2019 SGA Election Rules Packet

Main Campus

Please contact the Elections Commissioner with any questions.
Jason Repath - Email: jasprepa@ut.utm.edu
Important Dates and Deadlines for the 2019 SGA Elections

• **Monday, March 11th, 2019** – Preliminary Party Information Due
  o Deadline for submitting preliminary party information (party name and chairperson). This information must be emailed to elections commissioner (jasprepa@ut.utm.edu).

• **Wednesday, March 13th, 2019** - Constitution Test Must Be Completed
  o By 5pm on this date, the SGA Constitution test must be completed.
  o [It can be accessed at www.utm.edu/election](http://www.utm.edu/election)

• **Friday, March 15th, 2019, 5:00pm**
  Application, Petition, and Party Information Due
  o Deadline for the completion of the online election application and petition (25 signatures and 50 for Executive Council). The petition form must be printed, completed, and then uploaded as part of the online application process.
  o Each candidate must have successfully passed the constitution test.
  o Party lists, biographies, platforms, and photos for executive candidates are due to the elections commissioner by 5pm to the Elections Commissioner via email (jasprepa@ut.utm.edu).
  o [The online application, constitution test, and petition form can be found at www.utm.edu/election.](http://www.utm.edu/election)

• **Sunday, March 17th, 2019** - Campaign Period Opens
  o Candidates may begin distributing campaign materials, hanging posters and flyers, and using social media.

• **Monday, March 25th, 2019**
  o Candidate debates at 7:00pm in the Watkins Auditorium.
  o Must email the Elections Commissioner if you cannot attend.

• **Monday, April 1st, 2019**
  o Campaign finance forms due by 5:00pm to the Elections Commissioner. No money may be spent on the campaign after this date.
  o [Finance Form can be downloaded at www.utm.edu/election.](http://www.utm.edu/election)

• **Tuesday, April 2nd, 2019**
  o Election Day
  o Polls open 10:00am - 6:00pm (CST).
  o Online at [www.utm.edu/election](http://www.utm.edu/election) or the voting booth on the first floor of the UC.

• **Wednesday, April 3rd, 2019**
  o Runoff elections (if necessary).

• **Friday, April 5th, 2019**
  o All campaign material must be properly disposed of by 5:00pm
Section 1: Executive Council Election Qualifications

Article 1:
All nominees for the Student Government Association positions of President, Vice-President, and Secretary General must be enrolled in the University of Tennessee at Martin, have thirty hours of completed course credit, and be in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of election and appointment, and during the term of office. Per the SGA Constitution Article IV, Section 4, a nominee for one of these three positions must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or higher at the time of his or her nomination and shall not allow his or her cumulative grade point average to drop below 2.75 during the tenure of office.

Article 2:
Elected Executive Council officers must have served at least 2 full semesters by the time they assume an Executive Office in the Student Government Association in any of the following positions: Associate Justice, Chief Justice, Student Defender, Attorney General, Chief of Staff, Speaker of the Senate, Athletic Liaison, elected Senator, and any senator or justice who is appointed to a vacant position resulting from lack of candidacy or resignation within the elected senate. This provision excludes Freshmen Council.

Article 3:
Senators-at-Large shall be eligible to run for an executive office assuming they complete all of the following stipulations: Senators-at-Large must meet all of the requirements necessary for a Senator in addition to getting an additional 25 signatures from full time UT Martin students on their petition to run. (1) A member wishing to run must receive 2/3 Senate approval within 2 weeks after party packets is made available by the Elections Commissioner. (2) He or she must have served the entire fall semester as well as the spring semester as a Senator-at-Large or higher prior to taking office.

Article 4:
To qualify for candidacy, nominees need 50 signatures on an Elections Petition Form. Once the deadline for petition forms has passed, the candidate may not change the position that they are running for and still qualify for candidacy; however, if an extenuating circumstance emerges, then a course of action is left to the discretion of the Election Commissioner.

Article 5:
Each executive council candidate must submit a written copy of his/her platform. This written copy will include a brief explanation of why the candidate is running and at least three main platform points with three sub-points to each main point. Please submit your platform by email saved as a Microsoft Word (.doc) file to jasprepa@ut.utm.edu.

NOTE: Please identify your emails with a subject, your name, party affiliation, and a label of what you are turning in.

