

# **Illinois Wesleyan University Student Senate Code of Elections**

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## **Article I. General Guidelines**

**Section 1.** The Code of Elections shall govern all Illinois Wesleyan University elections.

**Section 2.** The Internal Affairs Committee may make additional guidelines in necessary circumstances as they see fit.

## **Article II. Petition Process**

**Section 1.** All full-time students who have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher and all students who have not yet received an IWU collegiate GPA may be candidates for Student Senate elections.

**Section 2.** All candidates for any Student Senate election must sign the Student Senate Candidate GPA Validation Form allowing the Chief of Staff to have one-time access to validate that the candidate's cumulative GPA is higher than 2.0. Candidates must plan on registering for classes taught on Illinois Wesleyan University's campus for the entirety of the term for which they are running. The President, Vice, and Executive Board should not pursue alternative off campus semester options which could include but are not limited to: study abroad, student teaching, off-campus internships, or other similar opportunities.

**Section 3.** Potential candidates must complete a Student Senate petition in the following manner:

1. Class Senators must collect signatures from their respective class: first-years must collect 15 signatures; sophomores, juniors, and seniors must collect 25 signatures.
2. Candidates for President or Vice President must collect the signatures of 75 members of the student body.

## **Article III. Campaign Procedures**

**Section 1.** The timeline for elections must be made available to the student body two (2) weeks before petitions are made available.

**Section 2.** The Code of Elections must be accessible to all students, either physically or electronically, before petitions are made available.

**Section 3.** Each candidate and all surrogates of candidates must uphold all campaign procedures.

**Section 4.** All campaign materials shall comply with the following guidelines:

1. No campaign materials (including but not limited to posters, flyers, websites, internet advertisements) shall be distributed before petitions are made available.
2. For Presidential and Vice Presidential elections, the Internal Affairs Committee must approve all campaign materials before distribution within forty-eight (48) hours of submissions. If, after that time, the committee fails to communicate a decision, the materials are considered approved. Materials may be submitted no earlier than one (1) week before petitions are made available.
3. Each candidate will be allowed, at most, 3 kinds of posters not to exceed a total of 150 posters.
4. All posters must not exceed the size of 8 1/2 by 11 inches.
5. Chalk writing will be prohibited.

6. No candidate shall tamper with or remove another candidate's campaign materials.
7. No candidate shall use any university listserv as a mechanism for mass e-mailing a personal campaign.
8. All material must also follow the Illinois Wesleyan University Campus Posting Policy.
9. Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates may endorse one another in official campaign materials.

**Section 5.** Candidates may be allowed up to \$100 for campaign materials. In kind donations must be marked at fair market value. Documentation of purchases shall be given to the Internal Affairs Committee Chair.

**Section 6.** Any knowledgeable attempt to use misleading or falsified information during a campaign will be viewed as a violation of the Code of Elections.

**Section 7.** If, as a part of a candidate's campaign, a serious violation of Illinois Wesleyan University's Student Code of Conduct or the Code of Elections occurs, it will be grounds for disqualification.

#### **Article IV. Voting Procedures**

**Section 1.** In accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws, online elections administered by the Internal Affairs Committee shall be recognized by the Student Senate as an appropriate medium for elections.

**Section 2.** The online election site must adhere to the following provisions.

- A. All necessary restrictions to ensure students may only vote once shall be taken.
- B. For each candidate, the ballot must contain his or her name, year in school, and a short bio. If a candidate fails to provide a bio twenty-four (24) hours prior to the election start time, it will be noted on the ballot.
- C. The ballot must be available to all eligible students.

**Section 3.** A candidate's bio may express campaign goals and/or describe his or herself in a manner they deem fit. Candidates for Senators are allowed a maximum of 150 words, and candidates for President or Vice President are allowed a maximum of 500 words.

**Section 4.** The period for which a vote can be cast shall not be less than forty-eight (48) hours or greater than four (4) days.

**Section 5.** During the election, only the Chief of Staff and President may have access to the election results.

**Section 6.** Releasing any election results prior to the official announcement of results is not permitted.

**Section 7.** If the number of candidates for any elected senate position is less than or equal to the number of available positions, the election shall be determined by a vote of confidence/no confidence.

- A. In the case of President/Vice President election, a majority no-confidence vote will result in an immediate repeated election process, with the former exec board continuing in an interim capacity.

