

# SAMPLE ELECTION PACKET



**Please Note:** This sample packet is meant to serve as a point of reference for students interested in running for office. SGA may alter the specifics / requirements of this packet in advance of upcoming elections.

**Official packets should be obtained in-person from the SGA office to qualify for candidacy.**

Dear Candidates:

Welcome to the Student Government Association (SGA) *[Term]* *[Type of Election]* Election. Please read over the attached rules and regulations carefully. Completed petitions must be returned to the Office Coordinator at the SGA front desk (Davis Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) by **no later than *[Due Date]***. Completed platform statements must be emailed to [uvmsga@uvm.edu](mailto:uvmsga@uvm.edu) as a .docx file by ***[Due Date]*** Your platform will be posted on the SGA website for potential voters to view before the elections. If you would like a photo of yourself posted with your platform, please email the photo with your platform as a .jpg file. Photos will only be accepted from the email address of the candidate running for the election.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Chair of the Elections Committee or the SGA office at (802) 656-2053.

Best wishes,

Chair, Elections Committee

## SAMPLE TIMELINE

**[Date]** – Election petition packets are available at [Location]

**[Date]** – Election petition packets are available to be picked up in the SGA Office (3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Davis Center) at 9:00AM

**[Date]** – Informational meeting for potential candidates in the [Location / Time]

**[Date]** – Informational meeting for potential candidates in the [Location / Time]

**(The two informational meetings are not mandatory, but it is recommended to attend one session. Potential candidates will learn about SGA and expectations of senators)**

**[Date]** – Petitions and platforms are due at the SGA Office at 3:00PM.

Platforms and pictures must also be emailed to [uvmsga@uvm.edu](mailto:uvmsga@uvm.edu) by 3:00PM.

**[Date]** – Mandatory elections meeting at 4:00PM in the SGA office for all candidates. If you cannot make this meeting, please email [student chair] to set up an alternative time. This meeting will be held to inform candidates on campaigning and expectations.

**[Date]** – Elections take place online. The election will be available online at UVM Clubs from 8:00AM on September 9<sup>th</sup> until 4:00PM on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Receipts for your campaign efforts must be turned into the SGA Offices by 4:00 PM on Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.

**[Date]** – All campaign materials must be removed by 12:00PM.

**[Date]** – All newly-elected senators must attend the SGA Retreat

**[Date]** – **NEWLY-ELECTED SENATORS SWORN-IN, [Time/Location]**

## CANDIDATE PLATFORMS

Candidate platforms should be e-mailed to Sarah Flaherty via this address [uvmsga@uvm.edu](mailto:uvmsga@uvm.edu) by [Date] (platforms must be sent in a Microsoft Word document). Because the election is taking place electronically

via UVM Clubs, candidates will be able to view platforms for candidates at the time of voting. If you would like a photo of yourself posted with your platform please email the photo with your platform as a jpg file. Photos will only be accepted from the email address of the candidate running for the election.

The following are typical questions inquired of candidates. When describing your platform you may use these questions to frame your platform but you should include any other information that you feel is pertinent to relay to potential voters.

- 1) What is your main purpose or reason for running for SGA Senate?**
  
- 2) What characteristics do you feel you possess that would make you a strong student leader?**
  
- 3) Do you have any past experiences or accomplishments that would qualify you for this position?**
  
- 4) Are there any issues that you are particularly interested in? Elaborate.**
  
- 5) Other comments**

# RULES AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION SENATORIAL ELECTION

## **A. Names, Abbreviations, and Definitions**

1. UVM refers to the University of Vermont.
2. The SGA is defined as those whom comprise the University of Vermont Student Government Association.
3. The Senate is defined as those who comprise the University of Vermont Student Government Association Senate.
4. The Members of the Student Body is defined as any undergraduate degree students of UVM, paying the Student Government Association Fee.
  - a. Any undergraduate degree student taking four (4) or more credits has automatically paid the Student Government Association Fee.
  - b. Any undergraduate non-degree students may join the student body by paying the Student Government Association Fee.
5. Candidate is defined as anyone running for elected office. A candidate is not “on the ballot” until their platform and petition have been turned in and verified. All candidates must abide by the elections rules specified in the following sections.
  - a. A candidate’s ability to be elected is dependent on abiding by the following rules and regulations.
6. Campaigning is defined as actively soliciting votes by publicly promoting a candidate or declaring a person as a candidate.
  - a. Examples include posters, handouts, banners, buttons, t-shirts, Facebook groups, and any other item or circumstance that labels a person as a candidate.

## **B. General Rules and Regulations**

1. The Elections Committee will oversee all SGA Elections
2. The Elections Committee will be responsible for publicizing the time frame for signing elections waivers and signing out elections packets.

3. The Elections Committee will be responsible for scheduling a meeting of all candidates to discuss these Rules and Regulations and any other pertinent information.

### **C. Elections Materials**

1. A petition is defined as the document given out to the candidate to be signed and completed.
2. A platform is defined as the document to be completed by the candidate, including personal information and any responses the candidate chooses to provide to the questions asked.
  - a. Each candidate must write an individual platform to be submitted with their petition.
3. The Elections Packet is the document given to candidates containing a timeline of the election, the SGA Elections Rules and Regulations, a blank platform sheet, and a petition.
4. The SGA Elections Waiver is the document candidates must sign prior to receiving their Elections Packet. By signing the SGA Elections Waiver, a student is considered to be an official candidate.

