General Candidate Seminar

2020 Student Body Elections
About the Student Government Association (SGA)

- SGA shall be the organized voice for each student of the University of Georgia;
- Shall protect students’ rights;
- Shall serve as a liaison between students, administrators, and organized governing bodies of the University;
- Shall foster an environment of civic responsibility;
- And shall advocate on behalf of the students’ academic, social, and cultural welfare.

- All students are members
- Meets Tuesday nights
About SGA Elections

- Each spring, every Senate seat is up for election (schools and colleges, at-large, and campus life)
- Also, Executive Officers are up for election (ticket of President, VP, and Treasurer)
- Enforced and administered by the Elections Committee
- Governed by the Elections Code
- Guided by the Elections Timeline
Elections Code

- Link
2020 Elections Timeline

- Link
Incumbent Senator Information

- Information from an incumbent senator to describe the duties of being a senator
Submitting Forms

- bit.ly/sgaelections2020
- Statement of Intent Form
- Staff Roster
- Financial Disclosure Form
- Endorsement Form
- Campaign Identifying Mark Submission
Campaigning

- May only be done during the Campaign Period (Feb. 17 at midnight – Feb. 26 at noon)
- Campaigning shall be defined as any and all actions intentionally undertaken with the purpose of promoting, publicizing, and securing support for a candidate(s) and/or Ticket, including dissemination of campaign materials and social media postings, as defined by the Elections Committee.
- “Campaign material” shall be defined as an advertisement, document, or other medium that is intentionally disseminated with the intent to promote the electoral prospect of a particular candidate, Ticket, or other electoral matter. Campaign material shall include, but shall not be limited to the following:
  - An electoral advertisement; A printed or digital document containing an electoral matter (a how-to-vote card, a candidate or party platform, etc.); Any posting on any social media or traditional media platform intended to promote a candidate, Ticket, or other electoral matter.
    - These platforms include, but are not limited to privately acquired websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, GroupMe, etc.
    - “Postings” include, but are not limited to Facebook status updates, tweets, Instagram posts or stories, Snapchat stories, GroupMe messages, etc.
  - Any fund solicitation (permitted after approval of Intent Form)
Campaign Staff and Personnel (Chapter 706)

- Staff members are an extension of the campaign and candidate(s), so a candidate(s) will be held responsible for staff activity and actions.

- Active Representation
  - "Active representation" includes all methods of campaigning and representation previously mentioned, but active representation does not include people whose only campaign involvement or participation has been through social media posts.
  - MUST be registered with the Staff Roster; Unregistered staff activity is not allowed.

- All additions to the Staff Roster must be made no later than 24 hours before the beginning of the Voting Period (Sunday, Feb. 23, at 8 a.m.)
  - Staff members may still be removed after this deadline.

- Designated Staff Members
  - People who submit specific forms to the Elections Committee; candidates may list themselves as DSMs
  - Are the only people authorized to perform specific tasks; can do more tasks, but these are min. Requirements
  - Primary Liaison – submits Staff Roster, Endorsement Forms, Ident. Mark
  - Financial Liaison – submits all Financial Disclosure Forms (Pt. I, II, and III) ($200 maximum)
  - Chief Counsel – submits all Complaints and Appeals; liaison to Elections CMTE; representation in hearings
    - Associate Counsel
Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals (Chapter 712)

- If a student suspects or has evidence of a campaign violation committed by a candidate(s) for office or their campaign, that student may file a complaint.
  - Filed on the “Forms” section of the EC’s Involvement Network page.
  - If there is a Chief Counsel, they are the only ones who can file on behalf of a campaign
    - Representation: Chief Counsel required to attend; candidates may attend, and may at times be required; Associate Counsel (up to two) can also attend and represent the campaign
    - Must be registered as such, and no other people can represent a campaign in a hearing
- Complainant is responsible for appearing in any resulting hearing to represent their position before the Committee with the individual(s) accused of wrongdoing
  - No anonymous complaints
- Committee responds in two school days by dismissing or calling a hearing.
  - Dismissal: submitted after the election results are certified, lack of jurisdiction, no cause of action stated, submitted in bad faith, lack of evidence or refusal to appear and elaborate via hearing
  - Hearings: If case is not dismissed, a hearing is called.
Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals (cont.)

