



ELECTION PROTOCOL

ARTICLE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. This Title shall be known, and may be cited, as the Student Government Association “Election Protocol.”

Section 2. The purpose of the Election Protocol is to define, regulate, and clarify the campaigning process of the Student Government Association for all eligible candidates.

- A.** The campaigns for the Student Government Association shall be run according to the Election Protocol.
- B.** The Elections Committee shall have the power to interpret and apply this Protocol.
- C.** The Director of Senate shall administer election processes in a manner that allows for a fair and just electoral process which provides each qualified candidate with an equal opportunity to campaign for an elected office;
- D.** If a candidate has any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the Protocol, then they shall seek clarification from the Director of Senate.
- E.** All aspects of the Election Protocol including the rules, regulations, and procedures of campaigning apply to a candidate’s campaign efforts both on- and off-campus.
- F.** All candidates seeking office and their volunteers shall be responsible for reading and adhering to the Election Protocol and its guidelines prior to the start of campaigning.

ARTICLE II. THE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Elections Committee shall exist to enforce the Election Protocol policies and guidelines and work to resolve any election concerns while maintaining their position as fair and impartial arbitrators. It shall also serve as the first hearing and sanctioning body if an alleged violation of the Election Protocol by a candidate arises.

Section 2. Membership

- A.** The Elections Committee shall be composed of the Director of Senate and at least three (3) other members of the student body who do not hold a position in SGA. Members will be recommended by the Director of Senate and approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate;

- B.** The Elections Committee has the authority to;
- i.** Interpret and apply the election governing documents to ensure the elections run as fair as possible.
 - ii.** Enforce the Election Protocol and regulations agreed to in the candidate packet.
 - iii.** Disqualify or sanction candidates who violate the Protocol from the current ongoing election as well as potential future elections, subject to individual review.
- C.** The Elections Committee has the following responsibilities;
- i.** Maintain confidentiality before, during, and after each election hearing and meeting.
 - ii.** Gather information and conduct a hearing within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving a formal written notice of an alleged election violation.
 - iii.** Complete duties as assigned by the Director of Senate.
 - iv.** Conduct all of these actions with fairness and impartiality.
- D.** Removal from Office, Suspension and Filling of Vacancies;
- i.** The Senate shall have the sole power to remove from office on grounds of nonfeasance or malfeasance of any member of the Committee. A Senator, member of the Executive Council, Director of Senate, or the SGA Advisor(s) may put the Committee member on the agenda and lead the discussion and a Senator must make a motion to vote on the removal. Removal is passed with a majority vote of the Senate.
 - ii.** If the Director of Senate is removed or unable to complete their term of office, the position will be appointed according to Article VII, Section 1, part H of the Constitution).
 - iii.** If any member of the Elections Committee would like to run in an election, they must provide written notice of resignation to the Director of Senate no fewer than two (2) academic weeks prior to the beginning of the filing period. They may be reinstated by a simple majority vote of Senate after the election is validated.
 - 1.** If the Director of Senate would like to run in an election, they must provide written notice of resignation to the Executive Council. Their position will be filled as specified in Article VII of the Constitution. The original Director of Senate may be the permanent replacement as specified in Section G.
 - iv.** If at any point the Elections Committee has fewer than three members, not including the Director of Senate, the Director of Senate must propose new members at the next Senate meeting.
- E.** Oath of Office;

i. The Student Government Association Director of Senate shall administer the following oath to each member of the Elections Committee. The oath must be taken before the commencement of each member's respective duties: *"I, (name), do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the duties and responsibilities entrusted to me by virtue of my office, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and enforce the Constitution, By-Laws, and the Election Protocol of the Student Government Association at Chapman University."*

Section 3. Committee Action

A. Unless otherwise provided, the Elections Committee may take action only at a meeting with quorum and a simple majority vote. Should a decision need to be made in a more timely manner and the Committee is unable to find a time to meet, virtual or asynchronous discussion and voting may be permitted.

