



Lafayette College Student Government Elections Manual

SECTION 1: STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Membership

The Student Government shall have 27 members made up of six cabinet members and seven senators per class year. All Cabinet members are to be elected by the student body, and Senators are to be elected by their respective class year.

SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

Elections Committee

The Elections Committee is a body of at least three members of the Student Government, including and co-chaired by the Vice President and the Inclusivity Officer, or, in the event that said officers intend to run for a Cabinet position, a designee thereof who does not intend to run for a Cabinet position. The members of the Standing Committee on Communications serve as non-voting members of the Elections Committee unless its members are selected as voting members of the Committee.

Applications/Intent to Run Forms

Student Government Applications, henceforth referred to simply as Applications, are online forms distributed to the first-year, sophomore, and junior classes to apply to the Student Government as Student Government Representatives. The content of these Applications is determined by the Elections Committee but must include a description of the responsibilities and expectations of a Student Government Representative. The Application must be identical for all applicants, including those who have previously served on the Student Government.

Elections Manual

The Elections Manual is a supplemental guide to the election and selection process, updated annually, compiled, and adopted by the Elections Committee. The Elections Manual contains the specific dates relevant to the elections and selection process, specific sanctions for violations of the rules outlined in these Bylaws or the Elections Manual, and details other procedures not mentioned in these Bylaws. The Elections Manual is subject to amendment by members of the Student Government after its initial adoption by the Elections Committee. The Elections Manual will be distributed to candidates by the Elections Committee via email upon the submission of the candidates' Intent to Run Forms (hereafter referred to as IRF).

SECTION 3: CABINET ELECTION

Eligibility

- a. All first-years, sophomores, and juniors who are full-time students and are not on academic or disciplinary probation at Lafayette College are eligible to run for Cabinet positions.
- b. Candidates for certain Cabinet positions (President, Vice President, and Treasurer) must have previously served on the Student Government for at least one semester. The positions of Secretary, Inclusivity Officer, and Parliamentarian are open to all students so long as they meet the other eligibility criteria.
- c. Candidates must only run for one Cabinet position per election cycle.

Timeline of Cabinet Election

- a. A general election of the Student Government Cabinet shall occur by the end of November.
 - o Monday Sept 28 at 8:00AM - Intent to Run Forms Available
 - o Monday Oct 12 at 11:55AM - Intent to Run Forms Due
 - o Monday Oct 12 by 11:55PM - Election Committee Meets to Discuss Candidates (Advisor checks academics/ judicial)
 - o Tuesday Oct 13 at 8:00AM - Candidates and Newspaper notified
 - o Wednesday Oct 14 - Friday Oct 16 - Meet with candidates to discuss campaigning and election procedures
 - o Monday Oct 19 - Sunday Oct 25 - Campaigning
 - o Thursday Oct 22 - Candidate Forum
 - o Monday Oct 26 at 8:00AM - Friday Oct 30 at 11:55AM - Voting
 - o Friday Oct 30 - Announcement of new Executive Board (26-27)
 - o Sunday Nov 1 - Campaigning must be taken down
 - o Thursday Dec 3 - Gavel Passing at the Chateau

Intent to Run Form Procedures

- a. All candidates must submit an IRF to be reviewed by the Elections Committee to appear on the ballot.
- b. An IRF may be rejected by a simple majority vote in the Elections Committee for any of the following reasons:
 - i. The content is obscene or inappropriate;
 - ii. Copyright infringement;
 - iii. The form is incomplete;
 - iv. Or reasons not listed before, but listed in the Elections Manual or voted on by the majority of the Elections Committee to be a reason for rejection.
- c. Once cleared by the Advisor, the Elections committee chair shall inform the candidates of their eligibility. If a candidate would like to remove themselves from the election, they must write it in a formal email to the Elections committee chair.
- d. If no IRFs are filled for the Cabinet positions by the deadline, then the Elections Committee can continue to solicit IRF until 48 hours before the election. Should no IRFs be turned in after the extended deadline, then the position will be filled according to the procedures outlined in Article V, Section 3 of the Bylaws.

Voting Procedure

Only Lafayette College students enrolled at the time of the Student Government elections are eligible to vote in the election. Students will be given the opportunity to vote for all Cabinet positions. This election shall be decided by plurality vote. If no singular candidate receives a plurality of the votes cast for the positions, a twelve-hour run-off election will be held to decide the winner.

SECTION 4: SENATOR ELECTION

Eligibility

- a. All full-time students who are not on academic or disciplinary probation shall be eligible to become candidates for the Student Government.
- b. Candidates of the Cabinet Election who were not elected into position, can run in the Senator election.

