

**UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE**  
**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**  
**RULES GOVERNING ELECTIONS**

Revised April 30, 2004

**Preamble**

These election regulations of the Student Government Association are established, consistent with the Student Government Association Constitution and BY-Laws, to govern and maintain the regulation of any authorized Student Government Election. These election regulations will not supersede the Student Government Association Constitution or By-Laws. The intent of these elections is to have students vote on their own behalf, as founded by our great nation's federal laws.

**Student Government Association Elections Committee**

All election regulations shall be enforced by a Student Government Association Elections Committee. Violations may subject a candidate to penalties or ultimate dismissal from the elections, upon the decision of the Elections Committee.

Appeals of decisions made by the Elections Committee must be made to the Student Affairs Appeals Committee within two (2) business days.

The Elections Committee of the Student Government Association will consist of the members of the Judicial Branch and one (1) member of the faculty or staff. No person who is a candidate for an office of the Student Government Association may serve on the Elections Committee.

The Elections Committee is appointed each Fall semester by the faculty advisor to the Student Government Association with the approval of the Senate.

**Duties of the Elections Committee**

The Student Government Association Elections Committee will be responsible for performing a number of specific duties, including:

1. Certifying the eligibility for candidate filing.
2. Enforcing the deadline for candidate filing.
3. Conducting a meeting to explain the election regulations to the candidates.
4. Supervising the election (this includes verification that persons are not allowed to vote more than once, investigation of complaints and generally providing assurance of a fair election)
5. Using any necessary means to insure that all posters, signs, or other material used in campaigning are removed by their respective candidates.
6. Informing the candidates of the results and submitting the results to the Student Government Association.
7. The Elections Committee shall meet within one (1) week of appointment to familiarize themselves with elections rules.
8. The Committee shall set the deadline for filing for candidacy, which shall be at least three weeks (21 days) prior to the election. The filing deadline shall be publicized by distribution of fliers and ads placed in The Vermilion two (2) consecutive weeks prior to the deadline.
9. Candidate's names shall be certified by the Committee and released to the Student Body by means of, but not limited to, The Vermilion no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the election.

## **Rules Governing SGA Elections**

10. The duties of the Election Committee are inclusive of, but not limited to, these specific duties. The Committee should make every effort to insure a fair election.

### **Election Dates**

1. Election of the Executive Branch and Senate seats, with the exception of the Freshmen senate seats, shall be held in the Spring semester. The date for this election will be recommended by the Elections Committee and approved by a majority of the senate present. The date shall fall between the first day of March and the first Friday of April, inclusive. Fall elections will be held during the fall semester.
2. If voting by computer for a minimum of two days, it will not be deemed necessary to have a designated absentee voting day.
3. Special elections may be held at any time so designated by the Senate.
4. The dates of all elections shall be reported to the Dean of Students, the Chairman of the Student Affairs Appeals Committee, and the student body through The Vermilion.
5. The polls shall remain open to student voting between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on the first day of elections and between 6:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on the final day of elections. These hours can be extended at the discretion of the Elections Committee.

### **Filing for Candidacy**

1. Deadline for filing petitions for candidacy will be set by the SGA Elections Committee. The prospective candidates must ensure that their petitions are received and date stamped by the SGA secretary or an Elections Committee member. This deadline will be at least twenty-one (21) consecutive days prior to the election.
2. All prospective candidates shall fill out and return their petition no later than 4:30 p.m. on the set date. Petitions may be turned into the SGA Office and must be accompanied by a current transcript. Any petition not date stamped is invalid. Petitions will not be accepted after 4:30 p.m. on the deadline date. Once verified, the transcript may be returned to the petitioner.
3. All candidates may indicate a party petition. If a party is not indicated, the candidate will not have a party associated with his/her name. However, a party must file a petition and list that candidate for that seat in order for a candidate to be declared affiliated. In the event of a conflict of affiliation between the candidate's petition and the party's petition, the candidate shall have no party affiliation status.
4. If a candidate files more than one petition, the petition filed the latest will prevail over all others.
5. To be a legitimate student and acceptable candidate in a UL Lafayette election, one must be a currently registered student whose official name, as registered with the university, will appear on the ballot. Any exceptions or special appeals will be considered by the Elections Committee.

