The Undergraduate Student Government

Election Rules, Procedures, and Guidelines

for the 2018-2019 Academic Year
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Section 1: Important Dates

Tuesday, March 5th, 2019: BTSU 227 @ 8pm--------Election Information Session

Wednesday, March 6th, 2019: BTSU 227 @ 7pm--------Election Information Session

Thursday, March 7th, 2019: BTSU 227 @ 5pm--------Election Information Session

Monday, March 11th, 2019: BTSU 314 @ 6:30pm------Election Information Session

Friday, March 15th, 2019: Petition is due by 5pm, submitted online **

Online Submission Requirements and Recommendations:
1. Candidate Information and Electronically Signed Election Rules/Procedures/Guidelines Agreement (Required)
2. Campaign Budget (Required)
3. Candidate Platform (100 words or less) (Optional)

Wednesday, April 10th, 2019: If budget was changed, FINAL copy MUST be in by 5pm**
Receipts for all items purchased and donated are due by 5pm** (Delivered to BTSU 401 – Chief Administrator’s Mailbox)

Wednesday, April 10th, 2019 USG Presidential/Vice-Presidential Debate
(ROOM AND TIME TBD)

April 15-18, 2019: ELECTION WEEK (Begins at 8am on April 15th and ends at 12pm on April 18th)

Friday, April 19, 2019: Results will be announced at 12:00pm in the Falcon’s Nest (Any technological difficulties will result in the results being announced April 22nd, 2019.)

ANY complaints/challenges must be filed within 48 hours of announcement.

**All Complaints and Challenges should be directed to Chief Administrator Remey Schneider, schneir@bgsu.edu**
Section 2: General Information/Background

The Undergraduate Student Government Mission Statement

The Undergraduate Student Government (USG) aims to serve as a bridge between students and the university administration as we advocate for the needs of our peers. Through collaboration and initiatives, we support our fellow falcons in the areas of academic success, wellness, safety, and engagement as we strive to build a welcoming community for students of all identities.

Section 3: Requirements for Candidacy

1. All candidates must attend one Election Information session. If a candidate has a time conflict with the Information Session dates, then candidate must make other arrangements with the Chief Administrator. Written documentation will be needed to show that all dates/times are conflicted.

2. Candidates must be full time undergraduate students, in good standing with the University, as outlined in the BGSU Student Handbook. Candidates must also have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5.

3. For senator positions, a candidate must reside among the constituents, or be a member of the college, he/she wishes to represent.

4. All candidates seeking senator seats in the General Assembly are required to submit a candidate information form.

5. Each President/Vice President ticket must submit a candidate information form.

6. As part of the online candidate information form, candidates digitally sign their petition for candidacy, by signing the petition, candidate agrees all information submitted is honest to the best of their knowledge.

7. ALL candidates must, via the Candidate Information Form, signify that they have read the election packet in its entirety. By digitally signing the Candidate Information Form, the candidate agrees to abide by this all rules, procedures, and guidelines included in this packet. Failure to abide by this packet will result in discipline which will be determined by the Procedures and Appeals Board. This is DUE by March 15th at 5pm online. By fulfilling these requirements, candidates will be permitted to appear on the ballot. **NO late submissions will be accepted. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

8. Candidates may turn in a statement of 100 words or less about their platform to be posted on the USG website. This is NOT a requirement, but rather an opportunity. **This is part of the Candidate Information Form.**
Section 3a: President/Vice President Requirements

1. Both the President and Vice President must complete one full academic year at this institution prior to holding office.

2. The President shall be responsible for upholding the Undergraduate Student Government Constitution. The President shall also execute the objectives of the USG as dictated by the Constitution and his/her administration as legislated by the Senate.

