

USG Election Policy
(3/11/16) updated 1/30/17

Article I

Election Responsibilities

Section 1: The Universities at Shady Grove(USG) Student Council(SC) elections will be coordinated by the Office of Student Services(OSS) in conjunction with program directors, coordinators or institution designees from the following Partner Universities; Salisbury University, Towson University, UMBC, University of Baltimore, University of Maryland, Baltimore, University of Maryland, College Park, University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, University of Maryland, University College.

Section 2: USG OSS Election Duties will include:

- A. Impartially encourage active student involvement in the election process.
- B. Coordinate the election process and policy to include setting minimum candidate qualifications
- C. Post and maintain the USG Election Policy on the Office of Student Services- Student Council website
- D. Create and distribute Candidate Application template to all program directors, coordinators or institution designees
- E. Send notification to approved candidates upon receipt of their approved application from their respective program director, coordinator or institution designee
- F. Hold information sessions for all candidates, at which all related procedures and policies will be reviewed.
- G. Have discretionary powers to interpret election policy and report any potential conduct violations to respective home institution program director, coordinator and/or designated institution representative.
- H. Create and maintain a voting platform as well as tabulate and announce voting results.
- I. Develop a schedule for the election year cycle, with campaigning and elections occurring in April and the installment of the new USG-SC by the second Monday of May.

Section 3: The program directors, coordinators or institutions designee duties include:

- A. Promote and recruit students to run for positions on the USG-SC
- B. Identify and communicate main election contacts for each institution and/or program to the Office of Student Services by the start of the spring semester.
- C. Endorse and encourage participation in the USG-SC elections
- D. Send the voting ballot to students enrolled in their respective programs hosted at USG on the agreed upon date
- E. Review and verify all potential candidates (GPA, enrollment, valid signatures)
- F. Uphold agreed upon minimum candidate qualifications
- G. Set and communicate appropriate additional institution specific candidate requirements to the Office of Student Services
- H. Update, distribute and collect all Candidate Applications and submit all valid applications to the Office of Student Services by the agreed upon deadline.
- I. Uphold the Rules and Regulations of the USG Election Policy.
- J. Provide feedback and suggestions to current election policy and schedule
- K. Report any election violations or concerns to respective campus conduct offices as well as the Office of Student Services.

Section 4: Duties of the seated Student Council include:

- A. Promote the USG-SC, encourage students to run for positions as well as vote.
- B. Be knowledgeable of and regularly review USG Election Policy.
- C. Remain focused on their elected/appointed duties throughout and after the Election season, remaining dedicated to the student body representing them in a professional manner.

- D. Provide and maintain neutral USG-SC meetings, Town Halls and web presence. USG-SC meetings must be free from active campaigning including but not limited to campaign signs, t-shirts, or other paraphernalia endorsing candidates.

Article II

Election Administration

Section 1: The annual election of USG SC Institutional Representatives (IR) will occur each spring semester in order to elect two undergraduate IR's from each of the following partner institutions: Salisbury University, Towson University, UMBC, University of Baltimore, University of Maryland, Baltimore, University of Maryland, College Park, University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, and University of Maryland University College.

Section 2: In order to be a candidate for the elections, the following minimum qualifications must be met:

- A. Any person seeking a USG-SC IR position must be enrolled in an undergraduate program offered at USG.
- B. Students need to be enrolled minimum of 6 USG on site credits and have at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average in their program at the time of their candidacy.
- C. Any person seeking a position must be in good academic and judicial standing with their respective institution.
- D. Any person seeking an USG-SC IR position must be able to fulfill all IR requirements as outlined in the USG SC By-laws.
- E. Any person seeking an SC position must have met with their program director, coordinator or designated institution representative to declare their candidacy, have all qualifications above verified, and submit their Candidate application.
- F. Any person seeking a position must be available to attend a full day summer retreat, barring extenuating circumstances.
- G. Appeals for exceptions to the any of the above criteria may be directed to the Director of the Office of Student Services and will be considered on a case by case basis

Section 3: Candidate Applications may be obtained from a program director, coordinator or designated institution representative. They will be made available at least five weeks before the first day of voting. Candidate Applications must be submitted to the Office of Student Services by the respective program director, coordinator or institution representative by 4:00 p.m. at least 10 calendar days prior to the first Election Day.

Section 4: A candidate's name will only go on the ballot once per election.

Section 5: All campaign rules are applicable upon confirmation of their candidacy which will come from the Office of Student Services.

Section 6: The Office of Student Services will publish USG-SC election deadlines, related policies and guidelines on Connect@USG and the USG-SC website which is maintained by the Office of Student Services.

