

The background of the page features a large, faint watermark of the University of Texas at Austin seal. The seal is circular and contains the text 'THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN' around the perimeter. Inside the circle is a shield with a five-pointed star in the center, flanked by two olive branches. Above the shield is a banner with the motto 'DISCIPLINA CIVITAS'.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT
ELECTION CODE**

2016

The University of Texas at Austin

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STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTION CODE

TITLE III STUDENT GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC ELECTION CODE

CHAPTER I PROVISIONS

- SEC. 1.1 CODE DEADLINES. If this code is enacted after any of the enclosed deadlines, such deadlines shall be immediately due, and the Election Supervisory Board shall meet those deadlines with all deliberate speed.
- SEC. 1.2 CODE REFERENCES. Pursuant to Section 5.44 of the Student Government Constitution, this act shall be referred to and cited as the “Student Government Election Code”, “Election Code”, or the “Code.”
- SEC. 1.3 ENACTMENT. TITLE III shall only apply to campus-wide elections of the Student Government at the University of Texas at Austin.
- SEC. 1.4 APPLICATION. A copy of this election code, the Student Government Constitution, and the Student Government Code of Rules and Procedures shall be made available to each candidate no later than the time of the candidate’s filing to run for office in the Student Government Office (SAC 2.102).
- SEC. 1.5 AVAILABILITY. Any student may receive a full copy of this election code at any time.

CHAPTER II DEFINITIONS

- SEC. 2.1 INCORPORATION OF DEFINITIONS. All definitions in TITLE II, Article II of this Code are incorporated into this article of TITLE III as if set forth in-full.
- SEC. 2.2 “APPELLATE COURT” refers to the Supreme Court, as empowered by Article 5.3 of the Student Government Constitution to serve as the court holding the appellate jurisdiction over all campus-wide Student Government elections.
- SEC. 2.3 “CAMPAIGN STAFF” refers to any and all individuals coordinating with a candidate, including, but not limited to, all agents and workers.
- SEC. 2.4 “ENDORSEMENT” AND “ENDORISING” refer to any form of communication expressing support for a candidate by a party other than the candidate.

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- SEC. 2.5 “EXECUTIVE ALLIANCE” refers to collaborative campaign plan or activity between a presidential and vice presidential candidate.
- (a) Only individuals filed as an executive alliance are allowed to collaborate, endorse, or otherwise share resources with each other.
 - (b) No other candidate is permitted to engage in written or verbal endorsement, collaboration, financial, or other tangible support for any other candidate(s) or their respective campaign staff in any campus-wide election.
- SEC. 2.6 “GENERAL ELECTION” refers to the annual election of Student Government officers; which shall be held on the Wednesday and Thursday of the week two weeks prior to the start of the University’s spring break.
- SEC. 2.7 “REGULATORY BODIES” include the Election Supervisory Board and all other administrative bodies of the election process.
- SEC. 2.8 “RUNOFF ELECTION” refers to all secondary elections held to resolve races not initially determined by a general or special election as specified in Article 6.5 of the Student Government Constitution.
- SEC. 2.9 “SPECIAL ELECTION” refers to an election called by the Student Government President, as specified in Article VI, Sec. 6.5-6.6 of the Student Government Constitution.
- SEC. 2.10 “STUDENT GOVERNMENT” refers to the student government association of the University as recognized in Rule 50203 of the Texas Board of Regents Rules and established within the Student Government Constitution.
- SEC. 2.11 “WORKER” further refers to any person that contributes time, effort, or service for the purposes of supporting or furthering a candidacy in which they coordinate with a candidate or member of a candidate’s campaign staff.
- (a) Social media updates, statuses and/or profile picture changes do not constitute time, effort or services as defined by the definition of worker immediately above.

