
ELECTIONS MANUAL
OF THE
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
OF
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

2010-2011



MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

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PREAMBLE

It is the intent of the Elections Commission and of the Elections Manual committee that all of the guidelines and regulations of this document be interpreted in the strictest manner permissible. The regulations herein are written in confidence that no candidates shall willfully bend, alter or misinterpret their true and most conservative intent. Any conduct after such a fashion, including the conduct of a candidate's staff, team or designees, reflects poorly on the candidates and on Missouri State University as a whole; such conduct is unfit of candidates for such a dignified position of leadership at this great University.

ARTICLE I: PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES:

PRE-ELECTION

I. Qualifications for Candidacy

- A. All candidates and campaign managers for any ticket, special project or issue must be a Missouri State student during the semester in which the election is held.
- B. Candidates must possess a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 or greater at the time of the election in order to assume their office.
 - i. Hereafter, a cumulative GPA can be interpreted to mean transfer and Missouri State University GPA, or Missouri State University GPA alone, to benefit the potential candidate.
- C. Potential candidates for the office of Senior Class President must have completed ninety (90) hours by the end of the semester in which the candidate is running. Failure to do so will result in immediate removal from office.
- D. No person may file for more than one office, or on multiple tickets, during a single elections cycle.

II. Timeframe of Elections

- A. The Elections Commission, via the Chief Elections Commissioner, shall notify the SGA Senate and the campus media of the date and details of all filing procedures, as well as the names of the candidates and issues appearing on the ballot when that information becomes available.
- B. The president, vice president, and campaign manager of each ticket appearing on the ballot must attend an informational session held by the Elections Commission on the subject of rules pertaining to the elections

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- process before the elections process begins. At that meeting, or soon thereafter, the tickets will receive all required forms implemented by the Elections Commission.
- C. Petitions for candidacy will be available in the SGA office by 8:00 a.m. on the second to last Monday of February, or the following day if class is not in session. Upon completion of a candidacy petition, it should be returned to the Dean of Students Office. Petitions, as well as all required campaigning forms, will be due to the Dean of Students Office by 4:00 p.m. on the following Monday.
 - D. Certification of petitions will commence immediately upon receipt of all forms from a candidate/ticket. Once such forms have been confirmed, the Elections Commissioner will inform the ticket of such certification, within four academic days after the filing deadline by 4:00 p.m.
 - E. Campaigning begins for candidate/ticket immediately upon receipt of their notification of approval. Campaigning before this receipt will result in a sanction from the Elections Commission, including, but not limited to, the ticket not appearing on the ballot or a deduction of votes cast in favor of the ticket.
 - F. Polls for the election will be open from 12:01 a.m. on Monday, April 4, 2011, to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 6, 2011.

III. Petitions for Candidacy

- A. Candidates for President/Vice-President shall collect seven hundred fifty (750) signatures from Missouri State University students in order to campaign for their respective offices and for their names to appear on the ballot. Candidates for Senior Class President shall not be required to collect signatures.
- B. Signatures may only be collected by the candidates themselves.
- C. Candidates may not petition for signatures within Residence Halls including the dining centers. The only exception to this rule is that candidates may petition for signatures at a meeting of an official Missouri State student organization that meets within a Residence Hall with signed permission from an officer of that organization.
- D. Candidates may petition for signatures within any official student organization (including Fraternity and Sorority Life houses) with signed permission of an officer of that organization.
- E. If signed permission is not received, or candidates are found in violation of not petitioning for signatures themselves, 25 additional signatures will be required per violation.
- F. Petitions of candidacy for President and Vice-President shall also include two copies of a typed platform detailing issues to be addressed during their potential administration. If a typed copy is not received with the petitions, the candidates will be unable to campaign and their names will not appear on the ballot.

IV. Campaign Budgets

- A. Campaigns for President/Vice-President are limited to and not to exceed one thousand (\$1,000) American dollars, excluding taxes.
 - i. Campaign expenditures for student body election purposes is defined as money spent on a ticket or monetary value of any campaign materials supporting a candidate or a ticket including, but not limited to: t-shirts, posters, handbills, webmedia, advertising, or campaign events.
- B. Campaigns for Senior Class President are limited to six hundred (\$600) American dollars, excluding taxes.
- C. All other candidates, tickets, proposals, referendums and issues are limited to three hundred (\$300) American dollars, excluding taxes.
- D. Student organizations or individuals may support a candidate or ticket by contributing finances or campaign materials of no more than 50% of the budget's limit to that respective campaign until that ticket's expenditures have reached their respective spending limit. Party ticket members will not be considered as student organizations or individuals for the purposes of financial contributions.
- E. Candidates and tickets must log all campaign expenditures on budget forms as provided by the Elections Commissioner.
 - i. "Expenditures" are defined as all donated and purchased materials and media valued at a fair market price.
- F. Candidates will be responsible for justifying the value of any services received or amounts spent, either through receipt or other reasonable means.
- G. Candidates will be required to submit a Budget form of all expenses accrued on the second Monday of March (March 14, 2011), each subsequent Monday, and through the election days (March 21, 28, April 4, 5, and 6) by noon. Budget forms are to include receipts of all purchases.
- H. Tickets which exceed spending limits or do not correctly report all expenditures can be penalized votes after a thorough investigation by the Elections Commission.

