

# Green Mountain College **Student Senate Election Bylaws**

## Preamble

*Following the precedence of the Student Government Association Mission and Constitution, the Senate holds Senatorial elections to elect candidates to be the student voice on campus annually and as needed. In such a way, the Student Senate Election Bylaws, as enumerated in this document, accurately meet the regulations of the Student Government Constitution.*

## Article I: Applicability

The provisions of these bylaws shall apply to all elections held by the Student Senate, pursuant to the provisions of the Student Body Constitution and Green Mountain College handbook.

## Article II: Student Senate Election Committee (SSEC)

The SSEC is the commission that shall administer all elections of the Student Senate. The SSEC maintains the responsibility to reside over all Student Senate Elections. The advisor(s) to the Student Senate shall preside over the SSEC.

### Section One: Composition of the SSEC

1. The SSEC shall consist of no fewer than three members, and shall have the power to enforce and maintain all election procedures set forth in this document.
2. The members shall be appointed by the Student Senate President, with the advice and consent of a majority vote of the Student Senate.
3. The members shall have full control until the results of the last election for the academic year is complete.
4. The Senate President shall appoint, by and with the advice and consent of a majority vote of the Student Senate, a Chairperson of the SSEC to serve as the chief elections officer.
5. The chairperson of the SSEC shall report to Student Senate, to the Student Senate President, and the Student Senate Advisor upon request.

### Section Two: Provisions

1. No members of SSEC or Student Senate shall publicly endorse any specific candidate for election when representing the SSEC or Student Senate.
  - a. The Student Senate, or any office within, shall neither endorse nor support any candidate for any office.
  - b. Advertisements by the SSEC or Student Senate shall not indicate or otherwise imply support for any candidate.
2. Members shall:
  - a. Assist any Commissioner in administering ballots during an election.
  - b. Assist in any other duties the SSEC may require during an election.
3. Restrictions on officers of election:
  - a. Cannot be candidates for office in Student Senate or Student Assembly in the election.
  - b. Cannot assist any candidate for office or participate in any political campaign having a vested interest in the outcome of any election administered by the SSEC.

## Article III: Conduction of Elections:

All enrolled Green Mountain College students have the right to run for a position with a forty-eight hour notice to the SSEC.

### Section One: Pre-Election Procedure:

1. Within a minimum of three weeks before election, the SSEC shall:
  - a. Produce applications for candidacy to the entire student body, inviting all to participate in running for office.
  - b. Hold no less than two meetings with candidates for the purpose of allowing candidates to properly file documents pertaining to their candidacy and to provide candidates with all necessary information regarding the election and election procedures.
    - i. At these meeting they shall set the established parameters of advertising:
      1. Agreed upon mass e-mail expectations (who can send them; number of)

2. The use of paper in campaigning
  3. All election campaigns must abide by College Policy with respect to posting of materials.
  4. All materials posted shall disclose the sponsoring individual, group, or organization.
  5. All disclosures must be indicated on the media being sponsored
  - ii. They shall establish the need, if necessary, for open campus debates for any position on senate at the request of the candidates, the student body, or the Student Senate
    1. Shall be required to host a debate/discussion for the candidates running for the office of Student Senate President
2. Establishment of Candidate Eligibility
- a. Academic Standing:
    - i. All students must be in good academic standing as determined by the Green Mountain College Registrar and Vice President of Student Life at the time of candidacy declared and filed with Student Senate
      1. In accordance, the candidates cumulative grade point average must have at least the follow for each respective office:
        - a. President: 3.00,
        - b. Executive Board (Vice President, Secretary, & Treasurer): 2.50,
        - c. Senate Members (Directors and Representatives): 2.25.
      - ii. Students on academic suspension, probation, or warning are not eligible for candidacy.
    - b. SSEC shall hand over all collected Senate Candidacy Packets to the Green Mountain College Registrar and Vice President of Student Life at least two days before elections shall commence.
      - i. The Registrar and Vice President shall confirm eligibility of each Candidate with the SSEC at least two days before elections commence.
        1. Any Candidate found not to be eligible:
          - a. Will be removed from the ballot immediately.
          - b. The Senate Advisor (the vice-president) shall send notice at least two days before elections.
          - c. The chair of the SSEC shall be included in this notice, and if the candidate is eligible for another position, then it should be suggested to the student.
        2. If for any reason the Candidates ineligibility is not confirmed before elections take place, then the candidates is disqualified as are any votes attributed to them.
    - c. Candidates Running for Specific Offices:
      - i. Candidate for Senate President:
        1. Must have at least one semesters worth of experience as an elected member of the Student Senate (this includes the Chair of Assembly's service)
        2. This experience may come at any time during the candidates tenure at Green Mountain College
      - ii. Candidates for Executive Board:
        1. Candidates for these positions are suggested to have experience on Senate, but are not required.
    - d. Registration:
      - i. Candidates shall complete the Senate Electoral Packet provided by SSEC within 48 hours of election in order to provide eligibility for ballot inscription. Candidacy packets include the following:
        1. Declaration of intent
        2. Students' personal information and the position they are seeking
        3. Academic verification form
      - ii. Candidates shall respect the student guidelines set forth by the Green Mountain College Student Handbook, submit a signed released for academic records for the sole purpose of confirming the candidates GPA
      - iii. Candidates must attend designated Candidate meetings, where attendance is required, to be eligible for ballot inscription.

