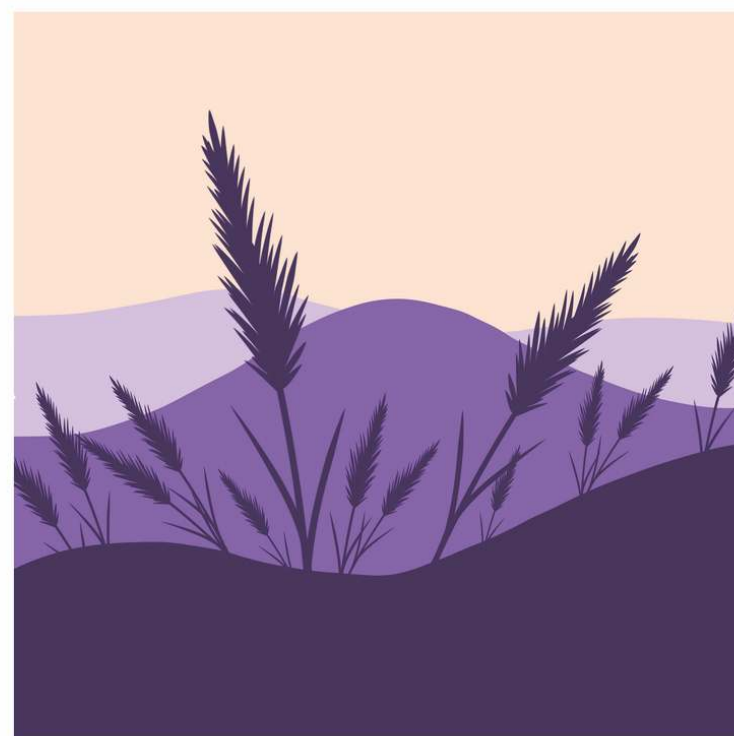
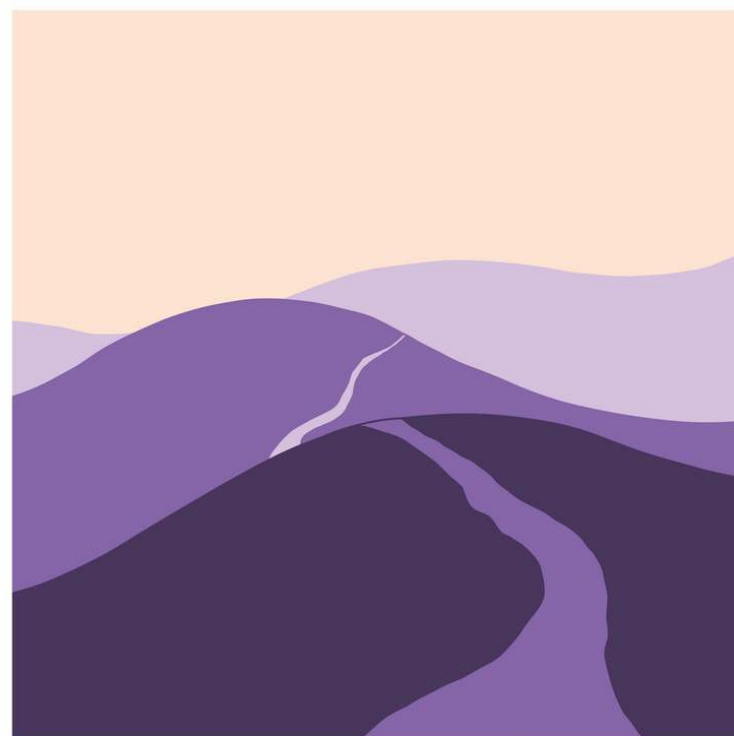
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3 ideas to
recruit and
retain for
2026-2027 -
5-10 minutes

