

Fall 2023 First-Year Elections
Election Supervisory Board Advisory Opinion 2023-009
(Issued: September 7, 2023)

Subject: Ballot Order and Candidate Withdrawals

The Election Supervisory Board (ESB) is issuing an opinion regarding the creation of the ballot for the 2023 Campus-Wide Election, concerning the name order and procedures if a candidate withdraws from the election after creation of the ballot order.

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.”

Creating the Ballot

The Student Government Election Code provides little guidance regarding ballot setting requirements.

Sec. 5.4 of the SG Specific Election Code states:

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.

All candidates were permitted to submit their statement as described in Sec. 5.4 (d) to ESB no later than 11:59 PM on Sunday, September 10, 2023 through a HornsLink submission form found on the [Election Timeline page](#).

To set the ballot order, ESB referenced guidance from Sec. 8.6 (a) of the Campus-Wide Election Code regarding randomization of the ballot.

“The order in which candidates appear on the ballot for each race shall be randomized by the Chair of the Election Supervisory Board. This random order will be the order of candidates on every ballot and shall be made known to the candidates at least forty-eight (48) hours before voting begins.”

As such, the ESB Chair will create the randomized ballot for each race. Using a random list generator, each name will be typed into the program in the order they filed in and as reflected on the final [candidate list](#) on utexasvote.org. From there, a computer program will randomize the list, and the first generated list will be the order in which the candidates’ names will appear on each ballot.

Once created, the randomized ballot order is final and will not be re-randomized. If a candidate withdraws or is disqualified from the election after the creation of the ballot, the candidates listed after theirs will all move up one space in the order they are listed.

As such, the ballot order will be made known to candidates **at least 48 hours before voting starts by 8 AM CST on Saturday, September 16, 2023 and published on the utexasvote.org site**. A link will be shared with Student Government to be included on their website as well per Sec. 5.4 of the SG Specific Election Code.

Withdrawing from the Election

Section 3.17 of the Student Government Specific Election Code states:

“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.”

Thus, the deadline for a candidate to withdraw is 8 AM CST on Friday, September 15, 2023.

Any candidate that wishes to withdraw must do so by emailing the Election Supervisory Board at esb@austin.utexas.edu by the above deadline. Should a candidate wish to withdraw after the deadlines outlined above, their name may still appear on the ballot when voting opens **at 8AM CST on Monday, September 18, 2023.**

Opinion Authorized by:

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