

# HSGSA ELECTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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## **ARTICLE I — AMENDMENT PROCEDURES**

1. This Policy and Procedure Manual may be amended at a meeting of Council with a regular majority.
2. Any proposed amendments to this document must be circulated one week prior to the Council meeting.
3. Any ratified changes to this document must be made available to the membership by electronic means within one week of the changes being accepted.
4. No changes may be made to this document during the election period; this period runs from the first day of nominations until the ratification of the results by Council.

## **ARTICLE II — RELEVANT BYLAWS**

1. This Policy Manual applies to Article IV and V of the Association's Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE III — CRO Selection and Role**

1. The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) shall be selected by the Elections Committee and will serve as the Chair of the HSGSA Elections Committee. The HSGSA CRO will remain in their position from their appointment to the changeover of all Executives. They will act as HSGSA CRO for any General Election, By-Election and Referendum.
2. The HSGSA CRO shall be responsible for the undisturbed execution of the HSGSA election process, including overseeing publicity prior to nominations, upholding rules and regulations surrounding campaigning, upholding rules and regulations for all voting procedures and providing judgement on infractions and appeals.
  - a. The Executive and Elections Committee shall publicize the opening and closing dates of the General Election nomination period through an email sent to all members of the Association two weeks prior to the nomination period. This email must have a suitable document attached to be posted in each department. The CRO should be ratified (approved) in the council meeting.
  - b. The CRO shall publicize the days of the Voting Period, the locations of polls, if in person voting, and the times they are open through an email sent to all members of the Association.
  - c. The CRO may further, at his/her option, publicize the GSA General Election in any way it deems fit, provided no material favors or disfavors any one candidate in any way.
  - d. The CRO with help from the Election Committee shall organize a minimum of one (1) All- Candidate Forum during the Campaign Period.
  - e. No member of the Elections Committee may participate in the election as a candidate or campaign volunteer. Should any individual on the Elections Committee engage in any campaigning, they will be immediately removed from their position on the Committee.
  - f. The CRO must respond to questions and requests by e-mail within 24 hours.
3. The HSGSA CRO will liaise with the CRO of the GSA election and maintain communication throughout the election process.
4. CRO will provide the copy of approved receipts and reimbursement form to the Finance committee no later than a week after elections.

5. The CRO and Election Committee conduct must be impartial, not providing confidential information to any candidate or slate, including current Executives.

#### **ARTICLE IV — NOMINATIONS**

1. Any Member of the Association in good standing may run for any Executive position, except the current HSGSA CRO and members of the Election committee membership; any member of the HSGSA may run for any UMGSA Executive position.
2. Any member of the Association is not allowed to run for any executive position for more than two consecutive years.
  - a. Except if the position remains vacant by the end of the nomination period.
3. A student member shall be nominated by ten (10) members of the Association; the student must collect signatures from these individuals on the official nomination form. When running in the HSGSA Executive Election, the candidate must be nominated by members of the HSGSA; when running in the UMGSA Executive Election, the candidate may be nominated by any GSA member, including HSGSA members.
4. During the nomination period, no campaigning is to occur.
5. Completed nomination forms must be submitted to the CRO by email or in person, who will date-stamp and verify its completeness. The CRO will hold a mandatory “candidates meeting” within the next 48hrs.
  - a. Individual candidates must notify the CRO at least 24 hours prior to all candidates meeting of which position they are running for. After notifying the CRO, candidates will not be allowed to switch and run for another position unless a position is announced as vacant by the CRO in the event of not receiving any nomination for that position.
  - b. Soon after the all candidates meeting, the CRO will electronically post a complete list of individual candidates and slates so that all members of the Association can access the information.

