

SGA Election Rules and Regulations

SGA Constitution

Article X - ELECTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICERS

Section 1 - Elections

1.1 Spring semester elections shall be held during the first week of April. The date will be designated by the Supreme Court and announced one month in advance.

1.2 All officers, senators, and other elected students will be elected during the Spring semester elections.

Section 2 - Academic Qualifications for Running for and Holding Office

2.1 All candidates for office, whether elected or appointed must have and maintain a cumulative GPA as stipulated for the office.

2.2 Minimum cumulative GPA for offices will be as follows:

President 2.5

Vice President 2.5

Treasurer 2.5

Chief Justice 2.5

Attorney General 2.5

Student At Large 2.0

Vanguard Liaison 2.0

Senate Clerk 2.0

Senators 2.0

2.3 A person holding an office, who falls below the stipulated GPA listed in 2.2 for one semester, will relinquish all powers and privileges of that office.

2.4 Should a person holding such an office be placed on academic probation, he or she must relinquish all powers and privileges of that office.

Section 3 - Class Standing Qualifications for Office

3.1 All candidates for President, Vice President, Treasurer, Chief Justice, Attorney General or members of the University Traffic and Parking Committee must have successfully completed at least 44 hours at the University of South Alabama and must be a regularly enrolled student.

3.2 All candidates for student senate positions must be enrolled in that college.

3.3 All candidates for election or appointment to any office under this constitution must meet any and all qualifications set forth in this constitution for the office in question.

SGA Code-of-Laws

TITLE V. Election Laws

Chapter 500. Election Rules Committee

500.1 The Election Rules Committee shall be composed of not less than five members who are to be appointed by the President of the Senate.

500.2 The Committee shall have the power to appoint students who are not seeking an office in the election to help them run the election (e.g. setting up polls, getting poll workers, counting votes, etc.) and enforcing the election law. Any decisions of the Election Rules Committee may be appealed to the Supreme Court.

500.3 After the Supreme Court decides the date for an election, the Elections Committee will set the deadline for candidates' applications. All candidates for office must meet all qualifications (as stated in Article X, Section 2 of the Constitution) by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date for applications. The Committee shall be charged with establishing procedures for validating the qualifications of a candidate. They are furthermore empowered to set the date when campaigning (defined as any written or printed material) may begin; running the election (e.g. setting up polls, getting poll workers, counting votes, etc.) and enforcing the elections law.

500.3.1 A mandatory candidate meeting will be held at 5:15 p.m. on the same day that applications are due. Failure to attend this meeting will result in immediate disqualification. A candidate may, however, send a representative to the meeting in the event that he or she cannot attend.

500.3.2 Candidates seeking the office of President, Vice President, and Treasurer of the Student Government Association will participate in a mandatory Candidates' Forum to be held prior to the general election to present their platform. This forum will be open to the public. If a candidate is unopposed, the candidate must still participate in the forum and be available to answer questions. The date and time of the forum will be decided by the Supreme Court and the Election Rules Committee. The date of forum will be announced on the same day as the dates for the general election. Failure to participate in this forum will result in immediate disqualification from the election. Candidates who are disqualified from the election due to absence from the Candidates' Forum may appeal to the Supreme Court for reinstatement of their candidacy.

500.4 With regards to enforcing the Election Laws, the Committee will:

A. Assess campaign violations

B. Keep specific written records of all violations. This should include:

1. Who committed the violation

2. What the violation was

3. Where the violation occurred

4. Who assessed the violation

5. Date of violation

6. Penalty imposed for the violation

C. The Elections Committee shall assess campaign violations. When a poster or other campaigning material is found in an illegal place, the committee member shall remove that poster in the presence of any student, sign the back of the poster, and give the date, time and place of the violation; as well as request the witnessing student to initial and give student number for proof of witness. No person may be fined more than once for each violation (e.g. if he or she has one poster in an illegal place, he or she cannot be fined 4 times for that poster. He or she can, however, be fined 4 times for 4 illegal posters).