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Section 2: Judicial Branch Elections Qualifications

Article 1:
All nominees for the Student Government Association Judicial Branch (5 Associate Justices, 1 Student Defender, 1 Attorney General) must be enrolled in the University of Tennessee at Martin and in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of election and appointment, and during the term of office. Per the SGA Constitution Article V, Section 12 and Article VI, Section 1, a nominee must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher at the time of his or her nomination and shall not allow his or her cumulative grade point average to drop below 2.5 during the tenure of office.

Article 2:
To qualify for candidacy, nominees need 25 signatures on an Elections Petition Form. Once the deadline for petition forms has passed, the candidate may not change the position that they are running for and still qualify for candidacy; however, if an extenuating circumstance emerges, then a course of action is left to the discretion of the Election Commissioner.

Section 3: Senate Elections Qualifications

Article 1:
All nominees for the Student Government Association Senate must be enrolled in the University of Tennessee at Martin and in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of election and appointment, and during the term of office. Per the SGA Constitution Article VI, Section 1, a nominee must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher at the time of his or her nomination and shall not allow his or her cumulative grade point average to drop below 2.5 during the tenure of office.

Article 2:
To qualify for candidacy, nominees need 25 signatures on an Elections Petition Form. Once the deadline for petition forms has passed, the candidate may not change the position that they are running for and still qualify for candidacy; however, if an extenuating circumstance emerges, then a course of action is left to the discretion of the Election Commissioner.

Section 4: UT Martin Advisory Board Student Representative Qualifications

Article 1:
All nominees for The University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Representative position must be enrolled full time at the University of Tennessee at Martin and in good academic and disciplinary standing at the time of the election, of appointment, and during the term of office. Note: Good academic standing for Student Representative position is classified as having a 2.75 cumulative grade point average at time of nomination and should maintain a 2.75 cumulative grade point average during the tenure of the position.

Article 2:
Nominees must be willing and able to serve as the University of Tennessee Advisory Board Student Representative for one full year. The Student Representative shall attend all Advisory Board Meetings, SGA Senate meetings and SGA Legislative Council meetings.

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Article 3:
Nominees must complete the pledge form stating that they have read The University of Tennessee Martin Advisory Board Bylaws in detail, and will pledge to fulfill all duties and requirements of the position if elected. A copy of the Bylaws will be made available in the SGA office and is available online at http://www.utm.edu/advisoryboard/.

Article 4:
Nominees must complete the Elections Rules Compliance Form stating that they will comply with all rules and requirements set forth by the Elections Commissioner and the SGA Constitution.

Article 5:
To qualify for candidacy, nominees need 50 signatures on an Elections Petition Form.

Article 6:
Nominees must comply with rules of Campaign Finance and complete the proper Campaign Finance Forms. These forms must be turned in to the Elections Commissioner by the date election packets are due.

Article 7:
Nominees are allowed to run for any SGA position and the Student Representative position, excluding executive council positions.

Article 8:
The top three vote recipients for The University of Tennessee at Martin Advisory Board Student Representative position in the general election will be submitted to the Chancellor’s Office for final selection.

Section 5: Representation and Voting

Article 1:
All students shall be eligible to vote for the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary General, Student Trustee, and Judicial Seats. To win one of the Executive Council offices, a candidate must receive over 50% of the vote. If no candidate receives at least 50% of the vote, then a run-off election will be held between the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes.

Article 2:
Student Senate seats will be elected by the students from each of the colleges, with undeclared students voting for candidates in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts. Candidates must be a student of the college they wish to represent. Elections will be decided by the highest percentage of the vote until all seats are filled. If no candidate receives a majority of the vote, then a run-off election will be held between the candidates receiving the greatest number of votes. The available seats for 2017 are as follows:

(5) Seats - College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences  
(4) Seats - College of Business and Global Affairs  
(10) Seats - College of Health, Education, and Behavioral Sciences  
(3) Seats - College of Engineering and Natural Sciences  
(7) Seats - College of Humanities and Fine Arts (undeclared/non-departmental majors will run in this college)  
(5) Seats-Campus Centers

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Article 3:
Student polling may take place from the following locations:
- The in-person voting station in the University Center
- From any electronic device

Any campaign paraphernalia/vocal campaigning is prohibited within the general space of the in-person polling location in the University Center. The only exception to this rule is the case of voters wearing pins or t-shirts advocating a particular candidate during the actual voting process. This is with the understanding that the voter will vote and leave the polling area.

Article 4:
On election day(s) candidates, political parties, or anyone acting as an agent of a candidate or political party may not solicit votes by use of laptop or any other electronic device. Violation of this rule will result in the candidate’s disqualification.

