



The Student Senate

Texas A&M University


S.A. 73-11

Texas A&M University
The Student Senate
73rd Session


Annual Election Regulations Review Act

“An act to make changes to the Student Government Association’s Election Regulations after reflecting on two elections cycles occurring during the academic year.”

Action Taken 

Certified By: 
Zachary McCue
Speaker of the Senate

Date Passed: 04-14-2021

Duly Approved: 
Eric Mendoza
Student Body President

Introduced By: Cara Maxwell, Election Commissioner
Edith Anthony, Election Commission
Mack Cleveland, Election Commission
Aaron Dutka, Election Commission
Sarah Goodman, Election Commission
Kaitlyn Lovingfoss, Election Commission
Maddie MacArthur, Election Commission

Sponsored By: Meghan Hein, Rules and Regulations, COALS Caucus

Whereas(1): Every year, the Election Commission reflects on the Fall and Spring student body elections and reviews the Election Regulations in order to find discrepancies or unclear rules; and


Whereas(2): The Election Commission feels that co-candidacy rules provides no benefit to candidates and exist only as an administrative formality; and



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- Whereas(3):** The criteria by which an individual is determined to be a supporter of a candidate, assigning responsibility to the candidate for their actions, is too broad as currently written and does not account for the required consent for a “supporter” to represent the candidate and their campaign to solicit votes; and
- Whereas(4):** The term “campaign staff” is utilized in the election regulations, but not defined, and is synonymous with the definition of a supporter; and
- Whereas(5):** Expanding upon the definition of activities which can take place during the general campaign period can provide candidates with a more clear distinction between the pre-campaigning and general campaigning periods; and
- Whereas(6):** Some violations may result in disqualification, a punishment of unequal severity to the offense, and further specification is required to determine disqualifiable offenses; and
- Whereas(7):** Within the Election Regulations, there is a lack of clarity in the definition of major violation behavior; and
- Whereas(8):** The current fines for minor violations are disproportionate to the defined budgets for minor and major race candidates, warranting an increase of this fine amount for major race candidates; and
- Whereas(9):** The commission finds that minor violations may carry an unfair consequence for small infractions and would like to instead implement a warning system to alert candidates of these minor violations within their campaign; and
- Whereas(10):** In order to provide clarity for candidates running for election, the updated common violation table will now provide examples for disqualifiable offenses and minor offenses resulting in warnings; and
- Whereas(11):** After a scheduling conflict occurred between two campaign events (one was publicized by the Commission and one was not), it was found that there are no regulations in place to constitute how a campaign event becomes sponsored by the Election Commission; and
- Whereas(12):** The Election Commission believes that there is an unnecessary restriction on the use of photos of live animals as, or apart of, campaign material; and



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Whereas(13): Out of respect for the wellbeing and image of our university mascot and her handler, the Election Commission believes it is necessary to define the context within which Reveille can be used for campaigning; and

Whereas(14): To clarify the Election Commission’s regulation of electronic campaigning, a clear rule addition should be made succinctly summarizing the time period during which social media ads can be run; and

Whereas(14): Changes to co-candidacy warrant a minor change in the verbiage regarding a candidates’ ability to submit photocopied receipts; and

Therefore

Let it be

Enacted(1): The Election Commission looks to make the changes outlined below in order to create a more efficient election process for future student body elections; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted (2): V S.G.A.C. §101.3(2) (a)(iv)(I) be amended to read as the following:

(I) Any group of candidates running for ~~any office may file as co-candidates;~~ the class agent position may file as co-candidates to constitute a class agent team.

so it reads,

(I) Any group of candidates running for the class agent position may file as co-candidates to constitute a class agent team.; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(3): V S.G.A.C. §601.4(1) (b)(1) be amended to read as follows:

(1) Speaks ~~on behalf as a delegate~~ of the candidate, posts or shares material online ~~on the behalf as a delegate~~ of the candidate, holds banners, or distributes campaign materials ~~for as a delegate of~~ the candidate.