Section 7: Voting will be conducted online beginning at 9 a.m. on the first day of voting and concluding at 7 p.m. on the last day of voting. The voting period will span a total of 7 days.

Section 8: Election Polling Information

- A. The Office of Student Services may sponsor polls throughout campus to promote voting. Candidates will be notified of the locations before elections.
- B. No candidates may work at the polls.

- C. No person working at the polls may actively or passively endorse a candidate while working the polls.
- D. Only current members of the USG-SC that are completing their SC term in the current semester, may work at the polls.
- E. If there are not enough volunteers to work the polls, the Office of Student Services reserves the right to pay students to work the polls.
- F. Polls may be open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day at various locations to help promote the election.
- G. Candidates may not set up independent voting stations to encourage voting or allow students to use the candidate's personal property to cast their vote.

Section 9: The 2 IR candidates receiving the highest number of votes per institution will be declared elected. If two or more candidates receive the same number of votes and result in a tie for one or more representative positions finalists will be declared and an abbreviated second round of voting will occur. In the case that a clear winner is still not able to be established there will be a closed vote of the current USG-SC conducted within one week of the close of the election and an Institutional Representative will be appointed.

Section 10: In the case that an institution fails to fill one or both IR seats, at-large representative(s) may be appointed by the current seated student council within one week of the close of the election. At-large representatives will be selected from candidates that received the next highest number of votes from their respective institutions. At-large candidates will serve as an active representative of their assigned institution.

Section 11: There are no provisions for write-in candidates.

Section 12: Students must maintain minimum candidate eligibility requirements each semester that they are serving as an IR.

Section 13: The results will be announced the Monday following the close of the elections, allowing the Office of Student Services to review and tally the ballots. Within one day after the announcements, a copy of the breakdown of votes will be available in the Office of Student Services office to program directors, coordinators, institution designees and candidates. General results will be posted on the Student Council bulletin board, Connect@USG, and in the following Monday edition of USG Weekly.

Article III

Campaign Regulations

Section 1: All candidates are responsible for adhering to election policies. Candidates are responsible to uphold election policy from the time they submit their candidate application.

- A. Confirmed candidates may begin formal campaigning activity at 9am the Monday following the close of the candidate application pending candidate confirmation. Technological campaigning may begin immediately upon confirmation of the candidate.
- B. Formal campaigning is defined as any written or printed statement supporting any candidate including but not limited to emails, flyers and text messages.
- C. Technological campaigning includes but is not limited to the usage of Facebook, AIM, YouTube, Twitter, the development of websites, and e-mail for the purpose of promoting one's candidacy.

Section 2:

All confirmed candidates will receive a set copy allowance from the USG Copy Center. It is up to the discretion of the candidate whether they would like to utilize personal resources for this campaign but the amount utilized by candidates should not exceed \$100.

Article IV

Voting

Section 1: All students enrolled in an undergraduate program hosted at USG during the election period will be eligible to vote in the USG-SC elections.

- A. All eligible voters will be emailed a ballot which they can complete and submit at any time during the voting timeframe.
- B. Ballots will include all confirmed candidates of the voters respective institution and require that the voter choose the two candidates they would like to serve as their institution representatives
- C. Students will be required to provide a valid USG ID number to screen for eligibility
- D. Each enrolled student is permitted to cast only one vote

Article V

Election Policy Rules

Section 2: If a USG Election Policy rule is violated USG reserves the right to suspend campaign privileges or disqualify candidates from the USG election cycle. In the event that a potential conduct violation is identified during the USG election the respective program director, coordinator, and/or designated institution representative will be notified immediately so that they can determine whether a violation of their home institution conduct policy has occurred. In addition, any damage to USG property or facilities will be immediately reported to the USG Director of Safety and Security.

Tentative Election Timeline Spring 2017:

March 14th - Candidate Applications available through each respective program office and online

March 14th-April 8th- Candidate verifications sent to OSS on a rolling basis

April 8th- FINAL Candidate application deadline

April 10th- Confirmed candidates may begin formal campaigning

April 17th- Final verified candidate names and an email list of eligible voters due to OSS

April 18-25th- Elections held online with some polling stations

May 1st- Winners are announced

May 1-8th- IR positions accepted

May 9th- New SC is confirmed and terms begin

Stipend Structure

To be paid at the conclusion of each semester as long as obligations are met. Compensation is based on the estimated time commitment of each role calculated at current student staff rate.

President- \$1,000 per semester (5 hours/week)

Vice President- \$750 per semester (3-4 hours/week)

Secretary, Treasurer, and two sub-committee chair positions- \$500 per semester (2-3 hours/week)

General representatives (10) - \$375 per semester (1-2 hours/week)