

Clarkson College
Student Government Association
Elections Rules & Regulations
Governing Candidates
2014-2015

Election Dates March 17th-21st

Chapter 1- Elections

Welcome to the Student Government Association election process. This packet contains information on running for an elected position with Clarkson College Student Government Association (SGA). Members of SGA are part of the official governing body representing the students of Clarkson College, whose duties are outlined by the SGA Bylaws. SGA acts as a liaison between students and administration. They propose formal resolutions to administration recommending changes in the operations of the campus, and allocate a portion of student fees to benefit student organizations.

All elected members of SGA are required to attend the Representative Meetings of SGA held bi-monthly, and serve on a formal SGA committee. Executive Officers may hold additional meetings throughout the month.

I. Election Committee

This committee is made up of individuals who will be involved in the election process. They are students, faculty, staff, and administration that have been charged with the duty of administering, and certifying student elections. Members of the Election Committee cannot be individuals who are running for office. The Election Committee is responsible for drawing up the procedures for the election and for implementing the election.

II. Authority

These rules and regulations are authorized by the Bylaws of SGA at Clarkson College and all power of the election producers has been charged to the Election Committee.

III. Offices

- A) Executive Board: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Chair.
- B) Representatives from two Sectors: Nursing and Allied Health and Health Care Business/Services.

The Representatives of SGA shall consist of 10 elected Representatives. This shall be apportioned according to the Bylaws, by the Election Chair according to enrollment in each Sector, with no Sector receiving less than one (1) seat. The number of Representatives for each Sector shall be determined by dividing the total number of students enrolled in each Sector by the total enrollment at Clarkson College, multiplied by ten.

IV. Eligibility

In order to be eligible for the SGA elected positions, all requirements must be met in order to run in accordance with Clarkson College policies and the SGA Bylaws. All candidates' eligibility will be checked against the Registrar's Office. The names of ineligible candidates may not appear on the ballot. Eligibility of write-in candidates will be verified prior to the installation of office.

Clarkson College complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws relating to discrimination and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, age, national origin, ethnicity, sex, veteran's status, or

marital status in the administration of its educational programs and policies, financial aid, activities or other school administered programs.

The following designated position coordinates the Clarkson College effort to comply with the regulations implementing Title IX, Section 504 and the Age Act:

Vice President of Operations
Clarkson College
101 South 42 Street
Omaha, NE 68131-2739
402.552.6109

To be eligible to run for or hold an elected or appointed position in SGA, stipulations on all the candidates are:

- A) Candidates must be currently enrolled students.
- B) Candidates must be enrolled in classes for both the Fall and Spring semester of the school year of which they are running and carry at least six (6) credit hours for undergraduate students and three (3) for graduate students.
- C) Candidates are required to have a minimum grade point average of 2.5 at the time of running for an SGA office.
- D) Candidates must not be on disciplinary action.
- E) Members of the Election Committee cannot petition, campaign, or be elected to a SGA office.

Candidates running for Representative positions must be a registered member of that Sector in the Registrar's Office at the time of elections; Candidates must remain a registered student of that Sector for their entire term of office.

Candidates running for President or Vice President shall also:

- A) Be a currently enrolled student at Clarkson College.
- B) Not be convicted of a felony, unless all civil rights have been restored by the date set forth for filing candidacy.
- C) Candidate has not served more than three (3) years as President.
- D) The incoming president is required to have served in some capacity on SGA prior to becoming president.

All Candidates must attend the Candidate Meeting held prior to elections in order to retain their name on the ballot. No exceptions other than emergency situations (ex. death in family) will be granted.

Any enrolled student at Clarkson College is eligible to vote for:

- A) All Executive Officer positions.
- B) The allotted amount of Representative(s) of a Sector based on their primary Sector.

V. Registering/Applying for Officer

Candidates with the intent to campaign for office must fill out an Application for election to SGA. These forms are made available by the Election Committee and are to be returned to the SGA Advisor by the deadline deemed by the Election Committee.

Write-in candidates can be elected into any office of SGA provided that they adhere to the above polices. A write-in candidate is any student who fails to turn in an application by the deadline. Write-in votes must be identical to the name and spelling indicated in Power Campus. Any eligible student who is elected as a write-in candidate must fill out an application prior to accepting their position. Candidates

who have applied for another office may not be elected as a write-in candidate for another office. Write-in candidates must adhere to all Election Rules and Regulations.

Candidates may have Campaign Teams to help build on the candidates strengths and character. The Campaign Team must follow all polices put forth by the Election Committee.

