

# Election Code

## George Mason University Student Government

### **1** PURPOSE AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1.1* The sole purpose of the Election Code is to provide the mechanism necessary to elect student body officers pursuant to the Code for Student Governance and the Student Body Constitution of George Mason University. No portion of the Election Code shall be invalidated either solely or partially on the basis of this statement of purpose.
- 1.2* This document shall be the ruling authority regarding any election for any office within George Mason University's Student Government. It is subject to limitations set forth by the Code of Student Governance, Student Body Constitution, and all local, state, and federal laws.
- 1.3* All votes taken by the Election and Disputes Commission, documents, hearings, and other materials related to Student Government elections are considered public record. Every effort will be made by this Commission to update the Student Government website in a prompt manner. This includes all documentation, evidence, and audio recordings taken during the grievance process.
  - 1.3.1* Solely at the request of University Administration showing just cause, documents may be sealed to protect students, or as required by law to comply with police investigations. Should any material become sealed, this Commission will post a notification to the website reflecting that information.
- 1.4* No member of the Election and Disputes Commission shall endorse, campaign for, make a contribution to, or in any other manner support any candidate(s) or ticket(s) for any George Mason University Student Government elected office or any George Mason University Student Government Ballot Measure(s).
  - 1.4.1* Election and Disputes Commission Members reserve and retain all rights to voting in any George Mason University Student Government election.
- 1.5* Student Government is a neutral entity.
- 1.6* Additionally, the Election and Disputes Commission will attach a Bylaws document to detail the dates of key events as currently planned. This Bylaws document shall be updated prior to each election cycle and presented to Senate so they are aware of the election timeline for any given cycle.
  - 1.6.1* The Bylaws document may also include information about potential dates and times for grievance hearings and other matters that require the attention of the whole Election and Disputes Commission.

### **2** DEFINITIONS

- 2.1* These definitions are to be used solely for the purposes of interpreting this document, and should not be applied to any other document that may govern the election process.

- 2.2 Altering shall mean modifying a flyer, poster, or other form of advertisement from its original state.
- 2.3 Student Body shall mean any student who is enrolled with good standing in George Mason University.
- 2.4 GMUSG shall mean George Mason University Student Government.
- 2.5 SG Office shall mean the Senate and Executive offices, Rooms 2306 and 2305 respectively, located within the Office of Student Involvement.
- 2.6 Ballot shall mean the medium on which a vote is recorded, transmitted, or counted.
- 2.7 Campaign material shall mean any supplies used by a candidate or candidate's staff that have the primary purpose of furthering the candidate's likelihood of being elected.
- 2.8 Campaigning shall mean any activity by a candidate that has a primary purpose of furthering the candidate's likelihood of being elected, or by an individual that has a primary purpose of furthering the defeat of or passage of a candidate.
- 2.9 Candidate shall refer to a person who meets the qualifications as outlined in the Student Body Constitution of George Mason University, The Code for Student Governance, and any other relevant governing documents. Candidate shall refer to a single individual as a Student Senate candidate or a group of two individuals running together as an Executive Ticket for Student Body President and Vice President. This term includes write-in candidates.
- 2.10 Commissioner shall refer to any duly appointed commissioner of the Election and Disputes Commission.
- 2.11 Constitution shall refer to the Student Body Constitution of George Mason University, unless specified otherwise.
- 2.12 Code shall refer to the Code for Student Governance, as adopted by the Student Senate, unless specified otherwise.
- 2.13 Defacing shall mean spoiling or marring the appearance or surface of any physical advertisement.
- 2.14 Defendant shall mean the person against whom any Grievance or grievance is filed with the Election and Disputes Committee.
- 2.15 Destroying shall mean completely ruining or removing a form of physical advertisement.
- 2.16 Election and Disputes Commissions (EDC) shall mean the body that oversees everything related to elections, as outlined in the Student Body Constitution
- 2.17 Flyer shall mean any printed material less than the size of eight and one half inches by eleven inches (8.5" x 11") that is displayed or distributed where permission is given to all candidates equally on campus.
- 2.18 Petitioner shall mean the party that initiates a grievance hearing before the Election and Disputes Commission.
- 2.19 Poster shall mean any printed material the equal to or greater than eight and one half inches by eleven inches (8.5" x 11") and up to twenty-four inches by eighteen inches (24"

x 18”) that is displayed where permission is given to all candidates equally on campus. Sign shall mean the same as a poster.