CHAPTER III
CANDIDATE RIGHTS & DUTIES

SUBCHAPTER A: *FILING PROCESS*

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- SEC. 3.1 ELIGIBILITY. Eligible individual students may file as candidates for a position in their respective school or file for a position as a University-wide representative.
- (a) Only eligible students, as recognized by the Dean of Students in interpreting the provisions of the Student Government Constitution and this election code, may have their filing officially certified and be registered as a candidate by the Election Supervisory Board.
- SEC. 3.2 FORMATION OF AN EXECUTIVE ALLIANCE. Two eligible students, one seeking the office of the President and the other the office of Vice President, may create an executive alliance as defined by TITLE III, Sec. 2.5 of this code.
- SEC. 3.3 PROHIBITED ASSOCIATION. Except in cases of a bona fide executive alliance as provided for in this election code, the prohibition against association means that no candidate is allowed to contribute financially or provide any other form of tangible support to another candidate.
- (a) This generally includes, but is not limited to, donating or sharing of campaign materials, campaign money, and campaign organization resources, including people, or jointly soliciting votes between and amongst candidates who are not in a bona fide executive alliance.
- (b) Because the purpose of the association rule is to encourage a diverse slate of candidates to compete in a fair and equitable election on the basis of their positions, the association prohibition should be applied only to further this purpose.
- SEC. 3.4 PERMITTED ASSOCIATION. Only the presidential and vice presidential candidates that have jointly filed under this code as an executive alliance are allowed to participate in campaigning together, endorse each other, and otherwise engage in joint, collaborative campaigning planning or activities.
- (a) All non-executive alliance candidates in the election must campaign separately, without written or verbal endorsements, collaboration, financial or other tangible support from any fellow candidate in any campus-wide election.
- (b) Candidates found in violation of this rule may be subject to sanctions under this code, including but not limited to, disqualification.
- SEC. 3.5 ADHERENCE TO QUALIFICATIONS. All candidates must adhere to the qualifications set forth in the Student Government Constitution, this code,

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University policy, the general information catalogs of the University, and all statutes enforceable by the Election Supervisory Board

SEC. 3.6 TRANSFERRING BETWEEN SCHOOLS. Candidates must file for a position in their current college or school, but those in the act of transferring may provide verifiable written documentation of transfer to run in another college.

SEC. 3.7 ADVERTISEMENT OF FILING DATES. The Election Supervisory Board shall set and advertise the dates for filing along with a list of the contestable positions in the student newspaper of the University on the first day of the spring semester.

SEC. 3.8 FILING PERIOD. The filing period shall open at 9:00AM (CST) on the first day of the spring semester. The filing deadline shall be by 12:00PM (CST) on the day of the candidate seminar.

SEC. 3.9 IF NO ONE FILES. In the event that no one files to run for a particular office, the Election Supervisory Board may extend the filing for that particular race for a period of up to three (3) class days.

SEC. 3.10 POSTING OF CANDIDATE LISTS. The Senior Administrative Associate of Student Government shall post online the names and positions sought of all candidates who have filed.

(a) The list shall be updated at the end of each filing day by 7:00PM (CST). Once campaigning begins, candidate statement shall be included after ESB review.

SEC. 3.11 JURISDICTION OF CODE. Candidates, their agents, and workers are subject to governance by this code throughout the duration of the candidate's endeavoring to be elected to office in accordance with TITLE II, Sec. 3.8.

(a) Candidates may still be held responsible and sanctioned for electioneering activities that violated the provisions of this code and its associated rules before the Candidate filed for office and was registered as a candidate by the Election Supervisory Board.

SEC. 3.12 FILING DOCUMENTS. The appropriate documents that all candidates seeking to run for office in the Student Government must file in the Student Government Office (SAC 2.102) are:

(a) A statement announcing the intention of the candidate to run for a particular office, listing the candidate's current address, phone number, and college;

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- (b) A statement signed by the candidate which gives permission to the Election Supervisory Board to solicit the Dean of Students to verify the requirements for the appropriate office, in accordance with Article I of the Student Government Constitution.

SEC. 3.13 MUTUAL EXCLUSION OF FILING FOR OFFICE. Candidates may file to run for only one elected Student Government office per election cycle.