ARTICLE II: PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES: ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY

I. General Rules of Conduct and Advertising

- A. All campaigns must follow not only the policies described within this Elections Manual, but also all University policies.

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- B. Alcohol cannot be a part of a campaign, whether in flyers, coupons, promotional materials, websites or in any other respect.
 - C. The use of Missouri State facilities, offices, equipment or resources (with the exception of paid services and open-access labs) to print or create campaign materials is prohibited.
 - D. No current campaigning or campaign materials are permitted in the SGA offices or chambers. The only exception is when the Speaker may recognize candidates to speak in open forum at a meeting of the Student Government Association.
 - E. Active campaigning within any University building, except for the Plaster Student Union, shall not be allowed outside the context of a student organization meeting with approval from an officer of that student organization
 - F. All candidate posters, banners, and T-Shirts must include notice of which campus body, student group or campaign that supported and paid for that material. That notice should include the words “Paid for and sponsored by...” and the full name and title of the organization(s). Failure to provide such notice, or its correction, will result in a penalty of votes cast in favor of the ticket and the possible removal of the material.
 - G. Candidates must remove all on-campus campaign materials, excluding chalking, by 5:30 p.m. of the final day of voting. Posters within academic buildings must be taken down by 5:00 p.m. Friday April 8, 2011.
 - i. In the event that campaign materials must be removed by University personnel, the candidate or ticket shall be assessed the cost of the personnel’s time as per the guideline established in the student organization handbook.
 - H. Candidates, tickets, or supporters of proposals or issues on the ballot, may not sponsor any voting booth.

II. Online Communication

- A. Each ticket or Senior Class Presidential candidate shall be limited to one website each.
- B. The use of unsolicited mass mailings, e-mailings, or Facebook messaging shall not be permitted. “Unsolicited” mailings and messages are defined as those sent to individuals who have not willfully added themselves to a campaign’s mailing or contact list.
- C. E-mailing
 - i. Campaigns may maintain an e-mail list. Students may only be added to such a list with their explicit consent. Only e-mail addresses contained on such a list may receive mass e-mails from a campaign.
 - ii. E-mail may be used to inquire about speaking to organizations and such e-mail may only be directed to executive officers.

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- iii. E-mail may be used to answer questions and to communicate between campaign members, the Chief Elections Commissioner and other interested parties.
 - D. Facebook
 - i. Each ticket or Senior Class Presidential candidate shall be limited to one campaign sponsored page.
 - ii. Individuals who join a campaign's Facebook group imply consent to receiving Facebook messages from that page.
 - iii. The usage of unrelated Facebook groups or pages to send campaign messages is prohibited.
 - iv. Invitations to join a campaign's Facebook page shall not constitute unsolicited messaging.

III. Residence Halls

- A. Windows may be used in the residence halls to promote a campaign, but only with the approval and consent of all residents in a room.
- B. If a campaign wishes to post flyers, posters, or other campaign materials in the Residence Halls, the procedures and policies of Residence Life and Services must be followed without exception.
- C. No campaigning of any kind shall be permitted in the dining centers.

IV. Commercial Businesses

- A. Commercial businesses with University contracts may not have their logos on flyers or handbills, or be featured in campaigning including speeches and addresses.
- B. Exceptions may be made if the business is part of the ticket's platform (i.e. if a ticket wishes to bring that business to campus or utilize their services on behalf of students), but the exceptions must be approved by the Chief Elections Commissioner before inclusion.
- C. Off-campus campaign materials are restricted to privately owned property subject to the permission of the property owner(s).

V. Posters

- A. Posters may be placed on open bulletin boards on campus, with a maximum of one poster per board.
- B. Permission must be obtained before putting posters on boards if such boards are maintained by a department, organization, or other University entity.
- C. Each ticket, candidate or issue may have no poster exceeding 11'' by 17''.
- D. Overlaying or removal of current or applicable posters already on bulletin boards is strictly prohibited.

VI. Banners

- A. Each ticket is limited to seven (7) banners.
- B. Banners may not be larger than a full-sized bed sheet (81 x 96 inches).
- C. Banners may only be hung on non-academic buildings or University owned fences. Permission must be obtained from a building's coordinator

where applicable prior to hanging banners on a building (i.e. Residence Hall Directors, Bookstore Manager, etc.).