- Hearings
  - Format determined by Committee so that all parties are represented equally and where necessary information is given to make a decision.
    - Will be informed of format beforehand.
  - Committee sets date, time, and place.
  - Open to public; deliberations occur in private
  - Complainant has burden of proof.
  - Ignorance is no defense.
  - May not lie to Committee or obstruct an investigation or try to pressure the members.
  - Majority of Committee required for decision.
  - Decision of the Elections Committee is sent out as soon as possible after deliberation.
Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals (cont.)

- Appeals
  - As per Chapter 712.12 of the Elections Code, any original complainant/defendant of a hearing may petition the Supreme Court to hear their case for an appeal of the decision of the Elections Committee if the petitioning party believes that the Committee did not adhere to the Elections Code and/or other governing documents in making its decision.
    - Must cite **specific ways** in which the appellant feels the Committee did not adhere to the Code.
    - Intended to dispute performance of Committee, **not** to get a do-over of the hearing.
  - Must be submitted within 24 hours of the Committee’s original decision
    - Emailed to Chief Justice Evan Oliver ([evan.oliver25@uga.edu](mailto:evan.oliver25@uga.edu)) using the Petition for Form found on the Involvement Network or the SGA website
  - Chief Counsel represents appellant; Attorney General represents Committee
  - Same rules as a hearing, but the Supreme Court takes the place of the Elections Committee
  - EC bears the burden of proof.
Remedies and Sanctions (Chapter 712.10)

- Disciplinary options
  - Formal Reprimand
  - Sanction
    - Removal of materials, probation, suspension of campaigning, disqualification
- Committee can take any measures deemed necessary
- 3, 4, 5 Rule for sanctions
- Cannot disobey a ruling or punishment
Communication with the Elections Committee

- All communication (questions, media requests about an electoral matter specifically, etc.) must be conducted with the Attorney General only.
  - Such communication must be through UGA email.
  - EthanPender@uga.edu
  - Do not text, call, social-media message, etc. the Attorney General. He will not respond unless you email at the listed address.
  - Do not communicate with individual members of the Elections Committee. They are busy and have their own tasks to worry about. If you have any questions, the Attorney General is the only point of contact with whom you should connect.
Miscellaneous Things to Know

- You are a student first.
- Adhere to the Timeline – Do NOT campaign before the Campaign Period begins at midnight on Feb. 17.
- All physical campaign materials must possess an identifying mark pre-approved by the Committee.
  - It can be your logo, for example. If it includes any copyrighted iconography of UGA, it will be subject to their regulations for usage.
- The usage of an organization’s private resources for campaigning (listservs, for example) requires the chief officer of that organization to sign an Endorsement Form specifically allowing for that usage.
- Read the Elections Code thoroughly.
- Monitor the 2020 Student Body Elections Drive, which is where all resources, minutes, decisions, filings, etc. will be found. You can go to sga.uga.edu, click “General Information” under the “Elections” tab, scroll down to “Elections Forms,” and click the link that shows access to the Drive.
- Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
Next Steps

- Jan. 17 – Statement of Intent Form
- Jan. 31 – General Filing Deadline
  - Staff Roster; Financial Disclosure, Pt. I (still must fill out if not participating)
  - Any Endorsements accumulated thus far (on rolling basis until end of the election)
  - Campaign identifying mark (if using physical materials, accepted after the GFD)
- Feb. 16 – Financial Disclosure, Pt. II
- Feb. 17-26 – Campaign period
- Feb. 19 – Executive Debate
- Feb. 23 – Final staff additions
- Feb. 24-26 – Voting period and results
- Feb. 27 – Financial Disclosure, Pt. III
- April 6 – Inauguration