### **Filing for Party Petitions**

1. A party petition is defined as a list which includes the party name and all candidates affiliated with that party and the seat they seek.
2. The party's petition shall be submitted by the party chairman and may not have more than one (1) candidate for any seat.
3. The party name will appear on the ballot next to all candidates affiliated with that party provided that the candidate's affiliation is indicated on both his/her petition and the party's petition.

### **Rules Governing SGA Elections**

4. Candidate petition's and party petition forms must match. Conflicts will be determined by what the candidate's petition indicates for the position; the candidate will not be allowed to run under the party affiliation name. Other conflicts/problems regarding party names and candidate's petitions will be handled by the Elections Committee.
5. The same deadline set for candidate petition filing will apply to filing for party petitions

### **Election Eligibility Requirements**

Election eligibility requirements can be found in the SGA By-Laws: Article 1.

### **Rules Governing Campaigning**

1. No forms of campaign materials may be distributed or posted prior to the mandatory candidates' meeting. This includes chalking.
2. The use of alcoholic or nonalcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled illegal substances, food, or any sum of money in any SGA election by any candidate or his/her representative in connection with campaign materials, solicitation of votes, or any action that furthers the candidate's course is expressly prohibited. Announcement functions are allowed up to two (2) weeks prior to the election date. Refreshments are allowed except for alcohol, drugs, or other controlled, illegal substances. Any functions, if held on any UL at Lafayette property must be open to the public and must be advertised in *The Vermilion* to the function.
3. Signs/Chalking
  - A. No individual posters, cards, signs, or the like may be placed on floors, walls, ceilings, or structures other than bulletin boards without permission from the proper authority or authorities. Proper authority for these actions always includes the Dean of Students, but may also require approval from other authorities.
  - B. Only one (1) sign-poster per candidate no larger than eleven inches by seventeen inches (11" x 17") per bulletin board is permitted. A candidate's name may only appear once per bulletin board.
  - C. Only one (1) sign-poster per party no larger than eleven inches by seventeen inches (11" x 17") per bulletin board is permitted. A party sign-poster is defined as having no endorsements or candidate's names on it, but displaying a name or symbol affiliated with a party or ticket.
  - D. Placement of campaign material on automobiles located on university parking facilities is prohibited.
  - E. Chalking of sidewalks is prohibited under covered walkways as well as vertical structures including the Walk of Honor and spheres outside of Dupre Library.
  - F. The removal of other candidate(s)' campaign material is prohibited under all circumstances.
  - G. Altering other candidate(s)' chalking by any means is prohibited under all circumstances.
4. Gummed or wettable glue-backed stickers are prohibited from use in Student Government Elections.
5. Electronic Media
  - A. No sound equipment of any kind is to be used on university property or the streets adjacent to university property in connection with campaigning. No announcements may be made in cafeterias, residence halls, computer labs or the Union with regard to a specific candidate or candidates. Campaign announcements on any radio or television station other than the University of Louisiana at Lafayette radio station, KRVS, and campus cable are prohibited.

