



# **ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

## *Student Government Association*

### **Elections Code**

Author: Danielle Zeitlin, Attorney General

Sponsor: Joe Eustace, Senate President

### *Table of Contents*

#### **REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFICE**

*ch. 700 – Candidates*

*ch. 701 – Elections Timeline*

*ch. 702 – Candidate Seminars*

#### **PRE-CAMPAIGN INFORMATION**

*ch. 703 – Filing of Required Documentation*

*ch. 704 – Campaign Staff*

#### **CAMPAIGN REGULATIONS**

*ch. 705 – Campaigns*

*ch. 706 – Ticket Regulations*

#### **ELECTIONS PROCEDURE**

*ch. 707 – Debates*

*ch. 708 – Elections*

*ch. 709 – Referendums, Recall Elections, and Constitutional Amendments*

#### **ELECTIONS COMMITTEE AND LEGAL PROCEEDINGS**

*ch. 710 – Elections Committee*

*ch. 711 – Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals*

#### **POST-ELECTIONS INFORMATION**

*ch. 712 – Transition*

*ch. 713 – Inauguration*

## **CHAPTER 700: CANDIDATES**

### **700.1 Executive Candidates**

- a. Shall run as an Executive Ticket composed of a candidate for President, for Vice President, and for Treasurer.
- b. May serve no more than two (2) terms as either President, Vice President, or Treasurer.
- c. Must be capable of fulfilling obligations of the office during the summer term.

### **700.2 Senatorial Candidates**

- a. Senator of Schools and Colleges
  - i. Shall be ineligible for the ballot if they terminate their enrollment or fail to enroll in the school or college they seek to represent.

### **700.3 General Requirements and Restrictions**

- a. No person may cross-file for any two (2) or more offices.
- b. All candidates for elected office must abide by the additional requirements and regulations listed in all governing documents of the Student Government Association. A candidate's failure to abide by these requirements shall result in disciplinary action up to and including disqualification.

## **CHAPTER 701: ELECTIONS TIMELINE**

### **701.1 Definition**

The Elections Timeline shall detail exact dates and times of all deadlines and restrictions outlined in the Elections Code."

### **701.2 Regulations**

- a. The Elections Timelines shall be adopted by an absolute majority of the Senate no

later than the first scheduled Senate session of the spring semester.

- b. The Elections Timeline shall be distributed to all candidates at the Candidate Seminars and made public on the SGA website.

### 701.3 Timeline Requirements

- a. The Statement of Intent Form deadline shall be before the General Filing Deadline on a date determined by the Elections Timeline.
- b. The Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form shall be due at the same time as the Statement of Intent Form, as set by the Elections Committee under 701.3(a).
- c. The General Filing Deadline (GFD) shall be set in the Timeline.
- d. The voting period shall begin no later than ten (10) days after the beginning of the campaign period and shall last no longer than five (5) days, including a potential runoff election period.
- e. The dates and times of all mandatory candidate events shall be in the Elections Timeline.

## **CHAPTER 702: CANDIDATE SEMINARS**

### 702.1 Seminars

The Elections Committee shall inform potential candidates of all policies within the Elections Code, distribute the Elections Timeline, and answer questions from potential candidates during the Candidate Seminars.

### 702.2 Executive Candidate Seminar

- a. The Elections Committee and the incumbent Student Government Association President, Vice President, and Treasurer shall thoroughly inform potential executive candidates of the duties of the office to which they seek election.
- b. All potential Executive Candidates are required to attend the Executive Candidate seminar.

### 702.3 General Candidate Seminar

- a. The Elections Committee and incumbent members of the Senate, including members of the Legislative Cabinet and other Senators designated to speak, shall thoroughly inform potential candidates of the duties of the office to which they seek election.
- b. All potential Senatorial Candidates are required to attend the General Candidate Seminar prior to the start of the campaigning period.

#### 702.4 Attendance Policy

- a. Potential candidates who are unable to attend the Candidate Seminars must contact the Attorney General and request an excusal from the Elections Committee for the following reasons: immediate family death or illness, personal medical emergencies, a university test or mandatory class meeting scheduled during the Candidate Seminar, or a unique and extenuating circumstance evaluated at the discretion of the Elections Committee.
  - i. An absence may only be excused after appropriate documentation has been presented to the Elections Committee.
  - ii. Potential candidates who are absent must also designate an approved agent to attend in their place; this agent must be approved by the Elections Committee in advance.
- b. Failure to attend a Candidate Seminar without proper excusal shall disqualify potential candidates from candidacy, even if other members of their Ticket are present.

### **CHAPTER 703: FILING OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

#### 703.1 Statement of Intent Form

- a. All potential candidates shall file a Statement of Intent Form with the Elections Committee to run for office.
  - i. Before the Elections Committee has approved the Statement of Intent Form for a potential candidate or Executive Ticket, the potential candidate or Ticket is considered a “potential candidate” for an office, and shall only represent

themselves as such.

- ii. After the Elections Committee has approved the Statement of Intent Form for a potential candidate or Executive Ticket, the candidate or Ticket is considered to be “intending to run” for an office, and shall only represent themselves as such.
- b. The Statement of Intent Form shall be posted on the organizational page of the Elections Committee on the University of Georgia Involvement Network.
  - i. An electronic confirmation of receipt shall be sent to the candidate after they have submitted the form online. If no confirmation is received, the candidate must notify the Attorney General within twenty-four (24) hours of initial submission.
- c. The Statement of Intent Form shall include:
  - i. The name of the potential candidate
  - ii. The contact information of the potential candidate including phone number and UGA email address
  - iii. The position for which the candidates intends to run
  - iv. The names and positions of Designated Staff Members
  - v. The contact information of Designated Staff Members including phone number and UGA email addresses.
  - vi. A signed grade-release statement enabling the Elections Committee to check grade qualifications of the potential candidates
  - vii. All social media accounts or handles created for the purpose of campaigning.
- d. A potential Executive Ticket shall only have one (1) Statement of Intent Form submitted on behalf of the entire potential Ticket; this form shall be submitted by the potential Presidential candidate of the Ticket.
- e. The Elections Committee shall be permitted to request alterations to any Statement of Intent Form on the grounds that it conflicts with UGA copyright policy or contains purposefully inflammatory language or harmful messaging directed at any student, student organization, or group of students.
  - i. If an adjustment to a Statement of Intent Form is requested by the Elections Committee, the potential candidate or Executive Ticket shall be given 72 hours

to complete the requested adjustment, and shall be waived of penalties arising from the deadline to submit the Statement of Intent Form.

