

University of the District of Columbia

**ELECTION PROCEDURES**

For the position of

**Student Member of the Board of Trustees**

These revised procedures have been approved by the Board of Trustees to govern the conduct of the election of a student to the position of Student Member of the Board of Trustees

REVISED MARCH 2012

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Section</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	Authority to Conduct Student Trustee Election	1
2	Student Trustee Elections Committee	1
3	Election Calendar	2
4	Eligibility: Candidates and Voters	3
5	Application by Petition	3
6	Filing of Petitions	4
7	Voluntary Withdrawal of Candidacy	5
8	Involuntary Withdrawal of Candidacy	6
9	Drawing for Ballot Positions	6
10	Ballot Design and Contents	6
11	Voting	6
12	Verification	7
13	Counting the Ballots	7
14	Assistance to Disabled Students	7
15	Poll Watchers	8
16	Poll Workers	8
17	Proper Conduct of Campaigns	9
18	Election Challenges	10
19	Stopping or Invalidating an Election	10
20	Requests For Recount	11
21	Funding the Student Trustee Election	11
22	Election Material Security	11
23	Certification of Election Results and Declaration of a Winner	12

## **ELECTION PROCEDURES**

### **Student Member of the Board of Trustees**

#### **1. AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT STUDENT TRUSTEE ELECTION**

- 1.1** This document details the procedures that shall be used to conduct the election for the position of Student Member of The Board of Trustees ( "Student Trustee").
- 1.2** In accordance with the provisions of 8 DCMR §122, the President of the University has delegated certain functions and responsibilities under these election procedures to the Vice President for Student Affairs ("VPSA") or his or her Designee as the responsible University official under these procedures.
- 1.3** The VPSA and other designated University staff shall serve as election officials for the Student Trustee elections.

#### **2. STUDENT TRUSTEE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

- 2.1** A Student Trustees Election Committee shall be established in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- 2.2** The Student Trustee Election Committee shall perform the duties specified by these procedures.
- 2.3** Student members of the Student Trustee Elections Committee shall be full-time students in good academic and financial standing, as defined in §122 of the University Rules.
- 2.4** The Student Trustee Elections Committee shall consist of the following membership:
  - a. One (1) student appointed by the president of the Community College Student Government Association; and
  - b. One (1) student appointed by the president of the Undergraduate Student Government Association; and
  - c. One (1) student appointed by the president of the Graduate Student Government Association; and

- d. One (1) student appointed by the president of the law school Student Bar Association;  
and
- e. One faculty member appointed by the Provost for Academic Affairs.

**2.5** The members of the of the Student Trustee Elections Committee serve until the completion of the election process.

**2.6** If a timely appointment of a member of the Student Trustee Elections Committee is not made, the VPSA shall make the appointment.

### **3. ELECTION CALENDAR**

**3.1** The VPSA shall establish and publish an Election Calendar for the Student Trustee election.

**3.2** The Election calendar shall contain the following:

- a. The date the signature petitions will be available;
- b. The deadline for the submission of signature petitions;
- c. The date for completion of authentication of signature petitions;
- d. The dates for inspection of signature petitions and deadline for filing challenges to petitions;
- e. The deadline for certifying eligibility of candidates;
- f. The date for the drawing to determine ballot positions;
- g. The deadline for voluntary withdrawal of candidacy;
- h. The date to commence campaigning;
- i. The deadline to request poll watchers;
- j. The voting dates and sites;
- k. The date and site for ballot counting;
- l. The date for certification of election results; and
- m. The date of the announcement of the winner.

