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University of Wisconsin – Green Bay

**Student Government Association Election Rules**

Approved by the Student Senate: November 25 2024

Updated by the Student Court: November 18, 2024

The Court is to take care that all elections are conducted truthfully and fairly, and according to such rules as the Court, subject to the Senate's will, shall make – SGA Constitution

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**I. Election Materials,**

A. Election materials will be made available to the student body at least twenty-eight (28) calendar days prior to the election. Candidates will have at least ten (10) business days to complete and return all materials.

1. Candidacy Form

a. Candidates running for the SGA President/Vice President, Chair of Location Campus Affairs, RHAA Chair ticket, or for SGA Senate must mandatorily submit a candidacy form that the Student Court will make available to the student body via email, website and social media. For purposes of assuring eligibility and to avoid confusion caused by duplicate names, the information form will require candidates to provide their student ID number. All information forms must be typed and submitted electronically by emailing completed forms to [stcourt@uwgb.edu](mailto:stcourt@uwgb.edu).

2. Candidates must submit signature forms with their complete candidacy forms.

3. Significance and Disposition of Election Materials

a. Candidates who successfully complete the candidacy form will be placed on the ballot and must participate in any candidate debate/candidate forum organized by the Court. The Court reserves the right to disqualify or otherwise penalize candidates whose election materials are falsified or incomplete.

b. All election materials become the property of the Student Court and will be destroyed upon completion and certification of the election.

c. All submitted forms must be obtained from the Student Court page of the Student Government Association.

1. Election materials can be found here:

<https://www.uwgb.edu/student-government/student-court/election-materials>

**II. Candidates**

A. Requirements for Candidacy

1. Candidates for Senate must be enrolled in a minimum of 3 credits at the University of Wisconsin– Green Bay and must have a cumulative grade point minimum average of 2.25 on a 4.0 scale at the time that nomination papers are submitted. To assure confidentiality of student records as required by law, confirmation of eligibility will be confirmed by the Dean of Students Office or the Registrar. Any student who transfers into the University is assumed to be in good academic standing and eligible for candidacy. If any student fails to meet the minimum requirement, they may appeal to the Student Court.
  - a. If a student has below a 2.25 and higher than or equal to a 2.0, the student will be eligible to appeal the decision. The appeal process will begin with the student going to the Student Court website and filling out the appeal form. Once completed, the student needs to send the appeal form to Student Court’s email. Student Court’s email address is [stcourt@uwgb.edu](mailto:stcourt@uwgb.edu). A few examples of what would be considered as a valid reason for the appeal process are the death of a family member, some type of medical issue or any other related extenuating circumstances. Once this occurs the following process will take place.
    1. The Chief Justice will call the Court together to review the appeal. The committee shall consist of the Student Court. There will also be one SGA advisor from either Senate, Executive Board or Student Court who will be present to ensure the fairness of the process.
    2. A date will be selected for the candidate to come and state their case. The student may be asked questions by the Court. Once the Court has gathered enough information, they will dismiss the student from the proceedings and move into deliberations.
    3. The Court will then vote on whether the candidate will be granted eligibility to run for the requested position. In the case of a tie, the Chief Justice will cast the tie breaking vote. If the Chief Justice is unable to vote, for conflict of interest or other ethical reasons, the Associate Justice with the most earned academic credits will pass the tie breaking vote. The Court’s decision is final. The candidate will be notified of the decision. If the decision is to allow that candidate to run, then they will continue the regular process for the election. If the decision is that the candidate is ineligible to run, then that student cannot reapply until the following semester.
2. Candidates for Chair of Location Campus Affairs, as well as campus President and Vice President must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits at the University of Wisconsin– Green Bay and must have a cumulative grade point minimum average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale at the time that nomination papers are submitted. To assure confidentiality of student records as required by law, confirmation of eligibility will be confirmed by the Dean of Students Office or the Registrar. Any student who

transfers into the University is assumed to be in good academic standing and eligible for candidacy.

3. Candidates for RHAA President and Vice President must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale at the time that nomination papers are submitted. To assure confidentiality of student records as required by law, confirmation of eligibility will be confirmed by the Dean of Students Office or the Registrar. Any student who transfers into the University is assumed to be in good academic standing and eligible for candidacy.
4. Candidates may not seek or use the endorsement of any non-student or non-student organization
5. Candidates must acquire signatures of currently enrolled students as part of a completed application.
  - a. Senators are required to have thirty verified student signatures.
  - b. Location campus students who are running for Chair of Location Campus Affairs are required to have thirty verified student signatures.
  - c. SGA President/Vice President, RHAA Chair tickets are required to have 200 verified student signatures.
1. Should the Court so designate, representatives of the SGA President/Vice President, Chair of Location Campus Affairs, RHAA Chair ticket, or for SGA Senate tickets are required to attend an SGA candidate debate/ candidate forum, to be scheduled in advance at a mutually convenient time. Failure to appear may result in an automatic disqualification unless the candidate has notified the Student Court of their absence with documentation as to why they will not be present, which must be approved by the Court.