- 2.20 Qualified voter shall mean any person entitled to vote in a George Mason University Student Government Election, as outlined in Student Government’s governing documents.
- 2.21 Voting period shall mean the time period during which students can access the ballot to vote in GMUSG elections.

### **3 CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 3.1 Each candidate running for a position in Student Government shall be subjected to this Code of Ethics.
- 3.2 Definitions:
  - 3.2.1 Slander shall mean the action of making a false spoken statement damaging to a person's reputation in a tangible way. Candidates may respectfully disagree or draw contrast with the ideas or past professional actions of the protected classes found in provision 3.2.2, but candidates may not personally attack people who fall into a protected class.
  - 3.2.2 Threat shall mean a statement of an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action on someone in retribution for something done or not done. Threat is also hereby defined as a menace of bodily harm, such as may restrain a person's freedom of action.
  - 3.2.3 Insubordinate shall mean defiant of authority; disobedient
    - 3.2.3.1 For the context of this code, authority as used in 3.2.3 is a power expressly held by the EDC and its designees.
  - 3.2.4 Disruptive shall mean causing disruption. Disruption shall mean disturbance or problems that interrupt an event, activity, or process.
  - 3.2.5 Disrespectful shall mean showing a lack of respect or courtesy; impolite.
- 3.3 Candidates shall not slander other campaigns or candidates, any student, faculty, or staff member at George Mason University, regardless of position. There shall be no slandering of student clubs, student activities, student events, or other bodies associated with the students and faculty/staff at George Mason University.
- 3.4 No threats shall be made against other campaigns, candidates, students, faculty, staff, or administrator. No threats shall be made against any student organization, club, or other entity.
  - 3.4.1 The medium in which incompliant threats can be made includes, but is not limited to, verbal, written, online, in-person, or in the form of email, text message, or other method of communication.
- 3.5 During grievance hearings, the EDC reserves the right to remove any person(s) and/or parties involved in a grievance hearing, or those viewing from the gallery, for exhibiting behavior, which the EDC deems insubordinate, disrespectful, or disruptive during hearings.

- 3.5.1 Any person(s) and/or party during a hearing who acts insubordinate, disrespectful, or disruptive towards the Elections and Disputes Commission, a person and/or party involved in a dispute, a member of the gallery, or faculty/staff present, will immediately be removed from the hearing.
- 3.5.2 Any person(s) and/or parties who are removed during a hearing for exhibiting behavior that violates Section 3.5 and/or its subsections shall forfeit all remaining speaking time to the opposing party.
- 3.5.3 Subsequent actions may be taken by the Elections and Disputes Commission or referred to other University judicial bodies, depending on the severity of the offense during a hearing.

## **4 CANDIDACY**

- 4.1 Candidates may run for one office, either a seat in GMUSG's Student Senate or an Executive Office as part of an Executive Ticket. Candidates may not simultaneously run for more than one (1) office.
- 4.2 Students wishing to run for an office within GMUSG must complete a Candidacy Packet. These packets shall be made available to all eligible persons at the Office of Student Involvement. When receiving a packet, the packet number, candidate's name, candidate's GMU email address, and the candidate's telephone number must be clearly printed on a Packet Check-Out form. Those who fail to comply with this step may not be placed on the ballot.
- 4.3 Completed packets shall include the following documents: Candidacy Declaration (to obtain basic contact information and University-related information, and ensure compliance with this Election Code), Release for Academic Records (to ensure compliance with the GPA requirement, verify academic standing, ensure a clean record with the Dean of Students and Honor Committee), a Petition Form (for candidates collect valid student signatures), and Faculty Statement (for candidates to receive a signature and GMU G# from a current faculty or staff member).
  - 4.3.1 Students running for Student Senate must collect one hundred fifty (150) valid signatures to complete Petition Form. Executive tickets must collectively gather three hundred (300) signatures to complete their Petition Form.
- 4.4 Upon completion of the requirements of candidacy, as outlined in the Constitution and Code, a student shall be placed on the ballot for the position indicated on their Candidacy Declaration form.
- 4.5 The Advisor of GMUSG shall verify that each student desiring to be a candidate meets the requirements provided in GMUSG's governing documents. Candidates may not be on academic suspension, probation, or have any recorded honor code violations. Any person failing to meet the requirements shall not be allowed to stand as a candidate.
- 4.6 After a candidate is verified by the Advisor of Student Government, they will receive an email from the EDC email account acknowledging their status as a candidate for office. Those who fail to meet the requirements, but collected a packet, will receive a notification email. If the student's packet was incomplete for any reason, they will not be

considered a candidate.

