



Reinhardt University

Student Government Association



Elections Code
Academic School Year 2017-18

“Popularity should be no scale for the election of politicians. If it would depend on popularity, Donald Duck and The Muppets would take seats in senate.”

~ Orson Welles

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Introduction

The Elections Code specifies regulations and procedures for student elections. The Elections Code shall include all necessary sections of the Constitution and these Bylaws that pertain to student elections. The Elections Code contains all of the rules concerning elections. The Elections Committee is the primary source of judicial review for this code. Any other Materials distributed by the Elections Committee are intended to facilitate the legal and fair execution of this election, but they are not to be thought of as substitutes for this code. In instances where materials distributed by the committee seem to be in conflict with the Bylaws and/or Constitution, the Bylaws and/or Constitution are correct.

Section I. General Rules

- A. Any person who wishes to become a candidate for office must complete and submit an official application to the Student Government Association office before the deadline specified.
- B. All candidates are required to attend an election orientation set forth by the Elections Committee. Failure to attend may result in disqualification.
- C. A candidate's application must specify which office he or she wishes to run for, and a candidate may only run for one office.
- D. Electronic mail shall be the official mode of communication of the Elections Committee.
- E. All candidates must use their actual names on the ballot for the election. Exceptions will be made for students who are addressed as a direct and common derivative of their names- i.e. Mike, Trey, etc. However, no nicknames or references to affiliated groups will be allowed. The Elections Committee will determine the appropriateness of names on the ballot and inform the candidate of any problems before the election takes place.
- F. All candidates and campaigns will be subject to Institute policies. Violation of any Institute policy by a candidate or campaign worker may, at the discretion of the Elections Committee, result in disqualification.
- G. Unless otherwise specified, the standard for the making of any decision by the Elections committee shall be a majority vote of the seated membership of the committee.
- H. Failure to abide by the regulations set forth in this document is not excused by ignorance.

Section II. Positions

- A. Student Senate
 - a. Academic department and class representatives for Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors shall be elected during the fall semester. Representatives shall be apportioned the various academic schools of the Institute as follows:
 - i. Elected Positions.
 - 1. Freshman Class Representative (1)
 - 2. Underclassman Male Residence Hall (1)
 - 3. Underclassman Female Residence Hall (1)
 - 4. Upperclassman Male Residence Hall (1)
 - 5. Uppercases Female Residence Hall (1)

- 6. Sophomore Class Representative (1)
 - 7. Junior Class Representative (1)
 - 8. Senior Class Representative (1)
 - 9. Student Body at Large Representative (2)
 - 10. Commuter Representative (2)
 - ii. Appointed Representatives.
 - 1. Price School of Education (1)
 - 2. McCamish School of Business (1)
 - 3. School of Arts & Humanities (1)
 - 4. School of Music Representative (1)
 - 5. School of Math & Sciences (1)
 - 6. School of Nursing (1)
 - 7. Intercollegiate Athletics Representative (4)
 - 8. Performing Arts Representative (2)
 - 9. International Representative (1)
- B. Executive Board
- a. Executive Board representatives shall be elected during the spring semester.
 - i. Elected Positions.
 - 1. Student Body President (1)
 - 2. Vice President of Administration (1)
 - 3. Vice President of Student Activities (1)
 - 4. Treasurer (1)
 - 5. Secretary (1)
 - ii. Appointed Positions by the Student Body President
 - 1. Chief of Staff (1)
 - 2. Chair of Commuter Life (1)
 - 3. Chair of Residence Life (1)
 - 4. Chair of Rules and Regulations (1)

Section III. Eligibility

- A. Student Senate
 - a. To be eligible for candidacy a student must:
 - i. Be an enrolled Reinhardt University student in good standing to be elected to the position of SGA Senator. Candidates must not be on academic or social probation. For all positions, a cumulative GPA of 2.5 must be maintained in order to run for office and to remain in office for the spring semester.
 - ii. All candidates must file a nomination application with the Vice President for Student Affairs by 4 p.m. on the specified deadline.
 - b. Candidates for the office of an academic school representative to the Student Senate shall:
 - i. Be a declared major, as defined by the Registrar, in the academic school they represent.