- f. Failure by a potential candidate or Ticket to submit the Statement of Intent Form by the deadline defined in the Elections Timeline shall result in automatic disqualification of candidacy for the potential candidate or Ticket, unless the Elections Committee finds there to be an extenuating circumstance deserving of leniency.

#### 703.2 Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form

- a. Two (2) or more individual Senatorial candidates wishing to form a Senatorial Ticket under Statute 706.3 must complete a Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form.
  - i. Before the Elections Committee has approved the Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form for a potential Senatorial Ticket, the potential Ticket is considered a “potential Senatorial Ticket” for an office, and shall only represent themselves as such.
- b. The Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form shall include:
  - i. The name of the potential Senatorial Ticket
  - ii. The constituency in which the potential Senatorial Ticket plans to run
  - iii. The names of each individual Senatorial candidate affiliated with the potential Senatorial Ticket
- c. The Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form shall be submitted by each potential Senatorial candidate in the potential Senatorial Ticket.
- d. Failure by a member of a potential Senatorial Ticket to submit the Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form by the deadline defined in the Elections Timeline shall preclude that individual from running on the Senatorial Ticket.
  - i. Individuals who fail to file the Senatorial Ticket Affiliation Form in a proper or timely manner shall be permitted to campaign as individual candidates if their Statement of Intent Form has been approved by the Elections Committee.

#### 703.3 Financial Disclosure Form

- a. The Financial Liaison of each campaign, as identified in the Staff Roster, shall be

required to file all Financial Disclosure Forms on behalf of the candidate or Ticket they represent.

b. Filing Deadlines

- i. Part I of the Financial Disclosure Form shall be due at the GFD, as defined in the Elections Timeline.
  - ii. Part II of the Financial Disclosure Form shall be due prior to the start of the campaign period, at a time defined in the Elections Timeline.
  - iii. Part III of the Financial Disclosure Form shall be due prior to the start of the general election voting period, as defined in the Elections Timeline.
  - iv. Part IV of the Financial Disclosure Form shall be due no later than 24 hours after the certification of the results of the general election or, if a candidate or Ticket is involved in a runoff election, 24 hours after the certification of the results of the runoff election.
- c. Copies of the Financial Disclosure Forms for each candidate and/or Ticket shall be available to the public.
- d. Any discrepancy between receipts provided and expenditures listed may result in a hearing before the Elections Committee and possible disciplinary action. If a hearing is called regarding Senatorial ticket expenditures, tickets should be prepared to provide evidence of which candidate contributed funding for each item.

703.4 Endorsement Forms

- a. No candidate or Ticket, nor any staff member acting on behalf of a candidate or Ticket, shall claim to be endorsed by any student organization unless the candidate or Ticket has secured a written statement of endorsement from the endorsing student organization and presented it to the Elections Committee by use of an official Endorsement Form."
- b. The Endorsement Form shall include:
  - i. The name of the candidate or Ticket being endorsed
  - ii. The name of the student organization making the endorsement
  - iii. The information of the head of the student organization including the individual's name, title, phone number and UGA email address

- iv. A declaration as to whether the candidate, Ticket, or campaign staff acting on behalf of a candidate or Ticket may use student organization resources for the purpose of campaigning, and what those resources may include
  - v. The signature of the head of the student organization making the endorsement, affirming they have read and followed the procedures required for endorsement.
- c. Student organizations that are endorsing a candidate or Ticket without the candidate or Ticket advertising, discussing, or promoting the endorsement do not have to complete an Endorsement Form.
- d. Only registered student organizations may endorse a candidate or Ticket, and may do so in accordance with that organization's bylaws.
  - i. No organization or entity that is not a registered student organization, an approved Ticket, or group of registered campaign staff may attempt to influence the election, support a candidate, or engage in other campaign activity. If a Ticket, member of a Ticket, or member of a campaign staff seeks the support, monetary or otherwise, of an individual or entity not permitted to engage in electioneering, the campaign shall be held liable.
- e. A student organization may rescind their endorsement of a candidate or Ticket at any time by notifying the Attorney General in writing, at which point the endorsement and the Endorsement Form in question shall be invalid.
  - i. The Elections Committee shall notify the impacted candidate or Ticket of the retracted endorsement as soon as possible.
  - ii. After the nullification of the Endorsement Form, the impacted candidate or Ticket must terminate all usage of the student organization's resources, all advertisement, discussion, or promotion of the endorsement by the individual or student organization, and shall delete or eliminate the endorsement in all campaign materials and posting in circulation, except where the Elections Committee identifies an extenuating circumstance deserving of leniency.

#### 703.5 Staff Roster

- a. An intended candidate or Executive Ticket shall, through the Primary Liaison, submit



a full Staff Roster by the GFD."

b. The Staff Roster shall include:

- i. The information of the campaign's Primary Liaison, including name, phone number, and UGA email address.
- ii. The information of the campaign's Financial Liaison, including the name, phone number, and UGA email address.
- iii. The information of the campaign's Chief Counsel, including name, phone number, and UGA email address; and the information of any additional Assistant Counsel who are assembled by the Chief Counsel to join the Legal Team of the campaign.

c. The Staff Roster does not need to be the final interaction of a campaign's staff, but it must truly and completely reflect the staff as of the GFD.

#### 703.6 Failure, Voiding, and Other Penalties

a. Failure by any campaign to submit any required paperwork or documentation by the deadline defined by the Elections Timeline shall be considered an incomplete submission."