- 4.7 All candidates must be registered for a minimum of nine credit hours during the semester when the candidate is running. Candidates must be registered as full-time students during the academic terms in which they are seeking office.
- 4.8 Any candidate who willingly and knowingly falsifies or participates in the falsification of petition signatures shall be penalized with a Class Three Violation. Refer to Section 9.3.3.
  - 4.8.1 Candidates may not sign their own packet once. Duplicated signatures will not be counted.
- 4.9 Candidates are required to attend two Candidate Meetings. The first meeting shall be held prior to the campaign period, and the second shall be held during the campaign period.
  - 4.9.1 Candidates who are unable to attend a scheduled candidate meeting must submit a written request for an exemption from attending the meeting. Any student who is in class during the time of a meeting may submit a copy of their student schedule from PatriotWeb for a guaranteed exemption. The Commission shall consider all other requests.
- 4.10 Candidates will be placed on the ballot in a random order. During the first Candidate meeting, the Chairman or next most senior Commissioner will draw names from a hat. The first name pulled will be placed at the top of the ballot, and additional names will be placed in sequential order. Names will be written on papers that are reasonably similar in size. The process will be overseen by the Advisor of Student Government to ensure fairness.
- 4.11 Completed Candidacy Packets shall be turned into the front desk staff of the Office of Student Involvement or other approved location on or before the deadline set forth by the EDC. Those candidates filing a valid application by the deadline set by the EDC shall be placed on the Election Ballot.
- 4.12 A candidate shall appear on the ballot under the name used on the candidate's Candidacy Declaration form. A candidate may request on the application that an abbreviated version of their first name or a nickname be listed on the ballot along side their last name. Requests will be reviewed by the EDC.
- 4.13 A student may run as a write-in candidate provided that they personally sign and file the following statement no later than 5pm the Wednesday prior to the start of voting: "I (Insert name of Candidate as presented on a valid GMU ID Card) certify that I meet the qualifications for the position of Student Senator as outlined in the governing documents of GMUSG. I am filing as a Write-in candidate and understand and agree that my name shall not appear on the ballot. Blank spaces will be provided for write-ins. Misspellings of my name will be evaluated by the EDC for intent, and the EDC will make every effort to ensure I receive all votes intended to elect me, but I will not have any way to appeal the EDC's decisions regarding misspelled write-in votes."
  - 4.13.1 Write-in candidates must follow all rules provided for candidates as appropriately stated within this Election Code.
- 4.14 Candidates for Senate are entitled to have a three hundred (300) character statement appear by their name on the ballot. Candidates for Executive Office are entitled to have a

six hundred (600) character statement appear by their name on the ballot. This statement must be submitted to the EDC on a Candidate Statement form no later than the date and time prescribed by the EDC. Failure to submit a statement will not invalidate a candidate, but that candidate will not have a statement appear next to their name.

- 4.14.1 Write-in candidates are not entitled to nor may they request to submit a Candidate Statement.

## **5** CAMPAIGNING

- 5.1 Wherever written approval is required for campaigning, the candidate must submit the appropriate written approval to the EDC prior to utilizing newly authorized resources.
- 5.2 Candidates may not litter campus with materials. Candidates are required to take all prudent measures to ensure their campaign materials stay affixed to their intended location.
- 5.3 No candidate shall employ sound amplification equipment for campaigning on campus, unless receiving written permission from the EDC prior to the event.
- 5.3.1 EDC will evaluate requests to ensure the requested method of use is not excessively disruptive to the surrounding environment, that it abides by University policies, and that it is not infringing on another campaign's usage.
- 5.4 There shall be no use of the GMUSG logo.
- 5.5 Each candidate must submit all campaigning materials used in the campaign and they must be approved by the EDC before distribution. EDC members will briefly assess items to ensure the quantity of presented items reasonably matches the quantities stated on the receipts. As the EDC is a neutral body, we will not preform assessments based on the rules enumerated under Chapter 5 of this Election Code. However, the EDC reserves the right to hear cases that are referred to the Commission for review by an external petitioner. An external petitioner shall be a person who is not a member of the EDC. Additionally, the petitioner may not be unduly influenced by a sitting Commissioner
- 5.5.1 Materials may be approved in conjunction with Section 6.3 of this Election Code. The date and time-stamped signature of any EDC commissioner, obtained at a mutually agreeable time for both Candidate and Commissioner, shall be considered approval.
- 5.6 Candidates must remove all campaign materials within forty-eight (48) hours after the results are announced.
- 5.7 As per the University's Code of Student Conduct, Campaigning in a classroom is strictly prohibited at any time. This includes using class time to campaign, addressing a class, fully or partially assembled, in the time before or after a class, or utilizing classroom resources such as bulletin boards, chalkboards, whiteboards, computers, or other resources to campaign.
- 5.7.1 Section 5.7 of this Election Code refers specifically to scheduled class time. Candidates who properly reserve space through Events Management for the sole purpose of campaigning may utilize that space for campaigning, even if the space they reserve is typically used as a classroom.

