**MUHLENBERG COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION ELECTION MANUAL**

**ARTICLE I. ELECTION STRUCTURE**

1. The President, Executive Board and representatives shall be elected at-large alphabetically by last name via electronic ballot from the Muhlenberg College student body when available. Should alphabetical electronic balloting not be available, paper balloting at designated stations will be used.
2. Two separate elections shall be held within the last two months of the spring semester.. The sixteen (16) representative candidates, six (6) executive board candidates,and the presidential candidate receiving the largest number of legal votes cast shall be declared the winner(s). In the event that a candidate has the largest number of legal votes for more than one position their personal preference ranking should be followed. If not available, the following order of election should be followed: Vice President, Treasurer, Executive Secretary, Recording Secretary, Campus Engagement Chair, and DEI Chair.
3. The first election shall be composed of the Presidential candidates and the second shall be the Executive Board and Representative candidates.
4. A candidate may run for all of the following positions:
	1. President
		1. A candidate must have served a minimum of 2 semesters (does not have to be consecutive) on SGA, prior to assuming office, to be eligible to run for President
	2. Executive Board (Maximum of 2 Positions)
		1. A candidate must have served a minimum of 2 semesters (does not have to be consecutive) on SGA, prior to assuming office, to be eligible to run for Vice President and or Treasurer
	3. Representative

**ARTICLE II. ELECTION PROCEDURES**

**Section One. Nominations & Elections Supervision.** The Student Government Association Nominations & Elections Committee is responsible for the coordination and supervision of Student Body President, Student Government Association Executive Board and Student Government Association Representative elections as outlined further in this document.

**Section Two. Nominations.**

1. Students interested in holding office shall complete the following:
	1. A *Statement of Intent* providing a brief summary (maximum 200 words) about a student’s intent, qualifications and eligibility to hold office in the Student Government Association.
		1. A candidate may choose to submit up to one statement per position they are running for
	2. At the conclusion of the campaign period, a *Personal Campaign Expenditure Statement* listing campaign-related expenses, accompanied by receipts and/or explanations for those expenses.
	3. Individuals shall have their names placed on the ballot if:
		1. They have completed the requisite paperwork.
		2. They are full-time students of Muhlenberg CollegeThey will be taking classes for at least the fall semester of their term of office.
		3. They are NOT serving disciplinary suspension or expulsion, unless approved to run for office by the Dean of Students.
2. Materials required for nomination shall be made available online under the Documents section of the SGA website, from the J. Conrad and Hazel Seeger’s Union Building Information Desk, and the Student Government Association Office, at least two weeks prior to Election Day.
3. Running on a ticket is prohibited. This means that candidates may not run together as a team.

**Section Three: Elections Committee**

1. This committee consists of the SGA co-advisors and two students chosen by the co-advisors. We recommend at least one of the students is a non-returning SGA member.

**Section Four. Campaigning.**

1. Campaigning may not begin more than fourteen (14) days prior to Election Day at 12:01 a.m.
2. Candidates shall refrain from unfair campaign tactics such as:
	1. Mud-Slinging or Smear Campaigning. Under no circumstances or at any time will negative propaganda be permitted.
		1. Mud-slinging or Smear Campaigning is defined as unjustly insulting or accusing an opponent with the aim of damaging their reputation.
	2. Actively campaigning 30 feet surrounding the designated polling area. Actively campaigning includes engaging other students in consideration of their vote through discussion or display (wearing a campaign shirt, handing out leaflets, etc.), and directly encouraging other students to vote. On election day, candidates may remind students how to vote, or show them how to bring up the form, but may not stand over their shoulder as they vote online, or watch to see who they vote for- this is considered unduly pressuring them and is strictly prohibited.
	3. Social and Electronic Media. All social media platforms are allowed. Campaigning on Canvas or use of Muhlenberg email accounts to send unsolicited bulk mail messages are prohibited. Muhlenberg college computer network, equipment, and resources are owned by the college and are provided primarily to support the academic and administrative functions of the college. Posting on a candidate's own personal Facebook pages, or into the offical facebook class pages are allowed. Candidates may also create events for the purpose of reminding people to vote, or vote for a specific candidate.
	4. Using the Muhlenberg College radio station (WMUH), Muhlenberg Broadcasting Community (MBC), Muhlenberg Weekly, or Digital Signage to record and/or broadcast campaign messages. The Weekly is independent of SGA and may choose on their own to cover the race or interview candidates.
	5. Removing, defacing, or posting on top of publicity or campaign material present on bulletin boards or authorized posting locations.
	6. Distributing paper handbills to passers-bys in Seegers Union.
	7. Defacing (i.e. chalking) any surface, placing lawn signs, and/or creating table tents.
	8. Creating bulk paper mailings, even when each piece of mail is personally addressed.
	9. Actively campaigning while engaged in work, paid or volunteer, as an agent of Muhlenberg College or during a non-partisan SGA event.

