

Student Government Elections

I. General Information

A. Elections will be in the form of online ballots. Student Government will allow for 48 hours of uninterrupted voting, and Student Government will allow for 24 hours of uninterrupted voting for runoff elections, with additional time added to the end for any amount of time missed due to complications or technical difficulties.

B. Elections shall be publicized at least one week in advance.

C. There shall be a mandatory meeting of all candidates to be scheduled by the Elections Director prior to the campaign period.

D. All campaigning will end at 12:00 AM on the day of the start of the elections.

E. Results of an election shall be posted outside the Student Government main office within 48 hours of the poll closings unless the election is disputed.

F. All candidates, including write-in candidates, are subject to all rules and regulations as established by the Student Handbook, the Elections Booklet and the Elections Department.

II. Purpose of the Elections Department.

A. The Elections Department shall exist to promote and publicize student body elections, formulate updated rules and regulations for student body elections, ensure that student body elections are run efficiently and with integrity, and to determine sanctions for student body election violations. The Elections Department shall also exist to host Federal Voter Registration Drives in order to allow Clemson students to have a voice in Federal affairs.

III. Student Senate Elections

A. Qualifications.

1. Candidates for Student Senate President, Senate President Pro-Tempore, Senate Secretary, and Senate Clerk, as well as candidates for Student Senate, must have a minimum GPR of 2.5 and must maintain a 2.5 GPR per semester while in office.

2. No senator may be an executive officer or director or hold a court office position.

3. All freshman seats must be filled by appointment after freshman candidates file the appropriate petition and interview with the Student Senate President, the Senate President Pro-Tempore and the Student Body Vice President.

4. Senators must be enrolled in the college under which they petition or fulfill the credit hour requirement for the class for which they petition.

5. Candidates for all offices must be enrolled as Clemson University undergraduate students during their entire term. All candidates must agree to serve the entire term.

B. Nominations. All Student Senate candidates must file a nominating petition, signed by twenty-five students, with the Elections Department no later than 5 PM on the first Friday of February, unless the potential nominee is absent due to family emergency, sickness, or official University business in which case he or she may submit a nominating petition after this date as under the jurisdiction of the Elections Director.

C. Election Procedures.

1. General Information

- a. Senate online elections shall be held the first consecutive Monday and Tuesday of March. Runoff elections, if required, shall be held on the following Thursday.
- b. Online polls shall open at 12:01 AM on Thursday and close at 12:01 AM on Saturday. Clemson University Undergraduate students, regardless of credit hours currently in progress, may vote at any poll in campus-wide elections.

2. Write-ins and Abstaining

- a. The Elections Department shall allow for write-in candidates by way of online ballots, provided that the candidate receives at least twenty-five write-in votes and is eligible to serve.
- b. The Elections Department shall allow for a no-vote (abstention) by way of online ballots.

D. Senate Campaign Rules.

1. There will be no restrictions on campaign expenditures for Student Senate candidates; however, candidates are encouraged to limit spending to \$100.00.
2. Use of University media shall be prohibited.
3. Student Senate candidates shall abide by the following rules governing the location of all posted material. These guidelines will be enforced by the Elections Department.

- a. In residence halls, posted material shall be restricted to bulletin boards, but will need to be approved by University Housing departments before posting. Posted material must be no larger than 8.5 by 11 inches and cannot be placed inside residence hall computer labs.
- b. Fliers may be placed under residents' doors.
- c. Senate candidates shall be restricted to kiosks, University Post Office bulletin boards, and any other approved location and academic building under the following

guidelines: Campaign material cannot be posted prior to the mandatory candidates meeting. Campaign material in academic buildings must be no larger than 8.5 by 11 inches. Candidates shall be restricted to one piece of campaign material per bulletin board in academic buildings.

d. Candidates are prohibited from using electronic mailing to contact potential voters with the intent of soliciting a vote. Candidates are also prohibited from having a Clemson.edu listserv sending mass emails to contact potential voters with the intent of soliciting a vote. No candidate may send emails of any kind representing themselves as a candidate to potential voters prior to the mandatory candidate meeting. All candidates are strongly reminded that the Elections Department has the authority to evaluate the intent of electronic mailing.

e. Candidates may use Facebook and instant messenger services, but are warned to use these services wisely and reminded that in using these, the campaign rules still apply (i.e. no slanderous campaigning)

f. Candidates may not perform any act of campaigning in the Student Government offices during election season.

g. Candidates may not use a Clemson University trademarked logo, letterhead, symbol, or any other alteration that would cause confusion in the marketplace for campaigning purposes unless approved by Clemson trademark officials. This approval must be provided in writing to the Elections Department prior to being used in any campaign.

h. The use of the Student Government logo, letterhead, office supplies, and office equipment for campaigning purposes is prohibited.

j. Candidates may not do any form of public chalking or writing on boards in University classrooms for their campaign.

k. Campaign material posted with the candidate's knowledge in any area other than what is allowed specifically in this section will constitute grounds for a violation.

l. All candidates must remove their campaign material within 48 hours after the election has been officially finalized. A \$30 fine will be charged if all the materials are not removed within 48 hours after the posting of election results.

m. A person who attempts to solicit a vote for an election, prior to filing the necessary materials to be considered an official candidate will immediately be assessed a violation as established by the Student Handbook, the Elections Booklet and the Elections Department. The violation will retroactively apply should the person choose to file the materials necessary for official candidacy. Gaining signatures for the completion of an election petition does not constitute grounds for a violation.