- 5.8 All chalking must follow the following rules and restrictions:
  - 5.8.1 Chalked messages must be on sidewalks that are directly exposed to rainfall.
  - 5.8.2 Chalking is not permitted: on stairs, on any wall or other vertical surface
- 5.9 Candidates are not permitted to wear, display, or carry any campaign materials past the front desk of the Office of Student Involvement unless they are covered or otherwise out of sight. A candidate may enter the Office of Student Involvement with campaign materials if the sole purpose is to speak with an EDC member regarding the campaign material in question.
- 5.10 Once the voting period has begun, candidates are forbidden from participating in any active campaigning. All currently posted flyers, posters, and similar campaign materials may remain in place, but no new materials may be posted and no more campaign events may be held.
  - 5.10.1 Candidates are permitted to utilize electronic forms of communication throughout the entire election and voting process. This includes social media, text message, email, and other forms of electronic communication that do not expressly violate other provisions of this code.
  - 5.10.2 Passive campaigning during the voting period is acceptable. Passive campaigning includes wearing shirts, stickers, buttons, and utilizing other forms of campaign materials that do not isolate individuals or small groups, or place undue pressure on an individual to vote a certain way.
- 5.11 All candidates are responsible for their campaign staff. All candidates are required to submit a Campaign Staff Roster to the EDC by 12 noon on the first day of campaigning.
- 5.12 Candidates wishing to utilize the cubes are required to adhere to the following rules:
  - 5.12.1 Cubes may be painted no more than ten (10) days prior to the start of the voting period. The start of the voting period is to be used as the date painted on a candidate's cube face.
  - 5.12.2 Candidates are limited to one (1) cube face. A cube face is defined as one side of one cube.
  - 5.12.3 To use a cube face, candidates must first gain express, written consent from an organization that is eligible to reserve a cube face. This consent form must be submitted to the EDC prior to painting a cube face.
  - 5.12.4 Cubes must be reserved using the standard Cube Reservation Form found in the Skyline Gym at the front desk.
  - 5.12.5 Nothing can be posted or affixed to any cube face, regardless of who reserved it.
- 5.13 No candidate may reserve the George Mason statue for advertising.
- 5.14 Candidates may buy or produce banners. The EDC does not guarantee a legal place to hang said banner during the duration of the campaign outside of specific campaign events.
- 5.15 Candidates must adhere to the following rules regarding posting flyers and posters:
  - 5.15.1 Candidates may put flyers up in Student Union buildings (Johnson Center, Student Union

Building I, The HUB, and Southside) after receiving a stamp on their materials. Stamps can be obtained from any information desk in any of the aforementioned buildings.