#### C. Write-in Candidates

1. For eligible students who do not submit election materials, they are still able to participate as a write-in candidate. This means at the time of voting; each voter has the option to enter the name of any eligible student they wish to serve in that office.
2. Write-in candidates must meet all candidacy requirements that are listed above. In order to be elected to Student Senate, a write-in candidate must receive 100 votes. In order to be nominated as either the SGA President/Vice President, RHAA Chair ticket, or for SGA Senate a write-in ticket must receive 200 votes. Chair of Location Campus Affairs, a write-in candidate must receive 50 votes.
3. All write-in candidates must adhere to Sections III, IV, and V of the election rules.

### III. Finance

- A. Campaign spending will be limited to \$1000 total, pursuant to the conditions stated below.

1. Tickets and Senate candidates may contribute up to \$500 of personal funds towards their campaign fund.
  2. Tickets and Senate candidates may raise up to \$1000 of funds from University of Wisconsin – Green Bay students.
  3. No student contribution to any one political campaign can exceed \$50.
  4. Students may not receive money or non-financial material support from any non-student in order to fund political campaigns.
  5. Any overspending of the allotted \$1000 will result in the immediate disqualification of the candidate or ticket.
  6. In the event of a run-off election, candidates may raise an additional \$250. Candidates may also spend any unused funds from the prior election.
- B. Campaign Resource Reports
1. All candidates must document their funding and spending on their Campaign Resource Report.
  2. A complete Campaign Resources Report includes signed receipts for all contributions and expenditures.
  3. Candidates for the SGA President/Vice President, Chair of Location Campus Affairs, RHAA Chair ticket, or for SGA Senate ticket must turn in their campaign resource report to the Student Court no later than two (2) hours after the polls close and are subject to Sections IV and V of the election rules.
  4. Candidates who neither receive funds nor spend any funds on the election must submit a signed form, provided by the Court, attesting to this fact.
- C. Fundraising
1. Only fundraising events that properly document each contribution will be permitted (including name of contributor, amount given and date of contribution). Only the candidate's personal contributions and contributions received from University of Wisconsin – Green Bay students may be used towards the candidate's campaign.
  2. Online fundraising websites, such as, but not limited to, GoFundMe, cannot be used to raise campaign funds.

#### IV. Campaigning

- A. The terms “campaign,” and “campaigning,” refer to any communication, physical, electronic, or otherwise, which attempts to persuade eligible voters to support any candidate for elected position, or any position on referenda. The collection of signatures on nomination papers is considered campaigning. Campaigning can occur up until polls close.
- B. The Student Court reserves the right to declare “campaign free” zones. These zones may expand during polling hours and all candidates will be informed of the boundaries of the zone and will be given advance notice of when all campaign materials shall be removed. Permanent campaign free zones include:

1. All public spaces of Housing and Residential Education buildings, excepting the Community Center
  2. The Student Government Association Suite and Offices, including the hallway starting at the bottom of the ramp leading to the doors outside the Christie Theatre leading to Mary Ann Cofrin Hall, including the Pride Center and the Office of Student Engagement Center suites.
  3. All faculty and staff offices
  4. All Academic Classrooms
    - i Academic Classroom Definition- a room where classes are taught in a school, college, or university.
  5. General Access Labs
  6. Computer Kiosks
  7. Library 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> floor
  8. Library Commons and Learning Center of the Library 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- C.** All campaign materials must have an “Authorized and Paid for” statement placed upon it, specifying the authorizing candidate and the funder of the campaign material.
- D.** All campaign materials (including but not limited to print materials, posters, banners, chalking, and table tents) must comply with University Police and University Union policies.
1. University Police policies can be found here: <http://www.uwgb.edu/university-police>
  2. University Union policies can be found here: (see promotions/vendors/solicitation policies) <https://www.uwgb.edu/union/marketing/poster-posting-policies/>
  3. Residence Hall posting policies can be found here; (policy # 5) <https://www.uwgb.edu/housing/living-on-campus/policies/>
- E.** Any person seeking to cite their membership in any student organization for endorsement purposes must first gain approval from that organization. Organizations that contest a candidate’s approval to use membership for endorsement purposes may file an election complaint with the Court. No student organization may endorse a candidate until all members of the organization have taken a majority vote in favor of the candidate.
- F.** Any person holding office in the Student Government Association, or Residence Hall and Apartment Association may not use their title in a way that implies SGA or RHAA endorsement of a specific candidate or referendum position. This includes all forms of social media.
- G.** Candidates may reserve Green Bay campus spaces and University Services using only the Student Government name (SGA), or Residence Hall and Apartment Association (RHAA) organizational affiliation. Both banner space reservation may begin on the

date of candidate certification. Election related materials must be removed not later than one week after the date of election.

- H. Whiteboarding is defined as, “the act of writing material on any white board on campus, including those in the classrooms.” The only acceptable forms of whiteboarding are as follows: Announcements describing election events. The following are unacceptable forms of whiteboarding: any wording implying or stating names of candidates or tickets running for Senate, Chair of Location Campus Affairs, campus specific President/Vice President, and RHAA President or Vice President.” The Student Court has the right to interpret this rule in ways it sees fit and necessary. Student Court has the right to enforce an infraction or penalty.