- ii. Have completed or be currently enrolled in at least two declared major classes as defined by the Registrar.
- c. Candidates for Class Representative must have completed the number of years of full-time enrollment in college corresponding to their office before the first Student Senate meeting of the fall semester of the year they take office:
 - i. Freshman 0 credit hours
 - ii. Sophomores 30 credit hours
 - iii. Juniors 60 credit hours
 - iv. Seniors 90 credit hours
- d. For the purposes of Class Representative eligibility, years of enrollment shall be defined as the number of complete credit hours since the first day of classes of the first semester of full-time college enrollment.

B. Executive Board

- a. To be eligible for candidacy a student must:
 - i. Be an upperclassmen who has served as a representative, senator, or other capacity in SGA or its associated councils for one full academic year consisting of two consecutive academic semesters, prior to their candidacy unless otherwise approved by the SGA advisor(s) and the Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean Students.
 - ii. Candidates must not be on academic or social probation.
 - iii. Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 that must be maintained in order to run for office and to remain in office for the spring semester.
- b. No person may run for more than one position concurrently.
- c. All candidates must file a nomination application with the Vice President for Student Affairs by 4 p.m. on the specified deadline.

Section IV. Voting

A. Student Senate

- a. Senators shall be elected by the Student Body.
- b. The Candidates receiving at least 50% of voting Student Body shall be designated as the Student Senator.
- c. In the event a tie vote prevents the installation of any Senator, the Executive Board shall hold a run-off vote within eight (8) business days.
- d. If a tie vote occurs that prevents the occupation of any Senator position(s), a runoff of all candidates receiving the highest vote total for that position(s) will be held.
- e. If an initial runoff fails to produce a winner, a second runoff, subject to the same rules as the initial runoff, shall be held.
- f. Election results for all elections shall be announced no more than 24 hours after the polls close unless extenuating circumstances occur.

B. Executive Board

- a. Representatives shall be elected by the Student Body.

- b. The Candidates receiving at least 50% of voting Student Body shall be designated as the elected official.
 - c. All candidates will be listed on the ballot in alphabetical order by last name, the way the candidate's name appears on the candidate application. Write-in candidates will not be allowed.
 - d. Voters may vote for the maximum number of candidates that can simultaneously hold a given office as designated in the Constitution and Bylaws.
 - e. An Executive ticket will be elected by receiving greater than 50% of the votes cast. If no ticket is elected from the pool of candidates, then a runoff between the two tickets with the highest vote totals, and any other ticket tied with either, will be held. 'No Votes' will be counted as un-cast ballots.
 - f. If an initial runoff fails to produce a winner, a second runoff, subject to the same rules as the initial runoff, shall be held.
 - g. Election results for all elections shall be announced no more than 24 hours after the polls close unless extenuating circumstances occur.
- C. Special Elections
- a. If a second runoff in any election fails to produce conclusive election results, a special election will be held by the sitting Student Senate at the regularly scheduled meeting immediately following the closing of polls in runoff elections. If there are no remaining regularly scheduled meetings remaining in the semester, a special session for the purposes of conducting balloting shall be held. Special elections shall be held in any of the following cases:
 - i. No candidate for executive office receives greater than 50% of votes cast.
 - ii. A tie vote occurs which prevents the occupation of any representative position(s).
 - iii. A tie vote occurs which prevents the designation of any representative as the stated position.
 - b. Special elections may not be postponed.
 - c. The rules governing eligibility for candidacy in a runoff shall govern eligibility for candidacy in a special election conducted by Student Senate.
 - d. The special election for each position shall be conducted separately.
 - e. If no candidate was elected in the prior elections, the candidate with the highest vote total in the special election, barring a tie, shall be the official, without need for later elections to determine the position.
 - f. Voting shall be conducted by named ballot; votes, however, shall not be made public.
 - g. No campaigning is allowed for a special election.
 - h. If a special election is necessary, the election becomes the responsibility of the Student Senate.
 - i. All violations or appeals must be made directly to the Judiciary Council.
- D. Balloting for Student Senate special elections:
- a. Balloting for Senator positions shall continue until the number of candidates remaining in the election is equal to the number of positions available.