- 5.15.2 In accordance with Student Centers' rules, candidates may post six (6) flyers in the Johnson Center, two (2) in Student Union Building I, one (1) in The HUB, and one (1) in Southside. There may be no more than one (1) flyer per bulletin board in any location.
- 5.16 Campaigning that disrupts the normal flow of University business is prohibited and can be stopped by appropriate University officials.
- 5.17 No campaign material shall be affixed to any vehicles, with the exception of the candidate's own personal vehicle or the vehicles of the candidate's supporters. Persons supporting a campaign must place the campaign material on their own car. Distribution of campaign materials on cars, bikes, motorcycles, or any other form of transportation used by persons not affiliated with a campaign is prohibited.
- 5.18 No tangible or electronic campaign material will be posted or left open on the monitors of any computers at George Mason University.
- 5.19 No candidate shall accept donations from any organization that is dependent on University funding. No organization funded exclusively by student fee money may donate to a candidate.
- 5.20 No campaigning may occur in any building that operates as part of George Mason University Housing without prior written approval from a Resident Director (RD) or higher-ranking housing staff member. With approval, only two (2) posters per residential floor are permitted. All posters must be posted by the Resident Advisor of each respective floor, as candidates will not be granted unlimited access to housing buildings.
- 5.20.1 Individual students' doors, personal rooms, and private conversations with friends and acquaintances are not subject to the regulations set forth in section 5.20. This policy is solely meant to restrict mass campaigning in housing buildings.
- 5.21 Absolutely no campaigning of any kind can occur in the SG Office.
- 5.22 Candidates who claim endorsement from a group or organization, either on-campus or off-campus, must first obtain written consent from the group or organization's sole leader or executive board. This written consent shall be submitted on a Campaign Endorsement form to the EDC prior to claiming endorsement.
- 5.22.1 Candidates cannot seek nor claim endorsement from any University office or on-campus group that is lead by non-students. Additionally, candidates cannot seek nor claim endorsement from Student Government, any member of the EDC, or any current Student Government member acting as part of their official capacity as an elected officer of the students.
- 5.22.2 Candidates claiming endorsement from current members of Student Government acknowledge that said endorsement is personal in nature, and in no way reflects the views of others in Student Government or the views of Student Government as a whole. Candidates may not advertise or publicize in any way an endorsement from any current or former member of Student Government whereas the member's title or office is included.



- 5.23 GMUSG property shall not be used for campaigning unless designated for that purpose. Candidates may not use any resources found in the Office of Student Involvement, including the Imagination Station, for any endeavor even loosely relates to their campaign.
- 5.24 Campaigning in any form may not begin until a time designated by the EDC.

## **6 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

### **6.1 Spending Limits**

- 6.1.1 No Ticket for Executive Office shall spend over \$1000 on their Campaign.
- 6.1.2 No Candidate for Senate shall spend over \$350 on their Campaign.
- 6.1.3 Persons listed on a candidate's Campaign Roster are financially linked to that campaign. Money that counts towards a Candidate's limit can only be claimed by candidates themselves, or by persons who's name appears on an appropriate campaign roster.
- 6.1.4 Additionally, any organization that endorses a candidate is linked to that candidate financially. Any money that organization spends with the sole purpose of campaign for said candidate must be declared by the candidate or a representative of the campaign, who's name appears on an appropriate campaign roster.
- 6.2 Exceeding spending limits will result in a Class Three Violation. If this violation is determined by the EDC after votes have been certified, the newly elected officer will lose office and the next runner up will be declared the new winner.
- 6.3 Candidates shall be responsible for declaring all campaign-related expenses on the Campaign Expense Form and provide original receipts for all campaign materials. This form shall be submitted to EDC prior to the utilization of newly acquired materials.
  - 6.3.1 All goods and services for which receipts cannot be provided shall be reported on the Campaign Expense Form. In lieu of receipts, candidates must report how and where they obtained these items.
  - 6.3.2 Any and all campaign materials and advertisements purchased by either a candidate and/or his/her campaign staff for the purpose of campaigning must be included in the reported campaign expenditures.
  - 6.3.3 All receipts must be itemized and dated.
- 6.4 A candidate must also include a sworn statement attesting to the accuracy of the Campaign Expense Form, found at the bottom of the Form. The candidate will be held accountable for all declared and undeclared campaign expenses.
- 6.5 All candidates are required to submit their Final Expense paperwork by no later than 5pm on the first day of the voting period.
- 6.6 The Campaign Expense Form and all original are to be delivered to Advisor of Student Government in a sealed envelope by the deadline prescribed in Section 6.6.
- 6.7 The EDC may submit a written request for a candidate's updated Campaign Expense Forms with receipts at any time during an election. The updated Campaign Expense Form with receipts shall be submitted to the EDC within twenty-four (24) hours of the request.

