

Muhlenberg College Student Government Association Election Rules

Revised November 4, 2010

Certified as official by: _____
(Elizabeth Martini, SGA Vice President)

I. The Student Government Association Operations Committee

- A. The Student Government Association Operations Committee shall govern any election for the positions of Student Body President and Student Government Association Representatives. The Advisor to the Student Government Association shall oversee the Committee.
- B. The duties of the Student Government Association Operations Committee shall consist of creating the election schedule, advertising the election to the Student Body, contacting nominees of all positions, conducting all candidates' meetings, and all other duties prescribed by *The Student Government Association Election Rules*.

II. Nominations

- A. A candidate may nominate him or herself, or may be nominated by a third party.
- B. Nominations for the available offices may be made at the Seegers Union Information Desk for at least 3 days and no longer than 1 week before the campaign period, excluding scheduled breaks. Nominations are to be placed in a designated box at the Union Desk.
- C. A formal nomination will consist of one sheet of paper with the following information; the candidate's name and class year, the position(s) desired, a phone number or extension at which the candidate can be reached, the Candidates mail box number and a working e-mail address.
- D. Nominees for Student Body President and Student Government Association Representatives shall be notified by phone and/or by written notification within 1 day after the nomination period ends.

III. Eligibility

- A. The candidate must be an enrolled full-time day student at Muhlenberg College.
- B. Each candidate must have a 2.50 cumulative grade point average to be eligible to run for and remain in office.
- C. A mandatory meeting of all candidates will be called by the SGAOC to distribute *The Student Government Association Election Rules* to each candidate and to answer any

questions. The election rules will be thoroughly explained and a sheet will be signed by the candidates stating that they are in attendance and have received and are willing to abide by the rules.

- D. In order to qualify, each candidate must fill out and sign a *Statement of Intent*, which must be submitted with their platform. The *Statement of Intent* informs the SGAOC that your cumulative grade point average is above a 2.50. By signing the *Statement of Intent* one signifies that their cumulative grade point average is above a 2.50.
- E. Candidates must submit platforms to the SGAOC. The SGAOC will be responsible for creating and posting a pamphlet with all of the platforms as well as posting them to the Student Government Association website. Candidates for Student Body President must also submit an electronic copy (disk or e-mail) of the identical platform at the same time for distribution to the Muhlenberg Weekly. Platforms must be turned in to the Dean of Student's Office by 4:30PM on the second day of campaigning.
- F. Nominees for Student Government Association Representatives must submit a petition with the signatures of 150 members of the student body of Muhlenberg College. Nominees for the position of Student Body President must submit a petition with the signatures of 250 members of the student body of Muhlenberg College. This petition is to be returned to the SGAOC by the date prescribed in order to be placed on the ballot and to be eligible for office.
- G. Candidates must submit an expenditure sheet of all personal campaign spending.
- H. In order to be eligible, the expenditure sheet, signature sheet, *Statement of Intent*, and any other required materials must be received by the SGAOC on the specified times preceding the election. The *Statement of Intent* and signature sheet must be submitted on the paperwork designated by the SGAOC.

IV. Write-in Candidates

- A. There are to be no write-in candidates.

V. Campaigning

- A. Campaigning will last at least one week and no more than ten days as prescribed by the SGAOC. Campaigning may be extended for more than ten days in the event of a runoff election.
- B. No candidate may campaign or loiter either in the Seegers Union Lobby or within sight (about 50 feet) of the polls on Election Day, including candidates who hold jobs which are located within 50 feet of the polls.
- C. Campaigning will commence at 12:01 am on the day selected by the SGAOC to be the start of the official campaign period.

- D. If there is a violation of Article V., Section B the candidate will be given a verbal warning by a member of the SGAOC, and be afforded with two opportunities to comply. A third warning will result in an immediate disqualification. The election will then be halted and all votes cast will be rendered null and void. The election will commence the following day minus the disqualified candidate.
- E. Campaigning through the use of the Muhlenberg College radio station (WMUH), the Muhlenberg College Television Station (MCTV), or any other video campaigning is prohibited.
- F. Campaigning by mail is prohibited.
- G. Campaigning by E-mail or the Internet is prohibited, including use of chat services, instant messenger services, online groups and databases (i.e. Facebook) and/or other online/chat programs.
- H. Campaigning on a ticket is prohibited. A ticket is two or more people publicizing their names together. Therefore, publicity material must only contain the name of one candidate.
- I. Any student working as an agent of the College (paid or volunteer) cannot campaign or discuss the election in any way during his or her shift.
- J. Debates may be conducted at the discretion of the SGAOC. If there is to be a debate, a meeting will be held with all of the candidates to discuss debate procedures. Candidates will have the right to request a public debate to be held no later or earlier than Campaign Week.