SEC. 3.14 IDENTITY OF CANDIDATES. Upon request, prospective candidates shall be informed, prior to their filing for office, of the identity of candidates already filed for any office for which the prospective candidate is eligible.

SEC. 3.15 CANDIDATE SEMINAR. At the time of filing, candidates shall be informed of the candidate seminar and the advantages and requirements of attending.

SEC. 3.16 CANDIDATE-ENTITLED CODES. At the time of filing, candidates shall each be entitled to one free copy of this code, the Student Government Constitution, the Student Government Code of Rules and Procedures, and the election timetable.

SEC. 3.17 DEPOSIT. At the time of filing, each candidate shall be required to submit a good faith deposit, made payable to Student Government.

- (a) The deposit of twenty dollars (\$20) shall be held by the Election Supervisory Board until the election process is completed. At that time, the deposit will be immediately refunded, unless failure to follow this code or ruling of the Election Supervisory Board has resulted in forfeiture of all or part of the deposit.
- (b) In any case, no portion of a candidate's deposit shall be refunded until all the candidate's signs are removed from the campus of the University.
- (c) Failure to do so within three (3) class days after the election shall result in forfeiture of the deposit.
- (d) Failure to pick up your refunded deposit within two (2) weeks after the election process has been completed will also result in forfeiture of the deposit.
- (e) This deposit shall not constitute a necessarily declarable expense for a candidate on his or her financial disclosures.

SEC. 3.18 WITHDRAWAL. Any candidate wishing to withdraw from an election may do so by turning in a written request no later than one (1) class day before the voting period.

SUBCHAPTER B: *FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE*

- SEC. 3.19 RECORD KEEPING. Each candidate in any Student Government election must keep accurate and up-to-date records of all campaign receipts and expenditures.
- SEC. 3.20 RECEIPTS. Receipts must be provided for all campaign expenditures.
- (a) All campaign-related expenses, except those specifically exempt within this code, shall be included in the candidate financial disclosure statements.
- SEC. 3.21 CONTRIBUTIONS. Contributions to a candidate by individuals or organizations are allowed, but all contributions must be documented in a financial disclosure statement in accordance with this code.
- (a) Student organizations who have received funding via student fees shall not contribute funds to any candidate or executive alliance.
 - (b) This provision shall not be construed to prohibit any Texas Student Media coverage of campus-wide Student Government elections.
- SEC. 3.22 FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES. Each candidate's financial records must list identifying information (name, item, etc.) and amounts of each contribution and expenditure.
- (a) Contributions and expenditures of non-monetary assets and in-kind efforts must be listed and valued at their fair-market value, as determined by the Election Supervisory Board.
 - (b) The efforts and services of declared campaign staff do not need to be included as 'in-kind' donations of efforts and services.
 - (b) Each financial disclosure statement must have all expenditure receipts attached.
 - (c) All expenses must be included in the financial disclosure report.
- SEC. 3.23 THIRD-PARTY ENDORSEMENTS. All campaign materials distributed by and/or paid for by an endorser of a candidate must be included in the candidate's campaign expenditures.
- (a) If a third-party pays for campaign materials promoting multiple candidates, the full cost of those materials must be included in the campaign expenditures of each candidate promoted by the materials.
 - (b) Entities created or utilized in a manner meant to circumvent campaign finance limits and/or other provisions of election code rules and

regulations are non-exempt from the provisions of this code and these entities' actions still constitute a responsibility of the corresponding candidate or candidates.

SEC. 3.24 ENDORSEMENTS. All campaign materials distributed by and/or paid for by an endorser of a candidate must be included in the candidate's campaign expenditures.

(a) If an endorser pays for campaign materials promoting multiple candidates, the full cost of those materials must be included in the campaign expenditures of each candidate promoted by the materials.

SEC. 3.25 FORMS. The Election Supervisory Board shall provide all necessary standardized forms for the purpose of this code by the filing deadline.

SEC. 3.26 REPORTING EXPENSES. The financial disclosure statements in TITLE III, Sec. 3.19-3.24 must contain all the expenses incurred by the candidate during the campaign.