## **7 ELECTION PROCEDURES**

- 7.1 Voting will be confidential.
- 7.2 Absentee voting and proxy voting are not permitted.
- 7.3 Ballots shall be made available using an online voting method prescribed by the Office of Student Involvement. If the Office does not supply a voting tool, the EDC shall be responsible for finding a suitable system.
- 7.4 Students may vote for up to thirty (30) candidates for Student Senate and one (1) Executive Ticket for Student Body President and Vice President.
- 7.5 At the end of the voting period, the EDC shall privately review vote tabulation, under the supervision of the Advisor of Student Government or higher-ranking administrator from the Office of Student Involvement.
- 7.6 Any person wishing to view the votes in their original form, as they were given to the EDC by the Advisor of Student Government, can request access to that document after the certification of the vote count.
- 7.7 Votes for persons other than candidates or filed write-in candidates who are not on the ballot will not be tabulated.
- 7.8 Candidates may file a grievance requesting a recount. The EDC will hear the grievance and rule in favor of a recount if clear and convincing evidence shows an error in the initial tabulation of votes or that a recount may result in a different outcome.
  - 7.8.1 This kind of grievance must be filed before the certification of the results.
- 7.9 After votes are tabulated, the Chair of the EDC shall certify the results, and publically announce the results at noon the day following the election. In order to certify the results, Chair of the EDC and the Advisor of Student Government shall sign this certificate. It shall read: "All qualified ballots and votes being accounted for, the following results of this election, held (dates here), are official and certified by the Election and Dispute Commission of George Mason University. All candidates achieving plurality are hereby declared elected, and all referenda achieving the same are hereby declared in effect. So say us one, so say us all."
  - 7.9.1 The EDC reserves the right to delay the announcement of election results when grievances are still pending, or if there is suspicion of election fraud or vote tampering.
  - 7.10 Following the public announcement, the Chair of the EDC shall deliver a copy of the certified results to Student Media and the Director of the Office of Student Involvement for publication and recordkeeping. Additionally, a copy of results shall be posted at the entrance to the Office of Student Involvement and the Student Government website.

## **8 GRIEVANCE Procedure**

- 8.1 Any student shall be permitted to file a grievance subject to limitations set forth in this Election Code.
- 8.2 Grievances shall be filed with the EDC. Grievances may be submitted via email to the

official EDC email address. All accompanying documents are to be included in this email. Additionally, all grievances must be hand delivered in a sealed envelope to the Advisor of Student Government.

- 8.2.1 Grievances must be filed using the standard Election Grievance form, available on the Student Government website, or by request sent to the official EDC email address.
- 8.2.2 Grievances shall specify in what way the petitioner was allegedly harmed by the actions of the defendant.
- 8.2.3 Grievances must list which provisions of this Election Code the defendant allegedly violated.
- 8.3 Upon receipt of a complete Grievance Form in total compliance with Section 8.2 and its subsections, the EDC will set a date, time, and place for the Grievance Hearing.
- 8.4 Grievance hearings shall follow the prescribed format:
  - 8.4.1 Only the petitioner, defendant(s), and up to one person they may chose to represent them are permitted to sit at the tables directly in front of the EDC's bench.
  - 8.4.2 All gallery members are required to remain silent behind the petitioner and defense tables, unless asked to come forward by an EDC member to testify. Gallery members are not permitted from using cell phones for any purpose during the hearings.
  - 8.4.3 At the onset of the meeting, the EDC Chair, or highest-ranking officer in order of time spent on the EDC in the event of the Chair's absence, shall read the official title of the Grievance at issue.
  - 8.4.4 At that time, each side will have ten (10) minutes to present their case. This is a hard time limit, and involved parties will be cut off by the EDC after a party's time period has elapsed.
  - 8.4.5 Following the opening arguments, each side will be permitted to ask five (5) questions to the opposition. Questions should be directed to the EDC. Should the EDC Chair deem the question appropriate, relevant, and non-repetitive, the Chair will direct the question to the appropriate party. During the question portion, no new information or charges may be introduced. Responses will be limited to one (1) minute.
  - 8.4.6 Following questions, each side will have two (2) minutes for closing arguments.
- 8.5 Involved parties or their representatives during a hearing may request for an extension to any of the allotted time slots. These requests will be evaluated and decided by the EDC.
- 8.6 If the EDC feels that a party needs more time to respond to a question, or a significant portion of the candidate's time was consumed answering questions from the EDC, the Commission may grant that candidate more time as it sees fit.
- 8.7 The time limits and question counts are subject to EDC discretion, and may be changed to gain a fuller understanding of issues at hand. Any change to time limits or question counts will be announced at the earliest moment in which the EDC feels and agrees that a change is necessary. The question section itself may be eliminated in its entirety or stopped short if the EDC feels that the questions are no longer relevant or constructive to the hearing at hand.