E. Disqualification.

1. A candidate may be disqualified for not abiding by the rules governing Student Senate elections.

2. If a candidate is disqualified before the polls open, the election will be held with the candidate's name stricken from the ballot.

3. If a candidate is disqualified after the polls have closed, the election will be considered null and void; however, if a qualified candidate has received a plurality of all the votes cast, the results of the election will stand. If a new election is required, all candidates' names will appear on the ballot except those who have been disqualified.

F. Appeal of Disqualification.

1. Grounds for appeal of elections

- a. Inaccurate vote count.
- b. Failure of the Elections Director and Elections Department to abide by the elections procedures.

2. An election referendum, special vote or disqualification may be appealed by filing a written notice containing specific allegations with the Attorney General within 72 hours after the polls have closed. Any complainant in this matter shall be considered an adversary and shall be granted all applicable rights.

3. The Supreme Court shall hold a mandatory hearing within three working days following the deadline for appeals. If the Court decides there are adequate grounds for appeals of elections, the court may at its discretion call a new election, uphold or overturn the ruling of the Elections Department or otherwise penalize the parties involved.

G. Commencement of duties. Elected candidates shall assume their duties in the last week of March.

H. Vacancies. Vacancies in Student Senate shall be filled by fully qualified candidates who are appointed by the Student Senate President and approved by a majority vote of the Student Senate. These senators shall serve out the remainder of the vacated term

IV. Presidential and Vice Presidential Elections

A. Qualifications.

1. Candidates for office must currently be enrolled as Clemson University undergraduate students and have a minimum GPR of 2.3.

2. Candidates for the office of President must have completed a minimum of 60 semester hours prior to petitioning. Candidates for Vice President must have completed a minimum of 45 Semester hours prior to petitioning. If the President is removed or has resigned, the Vice President does not have to have the required number of semester hours to assume the office of President.

a. Candidates for all offices must be enrolled as Clemson University undergraduate students during their entire term. All candidates must agree to serve the entire term.

i. No President or Vice President may hold an additional executive office, court position, or Student Senate position.

B. Nominations.

1. Nominations for office will be made by petition of seventy-five students, filed with the Elections Department, no later than 5:00 PM on the last Friday of January.

C. Election Procedures.

1. Candidates for the offices of President and Vice President shall campaign on a joint ticket and shall be elected upon their ticket receiving a majority of ballots cast.

2. Online elections shall be held the fourth Thursday and Friday of February. Runoff elections, if required, shall be held the following Monday.

3. Online polls shall open at 12:01 AM on Thursday and close at 12:01 AM on Saturday. Online polls for runoff elections, if required, shall open at 12:01 AM on Monday and close at 12:01 AM on Tuesday. All Undergraduate Clemson University students, regardless of credit hours currently in progress, may vote at any poll in campus-wide elections.

a. Write-ins and Abstaining

i. The Elections Department shall allow for write-in candidates by way of online ballots, provided that the candidate receives fifty write-in votes and is eligible to serve. The Elections Department shall allow for a no vote (abstention) in both manual and online ballots.

ii. In the case of a runoff election, the number of candidates included shall be twice the number of positions in dispute.

D. Campaign Rules.

1. Each joint ticket shall be allowed to spend no more than \$500 with an additional \$500 in donations on campaign materials in the election. In addition, each joint ticket shall be allowed \$200 for printing purposes.

a. Campaign materials shall include, but are not limited to, all posters, signs, fliers, platforms, letters, buttons, banners, stickers, and notices.

b. In order to prevent slanderous campaigns, all campaign material to be used must be approved and/or initialed by the Elections Director or their designee(s) before being distributed. This should be done before any material is replicated.

c. In order to ensure that each platform and the information contained therein are the property of the candidates using them, and to promote factual and consistent claims to the student body, all platforms must be submitted to and approved by the Elections Director. The final form of all campaign materials and platforms must be turned in for approval no later than 5:00 P.M. on the last Friday of January. No additions or amendments may be made to the platform after this date.

d. Candidates are prohibited from using electronic mailing to contact potential voters with the intent of soliciting a vote. Candidates are also prohibited from having a Clemson.edu listserv sending mass emails to contact potential voters with the intent of soliciting a vote. In addition, no candidate may send emails of any kind representing themselves as a candidate to potential voters prior to the mandatory candidate meeting. All candidates are strongly reminded that the Elections Department has the authority to evaluate the intent of electronic mailing.