**4. ELIGIBILITY: CANDIDATES AND VOTERS**

- 4.1 In accordance with the provisions of DC Code § 38-1202.01 and 8 DCMR §122, a student shall be eligible to appear on the official Student Trustee ballot and hold the office of Student Trustee, if the student meets the following qualifications:
- a. He or she is a full-time student at the University of the District of Columbia, or any component institution of the University of the District of Columbia as provided by Section 100.3, as evidenced by being enrolled in a degree-granting program and taking in the current semester not less than twelve (12) credit hours of coursework for an undergraduate student, nine (9) credit hours of coursework for a graduate student, or ten (10) credit hours of coursework for a law student.
  - b. He or she is in good academic standing at the University. For purposes of this section, the term "good academic standing" shall be defined as follows:
    1. Having earned at least twenty-four (24) undergraduate credits, twelve (12) graduate credits, or having completed the first semester of law school while enrolled as a student at the University; and
    2. Having and maintaining a cumulative grade point average ("CGPA") of 3.0 or higher for all undergraduate, graduate, law or professional studies students.
- 4.2 Each eligible candidate shall complete a background check authorization form. A student shall not be eligible to appear on the ballot as a candidate for Student Trustee if that student has been convicted of a felony, pursuant to DC Code §38-1202.03(a).
- 4.3 Each full-time and part-time student who is registered at the University on the date of election shall be eligible to cast a vote.
- 4.4 The Student Trustee is required to remain a full-time student and maintain good academic and financial standing at the University for the duration of his or her term.
- 4.5 Students must not have any outstanding University Code of Conduct violations. Prior Code of Conduct violations must be disclosed and are subject to consideration for eligibility on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.6 Failure to maintain eligibility shall result in forfeiture of office.

## 5. APPLICATION BY PETITION

5.1 To be placed on the ballot for the position of Student Trustee, a student shall obtain signatures of at least twenty five (25) ~~one hundred (100)~~ currently enrolled University students on a Student Trustee petition. Only those student signatures which are authenticated will be counted.

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5.2 The completed Petition shall serve as an application for the position.

5.3 The Student Trustee petition shall be available from the Office of Student Life beginning on the date set in the Election Calendar under §3.2.

5.4 Students are encouraged to obtain more than ~~one hundred (100)~~ twenty five (25) signatures to ensure that enough valid signatures are obtained. Failure to provide the required signatures will result in disqualification.

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5.5 A student may sign petitions for more than one candidate however a student shall not sign a petition more than one (1) time per individual candidate.

5.6 Each petition shall contain space for the following information:

- a. The name of the candidate as it will appear on the ballot;
- b. The candidate's student identification number; and
- c. Signature line for the signature, printed name, and student identification number of each student signing the petition.

5.10 If the person circulating an individual petition sheet is not the candidate, the name and student identification number of the person circulating the petition sheet and soliciting the signatures, as well as the information required in §5.6, shall appear on the petition sheet.

5.11 In order for a signature on a petition sheet to be counted as valid, all information required under §5.6 must be furnished in a legible fashion.

5.12 A student who, because of a temporary or permanent disability, is unable to sign a nominating petition sheet may make their mark in the space for signatures. If the student cannot sign, nor make a mark, a currently enrolled student may assist the student by filling in the required information and signing the disabled student's name.

5.13 The students mark or an assisting student's signature shall not be counted unless a statement is attached to the petition sheet confirming that the signing was done in the presence of the disabled student and one (1) other witness. The witness shall be a currently enrolled University student.

**6. FILING OF PETITIONS**

- 6.1 Candidacy petitions shall be filed with the Office of Student Life not later than the deadline for submission of petitions set forth in the Election Calendar. All petition sheets must be completely and correctly filled out for each candidate and shall be submitted at the same time.
- 6.2 Each submission shall be stamped with the date and time that it was received in the Office of Student Life.
- 6.3 Candidates should make and retain copies of each petition sheet before the petition sheets are submitted to the Office of Student Life.
- 6.4 The Office of Student Life shall prepare photocopies of the submitted petition sheets of each candidate and make them available for public inspection in accordance with the dates published in the election calendar.
- 6.5 Signatures on the Petitions shall be authenticated by the VPSA by comparing the data furnished on the petition sheets with data currently on file in the Office of the Registrar.
- 6.6 If the information with a signature fails to agree with the information on file, the signature shall not be counted.
- 6.7 The validity of a signature, the identifying information furnished on a petition sheet, or duplicate signatures on the petition sheets of any candidate may be challenged by any enrolled student including candidates. The challenger must submit the challenge in writing to the VPSA, identifying the alleged defects in the petition. The VPSA shall review the challenge and the petition and determine whether the challenged signatures are valid and will be counted.
- 6.8 Petition challenges must be submitted by the deadline published in the Election calendar.
- 6.9 If a candidate's petition contains sufficient valid signatures, and the candidate is determined to be eligible to run for and hold office, the candidate's name shall appear on the official ballot.
- 6.10 If a candidate's petition does not contain sufficient valid signatures, the petition shall be disqualified.