B. Two-thirds of the entire Committee membership shall constitute a quorum.

i. If a decision must be made virtually, every member of the Elections Committee must provide input.

C. Decisions will be made by a simple majority vote. Each member shall cast one vote, excluding the Director of Senate, who shall vote only in the case of a tie.

ARTICLE III. CANDIDATES

Section 1. The positions available for annual election are the SGA President, Vice President, and Senator.

Section 2. The term of office for the President, Vice President, and Senators begins the last Friday of April, and continues until the last Friday of April of the following year.

A. The First-Year Senator will take office at the conclusion of the Fall Election.

Section 3. President, Vice President, all ten (10) Academic Senators, the Sophomore Senator, Junior Senator, Senior Senator, At-Large Senator, and the two (2) Student Organization Senators will be elected in the Spring semester. The First-Year Senator will be elected in the Fall semester, in addition to any seats left vacant from the Spring Senatorial election.

Section 4. The qualifications for candidates seeking office in the election shall include the eligibility requirements as defined by the SGA Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 5. Senate Seats:

A. Academic Senators (1 per school/college);

i. Must have a declared major within the school/college to seek office.

B. Class Senators (4 total);

- i.** For Spring general elections, class year will be determined by the expected number of credits completed at the end of Spring semester.
- ii.** For Fall general elections and any special elections, class standing will be determined by the current number of completed credits.
- iii.** First-Year students shall be classified by fewer than 30 credits; Sophomore students shall be classified by 30 to 59.9 credits; Junior students shall be classified by 60 to 89.9 credits; Senior students shall be classified by 90 or more credits. In the case of special circumstances, a candidate may contact the Director of Senate for classification and approval.

C. Student Organization Senators;

- i.** Must be a member of a student organization recognized by the Department of Student Engagement in order to seek office.

D. At-Large Senator;

- i.** Must be in good standing with the University in order to seek office.

E. If a Senate seat is not filled by an election, the position will remain open until it is filled. During the next election taking place that term, the empty position will be available. During all subsequent elections taking place that term, the empty position will be available as an At-Large seat.

Section 6. Write-in Candidates

A. If a write-in candidate would like to be considered in an election, they must notify the Director of Senate in writing no later than 5:00 pm on the penultimate day of voting.

B. Write-in candidates are not required to attend the candidate meeting or submit a candidate bio or summary. Any questions regarding elections or campaigning should be directed to the Director of Senate.

Section 7. Any candidate that is also a member of SGA must recuse themselves from their election-related duties for the duration of the election.

ARTICLE IV. CAMPAIGN RULES, REGULATIONS, AND DEFINITIONS

Section 1. Campaigning is defined as:

A. Utilizing any type of print, electronic, or social media and marketing strategies to promote a specific candidate or belief.

- i.** All activity on behalf of campaigns will be treated as if they were initiated and endorsed by the candidate.

Section 2. Restrictions

- A.** No campaigning is permitted before the first day of the Campaigning Period
 - i.** Candidates may create campaign materials prior to the Campaigning Period.
 - ii.** Candidates may privately coordinate with their volunteers prior to the Campaigning Period
- B.** At all times, the candidate must abide by the Student Conduct Code, Housing and Residence Life Policies, this Election Protocol, the Student Government Association governing documents, and specific policies within the candidate packet and will request others to do likewise.
- C.** Campaigns may not use any copyrighted materials unless written permission was expressly given by the right holder;
- D.** At no time may a candidate bribe or threaten persons in order to procure votes, or require any individual to commit beyond their own free will to vote or support a particular candidate or issue;
- E.** Candidates shall not behave in a manner that challenges the of the election process, including providing inaccurate information about other candidates or the election process, or requesting others to do so.
- F.** No one shall access the voting portal using another student's login information;
- G.** The use of the SGA logo in campaign materials is not permitted.
- H.** Candidates must not miss class for campaigning purposes.
- I.** Candidates may not be present within the same private room while another student is utilizing the online voting system.
 - i.** A private room includes, but is not limited to, residence hall rooms, suites or apartments, and any other room the voting student has ownership over.
- J.** Candidates may not provide a computer or other device capable of voting to students with the intent of encouraging people to vote.
- K.** Campaigning is prohibited in any computer lab and in Leatherby Libraries.
- L.** Campaigning is prohibited within the general vicinity of any public polling place unless approved by the Director of Senate.
 - i.** A public polling place is defined as any polling station set up by the Student Government Association or any university-owned computer logged onto the online voting system during the election period.
- M.** In the event a student lives with another student who is eligible to vote, they cannot be present in their room when their roommate is voting.
 - i.** Campaign materials may be stored in the candidate's residence hall, apartment, or private room.
- N.** No campaigning of any kind may be done through mass phone calls to the student body.

