Lamar University SGA Election Rules

I. Purpose
This document establishes the rules and regulations governing the SGA election process, effective upon approval by the Student Senate. This policy shall be the highest binding authority on the election. The Office of Student Engagement shall serve as the administrators of the election.

II. Definitions and Clarifications
A. Bribery
Offering or promising any eligible voter a monetary incentive or a gift of any financial value for the purpose of inducing said person to vote or refrain from voting for or against any candidate. Any Candidate or Representative of a Candidate found guilty of bribery shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Commission.

B. Misrepresentation
Communicating information that the communicator either knows to be false, or upon reasonable efforts could know to be false, to any voter other than the person that the information is about for the purpose of inducing any person to vote or refrain from voting and/or to undermine proper Election Commission activities. Any Candidate or Representative of a Candidate found guilty of misrepresentation will be subject to disciplinary action by the Commission.

C. Sabotage
Damaging, destroying, removing, or undermining in some way proper campaign and/or Election commission activities with the purpose of assisting or harming a candidate and/or to subvert an election or referendum. Any Candidate or Representative of a Candidate found guilty of sabotage shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Commission.

D. Election commission advisor
The Chief Student Affairs Officer and Ex-Officio Advisor to the Student Government Association (SGA) or his/her designee shall be the Election Commission Advisor. He or she shall serve as ex-officio with voice, but not vote, in all Election Commission meetings.

E. Formal campaigning
Electronic or physical posting or distribution of campaign tokens and/or literature advertising candidacy in mass or student media, or conducting campaign activities that require scheduling through the University or that use University equipment.
F. Mandatory candidate meetings
Meetings which are conducted under the discretion of the Ex-Officio Advisor

G. Handbill
Leaflet of paper which is handed out and not affixed to permanent objects

III. Election Commission
In order to maintain the highest degree of impartiality and fairness, all SGA elections shall be conducted by a neutral Election Commission known as the “SGA Election Commission” or “Election Commission”.

A. Authority
Decisions regarding SGA Elections that are charged to the Ex-Officio Advisor, Chief Student Engagement Officer or designee, when in accordance with this document, and the SGA Constitution/Bylaws, shall be binding. The SGA shall have no authority over the Election Commission other than that stated herein.

B. Requirements
Election Commission Applicants must:
1) Be a currently enrolled full-time LU student
2) Not be on academic probation
3) All applicants must sign and agree to uphold all requirements of their appointed office

C. Commission
1) Voting Members
The Commission shall contain five appointed members in addition to the Chairperson and non-voting Advisor as specified in the SGA Constitution.

2) Chairperson
The sitting SGA Vice-President shall serve as Chairman of the Election Commission. Given the circumstance that the SGA Vice-President chooses to run in an election, he/she shall forfeit his/her participation in the Election Commission. The new Chairman shall be appointed by the President with a 2/3 vote by the Senate.

3) Selection Process
The Ex-Officio Advisor is responsible for overseeing the process of appointments of voting members of the Election Commission to be executed at his/her discretion. The Ex-Officio Advisor can remove any
member who is deemed to have a significant conflict of interest in the election. Members must receive Senate approval by a 2/3 vote.

4) Vacancies
The Chairman of the Election Commission shall have the power to appoint temporary commissioners from the Student Body to replace members who for some reason cannot fulfill their duties as approved by the Senate with a 2/3 vote.

5) Vice-President Ineligibility
In the case that the Vice-President either plans on being a candidate or campaign staff member in the election, he/she must relinquish his/her appointment duties. A replacement must be appointed by the President of SGA and approved by the Senate with a 2/3 vote.

D. Powers
The Election Commission shall have the power to:

1) Interpret, and uphold the policies and provisions of documents affecting the election process.

2) Recommend to the Ex-Officio Advisor or appointed advisor sanctions of any candidate based on a violation of election rules or regulations and to reconsider such sanctions. Sanctions may range from warnings to disqualifications.

3) Have the power to adopt provisions affecting the Election Process so long as they do not conflict with the Constitution, By-Laws, and any other Executive orders or Legislation of the Student Government Association.

Additionally, the Chairman of the Election Commission shall:

1) Serve as the voice of the Election Commission, but not single-handedly determine Election Commission policy.