- b. Abstentions shall count as un-cast ballots.
 - c. After each round of balloting, the highest ranking candidates, up to the number of positions available shall be considered elected.
 - d. In the event that a tie prevents the occupation of any Senator position(s), another round of balloting for that position(s) shall commence.
- E. Balloting for Executive special elections:
- a. Balloting for special Executive elections shall continue until a candidate receives greater than 50% of votes cast.
 - b. Abstentions shall count as un-cast ballots.
 - c. After any round of balloting in which no candidate receives greater than 50% of votes cast, any candidate who failed to receive one of the two highest vote totals shall be eliminated from consideration.

Section V. Campaigning

- A. Campaigning is defined as:
- a. The public distribution or posting of any material or information seeking votes for a candidate or candidates for office.
 - b. Speaking before an organized group or in a public place with the purpose of seeking votes for a candidate or candidates for office.
 - c. Any activity, on the part of either a candidate or a representative of a candidate, requesting the vote of a constituent for a specific candidate or candidates.
 - d. Using electronic medium for the purpose of seeking votes for a candidate or candidates for office.
 - e. The definition of campaigning shall not include the creation or design of campaign materials, the recruitment of direct campaign workers, the scheduling of speaking engagements, the discussion of campaign strategies, or other activities intended for the establishment of a campaign committee.
- B. The campaign period for Student Senate elections shall be the third week of the fall semester.
- C. The campaign period for Executive Board elections shall be the eleventh and twelfth weeks of the spring semester.
- D. The following forms of publicity and campaign materials are appropriate:
- a. Door to door campaigning within the stated residence halls visitation hours.
 - b. Promotional items placed on bulletin boards and doors (Excluding FPAC with exception to practice rooms).
 - c. Promotional items put on residence hall room doors.
 - d. RUTV ads that follow the correct procedures prescribed by RUTV personnel.
 - e. Commuter lot car windshields.
 - f. Sidewalk chalk in designated areas (excluding covered walkways or at FPAC).
 - g. Internet Websites / Blogs.
 - h. Newspaper Articles.

- i. Student Government Association and Senate members can endorse running candidates as a student of Reinhardt University, but not as a member of SGA
- E. The following forms of publicity and campaign materials are not appropriate:
- a. Voice-mail.
 - b. Fliers or posters on painted walls, hallways, or glass surfaces
 - c. Material posted on the doors or inside the Administration Building.
 - d. Any flier or poster mounted with duct tape, packing tape, heavy or industrial strength adhesive.
 - e. Promotional items in or on a living thing, excluding items that may be worn on a human being.
 - f. No skipping class in order to campaign.
- F. Encouraging voting in general, without specifying a particular candidate or group of candidates, is not campaigning.
- G. It is the responsibility of the candidate to educate any and all campaign workers and affiliates as to the rules set forth by this Elections Code. Candidates will be held responsible for the actions of those designated by the candidate to assist with the campaign.
- H. The use of any Student Government Association logo, letterhead, office equipment, office supplies, meeting space, or personnel is prohibited.
- I. All materials of any form in a campaign must specify the person or campaign of origination.
- J. An SGA Official Voting station is defined as any computer designated and maintained by the Elections Committee for the purposes of voting.
- K. Campaigning is not permitted within 100 feet of an Institute-maintained computer cluster or an SGA Official Voting station during the voting period.
- L. Candidates and all campaign workers are prohibited from maintaining a computer for the purposes of voting.
- M. Materials distributed, or intended for distribution by the Elections Committee, or any individual or group of individuals acting on behalf of the Elections Committee, may not be redistributed or edited by any party, other than designees of the committee.
- N. Under no circumstances shall a candidate's campaign display another candidate's logo or use his/her slogan.
- O. Student organizations are allowed to sponsor candidates. A student organization shall be any organization run by students who wish to officially sponsor a candidate, except SGA. The candidate must be made aware of the organization's intent to sponsor the candidate, and the candidate must sign a written consent form acknowledging the organization's sponsorship of him/her.
- P. Candidates may speak about another candidate's positions on campus issues and how they differ on these positions so long as these statements are truthful. Falsifying information about a candidate might result in immediate disqualification and will be dealt with in accordance to Institute policies.

