

**-Rules of Procedure-**

Elections Rules Commission



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA  
STUDENT GOVERNMENT

## **1 Authority and Jurisdiction**

- 1.1 The Rules of Procedure of the Elections Rules Commission shall not conflict with the Student Government Constitution.
- 1.2 The Rules of Procedure of the Elections Rules Commission shall not conflict with the Student Government Statutes. It may, however, further define any section of statutes that deals with the operation of the Elections Rules Commission.
- 1.3 The Authority of this document shall be vested within the governing documents of Student Government and with the consent of (a) the Senate Committee on Rules and (b) the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ethics.
- 1.4 This document shall revert to Chapter 700 of SG Statutes for all definitions and terms.

## **2 Candidacy Procedures**

- 2.1 To apply for candidacy, candidates must submit the following required forms in order to be put on the ballot:
  - 2.1.1 The official application packet
  - 2.1.2 Declaration of Intent
  - 2.1.3 Buckley Waiver
- 2.2 Applicants will be required to attend at least one (1) Candidate Meeting. A schedule of the meeting dates and times will be made available by the Elections Rules Commission.
- 2.3 Applicants shall not appear on the ballot unless all required paperwork has been received by the Elections Rules Commission and they have been certified to meet all candidacy requirements.
- 2.4 All aforementioned documents must be submitted to the ERC by the specified deadline as outlined by the ERC.
- 2.5 Candidates may request changes to submitted documents by submitting a Change Request Form to the Elections Rules Commission.
- 2.6 Candidates may withdraw from the election by submitting a Withdrawal form to the Elections Rules Commission, at no penalty to them. Candidates that withdraw from the election may not reapply after the application period has ended.
- 2.7 Any additional candidacy procedures are outlined in Title VII.

### **3 Campaigning**

- 3.1 Official Campaigning shall begin two weeks prior to voting and will end on the final day of voting.
  - 3.1.1 Students may not actively or passively campaign prior to the onset of Official Campaigning; however, they may solicit the assistance of campaign staff and organizers.
- 3.2 The Elections Rules Commission shall make public a list of all Official Polling locations at least 24 hours prior to the onset of Official Campaigning.
- 3.3 Students may not actively or passively campaign within 50 yards in any direction of an Official Polling location
- 3.4 Use of Student Government property (ie. Computers, golf carts, office equipment, office supplies, etc.) and campaigning within the confines of a Student Government Branch or Agency is prohibited.
- 3.5 All signage requests shall be directed to the Office of Student Organizations (OSO). The rules and regulations adopted by OSO, Physical Plant, and any other University entity shall govern all campaign signage.
- 3.6 Campaign chalking is prohibited within 10 yards in any direction of an Official Polling location. Campaign chalking shall also be limited or prohibited in certain areas in accordance with University Policies and the specific policies of individual colleges and buildings.
- 3.7 Any campaign materials such as t-shirts, a-frame signs, flyers, etc. must have the [www.sg.usf.edu/vote](http://www.sg.usf.edu/vote) website link printed on them
  - 3.7.1 Promotional material exceptions will be left to the discretion of the ERC.

### **4 Campaign Budget Statements**

- 4.1 Each candidate shall submit an initial Campaign Budget Statement prior to the onset of campaigning. This statement shall include all campaign contributions and any encumbered expenditures with all receipts attached.
- 4.2 Candidates shall be required to submit amended expense forms to the Election Rules Commission when making purchases during the weeks of campaigning, amending their campaign budgets, or upon receiving additional campaign contributions within 2 business days of the purchase, amendments, or contribution.
- 4.3 The Elections Rules Commission shall provide the webmaster with a copy of the initial budget statements and any amendments thereafter, to be posted to the SG website, within five (5) business days of their submission.

## 5 Violation Assessment

- 5.1 Violations shall be assessed in congruence with Title VII of SG Statutes and these Rules of Procedure. The jurisdiction of the Elections Rules Commission, for the purpose of issuing violations in these elections, shall not exceed the violation of the SG constitution, SG statutes, and these ROP's. Violations of municipal, state, and federal law shall be determined by the judiciary of the respective government.
- 5.2 The Elections Rules Commission may assess violations in accordance with statutes and these ROP's. The accumulation of a total of one (1) major violation or three (3) minor violations will result in the disqualification of the candidate.
- 5.3 Any student, staff, or faculty may submit a grievance outlining any violations regarding Title VII and these ROP's.
  - 5.3.1 Persons filing grievances against a Candidate must submit all supporting evidence with the grievance and once a grievance is filed no new evidence may be added. Grievances filed without any evidence will be dismissed without consideration or review.
  - 5.3.2 Violations may be assessed for technical and procedural violations of Title VII and these ROP's only by the Elections Rules Commission.
- 5.4 If the Elections Rules Commission determines to accept a grievance filed by a student, staff or faculty, the Elections Rules Commission will notify the Candidate of their potential violation within a timely manner.
  - 5.4.1 Included in this notification will be a copy of the grievance filed including all supporting evidence.
  - 5.4.2 The Candidate will then have, at minimum, 24 hours from when this notification is sent to when the meeting shall occur to prepare a statement written and/or oral, refuting the alleged charges with any applicable evidence. The Supervisor of Elections may schedule the grievance meeting any time after the 24 hours to hear arguments.
  - 5.4.3 The person who filed the grievance will be given 5 minutes to present their statement to the Elections Rules Commission.
  - 5.4.4 Candidates or a member of the Campaign ticket will be given 5 minutes to present their statement to the Elections Rules Commission.
  - 5.4.5 Failure to refute any alleged charges will not impede the Elections Rules Commission from assessing the violation(s).
  - 5.4.6 The Elections Rules Commission will discuss the statements from both parties, look at the evidence, and vote on whether or not to assess a major/minor violation to the Candidate.