O. In the event that information in the candidate packet conflicts with the regulations of the Election Protocol, the rules and regulations of the Election Protocol shall govern.

Section 3. These forms of campaigning are expressly permitted by the SGA Operating Documents. Other forms of campaigning may also be permitted.

A. Candidates may create social media groups and events for campaigning purposes. Statuses and profile pictures are also acceptable forms of campaigning.

B. Candidates may create websites promoting a candidate's position, viewpoints, and opinions.

C. Candidates may create podcast stations

D. Pamphlets, newsletters, flyers, and bulletins are all acceptable formats of campaigning, but must be no larger than 8 1/2 x 11". Any of these materials are permitted to be hung/distributed according to University posting policy. Any print larger than 8 1/2 x 11" will be considered a poster.

E. Posters are permitted but cannot exceed a 36" x 36" size and can be hung according to University Posting Policy.

F. Individual pieces of print media cannot be combined together to create a larger message or poster.

G. The use of chalk for campaigning is permitted as long as the proper procedures for using the chalk on campus property as stated in the University Posting Policies are followed.

H. All candidates who wish to utilize print media in the Residence Halls or Residence Life area must adhere to the Residence Life Posting Policy.

I. Guidelines for all print media:

i. No candidate materials may be placed over another candidate's materials. No candidate materials may be placed in Argyros Forum 303.

ii. Any campaign materials that harm or destroy campus property will be considered a violation of the Election Protocol and the candidate will be responsible for full restitution. The restitution fees will be considered campaign expenses, and if the amount results in a candidate spending more than allowed, the candidate shall be disqualified.

iii. No defacing of opposing candidate's materials will be permitted.

iv. All postings and publicity materials must follow the Posting Policy.

Section 4. The Director of Senate may assist candidates in scheduling and coordinating various other forms of campaigning.

A. Candidates may coordinate with the Director of Senate to hold meetings, town halls, and otherwise (including meet and greets), in which they discuss their

positions and promote their candidacy for office, as long as they follow the correct Facility Use and Event Policy.

B. Candidates may hold meetings in Residence Halls or Residence Life areas when approved by the Resident Director of the Residence Life facility in/around which they wish to hold the meeting. If a session is to be held outdoors, the candidate must follow the correct Facility Use and Event Policy.

ARTICLE V. GENERAL ELECTION TIMETABLE

Section 1. The order of events for any regular campus-wide election,

- A.** Selection of Election-related dates and deadlines
- B.** Announcement of Elections
- C.** Filing period
- D.** Mandatory Candidate Meeting
- E.** Declaration Period
- F.** Campaigning begins
- G.** Posting of Official Ballot
- H.** General Election
- I.** Unofficial Announcement
- J.** Post-Election Deadline

Section 2. Selection of Election-related dates and deadlines

A. All deadlines and dates that are relative to filing, campaigning, and Election Day for the Student Government Elections shall be declared by the Director of Senate;

B. The election time frame shall span at most fourteen (14) calendar days, beginning with the last day of filing and ending one (1) academic day after the final election results have been announced;

i. Fall Senator elections shall take place no later than the fourth week of classes of the Fall semester.

ii. Spring Senator elections shall take place no later than four (4) academic weeks before finals week.

iii. Elections for the President and Vice President shall take place no later than nine (9) academic weeks before finals.

iv. The Director of Senate and a majority vote of the Elections Committee may decide to extend the filing period by no more than five (5) academic days.