- i. Incomplete submissions shall result in disciplinary action by the Elections Committee against intended campaigns including, but not limited to, disqualification to run, sanctions, or other remedies deemed necessary and appropriate by the Elections Committee.
- b. Any tampering of election documents shall result in the disqualification of the person engaged in tampering and the candidate or Ticket they represent.
- c. Any forms or documents submitted by any candidate or Ticket through methods or mediums not approved by the Elections Committee shall be considered void and not properly submitted.
  - i. The Elections Committee reserves the ability to accept improperly filed documents in extenuating circumstances.

#### 703.7 Accessibility and Transparency

a. Any member of the student body may request the identity of any other student(s)

who have already filed any paperwork for any office or position at any time from the Elections Committee.

- b. All forms submitted by any candidate, potential candidate, or intended candidate shall be made available for public inspection.
  - i. The phone numbers, email addresses, and other private contact information shall be redacted by the Elections Committee to maintain the personal privacy of the candidates and their staff members.
- c. All forms and documents necessary to complete filing of required documentation shall be found and submitted on the Elections Committee's page on the UGA Involvement Network.
  - i. The Election Committee, if deeming it necessary and proper, may post or request any other forms or documents through other mediums and methods.

#### 703.8 Eligibility Status

- a. Upon approval by the Elections Committee of all GFD paperwork of an intended individual candidate or Ticket, the candidate(s) in question shall be considered official candidates for office, and may represent themselves as a "candidate," or as the "[insert Ticket name here] Ticket," that is "running for [insert office title]."
- b. Intended candidates and Tickets shall be notified of their eligibility status following the GFD at least one (1) week before any schedule debate.

### **CHAPTER 704: CAMPAIGN STAFF**

#### 704.1 Responsibilities

- a. All individuals who actively represent an individual or Ticket at any stage in the campaigning process are considered to be staff and must be registered with the official Staff Roster.
  - i. "Active representation" includes all methods of campaigning and representation outlined in these codes, but does not include individuals whose

only involvement or participation has been through social media posts on person accounts.

- b. Campaigns and candidates are responsible for the actions of their staff.
- c. Campaign staff are bound by the Student Government Association Code of Ethics, Elections Code, and the University of Georgia Code of Conduct.
  - i. Campaign staff fall under the personal jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of the Judicial Branch.

#### 704.2 Registration

- a. All individuals participating as campaign staff must register with the Elections Committee prior to the beginning of the voting period.
- b. No individual should be registered on the campaign staff of more than one (1) campaign.
- c. The participation of unregistered staff member warrants disciplinary action by the Elections Committee.
  - i. “Unregistered staff members” are individuals not on any staff roster who are participating in campaign activities or otherwise campaigning as defined by this code.

#### 704.3 Designated Staff Members

- a. Each campaign shall designate three (3) specific staff members to submit certain forms and perform certain tasks or actions as defined by the Elections Committee.
  - i. The Elections Committee can only require or compel the submission of those specific forms or the performance of those specific tasks/actions that are explicitly stated in the Elections Code.
  - ii. The registered Designated Staff Member shall be the only person authorized to perform the tasks associated with that office, except where otherwise noted.
    - 1. Performance of those specific tasks by anyone other than the registered Designated Staff Members shall be considered participation by an unregistered staff member and shall result in disciplinary action.
  - iii. Designated Staff Members can perform tasks in addition to those enumerated

in this Code, but they must perform the requirements enumerated.

- b. The Designated Staff Members of a campaign shall include the following officials:
  - i. Primary Liaison; who shall submit all Staff Rosters and Endorsement Forms on behalf of the campaign, and who shall perform the duties of the other Designated Staff Members in their absence.
    - 1. The Primary Liaison shall be the sole member of the campaign staff responsible for interactions with Campus Reservations, Events, and Technical Services (CRETS) and shall make all reservations on behalf of the campaign. All candidates/Tickets, Primary Liaisons, and any other campaign staff must abide by all CRETS guidelines.
  - ii. Financial Liaison; who shall submit all financial disclosure forms on behalf of the campaign.
  - iii. Chief Counsel; who shall represent the campaign to the Elections Committee, submit complaints on behalf of the campaign, represent the campaign in hearings, appeals, and other appearances before the Elections Committee and Supreme Court, and lead the campaign's Legal Team.
- c. A Senatorial Ticket shall not appoint any Designated Staff Members; the responsibilities of the Designated Staff Members shall lie with the individual candidates affiliated with a Senatorial Ticket and the staff of these individual candidates.
- d. A candidate or members of a Ticket may list themselves as performing one (1) or several of these functions.

## **CHAPTER 705: CAMPAIGNS**

### **705.1 General**

Candidates and Tickets may begin campaigning at the date and time specified by the Elections Timeline, provided that the Elections Committee has notified the candidate or Ticket that they are eligible to campaign.

- a. "Campaigning" includes any and all intentional actions to promote, publicize, and secure support for a candidate(s) and/or Ticket, including dissemination of

campaign materials and social media posts, as defined by the Elections Committee.

- b. Any form of campaign done prior to the date specified by the Elections Committee shall result in disciplinary action up to and including disqualification by the Elections Committee.
- c. All candidates, Tickets, and staff members must adhere to the campaigning guidelines of this Code or other rules set by the Elections Committee, under penalty of disciplinary action by the Elections Committee.

#### 705.2 Expenses

- a. Individual Executive Tickets may spend a maximum of \$1,200 on their campaigns."
- b. Individual Senatorial candidates not affiliated with a Senatorial Ticket may spend a maximum of \$200 on their campaigns.
- c. Individual Senatorial candidates affiliated with a Senatorial Ticket shall coordinate their spending so that their combined expenditures do not exceed a ratio of \$100 for every candidate on the Ticket, with a maximum of \$500 allowable for the entire Ticket.