**7. VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDACY**

- 7.1 A candidate's name shall not be considered officially withdrawn until the VPSA has received notice via signed letter or electronically via email, from the candidate requesting withdrawal of his or her candidacy.
- 7.2 The deadline for withdrawal of candidacy shall be the same date as the date set for the drawing to determine ballot positions.
- 7.3 If a student submits notice withdrawing his or her name after the ballot has been printed and the student receives the highest vote total in the election, the student shall be deemed to be ineligible to hold the position.
- 7.4 If a student withdraws after the ballot has been printed, notices shall be posted at each polling site indicating that the student has officially withdrawn and is ineligible to hold the position.

#### **8. INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDACY**

- 8.1 A candidate may be involuntarily withdrawn by the VPSA at any time prior to the election, under the provisions of this section.
- 8.2 The following causes shall constitute grounds for the involuntary withdrawal of a student's application or candidacy:
  - a. Violation of campaign procedures, based upon the recommendation of the Student Trustee Elections Committee following an informal hearing;
  - b. Insufficient valid signatures on a petition;
  - c. Failure to maintain eligibility to hold office

#### **9. DRAWING FOR BALLOT POSITIONS**

- 9.1 The Student Trustee Elections Committee shall determine the order of appearance of names on the ballot by conducting a drawing.
- 9.2 The drawing for ballot positions shall be held on the date set in the Election Calendar

#### **10. BALLOT DESIGN AND CONTENTS**

- 10.1 The VPSA shall ensure that the ballot is designed in a manner that will merit a voter to indicate his or her choice with one mark.
- 10.2 The only information by which a candidate shall be identified on the ballot is by candidate name and photo where available.

#### **11. VOTING**



- 11.1 The VPSA shall provide for the conduct of the balloting, in accordance with the provisions of these election procedures. The VPSA may designate University employees as election officials to oversee and assist with the balloting process.
- 11.2 Electronic voting shall be the preferred method of voting for Student Trustee elections.
- 11.3 Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- 11.4 A ballot with votes recorded by more than one candidate shall not be counted.
- 11.5 An alphabetized computer list of all students currently enrolled during the term when the election is conducted, including student identification numbers, shall be provided for each physical location where voting takes place.
- 11.6 A student whose name appears on the alphabetized listing shall be entitled to cast one ballot using a voting machine, paper ballot, or electronically.
- 11.7 In order to cast a vote at a physical location, a student shall present his or her valid student identification card at the physical location. Once a student has cast his or her vote, the student voter's name shall be marked on the alphabetized computer list.
- 11.8 In order to cast a vote electronically student voters must provide their student identification number and certify their identity.
- 11.9 In the event that a paper ballot is required, if an error is made in completing a paper ballot, the ballot shall be returned to a poll worker who will mark the ballot "spoiled" and place it in a spoiled ballot envelope. The word "spoiled" shall be written beside the name of the student on the computer list of eligible voters. After these procedures have been completed, a new ballot shall be issued to the student. Spoiled ballot envelopes shall be sealed and separated from other ballots. Spoiled ballots shall be maintained to ensure an accurate tally of ballots.

## **12. VERIFICATION**

- 12.1 If a voter name does not appear on the alphabetized list or if the student is unable to vote electronically, the Office of the Registrar shall be contacted for verification and certification that the student is currently enrolled. If a student's enrollment is unable to be verified, they will not be allowed to vote.

## **13. COUNTING THE BALLOTS**

- 13.1 The members of the Student Trustee Elections Committee shall be responsible for the counting of paper ballots and certification of electronic ballots.
- 13.2 The results obtained from any electronic and machine votes will be tallied, and the total number of votes received from paper ballots shall be added to each candidate's vote

total. The sum of these totals will represent the total number of votes received by a candidate.

**14. ASSISTANCE TO DISABLED STUDENTS**

- 14.1 If a qualified student is unable to record his or her vote by operating the voting machine or marking a paper ballot, an election official or poll worker, upon the request of the student voter, shall render assistance to record the student's vote.
- 14.2 A second election official or poll worker shall witness the proper execution of the student's vote.