C. Once the dates have been set, the Director of Senate will immediately deliver this information to campus media channels, the SGA President, the Vice President, and the Director of Public Relations.

Section 3. Announcement of Elections

A. The Director of Senate, in conjunction with the Director of Public Relations, shall issue appropriate widespread campus announcements, including but not limited to postings on the SGA website, broadcast emails, flyers, or advertisements at least ten (10) days prior to the opening of the filing period for the election,

i. In the case of a Special Election, campus announcements must be issued at least three (3) days prior to the opening of the filing period.

B. The announcements shall include the following;

i. Positions to be filled in the election

ii. Dates for the opening and closing of filing

iii. Time and place that a person may file for office

iv. Dates of the election

v. Name and contact information of the Director of Senate

Section 4. Filing Period

A. Candidates may apply to run in an election during the Filing Period by electronically submitting a candidate packet via the platform indicated by the Director of Senate with all required supporting documents by the filing deadline;

B. The Filing Period shall be open for a minimum of five (5) academic days, opening no fewer than fourteen (14) calendar days before the first day of voting.

C. The names of the candidates who have filed and qualified for election shall be open to the public at all times.

D. The candidate must sign or electronically submit the candidate packet; an official representative may not sign or electronically submit it on the candidate's behalf. No signatures by proxy will be allowed.

E. Candidates must submit a completed campaign packet via the platform and the specified date indicated by the Director of Senate to be eligible to have their names placed on the ballot.

F. After the closing of the filing period, the Director of Senate and SGA Advisor(s) shall verify each individual candidate's qualifications for running based on their academic and conduct standings;

i. All candidates must be able to serve the full term of office after the election.

ii. Candidates can either be full-time or part-time undergraduate students during their term of office.

G. After any amendments, the official list of qualified candidates will be posted on the SGA website. Appeals to the qualifying candidates may be filed during this time.

Section 5. Mandatory Candidate Meeting

- A.** The mandatory candidate meeting shall be held on the last Friday of the Filing Period.
- B.** The topics of the candidate meeting shall include, but are not limited to, the following;
 - i.** The Election Protocol
 - ii.** University Posting Policy
 - iii.** Election Schedule
 - iv.** Structure and Functions of the Student Government Association
 - v.** Duties and responsibilities of the elected officers of SGA
 - vi.** Review of campaign strategies
- C.** Attendance at the candidate meeting is mandatory for all running candidates.
 - i.** Failure to attend or send a proxy to the candidate meeting could result in sanctions and/or disqualification as deemed appropriate by the Elections Committee.
 - ii.** If the candidate cannot be in attendance, the candidate must send a proxy and notify the Director of Senate in writing that they will have a proxy and who that proxy will be at least one (1) hour before the scheduled meeting.
- D.** The Director of Senate shall have the power to host additional informational sessions during the filing period if necessary.

Section 6. Declaration Period

- A.** The exact date and time of the Declaration Period shall be determined by the Director of Senate but shall conform to the following:
 - i.** The Declaration Period shall run from Friday at 3:00 PM to Monday at 5:00 PM
- B.** During the Declaration Period, candidates must declare which office they will be seeking by completing the Required Acknowledgement of Election Code Form.
 - i.** The Required Acknowledgement Form can be found on the SGA website or by contacting the Director of Senate.
- C.** Candidates running for President and Vice President may run as a ticket by providing written notice to the Director of Senate during the Declaration Period
 - i.** A ticket may pool together their resources. Therefore, the ticket is entitled to four hundred dollars (\$400) of campaign finances.
 - ii.** The ticket will only file one joint Campaign and Expense Report.
 - iii.** Candidates will be listed together on the ballot.