(a) Candidates who have no eligible expenditures to declare must still submit a campaign financial disclosure form to the Election Supervisory Board, by the established deadline, indicating such.

SEC. 3.27 PUBLIC RECORDS. Each candidate's financial records shall be available for public inspection.

(a) Each candidate or executive alliance must submit a spreadsheet in digital format summarizing their campaign expenditures to the Election Supervisory Board for each disclosure required by TITLE II, Sec. 7.17.

(b) This summary of records shall be placed online by the Election Supervisory Board within twenty-four (24) hours after records are submitted.

SEC. 3.28 DISQUALIFICATION. Failure to file accurate financial disclosure statements by the deadlines listed in this section, or falsification of financial statements, shall allow for disqualification of the candidate(s) or executive alliance(s) by the Election Supervisory Board.

CHAPTER IV **CAMPAIGN PROVISIONS AND PROCEDURES**

SUBCHAPTER A: *EXPENSES*

- SEC. 4.1 SPENDING LIMITS. Candidates in all Student Government campus-wide elections shall adhere to the following spending limits:
- (a) Executive Alliance: \$511.00 in any general election or special election; and,
 - (b) University-wide Representative: \$204.00 in any general election or special election; and,
 - (c) First-Year Representative: \$204.00 in any general election or special election; and,
 - (d) College Representatives: \$153.00 in any general election or special election.
 - (e) The amounts herein listed shall be indexed yearly for inflation based upon the latest published rate of inflation according to the United States Department Bureau of Labor and Statistics.
- SEC. 4.2 RUNOFF EXPENSE LIMIT. Individual candidates and executive alliances each shall be allowed an extra \$75.00 for campaigning in a runoff election.
- SEC. 4.3 EXCEEDING EXPENDITURES. Candidates whose campaign expenditures exceed 120% of their designated spending limit shall be immediately disqualified by the Election Supervisory Board.
- SEC. 4.4 TOTAL EXPENDITURES. Total expenditures shall include all campaign expenditures and fines issued by the Election Supervisory Board and or Supreme Court.
- (a) Any fines against a candidate must be paid in-full, or else that candidate will receive a Dean of Students bar on their registration until the time the candidate has paid his or her fines in-full; and,
 - (b) In addition, a candidate with outstanding fines cannot be certified in his or her respective race until the time the candidate has paid his or her fines in-full; and,
 - (c) A candidate has forty-eight (48) hours from the announcement of the election results to pay his or her fines in-full, else the Election Supervisory Board may disqualify the candidate.

SUBCHAPTER B: *CAMPAIGNING AND ENDORSING*

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- SEC. 4.5 EARLY CAMPAIGNING OR ENDORSING. No campaigning or endorsing will be allowed until the official campaign period has begun as determined by the Election Supervisory Board.
- (a) Please refer to TITLE II, Sec. 2.3 and TITLE III, Sec. 2.3 of this Code for a definition of campaigning and endorsing, respectively.
- SEC. 4.6 FILED CAMPAIGN MATERIALS. A sample of all campaign materials must be filed with the Election Supervisory Board prior to its public distribution or publishing.
- (a) Candidates who distribute, publish, or disseminate their campaign materials prior to approval from the Election Supervisory Board shall be appropriately sanctioned for each violation of this section.
- SEC. 4.7 CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES. Candidates are responsible for all electoral actions and conduct of their campaign staff.
- SEC. 4.8 ELECTRONIC MEDIA. All campaign materials must be in compliance with University regulations governing the use of electronic media.
- SEC. 4.9 PROHIBITION OF CAMPAIGNING AND CAMPAIGN MATERIALS WITHIN POLLING STATION PERIMETER. No campaigning or campaign materials may exist within twenty (20) feet of any polling stations.
- SEC. 4.10 PROHIBITION OF CAMPAIGNING AND CAMPAIGN MATERIALS WITHIN POLLING LOCATION PERIMETER. No campaigning or campaign materials may exist within twenty (20) feet of any polling voting location.
- SEC. 4.11 DESTRUCTION OF MATERIALS. No candidate, agent, or worker shall remove, obscure, or damage any sign, which is in compliance with the posting policies of that locale.
- SEC. 4.12 DECEPTIVE OR MISLEADING CAMPAIGNING. Candidates shall refrain from knowingly deceptive campaign activities, including any act or statement reasonably calculated to injure or compromise the rights or interests of any student, faculty member, or administrator.
- SEC. 4.13 VERBAL HARRASSMENT. Candidates, as well as their agents and workers, shall not engage in campaigning activities that subject students, faculty, or the administration to demeaning verbal harassment as determined by the University's institutional rules.

