

**Updated: March 15th, 2019**

## **UMBC SGA Election Rules 2019**

**Read carefully!**

### **The Basics**

1. Candidates may run for no more than one position in the election.
2. In this document, “campaigning” means advertising one's campaign through verbal, written, printed or electronic promotion.

### **The Students’ Rights**

3. Students must be free to vote as they wish without being harassed, badgered, or intimidated by candidates or their supporters. Campaigns may not provide prospective voters with equipment (eg., laptops, tablets, cell phones) on which to cast votes. Campaigns may not assist or interfere with voters in the act of voting. If a candidate or supporter is aware that a student is waiting to or in the act of voting, the candidate or supporter may not approach within 10 feet of the voter to provide information, solicit votes, or attempt to view the voter's selections. The Election Board will disseminate information to assist students in reporting violations of this rule.
4. Any student may file a complaint with the Election Board about an alleged violation of these rules. Complaints must be filed by 48 hours after an alleged violation is discovered OR by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17th-- whichever is earliest. Complaints can be submitted through the RT system at [https://rtforms.umbc.edu/rt\\_authenticated/dosa/SGA\\_Election\\_Complaint.php](https://rtforms.umbc.edu/rt_authenticated/dosa/SGA_Election_Complaint.php). Any supplemental materials to the submitted complaint can be emailed to the Election Board Chair Jessica Kweon (jkweon1@umbc.edu). Complaints must be accompanied by evidence of the alleged violation.

### **Campaigns/Campaigning**

5. Candidates are not permitted to campaign until March 15th. All candidates must attend the mandatory candidate orientation in order to be eligible to campaign. Candidate orientations will take place on March 11th and March 13th at 12 p.m. in Room 206 of the Public Policy Building. If a candidate is not able to make one of these sessions and has made every effort to re-arrange their schedule, they must notify the Election Board Chair, by email, in advance of the final orientation to make arrangements to meet with the Election Board Chair (Jessica Kweon) or their designee (Candace Martinez-Doane). The Election Board will determine if the reason presented is valid and sufficient enough to allow for the candidate to schedule an alternative meeting before the start of campaigning, March 15th.
6. Candidates are responsible for any actions taken on their behalf by people who could reasonably believe that they are acting with the candidate's approval. If the candidate is aware that somebody intends to violate an election rule to promote the candidate’s campaign, the candidate is required to intervene to try to prevent the violation.
7. Permissible campaign methods include: handing out literature; making phone calls; using social

media; putting posters, flyers, banners, etc. in any location that does not violate UMBC rules; using campaign buttons; wearing a sandwich sign; sending emails (but see Rule #16, below) and handing out food, pencils, etc.

8. Any campaign method is allowed provided it does not violate any of these rules, any law, or any UMBC policy. Even if UMBC policies are not usually enforced by campus authorities, their violation will be considered a violation of these Election Rules. For example, the [UMBC Campus Posting Policy](#) must be followed.
9. Early voting will take place during two overnight voting periods: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 from 7:00 p.m. to Thursday, April 11, 2019 at 7:00 a.m.; Thursday, April 11, 2019 from 7:00 p.m. to Friday, April 12, 2019 at 7:00 a.m.  
In-person Voting will take place during two voting periods: Monday, April 15, 2019 from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Tuesday, April 16th, 2019 from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
10. NO campaigning is allowed from 2:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. during the two overnight voting periods (on the mornings of Thursday, April 11 and Friday, April 12).
11. Making false statements of fact to promote or discredit a candidate, orally, visually, or in writing, or misleading people about the voting process, either intentionally or because the person making the statements did not take reasonable steps to verify their accuracy, is prohibited. True statements and statements of opinion or intention are welcome except when they violate UMBC rules. Infractions involving false statements about an opposing candidate or intentionally misleading people about the voting process will be considered especially serious violations.

#### **Spaces Where Campaigning is NOT Allowed**

12. No candidate or campaign representative may physically or verbally approach any individual in the library (defined as the entirety of the library building, including the atrium and RLC). Passive campaigning, as in wearing promotional shirts and buttons, will be allowed.
13. No candidate or campaign representative may physically or verbally approach any individual in The Commons or The Commons Terrace to advocate for a specific candidate and/or ballot issue(s). In addition, campaigns are prohibited from sitting at non-reserved tables with the intent to distribute information in support/opposition of candidates and/or ballot issues.
14. Campaigning in the residence community is restricted by Residential Life policies, which are designed to ensure a comfortable living environment for resident students, in addition to the following instructions. Door to door solicitation, including knocking on residents' doors, is prohibited. No posted advertising (except on a resident's door by the residents themselves) or residential mailbox ads by individual candidates are permitted in the residential community. Postings and mailbox ads are permitted if they are sponsored by the SGA Election Board and include all candidates' information. Furthermore, active campaigning is not permitted in residential facilities and True Grit's; only passive campaigning is allowed in these locations.