6. The nomination period shall coincide with the UMGSA nomination period, as indicated in the UMGSA Election Policy and Procedure Manual (Article VI, 4).
  - a. If the above is not possible, the HSGSA Election Committee may recommend an alternative nomination period for approval at Council.
  - b. The nomination period may be extended by the HSGSA Election Committee without approval from council if its extension will not interfere with the election timeline set forth by the UMGSA.
7. All candidates shall attend the “All Candidates Meeting” in its entirety. The CRO may exempt individuals from attendance under extenuating circumstances, but only if the person requesting an exemption does so in writing at least 24 hours prior to the All Candidates Meeting or informs the CRO of an emergency for which no notice could reasonably be given. Failure to attend in “All Candidates Meeting” without a valid reason may subject the candidate to disqualification.
8. The CRO and election committee are not allowed to nominate a candidate for the HSGSA election by signing the nomination form.
9. Slate formation rules
  - a. Slates are defined as a group of more than one candidate whose nominations have been accepted and have decided to campaign together for the election.
  - b. Slate memberships can only be decided prior to the campaign period upon the approval of CRO.
  - c. The CRO must be notified of the formation of the slate (including slate name and membership) prior to campaign period.
  - d. Any candidate may join a slate of two or more members, so long as this occurs prior to final notification to CRO of slate formation before the campaign period.
  - e. CRO will approve the slate names on a first come first serve basis.
  - f. No candidate may simultaneously run as part of more than one Slate.

## **ARTICLE V — CAMPAIGNING**

1. Campaign Period
  - a. The campaign period shall coincide with the UMGSA campaign period, as indicated in the UMGSA Election Policy and Procedure Manual (Article VI).
    - i. If the above is not possible, the HSGSA Election Committee may recommend an alternative campaign period for approval at Council.

- b. Campaigning shall not take place prior to the official campaign period

## 2. Campaigning Options

- a. All forms of advertising by any campus media;
- b. The distribution of any material designed and/or likely to influence voters;
- c. Any electronic information (web pages, blogs, email, social media)
- d. Posters/banner or displays;
- e. Speeches and public communication shall only take place with the authorization of the election committee, the instructor, and/or meeting organizer, i.e. journal club, academic meetings.
- f. Any candidate or campaign volunteers that are members of the sitting Executive are required to take a leave of absence for the duration of the campaign period and voting period.

## 3. Campaign materials

- a. All campaign material must be approved in form and content by the CRO prior to distribution. CRO will have the final say on the appropriateness of specific campaigning material. Material will not be approved in the case it:
  - i. Violates the federal or provincial statute;
  - ii. Is factually incorrect. Sources must be provided for factual materials;
  - iii. Contains libel or slander;
- b. All campaign material must be removed by 9:00 CST on the day following the completion of the voting period. Penalty for non-removal will be decided by the Election committee and CRO.
- c. Printed Campaign Material
  - i. Printed campaign material is defined as any poster, flyer, handout, banner, written on paper/poster board etc., which announces, advocates or promotes a given candidacy or slate.

- ii. Each candidate running will be allotted 50 - 8 1/2 x 11 free photocopies (i.e. 50 - 8 1/2 x 11 impressions) from the Elections Committee for their written campaign material. Copies will conform to the following specifications: white paper, with black ink only. Receipts must be submitted for reimbursement of photocopying expenses.
- iii. Campaign material will not be placed directly on walls or windows of facilities or areas not under control of the HSGSA, unless the space is granted by the controlling organization (such as student council or departments) and equal space is provided to all candidates.

d. Electronic Campaign Material

- i. Electronic campaign materials are defined as emails, social media posts, and web pages which announce, advocate and promote a given candidacy or slate.
- ii. No emails referring to the election shall be sent out by the candidates to the HSGSA members.
- iii. The CRO will be solely responsible for sending out two unsolicited emails representing all candidates to the graduate students list during the campaign period. The email will be sent out at CRO's discretion.
- iv. Web pages and/or social media accounts must be approved in form and content by the CRO prior to the launching of the site. No changes may be made to the material posted without prior approval of the CRO.

e. Social Media

- i. Use of social media, as defined by the CRO and elections committee, during the campaign period will be at the discretion of CRO. Media Campaign Material
- ii. Media campaigning is defined by the CRO but can be broadly defined as newspaper articles, newspaper ads, letters to the editor, radio and television commercials, radio and television interviews which announce, advocate or promote a given candidacy or slate.
- iii. All advertising will be limited to free of charge services. No paid advertising is allowed.