D. Notify the candidate in writing for the specific violations which he or she committed and the amount of fines which he or she must pay. He or she should be informed that he or she has the options of paying his or her fines to the S.G.A.

secretary to be placed in the Contingency Account, or appealing the fines to the Election Rules Committee.

E. If the Election Rules Committee upholds the fines, the decision may be appealed to the Supreme Court.

F. Every effort must be made to verbally notify the candidate of disqualification within forty-eight (48) hours of the time of disqualification. Written notification of violations must be mailed within three (3) business days. This applies to any person who is not a member of SGA.

500.5 No member of the Election Rules Committee, including the President of the Senate may be involved in any committee work for or during any election which he or she is running for office.

500.6 All S.G.A. election and registration deadlines for candidates shall be publicized at least one month in advance of the date they are to be held.

500.7 The Election Rules Committee shall expand the rules regarding campaign publicity in Chapter 501 as is necessary with approval of the Executive council. It is the responsibility of the Elections Rules Committee to make available to all candidates at the time of the candidate registration deadline a copy of the expanded rules.

500.8 An Electronic polling system for student body elections shall be included as a way of polling the student body at the discretion of the current Election Committee.

Chapter 501. Homecoming Elections

501.1. The date set for the Homecoming election must be a minimum of four days before the Homecoming game.

501.2 All candidates for homecoming king and queen must have a cumulative 2.0 GPA at the time of the application deadline.

501.3 The terms "king" and "queen" are gender specific.

501.4 The nominating or sponsoring organization shall be responsible for any fines, and failure to pay said fines shall be reported to the Office of Campus Involvement and a hold will be placed on the candidate's grade at the end of the semester.

Chapter 502. Campaign Regulations

502.1 Publicity

502.1.1 All campaign preparations (including material preparation or campaign committee meetings) on or in sight of the University campus prior to the campaign dates must be made in a non-public area (i.e. an area made inaccessible to the general student body or general public).

502.1.2 Flyers may not exceed 8 1/2 by 11 inches and may be placed (using masking tape only) on ceramic tile or brick walls or other unpainted surfaces but not glass doors or windows.

502.1.3 Only one flyer per bulletin board inside buildings is allowed, but not to exceed two flyers per floor per building.

502.1.4 No posters will be allowed in any library or any dining service area.

502.1.5 Flyers may not be placed on trees.

502.1.6 No nails are to be used to hang any campaign materials.

502.1.6.1 Banners and sheets may be hung outdoors only.

502.1.7 All campaign materials must bear the name of the individual or organization which is responsible for its publication. That individual or group will be liable in student courts for any statement contained in the material. Individuals distributing unmarked

material will be held personally liable for what they distribute. If any organization distributing material is not officially recognized on campus, the names of the officials of the group must be filed with the Election Rules Committee by application date.

502.1.8 All editorials must be distinguished as being the responsibility of the editor or writer. The editor will be held liable for statements in ads not marked as herein required.

502.1.9.1 No campaigning, either verbal or material, will be allowed in any building containing polls on Election Day.

502.1.9.2 No campaigning, either verbal or material, will be allowed within 30 feet on Election Day in any building containing polls.

502.1.9.3 The above word "campaigning" will not be considered to mean buttons or stickers worn by students on Election Day while the polls are open.

502.1.9.4 No campaign materials may be worn by a person working at the polls during the election.

502.1.10 Violations of the above regulations will result in a fine of \$1.00 per violation with the exception of 502.1.6 which will result in a fine of \$5.00 per violation.

502.1.11.1 Any candidate who receives more than \$25.00 in fines during the election (through the date of the election) will be subject to disqualification.

502.1.11.2 Only the Election Rules Committee has the power to officially declare a candidate disqualified through the date of elections. The Supreme Court may disqualify a candidate if a candidate's appeal is upheld.

502.1.12 All flyers, banners, etc. must be removed by 5:00 p.m. on the third day following elections. Non-compliance will result in a \$2.00 fine for each violation.