- iv. Candidates must submit a Declaration of Intent, it is the SSECs responsibility to collect and confirm all of these statements into a document and to:
  - 1. Have them published and distributed to the campus community at large before elections
  - 2. Have them present at election polling stations.
- 3. Election Campaign
  - a. All election campaigns must abide by the Green Mountain College Student Handbook with respect regarding posting.
  - b. Student candidates have the right to campaign upon their inscription.
  - c. All materials posted shall disclose the sponsoring individual, group, or organization.
  - d. Candidates that withdraw from the election shall be removed from the ballot. Withdrawal should be submitted to the SSEC 24 hours before elections.

#### Section Three: Election Process

- 1. Prohibited Space
  - a. During the times the polls are open, no candidate or campaign supporter shall loiter or congregate within thirty feet of any polling location; nor shall they, with such distance give, tender, or display any ballot, ticket, or other campaign material to any person or solicit or in any manner attempt to influence any student in casting their vote; nor shall they hinder or delay a qualified voter in entering or leaving a polling location.
- 2. Dates of Election
  - a. Student Senate shall approve the length of time for an election. The dates of election shall be no earlier than the last week in March and no later than the last week in April.
    - i. First-year Representative(s) elections shall take place no later than the last week in September.
- 3. Election and Ballots
  - a. The election shall be conducted both online, through the Student Senate Homepage and by secret physically-casted ballot.
  - b. Physically-Casted Ballots:
    - i. Each qualified voter shall place their ballot into a closed container upon the completion of the ballot, which shall be opened only for the purposes of counting votes.
    - ii. Ballots shall be kept under the supervision of the Student Involvement Office.
    - iii. Cast ballots shall be collected throughout the duration of the election, and shall be counted only upon the conclusion of the election period.
  - c. Online:
    - i. Through the Senate Homepage, with ballots sent to the Student Senate e-mail address by qualified voters.
    - ii. Elections shall be conducted online and by secret ballot. Each qualified voter shall place their vote only once during the election process.
    - iii. Qualified voting students who both physically-cast a ballot and vote online, will have their online vote removed as their name is still attached to the results
  - d. Elections shall be observed by any member of the SSEC.
    - i. Any member of Senate who is not running for candidacy may assist in collecting physically-casted ballots
- 4. Counting of Ballots
  - a. The ballots must be counted within forty-eight hours after the polls have closed on the final day of election. The ballots will be counted under the supervision of the chairperson of the SSEC and Student Senate advisor(s).
    - i. Any member of Senate and SSEC may assist in counting the ballots
    - ii. Physically-casted ballots should be counted twice to confirm accuracy
    - iii. All candidates shall have the right to be informed of the time and location of where the ballot counting will take place.
    - iv. All candidates have the right to send one representative to witness the tabulation of the ballots; said representatives shall comply with all other provisions of this section.
    - v. All ballots are certified documents of Student Senate and shall be stored for a minimum of one year.

#### Article IV: Election Results

## Section One: Qualification of Candidates Votes

1. A candidate must receive a plurality of no less than five qualified votes to be declared the winner, provided they otherwise qualify for the office.
2. Run-off Elections:
  - a. If for any reason there is uncertainty in the quality of voting, the competing candidates have tied, or have not received six or more (i.e. did not receive a plurality of no less than five qualified votes) then there is a run-off election:
  - b. Candidates are informed, per the guidelines established in the document, and are given no less than two days and no more than one week (unless for any reason, elections are determined to take place the succeeding semester) after the initial election results were revealed.
  - c. The Run-Off Election will be well advertised and the Candidates will be given another chance to write a different Declaration of Intent.

## Section Two: Election Results

1. Candidates shall be officially informed of elections results no later than twenty-four hours after counting the ballots, by the President of Senate or Chair of the SSEC either by e-mail, phone, or personal meeting.
  - a. Candidates who have sent representatives must vow confidentiality to all election results and must not share results of election until publically announced
  - b. Winning candidates shall be informed first, and their acquiescence of fulfilling the duties of the position must be attained.
    - i. The winning Candidate of the President shall be informed first.
  - c. If a candidate chooses to decline the position they were voted into, then the second place candidate is offered the position without notice of placement in election
  - d. Once the winning candidates are informed and finalized, the other candidates are informed and thanked for their participation
  - e. Disclosure of Results:
    - i. Results/ballot-count of the election will only be disclosed to Candidates if they ask for permission to view them through a written letter explaining their desire to view the results/ballot-count to the President of Senate. The President has the choice to confirm or deny the request with a written response.
    - ii. Results will be disclosed without requirement to the advisors of Senate and the Vice President of Student Life.
2. Post Election:
  - a. The President of Student Senate and the chair of the SSEC will be in charge of formally announcing the new Senate Members to the campus:
  - b. Public of announcement of voted candidates shall occur no later than forty-eight hours after counting the ballots and with the provision that the candidates have taken their position.
  - c. Election results shall be posted in the Student Senate Board and send in an electronic form to the campus community.
3. Changing of the Senate:
  - a. The Student Senate President in office is in charged of publicly announcing the new representatives of the student body for the upcoming academic year.
  - b. The Senators shall receive letters from the current holders of their position describing their goals and accomplishments they made as a Senator in their position.
  - c. The SSEC and Senate shall host an informal gathering of the new and old Senators.

## Article V: Adoption of Election Bylaws

The Election Bylaws shall be valid when adopted by a majority vote of the Student Senate.

## Article VI: Amendment

Amendments of the Election Bylaws are made through Student Senate by a majority vote.

### Section 1: Grammatical Amendments

The Student Senate reserves the right to make changes to the Senate Election Bylaws that are errors (i.e. grammatical, spelling, etc) that do not change the inherent meaning of the constitution and are not indicative of a vote or a meeting in order for their correction to be changed.