

OFFICIAL ELECTIONS COMPLAINT
2019 STUDENT BODY ELECTIONS COMPLAINT FORM

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✓ *Campaign Liaison to a ticket or party*

If you are filing on behalf of a ticket or party, please indicate which ticket or party below:

Empower Executive Ticket

Please detail the nature of your complaint or concern and the specific portion of the Elections Code you feel has been violated. Include all information you find relevant.

A copy of the Elections Code can be found on the Elections Committee org. site on the Involvement Network under the "Documents" section. Please note that the Election Committee may dismiss a complaint for the following:

- If the Elections Committee lacks jurisdiction over the subject or a party in the dispute.
- If the complaint fails to state a cause of action for which relief may be granted.
- If the complaint is not registered in good faith and is primarily for the purpose of harassment.
- Lack of evidence or refusal of the complainant to testify or elaborate via hearing

Cause of action: The ACT Executive Ticket comprising of Asim Ahmed for President, Charley Claudio for Vice President, and Wesley Tillman for Treasurer has violated the SGA Elections Code and potentially the SGA Code of Ethics via the campaign activity of Tarun Ramesh, Editor-in-Chief of the Georgia Political Review and via his behavior in his capacity as a moderator of the SGA Executive Debate.

Articles Violated: SGA Elections Code: Chapter 704, Article 8, Sections A, D, and E; (Potentially: SGA Elections Code: Chapter 704, Article 4, Sections D, E, and F; Chapter 704, Article 8, Section C; Chapter 704, Article 1, Section C; SGA Code of Ethics, Chapter 503, Article 2, Sections A, B, C, E, G, and H)

Explanation: Upon investigation, members of the Empower Executive Ticket and their staff discovered that Tarun Ramesh, Editor-in-Chief of the Georgia Political Review and moderator of the SGA Executive Debate, participated in campaign activity for the ACT Executive Ticket. On Wednesday, Feb. 27 at 11:16 a.m. (roughly seven hours before the SGA Executive Debate), Ramesh sent a text message to Jessica Ma, Executive Director of Roosevelt @ UGA, soliciting an endorsement from Roosevelt for the ACT Executive Ticket. Ramesh asked, "Can asim cop a Roosevelt endorsement? (sic)," to which Ma replied, "we can't do that :((" Ramesh replied, "why. Just read the bylaws." As the conversation continued, Ramesh asked Ma, "Can Roosevelt do a similar thing [to sharing an article as Ramesh claims Foundation Fellows/Ramsey did]," to which Ma replied, "sorry I just don't think it would be in line with our org commitment to nonpartisanship."

This solicitation of support for the ACT Executive Ticket falls under the category of campaigning as defined by Chapter 704, Article 1, Section A, which states that, "Campaigning shall be defined as any and all actions intentionally undertaken with the purpose of promoting, publicizing, and securing support for a candidate(s) as defined by the Elections Committee."

Furthermore, if Ramesh is in fact a registered staff member of the ACT Executive Campaign, he acted in a way that violates the SGA Code of Ethics and SGA Elections Code in his capacity as moderator of the SGA Executive Debate on Wednesday, Feb. 27, where he would have knowingly participated as a partisan and biased individual in a situation which calls for and is expected to uphold non-partisan behavior. In this situation, Ramesh acted unethically, which means that, should he be a registered staff member of the ACT Ticket, the ACT Ticket by extension and association acted unethically, as well. His article posted on the Georgia Political Review on Friday, March 1, titled "GPR review of the SGA Ticket Debate" (<http://georgiapoliticalreview.com/gpr-review-of-the-sga-ticket-debate/>), includes what could be considered to be disparaging and misleading content designed to damage the character of the candidates of the Empower Executive Ticket. This claim centers mostly around his assertion that, "[Empower Presidential Candidate Rachel] Byers expressed that SGA would always act as a conduit for the majority of student voices...This mentality could be potentially dangerous for students of color at the University, who not only make up a minority of students, but are also less active in Greek organizations." This statement insinuates that Empower's election would put students of color in harm's way, which is a false and hurtful assertion aimed only to scare communities of color on campus and to impugn the integrity of the Empower Executive Ticket.

