Student Senate Election Rules and Regulations

NOTE: You must abide by all of the guidelines found herein. Failure to do so will result in your name being dropped from the ballot. In all elections, a candidate may only run for or hold one Student Association Officer Position or one Senate Representative Position during the same election for the same term of office. Furthermore, no candidate shall knowingly seek a position that, if won and accepted, would force he or she to violate the rule stated in the previous sentence.

1. Spring Elections: Prior to spring break, two (2) spring elections will occur. These elections shall hereafter be referred to as the “first spring election” and the “second spring election,” respectively. Collectively, they will hereafter be referred to as the “spring elections”:

(a) The first spring election is for the election of Student Association Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

(b) The second spring election will occur no less than seven (7) days after the first election in order to elect all Senate Representatives, except freshmen Senate Representatives.

(c) Special Rule for Section 1: If changes in the academic calendar create difficulties in the administration of two elections prior to spring break, the Senate may (by majority vote) move one or both elections until after spring break. This vote of the Senate for the desired action must occur at least two weeks prior to the original scheduled date for the affected election.

2. Fall Elections: A fall election will occur within the first forty (40) days of the beginning of the fall semester to elect Senate Representatives for the freshmen class. In the case there is a vacancy from the previous election, this election will also serve to fill these vacancy(s).

3. Petitioning: For candidates wishing to appear on the ballot, petitions germane to the candidate’s respective election (both in position and in class) will be available no less than sixteen (16) days before the election at the Ceddia Union Building (CUB) Information Desk and/or the Student Senate Office.

(a) Senate Officer position petitions require:
   a. President: One hundred and twenty-five (125) valid signatures from undergraduate students enrolled at Shippensburg University as well as completion of the Statement of Interest.
   b. Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer: One hundred (100) valid signatures from undergraduate students enrolled at Shippensburg University as well as completion of the Statement of Interest.

Each qualified student may only sign one (1) petition for each officer position.

(b) Unless specified by a primary process, Senate Representative Position petitions require candidates to obtain twenty five (25) valid signatures from members of the candidate’s constituency or class within the Student Association. Each
qualified student may only sign up to four (4) senator petitions for her or his respective constituency or class. The completion of the Statement of Interest is similarly required.

(c) For a signature to be valid, signatures on all petitions require an accompanied printed name in addition to the time and date of the signature for verification purposes. In the case of one qualified student’s signature appearing more than the allowed number of times for a specific office, the first signature(s) obtained (as determined chronologically) will be considered valid and all additional signatures from the signee will be declared null and void. Thus, candidates are encouraged, but not required, to obtain extra signatures that can replace a signature that is disqualified on a one-for-one basis. Candidates assume all responsibility and consequential liability for ensuring that the person signing a petition is a valid signee and that they complete their portion of the petition truthfully and in full.

(d) All petitions will contain these Election Rules and Regulations.

(e) All petitions will also contain a “List of Important Dates,” instructions, a “Statement of Interest,” and a “Position Testimonial,” all of which shall be congruent with those documents found in Appendix A, herein referred to as “Supplementary Petition Materials.” The “Position Testimonial” must be completed by a candidate in order for a petition to be considered valid.

(f) Candidates must return the completed petition, in person, to the administrative secretary of the Student Senate office between the hours of 8:30-4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday in the Ceddia Union Building (CUB), Room 201. This must be within two (2) weeks after petitions are released. Failure to return the petition directly to a staff member will nullify the petition. Unsuccessful candidates for the Student Association Officer positions during the first spring election can submit a petition in order to have his or her name appear on the ballot for a Senate Representative Position in the second spring election. If a candidate does not submit a petition on time, his or her name will not appear on the ballot!

(g) Further, the candidate shall verify that he or she meets the requirements for a respective election as stated in the “Student Association Constitution.”

(h) Petition Review: Before the mandatory meeting and after the petitions have been submitted for a respective election, the Elections Chair and/or a designee shall verify the information on the petitions, including the signatures. If the candidate’s petition contains invalid or incomplete information, including but not limited to invalid signatures, or if the candidate does not meet the qualifications in the “Student Association Constitution,” or if the petition is not fully completed, the Elections Chair shall convene the Elections Committee in order to make a ruling on the validity of the candidate’s petition. The meeting shall follow rules C through F of Section 9. If a candidate’s petition is declared invalid, he or she will not be listed on the ballot.