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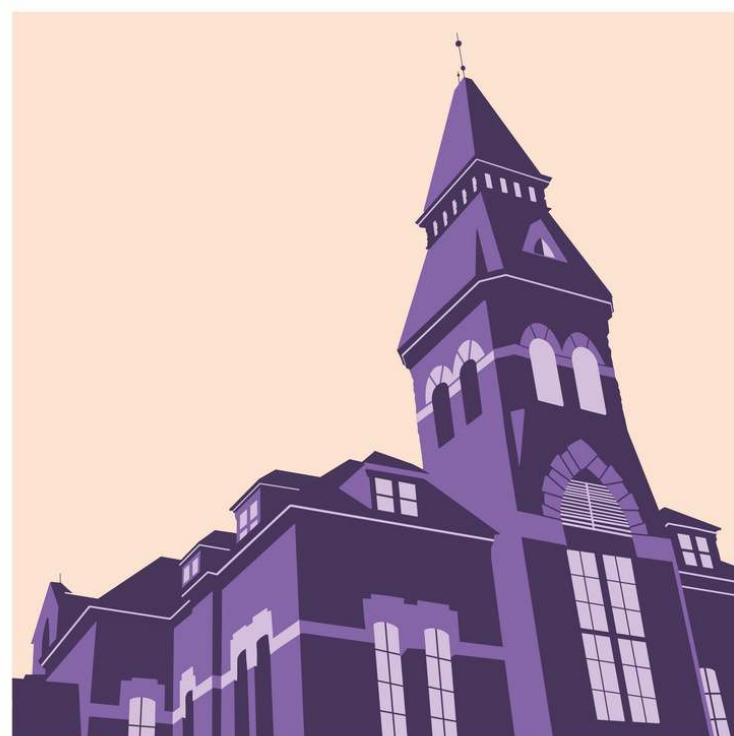
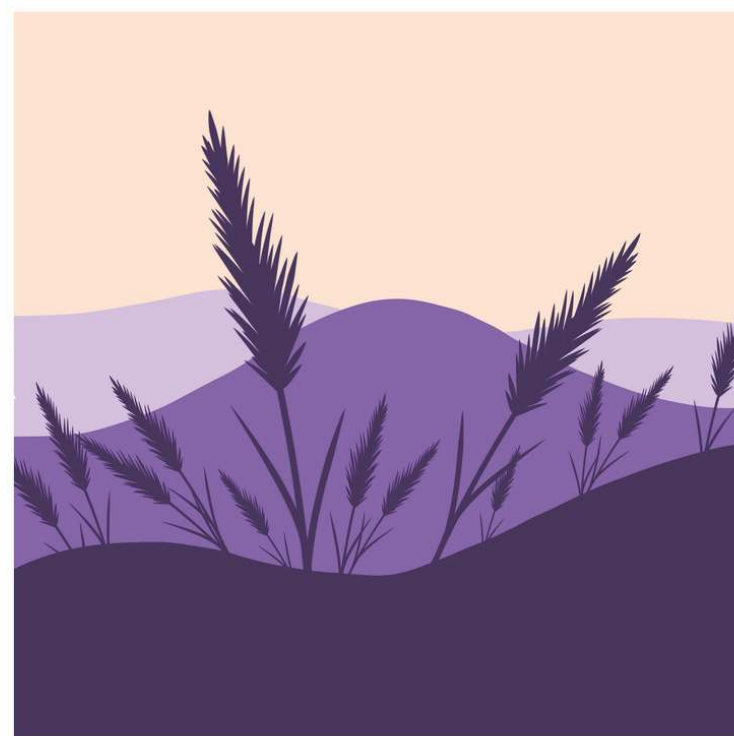
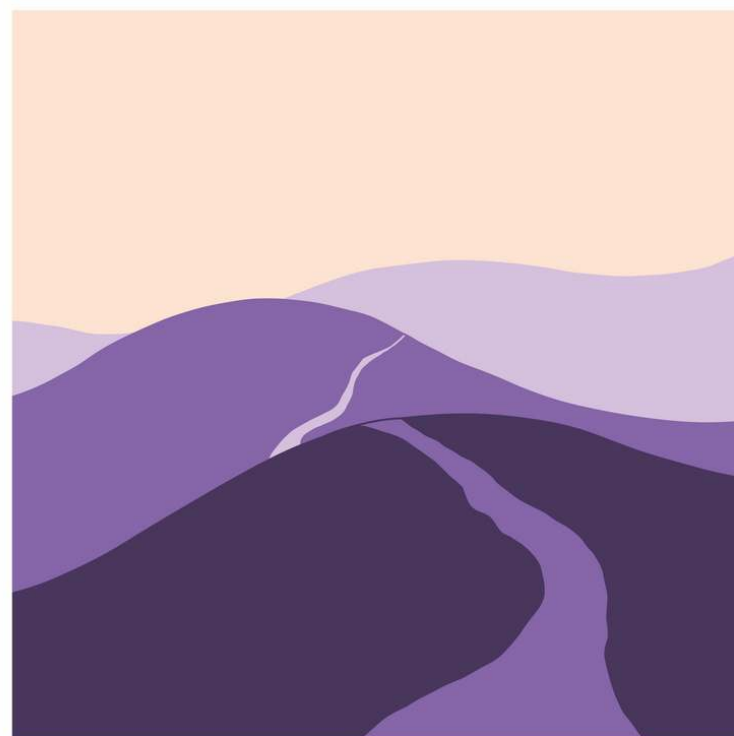
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A PROGRAM THAT'S UNDENIABLE

1

A team that consistently meets high expectations, trusts one another, enjoys spending time in your work space and holds each other accountable to achieve greatness.

2

These expectations must not just be held by the adviser but by the key leaders. This is how we do things here with our staff, program and team. This is the standard and our culture.

3

Relentless effort, toughness and grit will translate towards improved creativity, better teamwork and will improve your coverage, storytelling, awards, culture, community - everything!