4. Campaign Volunteers

- a. A Campaign Volunteer is defined as an individual who is not running for office, but is actively engaging in the process of campaigning for a particular

candidate or slate.

- b. All campaign volunteers must be registered with the CRO. All campaigning by volunteers is subject to GSA election rules. The candidate/slate is responsible for the actions of their campaign volunteers.
- c. All volunteers must familiarize themselves with this Manual, as well as the Association's Bylaws.
- d. If campaign volunteers are found to be engaging in campaign tactics which are in violation of the election rules the candidate/slate which they campaigned for will be held responsible and face penalty, and possible disqualification.

#### 5. Campaign Budget

- a. Each presidential and vice-presidential candidate will have a campaigning budget as approved by the council. The approved budget will be equally divided amongst the candidates with a maximum allowable budget of \$60. When a slate is formed, budgetary resources can be pooled accordingly.
- b. Each candidate not running with a slate can claim up to \$20 worth of travel expenses (i.e., bus tickets, parking tickets and mileage) and each slate can claim up to \$40 in total of the travel expenses (e.g., bus tickets, parking tickets and mileage).
- c. All expenses are to be approved by the CRO and elections committee beforehand.
- d. Receipts for purchases must be provided for reimbursement of expenses no later than a week after elections.
- e. Campaign spending is restricted to the budget provided by the HSGSA and should be divided depending upon the number of candidates.

### **ARTICLE VI — PENALTIES AND DISQUALIFICATION**

1. Any candidate or slate found violating the rules of campaigning or in another way attempting to undermine the election process may face penalties.
2. Penalties to a candidate or slate are administered at the discretion of the CRO and Elections Committee.
3. The CRO must consult only with the Elections Committee prior to determining a penalty. In case of doubt or questions about procedures, the Executive must not be consulted, if the Executive are also candidates. If necessary CRO can consult with previous CROs or UMGSA CRO

4. Penalties include, but are not limited to (in order of severity as determined by the Elections Committee):
  - a. Shortening of campaigning period
  - b. Requiring public retraction
  - c. Reduction of financial reimbursement from campaigning
  - d. Disqualification
    - i. A candidate or slates should only be disqualified for gross and willful violation of the rules. If another penalty can be found that will rebalance the election process without disqualifying the candidate, it should be pursued.
  - e. A candidate or slate must be informed of the penalty within 48 hours of the CRO being alerted to the violation.

#### **ARTICLE VII— VOTING**

1. Voting shall take place over the two (2) days following the closing of the campaign period.
2. Polls will be open from 9:00 AM CST on the first day of voting and will close at 5:00 PM CST on the final day of voting.
3. Voting shall be conducted online. Computers and technical support will be provided in the UMGSA Office for a minimum of four (4) hours each day during the voting period. Office hours will be kept by the CRO and/or members of the Elections Committee.
4. Results
  - a. The ballots shall be tabulated through the online voting system and the number verified by the CRO and members of the Elections Committee. The candidate receiving the greatest numbers of votes shall be declared elected. Tie votes and prospective winners by acclamation will be considered by Council according to Article XII of this Manual.
  - b. Results will be kept for a maximum of five (5) days after the ratification of the election, and then the memory wiped if no recount or appeal is called for or ballots shall be kept by the corporation providing the online voting software. In the Elections for GSA Senators, the Senate Elections Rule, supersede the above rules in the event of a disagreement.
  - c. In the case of a single candidacy, if the “NO” votes exceed the Number of



“YES” votes, the position shall remain vacant and a by-election shall be held.