Chapter 2- Rules Governing Candidates (“Campaign Practices”)

Candidates have the responsibility to create and support an educational environment. As potential representatives of the student body, students are encouraged to show good citizenship, off campus as well as on campus. Each member should be treated with respect and dignity. Candidates, and their Teams, have the right to express their political opinions, but may not jeopardize the rights of the other Candidates.

I. Expenses

- A) Candidates running for Executive or Representative Positions may expend up to but no more than a total of \$150.00 in campaign expenditures.
- B) Candidates are responsible for keeping an account of expenditures and must submit their budget to the Election Committee no later than 12:00 pm on the last day of elections. These lists are available for public investigation and should be itemized including all contributors.
- C) No organization may raise more than \$50.00 for the purpose of supporting candidates for SGA per election.
- D) The Election Committee will be allowed forty eight (48) hours from the deadline to submit expenditures to examine and verify the contributions and expenditures lists filed by all candidates.

II. Literature

- A) Anyone running for an elected SGA office (Executive and Representative Offices) is allowed to post posters in the following amounts and places: Student Center, three (3), Tower, six (6), housing, six (6). This Literature may hang from the time the applications are due until the end of elections.
- B) Any printed posted material for the election that is identifiably with a candidate, shall count towards that candidate’s poster total.
- C) A poster shall be defined as any posted literature or material specifically related to the elections no larger than twelve inches by seventeen inches (12” X 17”).
- D) All literature must be approved with initials of the Facility Manager in the Tower, the Housing Director /Director of the Student Center for Housing and the Student Center. ALL posters MUST BE also initialed by the SGA Advisor at Clarkson College.
- E) Candidates may only hang posters on designated bulletin boards.
- F) All references to drugs or alcohol on posters is prohibited, and all posters must contain text in English only.
- G) No posters may be displayed within fifteen feet (15’) of the designated polling area during the hours of election on campus.
- H) Under door slips are permitted in the Residence Hall, but are only allowed once, and a candidate must have them approved by the SGA advisor prior to distribution. Each candidate may only print thirty-four (34) of these, one for each apartment.
- I) Candidates are responsible for removing all posted material after elections have concluded.

III. Mass Email

Use of the Clarkson College student email system is permissible if the contents of the email in no way slanders or harasses another candidate. Emails may only be used to promote candidacy and the overall election. The SGA Election Committee will have the final jurisdiction and interpretation of the contents of all emails. These emails must be sent to the Election Committee prior to distribution and may not be sent out to students more than twice.

IV. False Statements

No candidate shall make false statements relating to himself/herself or any other candidate. It will be violation of the rules to provide the Election Committee with any false or misleading information.

Chapter 3- Disputes, Discrepancies, and Grievances

I. Grievance

Any person, having witnessed a candidate or a member of a candidate's campaign team in violation of any of the Election Rules, may file a grievance with the Election Committee on a form designated by and obtained from the SGA Advisor. This form should include questions pertaining to:

- A) Specific rule violated or misinterpreted (article and section);
- B) Specifically when and where violated; and
- C) Other witnesses

All grievances must be filled out no later than the close of the following business day (a business day is Monday through Friday) after the polls have closed on the last day of election.

II. Hearing

It shall be the right of any candidate to petition by filing a grievance with the Election Committee. Upon the submission of a grievance, the election for the office will be considered "in dispute." If the grievance addresses an action that would invalidate a candidate a public hearing at which an incident, indicated by the petitioner in their grievance, shall be reviewed. The Election Committee may take steps, if necessary, to place temporary sanctions on a candidate's campaign until the time of a hearing. The Election Committee shall schedule the hearing for some time convenient to the interested parties if possible, no later than five (5) days after the election polls close during periods when the College is in session, and shall announce publicly in advance the time and place of the hearing.

Once a candidate has signed a grievance and it has been filed, the Election Committee is responsible for notifying all candidates and individuals against whom a grievance has been filed, and those who have filed grievances as to the place and time of the hearing. The notification should be made within forty eight (48) hours of poll closing. Should a candidate file a grievance, that specific election result will be in dispute until proven otherwise. The person(s) filing grievances will be provided an opportunity to withdraw their grievance. Until a formal hearing occurs, a candidate may not take office until eligibility is affirmed.

The Election Committee has the responsibility to notify a candidate of any complaint filed against them. The information should be sent by registered mail, email, or telephone contact and will include the times for hearings. A copy of the grievance must be provided as well.