VI. Publicity Materials

- A. All publicity and campaign material must be hung in compliance with the Posting Policy (see student handbook) of Muhlenberg College.
- B. Publicity material (banners, sheets, poster boards, signs and table tents) is any campaign item that is attached to a surface on campus property or any item with the candidate's name or slogan written upon it. Use of any items other than those listed must be cleared with the SGAOC before they are used.
- C. There is to be no circulation of publicity material, although the candidate may carry a platform while campaigning.
- D. Each candidate for any elected office shall be limited to 50 total pieces of campaign material that may be posted at any one time. Extra publicity material may be kept on reserve within the candidate's possession, but is permissible only for replacing torn or destroyed items.

- E. Candidates for the position of Student Body President shall be limited to 100 total pieces of campaign material that may be posted at any one time.
- F. A candidate may post no more than 5 pieces of publicity material larger than 8 ½ x 11 inches.
- G. Publicity material may be placed in Seegers Union only in the main staircase and on the appropriate bulletin boards. No publicity material may be placed on the glass doors of the Union or outside of the Union on the masonry work, brickwork, or on the pillars outside of the entrance.
- H. Types of Publicity Material:
 - 1. **Sheets and Banners** – One sheet or banner is permissible in Parents’ Plaza. Sheets may be no larger than a queen sized flat bed sheet and banners may no larger than the area of a queen sized flat bed sheet. Sheets or banners hung in Parents’ Plaza may be printed on only one side. No other signs larger than a piece of poster board are permitted anywhere on campus.
 - 2. **Poster Board** – A poster board is any piece of publicity material larger than 8 ½ x 11 inches but not exceeding 22 x 28 inches (a traditional piece of poster board). A T-Shirt shall be considered a piece of poster board, and therefore may only have writing on one side.
 - 3. **Signs** – A sign is any piece of publicity material 8 ½ x 11 inches or smaller.
 - 4. **Table Tents** – Table tents are permitted, provided that when the paper is unfolded it is no larger than 8 ½ x 11 inches and are printed on only one side.
- I. Publicity material may be hung only on the bulletin boards in the following areas:
 - 1. Ettinger
 - 2. Shankweiler
 - 3. Trumbower
 - 4. Moyer
 - 5. Center for the Arts
 - 6. Trexler Pavilion
 - 7. Trexler Library
 - 8. Walson Hall
 - 9. Life Sports Center
 - 10. New Science Building
- J. Publicity material may be hung on the inside of any residence hall, including fraternities and sororities, with permission of the respective houses.

- K. Publicity material may not be hung on the outside of any residence hall. In addition, hanging posters or painting on the windows of any residence hall is prohibited.
- L. Publicity material may not be hung on the inside of any classroom.
- K. Publicity material may not be hung on any other college property.
- L. Candidates may not remove or cover any already present material from bulletin boards or legitimate posting locations.
- M. Candidate may not remove, deface or post over another candidates publicity material.
- N. All publicity material must remain positive and cannot attack another candidate.
- O. Chalking is prohibited.
- P. Lawn signs are prohibited.
- Q. No publicity material may appear within sight (about 25 feet) of the polls on Election Day, with the exception of posters not visible from the balloting location. All publicity material not meeting these requirements will be removed by the SGAOC.
- R. If more than 50 pieces of publicity material are posted, the candidate in question will be contacted by the SGAOC. A member of the Committee will accompany the candidate to remove the excess items. A second violation will result in disqualification.
- S. Publicity material hung in illegal locations or in violation of the election rules must be removed by the candidate within two hours of notification. If the item(s) are not removed within two hours, a member of the SGAOC will see that this is done and the item(s) will be available for pickup in the Student Government Association Office until the close of the polls on Election Day.
- T. Wording of publicity materials is expected to be in good taste. Specifically, posters containing profanity or advocating drugs and/or alcohol will be deemed unacceptable. Candidates in violation of this rule will be notified and their posters must be taken down within two hours. A repeated violation may place the candidate in jeopardy of disqualification at the discretion of the SGAOC.
- U. Use of copyrighted slogans, logos, characters, etc. is illegal. All material deemed in violation by the SGAOC will immediately be removed by the candidate.
- V. All candidates must remove their publicity material within twenty-four hours after the polls close. The only exception is for the candidates involved in a runoff election. Candidates that fail to do may be referred to the judicial process.

- W. The Plant Operations Office will fine candidates hanging publicity materials that cause extreme damage to painted areas.

VII. Campaign Spending

- A. Campaign spending shall be limited to \$60 for each individual seeking the office of Muhlenberg College Student Body President.
- B. Campaign spending shall be limited to \$35 for each individual seeking the office of Muhlenberg College Student Government Association Representative.
- C. Each individual candidate shall, forty-eight hours before the close of polls, submit a list of expenditures and contributions to the SGAOC. Prices should be determined from the current competitive prices, unless a sales slip showing a lower price is attached. Candidates are expected to use material that may be available to all candidates. If candidates are unsure of what cost to assign a particular item the SGAOC will determine the price upon inspection. If no receipt can be presented, the SGAOC reserves the right to assign a price to any item on a candidate's expenditure sheet.
- D. If a candidate does not submit an expenditure sheet prior to the deadline he or she will be automatically disqualified. If a candidate does not incur any expenses for his or her campaign publicity, he or she must still submit an expenditure sheet within the specified limitations (i.e. If you use a photocopier at your parent's workplace you must account for the expense based on competitive prices). If no materials were used then a report sheet stating so must be submitted (i.e. Candidate X has zero expenses).
- E. If a candidate willfully misrepresents his or her monetary allotment he or she will immediately be disqualified. The candidate found to be in violation may be referred to the judicial process.
- F. If any member of the Muhlenberg College Student Body suspects a candidate of accepting campaign contributions or campaign materials in excess of the set limitations, or of spending in excess of the allotted amount, the student may appeal to the SGAOC. The Committee will determine whether or not an infraction has occurred and report their decision back to the parties involved.