**15. POLL WATCHERS**

- 15.1 A candidate may request permission from the VPSA to have poll watchers at one or more physical poll locations. Requests for poll watchers must be submitted in writing to the VPSA and shall indicate the names and student identification numbers of the proposed poll watchers.
- 15.2 No more than one (1) poll watcher per candidate may be present at a physical polling place. A poll watcher shall wear approved identification on the outermost garment of his or her clothing.
- 15.3 A poll watcher shall not be a candidate for office during the election in which he or she serves as a poll watcher.
- 15.4 Poll watchers are prohibited from interfering with the election process.
- 15.5 Poll watchers are prohibited from handling election ballots or materials necessary to vote in an election. This restriction shall not be construed to deny a poll watcher the right to cast his or her own ballot.
- 15.6 While at the poll serving as a Poll watcher, persons are prohibited from campaigning for a specific candidate by voicing support orally, wearing paraphernalia, etc in support of a particular candidate. Failure to adhere to this requirement shall result in immediate dismissal of the poll worker from the physical location and may be considered a campaign violation.

**16. POLL WORKERS**

- 16.1 The VPSA may temporarily employ students as poll workers to discharge the responsibilities associated with conducting the voting process.

- 16.2 Students who are chosen to be poll workers shall be impartial. To ensure that poll workers are impartial, the VPSA shall conduct interviews or require students to sign affidavits attesting to their impartiality.
- 16.3 Students receiving Financial Aid or Student Employment Program workers must indicate that they are receiving this assistance and ensure that their employment as a poll worker is in compliance with the laws and guidelines of their respective programs.
- 16.4 The poll worker compensation rate shall be based upon compensation equal to the Work Study and Student Employment Program rate.
- 16.5 The following persons shall not serve as poll workers:
  - a. Candidates and campaign workers or managers;
  - b. Students who are not currently enrolled at the University or any affiliates; or
  - c. Members of the Student Trustee Elections Committee.

**17. PROPER CONDUCT OF CAMPAIGNS**

- 17.1 Candidates for the position of Student Trustee are expected to follow the rules and procedures for the election and conduct themselves in the highest level of collegiate behavior. All candidates shall be expected to be familiar with the provisions of the University Rules and these election procedures.
- 17.2 The use of student activity fees to engage in campaigning is prohibited. This prohibition is not intended to deny candidates the right to solicit votes by distributing the literature or introducing themselves to potential voters at various activities.
- 17.3 Use of any type of sound amplification system, including portable bullhorns, is not permitted during the election period without the prior written approval of the VPSA.
- 17.4 Campaign literature and advertisements may be of any size, so long as it does not exclude other candidates from displaying their campaign literature in close proximity.
- 17.5 Written approval of the Office of Student Life must be obtained prior to handing out or posting any campaign literature on University property, including but not limited to large campaign signs, posters, banners and handbills. Cellophane tape, glue, nails, or other types of adhesives or fasteners that leave a visible mark or residue shall not be used for mounting campaign literature.
- 17.6 Campaign literature shall not be placed within one hundred feet of any polling area on the day of voting or in any area designated as prohibited by the VPSA.

- 17.7 Campaign literature shall not be placed in any elevator or on any elevator door.
- 17.8 Campaign activity shall not disrupt classes or impede the normal operations of the University.
- 17.9 No student shall make use of University equipment, supplies, or services to support an individual candidate's campaign.
- 17.10 To avoid problems with campaign conduct, candidates are encouraged to consult with the Office of Student Life if there is any question with respect to proper campaign activity.
- 17.11 Campaign literature must be removed no later than seventy-two (72) hours after the day of election.
- 17.12 Threats and assaults will not be tolerated and shall be dealt with immediately by the Office of Student Life.
- 17.13 A candidate's disregard of a warning given by an election official may constitute a violation of these procedures. Warning shall be reported to the Student Trustee Elections Committee by the election official.
- 17.14 Any student, including the candidate, poll workers and poll watchers, who are found to have violated the University Student Code of Conduct during the election process, shall be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the Code.