Timeline of Senator Election

- a. The election process will be run at the discretion of the Elections Committee.
- b. The election of the Senate shall occur after the new Cabinet has been elected and prior to the end of the fall semester.
- c. Election of the Student Government Senators shall take place in November on dates to be determined by the Student Government.
- d. The Elections Committee will vote on an election timeline; this election process shall conclude by the end of the fall semester.
 - o Monday Oct 19 at 8:00AM - Intent to Run Forms Available
 - o Monday Nov 2 at 11:55AM - Intent to Run Forms Due
 - o Monday Nov 2 by 11:55PM - Election Committee meets to Discuss Candidates (Advisor checks academics/ judicial)
 - o Tuesday Nov 3 at 8:00AM - Candidates and Newspaper notified
 - o Wednesday Nov 4 - Friday Nov 6 - Meet with candidates to discuss campaigning and election procedures
 - o Monday Nov 9 - Sunday Nov 15 - Campaigning
 - o Thursday Nov 12 - Meet the Senators
 - o Monday Nov 16 at 8:00AM - Friday Nov 20 at 11:55AM - Voting
 - o Friday Nov 20 - Announcement of new Executive Board (26-27)
 - o Sunday Nov 22 - Campaigning must be taken down
 - o Thursday Dec 3 - Gavel Passing at the Chateau

Intent to Run Form Procedures

- a. All candidates must submit an IRF to be reviewed by the Elections Committee to appear on the ballot.
- b. An IRF may be rejected by a simple majority vote in the Elections Committee for any of the following reasons:
 - i. The content is obscene or inappropriate;
 - ii. Copyright infringement;
 - iii. The form is incomplete;
 - iv. Or reasons not listed before, but listed in the Elections Manual or voted on by the majority of the Elections Committee to be a reason for rejection.

- c. Once cleared by the Advisor, the Elections Committee Chair shall inform the candidates of their eligibility. If a candidate would like to remove themselves from the election, they must write it in a formal email to the Elections Committee Chair.
- d. In the event that there are an insufficient number of individuals running for a Senator position, then the vacancy must be filled in accordance with Article VII, Section 3 of the Constitution.

Voting Procedures

Only Lafayette College students enrolled at the time of the Student Government elections are eligible to vote in the election. Students will be given the opportunity to vote for their respective class year senators. Students will be able to vote for seven senators since there are seven seats. This election shall be decided by plurality vote of the top seven candidates to be elected. If there is a tie between the seventh and eighth place candidate, a twelve hour run-off election will be held to decide the winner.

SECTION 5: CAMPAIGN FUNDING AND REGULATIONS

Campaign Funding

- a. Each candidate will be subsidized \$50 by the Student Government. Candidates may use their own money so long as the expenses do not exceed \$150, including monies allotted by the Student Government.
- b. All campaigning rules and regulations apply to both Student Government funds and personal funds.
- c. Candidates may only spend campaign finances on campaign publicity, whether that is online media, printed materials, or campaign merchandise.

Campaign Publicity

- a. Candidates may only campaign during the time period determined by the Elections Committee. Candidates must pre-approve all election marketing decisions, printed material, merchandise, and endorsements, with the Elections Committee. Candidates are permitted to campaign off campus with pre-approval by the Elections Committee. The Elections Committee will approve by majority vote within one week of receiving the material. Failure to abide by the timeline may result in disqualification. Candidates are not obligated to campaign, however it is highly recommended.
- b. Online campaigning is defined as, but not limited to, all social networking sites, groups, wall posts, and profile edits regarding one's candidacy.
 - i. The Elections Committee will be checking all candidates' profiles and affiliated pages to ensure that no unfair/illegal campaigning occurs. A candidate may use their personal social media site for campaigning or create a professional social media site for the purpose of campaigning.
- c. Printed campaigning is defined as, but not limited to, printed or painted posters, banners and flyers.
 - i. Printed campaigns can be done on designated bulletin boards or posting locations per building. A banner will be provided to candidates courtesy of Student Involvement and will be put up in Fainon College Center. Posting is not allowed in unauthorized areas and should not cover or block another candidate's printed campaign.
 - ii. Printed campaigns must visibly bear the candidate's name. All printed campaign material must be sent to the Election Committee. Materials will be reviewed for appropriateness and conformity to all applicable College guidelines.

- iii. Printed Campaign materials must be removed within 48 hours of the polls closing.
- d. Campaign Merchandise, is defined as, but not limited to, all merchandise, such as buttons, stickers, and wristbands, that regard one's candidacy.
- e. In-Person Campaigning, is defined as, but not limited to, campaigning done by a candidate that is in person such as tabling, door knocking and attending the Student Government in person event to meet the candidates.