B. In the case of senator elections, the seat will remain vacant to be filled by IA by their appointment process.

**Section 8.** In the event of a system or network failure in which the online election site is down more than 12 hours over the entire course of the election, the online election will be extended by the number of hours the site was down and all voters will be notified via e-mail of the extension.

**Section 9.** If, after an election has concluded, a candidate requests documentation of the results, the Chief of Staff may share the results with only the requesting candidates' name tied to specific results.

## **Article V. President and Vice President Elections**

**Section 1.** Petitions shall be made available at least ten (10) business days prior to the due date and time specified.

**Section 2.** Elections shall be held no earlier than two (2) days after the petitions are due.

**Section 3.** The voting period for Presidential and Vice Presidential elections shall begin no earlier than six (6) weeks and no later than three (3) weeks prior to the last General Assembly meeting of the fall semester.

**Section 4.** Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates shall run in separate elections.

**Section 5.** A winner shall be determined when a candidate receives a majority of the votes legally cast. If any one candidate does not attain a majority, then the top two candidates for the office in question shall advance to a runoff election.

**Section 6.** If the President and Vice President host a forum for Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates, candidates shall be expected to attend the forum and abide by forum rules

1. The President shall determine a date and time for the forum and create questions for candidates that are made available to candidates at least 24 hours in advance of the forum.
2. The Internal Affairs committee shall create forum guidelines that are made available to candidates at least 24 hours in advance.

## **Article VI. Senator Elections**

**Section 1.** Petitions shall be made available five (5) to ten (10) business days prior to the due date and time specified<sup>1</sup>.

**Section 2.** Elections shall be held no earlier than two (2) days after the petitions are due.

**Section 3.** Student Senate Senator elections shall be held within the first three (3) weeks of the academic year before the first General Assembly Meeting.

**Section 4.** Students will receive a ballot with the candidates running for the seats of their respective class.

**Section 5.** Students shall be allowed two (2) votes for candidates on their ballot. Students must cast both votes and may not cast both for the same candidate.

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<sup>1</sup> A business refers to days when regularly scheduled classes at IWU are in session

**Section 6.** The top nine candidates with the highest plurality of votes shall be the winners. In the case of a tie for 8th place with two candidates, both candidates shall be considered. If more than two candidates tie for 8th place, a runoff election shall be held.

**Section 7.** In the event that there are not enough Student Senate candidates to fill the ballot, the seat(s) may remain open and not be counted in quorum. The Internal Affairs Committee shall accept petitions at any point throughout the year for candidates from classes with open seats and make a nomination to the Student Senate General Assembly to fill the seat for the remainder of the academic year with a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

**Section 8.** At the beginning of the spring semester, an election will be held to fill all vacated seats. The election will follow all applicable guidelines of Senator elections.

**Section 9.** If, after the Senator Election cycle ends, there are open seats within the Student Senate we will begin to accept overflow petitions. Overflow petitions will allow a student from a class of senators who have reached capacity (9 senators) to petition to become a senator, granted the entirety of the Student Senate has not reached its capacity (less than 36 members).

## **Article VII. Run Off Elections**

**Section 1.** All run off elections will begin no later than two (2) business days after the initial vote ends.

**Section 2.** All applicable guidelines from the initial election shall be followed.

**Section 3.** If initial election guidelines are not applicable, the Internal Affairs Committee may decide on the election structure.

## **Article VIII. Disqualification of Candidates**

**Section 1.** In order for a candidate to be disqualified, the disqualification process must take place in accordance with the following procedures:

1. If a student feels that a candidate has acted in a fashion that constitutes grounds for disqualification, the student may file a written complaint to the Internal Affairs Committee. The complainant may remain anonymous to all but the Internal Affairs Committee, President, Senate advisor, Dean of Students and all necessary parties.
2. The written complaint must be filed with the Internal Affairs Committee Chairperson, who shall in turn notify all candidates of the complaint.
3. If a member of the Internal Affairs Committee files a complaint, that member shall not act in any committee membership capacity during any part of the complaint process.
4. After a written complaint has been received, the Internal Affairs Committee must conduct a hearing to gather facts about the complaint.
5. The Internal Affairs Committee will decide upon the structure of the hearing, where all parties involved shall be given fair opportunity to present their case. The Internal Affairs Committee shall be allowed to ask questions and gather outside information with consent of the Committee Chair.