- D. Banners must be hung in a way that is not damaging to university property. Banners may not be taped to painted surfaces, only to brick/stone surfaces and must be secured on all four corners and may not impede the flow of campus traffic.
- E. Once put up, a report must be submitted to the Chief Elections Commissioner within twelve (12) hours of Blitz about the location of each banner, along with photocopies of any relevant approvals (if such a location requires one).
- F. Hanging of Banners is only permitted during Blitz. The only exception to this subsection is if a university employee is required to hang the banner from a building the ticket has permission to do so.

VII. Chalking

- A. Chalking must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Missouri State Advertising, Distribution, and Solicitation Policies (i.e. “Chalkings are permitted only on concrete horizontal sidewalk surfaces, in areas that can be naturally washed by rain, and are not permitted under building overhangs, on building surfaces, curbs, steps, brick surfaces, planters, benches, or similar locations.”).
- B. Chalking over other organization’s chalking is not permitted in any form, regardless of permission from the organization.
- C. Spray-on chalk is not permitted.
- D. Chalking is only permitted during Blitz.

VIII. Staking

- A. In the interest of sustainability, staking will not be permitted during the elections cycle for any reason.

IX. Blitz

- A. Blitz shall begin at 12:01 a.m. on the first day of voting (Monday, April 4, 2011) and shall conclude by 2:01 a.m.
- B. All campaign teams participating in Blitz must begin at the Bear Paw. Campaigns that do not begin at the Bear Paw may face the following consequences:
 - i. A delay of the ticket’s start of Blitz to 1:01 a.m.
 - ii. Removal of materials not at the Bear Paw at 12:01 a.m.
 - iii. Docking of votes cast in favor of the ticket.

X. Other Advertising

- A. Parades and rallies shall only be allowed with the permission of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Dean of Students (or his/her designee).
- B. Microphones and other amplification devices may only be used to speak at engagements arranged and approved in advance with all of the appropriate

officials. All other use of sound amplification equipment is strictly prohibited.

**ARTICLE III: PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES:
VIOLATIONS, SANCTIONS AND CLARIFICATION**

I. Filing Complaints

- A. Any election complaints caused by a suspected violation of the guidelines must be filed with the Elections Commission within twenty-four (24) hours after the discovery of the suspected violation.
- B. All elections complaints must be submitted via the online form on the SGA Website to the Chief Elections Commissioner at Elections@missouristate.edu and must include the name of the filer, an additional witness of the incident, a description of the violation, and which elections guideline, Constitutional or Bylaw stipulation is involved.

II. Hearing Complaints

- A. The Elections Commission will notify the offending ticket no later than twenty-four (24) hours after a complaint has been received via phone and e-mail.
- B. The ticket in question will be given an opportunity to file a rebuttal to the Elections Commission no later than twenty-four (24) hours after notification of a complaint has been received. The candidate must be able to clearly refute the violation and must have a witness if necessary.
- C. At the Elections Commission's discretion, they may ask both parties of the complaint to present their case at a designated time and location to be set by the commission.
- D. The validity of complaints, the assessment of violations, and their subsequent consequences will be subject to the decision of the Elections Commission.
- E. Decisions shall be rendered as soon as possible, to a maximum of five (5) business days after a complaint is received.
- F. Decisions shall require a majority of the Elections Commission in agreement regarding the violation.
- G. Any candidate, ticket, or supporter of a proposal or issue found to be in violation of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action (sanctions), including but not limited to removal from the ballot, nullification of votes cast in favor, or removal or limiting of campaign privileges.
- H. Any member of the Elections Commission shall have the authority to remove any campaign materials found in violation of the regulations noted above or declared inappropriate by the Elections Commission.

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- I. Elections Commission decisions can be appealed to the Campus Judicial Board with such ruling, or lack thereof, being considered as a subordinate court decision.
 - J. In the event that a decision is beyond the scope of the Elections Commission, then the violation will go to the Campus Judicial Board for a ruling where its decision shall be considered binding.

III. Clarification from the Elections Commission

- A. The Elections Commission may, for the purposes of a fair and balanced election with minimal disruption to the student body, clarify any rules or stipulations herein contained.
 - i. The Elections Commission shall advise all campaigns of such clarifications immediately, and such rules may not take effect until twenty-four (24) hours after notification.
 - ii. When a problem with the elections process arises that requires the establishment of a new rule, such rules shall only come into effect with the approval of the Student Government Association Senate and their inclusion in the annual revision to the Elections Manual the following year.
- B. Any additional paperwork approved and implemented by the Elections Commission will be considered binding and shall be strictly interpreted and followed by the candidates/tickets during the elections process.

ELECTIONS COMMISSION PERMISSION FOR ORGANIZATION VISIT

2011 ELECTION YEAR

Candidate or Ticket _____

Organization _____

Officer's Name _____

Officer's Position _____

Date of Visit _____

Reason for Visit Request _____