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- SEC. 4.14 REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE EID. Students must provide their University of Texas Student EID in order to vote.
- SEC. 4.15 ID COLLECTION. The collection of personal identifiers or student identification to facilitate voting is prohibited in accordance with the policies of the University IT Security Policy Office, and shall subject the candidate to disqualification by the Election Supervisory Board.
- SEC. 4.16 REASONABLE LATITUDE. Reasonable latitude will be allowed by the Election Supervisory Board to electioneering activities during the campaigning process, as long as those activities are in line with those specified within this code, the general information catalogs, and in accordance with University policy.
- SEC. 4.17 SANCTIONED CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY. All electioneering activities of a candidate and/or his/her respective campaign staff must adhere to the parameters set forth by this code, the Student Government Constitution, University policy, system rules, state and federal law, and any other established policy applicable to the actions in question.
- SEC. 4.18 STUDENT GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENTS. No Student Government representative, executive board member, agency, or committee member, may endorse any candidate or executive alliance on behalf of Student Government or any part of Student Government in accordance with Section 10.4 of the Student Government Constitution.
- SEC. 4.19 DISCLOSURE OF CAMPAIGN WORKERS. Each candidate and executive alliance shall be required to submit to the Election Supervisory Board an up-to-date list of all workers at least as often as each financial disclosure deadline.
- (a) These disclosures shall be made publicly available for inspection.
- SEC. 4.20 RESPONSIBILITY FOR KEEPING UP-TO-DATE LISTS OF WORKERS. It shall be the responsibility of all campaign staff to ensure accurate and up-to-date records of workers are kept and is the candidate's or executive alliance's responsibility to ensure these records are disclosed to the Election Supervisory Board in an appropriate manner.

CHAPTER V
ELECTION TIMETABLE AND PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

SUBCHAPTER A: *ELECTION TIMETABLE*

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- SEC. 5.1 TIMING OF ELECTIONS. The general election shall be held on the Wednesday and Thursday of the week two weeks prior to the start of the University's spring break.
- (a) Runoff elections, if needed, will be held on two (2) consecutive weekdays in the following week.
- SEC. 5.2 PROHIBITION OF ELECTION CODE CHANGE. No changes to the election code may be enacted within four (4) weeks of the general election, in accordance with Article V, Section 5.44 of the Student Government Constitution.
- SEC. 5.3 BALLOT ITEM CERTIFICATION. Ballot items declared, pursuant to the student government constitution, must be presented to the election supervisory board for certification at least three (3) weeks prior to the election. All ballot items must contain exact wordings of the items to be presented.
- SEC. 5.4 AVAILABILITY OF BALLOT INFORMATION. On the ballot and the student government website, a link shall be provided to the following information on each candidate:
- (a) Name; and,
- (b) Position sought; and,
- (c) Registered major(s); and,
- (d) Statement of no more than one-hundred fifty (150) words with the exception of the Executive Alliance, which is allotted no more than three-hundred (300) words.
- (e) The ESB shall be able to restrict any untrue information.
- SEC. 5.5 EXECUTIVE ALLIANCE DEBATE. No less than one (1) week prior to the election, the Student Government Advisor and Deputy to the Dean of Students must hold a debate between all registered executive alliances.