6. After the hearing has been conducted, the Internal Affairs Committee will meet in closed session to discuss the findings of the hearing and vote on a decision.
7. The votes of individual committee members shall remain anonymous.
8. The Internal Affairs Committee may rule in one of three ways:
  - a. The Internal Affairs Committee may decide that no further action needs to be taken on the matter.
  - b. The Internal Affairs Committee may require a course of action to be taken not resulting in disqualification.
  - c. The Internal Affairs Committee may decide to disqualify a candidate.
9. A three-fifths (3/5) majority vote of all voting members of the Internal Affairs Committee is necessary to disqualify a candidate.
10. If it is decided that the candidate is disqualified, the candidate shall remain on the ballot. The votes received for that candidate shall be void.
11. When a ruling is decided upon, the chair of the Internal Affairs Committee must notify, in writing, within twenty-four (24) hours, the following parties of the ruling:
  - a. The President, Dean of Students, and Senate advisor
  - b. The student who filed the original complaint
  - c. The candidate who the complaint was filed against
  - d. All candidates who are running for the same office as the candidate whom the complaint was filed against
12. The written notification of the Committee's ruling must include the following:
  - a. A description of the complaint
  - b. The Committee's ruling
  - c. The Committee's rationale for the ruling
  - d. If applicable, the Committee's recommended steps to rectify the situation in question without a hearing

## **Article IX. Appealing An Election**

**Section 1.** A candidate who desires to contest an election must do so within 48 hours from the time they are notified of the results.

- A. Candidates must notify the Internal Affairs Committee Chairperson of such an action in writing.

**Section 2.** The Internal Affairs Committee must meet and decide upon the written request within 24 hours of the complaint.

## **Article X. Elections Appeal Board**

**Section 1.** Anyone may appeal any of the Internal Affairs Committee in the following ways:

1. The student must request to appeal in writing to the Internal Affairs Committee Chair, who shall notify the President.

2. The President shall nominate an Elections Appeal Board from four (4) Senators not a part of the initial Internal Affairs Committee process. If the President is involved in the hearing, the Vice President shall take on these duties.
3. The Elections Appeal Board shall establish appeal processes similar to the original format.

**Section 2.** A hearing shall not interrupt the timeline of an election.

## **Article XI. Professor of the Year Elections, Staff Member of the Year, and Academic Advisor of the Year**

**Section 1.** The general elections for Professor of the Year, Staff Member of the Year, and Academic Advisor of the Year shall take place at the same time in March.

**Section 2.** A nomination form must be available to students for a minimum of one (1) week.

**Section 3.** The Internal Affairs Committee may meet to narrow down nominations to a reasonable number. A student Senate General Assembly vote shall be taken to identify the top five (5) nominees for Professor of the Year, the top three (3) nominees for Staff Member of the Year, and Academic Advisor of the Year by the plurality vote. After the top five (5) professors, top three (3) staff members, and the top three (3) academic advisors of the year accept their nominations, the student body will vote. Their names shall be on the ballot distributed to the student body.

**Section 4.** The Professor of the Year, the Staff Member of the Year and, the Academic Advisor of the Year voting period will be no shorter than forty-eight (48) hours and no longer than four (4) days. After the winning professor, staff member, and academic advisor accept their titles, the professor, staff, and academic advisor member will be announced no later than on (1) week after the end of the voting period.

**Section 5.** If a professor or staff or academic advisor member declines his or her nomination, the candidate with the next highest number of votes shall be announced Professor of the Year or Staff Member of the Year or Academic Advisor of the Year respectively.

**Section 6.** The Professor, Staff Member, and Academic Advisor of the Year shall be recognized by the student body with a certificate.

## **Article XII. Amending the Code of Elections**

**Section 1.** Any motion to amend the Code of Elections must first be introduced in writing for information at a General Assembly Meeting.

**Section 2.** Any such proposed amendment shall then be referred to the Internal Affairs Committee.

**Section 3.** A proposed amendment referred to the Internal Affairs Committee may only be considered for action by the General Assembly at a General Meeting after the Committee has both approved the item for action and submitted written recommendations.

**Section 4.** Amendments to the Code of Elections require a 2/3 affirmative vote for passage.