#### 705.3 Materials

- a. "Campaign material" includes advertisements, documents, or other mediums intentionally disseminated to promote the electoral prospect of a particular candidate, Ticket, or other electoral matter. Campaign material includes, but is not limited to:
  - i. Electoral advertisements
  - ii. Printed, handmade, or digital documents containing an electoral matter (e.g. a how-to-vote card, a posterboard, a candidate or Ticket platform, etc.)
  - iii. Social media or traditional media platform postings (e.g. privately acquired websites, Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, Snapchat, GroupMe, TikTok, etc.)
    - 1. The term "posting" includes status updates, tweets, traditional posts, temporary stories, messages, or other forms of communication.
  - iv. Solicitation for financial contribution including, but not limited to, in-person or online fundraising systems (e.g. Venmo, GoFundMe, Kickstarter, canning,

person-to-person money transfers), advertisements on social media, print advertisements, etc.

1. Solicitation for and receipt of financial contribution may only occur after the approval of a campaign's Statement of Intent Form.
  2. Solicitation for financial contribution may only include the Ticket name, Campaign ID mark, and names of intended candidates and shall not contain any other form of campaign material.
- b. All material purchased or otherwise acquired to distribute on behalf of a Ticket or candidate to the general population of UGA shall not exceed a per unit cost of \$5.
- i. Personalizations or adjustments to the item in question will be capitalized to the item.
  - ii. No food or drink can be distributed to the general population by a candidate or their staff.
  - iii. Multiple materials designed to be used together shall be considered one unit for the purposes of this section and their cost shall be determined by the individual materials' value collectively.
  - iv. "General population" refers to all eligible voters who are not actively registered on the staff roster for the respective campaign.
- c. Campaigns may not engage in, administer, or otherwise promote raffles, lotteries, drawings, sweepstakes, prize pools, luck-based games resulting in material award, or similar concepts.
- d. Materials disseminated by any registered staff member(s) shall be viewed as extensions of the campaign associated with the staff member(s); the campaign shall be held responsible for infractions resulting from campaign material regulation violations.
- e. All campaign materials must abide by the regulations of this code, UGA policies, applicable governmental law and statutes, and the policies and regulations of the places where the material is posted.
- f. Physical campaign materials must possess an identifying mark pre-approved by the Elections Committee; failure to include this mark shall result in removal of the offending material.

- g. Candidates and Tickets shall ensure that their campaign materials and postings are removed within 24 hours after the certification of the General Election Results or, if the candidate or Ticket is involved in a runoff election, 24 hours after the certification of the Run-Off Election Results.
  - i. Posts on social media by individual staff members or candidates do not need to be deleted or removed, by official campaign accounts must be deleted or made private with highly visible notation that it is an archived account that no longer represents an active campaign.

#### 705.4 General Regulations

- a. A link to all applicable codes and governing documents must be made available on the Student Government Association website prior to the Executive and General Candidate Seminars.
- b. No person other than a member of the Elections Committee, the respective candidate/members of the respective Executive Ticket, or a staff member of the respective campaign shall willfully destroy, deface, obscure, move, or remove campaign materials.
- c. The Elections Committee shall only handle campaign materials in the case of a violation of this Code and shall alert the respective campaign within one (1) business day.
- d. No candidate/no member of a Ticket or any campaign staff member may intentionally damage the character of another candidate, Ticket, staff member, or Elections Committee member with false information.
- e. No candidate/no member of a Ticket or any campaign staff member may disseminate campaign materials or postings containing false or misleading information about a candidate/Ticket, staff member, or Elections Committee member.
- f. Chalking and all other forms of defacing University property are prohibited.
  - i. This provision does not include methods of permitted advertisement, such as but not limited to painting at the Tate Bus Stop, as long as the campaign completes all necessary requirements to obtain approval to paint or advertise.

- g. Door-to-door campaigning in residence halls is prohibited.
- h. Candidates/members of Tickets and staff may not hand out campaign materials inside university buildings.
  - i. A “university building” shall be defined as any building owned or operated by the University of Georgia.
- i. Candidates/members of Tickets and staff may:
  - i. Wear T-shirts, stickers, buttons, or other forms of electoral advertisement inside campus dining areas, residence halls, and/or other university buildings.
  - ii. Discuss the election and advocate for themselves/the campaign with which they are associated via person-to-person interaction and speaking to classes or other assembled groups.
    - 1. However, no campaign materials may be physically distributed person-to-person, and candidates/members of Tickets and staff may not stand in common areas (such as but not limited to hallways, bathrooms, entrances and exits, etc.) and/or block, impede, or otherwise disrupt the flow of foot traffic or harass occupants of a building/location in order to promote a candidate, Ticket, or other electoral matter.
    - 2. If applicable, such behavior will be determined to be in violation of the above provisions of this Code at the discretion of the Elections Committee.
- j. When a candidate/member(s) of a Ticket or their staff are being interviewed by media outlets (including all print media, broadcast, and online outlets), or making campus reservations, or campaigning, it is their responsibility to present themselves as a candidate (or potential or intended candidate, or as a representative of the same) for office, and not as a member of the Student Government Association.
  - i. Statements of prior or current active membership in the Student Government Association are permitted, but the candidate/members of a Ticket and their staff may not speak or behave in a way that would present themselves as active representatives or agents of the Student Government Association in



their specific roles as candidates for office.