e. Candidates may use Facebook and instant messenger services but are warned to use these services wisely and reminded that in using these, the campaign rules still apply (i.e., no slanderous campaigning).

f. Candidates may not perform any act of campaigning in the Student Government offices during election season.

g. Candidates may not use a Clemson University trademarked logo, letterhead, symbol, or any other alteration that would cause confusion in the marketplace for campaigning purposes unless approved by Clemson trademark officials. This approval must be provided in writing to the Elections Department prior to being used in any campaign.

h. The use of the Student Government logo, letterhead, office supplies, and office equipment for campaigning purposes is prohibited.

i. Candidates may not do any form of public chalking or writing on boards in classrooms for their campaign.

j. Each joint ticket must submit the names of the twenty-five campaign helpers officially associated with their campaign when petitions are due and immediately inform the Elections Director should any changes occur in this list. Candidates are encouraged to inform these persons of the rules and regulations of the election and will be sanctioned for any violations these persons commit.

k. All candidates must file one sample of each type of campaign material to be used in the election with the Elections Director and/or their designee(s)

l. All candidates must specify and submit an itemized expense report with intended campaign expenditures to the Elections Director on the day petitions are due. Candidates will turn in an updated expense report during campaign season at a time specified by the Elections Director. Candidates will also each complete and turn in a finalized, specific expense report. Candidates must adhere to their reports.

m. Candidates will also turn in a finalized, specific expense report. Any donations to a candidate must be reported and will be valued at a rate set by the Elections Department.

n. If elected, write-in candidates for President and Vice President shall be subject to all regulations governing elections except that campaign expenditures must be submitted to the Elections Director no later than 24 hours after the official notification by the Elections Director.

o. A person who attempts to solicit a vote for an election, prior to filing the necessary materials to be considered an official candidate, will immediately be assessed a violation as established by the Student Handbook, the Elections Booklet, and the Elections Department. The violation will retroactively apply should the person choose to file the materials necessary for official candidacy. Gaining signatures for the completion of an election petition does not constitute grounds for a violation.

p. 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.

q. Emails sent to any list which is used by a campus department or office to distribute information is prohibited.

r. Sending electronic mail to any list without the consent of the list administrator is prohibited.

s. 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.

E. Violations and Disqualifications

1. A candidate may be disqualified for not abiding by the rules governing campus-wide elections.

a. Candidates will be given the regulations at the mandatory candidates' meeting.

b. If an offense is detected, the Elections Board has the right to determine it to be a violation. If a student body member has detected a violation, an official violation form citing the specific rule breached with any evidence attached, must be submitted to the designated box in the CUSG offices. An electronic mail should also be sent to the designated Elections department email verifying the violation report. All violations will be decided within 24 hours.

c. For each violation a reduction in the total campaign budget and taking down campaign material in the following sequence: \$50 reduction and three (3) ground stakes as determined by the Elections Board, \$75 reduction and four (4) ground stakes as determined by the Elections Board, and \$100 reduction and the Outdoor Theater banner. Each campaign has the right to request a meeting with the Elections Board to discuss any violation.

d. Grounds for immediate disqualification will include (1) Failure to correct a violation as directed by the Elections Board; (2) Failure to turn in a campaign finance report; (3) Falsifying a finance report; (4) Accumulation of three violations will result in a hearing before the Attorney General, one Assistant Attorney General, Undergraduate Senate President, or an unbiased Senator chosen by the Senate President prior to the start of campaigning, and the Clemson University Undergraduate Student Government Advisor who have the discretion to issue an automatic disqualification by unanimous vote.

2. If a candidate is disqualified before the polls open, the elections will be held with the candidate's name stricken from the ballot.

3. If a candidate is disqualified after the polls have closed, the election will be considered null and void; however, if a qualified candidate has received a majority of all votes cast, the results of the election will stand. If a new election is required, all candidates' names will appear except those who are disqualified.

F. Appeal of Disqualification

1. Grounds for appeal of elections

a. Inaccurate vote count.

b. Failure of the Elections Department or candidates to abide by the elections procedures or campaign guidelines.

c. An election referendum, special vote or disqualification may be appealed by filing a written notice containing specific allegations with the Attorney general within 72 hours after the polls have closed. Any complainant in this matter shall be considered an adversary and shall be granted all applicable rights.

G. Commencement of Duties

1. Elected candidates shall assume their duties in the first week of April.
2. An elected candidate for the Office of President shall be required to serve an internship as President-Elect under the current President.
3. An elected candidate for the Office of Vice President shall be required to serve an internship as Vice-President-Elect under the current Vice President.
4. Internships shall begin the day following the final election results and continue until the election candidates assume office.

H. Vacancies

1. If the office of Student Body President is vacated, the Student Body Vice President will assume office.
2. If the office of Student Body Vice President is vacated, a new vice president will be appointed by the Student Body President upon ratification by two-thirds majority vote of Student Senate.