

ELECTIONS

THE PARTS OF AN ELECTION PROCESS

The election of officers can be a difficult process for organizations if past elections have been cluttered with bias, disorganization, or a lack of consistent rules and procedures. Depending on the size of your organization, you may want to create an Elections Committee to administer the process. You should have written policies and procedures for your election process described in your bylaws. These policies and procedures should be re-evaluated on a regular basis. Here are some of the areas you should address when defining your election process:

ELECTION COMMITTEE

- scope of power
- selection and removal process of members
- responsibilities

ELECTION SCHEDULE

- dates for filing and holding nominations
- dates for selection and runoff elections

OFFICERS AVAILABLE

- number and kind of positions

CANDIDATES

- qualifications for office
- nomination/filing procedure
- affiliation (coalition/party vs. independent)
- write-in procedures

BALLOTS

- order of candidate names

POLLS/VOTING SITES

- locations and times for voting (at a specified meeting or site)
- eligibility of voters (identification voters need to vote)

CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES AND MATERIALS

- conform to organization and university policies
- acceptable locations to campaign
- acceptable/unacceptable materials
- selection and removal process of members
- responsibilities

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- forms to report campaign expenditures (if spending limits apply)
- forms to report campaign activities

VOTE TABULATION

- who counts and how votes are counted
- number of votes to declare winner (majority, simple majority, plurality)
- ties and runoffs
- disqualification of ballots

CERTIFICATION AND AUTHORITY

- when and who certifies election
- partial certification
- annulment (reasons and process for new election)
- contested election (who can contest and how)

ENFORCEMENT OF ELECTION RULES

- violations/offenses and complaints (last date to submit complaint)
- process for deciding if violation has occurred (hearings)
- penalties

APPEALS

- who to appeal to and by when

RECALL/REFERENDUM/OTHER SPECIAL ELECTIONS

- when and how, if necessary

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Robert's Rules of Order provides the following guidelines for nominations and elections: A nomination is a motion that proposes that a person be elected to fill a specific position — "I nominate Jane Doe for Vice President of Club ABC."

METHODS OF NOMINATION

- By the Chair: It is more common for the chair to nominate and fill committee positions instead of an office.
- From the Floor: Any member may nominate someone. This process is often called open nominations.
- By a Committee: The nominating committee (chosen in advance) submits nominations.
- By Mail: This is the same as "by ballot" but is mailed to the members.
- By Petition: The member shall become a nominee upon the petition of a specified number of members.
- Methods of Election: Ballot election (two options): Nominations for all offices are taken and one ballot with all offices is distributed OR separate ballots for each office are distributed.
- Via Voice Election: Candidates are voted on in order of nomination; when one candidate receives a majority vote, no more votes are taken on the remaining nominees.
- Roll Call Election: A member, when called upon, declares vote for each office.