

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITY: Board of Directors
PROCEDURE:

ADOPTED: Unknown
AMENDED:

PREAMBLE

The primary function of the Electoral Policy is to provide for an orderly and democratic process for the selection of members to serve on the Board of Directors. In conduct of elections, the Students' Union's process shall prioritize respect for the rules and democratic decision-making; respect for those participating in, and those conducting, the election process; and, fairness and consistency in the application of electoral rules and the adjudication of complaints and appeals.

STATEMENT:

1. Definitions

General Election: An election process for the full-term of a position as per Bylaw VII, subsection 2 – Schedule of Elections.

By-election: An election for a partial term of a position vacated prior to the term expiration as per Bylaw VII, subsection 2 – Schedule of Elections.

Member: A member of the Students' Union as defined by Bylaw II.

Committee: The Electoral Committee as defined by Bylaw VII, subsection 1.

Nominee: A member who submits a nomination form seeking candidacy in a general or by-election.

Candidate: a nominee whose nomination form has been declared valid by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Chief Returning Officer (CRO): The Executive Director who is a member of the Electoral Committee shall take primary responsibility for organizing and overseeing the electoral process.

Approved Posting Location: a general bulleting board or other area approved for posting notices as per college policy.

Voting Area: The area within a 10-meter radius of a balloting station.

Communication "in writing": for the purposes of the policy, electronic mail shall be considered written communication and time of receipt shall be the time a piece of electronic mail is received by the Students' Union.

2. NOMINATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Eligibility

Eligibility requirements are established in Bylaw VII, 4. In addition to those requirements, the following provisions apply:

- Students' Union employees shall not be eligible for nomination to any position on the Board of Directors.
- Students currently on "Incomplete Contracts" shall not be considered to be members.

2.2 Validation of Nomination Form

Students' Union Board Positions:

Nomination forms shall contain the name, signature and student numbers of not less than 10 members supporting the nomination of the listed nominee. Nomination forms shall also contain a written and signed verification that the nominee has received a copy of the Students' Union's Election Policy, Appeals form and a copy of the Bylaws. Nomination forms will be distributed, collected and verified by the Chief Returning Officer.

Incomplete nomination forms will be returned to the nominee within 48 business hours of submission for correction. Incomplete nomination forms may be resubmitted twice per election cycle.

2.3 Nominee Orientation

All nominees shall attend an orientation session held between the conclusion of the nomination period and commencement of the campaign period. The CRO may exempt individuals from attendance by scheduling an orientation meeting with the nominee. Failure to attend a nominee orientation session or make alternate arrangements to meet with the CRO to receive an orientation shall result in disqualification.

The following information shall be presented at nominee orientation sessions:

- A review of the elections regulations and campaigning rules.
- Announcement of the times and locations of polling.
- An overview of the discipline, disqualification and appeals process.

3. CAMPAIGNING

3.1 Election Bulletin

The Students' Union shall produce an election update poster with the names of all candidates.

3.2 Election Forum

The Committee may decide to host an Election Forum. Election Forums shall correspond to the following regulations:

- The forum will be structured as a candidate meet-and-greet.
- The forum will be scheduled on the Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday before polling and shall occur at lunchtime.
- The Election Forum shall be organised by the Chief Returning Officer.

3.3 Conduct of Election Participants and Students' Union Officials

Each individual candidate is required to act reasonably, responsibly and in good faith; and shall be required to:

- Ensure that they, and any of their campaign volunteers, are aware of, and comply with, all rules, policies and bylaws of the Students' Union;
- Be responsible to the Electoral Committee for her/his actions as well as the actions of her/his campaign volunteers;
- Report any breaches of the electoral rules, policies or bylaws; and,
- Comply with the rules, policies and procedures of the University.

Members of the Board shall not participate in campaigning as part of their official duties and, while engaged in work for the Students' Union, shall not provide resources or counsel to candidates.

3.4 Candidate Instigated Campaign Materials

As per bylaw VII subsection 5 the Students' Union shall provide free poster design and up to 50 copies of campaign posters at no charge.

When engaging in campaigning, candidates may not:

- Post or use any material not yet approved by the CRO.
- Distribute or erect campaign materials in the Students' Union spaces.
- Deface, remove, vandalize or otherwise alter campaign materials of another candidate.

3.5 Online Campaigning

Candidates may campaign online via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Other social media platforms may be considered upon request to the CRO. Online campaign forums must be universally accessible to all members of the Students' Union.

Candidates are responsible for the content of their online campaign, including posts by others. All efforts must be made to ensure that the candidates' online presence fully adheres to the Electoral Policy.

3.6 Financing

Additional materials and printing costs shall be the responsibility of each individual candidate. No candidate may spend more than \$50 on their campaign and no candidate shall receive any campaign donations from other persons or organizations, including donations in-kind. The Students' Union will reimburse candidates' campaign expenses up to \$50 provided receipts are provided within one month of the conclusion of voting.

4. BALLOTING AND RESULTS

4.1 Polling

Only members of the Committee, hired balloting clerks, or Students' Union staff members approved by the CRO shall staff balloting stations.

Proper ballot boxes shall be used. Prior to the opening of the polling, ballot boxes shall be sealed by the CRO and witnessed by a Poll Clerk. Ballot boxes shall be sealed throughout the polling process and the Electoral Committee shall be responsible for ensuring the security of the ballot boxes. The CRO or designate will store ballot boxes in a locked office of the Students' Union Building when not in the custody of poll clerks.

As per bylaw VII, subsection 2 balloting shall be no less than 16 hours over a minimum of 2 days.

Except when casting a ballot, candidates must remain out of the voting area during polling.