Candidate Restrictions

- a. The Elections Committee reserves the right to control the time, place, and manner of distribution. If any material is deemed defamatory, obscene, or poses a clear and present danger of resulting in a serious substantive matter which the college has the right to prevent. The elections committee reserves the right to remove any candidate from the election if they violate any campaigning rules. Those who distribute must not:
 - i. Purchase or distribute gifts for gift-giving, regardless of monetary value. This includes but is not limited to, candy, giveaways, personal favors, exchangements of any kind, or offer positions, opportunities, or voting decisions in any capacity.
 - ii. Run with another candidate in the election.
 - iii. Campaign in any form against any other candidate. Slander of a candidate's opponent or any personal defamation of character digitally, verbally, or written down, in any capacity during the election process.
 - iv. Use YikYak as a platform to campaign.
 - v. Post on walls, doors, windows, pillars, garbage cans, trees, automobiles, vending machines, walls by telephones, bathroom stalls, or any other unauthorized areas.
 - vi. Block entrances or exits to any facilities or disrupt the normal flow of traffic.
 - vii. Commit any act that creates a safety or health hazard.
 - viii. Use bribery as a form of gaining votes.
 - ix. Use vulgar or derogatory language campaign tactics including posters, media, slogans, or interactions with other candidates.
 - x. Defacing other candidates' advertisements, whether physical posters or on social media, defacing includes, but is not limited to, tearing down or damaging physical posters, or re-imaging a candidate's social media post in a negative light.
 - xi. Continuously badgering people such as repeatedly knocking on doors.
 - xii. Accompany the distribution of materials by loud or raucous sounds which are likely to disturb others.
 - xiii. Interfere or disrupt any other activity in the same general location.
 - xiv. Campaign in any place that serves alcohol off campus.

Endorsements by Organizations

- a. Endorsements may take the form of verbal support of a candidate or may involve actual assistance in campaigning. All Student organizations may endorse candidates once. The endorsement must be approved by the Elections Committee. The executive officers of student organizations should ensure that the organization has voted to endorse a candidate. Student Activities fee money cannot be used by any recognized student organization to campaign for a candidate.
- b. The Student Government is the only student organization that may not endorse a candidate. This includes its members.

SECTION 6: Candidate, Advisor, and Elections Committee Responsibilities

Candidates

- a. Each candidate will be responsible for:
 - Filling out an IRF if running for an elected position, by a specified date laid out by the Elections Committee.
 - Meet all requirements of the position that they seek. Failure of a candidate to meet the requirements shall constitute cause for removal of the candidate from the election ballot.
 - The conduct of their campaign workers.
 - Must abide by a fair and respectful campaign:
 - No use of vulgar or derogatory language campaign tactics including posters, media, slogans, or interactions with other candidates;
 - Refraining from defacing other candidates' advertisements, whether physical posters or on social media, defacing includes, but is not limited to, tearing down or damaging physical posters, or re-imaging a candidate's social media post in a negative light;
 - And adherence to the College's poster, solicitation, and distribution of literature policies and in congruence with spending limits imposed by the Student Government election rules.
- b. Failure of a candidate to cease a violation of the election rules after having been so advised by a member of the Elections Committee shall constitute cause for removal of the candidate from the call and/or disqualification from being elected.

Advisor

- a. The Advisor will be responsible for:
 - Working and overseeing the polls
 - Creating the ballots
 - Creating the rules for candidates, approves candidate marketing strategies, and imposes elections sanctions on rule-breaking candidates
 - Confirming eligibility of candidates
 - Approving funding for candidates

Elections Committee

- a. The Elections committee will be responsible for:
 - i. Creating the election timeline in accordance with the Bylaws.
 - ii. Soliciting IRFs
 - iii. Notifying each candidate of their status
 - iv. Remaining unbiased in the campaign process, however, will still be able to vote in the election.

SECTION 7: VACANCIES AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Vacancy of Cabinet Member

- a. Should the office of the President be vacant, the Vice President shall become the President and assume all of the responsibilities of that office.
- b. Should the office of any of the remaining officers become vacant, the Student Government by a three-fourths vote, shall designate a Senator to temporarily fulfill the duties of the Cabinet member whose seat was vacated until that seat is officially filled.
- c. The Vice President, or another Cabinet member designated by the President in the event of the Vice President's absence, shall request an IRF from the population of those

eligible to run.

- d. The Election Committee will hold a special election for the open position(s) based on IRFs submitted. This election shall be done by plurality vote and within a timeline of the committee's choosing.
 - i. The timeline of the special election shall be determined by the Elections Committee and does not have to abide by the regular election timeline due to time sensitivity. All eligibility, Intent to Run Form procedures, and Voting procedures shall remain consistent.