(i) Balloting: Following verification, the names of the candidates will appear on the ballot in the order that the petitions were returned to the Student Senate office,
CUB Room 201. The name listed on the petition in the designated supplementary petitions material will be the name on the ballot. If a candidate does not submit a valid petition, his or her name will not appear on the ballot!

4. Mandatory Meeting: A mandatory meeting will be held prior to the start of campaigning for all candidates who are listed on the ballot and who are seeking a position for which the election is being held. All candidates appearing on the ballot must attend this meeting, and all candidates' names will be read at this meeting. If a candidate does not attend this meeting, his or her name shall be dropped from the ballot and the candidate shall be notified of his or her status within twenty-four (24) hours of the close of the mandatory meeting unless he or she contacts the Elections Committee Chairperson prior to the meeting and the chairperson validates the candidate's reason for the absence. At the meeting, the following will occur:

(a) Candidates will have the opportunity to review opponents' petitions. Complaints of improper petitions must be filed through the complaint process listed in Section 9;

(b) The Elections Chair shall review the election rules;

(c) All candidates must sign a form, as put forth in Appendix A, herein referred to as “Statement of Comprehension and Assumed Liability.” Failure to sign this form will cause the candidate's name to be removed from the ballot;

(d) Candidates will have the ability to confirm the ballot to ensure its validity and accuracy.

(e) If a candidate has a question about these Election Rules and Regulations or any pertinent document reference herein, she or he must submit the question to the Elections Chair in writing or through e-mail in order to obtain a response unless the question is put forth at the mandatory meeting. If the question does not occur at the mandatory meeting, the Elections Chair will forward only the question and his or her response to all candidates. However, this opinion is advisory in nature and cannot be used as cause for the filing or the defense of an elections complaint.

5. Mandatory Speeches: An open meeting for mandatory candidate speeches will be held the Thursday prior to the election. Candidates must deliver a speech and stay for the entire length of the meeting. Further, after all candidates for a designated office have delivered their speeches, the audience will be able to ask questions of the candidates, with the Elections Chair or their designee moderating the questioning. Failure to attend the speeches for the entire length of the meeting and to deliver a speech may result in the candidate's name being dropped from the ballot at the Election Chair's discretion. If the candidate's name is removed, she or he will be contacted within twenty-four (24) hours from the close of the mandatory speeches. The Elections Committee Chairperson must approve a candidate's excuse for not giving a speech and/or not attending the speeches, either in part or in their entirety, before the speeches begin.
6. Campaigning regulations for Student Senate elections:

(a) Potential candidates, both those candidates appearing on the ballot and write-in candidates, may not begin hanging posters, distributing materials on campus or in any other way campaigning before the mandatory meeting.

(b) Chalk may only be placed on sidewalks and not on any other structure, and it must be removed within twenty-four (24) hours after the polls close.

(c) No stickers of any kind may be affixed to Shippensburg University or Student Services, Inc. property.

(d) All candidate flyers displayed in the CUB, in academic buildings, and/or in administrative buildings must be stamped by the CUB staff. Flyers are restricted to the interior of all campus. Moreover, in all residence halls, individuals may personally display campaign materials on their own residence hall doors. Flyers may be placed on residence hall bulletin boards only by the Residence Life staff.
   a. In the CUB, flyers will be hung by the CUB staff in areas designated by the CUB Director. In academic and administrative buildings, flyers may only be placed on any general use bulletin boards. Flyers may not be attached to glass surfaces in any campus building, except as allowed by rule 6g.

(e) Candidates are encouraged to be respectful in placing their signs by allowing space for competitors. Candidates may use the copier found in the Student Senate office (CUB 201) in order to make copies, not to exceed 20 per day on 8 ½ x 11 white copy paper only, without charge. Color copies on white paper will be permitted. Copies made through this rule must be done between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm by the full-time, administrative Senate secretary and/or the officers of the Senate barring those currently running for office and only after the mandatory meeting. A detailed log, including time, date, number of copies, the copy-maker’s signature, and the initials of the administrative secretary and/or a Senate Officer must be maintained appropriately, and this log will be kept confidential. The candidate is responsible for ensuring that the records are kept accurately. Therefore, candidates are encouraged, but not required, to keep a copy of the log in case the original log is lost or destroyed.