- 8.8 In order for the Election and Disputes Commission to hear a grievance, at least three (3) commissioners must be present.
- 8.9 All defendants are innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

## **9 PENALTIES**

- 9.1 The EDC shall assess and enforce all penalties.
- 9.2 The EDC is forbidden to grant any relief or pardon for any penalties listed in this election code.
- 9.3 The classifications of violations are as follows:
  - 9.3.1 Class One Violations shall be failure to abide by the provisions of (5.1) through (5.15) in this Election Code. They shall count as one infraction per provision violated.
  - 9.3.2 Class Two Violations shall mean deliberately defacing, altering, or destroying the campaign material of another candidate without that candidate's explicit written permission. Class Two violations shall also constitute a failure to abide by the provisions of (5.16) through (5.23) in this Election Code.
  - 9.3.3 Class Three violations shall include falsification of paperwork required by this Election Code; knowledge of an offense against this code prior to or during its occurrence and failing to report it; aiding another individual in fraudulent voting; any violation of the Code of Ethics outside the context of a Grievance hearing, or a violation of sections (5.24) or (4.8) of this Election Code.
    - 9.3.3.1 The EDC reserves the right to apply a Class Three violation to any violation of Section 3 of this Election Code that may occur during a Grievance hearing.
- 9.4 The penalties for the three classifications are as follows:
  - 9.4.1 Class One: three penalty points.
  - 9.4.2 Class Two: six penalty points.
  - 9.4.3 Class Three: disqualification.
- 9.5 Additionally, the EDC may require a campaign to correct an action that is in conflict with a provision set forth in this Election Code. If such corrective action is feasible, it must be completed within twenty-four (24) hours of the EDC notifying the campaign.
  - 9.5.1 Failure to follow Section 9.5 will be construed as gross negligence and an insubordinate action (as defined by Section 3.2.3 of this Election Code). Those who fail to follow Section 9.5 will be subject to a Class Three Violation and subject to disqualification, pending a follow-up hearing.
- 9.6 If the EDC is presented with a Grievance that is not a Class One, Class, Two or Class Three classification and the EDC decides that it is indeed a violation of the Elections Code this violation shall be penalized as a Class One, Class Two, or Class Three violation on a case-by-case basis as determined by the EDC.
- 9.7 Accumulation of nine penalty points or conviction of a Class Three Violation shall result in the disqualification of the candidate.

## **10** RECORD KEEPING

- 10.1* All electronic communication submitted to the Commission regarding any election matter should be directed to the EDC's official email address ([sgedc@gmu.edu](mailto:sgedc@gmu.edu)).
- 10.2* The Chair of the EDC shall record all final totals and file them with the Advisor of Student Government as the official and permanent record of the vote for the election at issue. Said records shall be available for audit by GMUSG or any of its official entities.

# Election Code Bylaws

## George Mason University Student Government

### **1 ELECTION DATES**

- 1.1* For the Spring 2012 General Election, the EDC is planning to adhere to the following timeline.
  - 1.1.1* Candidacy packets available: Monday, February 27 2012 at 12 Noon
  - 1.1.2* Completed Candidacy Packets due: Friday, March 2 2012 at 12 Noon
  - 1.1.3* Candidacy Notifications emailed: Wednesday, March 7 2012
  - 1.1.4* Campaign Period begins: Monday, March 19 2012 at 12:01am
  - 1.1.5* Voting Period begins: Monday, April 2 2012 at 12:01am
  - 1.1.6* Voting Period ends: Wednesday, April 4 2012 at 12:01am
  - 1.1.7* Public Announcement and Certification of Results: Wednesday, April 4 2012 at 12 Noon

### **2 TENTATIVE GRIEVANCE DATES**

- 2.1* For the Spring 2012 General Election, the EDC will plan to hear all grievances during the following times:
  - 2.1.1* Tuesday evenings at 5:45pm
  - 2.1.2* Thursday evenings at 5:30pm
- 2.2* Should any party whose presence is required at a Grievance Hearing not be able to attend during one of the times listed in Section 2.1 and its subsections in this document, the EDC will make every effort to find a time suitable to all parties.

### **3 ELECTION AND DISPUTES COMMISSION OFFICE HOURS**

- 3.1* Throughout the entire campaign process, at least one (1) EDC commissioner will hold office hours every day.