- 5.4.7 An official decision on violation assessment by the Elections Rules Commission shall be made public no later than (2) two business days from the adjournment of the meeting.
- 5.5 In the event that the Elections Rules Commission feels a violation may have occurred they shall follow the investigation procedure as follows:
- 5.5.1 The candidate or campaign ticket who is believed to have committed a violation shall be notified in a timely manner
- 5.5.2 The Elections Rules Commission will meet to discuss the evidence and hear testimony in regards to the issue.
- A Those called forth to testify before the Commission will be notified via email at least 24 hours prior to the investigation meeting.
  - B Should the individual be unable to attend the meeting, a written statement of their testimony may be submitted to the Commission.
  - C Should the individual in question fail to respond in any way the Commission will carry on with their investigation.
- 5.5.3 The Commission will then discuss its findings and deliberate on the outcome of the investigation and whether or not a major/minor violation shall be assessed.
- 5.5.4 The outcome of the investigation shall be made public no later than 2 business days after a decision has been reached by the Commission.
- 5.6 No grievances may be filed with the Elections Rules Commission after the official certification of the results of this election and/or the run-off election.
- 5.7 The following shall outline the major and minor violations applicable in this election. The Elections Rules Commission reserves the right to amend the classification of an offense when warranted.
- 5.7.1 Major violations include:
- A Any threat or act of violence against any member of a campaign ticket
  - B Any attempt to commit extortion or blackmail
  - C Knowingly providing false information to SGATO, the Elections Rules Commission, or Supreme Court
  - D Withholding any financial records or changes to the campaign budget
  - E Any attempt to commit a bribe
  - F Destruction or theft of another campaign's materials (including posted signs, chalking, etc)
  - G Attempting to cast more than one vote or tamper with voting software
  - H Attempting to set up/utilize mobile polling stations
  - I Any violations that are not specifically outlined can be left up to the Elections Rules Commission to be considered a major violation

### 5.7.2 Minor violations include:

- A Slander or libel against another candidate or campaign
- B Using A&S funded materials to further their campaign (with the exception of anything printed in SG computer labs)
- C Condoning or authorizing the destruction of another campaign's materials
- D Sliding material under doors of residence halls
- E Posting signs in unauthorized locations (Marshall Center may impose fines/disciplinary measures of their own)
- F Chalking in unauthorized locations (Marshall Center may impose fines/disciplinary measures of their own.
- G Chalking within 10 yards of an official polling location during election days
- H Active Campaigning within 50 yards of an official polling location
- I Active or Passive campaigning in any Student Government Agency or Bureau
- J Early Campaigning
- K Using a celebrity or University figure on campaign materials, (such as Rocky or President Genshaft).
- L Using Student Government resources (golf carts, copier, etc)
- M Any violations that aren't specifically outlined can be left up to the Elections Rules Commission to be considered a minor violation.
- N Any minor violation may be promoted to a major violation if the Elections Rules Commission feels the situation warrants it.

## **6 Elections Rules Commission Meeting Procedures**

- 6.1 The Supervisor of Elections shall determine the time, day, place, of Elections Rules Commission meetings and provide an agenda at least 24 hours in advance of meetings.
- 6.2 In order for any official decision to be rendered, quorum shall be more than half of voting members.
- 6.3 Voting rights shall be exclusive to the Commissioners of the Elections Rules Commission
- 6.4 Speaking rights shall be exclusive to the Commissioners of the Elections Rules Commission.
  - 6.4.1 A guest speaker may address the Election Rules Commission during their appointed times as set in the agenda.
  - 6.4.2 A non-member of the Elections Rules Commission may address the Commission beyond such times by permission of the Supervisor of Elections.
- 6.5 Meetings shall be conducted in the accordance with Robert's Rules of Order at the chair's discretion.

## **7 General Election Timeline**

- 7.1 The General Election shall be held beginning February 27<sup>th</sup> at 8am, continuously, until its close on March 1<sup>st</sup> at 8pm.
- 7.2 If a Run Off Election is necessary it shall be held beginning March 6<sup>th</sup> at 8am, continuously, until its close on March 7<sup>th</sup> at 8pm.

## **8 Amendments**

- 8.1 Amendments to this document may be presented by the Elections Rules Commission and shall require the joint approval of the Senate Committee on Rules and the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ethics.
- 8.2 Unless these ROP are amended or new ROP are submitted these ROP shall remain in effect

Approved by the  
Committee on Rules  
01.30.2012

Approved by the  
Committee on Judiciary and Ethics  
01.19.2012

---

Khalid Hassouneh  
Student Senate President