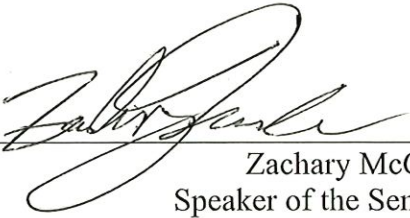
so it reads,



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- (1) Speaks as a delegate of the candidate, posts or shares material online as a delegate of the candidate, holds banners, or distributes campaign materials as a delegate of the candidate.; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(4): V S.G.A.C. §601.4(1) (b)(2) be removed:

~~(1) Publicly approves of a candidate by wearing apparel as defined by the Election Commission.; and~~

Let it be

Further

Enacted(5): V S.G.A.C. §601.4(1) (c)(1) be amended to read as follows:

- (1) The pre-campaigning period shall be defined as the period of time during which candidates and ~~campaign staff their supporters~~ may begin speaking to any university-recognized student organization during meetings at locations on-campus or off-campus.

so it reads,

- (1) The pre-campaigning period shall be defined as the period of time during which candidates and their supporters may begin speaking to any university-recognized student organization during meetings at locations on-campus or off-campus.; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(6): V S.G.A.C. §601.4(1) (c)(4)(i) be amended to read as follows:

- (i) Candidates and ~~campaign staff their supporters~~ shall be allowed to wear any article of clothing that supports their candidate during the pre-campaigning period, as long as these materials are not distributed to the general student population.



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so it reads,

- (i) Candidates and their supporters shall be allowed to wear any article of clothing that supports their candidate during the pre-campaigning period, as long as these materials are not distributed to the general student population.; and

Let it be
Further

Enacted(7): V S.G.A.C. §601.4(1) (d)(1) be amended to include subsusbub-section (i):

- (i) Candidates may engage in actions that support their election such as, but not limited to, the distribution of any flyers and campaign materials, publication of social media ads, and holding campaign signs during this period.; and

Let it be
Further

Enacted(8): V S.G.A.C. §601.6(3) (a)(1) be amended to read as the following:

- (1) Major ~~offenses violations~~. Major violations include, but are not limited to: ~~proven~~ offenses against local, state or federal law to any degree; sabotage of opposing campaigns; voting fraud; falsified documents (with proof included to show falsification, including finance reports); ~~and~~ campaign ethics/~~Honor Code violations; violations;~~ ~~obstructions of the free and fair nature of voting; and violations of the Aggie Honor Code~~

so it reads,

- (1) Major violations. Major violations include, but are not limited to: proven offenses against local, state or federal law to any degree; sabotage of opposing campaigns; voting fraud; falsified documents (with proof included to show falsification, including finance reports); campaign ethics violations; obstructions of the free and fair nature of voting; and violations of the Aggie Honor Code; and



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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zachary McCue".

Zachary McCue
Speaker of the Senate

Let it be

Further

Enacted(9): V S.G.A.C. §601.6(3) (a)(1) be amended to include subsubsub-section (ii):

(ii) Falsification of documents refers to the intentional and substantive corruption of documents that undermines the transparent nature of the election.; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(10): V S.G.A.C. §601.6(3) (a)(1) be amended to include subsubsub-section (iii):

(iii) The Election commission may determine what constitutes significant ethical violations based on judgement of common sense and reasonability, in accordance with the Election Commission's duties to uphold a free and fair election, to look after the safety of their fellow students, and to adhere to the standards of the Aggie Core Values.; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(11): V S.G.A.C. §601.6(4) (a) be amended to insert subsection (b) and its relevant subsections:

(b) Disqualification shall only be applied in cases where the violation can be confidently determined to undermine the free, fair, and safe nature of the election, or the candidate has committed an act which prevents them from maintaining qualification as a candidate within the current election.

(1) The following acts prevent a candidate from maintaining qualification within a current election: failure to meet eligibility requirements, failure of themselves or their registered proxy to attend the Mandatory Candidates' Meeting, failure to submit a signed finance form by the appropriate deadline, exceeding the defined budget limitations, and, if elected to the position being sought, failure to submit payment of all fines by the appropriate deadline.;and



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Let it be

Further

Enacted(13): V S.G.A.C. §601.6(4) (c)(1) be amended to insert subsection (1):

- (1) Candidates who commit a minor campaigning violation will be assessed one (1) warning for the respective violation and notified of this warning via email. This warning will be documented on the public report of submitted violations that can be found at election.tamu.edu. Any additional offenses of the same violation will be assessed as minor violations, warranting the appropriate fine amount.; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(14): The existing V S.G.A.C. §601.6(4) (c)(1) be amended to read as follows:

