



Election Rules

Policy Information

Date Established: May 17, 2019

Date Last Updated: April 10, 2024

Category: Student Association

Section 1: General Rules; Authority and Applicability

- (a) The Elections and Credentials Chairperson (“E&C Chair”) shall have the authority to enforce these Rules.
- (b) The E&C Chair may create and enforce additional rules so long as they are not inconsistent with these Rules or the Bylaws, in order to ensure a fair and impartial election. Notice of any new rules shall be promptly given to all candidates.
- (c) The E&C Chair shall, at their discretion, have the authority to extend any deadline in these Rules in the interest of justice.
- (d) These Rules shall govern elections for University at Buffalo Student Association Inc. (“SA”) Officer and Senator positions only.

Section 2: Responsibilities and Qualifications

- (a) All candidates shall be responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with these Rules, and ensuring their staff and supporters read, understand, and comply with these Rules.
- (b) Members of SA must be in academic good standing as determined by the University to: run for elected office; serve in elected or appointed office; serve through one’s elected or appointed term; or do any or all of the foregoing. Officers must be full-time students.

Section 3: Petitioning

- (a) The SA President shall determine when petitions shall become available and the deadline when petitions are due.
- (b) To appear on the ballot in an election, an otherwise-qualified Member of SA must:
 - (1) Obtain a petition from SA, in the manner determined by the E&C Chair;
 - (2) Obtain the name, UBIT name, University person number, and valid signature of at least the following number of Members of SA, in the manner determined by the E&C Chair:
 - (A) In an election for SA Officer positions: 100 signatures;
 - (B) In an election for SA Senator positions: As stated in the SA By-Laws;
 - (3) Return the petition to SA, in the manner determined by the E&C Chair; and
 - (4) Attend the SA mandatory candidate meeting, at the time and in the manner determined by the E&C Chair. The E&C Chair may approve alternative arrangements to meet this requirement, at their convenience and discretion.
- (c) The E&C Chair may declare duplicate or illegible names, UBIT names, University person numbers, signatures, or any or all of the foregoing invalid.

Section 4: Campaigning

- (a) Any candidate or their supporter who holds a position in a student government, club, or other organization at the University at Buffalo shall not use such position to benefit their or the candidate's campaign.
- (b) No University or mandatory student activity fee funds or resources (including but not limited to SA club, SA, or University email listservs or social media) shall be used in campaigning for or against any specific candidate. The preceding sentence shall not prohibit SA from advertising the election itself or prohibit the E&C Chair from providing presentation opportunities that are available to all SA election candidates. SA Officers, Senators, Clubs Council Coordinators, and employees found to have violated Section 5(b) of these Rules may face consequences under Sections 8.01, 4.01(a)(vi), 6.02(b), and 5.02(e)(iii), respectively, of the SA By-Laws, as well as any other applicable provision.
- (c) The E&C Chair may (but is not required to) organize one or more forums for SA election candidates to present their platform publicly, at the E&C Chair's convenience and discretion. Such forum(s) must be open to all candidates.
- (d) SA Clubs shall neither host independent forums for nor endorse candidates.
- (e) Candidates are reminded that they and their supporters must comply with all applicable rules and regulations imposed by the University or any other body and may face penalties from said body for violations of those rules.
- (f) If an SA club is found by the E&C Chair, by a preponderance of the evidence, to have violated any of these Rules, the E&C Chair may impose a fine of \$100.00-\$750.00 per violation of these Rules, either out of the current fiscal year's club budget or the next fiscal year's club budget if the current year's club budget does not have sufficient funds.

Section 5: Voting

- (a) A candidate may choose to run in a party with other candidates.
 - (1) A candidate running in a party shall have their party name appear next to their name on the ballot, subject to these Rules.
 - (2) A candidate shall declare their intent to run in a party at the time and in the manner determined by the E&C Chair.
- (b) A candidate who does not choose to run in a party with other candidates may choose a series of characters to appear next to their name on the ballot, which shall be declared at the time and in the manner determined by the E&C Chair.
- (c) The characters that appear next to a candidate's name, whether a party name or series of characters:
 - (1) Shall not violate the law;
 - (2) Shall comply with any character limitations as determined by the E&C Chair; and
 - (3) Shall not be the same as any previous party's name used within the preceding year, unless proof of permission of over 50% of the party members who previously used the party's name is provided to the E&C Chair by the time by which candidates must declare their intent to run in a party.
- (d) The order in which candidate names shall appear on the ballot shall be determined by random drawing, at the time and in the manner determined by the E&C Chair.
- (e) Each Member of SA may vote once per election during the voting period. SA Member status may be verified according to methods established by the E&C Chair or the University.
- (f) Voting in an election shall occur by:
 - (1) Online voting, through a website administered by the University; or

- (2) Paper ballot, if the foregoing is impracticable or impossible.
- (g) If voting occurs by online voting, the results of the election shall be the results provided to SA by the University.
- (h) If voting does not occur by online voting:
 - (1) There shall be no campaigning within fifty feet of any polling area, as determined by the E&C Chair; and
 - (2) The E&C Chair, SA Administrative Director or their designee, and any others chosen by the E&C Chair shall tabulate all ballots, to be verified by SA's attorney.
- (i) The results of an election shall be announced publicly within seven calendar days of the conclusion of voting, unless doing so is impracticable or impossible.