- k. No candidate/member(s) of a Ticket or their staff shall use any live animal(s) as a means of campaigning or otherwise promoting a candidate, Ticket, or any other electoral matter via any means outside of social media posts, photographs, and/or videos.
  - i. These posts, photographs, and/or videos may not be made or captured in real-time (such as, but not limited to, a photo booth with animals, a social media livestream with animals, and/or any related concept at the discretion of the Elections Committee).
  - ii. It shall be permissible to use or stage animals in a campaign photo, video, or other similar medium that was pre-recorded, pre-photographed, or otherwise created before the date and time of release in a manner or location designed/used only for the purpose of content creation (and not active campaigning).
- l. No candidate/member(s) of a Ticket or their staff shall use methods of campaigning not listed that damage the integrity of the election cycle and the Student Government Association. The Elections Committee reserves the right to analyze and use discretion when determining appropriateness of campaign methods.
  - i. Methods of campaigning that damage the integrity of the election cycle will be defined as methods that are found in violation of section 706.1c of this code.
- m. Absences by active members of the Student Government Association from their official governmental obligations for the purpose of campaigning shall be considered unexcused in all circumstances except for attendance at any mandatory Candidate Seminar, or at the Executive Debate, or at any hearing scheduled by the Elections Committee or the Supreme Court, or any extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Elections Committee.
- n. The Student Government Association as a registered student organization shall not endorse any candidate, Ticket, or any other electoral matter.
- o. No Student Government Association resources and/or platforms may be used in the promotion of, advocacy for, or campaigning on behalf of or in coordination with any candidate, Ticket, or any other electoral matter on the ballot. General announcement,

notification, or publication of an upcoming election is acceptable, and general statements of encouragement to vote in said election are also permissible.

## **CHAPTER 706: TICKET REGULATIONS**

### **706.1 General Ticket Regulations**

- a. Individual Senatorial candidates, Executive Tickets, and Senatorial Tickets run independently of any other candidates and tickets, and shall not endorse any other campaign.
  - i. No candidate, nor member of a candidate's campaign staff, may provide contribution to any other candidate, ticket, or campaign not on the Ticket with which the candidate is formally affiliated. This includes, but is not limited to, financial contributions, volunteer work, non-monetary assistance, or any other contributions or assistance that would impact the campaign.
  - ii. General staff members who are not officially appointed to a position within a ticket may promote other tickets or candidates in different constituencies on personal social media platforms, provided such promotion is an explicit personal endorsement and does not represent the ticket itself.
  - iii. An individual Senatorial candidate shall be permitted to endorse other individual Senatorial candidates if they are affiliated with the same Senatorial Ticket.

### **706.2 Executive Ticket Regulations**

- a. Members of an Executive Ticket shall choose a name under which all three (3) candidates shall run as an entity.
- b. Partial or non-complete Executive Tickets are not allowed.
- c. Executive Tickets shall be accountable as a single entity, not as individual candidates, in instances of adjudication.

### **706.3 Senatorial Ticket Regulations**

- a. Two (2) or more individual Senatorial candidates running to represent the same constituency may form a Senatorial Ticket.
  - i. No Senatorial Ticket shall have more candidates than available seats for the given constituency.
- b. Members of a Senatorial Ticket shall choose a name with which all members of the Ticket shall affiliate.
  - i. The Ticket may not share a name (or variation of a name) with any other Senatorial Ticket or any Executive Ticket.
- c. An individual Senatorial candidate may only be affiliated with a maximum of one (1) Senatorial Ticket.
- d. Members of a Senatorial Ticket shall be elected independently of one another.
  - i. On the ballot, each candidate shall appear individually, but each member of a Senatorial Ticket shall be identified as member of their respective Ticket.
- e. Members of a Senatorial Ticket shall be held accountable as an entity, when the Elections Committee deems it appropriate.
  - i. The Elections Committee may reject the registration of or require the dissolution of a Senatorial Ticket without disqualifying the Ticket's individual members for failure to file appropriate documentation in a proper and timely manner, or for other violations of this Code.

## **CHAPTER 707: DEBATES**

### **707.1 Time, Place, and Publicity**

The Elections Committee shall set a time and place for an Executive Debate. One (1) debate is to be held during the week prior to the voting period in the General Election.

- a. The time and place for the Executive Debate shall be made available in the Elections Timeline.
- b. The Elections Committee shall publicize the Executive Debate.

## 707.2 Format and Moderation

- a. The Executive Debate shall be managed, arranged, and conducted in a neutral manner so that no Executive Ticket receives any institutional or systematic advantage over another.
- b. The format of the debates shall be determined by the Elections Committee.
- c. The Elections Committee may select a third-party outlet(s) and/or moderator(s) to moderate the debate after a thorough vetting process to ensure neutrality.
  - i. No outlet or moderator that has endorsed any candidate, Executive Ticket, or electoral matter on the ballot for the current election cycle shall be considered.
  - ii. The Elections Committee shall not consider any moderator that is a registered staff member for any campaign, or has given monetary or non-monetary contribution to any campaign, or has otherwise participated in any campaign in any way that would create reasonable doubt as to the neutrality of the debate.

## 707.3 Attendance

Attendance at the Executive Debate is mandatory for all candidates on an Executive Ticket.

- a. Any Executive Ticket unable to attend the debate must submit an excuse, in writing, with appropriate documentation, to the Attorney General pursuant to the rules of the Attorney General and Statutes.
- b. Unexcused absences shall result in disciplinary action.
- c. If an Executive Ticket candidate is unable to attend the debate, they will not be allowed a proxy.

## **CHAPTER 708: ELECTIONS**

### 708.1 Voting Procedure

- a. Voting shall be conducted by secret, online ballot through the elections feature of the

## UGA Involvement Network.

- i. Senators who are currently serving in the Senate, who are in good standing by the time of the approval of the Statement of Intent, and who are campaigning for the same constituency they currently serve shall have the status of Incumbent placed by their name in all official SGA notices, and shall have “(I)” to placed on the ballot after their name and, if applicable, their ticket name, to make their status as Incumbent.
  - ii. Instructions to vote shall include a brief description of the incumbent designation.
  - iii. An inactive voting link shall be sent to the candidates by the Attorney General via email at least 24 hours before the campaigning period begins. This link shall be made active when the voting period begins.
- b. Each student shall be permitted to cast one (1) ballot during the election cycle.
    - i. Submission of a ballot using the identity of another student, regardless of the willingness or consent of either party, shall be prohibited.
  - c. No candidate, Ticket member, or staff member may exert any undue influence over any voter.