Section 6: Campaign Rules

Article 1:
Nominees must comply with the rules of campaign finance and complete the proper Campaign Finance Forms. These forms must be turned in to the Elections Commissioner by 5:00pm on Monday, April 2nd, 2019.

Article 2:
Nominees must complete Pledge Forms (stating that they have read the SGA Constitution and Article IV in detail), the Elections Rules Compliance Form (stating they will comply with all rules and requirements set forth by the 2019 Elections Commissioner and SGA Constitution), and agree to a grade check. These are completed via the online application.

Article 3:
Each candidate must submit a first-person, one-paragraph biography stating his/her history. Bios should be no longer than 250 words. A photograph of the candidate should be included with the bio. Please submit both by email to jasprepa@ut.utm.edu, with the bio saved as a Microsoft Word (.doc) file and the photograph saved as a JPEG (.jpg) file. The photograph included with the bio will be the candidate’s official photo for the duration of the election process. It will be distributed to the Pacer and possibly with other election documents. Due via email by 5:00pm on Friday, March 15th, 2019.

Note: Bios will not be edited after submission. It is your responsibility to have your bio suitable for publication.
Article 4:
Candidates/Parties are limited to six (6) posters, i.e., 22 x 28 inches poster board, per academic building.
The academic buildings available for placing campaign posters are:
- Andy Holt Humanities Building
- Fine Arts Building
- Joseph E. Johnson EPS Building
- Communications Building
- Gooch Hall
- Brehm Hall
- Business Administration Building
These are the only academic buildings available to place posters in. If more than one candidate’s name is placed on a poster, the poster shall count as one for each candidate. Therefore, the Elections Commissioner will allow poster sharing, but any poster with a candidate’s name or image will count as a poster toward the six poster limit.
Note: All posters are subject to approval by the SGA Elections Commissioner. It is the candidate’s responsibility to obtain further permission from the building managers before placing posters in academic buildings. Current sign posting procedures and a list of building managers can be found at http://www.utm.edu/departments/univrel/signs.php.

Article 5:
Candidates/Parties are limited to twenty (20) flyers, i.e., an 8.5 X 11 inch paper, per academic building.
The academic buildings available for placing campaign flyers are:
- Andy Holt Humanities Building
- Fine Arts Building
- Joseph E. Johnson EPS Building
- Communications Building
- Gooch Hall
- Brehm Hall
- Business Administration Building
These are the only academic buildings available to place flyers in. If more than one candidate’s name is placed on a flyer, the flyer shall count as one for each candidate. Therefore, the Elections Commissioner will allow flyer sharing, but any flyer with a candidate’s name or image will count as a flyer toward the 20 flyer limit.
Note: All flyers are subject to approval by the SGA Elections Commissioner. It is the candidate’s responsibility to obtain further permission from the building managers before placing posters in academic buildings. Current sign posting procedures and a list of building managers can be found at http://www.utm.edu/departments/univrel/signs.php.

Article 6:
Placement of campaign materials is allowed in the residence halls. Keep all flyers, posters, etc. to a maximum of six (6) in any combination per building. Remember to ask permission from the Hall Directors before hanging any flyers, posters, etc.

Article 7:
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Placement of flyers is allowed in the University Center. Posters are prohibited in this building. Candidates are limited to two (2) flyers in this building, which must be approved by the building manager and may only be placed on existing bulletin boards.

Article 8:
Signs are limited to the quad. A candidate/Party may only place 3 signs on campus. Signs are any paper, plastic, poster board, wood, etc. banner or similar document with a candidate’s name, political party, or picture. **Before placing of any signs in the Quad, the method of how they will be displayed must be approved by UTM Physical Plant which can be contacted at 731-881-7640.**

**Use of sidewalk chalk for campaigning will be permitted only in the quad.**
Note: Stakes should not be used to place signs because of wiring and plumbing considerations.

Article 9:
No campaign material is to be placed on the exterior of buildings, trees, light poles, garbage cans, glass marble, or any painted surfaces except for painted concrete blocks. **Material can only be placed on bulletin boards inside buildings at the discretion of the Building Manager.**
Note: It is the candidate’s responsibility to ask the building managers for any specific guidelines before placing campaign materials in buildings.

Article 10: Each candidate is responsible for any material that contains his/her name or image, or his/her political party’s name or logo. Posters and flyers placed by parties other than the individual (i.e. fraternities, sororities, campus organizations, etc.) with a candidate’s name, image, etc. are subject to the limitations and restrictions previously stated in this packet.