**Campaign Materials.** Campaign Materials shall be any item with a candidate’s name, likeness, and/or slogan.

1. Campaign materials to be hung on walls may not be larger than 22” x 28”.
2. One (1) campaign banner per candidate may be hung on campus. Banners may be no larger than 60” x 80”.
3. The use of copyrighted slogans, logos, characters, etc. without written permission from the copywriter is illegal and the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee shall remove campaign materials using such items.
4. Campaign materials shall avoid using offensive language or innuendo, advocating the use of drugs and/or alcohol, or degrading any person on the basis of race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.
5. Signs, notices, and banners may be posted or hung in authorized areas only. Authorized areas include:
	1. Parent’s Plaza, Residence halls and Academic buildings (after receiving permission from the appropriate office such as Office of Residential Services or an academic office).
		1. Notices posted in residence halls and academic buildings must be affixed to designated bulletin boards only.
		2. Posting is not permitted on any painted surface, entrance, fire doors or windows.
		3. Candidates may not post or hang notices on trees, building exterior, light posts, etc.
6. Candidates shall be held financially responsible for any physical damage caused by their campaign material.
7. It shall be the responsibility of the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee to remove campaign material improperly posted any times throughout the campaign week. Electronic material the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee deems to be improper must be taken down by the candidate who posted it within twenty four (24) hours of the candidate being informed by the Committee that the posting was improper.
8. Candidates must remove their physical publicity material within twenty-four (24) hours after results have been declared “official”. The only exception is for the candidates involved in a runoff election.
9. Protests filed in regards to unfair campaign tactics should be filed as soon as possible to be reviewed by the Nominations and Elections Committee. Protests involving unfair campaigning will not be considered after the unofficial results have been released to the Student Body.
10. If the Nominations and Elections Committee unanimously finds a campaign tactic to be unfair, the candidate will be disqualified.

**Section Four. Campaign Spending.**

1. Campaign spending shall be limited to $100 out-of-pocket, and $200 from gifts, donations, and fundraising for each candidate seeking the office of Muhlenberg College Student Body President. The total campaign spending can be no more than three hundred dollars ($300.00).
2. Campaign spending shall be limited to $50 out-of-pocket, and $100 from gifts, donations and fundraising for each individual seeking the office of Muhlenberg College Student Government Association Executive Board and/or Representative.
3. For candidates running for both Student Body President, Executive Board, and/or Representative, campaign spending shall be limited to $100 out-of-pocket, and $200 from gifts, donations, and fundraising. Distribution for campaign spending cannot exceed campaign spending limits for the respective office.
4. A candidate may use their pre-existing Papercut allotment to print campaign material without it counting towards their total campaign expenditures- however, depositing additional money into a Papercut account for the purpose of printing campaign materials does count towards the campaign spending totals.
5. Gifts and donations cannot be given directly to candidates. Monetary gifts and donations must be submitted to the Nominations and Elections Committee. The Committee will then distribute the funds to the appropriate candidate.
6. Campaign spending limits are inclusive of outright expenditures and include, gifts, and donations of products or services, and funds raised through fundraising. The cost of donated items should be based upon the candidate’s best judgment.
7. Candidates may not combine campaign funds for any purpose.
8. Gifts and donations must come from another member of the student body, or a collective group of Muhlenberg college students.
9. Each candidate shall submit a Personal Campaign Expenditure Statement to the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee by 11:59 PM on Election Day. The SGA Nominations & Elections Committee reserves the right to assign a different price to any item on a candidate’s expenditure sheet provided it can present data justifying the alteration. If a candidate does not incur any expenses for campaign publicity, a Personal Campaign Expenditure Statement must still be submitted.