#### **Prohibitions on Use of UMBC Resources**

15. The use of resources owned by SGA or any other UMBC office for campaign purposes is prohibited, except when the resources are available for public use. Campaigning or preparing campaign materials in the SGA Office is prohibited. Examples of prohibited conduct within the SGA office: using SGA telephones to solicit votes, wearing visible paraphernalia supporting candidate(s), or using supplies from a UMBC office to create advertising. Campaigning during SGA Open Meetings, including Senate or Finance Board meetings, is prohibited.
16. While the student body will receive email(s) from the UMBC Administration on behalf of the Election Board for election-related announcements, the assumption will be that students are otherwise opted-out of emails or messages on behalf of individual candidates or groups of candidates. The use of a line of communication between candidates/campaigners and students will be limited to those students who A) initiate an email thread, social media group, and/or messaging group with the candidate by directly inquiring about their campaign or B) decide of their own free will to opt-in to emails and/or messages from a candidate via the following google form: Email and Messaging Opt-in Form SGA Elections 2019. The Election Board requires that candidates keep proof of the full email exchange in regard to scenario A. However, any student organization may still use its organization-specific list of emails to communicate with its members regarding the organization's candidate endorsements.

### **Endorsements**

17. Any student organization\*, or individual student, may choose to endorse\*\* any candidate. Candidates may publicize these endorsements AFTER:
  - a. submitting a statement, signed by the president of the organization, identifying the candidate(s) endorsed AND the method used to determine who would be endorsed, and
  - b. receiving written acknowledgement from the Election Board Chair. This written acknowledgement will include a statement indicating how the organization and candidate's campaign may permissibly characterize the endorsement without violating the rule against false statements of fact. For example, if the organization's endorsement was determined by a vote of all members, the Election Board Chair's statement would say "Candidate X has been endorsed by the ABC Club." If, on the other hand, the President and Vice President of an organization decided whom to endorse without the participation of any other ABC Club members, the Election Board Chair's statement might say "Candidate X has been endorsed by the President and Vice President of The ABC Club."

Both requirements must be met for a student organization or individual student to publicly endorse a student, both in-person and virtually (e.g. social media posts).

\* Note: Charter organizations and the Resident Student Association (RSA) are not allowed to endorse a candidate as a whole. Individual members/officers are permitted to endorse candidates as they see fit.

\*\* Note: Endorsements only apply for an individual when they are utilizing their positionality to promote a campaign.

### **Commonvision as a Resource for Campaigns**

18. If candidates make use of funds provided by the Election Board to print promotional materials at Commonvision, those promotional materials must meet the following standards:
- a. Any and all content on the printed pages must directly pertain to your own campaign in this year's SGA election.
  - b. The page must include the candidate's name and position they are seeking. This must be included on all printed campaign material.
  - c. Candidates are not allowed to use SGA funds to print material for personal matters.

Candidates are welcome to send material to the Election Board Chair via email to verify that the material is in compliance with the above standards if they are unsure. Candidates are not required to submit material for approval prior to printing if they are confident the material meets the standards. If a candidate prints a piece of material that does not meet above standards, the candidate will be subject to consequences decided by the Election Board.

19. Each candidate is allocated a limited amount of funds to be used at Commonvision by the Election Board, but there is no spending limit on a candidate's personal funds.
20. When there is limited access to a public forum (such as iNet and space to hang banners), the Election Board will decide how to apportion the resource among candidates interested in using it.

### **Election Board Rights and Responsibilities**

21. The Election Board will determine that the evidence is insufficient to support the allegation or invite the accused student(s) to present contrary evidence. The Election Board will rule that a violation has occurred if they determine that the evidence supports this conclusion.
22. Violations of any of the listed rules will result in penalties, potentially including candidate disqualification. Disqualification is especially likely when a candidate has committed a violation with a high probability of affecting the outcome of the election during the period of voting. In addition, any action which appears to violate the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the proper UMBC authorities.
23. The Election Board may choose to issue statements clarifying these rules. Candidates may request clarification of a rule at any time by submitting a written request to the Election Board Chair, Jessica Kweon (jkweon1@umbc.edu). The Election Board's clarifying statements will be made available in writing to all candidates only by the Election Board Chair, and will be clearly identified by the heading "Official Election Board Statement Clarifying Election Rules." Any clarifying statement not published by the Election Board Chair, or not set forth in writing with the heading described in this rule, is invalid.
24. To maintain the integrity of the Election Board, members cannot nominate a potential candidate nor serve on a candidate's campaign. In addition, while they are serving on the Election Board, members cannot run in the SGA Elections. Furthermore, if a member of the Election Board resigns from their position, they are not permitted to run in that year's elections.

25. All official communications to and from the Election Board will be done by email. Oral communications or communications via social media are not official.
26. The Election Board as a whole will not give advance approval to any specific action by any campaign. If you think an action might violate a rule but are not sure . . . simply do not do it!
27. The Election Board may amend these rules at any time. If it does, an email will be sent with the official title "Official Election Board Statement Amending Rules." If an amendment is made, the rules will be effective at the time that the email is sent.
28. In the event of a last-place tie in the Instant Runoff races for President/Executive Vice President, Treasurer, and/or Vice President of Student Organizations, the vote tallies will be reset to "0". The race will re-run on the day immediately following the end of the advertised voting period, and the voting hours will remain the same as the early voting days (7 pm to 7am).