3. In the event that the office of President becomes vacant, the Vice President is to assume the duties of the President. In the event that the office of Vice President is currently vacated as well, then the Speaker of the Senate shall assume the duties of the President. In the event that there is neither a Vice President nor a Speaker, then an election will be held among the members of the Senate for the purpose of electing a Senator to the position. The Senator elected to obtain this position must win by a plurality vote.

Section 3b: Legislative Branch Duties

1. The legislative branch shall exercise all legislative functions of the Undergraduate Student Government under the provisions of the USG Constitution. The proceedings and actions of this branch shall be limited to legislative matters. Official actions and decisions of the legislative branch shall be valid only under the provisions of the Constitution.

2. All legislative authorities herein granted shall be vested in a Senate.

3. There shall be at least one Senate meeting held each month of the academic year.

4. All members of the Senate shall have the authority to propose legislation.

5. Any legislation passed through the Senate shall be forwarded to the President for his/her consideration.

6. The legislative branch shall operate through a committee system, chaired by a Senator, through which all legislation shall pass. The Senate shall have the authority to establish and govern the activities of such committees of its own membership.

7. The Senate shall elect from within its members a Speaker who shall preside over all meetings of the Senate, but shall have no vote unless the Assembly’s votes are equally divided.

8. The Senate shall be composed of Senators, elected by the student body as At-Large, On/Off Campus Population Districts, Academic College, Diversity Affairs, Honors College, and Non-Traditional.

9. Each Senator shall be granted one vote and only one vote, in the Senate.
10. A Senator must be a full-time undergraduate student with a 2.5 (cumulative) GPA, in good standing with the University as outlined in the Student Handbook, for the duration of his/her term, as calculated at the beginning of each academic term.

11. The Senate shall establish its by-laws by approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote no later than the fourth official meeting of the fall semester.

12. The Senate shall have the authority to extend this deadline by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

Section 4: Campaigning

1. Campaigning will officially begin after a candidate has attended an Election Information session presented by the Procedures and Appeals Board and submitted a completed Candidate Information Form online. Absolutely no campaigning shall be permitted before this time. **You will receive notification from the Chief Administrator as to when you have been approved to begin campaigning.** Candidates planning on speaking to student groups throughout the campaign are permitted to arrange appointments prior to the start of campaigning.

2. All rules of the student handbook, rules stated in this packet, as well as all university policies and procedures are in effect for the entirety of campaigning period.

3. Campaigning includes but is not limited to, the display and distribution of posters, flyers, banners, chalking sidewalk messages (a minimum of 20 feet from any University building), and other visual displays of candidacy, as well as speaking to any university group/organization or individuals. **Under NO circumstances will there be any chalking on any University building.**

   a. Sliding flyers under residence hall doors is strictly prohibited, no exceptions.

4. The use of the Undergraduate Student Government logo, letterhead, etc. is forbidden for campaign materials unless authorized by the Procedures and Appeals Board.

5. No campaign materials may be posted which intentionally demeans, harasses, or distresses on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, and/or age of an individual(s); or intentionally presents a clear and present danger of harm to individual(s) or to University operations.

   a. Posted material that does not comply with the above standards will be removed immediately and disciplinary actions will be sanctioned as necessary.

6. No political affiliation may appear on signs or literature except the listing of offices held in political organizations

7. The use of amplifying devices, including individual hall announcements, writing on buildings or sidewalks, posting signs on University greens, and placing more than one sign per side of a
kiosk or University bulletin board is prohibited in accordance with the specific sections of the Student Handbook.
   a. Candidate(s) may NOT post one’s own flyer/poster over another’s.
   b. Candidate(s) may NOT take down another candidate’s flyer/poster.

8. Door-to-door canvassing and campaigning in residence halls must be conducted in accordance to University Policy.

9. Quid-pro-quo campaigning is prohibited! (This includes but is not limited to the exchange or money, food, services, merchandise, or any other general goods for votes.) This rule is also in effect for the election of committee chairs, speaker of the senate, and appointed offices. Any quid-pro-quo campaigning will result in immediate removal from the ballot/office.