Due to the obvious solicitation by Ramesh for an endorsement from Roosevelt @ UGA, and due to the obvious breach of ethics of a potential staff member's moderating a debate containing his supported ticket and his publication of a disparaging article via a non-partisan political magazine designed to impugn the Empower Executive Ticket, the Empower Executive Ticket believes that the ACT Executive Ticket has violated the SGA Elections Code, (and potentially the SGA Code of Ethics) in one of two ways:

- 1.) In the event that Ramesh is **not** a registered staff member for the ACT Executive Ticket, the ACT Ticket has violated the SGA Code of Elections, specifically Chapter 704, Article 8, Sections A, D, and E. These parts of the Elections Code state: "a. All individuals who are actively representing an individual or party are considered to be staff and must be registered with a Statement of Intent or Party Affiliation. ... d. All individuals participating as campaign staff must be registered with the Elections Committee no later than 24 hours before the beginning of the voting period. e. The participation of unregistered staff members will result in disciplinary action from the Elections Committee." Ramesh has participated in campaign activity in a way that would lead the recipient of his message to believe that he is actively representing the ACT Ticket, which is consistent with the definition of*

“campaigning” referenced in the above paragraph and defined by the SGA Elections Code. By this definition from the Elections Code, Ramesh was not registered with proper documentation, and he participated as an unregistered staff member, which calls for disciplinary action.

- 2.) *In the event that Ramesh is, in fact, a registered staff member for the ACT Executive Ticket, the ACT Ticket has violated the SGA Code of Ethics, specifically, Chapter 503, Article 2, Sections A, B, C, E, G, and H, which state: “503.2 The following expectations apply to all members of the Student Government Association. Active members shall: a. Conduct themselves at all times in a manner that shall reflect positively on the Student Government Association and the University of Georgia. b. Be loyal to the highest ethical principles and to the Student Government Association oath of office. c. Uphold the Oath of Office, Constitution, Statutes, and all governing documents of the Student Government Association, in addition to the University of Georgia Student Code of Conduct...e. Maintain the appropriate attitude and level of professionalism regarding their duties and to perform them with the best interests of the students in mind. ... g. Never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone, and never accept for themselves favors or benefits under circumstances which might be interpreted by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of their governmental duties. h. Uphold the principles, ever conscious that a Student Government Association office is a public trust of the student body, of the University of Georgia.”*

Furthermore, as per Chapter 704, Article 8, Section B of the SGA Elections Code, “Candidates and parties are responsible for the actions of their staff.”

By this standard, the ACT Executive Ticket must be held accountable for the actions of Ramesh, who acted as a representation of and under instruction by the ACT Executive Ticket, which is comprised of three active members of SGA. Thus, Ramesh and the ACT Executive Ticket did not conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on SGA and on the University of Georgia, did not behave in a way that is loyal to the highest ethical principles and to the SGA oath of office (which states that the individuals “do hereby affirm that [they] will faithfully support and defend the Constitution and all other governing documents of the Student Government Association [including the Elections Code],” did not uphold said oath of office and governing documents (including the Elections Code), did not maintain the appropriate level of professionalism becoming of an active member of SGA, did discriminate unfairly by dispensing/accepting special favors/privileges that could be interpreted to influence their performance, and they did not uphold the principles of the University. The ACT Executive Ticket has herein also violated the SGA Elections Code, specifically Chapter 704, Article 4, Section F, which

states that "All candidates, staff, parties, and tickets will abide by the Student Government Association's Code of Ethics as defined in this document," as well as Chapter 704, Article 8, Section C, which states: "Campaign staff will adhere to the Student Government Association's Code of Ethics, the Elections Code, and the University of Georgia's Code of Conduct."

Furthermore, in the event that Ramesh is a registered staff member of the ACT Executive Ticket, the ACT Campaign has also violated Chapter 704, Article 4, Sections D and E of the Elections Code, which state, "d. No candidate or any individual working on a campaign may intentionally damage the character of another candidate, staff member, or Elections Committee member with false information. e. No candidate or any individual working on a campaign may disseminate campaign materials or postings containing false or misleading information about a candidate, staff member, Elections Committee member, or party." This conclusion is based on Ramesh's debate "review" posted on the Georgia Political Review website and linked in an above paragraph.

Furthermore, in the event that Ramesh is a registered staff member of the ACT Executive Ticket, the ACT Ticket has also violated Elections Code Chapter 704, Article 1, Section C, which states: "All candidates and registered staff members will be accountable for adhering to the campaign guidelines, as defined in this section. Failure to adhere to said guidelines will result in disciplinary action, as defined by the Elections Committee."

In conclusion, the Empower Executive Ticket believes that the ACT Executive Ticket has committed multiple violations of the SGA Elections Code, and potentially, the SGA Code of Ethics, including SGA Elections Code: Chapter 704, Article 8, Sections A, D, and E; (Potentially: SGA Elections Code: Chapter 704, Article 4, Sections D, E, and F; Chapter 704, Article 8, Section C; Chapter 704, Article 1, Section C; SGA Code of Ethics, Chapter 503, Article 2, Sections A, B, C, E, G, and H).

Due to these violations, the Empower Executive Ticket seeks that immediate legal disciplinary measures be imposed on the ACT Executive Ticket comprising of Asim Ahmed for President, Charley Claudio for Vice President, and Wesley Tillman for Treasurer.