(f) Candidates or campaign workers may not tear down, cover, or deface candidates’ campaign material in any manner. If any damage is done by a candidate or campaign worker, the person committing the damage will be held responsible for restitution and the candidate committing the offense or the candidate whom the campaign worker was serving may be disqualified from the election through the complaint process as described in section 9.

(g) Posters may be placed on an individual’s residence hall window to be visible from outside the building, provided that the posters are attached to the inside of the window.

(h) Campus mail, for the purpose of campaigning, must be personally and individually addressed to individual students and/or student groups. Mail sent through the United States Postal Service is unrestricted. Candidates or their
(i) Campaign workers may not use the official SGAC registered e-mail accounts of
Student Association funded student groups to send electronic mail for
campaigning purposes. Electronic mail is otherwise unregulated.

(j) Candidates may not be officially endorsed by a Student Association funded
student group or use materials purchased with Student Association funds, except
as allowed in rule 6e. Further, no candidate may use official stationery, emblems,
symbols or envelopes of any Student Association funded student group.

(k) Reasonable online campaigning, including but not limited to the use of social
networks, personal blogs, instant messaging, etc., is permitted following the
mandatory meeting and the start of campaigning. Questions or complaints
pertaining to the use of online campaigning should be directed toward the
elections committee through the recognized medium.

   a. During the week of voting in each election, campaigning may not take
      place online. All messages, status updated, etc. shall pertain exclusively
to the existence of Student Senate elections and shall never solicit votes.
      Improper virtual posts or messages created by candidates and/or their
campaign workers shall result in immediate disqualification of the
candidate.

(l) For each upcoming election, room-to-room campaigning in the residence halls is
only allowed after the mandatory meeting. Room-to-room campaigning in the
residence halls may only occur from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. each night from
the mandatory meeting through the evening before the election. All residence
hall regulations, as found in or referenced to in the Swataney and all other official
University documents, will be enforced, including the escort policy and quiet
hours. Candidates must follow all of these policies while campaigning in the
residence halls.

(m) During the week of the voting in each election, campaigning may not take place
in any residence hall or in any Shippensburg University computer labs.

   a. Further, all posters and all other campaign materials, including any actions
of the candidate or campaign workers, must comply with policies found in
or referenced to in the Swataney unless otherwise modified in this
document. Campus officials and residence hall staff have the right to limit
and restrict the hanging and distribution of campaign materials of any kind
in accordance with policies found in the Swataney unless otherwise
modified in this document.

   b. Candidates and their respective campaign workers are responsible for
removing all campaign and elections materials located within the CUB at
the completion of the election cycle.

**NOTE:** No candidate or campaign worker may serve on the Elections Committee during
the particular election in which he or she is participating, and he or she may not assist
with the elections on that particular day. Elections Committee members who wish to run
for an office or campaign for a candidate or group of candidates must submit a typed
letter of resignation to the Elections Chair, who will sign the letter as verification of
receipt before the petitions are available for that particular election.
7. **Write-Ins**: Any eligible candidate may conduct a write-in campaign. A write-in candidate is defined as a person whose name does not appear on the ballot, yet still campaigns for a position. Write-in candidates must adhere to all guidelines set forth in this document except for sections 3 through 5.

8. **Voting**: Voting will be held for four back-to-back days (8 a.m. Monday through 4 p.m. Thursday) over the Internet (through the Elections System).

9. **Complaint Process (for non-Homecoming elections only)**: A declared candidate may file a complaint against another candidate running for the same position in the same election. This complaint must be founded in one or more of these areas:

   - Violation of a rule(s) or procedure(s) set forth in the Election Rules and Regulations, the Student Association Constitution, and any pertinent section(s) of documents directly referenced in these sources. The violation may be committed by either the candidate or a campaign worker. Further, violations must be directly related to a candidate’s actions while campaigning. For example, if a candidate violates quiet hours while not campaigning, a complaint could not be filed;

   - Procedural irregularity that directly and negatively affects a candidate’s or several candidates’ chances of winning an election, including but not limited to irregularities in the campaign copy log, the Election Chair’s misjudgment, or inequities in the voting procedure;

   - Invalid petition if the candidate in question was listed on the ballot. However, these complaints must be brought before the election occurs, and a candidate can only be taken off the ballot for this violation;

   - Inability of a candidate to meet the qualifications for an office as set forth in the “Student Association Constitution.”