## Rules Governing SGA Elections

- B. Other Electronic Media
  - 1. The use of a computer for creation/presentation of web-based documents is permitted.
  - 2. Any other form of computer campaigning is prohibited (i.e. blanket e-mails, news groups, etc.) The Elections Committee will handle any discrepancies.
- 6. Campaigning by telephone or in person in the residence halls will be allowed only from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on the Sunday before the election pending the approval of the Department of Student Personnel. However, the use of broadcast messages to conduct campaigning is prohibited at all times.
- 7. Use of aircraft as a means to distribute campaign material or in connection with campaigning is prohibited.
- 8. No trailers, trucks, tents, or the like will be permitted on university property for election purposes. Appropriate campaign signs are permitted on automobiles with the owner's consent. Automobiles may be used for campaign transportation but not for the transportation of students who are going to vote.
- 9. Billboards
  - A. Each candidate will be allowed to place one (1) large sign (billboard no larger than 4' x 8') in designated areas of the campus with the exception of candidates for President, Vice-President, and Treasurer, who will each be allowed to have two (2) signs.
  - B. The Elections Committee will determine the locations where billboards can be placed and the method these locations will be distributed to candidates for use.
  - C. Candidates name must appear on their own signs. An individual may allow other names on his/her billboard provided their own name is legible and of a size greater than or equal to the other names.
  - D. Placement of bulletin boards may begin Sunday at noon the week prior to the election.
- 10. Placement of bulleting boards and distribution of campaign materials will be limited to:
  - A. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus.
  - B. Land owned or controlled by the University.
  - C. Land owned, leased, or rented by a University recognized organization and occupied by the organization.
- 11. All election campaigning materials not pertaining to the runoff election should be removed within three (3) school days after the election.
- 12. Students may not participate in campaigning while in the SGA office, SGA meetings, or at any SGA sanctioned event. This includes wearing or distributing any campaign materials.
- 13. No university logos, including the SGA logo, are allowed on campaigning materials.

## Election Day

- 1. Each voting student must be a valid student in the college in which he/she votes at the time of elections.
  - A. Only a valid UL at Lafayette identification card will be accepted for voting purposes in that it contains all pertinent information (i.e. student PID number, date of birth, and voter number).
  - B. Each student must vote on their own behalf. Each student must vote using his/her own UL Lafayette information required in the voting process.

## **Rules Governing SGA Elections**

2. Voting procedures will be governed by requirements of the Elections Committee.
3. Candidates names will appear on the ballot in alphabetical order, according to the office they are seeking.
4. All candidates running for SGA seats (BIG THREE-SENATE) are to be elected by a majority of participating voters. If there are more than two (2) for the same seat of the Senate, it is to be by a plurality vote. (SGA By-Laws: Article 2, Section 4, Part 2.)
  - A. If no candidate running receives a majority vote for President, Vice-President, or Treasurer, a runoff election will be held for that office between the two (2) candidates receiving the most votes.
  - B. In case of a tie, unless one (1) of the candidates in question is willing to concede to the other in writing, a runoff election will be held to determine a winner.
5. The date of the runoff election will be set by the Elections Committee with the approval of the SGA Senate. The date of the runoff shall be no later than fourteen (14) consecutive days after the primary election. In the event of another tie, additional runoff elections will be held at the discretion of the Elections Committee with the approval of the SGA Senate.
6. On election day, no distribution of campaign materials will be allowed inside or within twenty feet (20') of any room in which voting can take place (i.e. contains computers with internet access). No verbal campaigning is allowed in lobbies or hallways in the building in which voting is taking place.
7. No loitering or verbal campaigning is allowed in the immediate vicinity of the polls.

## **Penalties for Violations**

1. Any violations of these rules or the Code of Student Conduct with regard to campaigning should be reported to the Elections Committee as soon as possible. No complaints of illegal or improper campaigning conduct will be accepted after 4:30 p.m. the next business day following the election. Complaints **MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING.**
2. The Elections Committee will meet in quorum to review all complaints filed in writing. Any violation of the rules, which is found by the Elections Committee to significantly further the candidate's course, shall be deemed a major offense. All major offenses will be punished by disqualification. After reviewing all evidence, the Elections Committee shall render their decision in writing to all parties concerned.
3. Further appeals can be made to the Student Affairs Appeals Court within two (2) business days of the Elections Committee's ruling.

## **Amendments**

These rules may be changed by a majority vote of the senators present.