10. Use of false accusation, defamatory statements, or malicious activity is not permitted in campaigning.

11. Group campaigning is allowed. Senatorial candidates may campaign together and produce shared campaign materials. Senators may also campaign on a Presidential/Vice Presidential ticket.

12. There will be NO campaigning on the grounds of Dance Marathon, if elections are conducted during that time frame.

13. Candidates may reserve space/banner space under USG’s name with the Chief Administrator’s approval.

14. No organization can be created, titled with the President/Vice President or Senator’s name for the SOLE purpose of campaigning.
   a. A support group is still welcomed and encouraged.

15. Candidates may use supplies available to them from the Student Organization Paint and Poster Room located on the 4th floor of the Student Union as long as it is accounted for in the in-kind donation request (which must be approved by the Procedures and Appeals Board.)

16. A student may be a candidate for only one position in each election.
   a. Individuals running for President and Vice-President may also be write-in candidates for senator seats in which they are qualified to fill.

17. A student may hold only one position, either elected or appointed, at any time (except for senators serving on the Procedures and Appeals Board and Chairs).

18. Candidates are responsible for being aware of any rules and regulations regarding any type of election activities in the Student Handbook. Candidates in violation of any part of the Student Handbook may be disciplined by the University as well as face possible penalties by the Procedures and Appeals Board. For more information, go to http://www.bgsu.edu/student-handbook/policies-and-procedures.html.

19. All signs, postings, or any other campaign material MUST be removed by the
day after the conclusion of the elections at 5pm.
   a. Candidates are responsible for all signs that volunteers, recruited or otherwise hang on their behalf.

20. During voting (April 15-18) no candidate, for any office, may physically approach anyone to ask for votes. A candidate may not directly interact with someone who is in the process of voting.
   a. Because the voting process is conducted electronically, anyone utilizing an electronic device can be considered to be “in the process of voting.”

21. Candidates are urged to reserve any banner space they feel they may need at their earliest opportunity. USG will not be responsible for a candidate who is not able to reserve banner space.
   a. All banners must be posted in accordance with University policies.

22. Write-in candidates may not campaign in any form, except verbally. Campaigning using social media and print is forbidden.

23. Window splashes on the Pub windows in order to campaign is forbidden. A candidate is also not allowed to use another organization’s name to campaign by way of a window splash.

Section 5: Spending/Donations

1. All candidate(s) must create a budget. The budget needs to detail all expenses that candidate(s) expect to occur; this must be a realistic budget with exact pricing. The Procedures and Appeals Board will be going over each budget to make sure the candidate stays within their maximum spending allowance. Candidate must use budget sheet created by Procedures and Appeals Board.

2. Candidate(s) must keep all receipts and turn them in no later than the Friday BEFORE elections (April 10th) by 5pm. If there is a lot of discrepancy between the budget and receipts a hearing before the Procedures and Appeals Board will take place.

3. Each senatorial candidate is allowed to spend a maximum of $100. President/Vice President tickets will be able to spend $400 (or $200 for each candidate)
   a. Candidates can join on another ticket and combine their spending allowances, but this must be documented on the budget. All ticket members must be advertised on all materials if they join together. NO EXCEPTIONS.

4. All in-kind donations/contributions must be approved by the Procedures and Appeals Board prior to receiving the donation.

5. Candidates are allowed to seek “sponsors,” or “monetary donations” be it by student organization, individual support, or businesses, but each source of monetary donation will be capped at $50.00. Candidate may try to get as many donations as possible – up to their allotted
amount ($100 – senators, $400 president/vice; unless candidates are on the same ticket, then they may get up to that allotted amount.) These monetary donations DO count as part of the allotted amount that each candidate is allowed to spend. Candidates must maintain written proof of these monetary donations.

a. University Offices, Departments, and Divisions may not make monetary contributions/give donations to candidates or tickets.

b. Anything purchased for the SOLE use of the campaign must be documented in budget. Materials previously owned are not mandated to add.