### **ARTICLE VIII — APPEALS**

1. Individual candidates, slates or voters may lodge a complaint concerning election procedures or results by submitting a written statement to the CRO either during the election, or within five day of the ratification of the election. The CRO must rule on the appeal within forty- eight (48) hours. Any decisions made by the CRO will be reported and explained to Council; the Council then has the authority to overturn the decision, should there be cause. However, Executives and Councilors that are also candidates are ruled out from participating on the appeal.

### **ARTICLE X — RATIFICATION**

1. Council shall ratify the results of the election at the meeting immediately following the counting of the ballots. The CRO will provide a report of actions taken, any incidents of violation or appeal, and a listing and justification of any rulings made. The Elections Committee shall present the full vote-count and subsequent results. Unless there is due cause to call into question the election results, the Council will ratify the results.

### **ARTICLE IX — BY-ELECTIONS**

1. Any position vacated prior to October 1st will be filled by a by-election. Council will have the ability to appoint someone in the interim.
2. Any Member of the Association in good standing may run for any Executive position; a member of the HSGSA may run for any GSA Executive position.
3. A student is nominated by ten (10) members of the HSGSA; the student must collect signatures from these individuals on the official nomination form. When running in the HSGSA Executive Election, the candidate must be nominated by members of the HSGSA; when running in the GSA Executive Election, the candidate may be nominated by any GSA member.
4. Completed nomination forms must be submitted to the CRO, who will verify its completeness.
  - a. The CRO will hold a mandatory “candidates meeting” on the closing day of nominations.
  - b. The CRO will post a complete list of candidates in print and electronically in a forum all members of the HSGSA can access within twenty-four (24) hours of the close of the nomination period.
5. The nomination period shall be ten (10) days prior to the opening of the campaign period.

- a. The Executive and Election Committee shall publicize the opening and closing dates of a By- Election nomination period two weeks prior to the opening of the By-Election nomination period through an email sent to all members of the HSGSA, all departmental secretaries and the graduate program chairs of all departments containing health sciences graduate programs. This email is to have attached to it a suitable document to be posted in each department.
  - b. Nomination Forms will be made available at the announcement of a By-Election.
  - c. The Election Committee shall ensure that Nomination Forms are freely distributed to all departments.
  - d. Nomination Forms will remain available in the Office of the HSGSA until the close of the Nomination Period.
  - e. To be nominated, ten (10) members of the HSGSA must sign the candidate's Nomination Form.
  - f. Nomination Forms shall be submitted to the HSGSA Office or CRO email.
  - g. No Nomination Forms shall be accepted outside of the Nomination Period.
6. The Campaign Period shall be ten (10) days beginning the Monday following the close of the nomination period.
  7. Campaign materials and volunteers must follow the same guidelines as listed in VI.2 and VI.3

#### **ARTICLE X — TIES AND COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS**

1. Any position vacated on or after October 1st shall be filled for the remainder of the year through appointment.
  - a. The Executive shall make a recommendation to be voted on by Council.
  - b. Any executive appointment will require a 2/3 vote of the quorum.

#### **ARTICLE XI — REFERENDA**

1. Referenda shall be initiated by:
  - a. A resolution of the Executive; or
  - b. A resolution passed by two-thirds (2/3) of Council; or
  - c. A petition signed by at least thirty (30) members of the HSGSA.
2. Referenda questions shall be phrased by the Executive Committee. However, where a

referendum is initiated by petition, the phrasing shall not alter the original intent of the petition.

3. At least two (2) weeks public notice of any referendum shall be given.
  - a. No voting shall take place from May 1 – September 1, December 15 – January 15 or during Reading Week.
4. For the purposes of campaigning, the two sides of the Referenda shall be considered ‘candidates’ and expenditure and campaign rules will follow the regulations listed in Articles IV.2 and IV.3.
5. Referenda balloting shall be organized by the Elections Committee. Council shall not have the power to void a valid referendum which is held in accordance with the By-laws.
6. In the event that a referendum involves less than the required quorum of eligible voters, being five percent (5%), the results shall be considered advice to Council that is in no way binding.