## 708.2 Results

- a. Upon poll closure, the Elections Committee shall review the results of the General Election. The Attorney General, acting as Chair of the Elections Committee, shall then certify the General Election Results and disseminate the results publicly.
- b. An Executive Ticket shall be elected when the Ticket achieves an absolute majority of the votes cast for the election the Ticket contests.
- c. A Senatorial candidate contesting a constituency with a singular Senate seat shall be elected when the candidate achieves an absolute majority of the votes cast for the election the Senatorial candidate contests.
- d. A Senatorial candidate contesting in a constituency with multiple Senate seats shall be elected if they receive enough votes to rank within the number of seats available for that constituency. For example, if a constituency has five (5) seats, the five candidates with the highest number of votes shall be elected.

- e. The outgoing Senate must ratify the General Election Results in the next immediate Senate session following the certification of these results.
  - i. If the Senate chooses not to ratify the results, then the Elections Committee shall carry out appropriate remedies.

#### 708.3 Irregularities

- a. The Elections Committee shall have the power to withhold certification of the General or Runoff Election Results, should the Elections Committee find substantial evidence that irregularities may have occurred, and that such irregularities may have influence the outcome or results of the election.
- b. The Elections Committee shall have 48 hours after the initial compilation of the results in question to investigate and rule on the irregularity.
- c. The Elections Committee may, if it deems necessary, call a new election to be held within the limits of this Elections Code at the earliest convenient time.

#### 708.4 Runoff Elections

- a. If no individual or Ticket achieves an absolute majority of votes in the elections for a single seat or set of seats under Statutes 708.2(b) and 708.2(c), a runoff shall occur between the candidates or Tickets that receive the highest and second-highest number of votes in that contested race.
- b. The threshold for election under Statutes 708.2(b) and 708.2(c) applies to runoff elections.
- c. The Runoff Election Results shall undergo the same processes of certification, ratification, and rules regarding irregularities as the General Election Results.
- d. In the case of a runoff election, the Financial Disclosure Form for the candidates in the runoff election shall be due within 24 hours of the end of the extended voting period.

### **CHAPTER 709: REFERENDUMS, RECALL ELECTIONS, AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

#### 709.1 Applicability of Rules

Votes on referendums and constitutional amendments, as well as recall elections, shall be subject to the rules and regulations found in this Code and in the Constitution of the Student Government Association.

#### 709.2 Proactive Enforcement

No amendment to the Constitution may apply to the ballot on which it is placed for ratification, nor may any amendment to the Constitution, prior to ratification, affect the processes, procedures, or language of the election.

### **CHAPTER 710: ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

#### 710.1 Authority

The Elections Committee shall enforce the Elections Code of the Student Government Association of the University of Georgia.

- a. The Elections Committee shall dissolve 96 hours after the certification and ratification of the General Election Results or, if applicable, the certification and ratification of the Runoff Election Results.

#### 710.2 Impartiality

The Elections Committee and its members shall act in good faith, without bias.

- a. Neither the Elections Committee nor any of its members shall, upon confirmation, render aid, assistance, help, or contribution to any candidate, Ticket, or electoral matter in any way.
- b. No member of the Elections Committee shall, upon confirmation, stand for election or function as a registered staff member of any campaign, or perform any campaigning for any candidate, Ticket, or electoral matter, or advertise, promote, advocate for, or otherwise support any candidate, Ticket, or electoral matter.

- c. Should the Attorney General stand for election to office, or otherwise be deemed incapable of impartiality by the Elections Committee, the Elections Committee shall submit a nominee to the President of the Student Government Association to fulfill the Attorney General's duties on the Election Committee. This nominee must be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.

### 710.3 Duties

The Elections Committee shall:

- a. Interpret, execute, and enforce all election laws provided in this Elections Code.
- b. Supervise all campaigns for Student Government Association offices, as well as elections related to referendum issues, proposed Constitutional amendments, and other questions appearing on the official ballot.
- c. Assess and execute the remedies and sanctions provided in this Elections Code if it finds violations of provisions of this Code or of Elections Committee rulings.
- d. Have the authority to submit news items and election results to campus or community news organizations.
- e. Take all minutes of meetings and hearings, and keep records of all opinions, rulings, and filings required of candidates and Tickets under this Elections Code, and shall make these records public under applicable transparency procedures and rules of the Student Government Association.

## **CHAPTER 711: COMPLAINTS, HEARINGS, AND APPEALS**

### 711.1 Complaints

- a. Any student may submit complaints about Elections Code violations to the Attorney General, and shall be responsible for representing their position in any possible resulting hearing.
  - i. Only the Chief Counsel of a campaign may submit a complaint on behalf of their respective campaign.
- b. The Elections Committee shall act on all complaints within two (2) weekdays after



receipt, or by any deadline for action otherwise assigned by this Code, either by dismissing them or by calling a hearing.

- c. If a complainant filed a complaint two (2) weekdays after the alleged violation took place, the complainant must include an explanation for their delayed submission in their complaint.
  - i. Complainants should make a reasonable effort to file complaints as soon as possible.
  - ii. If a complaint cites multiple instances of an Elections Code violation, the complainant should file within two (2) weekdays from the most recent violation, though the Elections Committee shall consider all violations when deliberating on sanctions and their severity.
- d. All hearings and deliberations must be completed, and all sanctions and remedies assigned, before the certification of the General Election Results or, if applicable to the candidates or Tickets involved, before the certification of the Runoff Election Results.
  - i. If the Elections Committee finds substantial evidence of electoral irregularities under Statute 708.3, the time constraint of the above provision is nullified.

#### 711.2 Dismissal

The Elections Committee may by majority vote dismiss a complaint if:

- a. The complaint does not adhere to the deadline requirements established under Statute 710.1.
- b. The Elections Committee, in its judgement, lacks jurisdiction over the subject or a party in the dispute.
- c. The complaint fails to state a cause of action for which the relief may be granted.
- d. The complaint is not submitted in good faith and is primarily for the purpose of harassment.
- e. There is a lack of evidence or refusal of the complainant to testify or elaborate to the claim via a hearing.