**Section Five. Election Requirements.**

A. Ballots

1. A candidate’s name and class year shall appear on the ballot as it appears on the *Statement of Intent* submitted by the candidate.

2. The order of candidates’ names on the ballot shall be determined by candidate’s last name alphabetically.

 3. Elections shall be conducted using electronic balloting, and at the selected polling location in Seegers Union. The link to the electronic ballot will be provided via email to the entire student body.

4. Students studying abroad or virtually may vote using an electronic ballot.

B. Voting

1. Voting shall be open at 8:00 AM EST and remain open for a minimum of 12 hours via online electronic ballot. In person polls will be held in the Lobby of J. Conrad and Hazel Seegers Union Building from 8:00AM EST to 8:00PM EST, unless otherwise designated by the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee.

2. Students are required to authenticate with their Muhlenberg network credentials to access the electronic ballot.

**ARTICLE III: POST-ELECTION**

**PROCEDURES Section One. Result Procedures.**

A. Results

1. Results of the election shall be presented in alphabetical order by last name of the candidate and the number of legal votes cast for each shall be provided upon request.

2. SGA Nominations & Elections Committee shall meet immediately after closing of the polls to tabulate the votes and send out an email to the student body through the SGA official email account.

B. Counting Procedures

1. The results of the election shall be tabulated by at least two members of the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee.

2. The SGA Nominations & Elections Committee will meet to verify the results. The results will be considered “unofficial” until the protest period has ended.

**Section Two. Contesting the Results of the Election.**

1. A protest contesting the results of the election may be filed by any member of the student body by stating the reason for the protest in writing and providing it to a member of the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee within forty-eight (48) hours of the polls closing.
2. If after forty-eight (48) hours there are no protests, or all protests have been determined to be without merit, the unofficial results shall be considered official results.
3. A protest may be made for any reason that would place the validity of the results in doubt. This may include mechanical or physical difficulties with the voting equipment, suspicion that some students may have voted more than once, or concerns that some votes cast were not counted. It does not include allegations regarding the eligibility of a candidate or violations of campaign rules.
4. The SGA Nominations & Elections Committee shall meet within twenty-four (24) hours to review the protest and render a decision before the first meeting of the year.
5. Should the committee determine that the protest has merit, it shall nullify the unofficial results and either conduct a new tabulation of the ballots or order a new election.
	1. Should the committee determine that the protest is without merit, the unofficial results shall be upheld.

**Section Three. Runoff Elections, Protest Elections, and Special Elections.**

A. Elections between candidates tied in votes cast for an office or protest elections called to address inconsistencies in the voting process must be scheduled within ten (10) days of the first election.

1. Only those candidates tied in the number of votes for an office shall be listed on the ballot for a runoff election. The candidate(s) with the greatest number of votes cast (singular plurality) shall be declared the winner(s).
2. Should two or more candidates receive an equal number of votes for the last available presidential, executive board, and/or representative position(s), all tied candidates will participate in a run-off election for the remaining seat(s).

B. A Protest election will be held in acknowledgement that there were inconsistencies in how the vote was conducted which brought into question the accuracy of the result.

C. If a candidate wins election to multiple positions and assumes one, then the position(s) not assumed will be awarded to the candidate(s) with the next highest number of legal votes...

**Section Four. Violations of the Election Procedures.**

A. Any member of the student body may report an alleged infraction of The Student

Government Association Election Procedures by stating such allegations in writing and presenting them to the SGA Nominations & Elections Committee at any time during the election process and up to forty-eight (48) hours after the closing of the polls.

B. The SGA Nominations & Elections Committee shall meet as soon as possible to review the allegation and render an opinion.

C. Sanctions may range from public censure to forfeiture of office depending upon the

severity of the infraction. Suspected violations of College policy shall be forwarded to the Dean of Students Office for adjudication.

**ARTICLE IV. AMENDMENTS**

**Section One.**

A. Passage of an amendment requires a majority vote roll call vote of the present and voting members of the general assembly.