Vacancy of Senator

- a. A vacancy of a Senator shall be filled by an appointment process.
- b. The Vice President of the Student Government shall request applications from the student body within one week of a vacancy arising.
- c. The Chair of the Communications Committee must notify the student body through the campus media and the publications of the Student Government of the vacancy.
- d. It shall be the duty of the Cabinet to select the new Senator by majority vote based on the recommendations submitted by the Vice President.

SECTION 8: ELECTIONS VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS

Definitions of Violations

- a. Acts of misconduct for which candidates are subject to review include violations of College policy and regulations, election and campaign guidelines, local ordinances, and state and federal laws, and include, without limitation:
 - o Willful or malicious damage or destruction of another candidate's campaign material or election material.
 - o Forgery, alteration, or misuse of College documents, records, and student ID cards
 - o Violations of Lafayette College Housing regulations
 - o Violate the College's poster, solicitation, and distribution of literature policies
 - o Violations of other college policies or regulations
 - o Leafletting on vehicles or posting flyers on unauthorized areas.
 - o Providing access on campus to a computer in order to vote online. Doing so creates a de facto polling site and violates secret-ballot confidentiality.
 - o Slander of a candidate's opponent or any personal defamation of character in any capacity during the election process
 - o Use bribery in any form as a way to get votes.

Sanctions

- a. The sanctions listed in this section are not inclusive, but merely serve as guidelines and may be imposed in any combination:
 - o Warning: A written warning noting that repetition of violations or additional violations will subject the candidate to further sanction.
 - o Assessment for restitution: Payment for the restoration of the college's property and/or candidate material
 - o Probation: Places the candidate on notice that further violations may result in separation from the election
 - o Separation from the election (permanent): The candidate may not hold office in Student Government or serve as a committee chair.

Grievance Procedures

- a. Under this section, a student may charge a candidate with alleged violation of election and/or campaign guidelines. Charges of violations shall be processed according to the following procedures:
 - Grievances shall be made to the Elections Committee. The grieving party shall submit in writing:
 - The name of the person whom the complaint is made and the date of the complaint
 - The specific charges
 - A statement of the circumstances and evidence
 - A list of witnesses (if applicable)
 - The Election Committee shall, within three working days, in writing:
 - Acknowledge receipt of the charges to the complaining party
 - Forward the charges and the statement of circumstances, evidence, and the list of witnesses to the complainant and the person against whom the charge is made.
 - Arrange for and give notice of the time and place of a hearing to the parties involved.
 - Conduct a hearing no more than five days from the date of receipt of the written charge.
 - Within 24 hours after the hearing, notify in writing the parties involved of their decision of resolution.
- b. If a grievance is submitted that cannot be resolved before the election opens, then the election timing will be moved at the discretion of the elections committee.

Hearing Procedures

- a. A hearing shall normally follow the sequence indicated below:
 - The Elections Committee shall convene and preside over the hearing.
 - The Student Government advisor shall be responsible for keeping an accurate record of the proceedings of the hearing(s) or choose someone to do so.
 - The Elections Committee shall inform all parties of their responsibilities regarding attendance, testimony, honesty, rights, and the maintenance of order.
 - The President shall read the charges and ask the respondent to reply to the allegation(s). If the respondent is absent or refuses to reply, it shall be assumed that the respondent disagrees with the allegation(s) made.
 - The complainant and the respondent may make an opening statement which shall inform the Election Committee of the evidence to be presented and provide a general overview of the case.
 - The complainant may then present witnesses and other evidence in support of the allegation(s).
 - The respondent may then question the complainant and each witness presented.
 - The complainant may question each witness again after the respondent has finished questioning.
 - Members of the Election Committee may question the witnesses, and the President may permit further questioning by the parties.
 - Either party may challenge the admission of evidence if the party believes there is a good reason the evidence should not be admitted. The president shall make the final decision in all cases regarding relevance and admissibility of evidence.
 - The respondent may then present witnesses and evidence in an effort to respond to the charge(s).

- The complainant may question the witnesses.
- The respondent may question the witnesses again after the complainant has finished questioning.
- Members of the Elections Committee may question the witnesses and permit further questioning by the parties.
- The President shall have the opportunity to present their closing statements, summarizing evidence and presenting arguments.
- The Election Committee shall close the hearing and meet in executive session to make a finding of fact based on a preponderance of the evidence, then determine a recommendation, which shall be rendered within applicable time limits.

Election Contests / Appeal

- a. Under this section, a candidate may choose to appeal to the election results under the following guidelines:
 - A candidate may contest the results of the election no later than 12 hours after the announcement of the election results.
 - The appeal must be made in writing, stating the misconduct or reason(s) for the appeal.
 - All appeals will be addressed to the Election Committee
 - The Election Committee will review the basis of the appeal and pursue the next steps within the appeals process and fulfilling a vacant seat.