**18. ELECTION CHALLENGES**

- 18.1 A candidate may challenge conduct by or on behalf of a candidate that violates the provisions of §17 of these procedures. A campaign conduct challenge must be submitted in writing to the Student Trustee Elections Committee within twenty four hours of the alleged violation.
- 18.2 The Student Trustee Elections Committee shall conduct an inquiry into the alleged violation and may conduct an informal hearing on the conduct challenge as soon as practicable.
- 18.3 If the Student Trustee Elections Committee determines that a campaign conduct violation has occurred, it may issue a warning to the candidate to cease and desist from the improper conduct or, if the Committee determines that a violation has occurred which resulted in the candidate who committed the violation having an unfair advantage in the election and that the violation is likely to materially affect the outcome of the election, it may recommend to the VPSA that the election be stopped or invalidated.
- 18.4 A candidate may challenge an error in the conduct of an election that the candidate believes has or will materially affect the outcome of the election. The challenge must be submitted in writing to the Student Trustee Elections Committee within twenty four hours of the alleged error. If a

student trustee elections committee determine that an error in the conduct of the election has occurred, and that the error has or is likely to materially affect the outcome of the election, it may recommend to the VPSA that the election be stopped or invalidated.

- 18.5 A candidate may challenge the results of an election by demanding a recount in accordance with the provisions of §20 of these procedures.

## **19. STOPPING OR INVALIDATING AN ELECTION**

- 19.1 The VPSA has authority to temporarily stop the voting process in order to correct an error or problem with the voting process.

- 19.2 The VPSA has authority to invalidate an election, upon the recommendation of the Student Trustee Elections Committee, after an inquiry (including a hearing, if one is held by the Elections Committee) on an election challenge based on a finding by the Committee that an error or violation has occurred which resulted in one (1) or more candidates having an unfair advantage in the election, and where the Committee has determined that the error or violation is likely to have materially affected the outcome of the election.

- 19.3 If the VPSA stops voting or invalidates an election, the following shall occur:

- a. The VPSA shall notify in writing the ~~Provost and~~ President, and all candidates regarding the reasons for taking action; and
- b. The ~~Provost-VPSA~~ and President shall determine the necessary actions to continue the voting process, if voting has been temporarily stopped; or shall reschedule the election and announce a new Election Calendar if the election is invalidated.

## **20. REQUESTS FOR RECOUNT**

- 20.1 Where it is necessary to conduct an election via paper ballot, and the winner is determined by 5% or less, there shall be an automatic recount.

- 20.2 A candidate who participated in the election may request a recount of the paper ballots by submitting the request in writing to the VPSA.

- 20.2 A request for a recount shall be made within twenty four hours after the votes have been tabulated under §13 of these election procedures.

- 20.3 If the VPSA determines that a recount should be made, written notice of the time and date of the recount shall be sent to all candidates.

- 20.4 The Student Trustee Elections Committee shall conduct the recount at the time and on the date specified by the VPSA.

## **21. FUNDING THE STUDENT TRUSTEE ELECTION**

21.1 If the Student Trustee election does not occur concurrently with the undergraduate and graduate student government elections, an allocation of the Student Affairs budget shall be provided to the VPSA to conduct the election.

**22. ELECTION MATERIAL SECURITY**

22.1 Ballots and other election materials shall be maintained in a secure manner that will permit control by the Student Trustee Elections Committee.

22.2 To ensure the highest standards of security are maintained over election material, the Student Trustee Elections Committee shall consult with the Office of Student Life and the Office of Public Safety.

22.3 Election materials, including all ballots, shall be retained by the VPSA for at least three months following the announcement of the official winner.

**23. CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION RESULTS AND DECLARATION OF A WINNER**

23.1 The eligible candidate receiving the most votes shall be certified by the VPSA as the winner of the election.

23.3 The VPSA shall certify that the winning candidate meets all of the qualifications set forth in 8 DCMR §122 "Student Member of BOT" and all applicable laws.

23.4 The VPSA's certification shall include a report indicating the names of candidates on the ballot, the number of votes received by each candidate, and the name of the student elected.

23.5 The VPSA shall certify the results of the election to the President of the University, who shall then certify the winner to the Board of Trustees.