

**STUDENT ASSOCIATION AT
DURHAM COLLEGE AND UOIT
SOCIETIES ELECTIONS PROCEDURE**



PROCEDURE TYPE:	Operations
PROCEDURE TITLE:	Societies Elections Procedure
PROCEDURE NO.:	OPR P3 Societies Elections Procedure
RELATED POLICY:	OPR 2 Societies Policy
RESPONSIBILITY:	Student Association Vice President of College Affairs and Student Association Vice President of University Affairs
PROCEDURE APPROVED BY:	Student Association Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE:	December 2011
REVISED:	July 2012
REVIEW DATE:	August 2013

INTRODUCTION

In order to fulfill the mandate to elect a president and executive members for each Society at Durham College and UOIT, this procedure is in place to ensure a fair and transparent election process.

DEFINITIONS

SA is the Student Association at Durham College and UOIT.

SCHOOL refers to a group of academic programs under a specific discipline at Durham College.

FACULTY refers to a group of academic programs under a specific discipline at UOIT.

VP refers to the Vice President of College Affairs at Durham College or the Vice President of University Affairs at UOIT, depending on which institution the Society represents.

AVP refers to the Associate Vice President of College Affairs at Durham College or the Associate Vice President of University Affairs at UOIT, depending on which institution the Society represents.

CRO refers to the Chief Returning Officer who oversees the electoral process.

ACM or **All-Candidates Meeting** refers to a meeting held by the VP or AVP with all candidates in attendance either physically or by proxy.

Society President: refers to the elected or acclaimed student president who acts as the highest executive officer of a Society.

Executive (Member): refers to a student position with a distinctive role on a Society who partakes in the Executive branch of their Society. This position is generally responsible for having administrative or supervisory authority in the Society pertaining to carrying out the day-to-day operations of the Society.

PROCEDURE

The following rules and regulations have been set to provide a fair, democratic procedure for the election of Society presidents and executives.

Whether or not a Society has an Elections Policy, the VP or AVP will act as the Society's CRO in any and all Society Elections. This Elections Procedure will act as the rules and regulations of an Election in the event that the Society does not have a procedure themselves.

1.0 COMPLIANCE

Society elections shall be conducted in accordance with by-laws, policies and procedures of the SA. The provisions of this procedure shall apply to those elections conducted by the Society and the candidates within those elections. Where this procedure contradicts with the SA General By-Laws, those governance documents shall prevail. This document shall prevail over all other directives or documents of the Society.

2.0 ELECTION GUIDELINES

Full-time SA staff, SA Officers and SA Board Directors may not be the President or Executive of a Society or sub-society/group.

For the 2012-2013 academic year only, if elected in the 2011-2012 academic year, SA Board Directors may be the President or an Executive of a Society or sub-society/group. After 2012-2013, students may not be an SA Board Director and the President or Executive of a Society or sub-society/group.

For the 2012-2013 academic years only, students may be the President of a Club and Society if their Club and Society has been re-ratified and registered through the appropriate channels and time-lines in October. After this time-frame, students may not be a President of a Club and Society in the same academic year, no exceptions.

ANNUAL ELECTIONS TIMETABLE

- Elections for Society President and Executive positions are to be held once per academic year in the Winter Semester.
- A mandatory All-Candidates meeting must take place between the VP or AVP and the candidates within the closing of the nomination period and the opening of the campaign period.
- A mandatory All-Candidates meeting must take place between the VP or AVP and the candidates within 24 hours of the closing of the voting period.

- The length of the campaign period is determined by the VP or AVP, in advance of the opening of nominations.

*Note: Should a Society wish to have the VP or AVP act as their CRO during their elections but in a different time than established by the VP or AVP they must submit a request in writing outlining the reason and time-frame they wish to have it changed to at least twenty (20) business days prior to the date established. The VP or AVP has the right to deny any request for a change in date due to heavy work load, unreasonable or late requests.

DUTIES OF THE VP OR AVP DURING ELECTIONS

- It will be the duty of the VP or AVP to administer this procedure and to uphold its spirit and principles.
- VP and AVPs cannot run as a candidate in any society election while under contract with the SA.
- VPs and AVPS cannot act as an active supporter for any candidate while under contract with the SA.
- Oversee any society elections that take place during their contract term;
- Be the principal officer and advisor of the election;
- Review and approve all campaign material produced by candidates;
- Recruit and train any volunteers/staff necessary to conduct the election;
- Schedule and oversee the All-Candidate Meeting;
- Act impartially in all matters relating to the administration of the election;
- Ensure that the Election procedures and all other SA and Society policies and procedures as well as the institutional Codes of Conducts are enforced; and
- Authorize all election notices, publicity and campaign materials.

COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

Any complaints made during the process of an election must be dealt with by the VP or AVP. If a complaint is made regarding the AVP's conduct, it must be brought to the VP. If a complaint is made about the VP's conduct, it must be brought to the SA President.

3.0 CANDIDATE INFORMATION

NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

A nomination form shall be valid if it is complete, accurate and submitted by the candidate prior to the closing of nominations. Third party nominations are prohibited. Each candidate for the position of Society President shall be nominated in accordance with the Society Constitution. If the Society does not have a Constitution or Elections Policy, the following will act as nomination guidelines:

The candidate for Society President must present a transcript that matches the requirements of a minimum 60% GPA (2.0).

When possible, candidates will be notified that their nomination form is deficient or incomplete before the nomination deadline to permit resubmission. It is the responsibility of the candidate to submit a nomination form with an honest representation of information.

ACCLAMATIONS

A position shall be deemed to be acclaimed if only one candidate runs for the open position.

WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATES

A candidate may withdraw from the election if their withdrawal is submitted to and accepted by the VP or AVP twenty-four (24) hours before the voting period begins.

VACANCIES

In the event that a Society President is vacant, the VP or AVP will call a by-election (if possible) to fill the vacant position, or, recruit a President through an interview process as approved by the SA President.

4.0 CAMPAIGNING AND EXPENDITURES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

All forms of campaign advertising, the distribution and/or posting of any materials designed and/or likely to influence voters/speeches and public forums, cannot take place prior to campaign period.

It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that their campaign, tactics, materials and advertisements conform to all Society and SA policies and procedures, institutional Codes of Conduct, residence policies and all applicable laws. Candidates must be aware of public and private by-laws and rules. It is the responsibility of each candidate to understand all information provided at the All-Candidates Meeting.

Any complaints received regarding off-campus may result in penalties at the discretion of VP or AVP. Candidates shall campaign with proper consideration of fairness, ethics, respect and a sense of fellowship with other candidates.

CAMPAIGNING AND LIMITATIONS

Campaigning will commence within twenty-four (24) hours following the first All-Candidates Meeting, beginning at 9 a.m. the following day, and ending at the closing of the voting period.

The VP or AVP will be responsible for determining whether any specific action or medium is deemed to be campaigning. The VP, AVP, SA Officers, or SA staff may not campaign for any candidate.

Campaigning cannot take place in any SA spaces or offices including, but not limited to: EP Taylor's Pub, the Student Centre, SA Club and Study Space Portable, the SA bulletin boards, stairwells, the "Living Wall" in UA West Atrium (South wall in Atrium, between classrooms), columns, and doors, exterior of buildings and the SA Library Den. The VP or AVP may use their personal discretion for Campaigning on Riot Radio space. If the VP or AVP allows it, each candidate must be given equal air time.

Other spaces where campaigning is restricted include, but are not limited to: classrooms, labs, boardrooms, seminar rooms, prayer rooms, cafeterias, the library, and any institutional administration offices. Further restrictions will be stated at the All-Candidates Meeting.

MATERIALS

All campaign material and/or advertisements require approval by the VP or AVP in advance of distribution. All printed materials must be printed in full quantities and submitted to the VP or AVP and will only be stamped with the SA logo upon approval. The use of Durham College and/or UOIT institutional logos is prohibited.

All materials may only contain the information that is relevant to the election as determined by the VP or AVP.

Candidates are encouraged to use recyclable materials wherever possible. All printed materials must contain the sentence, "Please Recycle after the Election."

Laminated materials, lawn signs, posters, and banners are prohibited. Plasma screens are not available for use during elections.

All materials must be removed within forty-eight (48) hours of the closing of the voting period.

EXPENDITURES

To receive reimbursement for campaign expenses, candidates must submit a Campaign Expense Form within five (5) business days to the VP or AVP. Candidates will be reimbursed up to a maximum of fifty (\$50) dollars and original receipts must be attached with the Campaign Expense Form. Specific deadlines and maximum expense information will be given at the All-Candidates meeting.

Expenses will be evaluated at fair market value based on major competitors. For the purposes of printing, this will be evaluated based on the prices of the Artist Den. Price evaluations for all goods in question will be those prices available with a company or an employee of a company regardless of affiliation or lack thereof.