- f. The Elections Committee determines the complaint was withheld with strategic intent in violation of Statute 710.1(c).

### 711.3 Hearings

- a. The Elections Committee shall determine the format for hearings to ensure all parties are represented fairly and where all the information necessary to make a decision is provided.
- b. The Elections Committee shall set the time and place for hearings and shall notify involved parties of the time and place of the hearing in advance.
- c. Hearing proceedings shall be open to the public; however, deliberations of the Elections Committee shall be in a closed session.
- d. Decisions by the Elections Committee must be clearly reasoned and explained using citations from the Elections Code, the established fact pattern, and/or the Constitution.
- e. A quorum shall be required to hold a hearing.
- f. Any person who files a complaint shall be required to attend any resulting hearings.
  - i. The attendance of a campaign's Chief Counsel shall serve to fulfill this requirement in instances in which a campaign is the complainant.
- g. The presentation of witnesses or testimonies is allowed.
  - i. All witnesses can be cross-examined by opposing parties.
- h. The complainant bears the burden of proof.
- i. Ignorance of the Elections Code, either by candidates, members of a Ticket, staff members, or by members of the Elections Committee, shall not be an acceptable defense in response to any offense committed in any election governed by this Code.
- j. For the purposes of maintaining decorum and civility, the Attorney General may eject unruly or otherwise disruptive individuals from any Elections Committee hearing at any time.

### 711.4 Legal Representation

- a. The Chief Counsel shall be the primary representative of any campaign while said campaign is involved as a complainant or defendant in a case or hearing or appeal

before the Elections Committee and/or the Supreme Court.

- b. The Chief Counsel may assemble a Legal Team to assist in representing the campaign with which the Chief Counsel is associated.
  - i. Members of a campaign Legal Team who are not the Chief Counsel and who are not the candidates themselves shall hold the title of Associate Counsel.
  - ii. A Legal Team shall not consist of more than one (1) Chief Counsel and two (2) Associate Counsel.
  - iii. Members of the Legal Team must be registered with the Elections Committee on the Staff Roster specifically as members of the Legal Team, and these Legal Team members shall be the only people, besides the candidates and/or members of a Ticket, authorized to represent their respective campaigns in hearings and/or proceedings of the Elections Committee and/or the Supreme Court.
  - iv. Performance of legal representation by anyone other than registered members of the Legal Team or candidates shall be considered participation by an unregistered staff member(s) and will result in disciplinary action.
- c. The Chief Counsel shall attend all hearings and appeals in which the campaign that they represent is named as a complainant or defendant.
  - i. If the Chief Counsel is unable to attend a hearing, the Chief Counsel must notify the body in which the hearing takes place before, and must designate another member of the campaign's Legal Team to act as Chief Counsel.
- d. No person appearing before the Elections Committee or Supreme Court shall knowingly or willfully:
  - i. Make any false statement or representation; or,
  - ii. Create, present, or use any false, altered, or doctored evidence or document(s) knowing said evidence or document(s) to contain any false statement or representation; or,
  - iii. Falsify, conceal, or cover up any fact via the usage of any trick, device, or deception; or,
  - iv. Influence, obstruct, or impede (or endeavor to influence, obstruct, or impede) any investigation, operation, or proceedings of the Elections Committee

and/or the Supreme Court, of any other official vehicle or apparatus designated for the purpose of the administration, or potential administration, of justice; or

- v. Influence, obstruct, or impede (or endeavor to influence, obstruct, or impede) any disciplinary action or penalty imposed.

#### 711.5 Ability of the Elections Committee to Serve as Complainant

- a. In cases in which the Elections Committee brings a charge against a candidate or Ticket to address a matter originated by a complainant party other than the Elections Committee, all normal rules of procedure shall be followed.
- b. The Elections Committee may only bring a case against a candidate or Ticket if the Elections Committee has verifiable, concrete evidence that a violation has occurred.
  - i. The Supreme Court shall be the ultimate arbiter in the question of whether the evidence is verifiable and concrete; failure to meet that threshold warrants dismissal of the case.
- c. The Elections Committee may only bring a case against a candidate or Ticket:
  - i. If a candidate or Ticket places the Election Committee or any of its members in a compromising position by offering, requesting, or attempting to offer or request any favor, bribe, inducement, or other form of improper compensation.
  - ii. If a candidate or Ticket applies or endeavors to apply undue pressure on the Elections Committee or any of its members to persuade or influence the duties of the Elections Committee or its members in an inappropriate or unethical way.
  - iii. If it a candidate or Ticket potentially violated the Elections Code, Code of Ethics, or other governing documents.
- d. When the Elections Committee is the original complainant:
  - i. The Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction, and their decision shall be final with no avenue for further review.
  - ii. The Supreme Court shall determine the format for hearings to ensure all parties are represented equitably and where all the information necessary to

make a decision is provided.

- iii. The Supreme Court shall set the time and place for hearings and shall notify involved parties of the time and place of the hearing in advance.
- iv. The Elections Committee shall be the official complainant, and all complaints, evidence, and supporting documents shall be submitted by the Attorney General on behalf of the Elections Committee to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- v. The Elections Committee shall bear the burden of proof.
- vi. The Attorney General shall argue on behalf of the Committee and shall be required to attend the hearing. If the Attorney General cannot attend, he or she is responsible for designating a member of the Elections Committee to represent the Committee in place of the Attorney General.
- vii. Hearing proceedings shall be open to the public; however, deliberations of the Supreme Court shall be in a closed session.
- viii. All rules under Statutes 710.3(d), 710.3(e), 710.3(g), and 710.3(i) apply in these hearings.

#### 711.6 Decisions

- a. Decisions, order, and rulings of the Elections Committee shall be announced as soon as possible after hearing and deliberations, and must have the support of a majority of the Elections Committee."
- b. The Attorney General shall write the decisions of the Elections Committee and shall deliver it to all relevant parties and to the public as soon as possible after the decision is made.
  - i. In the event that the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction, the Supreme Court shall follow its own procedures under the governing documents to issue its ruling, but must deliver the decision to the parties to the hearing and to the public as soon as possible after the conclusion of deliberations.