Procedure for Election Hearing:

- A) Meeting is called to order.
- B) The rule in question is cited and read by the Election Committee Chair.
- C) The petitioner is heard.
- D) The defendant's case is heard.
- E) The petitioner's witnesses are heard.
- F) The defendant questions complainant's witnesses.
- G) The Election Committee members question petitioner and petitioner's witness.
- H) The defendant's witnesses are heard.
- I) The petitioner questions defendant's witnesses.
- J) The Election Committee members question defendant and defendant's witness.
- K) Recess for deliberation (Deliberations are closed).

- a. Members vote on the resolution of the case. (Tie votes will be resolved by a vote from the Chair.)
- b. If case is found in favor of the complainant, the members will vote on prescribed sanction, if any.
 - L) Formal decision is read by Chair with applicable sanction.
 - M) Meeting adjourns.
 - N) Petitioner and defendant are provided a copy of ruling via certified mail.

Rulings of the Election Committee may be appealed to the Election Committee if the appeal has merit. Due process of the Election Committee according to the Election Rules and Regulations or the SGA Bylaws must be violated for any appeal to have merit.

III. Sanctions

Any violation of polices at Clarkson College or the Clarkson College Board of Directors may be grounds for the invalidation of any candidate. If the applicable sanction for a filed grievance is not invalidation and at least one (1) member of the Election Committee has witnessed the violation, then the Election Committee may meet to decide on sanction(s) without a hearing.

The Election Committee may enforce, but is not limited to, the following sanctions:

- A) Provide a verbal warning of violation.
- B) Restrict candidate campaigning before elections are over.
- C) Write a written reprimand to the candidate or agent in violation of the rule.
- D) Invalidate a candidate.
- E) Recommend disciplinary action from Clarkson College Administration.

Additional situations that would require a hearing to determine a candidate's campaign validity:

- A) Fraudulent manipulation of vote count (e.g. stuffing the ballot box, voting twice, casting more votes than allowed according to eligibility).
- B) Extreme cases of libelous statements about opponent.
- C) Extreme propagation of falsehoods about oneself.
- D) Spending more than campaign expenditures limits permit.
- E) Distributing or promising money, currency, or coin of any nation.
- F) A promise of services or relinquishment of services relating to wages, money, currency, coin, or scholarship requirements.
- G) Failure to comply with sanctions.

Clear and convincing evidence must be provided in each case.

Chapter 4- Election Setup, Tabulation, and Certification of Votes

I. Election Setup

Dates for the elections shall be as follows:

- A) Elections shall be held in the third week in March.
- B) The election process will be posted by the third week in February by the Election Committee, which is appointed by SGA prior to each election.
Runoff elections are held during the first full week in April.

II. Publicizing Elections

The Election Committee will take sufficient measures to adequately publicize the available positions and the actual election. The publicity should include be is not limited to the following:

- A) Placing posters at strategic locations in the Student Center, Residence Hall, and Clarkson Tower.
- B) Submitting election advertisements within different Clarkson College social media.
- C) Sending detailed election information in the student email.
- D) Contacting/ attending student organization's meetings to recruit applicants and spread awareness about SGA Elections.

III. Tabulation

The tabulation of votes must conclude within twenty four (24) hours after the last day of the election. The Election Committee and the SGA Advisor shall tally the votes.

Voting shall be done by written ballot.

- A) Ballot shall list all eligible candidates for the executive officers in alphabetical order through this progression:
 - a. President
 - b. Vice President
 - c. Secretary
 - d. Treasurer
 - e. Public Relations Chair

- B) Ballot shall list all eligible candidates for the representative positions in alphabetical order within their registered Sector:
 - a. Sector of Allied Health and Health Care Business/Services
 - b. Sector of Nursing

- C) Write-in space will be provided for each section.

Ballots will be counted in privacy. The Election Committee may take appropriate means to ensure the integrity of the election.

Those running for election must receive a majority vote in order to be elected. Individuals will not be able to hold more than one office in SGA.

IV. Certification of Votes

After the election secedes the Election Committee must certify the votes to install the newly elected Executive Officers and Representatives:

- A) All newly elected Executive Officers and Representatives must confirm their acceptance of the elected position.
- B) The names are then posted in areas readily seen by all SGA members and submitted to the SGA Advisor.
- C) The newly elected Executive Officers and Representatives must be formally installed into office in SGA.
- D) An Inauguration Ceremony will be held annually to install newly elected officers by the third full week in April unless a runoff election is held.
- E) Should a vacancy occur after the election takes place; the voting membership is charged with filling the position(s).