Section 7. Campaigning Period

A. The exact date and time of the Campaigning Period shall be determined by the Director of Senate but shall conform to the following:

i. The Campaigning Period shall run from Tuesday at 8:00 AM to Friday at 8:00 am unless otherwise approved by the Elections Committee.

B. Candidates may campaign as described in Article IV of the Election Protocol during the Campaign Period.

Section 8. Voting Period

A. The exact date and time of the Voting shall be determined by the Director of Senate but shall conform to the following:

i. The Voting Period shall run from Friday at 8:00 AM to Wednesday at 5:00 pm unless otherwise approved by the Elections Committee.

B. Candidates may campaign as described in Article IV of the Election Protocol during the Voting Period.

Section 9. Unofficial Announcement of Results

A. Regardless of complaints or appeals, the unofficial results of the General Election shall be announced by the Director of Senate after the election closes.

i. The unofficial winner of each election shall be the candidate that received the most votes.

Section 10. Post-Election Deadline

A. All campaign materials must be removed from campus by the Post-Election Deadline (24 hours after voting closes). Failure to comply will be referred to the Elections Committee.

Section 11. Campaign and Expense Report

A. For campaign purposes, candidates are permitted to spend no more than one hundred dollars (\$100) if running for Senate and two-hundred dollars (\$200) if running for President or Vice President. Any donations must be cited on the Campaign and Expense Report for the value and deducted from the overall allotted budget.

B. Candidates must submit a complete and signed Campaign and Expense Report to the Director of Senate by the Post-Election Deadline (24 hours after voting closes) in order to be reimbursed up to the allotted spending amount.

C. Candidates must submit the Campaign and Expense Report even if the amount spent on the campaign was zero dollars (\$0).

D. The Student Government Association will refund up to one hundred dollars (\$100) for Senate candidates and two hundred dollars (\$200) for President and Vice President candidates.

E. Candidates may not be reimbursed for campaign materials involved in violations of the Student Conduct Code, Housing and Residence Life Policies, this Election Protocol, the Student Government Association governing documents, and specific policies within the candidate packet.

ARTICLE VI. ELECTION RESULTS

Section 1. General Election Results

A. For a candidate to be elected into any seat, the election must have met a designated minimum percentage of eligible voter participation.

i. The minimum eligible voter participation for the following elections shall be ten percent (10%) for each position: President and Vice President.

ii. The minimum eligible voter participation for the following elections shall be five percent (5%) for each position: Student Organization Senators, Academic Senators, Class Senators, and the At-Large Senator.

B. Should an election's voter participation fall under the minimum threshold due to extenuating circumstances, the election may be validated with both the approval of the Director of Senate and a majority vote of the Elections Committee.

C. For the Student Organization Senator positions, the top two (2) candidates with the highest voting percentage shall be elected.

Section 2. Validation of General Election Results

A. If no complaints or appeals are registered by the Post-Election Deadline (24 hours after voting closes), all election results shall be deemed final.

Section 3. Run-off Election

A. In the case of a tie, the two (2) candidates that tied shall be in a Run-off Election.

B. The Run-off Election shall be held within three (3) to six (6) academic days after the General Election.

C. The Run-off Election shall consist of a single voting period, run in the same manner as in Article V, Section 8 of the Election Protocol.

D. The Post-Election Deadline for the Run-off Election shall be 24 hours after voting for the Run-off Election closes.

E. The unofficial results of the Run-off Election shall be announced in the same manner as the results of the election.

F. If no complaints or appeals are registered by 5:00 PM within one (1) academic day after the announcement of the Run-off Election results, all election results shall be deemed final.

Section 4. Declination of Position

A. After election results have been announced, elected candidates shall be informed via email that they have until the Post-Election Deadline (24 hours after voting closes) to notify the Director of Senate if they choose to decline their position. Failure to notify the Director of Senate of their acceptance of the position shall be considered a declination.