#### 711.7 Remedies, Sanctions, and Regulations

- a. Possible remedies and sanctions available to the Elections Committee include:"

- i. Disqualification from office or from candidacy
  - ii. Removal from the ballot
  - iii. Suspension from campaigning
  - iv. Probation
  - v. Removal of campaign materials
  - vi. Formal reprimand
- b. The list outlined in Statute 710.7(a) is not exhaustive and, should the Elections Committee, or the Supreme Court on appeal, deem it necessary, additional remedies and sanctions may be assigned up to and including disqualification.
- c. Additional Rules
- i. No candidate or Ticket may receive multiple sanctions for the same incident; this does not preclude the assignment of steeper sanctions for continued violation.
  - ii. Accumulation of a third (3rd) sanction shall result in automatic probation, the definition and terms of which shall be established on a case-by-case basis by the Elections Committee.
  - iii. Accumulation of a fourth (4th) sanction, or the accumulation of a sanction while on probation regardless of the number of previous sanctions, shall result in the automatic suspension of campaigning by the affected party.
  - iv. Accumulation of a fifth (5th) sanction, or the accumulation of a second (2nd) sanction while on probation regardless of the number of previous sanctions, or the accumulation of a sanction while suspended from campaigning regardless of the number of previous sanction, will automatically disqualify the affected party from the election.
  - v. Willful violation of the ruling or orders of the Elections Committee shall warrant disciplinary action.
  - vi. Any decision by the Elections Committee other than a formal reprimand against a candidate or Ticket shall be considered a sanction.
  - vii. The Elections Committee has the discretion to take any action that is deemed appropriate with regard to any complaint.

## 711.8 Appeal

The decisions, orders, and rulings of the Elections Committee may be appealed to the Supreme Court.

- a. Complainants or defendants of an initial hearing before the Elections Committee may appeal the decision of the Elections Committee to the Supreme Court, provided this appeal occurs within 24 hours of the release of the Election Committee's decision to the relevant parties.
  - i. Appeals may only be made on the grounds that the Elections Committee failed to adhere to the Elections Code or other governing documents of the Student Government Association in making its decision. Appeals may not be made on factual grounds, only on matters of law.
  - ii. In making an appeal, the appellant(s) must clearly indicate the provisions of the Elections Code or governing document that the appellant(s) believe the Elections Committee to have violated.
  - iii. Appeals must be submitted, in writing, to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court by the Chief Counsel of a campaign or the other appropriate legal representation as prescribed by this Code.
  - iv. The Supreme Court shall not consider appeals that are filed after the 24-hour period; in dismissing an appeal, the decision of the Elections Committee stands.
- b. The Supreme Court shall choose either to hear properly filed appeals or to deny it outright for improper filing, failure to state an issue of law, lack of standing, or lack of jurisdiction.
- c. Should the appeal be accepted by the Supreme Court, the Supreme Court shall contact all relevant parties as soon as possible in order to schedule an appeal hearing, within 36 hours of the Court's agreement to consider the appeal.
  - i. Appeal hearings shall be open to the public.
  - ii. The Chief Counsel of the involved parties, the Attorney General, at least one (1) additional representative of the Elections Committee shall attend the appeal hearing. Witnesses may be called by either party and required to attend. The candidate(s) or member(s) of the Ticket appealing the decision of

the Elections Committee may be compelled to attend by the Supreme Court, if necessary for fact-finding.

d. The structure of an appeals hearing shall be as follows:

- i. The appellant shall make an opening statement outlining their grievances; the Attorney General shall then deliver an opening statement defending the decision of the Elections Committee.
- ii. The appellant shall present any evidence or witnesses. The Supreme Court Justices shall ask clarifying questions of witnesses or the appellant's legal representation at any time during this presentation; the Justices may interrupt statements to ask these questions.
- iii. The appellant shall make a closing argument and recommend an altered verdict to the Supreme Court to overrule the decision by the Elections Committee; the Attorney General shall make a closing argument to defend the Elections Committee and argue for the upholding of its decision.
- iv. The Supreme Court may question either party on matters of fact and law after closing arguments before choosing to leave for sequestered deliberation.

e. Deliberation and Decisions

- i. The Supreme Court shall deliberate as to the validity of the ruling of the Elections Committee and the appealed decision in a sequestered environment.
- ii. A majority of the Supreme Court may overturn the decision of the Elections Committee. If it does so, pursuant to Statute 400.4, the Supreme Court shall determine an appropriate sanction and/or severity of punishment under the governing documents of the Student Government Association.
- iii. The majority opinion of the Court, any concurring or dissenting opinions drafted, shall be delivered in writing to the appellant(s), Elections Committee, Senate, and other relevant parties.
- iv. All decisions by the Supreme Court on appeal from the Elections Committee shall be made public within 48 hours of the ruling.
- v. For the purposes of maintaining decorum and civility, the Chief Justice may eject unruly or otherwise disruptive individuals from any Supreme Court hearing at any time.



## **CHAPTER 712: TRANSITION**

### **712.1 Transition Period**

The transition period shall begin immediately following the ratification of the General Elections Results (and the Run-Off Election Results if necessary) by the outgoing Senate and will end with the inauguration of the incoming Student Government Association Administration."

### **712.2 Vacancies**

Outgoing Senators of a college whose seat remains vacant after elections have the responsibility of informing their academic advisors and Dean of the vacancy.

## **CHAPTER 713: INAUGURATION**

### **713.1 Oath of Office**

The President-elect, Vice President-elect, and Treasurer-elect shall be administered the Oath of Office by the Chief Justice of the Student Government Association at a time, date, and location set by the Elections Timeline.

### **713.2 Appointments**

Any newly appointed Constitutional officers shall be administered the Oath of Office by an oath-bound official upon confirmation by the newly inaugurated Senate.