- (1) Candidates filing under a Major Race shall be subject to a base ~~\$2075~~ fine following their first warning of the relevant offense. Each subsequent related offense shall result in an additional fine, with a ~~\$5-15~~ increase to the amount of the last fine.

so it reads,

- (1) Candidates filing under a Major Race shall be subject to a base \$75 fine following their first warning of the relevant offense. Each subsequent related offense shall result in an additional fine, with a \$15 increase to the amount of the last fine.; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(13): V S.G.A.C. §601.6(4) (c)(2) be amended to read as follows:

- (2) Candidates filing under a Minor Race shall be subject to a base \$10 fine following their first warning of the relevant offense.. Each subsequent related offense shall result in an additional fine, with a ~~\$5-2~~ increase to the amount of the last fine

so it reads,



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(2) Candidates filing under a Minor Race shall be subject to a base \$10 fine following their first warning of the relevant offense. Each subsequent related offense shall result in an additional fine, with a \$2 increase to the amount of the last fine; and

Let it be
Further

Enacted(13): V S.G.A.C. §601.4(2) (a)(1) be amended to read as follows and include its relevant subsections:

(1) The Election Commissioner may set ~~up to four (4)~~ dates and times for candidates to participate in sponsored forums, debates or other public demonstrations or congregations. Registered candidates and write-in candidates that have submitted a Voluntary Compliance Notice are eligible to participate.

(i) Any student organization or group interested in hosting an Election Commission-sponsored campaign event for any elected position must register their event with the Election Commissioner no less than one week prior to the date that their event is expected to occur.

(ii) To seek event registration, a student organization or group should contact the Election Commissioner via email (tamuelection@gmail.com) and inform them of the name, student organization affiliation, intended date, time, and location of the event. The Election Commission maintains discretion in granting sponsorship of any campaign events.

so it reads,

(1) The Election Commissioner may set dates and times for candidates to participate in sponsored forums, debates or other public demonstrations or congregations. Registered candidates and write-in candidates that have submitted a Voluntary Compliance Notice are eligible to participate.

(i) Any student organization or group interested in hosting an Election Commission-sponsored campaign event for any elected position must register their event with the Election Commissioner no less than one week prior to the date that their event is expected to occur.



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Speaker of the Senate

(ii) To seek event registration, a student organization or group should contact the Election Commissioner via email (tamuelection@gmail.com) and inform them of the name, student organization affiliation, intended date, time, and location of the event. The Election Commission maintains discretion in granting sponsorship of any campaign events.; and

Let it be
Further

Enacted(14): V S.G.A.C. §601.5(2) (k) and its relevant subsections be amended to read as follows:

(a) **Live animals are permitted in photographs used for campaign purposes, but may not be present at campaigning locations.** Exceptions shall be granted for service animals.

(1) Reveille may not be used for campaigning in any manner and cannot be present at campaigning locations through intentional solicitation by a candidate. (1) ~~This includes photographs taken with live animals.~~

so it reads,

(a) Live animals are permitted in photographs used for campaign purposes, but may not be present at campaigning locations. Exceptions shall be granted for service animals.

(1) Reveille may not be used for campaigning in any manner and cannot be present at campaigning locations through intentional solicitation by a candidate.;and

Let it be
Further

Enacted(15): V S.G.A.C. §601.5(2) be amended to include subsection (l):

(l) Paid social media ads cannot be displayed until the start of the general campaigning period.;and



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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zachary McCue", written over a horizontal line.

Zachary McCue
Speaker of the Senate

Let it be

Further

Enacted(16): V S.G.A.C. §601.7(1) (f)(1) be amended to read as follows:

- (1) In the case of ~~co-candidacy~~ campaign materials bearing the name of more than one candidate, one candidate must submit the original receipt and the ~~co-candidates~~ additional candidates must submit photocopies.

so it reads,

- (1) In the case of campaign materials bearing the name of more than one candidate, one candidate must submit the original receipt and the additional candidates must submit photocopies.;and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(16): A copy of this bill be sent to:

Meghan Hein, Rules and Regulations Chair