## V. Infractions

- A. Infractions will be divided into major and minor infractions. The Court will investigate all allegations of infractions, and if warranted, may impose a penalty ranging from a warning to disqualification of a candidate ticket or a total vote reduction of a referendum position.
1. In the event of major SGA, RHAA, or Senate campaign improprieties intended to garner votes illegally, the Court may impose a penalty of disqualification on a ticket. A major infraction or any three (3) minor infractions will be considered a major impropriety. Repeated minor infractions of the same nature may be reviewed by Student Court to determine severity. Minor infractions may result in a small vote deduction, to be determined by the court. Any disqualification may only be enacted through a unanimous vote of the Student Court after a proper investigation.
  2. In the event of major referendum campaign improprieties intended to garner votes illegally, the Court may impose a penalty of a deduction of a percentage of votes cast for or against a referendum position. Penalties impacting the voting totals must be based on a demonstrated willful disregard of elections rules contained herein and may only be enacted through a unanimous vote of the Student Court after a proper investigation. The penalty structure shall be a 5%, 15%, or 30% reduction in the vote count for a referendum position depending on the severity of the infraction, left to the discretion of the court.
  3. Only the findings and decision of the Court will be documented in the minutes of the Court meeting at which such decision is rendered.
- B. The following infractions are examples of actions that are prohibited by the Student Court during the SGA elections:
1. Minor Infractions
    - a. Failure to place “Authorized and Paid for” statement on any literature, signage, or any other mass communication.
    - b. Non-compliance with University Police, Housing and Residential Education or University Union policies.

- c. Campaigning in a “Campaign Free” zone.
- d. Non-compliance with campaign finance rules (Discrepancies up to \$30).

## 2. Major Infractions

- a. Citing any title of membership in any student organization in a manner appearing to endorse any candidate or position without the express consent of the student organization.
- b. Refusal or repeated failure to appear in front of the Student Court upon request.
- c. Intentional destruction of an opponent’s campaign materials.
- d. Coercion of Votes.
  - i This includes physical campaigning behavior that disrespects the voters right to privacy.
- e. Non-compliance with campaign finance rules (discrepancies above \$30 or failure to submit documents).

## C. Complaints

All complaints must be submitted on the [Student Court’s authorized complaint form](#) no later than 24 hours from the time of the alleged incident. The Student Court will review minor infractions within three (3) business days and major infractions and repeated minor infractions within five (5) business days. The Court is the sole venue of remedy for any challenge, problem or discrepancy with the ballot, vote, tally, or certification of SGA election.

## VI. Referendums

### A. Notice

1. Any group or individual that wishes to include a referendum question on the SGA election ballot must present a draft of the referendum question to the Student Court not less than forty-five (45) calendar days prior to the election.
2. The Court will ensure that the referendum question is clear and unbiased and is compelled to approve or amend the wording of the question without changing its spirit or intent. The approved question will be returned to the initiator within five (5) business days of being submitted.
3. A referendum petition that includes the verbatim Court-approved referendum question and has been approved by the initiator must be returned to Court no less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to election.
4. The Student Body will be made aware by the Dean of Students Office of all ballot referendums no less than 10 business days prior to the election.

### B. Campaigning

1. Individuals or parties that petition and campaign for a referendum issue are required to abide by all campaigning rules stated above.

2. The petition process will be conducted consistent with all campaigning rules and procedures as stated herein.

#### C. Neutral Statement

1. It shall be the duty of the Student Court to issue an unbiased statement to the student body not less than ten (10) business days in advance of the election. The statement will include the verbatim referendum question(s) that will appear on the ballot and a neutral and unambiguous statement of the consequences of a “No” vote and a “Yes” vote.

### VII. Election Mechanics

#### A. Polls

1. The polls will be open continuously for two consecutive days beginning at 9:00am on the first day of the election and closing at 4:30pm on the second day.
2. Only members of the Student Court may conduct SGA elections and prepare the ballot.

#### B. Vote Verification

1. The final vote must be verified by the Student Court.
2. All recorded votes (ballots, printouts, etc.) and all candidate materials (nomination papers, campaign resource reports, etc.) will be stored in a secure place for 30 days after the election, after which time they may be destroyed.
3. Complaints and infractions that may result in vote deduction will be acted on prior to tally and verification of the vote.

#### C. Declaration of Election Results

1. After calculating any possible infraction deductions, the candidate or referendum position that obtains a simple majority of votes cast will be declared winner.
2. In the event of a tie, a runoff election will take place between the two tickets with the most votes. The Court will determine the date and time of the runoff election.
3. If a tie in the runoff election occurs the Student Court will have a recorded vote to determine the winner. A winner will be declared by a simple majority vote from the Student Court. If there is a tie within the Student Court, the Chief Justice will cast a vote to break the tie.
4. The outcome of the election will be reported solely by the Court and stated formally to the SGA.

### VIII. Election Rules Modifications

- A. Modifications to the election rules may be made by a 3/5 vote of the Student Court and a 2/3 vote of the SGA Senate.



- B. No modifications may be made to the election rules after election materials have been officially made available to the student body.