(a) Any complaints of improper campaign practices during an election must be put in writing, signed, and submitted to the Elections Committee Chair within forty-eight hours of the closing of the polls before any action will be taken. This may also be done electronically through e-mail, whereby the signature requirement can be fulfilled by submitting the filer’s library ID.

(b) After receiving a complaint, the Elections Committee Chair shall notify all parties that are directly involved with the complaint in order to schedule a meeting of the Elections Complaint Ad-hoc Committee. The committee will be comprised of the Elections Committee Chair and two members from the elections committee, who shall be selected by the Elections Committee prior to the release of petitions for the respective election. An alternate member (who shall also be a member of the Elections Committee) shall be selected by the Elections Committee prior to the release of petitions for a respective election, and this alternate shall be used in a case where a pre-selected Elections Committee member must resign from the Elections Complaint Ad-hoc Committee or if the pre-selected member cannot attend the Elections Complaint Ad-Hoc Committee meeting.
(c) The candidate(s) in question and their designated witnesses will be invited to speak before the Elections Complaint Ad-Hoc Committee concerning the allegation(s). This shall be the official hearing, and an audio recording will be made of the meeting’s proceedings. Further, the official start and stop time of the meeting will be noted. All candidates involved and their respective witnesses have the right to be present while the candidate(s) present(s) their case(s). After hearing both sides, the members of the Elections Complaint Ad-Hoc Committee shall be allowed to ask question of the candidates or their witnesses.

(d) Afterward, the Elections Complaint Ad-Hoc Committee will deliberate in closed session and make a decision regarding the candidates’ statuses within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the Elections Complaint Ad-Hoc Committee meeting. During these deliberations, the Elections Complaint Ad-Hoc Committee reserves the right to call witnesses before the committee in order to gain clarification on issues pertinent to the complaint.

(e) If a candidate is charged with a complaint, he or she shall be granted an additional twenty-four (24) hours from the regular complaint deadline in which to file a complaint, which will be adjudicated through the elections complaint process outlined in this section.

(f) In the case of disqualification or failure of a candidate to accept a position any time prior to taking office, the candidate with the next highest votes for the contested or vacant office will become the elected Senate Representative or Senate Officer.

Double Jeopardy: Candidates may not be subjected to double jeopardy. Thus, if a candidate is punished for an incomplete petition by having his or her name removed from the ballot, a competing candidate cannot file a complaint alleging the candidate should be disqualified because he or she violated a procedure described in the Election Rules and Regulations.

10. Additional Definitions:

CAMPAIGN WORKER, in this document, and in all other official student association documents pertaining to student elections, is defined as “a person advocating for the successful or unsuccessful election of a candidate or group of candidates under the direct, assumed or implied instruction from the candidate whom the campaign worker is working.”

CAMPAIGN, in all documents regarding campaigning, shall be defined as “advocating for the successful or unsuccessful election of a candidate or a group of candidates.” However, circulating a petition during the petitioning process is not included in the definition of campaigning.

ELIGIBLE VOTER, in this document, shall be defined as any undergraduate student voting in any set of elections.
Appendix A: Statement of Comprehension and Assumed Liability

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Student Association Constitution and the Election Rules and Regulations. I have also had the opportunity to address any questions or clarify any ambiguities in either of these documents at the mandatory meeting on March 3, 2014 in CUB Room 103 at Shippensburg University. Having taken advantage of this opportunity, I understand, to the best of my current ability, all the information contained in the Student Association Constitution, the Election Rules and Regulations and pertinent sections of other documents referenced in either the former two sources of election law.

I further understand that not seeking clarification is neither a cause nor a justification for my not following the election guidelines as put forth in the Student Association Constitution, the Election Rules and Regulations and pertinent sections of other documents referenced in either of the two former sources of election law. In the case of unforeseen ambiguity after the close of the mandatory meeting, I will ask the Elections Chair to clarify the point, if I wish it to be clarified, through the appropriate procedure as described in the Election Rules and Regulations. Again, acting without seeking clarification does not justify or excuse an action.

Finally, I take full responsibility for my actions and for the actions of my campaign workers during the election cycle in which I am a candidate.

By signing below, I agree to all the conditions and statements set forth in this “Statement of Comprehension and Assumed Liability.”

Name of candidate

______________________________

Signature of candidate

______________________________

Date

______________________________

Name of witness

______________________________

Signature of witness

______________________________

Date