6. No campaign is allowed to use money that is allocated by the Student Organization Allocation Board for materials and/or events. This money is reserved for student organizations.

Section 6: General Rules

1. Only undergraduate students registered for Spring Semester 2019 are eligible to vote in the USG elections.

2. Voting will occur online through student BGSU email (@bgsu.edu).

3. A polling place is considered to be any device (university or other) that has an Internet connection.

4. Election results will be announced on Friday, April 19th at 12:00pm in the Falcon’s Nest, unless otherwise noted.

5. The President and Vice President election will be determined by the President/Vice President ticket receiving the highest number of votes from the total number of ballots cast.

6. At-large senators will be determined based on the eleven candidates receiving the highest number of votes from the total number of ballots cast from that constituency group.

7. Off-campus senators will be determined based on the ten candidates receiving the highest number of votes from the total number of ballots cast from that constituency group.

8. Academic College senators will be determined based on the one individual from each college who receives the highest number of votes from the total number of ballots cast.

   a. This includes a senator to represent the Honors College.

9. Diversity affairs senators will be determined based on the four individuals who receive the highest number of votes from the total number of ballots cast.

10. Any challenges/complaints to the election must be filed within 48 hours of the announcement of the results.
Section 7: Debates

1. The Procedures and Appeals Board will organize a joint debate amongst all Presidential/Vice-Presidential tickets with a maximum of two debates.

2. The debate will be arranged at a date, time, and location that is most conducive to the candidates.

3. A member of the Procedures and Appeals Board or the group’s designee will moderate the debate.

4. The debate will be open to the campus community and media organizations.

5. Each candidate will be allowed five (5) minutes of introductory comments and five (5) minutes of closing comments.

6. A series of topics, selected by the Procedures and Appeals Board, will be used to generate questions for the candidates.

7. Each candidate will receive three (3) minutes to respond to each question. Following each President/Vice President ticket’s response, each ticket will receive one (1) minute for additional comments or rebuttal to points made by other candidates.

8. In order to allow each candidate the first response, questions will be asked in an alternating order. If time allows, questions will be taken from the audience.

Section 8: Violations of the Election Rules

1. Violations may occur in many forms. USG Information Sessions will be held to educate the candidates about USG, the election procedures, and campaign violations. We encourage candidates to run campaigns that are fair, honest, and honor the campaign procedures. If you see that something isn’t following procedure and know the issue is a violation, tell the candidate who is responsible, so that they may correct the problem. Complaints of violations will be turned in to the Chief Administrator’s mailbox in written form or via email to Chief Administrator Schneider at schneir@bgsu.edu within 24 hours of the incident. The person writing the complaint must have seen the action or the results of the action (i.e. posters). The violator will have exactly 24 hours to remove or repair the damage, unless further discipline has been decided by the Procedures and Appeals Board, then action will be dealt with accordingly. The greatest sanction can be removal from the ballot or removal from office, if elected. Depending on the situation, different measures may be taken. The decision of the Procedures and Appeals Board can be appealed to the Executive Board within (1) one week of the decision.
2. In order to save time and limit the number of dilatory/petty violations being filed, the Procedures and Appeals Board shall have the option to dismiss any minor first-time violation of a particular section for any candidate, without conducting a hearing.

3. If a violation occurs and a hearing is needed:
   a. The Procedures and Appeals Board members will always conduct themselves in a professional manner.
   b. The Procedures and Appeals Board members will dress appropriately for all hearings.
   c. The Procedures and Appeals Board members will refrain from discussing hearing details outside of the hearing.
   d. The Procedures and Appeals Board members retain the right to change hearing time/location as needed with notice to parties involved.

Election Rules/Procedures/Guidelines Agreement

Please Submit 2018-2019 Election Candidate Information Form on online

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