All campaign donations must be brought to the attention of the VP or AVP and included in the Campaign Expense Form to be submitted by each candidate. Donated materials will be assigned a dollar value

based on fair market value by the VP or AVP and calculated as campaign expenses. They will not be considered in the calculation of a refund against election expenditures.

The VP or AVP may request original receipts for expenditures from any candidate prior to the closing of voting. Alcoholic beverages will not be considered a legitimate campaign expense.

5.0 BALLOTS AND VOTING

Every student is entitled to one (1) vote for the representatives of each School or Faculty they belong to, as set out in the SA By-Laws.

BALLOT FORMAT

Ballots will indicate the name of each candidate, listed in alphabetical order by last name. Only the legal name of candidates, those listed in student records or reasonable derivations thereof may appear on the ballot, as approved by the VP or AVP.

All votes will be cast as secret ballots online through a link on the SA website. Under special circumstances approved by the VP or AVP, paper ballots may be used.

ELECTION RESULTS

A candidate will be deemed the winner of the position if they have received the largest number of votes for the position. In the event of a tie, the winner will be decided through a by-election.

The VP or AVP will call a final All-Candidates Meeting to announce the winner of the election within twenty-four (24) hours of the closing of the voting period. Appeals of final results can be submitted to the SA President within twenty-four (24) hours of the results being announced.

6.0 VIOLATIONS, DISQUALIFICATIONS AND APPEALS

The VP or AVP have the sole authority to institute penalties for candidates not abiding by the Societies Election Procedure. If the VP or AVP have not ruled on a given issue, the SA President will render a decision.

Failure to correct violations within stated time included with a violation notice may lead to immediate disqualification.

VIOLATIONS

Potential violations of election procedure include, but are not limited to:

- Anyone improperly declared an eligible candidate;
- Failure to attend or send a delegate to the All-Candidates Meetings;

- Any candidate spending over the maximum spending limit as set by this procedure or failing to submit a Campaign Expense Report;
- Any campaign material found around campus forty-eight (48) hours after voting has closed.
- Misrepresentation of campaign expenditures;
- Solicitation of Durham College or UOIT Administration to interfere in the Election Process. Solicitation of Interference includes, but is not limited to: actions that encourage the Durham College or UOIT Administration to apply pressure on the VP or AVP or Election Officials to make or change specific decisions, interference in the voting or ballot counting process, withholding vital election documents such as voters list and ballot boxes, and withholding SA funds.

In the event a winning candidate in any election is disqualified, the runner-up with the next highest number of votes for that position will take the place of the disqualified winner.

VIOLATION ALLEGATIONS

Only eligible voters, with some exceptions as determined by the VP or AVP can allege violations of the Election procedure. Allegations of violations of this procedure shall be submitted directly to the VP or AVP or office of the VP or AVP in person. Such allegations must be made within one (1) business day of the alleged infraction being known to the complainant.

DECISIONS OF THE VP AND AVP

Once a complaint is filed, the VP or AVP shall order the suspension of the activity in question until a ruling is given. The VP or AVP may use any and all resources necessary and available to reach a decision.

The VP or AVP shall render a written decision via institutional email within one (1) business day of receiving the complaint. It is the responsibility of all candidates to be aware of, and be compliant with, the decisions of the VP or AVP.

PUBLICATION OF OUTCOMES

Regardless of the outcome of a decision of the VP or AVP rulings will be posted outside the VP or AVP's office, and the parties involved will be notified by email once all appeals have been exhausted.

APPEALS

Appeals of a VP or AVP position will be made to their direct supervisor. For the AVP, appeals will be made to the VP. For the VP, appeals will be made to the SA President.

Appeals of decisions made by the VP or AVP must be done in writing and submitted to the appropriate supervisor. Appeals of decisions of the VP or AVP must be made within one (1) business day of the decision being issued. Appeals beyond this timeframe will be denied. Appeals will render a written decision via institutional email within one (1) business day of receiving the appeal. Written decisions shall be communicated publicly and to all affected parties, including the complainant(s) and the accused.

Once an appealed decision has been made, it shall be final and not open to be appealed again. It is the responsibility of all candidates to be aware of, and compliant with the decisions of all appeals.

7.0 EXCEPTIONS

Any exception to this procedure must be documented and approved by the SA Leadership Team.

8.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The VP for the applicable institution is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is enforced and that any exceptions to this procedure are documented and approved.