### **D. Requirements for Candidacy**

1. In order to be eligible to run for the positions of SGA President, Vice President, or a Senator, a candidate must be a full time matriculated student at the time of the elections, and remain in good academic standing through the elections.
  - a. Each candidate running for the position of SGA President or Vice President must have at least one full academic year remaining at UVM.
  - b. Each candidate running for the position of SGA Vice President must have served on the Student Government Association as an elected or appointed Senator for at least three consecutive months to be eligible to run for the office.
  - c. Each candidate running for the position of a Senator must have a minimum of one semester of study remaining at UVM.
2. To be considered an official candidate, the student must sign an SGA Elections Waiver and sign out an Elections Packet. These will be located in the SGA Office at a time determined by the Elections Committee.

- a. Once a candidate has signed the SGA Elections Waiver, they will be officially considered a candidate for that election and allowed to campaign.
  - b. The Elections Committee will be responsible for publicizing the time frame for signing the SGA Elections Waiver and signing out an Elections Packet.
3. Platforms and Petitions must be returned to the SGA office and emailed to [uvmsga@uvm.edu](mailto:uvmsga@uvm.edu) by a date determined by the Elections Committee.
  - a. A picture of the candidate may also be included.
  - b. As soon as a petition and platform are turned in and verified, the candidate will officially be on the ballot.
4. Write-ins are legitimate candidates for all SGA Elections as long as they meet the requirements for candidacy (Section D, Subsection 1).

#### **E. Expenditures and Endorsements**

1. A limit on campaign expenditures is placed on all candidates and is specified for each election in the following sections. The limit on campaign expenditures includes all contributions of funds, services, and donations to the candidate and personal expenditures by the candidate.
  - a. Services include any contributions or donations by companies and businesses.
2. The SGA does not reimburse candidates; however, receipts documenting all campaign expenditures must be turned into the Elections Committee in the SGA office or via email to [Nicholas.Bouffard@uvm.edu](mailto:Nicholas.Bouffard@uvm.edu) within 24 hours.
3. SGA Organizations and members of the student body may endorse Senatorial, Presidential, or Vice Presidential candidates.
  - a. The endorsement must be documented and confirmed by the Elections Committee with the endorsing person(s) and the candidate before the endorsement can be made public by the SGA, the endorsing person(s), or the candidate.
4. SGA Organizations may not financially contribute to candidates.

#### **F. Campaigning**

1. Members of the student body may sign more than one petition.
  - a. A candidate may sign his/her own petition.

- b. When signing a petition, students must fill out their full name and their on or off-campus residence address.
2. Candidates must adhere to all University Policies as well as any other departmental posting and solicitation guidelines, which will be distributed to candidates by the Elections Committee.
3. During the voting period, Candidates may not actively campaign within 20 feet of any visible computer.
4. All candidates must remove all campaign materials from any and all university structures/sites within 24 hours of the last day of elections.
5. Candidates may campaign in groups; however, the official election ballot will list candidates only as individuals.

#### **G. Elections and Voting**

1. Candidates are considered under two groupings depending upon their residential status: “on-campus” or “off-campus.”
  - a. The number of seats available in each grouping will determine the amount of votes each voter can cast.
2. The number of available seats for each grouping may vary depending upon the election and seats will be awarded to the candidates that receive the most votes.
3. Elections will be held using an online ballot system on UVM Clubs ([www.uvm.edu/clubs](http://www.uvm.edu/clubs)), the online home for SGA clubs and organizations.
4. In order to vote, students must be registered on UVM Clubs. Any UVM student is eligible to register for UVM Clubs using their netid and password.
5. Each member of the student body may cast votes only once in each election. A voter can cast votes for candidates of each grouping regardless of the voter’s year or residential status.
6. Candidates may not attempt to bias a voter’s decision in any way.
7. Election results will be tabulated by the system and will be available within twenty-four (24) hours of the polls closing.
8. Winning candidates have a twenty-four (24) hour period in which they can inform the Elections Committee if they wish to reject the position.



- a. In the event that a candidate declines the position, the position shall be awarded to the runner-up of the election.
9. In the event of a tie, a runoff election will follow. Rules and Regulations pertaining to that specific election will be stated by the Elections Committee.

## **H. Sanctions**

1. Any violation of the Rules and Regulations will result in a sanction by the Elections Committee.
  - a. If the Elections Committee deems it necessary to sanction a candidate, the Elections Committee will ask the candidate in question to come before the committee. After hearing the candidate, the committee shall vote on the sanction by simple majority and alert the candidate of the outcome immediately upon a decision being reached.
  - b. During the election period, the Elections Committee reserves the right to enforce sanctions following a hearing with the candidate. If the candidate fails to attend the hearing during a twenty-four (24) hour period after the Elections Committee is alerted of the infraction, then sanctions may be enacted without a hearing.

## **I. Individual Election Details**

### First Year Elections

1. To be placed on the ballot, candidates must obtain 100 signatures on the petition from members of the student body.
2. A limit of \$50.00 per candidate is placed on all campaign efforts.

### Midterm Elections

1. To be placed on the ballot, candidates must obtain 150 signatures on the petition from the student body.
2. A limit of \$50.00 per candidate is placed on all campaign efforts.

### President and Vice Presidential Elections

1. To be placed on the ballot, candidates must obtain 500 signatures on the petition from members of the student body.
2. A limit of \$150.00 per candidate is placed on all campaign efforts.
3. A debate will be held for Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates during the campaign period. These dates will be determined by the Elections Committee. The debate is mandatory for all candidates.

#### Spring Senatorial Elections

1. To be placed on the ballot, candidates must obtain 150 signatures on their petition from members of the student body.
2. A limit of \$50.00 per candidate is placed on all campaign efforts.