

Carnegie Mellon University

Student Government Election Rules

I. Application of rules

- A. These rules shall apply for all Student Body wide referenda and elections for Executive office.
- B. When there is any contradiction between these rules and the bylaws of the Undergraduate Student Senate or Graduate Student Assembly, these rules shall supersede those bylaws.
- C. When there is any contradiction between these rules and the Constitution of the Student Body, the Constitution shall supersede these rules.
- D. Any questions regarding these election rules, their meaning, their application, and their enforcement shall be decided by a majority vote of the Elections Board.
- E. The Student Senate Election Rules shall apply for all Undergraduate only referenda and elections for Undergraduate Student Senate

II. Definitions

A. Campaign Material

- 1. Any poster, web page, email document, pamphlet, auditory or visual recording, or other device that is intended to influence voting at an election.

B. Candidate Platform

- 1. A candidate platform shall be defined as a statement from the candidate or candidates describing their positions.
- 2. Candidate platforms shall be subject to all guidelines regarding campaign material except where otherwise noted.

C. Eligible Voter

- 1. An eligible voter shall be defined as an Undergraduate or Graduate student enrolled for 19 units or more at Carnegie Mellon University, who has paid the Activities Fee for the current semester.
- 2. The final test for eligibility shall be the list provided by Enrollment Services, subject to appeal.

D. Candidate for office

1. A candidate for office shall be defined as any person seeking an office in Student Government. Eligibility is defined below.

E. Elections Board

1. The Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly, in accordance with the Constitution of the Student Body and their respective Bylaws, shall appoint the Elections Board by a majority vote. The Election Board shall select for itself a chair.
2. The Elections Board may elect new members to its body with the approval of Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly.
3. No member of Student Senate, Graduate Student Assembly or the Executive Branch may serve on the Elections Board.
4. No candidate for office may serve on the Elections Board.
5. The Elections Board shall have at least four (4) members in addition to the Elections Board Chair.

F. Pollster

1. Only members of the Elections Board shall monitor a polling location.

G. Polling Location

1. The polling location shall be defined as the area within ten meters of the ballot box or official voting location designated by the the Elections Board on the day of the election.
2. A portable computer or computer lab shall not be considered a polling location unless specifically designated to be such by the the Elections Board.

H. Campaign Purposes

1. Using campaign material to influence voting for or against one or more particular candidates for office at an election.

III. Candidate Eligibility

- A. Only activities-fee paying students of Carnegie Mellon University registered for at least nineteen (19) units shall be eligible to run for office.

B. Petitions

1. To be listed on the election ballot for Student Body President or Vice President for Finance, each qualified candidate must submit a petition with

at least 100 signatures from eligible Graduate or Undergraduate students of Carnegie Mellon University to the Elections Board.

2.

- a) Any eligible voter may sign more than one election petition.
- b) No person may sign a single petition multiple times.
- c) A candidate may run for multiple offices.

C. If a candidate receives sufficient votes to be elected to more than one office, that candidate may only accept one office.

D. Election petitions for Executive office must be turned in no later than 14 days before the election.

E. The Elections Board shall validate all election petitions and notify the candidates within twenty-four (24) hours if their petition is invalid.

F. Write-in candidates

- 1. Any eligible candidate can run as a write-in candidate. Their name will not appear on the ballot, but may be entered manually by voters.
- 2. Write-in candidate shall be subject to all rules of campaigning.
- 3. No member of the Elections Board may run as a write-in candidate.

IV. Campaigning

A. Candidates for office are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and following all applicable University, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Senate policies.

B. No campaigning may take place at any polling location during polling hours on the election days, nor may any campaign material be present at a polling location during polling hours.

- 1. This shall exclude candidate platforms received by and approved by the Elections Board at least one week prior to the election.

C. The office of Student Activities must approve any posters in advance, in order for candidate posters to comply with the University Poster Policy.

D. No painting of the fence is permitted for campaign purposes.

E. Libelous or slanderous campaigning shall be subject to sanction by the University Disciplinary Committee and applicable state and local laws.

F. No Activities Fee money shall be used for campaigning purposes.

1. This shall exclude the Elections Board reproducing candidate platforms approved by the Elections Board.

G. No person may bribe, give, or lend anything of over one dollar (\$1.00) in value in order to induce a person to vote or refrain from voting or to vote for or against a candidate or referendum.

H. No person may personally or through an agent intimidate, harass, use or threaten the use of force, violence, or restraint in order to compel or induce any person to vote, abstain from voting, or vote or abstain from voting for a particular candidate or referendum.

I. Violations of these rules may result in penalties of up to 10% of votes received and action by the University Disciplinary Committee, at the discretion of the Elections Board.

