

# Muhlenberg College Student Government Association Election Procedures

## I. Nominations & Elections Supervision

The Student Government Association Operations Committee is responsible for the coordination and supervision of Student Body President and Student Government Association Representative elections as outlined further in this document.

## II. Nominations

- A. Students interested in holding office shall complete the following:
  1. A *Statement of Intent* which provides information about a student's intent and eligibility to hold office in the Student Government Association.
  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.
- B. Individuals completing the requisite paperwork shall have their names placed on the ballot.
- C. Materials required for nomination shall be made available from the J. Conrad and Hazel Seegers Union Building Information Desk and the Student Government Association Office two weeks prior to Election Day.
- D. Running on a ticket is prohibited. A ticket is two or more people seeking office as a "block" or "party". Each individual seeking office is required to complete the requisite paperwork.

## III. Eligibility

Students interested in holding SGA office must:

1. Be students of Muhlenberg College paying the Student Activities fee, as verified by the Controller's Office.
2. Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 as verified by the Registrar's Office.

## IV. Campaigning

- A. Campaigning shall begin seven (7) days prior to Election Day at 12:01 a.m.
- B. Candidates shall refrain from:
  1. Making disparaging, false, or unsubstantiated claims against other candidates.
  2. Actively campaigning within 50 feet of the polls on Election Day. "Actively campaigning" shall be defined as engaging other students in consideration of their vote through discussion or display (wearing a campaign shirt, handing out leaflets, etc.).
  3. Using the Muhlenberg College radio station (WMUH), Muhlenberg College Television Station (MCTV), or Digital Signage to record and/or broadcast campaign messages.
  4. Creating and sending mass emails (spam).
  5. Removing, defacing, or posting over publicity or campaign material present on bulletin boards or authorized posting locations.
  6. Distributing paper handbills to passers-by.
  7. Chalking any surface, placing lawn signs, and 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.

#### C. Campaign Materials

1. Campaign materials shall be any item with a candidate's name, likeness, and/or slogan.
  2. Signs, notices and banners may be posted or hung in authorized areas only. College regulations prohibit the posting or hanging of notices on trees, building exteriors, light posts, etc., except where specifically authorized (such as Parents' Plaza). Candidates must receive permission from the appropriate office (Office of Residential Services or an academic office) prior to posting in residence halls and academic buildings. Notices posted in residence halls and academic buildings must be affixed to designated bulletin boards only. Posting is not permitted on any painted surfaces, entrance or fire doors, or windows.
  3. Candidates shall be held financially responsible for any physical damage caused by their campaign material.
  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, sex, or sexual orientation.
  5. The use of copyrighted slogans, logos, characters, etc. is illegal and campaign materials using such items shall be removed by the SGA Operations Committee.
  6. Campaign materials to be hung on walls may not be larger than 22" x 28".
  7. One (1) campaign banner per candidate may be hung on campus. Banners may be no larger than 60" x 80".
- D. It shall be the responsibility of the SGA Operations Committee to remove campaign material improperly posted and to ensure that no campaign material is visible from the polling place on Election Day.
- E. Candidates must remove their 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.

#### V. Campaign Spending

- A. Campaign spending shall be limited to \$60 for each candidate seeking the office of Muhlenberg College Student Body President.
- B. Campaign spending shall be limited to \$30 for each individual seeking the office of Muhlenberg College Student Government Association Representative.
- C. Campaign spending limits are inclusive of outright expenditures as well as gifts, and donations of products or services.
- D. Each candidate shall, on the Friday prior to Election Day, submit a *Personal Campaign Expenditure Statement* to the SGA Operations Committee. The cost of donated items should be based upon the candidate's best judgment of reasonable market value. The SGA Operations 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.
- E. If a candidate does not incur any expenses for campaign publicity, a *Personal Campaign Expenditure Statement* must still be submitted.



## VI. Election Procedures

### 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 position of each candidate's name on the ballot shall be determined by random draw at a meeting held for this purpose on the Tuesday immediately preceding Election Day. Candidates for office shall be informed of the time and location of the meeting in the nomination materials. Attendance at the meeting does not affect the results of the drawing.
3. Elections shall be conducted using electronic balloting. Paper ballots shall be ordered when electronic balloting is not possible.
4. Students studying abroad may obtain an absentee ballot from the Student Government Association website. Absentee ballots must be returned to [studentgov@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:studentgov@muhlenberg.edu) by no later than 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Election Day.

### B. Voting

1. Voting shall take place from 8:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. in the Lobby of the J. Conrad and Hazel Seegers Union Building unless otherwise designated by the SGA Operations Committee.
2. Students are required to show their Muhlenberg College student identification card to be eligible to vote.

### C. Results

1. Results of the election shall be presented in alphabetical order by last name of the candidate and shall include the number of legal votes cast for each.
2. Unofficial results shall be made publicly available within six (6) hours of the closing of the polls.

### D. Counting Procedures

1. The results of the election shall be tabulated by at least two members of the SGA Operations Committee.
2. The SGA Operations Committee will meet to verify the results. The results will be considered "unofficial" until the protest period has ended. Unofficial results shall be posted publicly as determined by the Committee.

## VII. Contesting the Results of the Election

- A. 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 Operations Committee within twenty-four hours of the closing of the polls.
- B. A protest may be made for any reason which 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.
- C. The SGA Operations Committee shall meet as soon as possible to review the protest and render a decision.
  1. 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.

2. Should the committee determine that the protest is without merit, the unofficial results shall be upheld.
- D. If after 24 hours there are no protests, or all protests have been determined to be without merit, the unofficial results shall be considered official results.

### **VIII. 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. Protest election ballots shall include the candidates listed on the first ballot.
- B. Special elections to fill vacant offices shall be conducted in accordance with the SGA Bylaws and these Election Policies.
- C. If a candidate wins election to both the office of President and Representative and assumes the office of President, the Representative candidate not currently awarded an office with the next highest number of votes will assume the vacated office of Representative.

### **IX. 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 Operations Committee at any time during the election process and up to forty-eight hours after the closing of the polls.
- B. The SGA Operations 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 Student's Office for adjudication.