4.2 Counting of Ballots

Ballots shall be counted by members of the Committee, poll clerks and Students' Union staff under the direction of the CRO at a scheduled time following the closing of the voting period. For each position, the ballots shall be counted twice to ensure the accuracy of the result. Where the first and second counts do not match, the ballots will be counted a third time by the CRO.

Each candidate, or their designated scrutineer, may observe *the* ballot count, unless prohibited due to campaign infractions. During ballot counting, candidates and scrutineers are not permitted to interfere in any way with the process. Questions regarding the ballot counting can be addressed to the CRO. Any candidate or scrutineer found in violation of these rules shall be removed from the counting room.

To appoint a scrutineer a candidate must provide written notice to the CRO prior to the conclusion of the voting period. Such notice may be by email.

Candidates may request a recount of the ballots cast as per bylaw VII, 7. a. Such recounts shall be undertaken where the request is in writing. Requests for a recount must be received by the electoral committee within forty-eight business hours of the announcement of the results.

4.3 Announcement and Ratification of the Results

Following the counting of ballots, the unofficial results shall be communicated to the candidates participating in the election. Once all outstanding appeals and complaints have been dealt with and results adjusted accordingly, the unofficial results will be communicated to the Board for ratification.

The Committee shall produce an Electoral Report as per bylaw VII, 1. g. and the report shall contain:

- The list of positions being elected and the schedule of elections;
- The official results, including numerical totals;
- A list of candidate breaches of the bylaws or policy recorded during the election period; and,
- Any recommendations from the Committee regarding improvements or alterations to electoral policy.

The Electoral Report shall be submitted to the Board of Directors not less than one month following the conclusion of the balloting period, or not less than one week prior to the beginning of the term for which candidates sought election, whichever ever comes first.

Official results shall be distributed of not less than 25 posters on the Broadway and Downtown campuses and not less than 5 posters at regional campuses.

4.4 Destruction of the Ballots

Ballots and associated voters' lists shall be destroyed within one (1) week of the Board of Directors' receipt of the Election Report and their ratification of the results.

5. DISCIPLINE AND DISQUALIFICATION

5.1 Administration

Contravening any section of this policy or associated bylaws may result in disciplinary action. The CRO shall administer the discipline and disqualification process on behalf of the Committee except as may be otherwise noted in this policy or in bylaw VII.

5.2 Complaints

Complaints may be made by nominees, candidates, or members and may relate to the conduct of election participants or the implementation of the electoral process. Complaints that relate to decisions of the CRO shall be considered appeals and dealt with under section 5.5 of this Policy.

The following regulations shall apply to the consideration of complaints:

- All complaints must be in writing and contain the name and student number of the complainant; a full description of the cause for complaint with appropriate references to the associated policy or bylaw; the specific individual responsible for the breach, where appropriate; and supporting facts and evidence.
- Incomplete complaints will be returned to the complainant.
- Complaints will be ruled on within forty-eight (48) business hours of receipt.
- When a complaint relates to the actions of a third party, that party shall have the right to address the matter before a ruling is made on the validity of the complaint.
- Complaints may be filed up to forty-eight (48) business hours following the closing of the balloting period. Complaints filed following this period shall not be considered.

5.2 Minor Offenses

Minor offenses shall be those breaches of electoral policy, bylaws or regulations not listed under section 5.3 of this policy.

Minor Offenses of Similar Nature

- In the case that a candidate commits a minor offense, said candidate shall be issued a written warning outlining the offense and the steps necessary, if any, to correct the situation.

- Should a candidate commit a second offense of similar nature to her/his first offense, said candidate shall be issued a final.
- Should a candidate commit a third offense of similar nature to her/his first and second offense, said candidate shall be disqualified by the CRO.

Diverse Minor Offenses

- In the case that a candidate commits a second offense, but the second offense is of a different nature than the first, said candidate shall be issued a second letter of warning outlining the offense and steps necessary, if any, to correct the situation.
- In the case that a candidate commits a third offense that is different in nature to the first two offenses, the candidate shall be issued a third and final warning outlining the offense and the steps necessary, if any, to correct the situation.
- Upon a fourth offense of any kind, the candidate shall be disqualified.

5.3 Major Offenses

Major offenses will result in disqualification of a candidate. Major offenses include:

- Engaging in harassment of any kind against members, other candidates, members of the Board or College officials;
- Exceeding the poster, handbill or banner limit by more than 50%;
- Continued loitering in the voting area;
- Interfering in the voting process;
- Removal or vandalism of other candidate's campaign materials;
- Making, joining, or participating in campaigning that defames other candidates, members of the Committee, or officials of the Students' Union and/or College and,
- Any violation of the election policy, bylaws or regulations that is malicious and seeks to undermine the electoral process.

5.4 Disciplinary Action

The following shall apply to the application of disciplinary action:

- If disciplinary action involves campaign material, a member of the Committee shall remove the offending material.
- All decisions regarding disciplinary action shall be communicated to the effected candidate in writing. Decisions shall also be communicated to the complainant, where deemed appropriate by the CRO.
- Candidates may view a copy of a complaint filed against them.
- Candidates or members of the Committee may request a meeting to discuss the application of discipline prior to or following communication of a formal decision in writing.
- If the discipline applied is disqualification, the candidate being disqualified will be notified in writing and offered a formal meeting to discuss the reasons for disqualification.

5.5 Appeal

Appeals of disciplinary action or decisions of the CRO may be made to the Board of Directors provided that they are delivered in writing within forty-eight (48) business hours of the issuance of the decision or disciplinary action. Appeals must include a completed appeals form. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be communicated to the appellant within forty-eight (48) business hours of the receipt of the appeal.

The appeal form is attached as an appendix.

As per bylaw VII, subsection 7, b., decisions of the Committee may be appealed to a quorate board of directors meeting.