V. Balloting Procedures

A. Single Table Method

1. A table shall be set up with a ballot box, a stack of unmarked ballots, these Election Rules, and approved candidate platforms at the approved polling location.
2. At least two pollsters shall be present at the approved polling location at all times.
3. The Voter shall present valid photo identification to the pollsters.
4. The pollsters shall check to ensure that the student is an eligible voter by confirming the name or student identification number from the list that was obtained from Enrollment Services.
5. If a student claims to meet the criteria to be a voter and is not listed as valid, then the pollsters shall follow the procedure for double enveloping.
6. The pollsters shall then cross the voter's name off of the List. Then the pollsters shall return the photo identification, along with one ballot for the voter's college and one ballot, each, for referenda and campus-wide positions. The pollsters shall not touch the ballots after the votes have been cast.
7. The stock of unused ballots shall be kept secure at all times.

B. Multiple Table Divided List Method

1. The List of students shall be divided by a method agreed upon by the Chair of the Elections Board and Student Senate. Different portions may be at each polling place, but no portion may be duplicated at two.
2. The procedures for Single Table Method shall then be followed for each table that is a designated polling location.

C. Online Method

1. At least one computer with a connection to the network shall be set up at each polling location. This computer shall be designated the polling computer.
2. At least two pollsters shall be present at the polling location at all times.
3. The Elections Board shall maintain a secure web site, updated in real time, containing online ballots and a voter verification database containing data provided by Enrollment Services. Voters shall cast their votes using this secure web site from the polling computer(s) or any other secure computer system. The web site shall also contain links to candidate platforms, the election rules, and directions for reporting errors.
4. If a student claims to meet the criteria to be a voter, but is not able to log into the system as a valid user, then the pollsters shall require a photo ID and will follow the procedure for double enveloping.
5. The pollsters shall then access the voter verification database and update the student's vote status from "not voted" to "voted". Then the pollsters shall return the photo identification, along with one ballot for the voter's college and one ballot, each, for referenda and campus-wide positions. The pollsters shall not touch the ballots after the votes have been cast.

D. Double Enveloping

1. The pollster shall give the voter two envelopes and paper ballots for each position and referendum.
2. The voter shall mark their vote on the ballots and then seal the ballot in the first envelope.
3. The first envelope shall then be sealed in the second envelope, upon which the pollsters shall then write the voters name and student identification number, the name of the pollsters, and a description of the problem.

4. This method shall not be employed unless a voter claims to be eligible but is not entered in list of eligible voters, or claims not to have voted but is marked as voted.
5. The Online Method shall be the preferred system of voting.
6. No method not described above shall be used for voting.

VI. Timeline

- A. The Elections Board shall be established by the last day of February for elections.
- B. The Elections Board shall choose the location of election polls and their times of operation by a vote no later than two (2) weeks before the election.
- C. Elections for Executive offices shall be held in either March or April.
- D. The Elections Board shall establish and announce the elections date at least thirty (30) days in advance.

VII. Election procedures

- A. The elections method shall be chosen from among those described under Balloting Procedures.
- B. Upon completion of the Vote Counting, the Elections Board shall notify all candidates of their status within one day and make the results public within the same time frame.
- C. If a candidate declines a position, the eligible candidate with the next highest percentage of votes shall be offered that position.
- D. The frequency of elections for Executive positions shall be governed by the Constitution of the Student Body.
- E. The Elections Board shall be responsible for all elections procedures, excluding election publicity, setting the polling locations, and provision of necessary funds or materials, but including the following:
 1. Maintaining the list of eligible voters.
 2. Validating election petitions.
 3. Compiling the list of ballot-eligible candidates and referenda into ballots.
 4. Investigating any election irregularities or campaign violations reported.

5. Deciding any questions or disagreements regarding elections not specifically answered in this document or the Constitution of the Student Body.

F. The Elections Board may, upon violation of any procedure and at its discretion, invalidate the election results and call for a new election.

VIII. Vote Counting

A. At least four members of the Elections Board, a professional staff representative of the Office of Student Activities, and the Elections Board Chair shall be present at the vote counting.

B. No person not on the Elections Board shall be present.

C. The vote counting shall take place within twenty-four (24) hours of the closing of the polls.

D. If the Online Method is used, the results shall be unlocked and their numbers tallied by the computer voting scripts. Any obviously misspelled names shall be corrected and added to the tally. Any paper ballots shall be counted and added to the tally.

E. The paper ballot tally shall be counted and recounted until a majority of the Elections Board members present agree upon the result.

F. The tally for each candidate shall then be adjusted for any penalties or violations of these rules by an amount not to exceed ten (10) percent.

G. No counters may leave during the counting, except at the discretion of the Elections Board Chair.

H. The Elections Board shall determine, via majority vote, the validity of the elections upon completion of the vote counting.

I. The results shall not be final until ratified by a majority of the Undergraduate Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly, at the meeting following immediately after the Elections Board's approval of these results. Said results will be enacted upon completion of the final Student Senate meeting of the term.

IX. Amendment

A. Amendment of these rules shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Undergraduate Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly.