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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

ELECTIONS MANUAL

TABLE OF CONTENT

TITLE I. ELECTIONS AND RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

Chapter 1. Committee Purpose
Chapter 2. Committee Jurisdiction
Chapter 3. Committee Composition
Chapter 4. Committee Member Rules

TITLE II. HOMECOMING RULES AND ELECTIONS

Chapter 5. Eligibility
Chapter 6. Nominations
Chapter 7. Election Process
Chapter 8. Rules

TITLE III. SGA ELECTIONS RULES AND PROCEDURE

Chapter 9. Qualifications
Chapter 10. Election Timeline
Chapter 11. Apportioning
Chapter 12. Rules for Candidates
Chapter 13. Campaign Material
Chapter 14. Endorsements
Chapter 15. Ballot and Voting
Chapter 16. Special Elections

TITLE IV. RULES VIOLATIONS

Chapter 17. Protocol

TITLE V. DOCUMENTS

TITLE I. ELECTIONS AND RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

Chapter 1. Committee Purpose

1.1 The SGA Elections and Recruitment Committee shall ensure honest, fair, open elections for all who are involved. In upholding its responsibility to the Student Body, the committee will endeavor to hold candidates to the highest level of accountability for their actions or actions on their behalf, using the Elections Manual as a guide. All candidates and their volunteers shall be responsible for knowing its contents. Any questions concerning this code shall be addressed directly to a member of the committee or the committee chair.

1.2 The committee shall post election results to the UNA website and official SGA Instagram after each election. https://www.una.edu/student-government/elections.html The Flor-Ala shall as expeditiously as possible be informed by an Elections and Recruitment Committee member of the election results.

1.3 The committee oversees publicizing the opening of positions that the SGA President will fill by appointment and approval by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present of the Senate.

Chapter 2. Committee Jurisdiction

2.1 The committee will oversee its members and potential candidates following rules established in the Elections Manual and amending the manual yearly. A simple majority of the Senate must approve all changes made to this manual by the committee.

2.2 The committee will oversee Homecoming Elections, SGA Officer Elections, Senator Elections, Referendums, Special Elections and recommend appointees to the SGA President.

2.3 The committee shall also establish election procedures for validating the qualifications of a candidate, conducting the elections, and enforcing the election laws shown in the Elections Manual.

2.4 It is the responsibility of the Committee to supply the election rules to the candidates who will sign up for receipt of such rules. Any candidate who does not sign acknowledging receipt of these rules will be ineligible to run in the election.

Chapter 3. Committee Composition

3.1 The Elections and Recruitment Committee shall be composed of at least three (3) members including the Chair.

3.2 The President of SGA shall serve as an ex-offico member of the committee.

3.3 The Elections and Recruitment Committee shall work together to oversee each election: Homecoming, SGA Officers, SGA Senators, and, if necessary, Referendums and Special Elections.

3.4 In the event the committee member becomes a candidate, they cannot utilize advantageous circumstances within the affairs and work of the committee during their campaign. The Elections Chair may designate a proxy to oversee the respective election.

Chapter 4. Committee Member Rules

4.1 Committee members not running in an election shall be prohibited from campaigning for any candidates during the respective election. Campaigning includes, but is not limited to, verbal endorsements, posting campaign images on social media, wearing a candidate's apparel, or passing out flyers/media related to a specific candidate. Committee members are permitted to participate in any election as a student voter but are expected to keep their preferences private so as to not influence fellow constituents.

4.2 No member of the Elections Committee, including the President, may be involved in any work of that committee for or during any election in which they are running for office. Members of the committee are permitted to run for senate or an elected officer position under specified conditions. Committee members running for SGA elections may not have access to the declaration of candidacy submissions, oversee the scheduling or location of the candidate debate, create or view debate questions for their respective panel, participate in the tabulation of student votes, or utilize any other advantageous circumstances via the affairs of the elections and recruitment committee. These responsibilities may be delegated to a committee member who is not running in the election or the SGA advisor.

4.3 With regards to enforcing the election regulations, the committee will: Assess campaign violations and keep specific, written reports of all violations. These include who committed the violation, what the violation was, where the violation occurred, who assessed the violation, and the date of violation.

4.4 Following an alleged violation, a committee member must report the occurrence to the Judicial Branch for further review and, if found to have committed a violation, notify the candidates in writing concerning the specific violation(s), which they committed.

TITLE II. HOMECOMING RULES AND ELECTIONS

Chapter 5. Eligibility

5.1 Students who are enrolled full-time, who are currently enrolled at the University of North Alabama, and are classified as a Junior or Senior, may be eligible for nomination.

5.2 To be nominated for Homecoming Court, a nominee must have a cumulative institutional grade point average of 2.5.

5.3 No previously elected Queen or King, or student serving on the Elections and Recruitment Committee shall be eligible.

Chapter 6. Nominations

6.1 All registered student organizations in good standing with the Office of

Student Activities and Leadership Development shall be eligible to nominate one (1) candidate for Homecoming Queen and/or one (1) candidate for Homecoming King.

6.2 Students that are not nominated by an organization may qualify as a nominee by submitting a petition of fifty (50) signatures and UNA Emails of currently enrolled University students to the Student Government Association (GUC 163B). Students must use the official petition form provided by SGA to obtain their signatures. This can be found on the official SGA website. The deadline for petitioned nominees to be submitted shall be the same as the deadline for organizations nominees to be submitted. Nominees must be clear with students on what they are signing.

6.3 If a student is nominated by more than one (1) organization, the student will be able to select which nomination to accept. An organization has the option to submit another nomination if a student accepts another organization's nomination.

6.4 The nomination form shall be completed online. The form will be available three (3) weeks before the Monday of Homecoming until the Monday two (2) weeks before the Monday of Homecoming. In extenuating circumstances, paper nomination forms shall be present in the Student Government Association Office (GUC 163B).

Chapter 7. Election Process

7.1 Elections for Homecoming King and Queen shall be a two-vote process. All nominees will be on the first ballot to determine who shall make it on homecoming court. After the first round of voting, the top five (5) in each category will make it on the homecoming court for the next ballot. The second round of voting will determine who on the homecoming court will be the Homecoming King and Queen. The person receiving the highest number of votes in each category will become the Homecoming King/Queen.

7.2 The first round of voting will take place one week before homecoming. The second round of voting will be during the week of Homecoming.

7.3 Each ballot will open at 8:00 a.m. and close at 5:00 p.m.

7.4 The polls will open for a three (3) day period beginning at 8:00 a.m. on the first day and ending at 5:00 p.m. on the third day.

7.5 The designated Elections Committee member shall be responsible for publishing the ballot. Should he/she be nominated for the Homecoming Court, then a member of the Elections and Recruitment Committee, appointed by the Chair, is responsible for publishing the ballot.

7.6 The SGA President, Senate Pro-Tempore, Elections and Recruitment Chair (and/or committee designee), and SGA Advisor must be present at a vote tabulation at the end of the election to confirm the election results. Should any of the following individuals be candidates in the respective election or unable to attend, a non-participating SGA member may act as proxy.

Chapter 8. Rules

8.1 Campaigning

8.1.1 The Selected Homecoming candidates shall be allowed to campaign digitally until the Homecoming Court is announced.

8.1.2 The selected Homecoming Court shall be allowed to campaign both digitally and physically starting the day that the Homecoming court is announced.

8.1.3 The selected Homecoming Court shall be allowed to campaign both digitally and physically starting the day that the Homecoming court is announced.

8.1.4 Candidates are expected to run a fair, truthful, and respectable campaign.

8.1.5 Untruthful or misleading statements, and offensive or obscene images are not permitted during campaigning.

8.1.6 SGA is not liable or responsible for any untruthful or offensive statements made about candidates by other candidates, students, or employees of the University.

8.1.6a Candidates are not allowed to remove, cover, or deface other candidates' campaign materials.

8.1.6b If a candidate and/or their volunteer(s) is found to have maliciously done anything mentioned in 8.1.9, the candidate shall be referred to the Judicial Branch who will then make a recommendation for what shall be done.

8.1.7 Campaigning may not occur in any way that disrupts classes.

8.1.8 No campaigning of any type will be allowed in the Student Government Association Chambers. This includes the obtaining of signatures and the distribution of campaign material.

8.1.9 Candidates are not allowed to formulate new mobile group chats or email chains for campaigning purposes unless prior consent is given by each person to receive self-promotional materials prior to said group chat and/or email chain's creation

8.2 Campaign Material

8.2.1 A candidate's campaign material must comply with UNA Housing and Residence Life and all University policies.

8.2.2 All campaign material must be free of any untruthful, misleading, discriminative, or obscene statements or images.

8.2.3 No campaign material shall be distributed among or placed on, utility poles, statues, monuments, sidewalks, steps, bike racks, trees, chain guards, windows, painted walls, or bushes.

8.2.4 Campaign materials must be removed by the deadlines posted for the current campaign period.

8.2.5 The deadline for each campaign period shall be three (3) school days after said election.

8.2.6 Failure to comply with 8.2.5 will result in a $50 fine.

TITLE III. SGA ELECTIONS RULES AND PROCEDURE

Chapter 9. Qualifications

9.1 SGA Officer Candidates must qualify per Chapter 100 of the Student Government Association Code of Laws.

9.2 SGA Senate Candidates must qualify per Chapter 101 of the Student Government Association Code of Laws.

Chapter 10. Election Timeline

10.1 Elections for both SGA Executive Officers and SGA Senators shall occur simultaneously.

10.2 Elections shall occur two (2) weeks prior to Spring Break every year.

10.3 An application and declaration of candidacy statement for SGA Executive Officers and SGA Senators shall be available at least five (5) weeks prior to the election and must be submitted at least four (4) weeks prior to the election. Failure to submit the application and declaration of candidacy statement will disqualify a candidate from participating in the election. Candidates may only submit one declaration of candidacy form. Should a candidate decide to change the respective position they are seeking election for, their previous declaration is to be deleted and will not be placed on the ballot. They must then declare candidacy again prior to the submission deadline.

10.4 Candidates for SGA Senate must submit verification of their enrollment in a specific college and/or verification of intent to enter a specific college along with their declaration of candidacy before being placed on the ballot. The transcript data section of a student's unofficial transcript or other photographic demonstration of a student's current enrollment shall serve as verification.

10.5 If only one (1) candidate is declared for an executive office, no election for that office will be necessary.

10.6 Those newly elected officers and Senators shall assume office on the last Monday prior to final examinations.

Chapter 11. Apportioning

11.1 The Student Senate shall be composed of 30 voting Senators, 25 of which are elected. The 25 elected seats shall be apportioned based on the percentage of students each Academic College holds in regard to the total number of enrolled students. If the percentage of Senators does not result in a whole number, numbers containing a decimal value of .5 or above shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number, and numbers containing a decimal value below .5 shall be rounded down to the nearest whole number. In addition, members of the SGA Executive Branch are to be part of the Student Senate as non-voting members, including the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Chief of Staff, Historian, Communications Director, and Diversity & Inclusion Advocate.

11.2 Apportionment is to be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate at least four (4) weeks prior to the election based on enrollment numbers from the previous spring semester.

11.3 Any Collegiate Senator that changes their major during their term shall remain qualified for their seat so long as they do not change academic colleges. If a Collegiate Senator does not retain their enrollment in the academic college that they represent, they shall fill any open seat as a General Senator, leaving their previous seat open to a presidential appointment. Should a candidate change their academic college mid-campaign, they should be placed on the ballot they will be potentially representing for their elected term.

Chapter 12. Rules for Candidates

12.1 Campaigning

12.1.1 Campaigning may begin four (4) weeks prior to the beginning of the election.

12.1.2 A candidate may not begin campaigning until they have declared candidacy and attended a pre-campaign meeting that clearly communicates the procedures, expectations, dates, and rules of the elections process. This meeting shall occur the week before campaigning starts on the following Monday. In the event a candidate cannot attend a scheduled in person meeting; individual or virtual meetings may be held by any member of the committee.

12.1.3 Candidates are expected to run a fair, truthful, and respectable campaign.

12.1.4 Untruthful or misleading statements, and offensive or obscene images are not permitted during campaigning

12.1.5 SGA is not liable or responsible for any untruthful or offensive statements made about candidates by other candidates, students, or employees of the University

12.2 Candidates are not allowed to remove, cover, or deface other candidates' campaign materials.

12.3 If a candidate and/or their volunteer(s) is found to have maliciously done anything mentioned in 12.2, the candidate shall be referred to the Judicial Branch who will then make a recommendation for what shall be done.

12.4 Campaigning may not occur in any way that disrupts classes.

12.5 Candidates are not allowed to use newly formed mobile group messaging unless prior consent is given by each person.

12.6 No campaigning of any type will be allowed in the Student Government Association Chambers. This includes the obtaining of signatures and the distribution of campaign material.

12.7 All prospective candidates are required to attend the annual SGA Candidate Debate which is to be held and overseen by the Elections and Recruitment Committee prior to the final day of voting. Prospective candidates are not required to participate in the debate but must be in attendance. Should a candidate be unable to attend due to illness, prior commitments made before the announcement of the debate, or conflicting schedules, they are to notify a member of the committee no later than the night before the debate with verification of their absence and, with committee approval, may be excused from the debate.

Chapter 13. Campaign Material

13.1 A candidate's campaign material must comply with UNA Housing and Residence Life and all University policies.
https://www.una.edu/housing/resources/policies.html
https://una.edu/events/docs/current/policies/advertising_on_campus.pdf

13.2 All campaign material must be free of any untruthful, misleading, discriminative, or obscene statements or images.

13.3 No campaign material shall be distributed among or placed on, utility poles, statues, monuments, sidewalks, steps, bike racks, trees, chain guards, or bushes.

13.4 Campaign materials must be removed seven (7) days after the election ends.

13.4b Failure to comply with 13.4 will result in a $50 fine.

Chapter 14. Endorsements

14.1 No facility on the University campus may be used in support for any one candidate without making the same facility available to all candidates. Permission cannot be granted exclusively to any one candidate for the distribution of material.

14.2 No candidate can ask for the support of any employee of the University (faculty, staff, or administration) in any capacity of their campaign

14.3 No candidate may accept 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 off-campus place of business. Candidates found in violation will be referred to the Judicial Branch for action.

14.4 No current SGA Officer may endorse or promote a specific candidate unless that officer is running for election, in which case they may promote themselves. In the event a current officer is running for president or vice-president, they may then also endorse their running mate

14.5 If a candidate and/or their volunteer(s) is found to have violated anything found in Chapter 14, the candidate shall be referred to the Judicial Branch who will then make a recommendation for what shall be done.

Chapter 15. Ballot and Voting

15.1 Candidates' names will appear on the ballot in alphabetical order by last name.

15.2 The polls will open for a three (3) day period beginning at 8:00 a.m. on the first day and ending at 5:00 p.m. on the third day.

15.3 Officer and Senator Elections shall be done online.

15.4 The SGA President, Senate Pro-Tempore, Elections and Recruitment Chair (and/or a designee), and SGA Advisor must be present at a vote tabulation at the end of the election to confirm the election results. Should any of the following individuals be candidates in the respective election or unable to attend, a non-participating SGA member may act as proxy.

15.5 A simple majority (which is to be defined as 50% plus one (1) vote) of the total votes cast is necessary to win any of the elected SGA Executive Offices.

15.6 Collegiate Senate Candidates shall be ranked in order of votes received from highest to lowest. Based upon this ranking, candidates for Senate receiving the most votes shall be elected to represent their college.

15.7 Students shall have the same number of votes as they have Senate seats in their academic college. The number chosen shall be equal to the apportioned senate seats for each college.

15.7.1 In the event of a tie in the number of votes received by candidates for Senate seat that results in a college surpassing the apportioned seats for that college, a tie will be broken by a run-off election.

15.7.1 In the event of a tie in the number of votes received by candidates for Senate seat that results in a college surpassing the apportioned seats for that college, a tie will be broken by a run-off election.

15.8 Withdrawal from Campaign

15.8.1 If a candidate wishes to withdraw from an election, they must do so by meeting with a member of the Elections and Recruitment Committee, in person. Should a withdrawn candidate's name be inadvertently placed on the ballot, they shall be considered to have withdrawn and to be thus ineligible to win the election. Votes for this candidate will not be counted.

15.3 Runoffs

15.3.1 In case no candidate receives the majority necessary to win, a runoff election will be held one (1) week after the initial election began.

Chapter 16. Special Elections

16.1 A Special Election will be held if an office or position is not filled because all the candidates seeking that office are disqualified or because there are no candidates running for that office.

16.2 Applications for this special election will be taken by the Elections and Recruitment Committee for two (2) weeks preceding the campaigning start date for a special election date set by the Elections and Recruitment Committee.

16.3 The special election shall not be more than four (4) weeks after the first day of application acceptance.

16.4 Campaigning for the special election can begin after the mandatory campaign meeting.

16.5 A Special Election will also be held if the SGA Advisor determines that the said election(s) is/are sufficiently tainted. Following such an occurrence, the SGA Advisor must provide sufficient evidence and/or explanation to the Senate to verify credibility of these allegations.

16.6 If there is only one qualified candidate for a Special Election, the SGA President may appoint the candidate with two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present of the Student Senate.

TITLE IV. RULES VIOLATIONS

Chapter 17. Protocol

17.1 The candidate's campaign must comply with the rules of the most recently updated Elections Manual.

17.2 Violations will be filed with the SGA Judicial Branch.

17.3 The Judicial Branch will not hear a violation if any part of the form is incomplete,

marked “anonymous,” or contains false information.

17.4 An extended investigation into violations may be necessary if the candidate violates local, state, or federal law.

17.5 If a violation is filed against a candidate, that candidate will be notified by e-mail.

17.6 Any violation may result in (but not limited to): removal of campaign material; disqualification of the candidate from the election; all actions deemed appropriate by the Judicial Branch committee

17.7 Failure to comply with the decisions of the Judicial Branch may result in further penalties and/ or disqualification.

TITLE V. DOCUMENTS

All required documents and forms are available online at una.edu/sga.