

Fall 2023 First-Year Elections
Election Supervisory Board Advisory Opinion 2023-008
(Issued: August 19th, 2023)

Subject: Clarification of Campaign Materials Requiring Filing

The ESB is authorized to oversee and decide on cases for first-year elections. Student Government Constitution Sec. 6.7 states:

“The Election Supervisory Board shall oversee the annual fall first year student elections of the first-year representatives.”

In regards to Filed Campaign Materials, The Student Government Election Code Section 4.6 reads:

“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.”

The Student Government Election Code makes no explicit reference to what constitutes campaign materials. Thus, ESB sees fit to clarify by adopting Section 2.4 of the Campus-Wide Election Code:

“CAMPAIGN MATERIALS refers to all materials and literature of any kind concerning any candidate that have or are intended to have the effect of soliciting votes, support, or interest for a candidate or elective office but excludes any individual endorsement not approved by the candidate.”

The 2023 Election Supervisory Board interprets campaign materials to be those publicly broadcasted or distributed materials. Candidates do not need to submit spontaneous, speech-based, or interpersonal materials. For example:

Candidate A would not need an interpersonal conversation with her roommate approved, nor would she need text message or any speech-based digital contact approved.

Candidates do need to submit those advertisements (posters, videos, banners, filters, etc.) created for the purpose of garnering votes or support from a public audience. The focus is on printed/digital promotion (fliers, videos, etc.) curated for the campaign.

However, Candidate A would need a Snapchat filter or printed poster approved.

When in doubt, a candidate should refer to their Election Supervisory Board representative.

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