- Q. Promotional materials must be removed from the polling places by midnight the day following the first day of the election period.
- R. All campaign materials, including sidewalk chalk, fliers, and campaign related social media pages must be removed by the Sunday following election periods.
- S. Campaign materials and social media pages can be posted no earlier than Sunday at midnight leading into campaign weeks.
- T. All candidates must have an equal platform/ place to speak.
- U. Official athletic events and performing arts performances are not permitted as appropriate places to campaign.
- V. Three minor violations within the campaign will equal to one major campaign violation.
- W. One major campaign violation will result in disqualification in the election.

Section VI. Signs

- A. The definition of a sign includes posters, banners, flyers, and other printed material.
- B. Signs may be displayed on the following locations:
 - a. Bulletin boards.
 - b. Bulletin boards present in campus buildings and off-campus business establishments with appropriate permission.
 - c. Residence Halls and other University living areas with the approval of and accordance with the policies of the Residence Life.
 - d. Other locations approved by the Vice President of Student Affairs.
- C. Signs are forbidden on the following locations:
 - a. On trees.
 - b. On traffic signs.
 - c. On the sides of buildings or sculptures.
 - d. On public trash cans.
 - e. On roadways.
 - f. Painted Interior walls.
- D. No sign for any campaign may exceed 11 x 17 inches in size.
- E. Campaigning on private property without permission of the owner is prohibited.
- F. The placing of any sign in a way designed to obscure any other sign belonging to another campaign is prohibited.
- G. Candidates will be responsible for taking down campaign materials.

Section VII. Mass Communication

- A. All candidates must comply with Federal, State, and Institute policies concerning mass communication.
- B. No campaign materials listing an electronic mail address and/or a URL address may utilize any Reinhardt University related resources.
- C. No candidate may, in any campaign materials, display their email address, or that of any campaign affiliate.
- D. Sending electronic mail to any list without the consent of the Vice President of Student Affairs is prohibited.

- E. The creation or use of groups or profiles on media including, but not limited to, Facebook or Instagram prior to the beginning of campaigning is prohibited.
- F. The posting of a campaign website prior to the beginning of campaigning, or the failure to remove a campaign website prior to the end of the semester preceding the elections shall be prohibited.
- G. Emails sent to any SGA maintained email list are prohibited.

Section IX. Penalties and Violations

- A. Upon the rendering of judgment in any matter concerning violations, the Elections Committee shall explicitly state the level of violation found, the specific section of the elections code under which the candidate was found guilty, the remedy mandated by the committee, and the timeline for the completion of the remedy.
- B. Any person, including non-candidates, found guilty of tampering with the election process or results will be automatically disqualified, and forever be ineligible to hold office in any branch of SGA, and will be subject to further disciplinary action. The definition of tampering includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Framing a candidate to gain that person's disqualification.
 - b. Falsifying of vote results.
 - c. Theft or destruction of property of another candidate.
 - d. Forging of materials to give the appearance of origination from another person or campaign.
 - e. The purposeful filing of deceitful violations against any candidate.
- C. Major violations for which the candidate will be disqualified include but are not limited to:
 - a. Posting any slanderous material, as determined by the Elections Committee.
 - b. Failure to correct a violation as directed by the Elections Committee.
 - c. Election interference, as determined by the Elections Committee.
 - d. The accumulation of two violations.
 - e. Failing to follow Federal, State, and Institute policies concerning mass communication.
- D. Minor violations for which the candidate may be subjected to penalties as decided by the Elections Committee, below, include but are not limited to:
 - a. Sign violations
 - b. Other violations of rules specified in this code.
- E. The Elections Committee shall be guided by the following guidelines while assessing sanctions:
 - a. All sanctions should seek to eliminate any unfair advantage gained by the violating candidate.
 - b. A violation shall not result in a penalty of more than \$5.00 per campaign violation.
- F. The Elections committee may, at its discretion, direct a campaign to take corrective action to remedy a violation, while declining to impose further sanctions or to officially record a violation.