Article 11:
With regard to spending, the Candidates and Political Parties may use personal funds or solicit donations in accordance with the following:

- Any individual Candidate (affiliated with other persons in a Political Party) is limited to $250 individual spending. Although, a Candidate is entitled to $500 if and only if they are running on a party alone, i.e., with no other persons in their party, or running independently.
- Any Political Party (independent of its Candidates) is limited to $250 in party spending.
  
  For instance, a Political Party consisting of 2 candidates has a potential, total budget of $750 (both candidates may contribute $250 individually to their party for a total of $500, with the Political Party’s budget contributing additional $250 for a total of $750).
- Likewise, a 5-candidate Political Party has a potential budget of $1500.

Note: Donations should be provided in the form of a personal check for documentation purposes. No anonymous donations are permitted.

Article 12:
The use of social media is allowed for campaigning, but slanderous attacks will be investigated and may result in punishment for the candidate. **No electronic campaigning shall begin prior to the formal campaigning period.**

Article 13:
Speaking engagements and verbal campaigning are allowed until 10:00pm on April, 1, 2019, but at no time during the election may a candidate campaign by setting up tables in the UC. A table may be set up outside
the UC but must be at least 30 feet from the door. Upon the 2nd of April, the UC becomes an official polling location, and verbal campaigning or distributing campaign materials within the building will result in disqualification.

Article 14:
No election or campaign rule shall supersede any existing university rule, policy, or regulation which places restrictions on general student practice or behavior. Should election and university guidelines conflict, the more restrictive rule shall take precedence.

Article 15:
After filing a declaration of intent, a candidate or a political party shall be responsible for obtaining thorough knowledge of all election regulations. Ignorance of such regulations shall be no excuse for any violation thereof. Consequences of violations, which may include the disqualification of a candidate, shall be left up to the discretion of the Elections Commission. If a candidate who is running on a political party is found to be in violation of the SGA Constitution or this packet and is disqualified, resigns, or leaves for any reason after the deadline in which petitions are due, the party will not be able to replace the candidate.

Article 16:
It is the responsibility of each candidate to know and abide by the campaign rules. Candidates will be held accountable for actions disobeying the rules and regulations herewith set forth, whether the violation of rules was done knowingly or unknowingly. The Elections Commission reserves the right to administer punishment. Any complaint about the election process shall be submitted to the SGA Elections Commissioner. Note: Please identify yourself, your party affiliation, and your complaint Any persons who feel they have been unreasonably, inordinately, or disproportionately punished by the Election Commission may appeal to the Student Court.

Article 17:
No material shall be distributed of a negative nature. Name-calling, slander, or similar offensive activities are prohibited. Any campaigning deemed unethical or negative by the Elections Commission will be addressed seriously and could result in candidate disqualification.
Section 7: Political Parties

Article 1:
A political party must name a party chairperson and declare this party chairperson to the Elections Commissioner in written documentation by 6:00pm on Monday, March 11th, 2019.

Article 2:
The party chair must furnish a list of candidates and the offices for which they are running by 5:00pm on Friday, March 15th, 2019. This list shall be alphabetized and shall include the name and phone number of each candidate.

Article 3:
The Elections Commissioner must approve names used by all political parties. Party names should not be of a negative nature and should reflect well on the university. Names shall be placed upon the party’s written documents that are due on Monday, March 11th, 2019.

Section 8: Campus Debate

Article 1:
The debate is mandatory for all candidates. All candidates should come prepared to respond to questions on issues relevant to the student body. The debate will be held on Monday, March 25th, 2019, in the Watkins Auditorium.

Section 9: Referendums

Article 1:
Any student or recognized university organization may petition any item to be placed on the official ballot during the Student Government Association elections.

Article 2:
In order for an item to be placed on the ballot, 250 students must sign a petition that will be turned in to the Elections Commissioner no later than 5:00pm on Friday, March 16th, 2019. Each petition must clearly state the referendum and its sponsor and have numbered lines upon which students write their names and student ID numbers.

Article 3:
Referendums will be reviewed by the Elections Commissioner. Upon approval, the referendums will be placed on the ballot.

Article 4:
A referendum must be approved by a majority of the students voting in the election for it to pass. Any referendum that passes will be implemented in consultation with and subject to final actions and decisions by the University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor, University of Tennessee President, and the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees.

Please contact the Elections Commissioner with any questions.
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Disclaimer: The SGA Elections Commission has the right to meet and discuss any potential violation of election or campaign rules, and to declare new rules upon the commission of questionable election practices.

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