SUBCHAPTER B: *ELECTION PROCEDURES*

- Sec. 5.6 START OF CAMPAIGNING. The sanctioned campaign period shall begin the Wednesday two weeks prior to the first election date.
- (f) Candidates, and their respective campaign staff, who engage in any electioneering activities, outside of the sanctioned individual recruitment of campaign staff, prior to the start of the sanctioned campaign period shall be appropriately sanctioned for each violation of this section.

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- SEC. 5.7 NUMBER OF VOTES A STUDENT MAY CAST. Each student may cast one (1) vote for an executive alliance (president and vice president), one (1) vote for each available seat for their respective school or schools in the Assembly, and one (1) vote for each available University-wide representative seat.
- SEC. 5.8 ELECTION RESULTS. Election results shall be determined in accordance with Article VI, Sections 6.4-6.5 of the Student Government Constitution.
- SEC. 5.9 VOTER EXCLUSION. No potential voter may be specifically excluded from casting a vote at any polling location.
- SEC. 5.10 BRIBERY. No candidate, agent, or worker may exchange anything of value or food-related items, excluding campaign material, in return for a promise of a vote at any time before, during and/or after the established campaign period.
- SEC. 5.11 POLLING FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. The Election Supervisory Board must coordinate with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities in the Office of the Dean of Students, or other appropriate office, to ensure that at least one polling station is accessible to students with disabilities.
- SEC. 5.12 POLLING HOURS FOR GENERAL ELECTION. Polling hours for the general election shall be from 8:00AM (CST) on the first day of voting in the general elections until 5:00PM (CST) on the second day of voting in the general elections.
- SEC. 5.13 POLLING HOURS FOR RUNOFF ELECTION. Polling hours for the runoff election shall be from 8:00AM (CST) on the first day of voting in the runoff elections until 5:00PM (CST) on the second day of voting in the runoff elections.
- SEC. 5.14 CANDIDATE INFORMATION ON THE BALLOT. Candidate information on the ballots shall include:
- (a) The candidate's name; and,
 - (b) Position sought; and,
 - (c) Other information pertinent to voting procedure.
- SEC. 5.15 VALID VOTING MECHANISMS. Any electronic device with internet access is acceptable for use in voting in all Student Government campus-wide elections.
- SEC. 5.16 APPROVAL OF CHANGES. Any change in the election process or this code shall be presented before the Assembly, and shall be implemented following approval of the Assembly.
- SEC. 5.17 VOTE TABULATION. The final vote tabulation shall be under the supervision of the Election Supervisory Board.

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- (a) No candidate for any Student Government office or position shall participate in vote tabulation.
- (b) The Election Supervisory Board shall annually determine the process of certification, in accordance with the Student Government Constitution.

Approved by the Student Assembly January 27, 1998
As Amended by the Student Assembly January 18, 2000 A.B. 21
Establishing Judicial Commission Oversight for Absentee Balloting and
A.B. 22 Amending the Election code
As Amended by the Student Assembly 02/01/2000 by A. B. 24
Amending the Election Code
As Amended by the Student Assembly 02/08/00 (Amendment addition
approved by ESB chair Nathan Brown) by A.B. 25 Amending the
Election Code.
As Amended by the Student Assembly 11/14/00 by A.B. 11 Amending
the Election Code
As Amended by the Student Assembly 12/05/00 by A.B. 14 Amending
the Election Code As Amended by the Student Assembly 01/30/01 by
A.B. 18 Amending the Election Code
As Amended by the Student Assembly 02/13/01 by A.B. 19 Amending
the Election Code to Require an Advisory Opinion of the Election
Supervisory Board
As Amended by the Student Assembly 01/22/02 by A.B. 13 Amending
the Election Code
As Amended by the Student Assembly 12/03/2002 A.B. 13 Amending
the Election Code
As Amended by the Student Assembly 02/03/2004 A.B. 15 Amending
the Election Code
As Amended By the Assembly 11/30/2004 A.B. 13 Revising the Election
Code
As Amended by the Assembly 03/08/2005 A.B. 17 Enforcing the
Dispute Resolution Requirement
As Amended By The Assembly 4/19/2005 A.B. 1 Election Improvement
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