

Sunday, February 12, 2012

# VSG Election Interest Meeting

# Election Commission

- The Election Commission promotes and oversees VSG Elections. All authority regarding campaign procedures and regulations is governed by the Commission and the Constitution and VSG Statutes
- Membership: Attorney General Elizabeth Pruitt and 4 At Large Members: Natasha Abdullah, Juliana Valcarenghi, Alissa Rashid, and Carly Stone.

# Constitutional Changes to VSG

- All Senators will be elected in the Fall of 2012 for the new, unicameral Senate
- Student Body President and Executive Vice President are elected after Spring Break. The election period is no longer than 1.5 weeks
- Any cabinet, co-chair, or other appointed positions are selected in the Spring following presidential elections
- Only student-wide election is now the Presidential election

# Fall 2012: New Legislative Structure

- Unicameral Legislature of 29 Senators
- Residential Representation:
  - 10 Elected as Commons House Presidents
  - 7 Elected from Upperclassmen Areas
- Academic Representation:
  - 5 Elected as Arts & Science Senators
  - 1 from each: Peabody, Blair, Engineering
  - 4 Elected as School Council Presidents
  - First Year students cannot serve as academic senator

# Spring 2012 SBP and EVP Timeline

- February 10: Election Interest Meeting
- February 24: Candidate Declaration Meeting
- February 28: Petitions and Campaign Team Forms due
- March 11: Campaigning Begins, Endorsement Form made available
- March 14-15: Primary Election
- March 19-20: General Election

# Election Reform: Eligibility

- VSG has removed the Experience Requirement to be eligible to be on a ballot for the Presidential Elections
- Each ticket must gather 500 signatures in order to appear on the ballot. Students are allowed to sign multiple petitions and soliciting votes or endorsements is not permitted until campaigning begins
- Students must turn in their declaration form and sign that they understand and can comply with VSG's academic eligibility requirements (2.75 GPA, in Good Standing) as well as conduct requirements (not on Disciplinary Probation)

# Election Reform: Finances

- Tickets may self-finance the entirety of their campaign or fundraise money from their undergraduate peers at any amount
- For Presidential Elections each ticket is allowed to spend up to \$500
- Students must report all items including itemized receipts. Market value must be utilized not including sales tax.
  - Standard per-page Vanderbilt printing rates apply to ordinary copies: \$0.04 for B/W, \$0.25 for color
  - Ordinary school supplies (Pens, Crayola/Sharpie Markers, Staplers) do not have to be reported

# Election Reform: Negative Campaigning

## *Definition:*

For the purposes of VSG elections, negative campaigning shall be defined as:

- Remarks or attacks about a candidate's personal character
- Baseless and factually inaccurate allegations about a candidate's character, experiences, or capabilities
- Incorrect insinuations based upon a statement or experience

Factual statements about a candidate's record or platform are allowable so long as they comply with the above criteria of an unacceptable action.

Factually established remarks that may be portrayed as negative but relate to the position and its related competencies are allowable, so long as they meet the above standards prohibiting assaults on a candidate's character.



# Election Reform: Campaign Teams

- Campaign teams may be formed as soon as the Candidate Declaration Meeting. A List of Campaign Team members must be turned into the Election Commission by February 28
- Campaigns may consist of 10 members other than the candidates
- Campaign Teams may participate in the construction of the content of a campaign any time after the form has been turned in. Soliciting endorsements or votes is not permitted until campaigning begins
- Individuals not on the campaign team are permitted to help in the construction of campaign materials (ex. paint a banner or poster) before the beginning of campaigning, so long as they are only privy to the content on the particular item they are helping with.

# Election Reform: Endorsements

- Forms will be made available after the beginning of campaigning and must be submitted before a team publicizes the endorsement
- Individual Endorsements are not a reflection of their organization's sentiment. Candidates publishing a webpage of any individual endorsements must include the following disclaimer to be visibly published at the top of the page:
  - "All individual endorsements reflect a person's personal views, and not the views of their organizations."
- Organizational Endorsements must bear the signature of the President and Vice President and the general method in which the endorsement decision was made (ex. Vote of general body, exec/editorial board, etc)

# Endorsements Continued

- Endorseees may be members of the Undergraduate Vanderbilt community ONLY.
- All endorseees are expected to follow all campaign rules and regulations. This year, endorseees will be treated as campaign team members once voting begins.

# Election Reform: Violations

- Any student can report to the Election Commission
- Major Violations
  - Intent
  - Pre-Campaigning
  - Punishments
- Minor Violations
  - Negligence
  - Punishments
- Campaign Teams
  - Candidates personally responsible for actions of campaign team members
- Election Commission will deliberate, all violations are handled on a case-by-case basis
- All candidates in the election will be informed of the ruling immediately following the notification to the candidate involved.
- Any appeal to the media will be considered a campaign violation

# Question and Answer