502.1.13 All write-in candidates are subject to the same regulations as recognized candidates.

502.1.14 Only the following may be hung, displayed, or advertised on the main campus or Springhill campus unless told otherwise by the elections chair:

- A. flyers
- B. banners
- C. sheets

Endorsements

502.1.15 No facility on the University campus may lend its support in any capacity to any candidate. Permission cannot be granted exclusively to any candidate for the distribution of material by such a facility.

502.1.16 No employee of the University (faculty, staff, or administration) may campaign in any capacity for any candidate. Any student who is an employee in any capacity for the University of South Alabama may not campaign, either verbal or material, for any candidate while on the clock.

502.1.17 No candidate may receive any exclusive assistance ("exclusive assistance" is defined as "any service or contribution which is provided to a candidate which is not equally made available to all other candidates") from any type of business; violation of this will result in disqualification of the candidate.

502.1.18 No candidate may use university letterhead (or copies of letterhead) for campaigning purposes.

CHAPTER 503. Campaign Expenses

503.1 No candidate's campaign expenses may exceed \$250.00 including all contributions. This amount is to cover the general and run-off elections.

503.2 Each candidate must submit an itemized financial statement containing an estimate of the fair market value of each item which he or she used in the campaign. This statement must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on the first day following elections (23 hours after the polls close).

503.3 The Election Rules Committee has the power to assess a candidate's expenditures according to the fair market value of the expenditures. Any candidate whose expenses are determined by the committee to be over \$250.00 will be disqualified. All materials used in the general election may be used in the run-off election.

503.4 Failure to turn in itemized financial statements for campaign expenditures as stipulated in 503.2 will result in a hold on the candidate's grades.

CHAPTER 504. Voting Procedures

504.1 Candidates' names will appear on the ballot in a position determined by lot. Space will be provided on ballots for write-in candidates.

504.2 The polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the main campus. The Elections Committee Chair shall have the discretion to maintain polling places beyond these time requirements.

504.3 The location of the polls will be announced two weeks before the election by the Election Rules Committee.

504.4 The students who staff the polls must be approved by the Election Rules Committee in advance.

504.5 Voting may also take place on any personal computer using Student ID number, pin number, birth date, last name, or any combination thereof when made available by the Elections Committee.

504.6 As long as one of the official voting areas on the main campus remains open from 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. the election is official.

504.7 Voting shall be by secret ballot. To receive a ballot, the voter must follow procedures outlined by the Elections Committee. The voter must mark the ballot according to the instructions on the ballot. The voter shall be responsible for submitting the completed ballot to the elections vendor.

504.8 The manner in which votes are tabulated will be determined by the Elections Committee and results of all votes counted will be posted at the SGA office.

CHAPTER 505. Run-Offs

505.1 A majority of the total votes cast is necessary to win any of the elected S.G.A. offices other than Senator.

505.2 In case no candidate receives the majority necessary to win, a runoff election will be held approximately one week after the general election. The two candidates receiving the highest percentage of the vote will participate in the run-off election. The date of the runoff election shall be determined before the date of the general election and published with the date of the general election.

505.3 If a tie occurs for the last Senator position in any college, division or Student-At-Large position, these individuals will participate in a runoff to be held one week after the general election.

CHAPTER 506. Protests

506.1 Any protest of a Student Government Election or a Homecoming Queen and King

Election must be submitted to the Supreme Court within five (5) business days after the day of election. Any decision by the Election Rules Committee may be appealed to the Supreme Court.

CHAPTER 507. Absentee Ballots

507.1 Any student who will be absent on Election Day because of a University approved activity is eligible to cast an absentee ballot in any S.G.A. election.

507.2 The absentee ballot must be cast not more than one week prior to Election Day.

507.3 The date, time, place, and procedure for casting an absentee ballot must be announced two days in advance by the Election Rules Committee.

507.4 The Election Rules Committee will collect all absentee ballots and be responsible for their security. The absentee ballots will be counted when the regular ballots are counted.

507.5 All election rules, procedures, and decisions made by the Election Rules Committee concerning the regular polls will be in effect at the absentee ballot poll.

507.6 In an election in which 504.5 is applicable, 507.1, 507.2, 507.3, 507.4, and 507.5 shall be suspended.