VIII. Election Procedures

- A. Elections shall be conducted in the month of November for all Student Government representatives.
- B. Elections shall be conducted in the month of October for the position of Student Body President.

- C. The first and last name of the candidate shall appear on the ballot unless the SGAOC is notified of an alternative name at least two days prior to the drawing of the ballot position.
- D. All candidates for office will be informed of a meeting to randomly draw ballot positions. Attendance at this meeting will not affect the results of the drawing.
- E. Election Day will be on a class day as set by the SGAOC.
- F. Voting will take place from 8:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. in Seegers Union lobby unless otherwise designated by the SGAOC.
- G. Computer Balloting will be used in the elections of Student Body President and Student Government Association Representatives whenever possible. Paper ballots will otherwise be used.
- H. Students are required to show their student identification card to be eligible to vote.
- I. Each student is only eligible to vote once.
- J. Results of the election will be posted in alphabetical order on the Student Government Association bulletin board as soon as possible following the closing of the polls.
- K. Candidates may inquire of the SGAOC as to the actual number of votes they received if there is relevant concern.
- L. Absentee ballots may be used if a voter will be away from campus for the entire balloting period. They will be available at the Dean of Student's Office beginning the day after platforms are due, through the last day of campaigning. Absentee ballots will also be posted on the Student Government Association website and will be available for online submission. Absentee ballots will be cross referenced with the voting system to ensure that each student may only vote once.
- M. If the margin of victory is less than 5 votes, then there will be an automatic recount of all paper ballots.

IX. Counting Procedures

- A. Two student members of the SGAOC shall be responsible for reading the results from the computer, one reading and the other verifying. Two other student members of the SGAOC shall be responsible for recording the results, one writing and the other verifying. When using paper ballots, all ballots must be counted twice by two different people. Again, two people shall record the results, one writing and the other verifying.

- B. The Advisor to the Student Government Association will verify the count. The results will be posted on the Student Government Association Bulletin Board.

X. Recounting

- A. Any candidate may request a recount within twenty-four hours from the time the results are posted. Notification must be given in writing to the SGAOC.
- B. The SGAOC shall decide if the appeal is valid and whether or not to proceed with a recount.
- C. Any candidate whose position has changed as a result of the first recount may call for a second recount. A written request must be given to the SGAOC within 24 hours following the results of the first recount are posted. The results of the second recount are final.

XI. Runoff Elections

- A. Criteria for a Student Body Presidential Runoff:
 - 1. One candidate must receive a simple majority of the votes or a runoff election will be held between the top two candidates.
 - 2. If there is a tie for the most votes a runoff election will be conducted.
- B. Criteria for a Student Government Association Representative Runoff:
 - 1. If a tie occurs which causes there to be more elected candidates that spots allocated, a runoff election will be conducted.
- C. All runoff elections must take place within seven days of the original election

XII. Violations of the Election Rules

- A. Any Muhlenberg College student, including candidates, may report an infraction of *The Student Government Association Election Rules* in writing to the SGAOC at any time during the election process and up to forty-eight hours following the closing of the polls.
- B. Any party involved will be notified immediately and appropriate action will be taken which may include disqualification of that person, a freeze of their recently obtained position, a delay/postponement of the entire election, and/or any other action deemed appropriate by the SGAOC.
- C. The SGAOC in conjunction with the Advisor to Student Government Association and the Dean of Students will investigate the alleged infraction and determine whether or not the accusation requires further action. The investigation will be carried out within one week of notification.

- D. It is expected that if the infraction involves any member of the SGAOC, that he/she will remove themselves from the investigation process, the remaining members of the investigation will appoint a replacement if deemed necessary.
- E. If violations are found to have taken place, the Advisor to the Student Government Association will notify the affected parties, the Dean of Student's Office, and Student Government Association in a timely manner of those violations and the appropriate sanctions will be imposed.
- F. If the accusations are found to be unjustified, the investigation shall be terminated and any action taken against the parties involved shall cease, and or be repealed.
- G. The decision of the SGAOC, Advisor to the Student Government Association, and Dean of Students are final unless there is an appeal within forty-eight hours.
- H. All election rules are subject to the discretion of the SGAOC. Decisions of the SGAOC are final.
- I. The scope of any sanctions that may be levied are at the entire discretion of the SGAOC in conjunction with the Advisor to the Student Government Association and the Dean of Students.