- G. All elections violations shall be decided upon within 48 hours, or before 1 hour prior to the announcement of elections results.
- H. A hearing is required for all major violations.
- I. Any student of Reinhardt University may submit an election violation charge against any candidate by submitting the charge in writing at the Student Government Association office.
- J. The person(s) charged with any violation will be notified by electronic-mail of the time and place of any possible hearing 24 hours in advance, and will be given the opportunity to hear all charges and present a defense at this hearing.
- K. The person bringing the charge may present their case before the Judicial Council. The person(s) charged with the violation must, in this case, be allowed to remain present during the presentation of the case.
- L. In cases brought before the Judicial Council, the defendant may unseat as many as two (2) members, (the Chair cannot be struck), provided a quorum of five (5) members and the Chair remain.
- M. The Judicial Council will hear cases of Elections Code violations and pass judgment on the accused. Candidates shall have the right to appeal a disqualification decision, or an interdiction on the holding of office in SGA, to the Judicial Council.
- N. Severe cases of Elections Code violations may be referred to the Judiciary Cabinet.
- O. Successfully prosecuted election violations (not violation allegations) will be made available to the public through the official page of the SGA website.
- P. It will be the responsibility of the affected candidate to appeal any case resulting in disqualification to the Judicial Council for review.

Section XI. Emergency Elections

- A. If an election is found to be fraudulent or found to have been held outside the bounds of the SGA Constitution and Bylaws by the Elections Committee, then a new election, of the same type as that found to have been fraudulent, will be held no earlier than three full week-days after that decision has been made, and no later than six week-days after the ruling.
- B. Requests and Timeline for emergency elections:
 - a. Any student, believing that an election in which he or she was a candidate was fraudulent, or held outside the bounds of the SGA Constitution and Bylaws, may request that the Elections Committee determine the necessity of an emergency election.
 - b. Timeline:
 - i. Emergency election requests must be made no later than six (6) hours prior to the scheduled opening of polls in the next round of voting.
 - ii. If no later round is scheduled, emergency election requests must be made no later than forty eight (48) hours after the official posting of results at the Student Government Association office.

- C. Rulings of the Elections Committee regarding emergency elections may be appealed to the Judiciary Council, which shall be the final arbiter on all such matters.

Section XII. The Elections Committee

- A. Members of the Elections Committee shall serve until the installation of the next Student Body President.
- B. An Elections Committee member who has an inappropriate interest in and/or relations to a particular campaign shall be removed by the chair from all proceedings regarding that part of the campaign unless that member voluntarily removes himself or herself.
- C. If a position on the committee for any reason becomes vacant an alternate shall be appointed by the Vice President of Administration. These alternate appointees shall serve with the full powers of office unless the appointment is rejected at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Student Senate.

Section XIV. Amendment to the Elections Code

- A. The Elections Code may be altered, amended or repealed and a new Elections Code may be adopted by a two-thirds majority of Student Senators. All amendments to this code must be submitted in writing to the Elections Committee. Propositions for the Elections Code must acquire a two-thirds vote of the Student Senate to take effect.
- B. Editorial proposals, grammatical changes that do not alter in any way the content of this document, may be brought forth by any member of the SGA. Editorial proposals must be approved by the Elections Committee.