2) Interpret the parliamentary rules with regards to the Election Commission as set for in the By-laws.

E. Ex-Officio Advisor Duties

1) Maintaining records of all candidates

2) Design Ballot. Ballot will be categorized by office. Names will be drawn by the Ex-Officio advisor in alphabetical order.
3) Filing a statement signed by the candidate indicating knowledge of and agreement to comply with all election rules and regulations

4) Advertising SGA elections and establishing/ensuring that deadlines for applications are publicly announced in advance.

F. Election Chairman Duties
1) Representing the SGA in any dispute arising with a candidate regarding SGA elections
   i. Ensuring public awareness of the election
   ii. Maintaining the integrity of all those involved in the elections process through confidentiality
   iii. Preside over Election Commission meetings

G. Candidate Affiliation
No Election Commission member may campaign, serve as a campaign staff member, give or take bribes, or commit sabotage. Any Election Commission member found guilty of any of these shall be removed from the Election Commission by action of the Election Commission Advisor.

H. Meetings
Meeting may be called by the Chairman. A quorum of simple majority must be established for decision to be binding.

IV. Campaign Requirements
A. Campaigning
1) Campaigning shall be defined as any public soliciting of votes for a particular candidate, slate of candidates, or issues involved in the election concerned.

2) Campaigning shall begin at the close of the last Election Rules Meeting.

3) All candidates shall be liable for the actions and remarks of their campaign staff.

4) All university building posting guidelines must be adhered to.

5) No campaigning or campaign signs 25 feet in front of an official election booth station.

6) Candidates, campaign managers, campaign workers, and any individuals shall refrain from actions and remarks that will be in any way detrimental, defamatory, ridicule, or embarrass any individual. The Election Commission reserves the right to refer any violators to the Office of Student Engagement for disciplinary action.
7) Usage of the SGA Office for purposes of printing campaign materials, signs, or handbills, as well as any other campaigning shall be strictly prohibited.
8) No SGA representative such may campaign in any classroom or academic event in which he/she has the power to alter, mark, or assign any sort of grade, including extra credit.
9) All university-wide elections may use media for campaigning, in accordance with the restrictions of this code.
10) The use of sidewalk chalk is prohibited.
11) Candidates shall have 1 week to clean up on campus all campaigning material

V. Appeals
In order to maintain the highest degree of impartiality and fairness, all SGA elections appeals shall be handled by the Assistant Vice-President for Student Engagement, Chief Student Engagement Officer and Ex-Officio Advisor or his/her designee.

A. Campaign Grievances
Appeals of the election results must be made within 24 hours of the posting of the results. Unless appealed, election results shall become legally binding 24 hours after they are publicly announced.
1) Appeals shall be made directly to the Chief Student Engagement Officer and Ex-Officio Advisor or his/her designee through OrgSync Document: Elections Appeals
2) Chief Student Engagement Officer and Ex-Officio Advisor or his/her designee will review the appeal and decision will be binding.

B. Application
1) Candidate Obligations
    All candidates for office shall:
    i. Completely fill out the application form
    ii. Attend all of the mandatory candidate meetings
    iii. Follow all University and SGA policies

C. Results
1) Notification
    The Ex-Officio Advisor, Chief Student Engagement Officer or designee shall notify candidates by telephone as soon as possible after the results have been verified. A candidate may request an alternative means of notification before the close of the polls. Election results will be made
public through OrgSync and the University Press will be contacted within 24 hours of certification of election results.

2) Certification
After the polls have been closed for 24 hours without any pending appeals, the Chief Student Affairs Officer and Ex-Officio Advisor or his/her designee must certify the final results of the election.

D. Run-off Elections
In the event that no candidate receives more than 50% of the total votes cast before the designated closure of the election polls for any contested office, a run-off election shall be held one week after the original election. The SGA Election Policy shall apply to all run-off elections. Only the individuals receiving the top two numbers of votes cast shall participate in the run-off election.

E. Resignation Prior to Swearing-In
In the event that a candidate-elect decides not to confirm his/her seat prior to swearing-in, the candidate with the next highest number of votes shall be declared the winner and receive the seat.