

Election Code

Section 1.01 Application

The rules and procedures specified in this Election Code shall apply to all Graduate Students Association (GSA) elections and are intended to supplement provisions of the GSA Constitution pertaining to the conduct of Associated Students' elections for offices in the GSA Executive Branch and Senate.

Section 1.02 Definitions

The following terms are defined to avoid ambiguity:

- A. An Association election is the process of electing GSA officers and pursuant to the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, and Election Code.
- B. An election officially begins when candidacy petitions become available and shall officially conclude when all results are published by the Election Chair.
- C. A campaign consists of all activities performed by a candidate with the intention of being elected to office.
- D. Whomever receives the plurality of votes shall receive the given position.
 - i. Whomever receives the most votes shall receive the position for which they are running.
- E. A run-off election occurs if no candidate receives a plurality of the votes
 - i. In the event three or more candidates are running for the same position, the candidate with the most votes shall be declared the victor of the run-off election.
 - ii. The top two candidates for the given position shall be the only participants in this run-off election.
- F. A candidate's constituency is defined as the body of students who are eligible to vote for that candidate in an election as defined in Section 1.11 of the Election Code.

Section 1.03 Election Commission

- A. Composition
 - i. The Election Commission shall be composed of five members, all of whom shall be eligible to vote in decisions. The Election Commission is composed of the five GSA Executive Branch members and is advised by professional staff from the College.
 - ii. The Graduate Student Association President shall serve as Election Commission Chair if they are not running for re-election. In their absence, a member of the Commission not seeking re-election shall assume the role of Chair. If all Executive Council members are seeking re-election, the Senior Class Senators will assume the Commission positions.

- iii. Any GSA member who is not seeking re-election or is in their last year at Saint Mary's College.
- iv. A quorum shall be defined as 75% of the voting members of the commission.
- B. Conflict of Interest
 - i. No candidate seeking election may participate in any function of the Election Commission

Section 1.04 Complaints and Appeals

- A. Any formal complaint, destruction, or theft of another candidate's property shall be reported to the chair of the Election Commission, and subsequently, the chair shall call a hearing of the commission. After meeting with the involved parties and pertinent investigation, the commission shall deliberate and reach a decision.
 - i. Complaints must be submitted within 12 hours after election results have been posted. If a complaint does not involve Election results, said complaint must be made within the same time period.
 - ii. The accused party shall be reserved the right to defend themselves.
- B. The decision of the Election Commission can be appealed within three days of the decision. This appeal will go directly to the Election Commission for possible reconsideration.
 - i. Appeals shall include documented evidence proving invalidity of the decision, an articulate explanation of why the decision should be appealed, and at least one character witness to speak on behalf of the accused.
- C. A copy of final Election results may be provided upon request.

Section 1.05 Schedule

- A. Candidacy application forms shall be made available at least two weeks prior to the submission deadline.
- B. All candidates shall complete and submit an application form, approval for academic and disciplinary verification, and candidate biography by the submission deadline.
- C. All candidates shall have at least one full academic week of formal campaigning prior to the beginning of the voting.
- D. General voting shall take place during a two-week period, during hours prescribed by the Election Commission Chair.
- E. Run-off voting shall be utilized, if necessary, one week after initial voting has concluded for only 24 hours.
 - i. Refer to Section 1.02, Subsection D and E.
- F. Results shall be certified and posted by the Election Commission Chair to all students. Only after certification, shall election results be official. Complaints must be submitted within 12 hours after the election results have been posted.

Section 1.06 Eligibility of Candidates

- A. Eligibility shall be determined by the Election Commission, under the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, and Election Code.
- B. No Association member shall hold more than one elected position at a time.
- C. An Association member may run for up to two positions in general elections, provided that they

are not running for Class Chair and Class Vice Chair at the same time. GSA members may not run for more than one Executive Council position at one time.

- D. Disqualified candidates or candidates withdrawing from the election shall have their names removed from the ballot.
- E. All candidates should attend the Mandatory Election meeting for their respective election, unless it conflicts with an approved academic or athletic commitment.
- F. Individuals who are elected into an Executive position and Chair positions, shall not hold both positions. Additionally, if an individual were to run for two Executive positions, they may not hold both positions.
- G. Candidates may not hold an Executive Council or Senate position and be the Campus Activities Board Director.
- H. Candidates are permitted to run for an executive council position in conjunction with a position on their class council.
- I. Candidates who are successfully elected to a position in a spring election are permitted to run for a different position in fall elections.

Section 1.07 Campaign Rules

- A. Posting and distribution requirements shall be set by the posting policy described in the Student Handbook and by the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership.
- B. Copyrighted material shall not be used in the campaign.
- C. Candidates must comply with all policies outlined in the Student Handbook, and all other College policies.
- D. No campaigning shall take place on Election days.
- E. All physical modes of campaigning (i.e. posters and handouts) must be approved by the Election Commission Chair and Student Involvement & Leadership before public posting.
- F. All electronic campaigning materials, including social media, must comply with campaigning rules and the policies outlined in the Student Handbook. Additionally, candidates must provide social media links to the Election Commission Chair.
- G. Failure to comply with the above campaigning rules could result in a potential Election Commission Case.

Section 1.08 Spending Limits

- A. No candidate for Executive Council shall spend more than \$100.00 total during their campaign (non-refundable personal funds) unless a run-off is deemed necessary.
- B. No candidate for Senator delegation shall spend more than \$75.00 total during their campaign (non-refundable personal funds) unless a run-off is deemed necessary.
- C. Run-off expenses shall not exceed more than one-half the amount allowed in preparation for the general election.
- D. All expenses must be turned in by the close of balloting in the executive, general, and run-off elections.
- E. The value of any materials purchased without receipts shall be estimated at market values.
- F. The value of any donations shall be listed as expenditure, with a price set by market values.
- G. Donated labor need not be reported as expenditure.
- H. All prices shall include the sales tax of the area in which materials were purchased.

Section 1.09 Balloting

Balloting shall be conducted at the direction of the Election Commission, under the Constitution, Bylaws, and Election Code.

- A. Only members of the Graduate Student Association may vote in any election.
- B. No voter shall vote more than once in a single election.

In the Fall Elections:

- A. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the Kalmanovitz School of Education may vote for their school representative.
- B. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the School of Economics and Business Administration may vote for their school representative.
- C. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the School of Liberal Arts may vote for their school representative.
- D. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the School of Sciences may vote for their school representative.
- E. If an Executive Branch election is postponed until the fall, all Graduate Student Association members may vote for Executive Branch positions.
- F. The Election Commission shall conduct audits on the cast ballots when fraud is suspected or when deemed necessary.
- G. The Election Commission shall consult with campus partners to ensure fair and representative election processes. Any Graduate Student Association member who is unable to vote may appeal to the Election Commission for special consideration.

In the Spring Elections:

- A. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the Kalmanovitz School of Education may vote for their school representative.
- B. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the School of Economics and Business Administration may vote for their school representative.
- C. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the School of Liberal Arts may vote for their school representative.
- D. All members of the Graduate Student Association in the School of Sciences may vote for their school representative.
- E. All members of the Graduate Student Association may vote for Executive Branch positions.
- F. The Election Commission shall conduct audits on the cast ballots when fraud is suspected or when deemed necessary.
- G. The Election Commission shall consult with campus partners to ensure fair and representative election processes. Any Graduate Student Association member who is unable to vote may appeal to the Election Commission for special consideration.

Section 1.10 Vacancies and Removal from Office

Refer to Bylaws, specifically Article 8.08 and Article 9 for Senate and Article 5 for Executive Branch.