Section 5. Change of Eligibility Status

A. In the event that an elected candidate becomes ineligible before the start of their term, the runner-up candidate will be offered the position. If there are no runner-up candidates or the runner-up declines the position, another election will be scheduled.

ARTICLE VII. VIOLATIONS

Section 1. Reporting Violations

A. For candidates or other students who wish to report an infraction of the Election Protocol by a candidate, they need to file a complaint form with the Director of Senate by email within twenty-four (24) hours after gaining knowledge of the alleged infraction in order for the case to be heard by the Elections Committee.

B. The Director of Senate is required to report election violations and to ensure that a complaint form is filled out and forwarded to the Elections Committee within twenty-four (24) hours of gaining knowledge of any alleged infractions, either firsthand or via email.

C. The Elections Committee is required to gather information and conduct a hearing within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving a formal written notice of an alleged election violation.

i. If quorum cannot be met, written votes submitted by email may be considered, as long as every committee member submits a vote. Written votes must be submitted within twenty-four hours of receiving a formal written notice of an alleged election violation.

D. The Director of Senate is required to notify the parties involved via email of the results of any hearings within twelve (12) hours.

E. All members of the committee must maintain confidentiality before, during, and after each election hearing and meeting.

F. Complaint forms can be found on the SGA website.

G. In the event that a complaint is filed after the election results have been validated, the Judicial Review Board shall hold a hearing as described in Article II of the SGA Bylaws.

Section 2. Penalty for Violations

A. Penalty for any of the above violations will be at the discretion of the Elections Committee. Sanctions may include but are not limited to:

- i.** Formal warnings
- ii.** Public apologies or retractions
- iii.** Written letters demonstrating understanding of policy restrictions
- iv.** Cleanup of materials distributed incorrectly
- v.** Disciplinary Review Status
 - 1.** While under Disciplinary Review, candidates must meet with a member of the Election Committee or their designee to discuss their violation before they may resume campaigning.
 - 2.** This meeting must be scheduled within twelve hours of the decision.
 - 3.** While on Disciplinary Review, further violations may result in disqualification at the discretion of the Elections Committee.
 - 4.** Candidates not on Disciplinary Review may be disqualified only in cases where the violation is severe enough to have influenced the outcome of the election.

B. Any potential violations of the conduct code will be sent to the Dean of Students Office for review.

Section 3. Process of Appeal

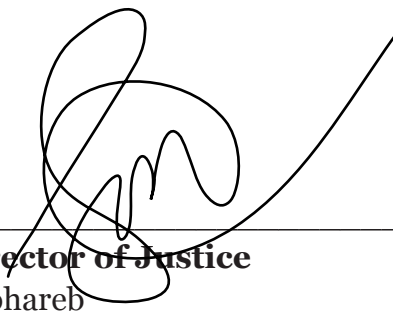
A. If the Elections Committee has deemed a candidate as violating the Election Protocol and has decided upon an appropriate sanction or disqualification, an involved party may appeal the decision or sanction to the Student Government Association Review Board, hereinafter referred to as the SGA Review Board.

- i.** The appeal must come within one (1) academic day after the Elections Committee's decision is announced.
- ii.** The SGA Review Board will hear any fairness challenges to the original decision made by the Elections Committee and will serve as the appellate body for the Election Protocol violation cases.
- iii.** All candidates affected by the decision of the Elections Committee may file for appeal.
- iv.** The decision made by the SGA Review Board within three (3) academic days will be final and no other appeals may be filed. By this deadline, the decision must be communicated to the candidate and Director of Senate via email.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. In order to alter the Election Protocol, the amendment must be approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate.

Section 2. Powers not specifically defined in the Election Protocol are reserved by the Director of Senate and Elections Committee.



SGA Director of Justice
Sarah Mohareb



SGA President
Eric Hall