

Student Government Association Election Rules and Procedures 2023



This document exists to encourage and facilitate student involvement in the Student Government election process as both candidates and voters. The Student Government Association is tasked with advancing the needs and desires of the student body and this role must always be at the core of the election process.

The Election Commission asks every campaign and candidate to respect one another.

Prepared by the 2023 SGA Election Commission

votesga@utk.edu

Last Updated: February 7, 2023

2023 Election Timeline

February 7, 2023

6:15 pm EST, SU-169 – The 2023 Election Rules and Procedures are passed in the Undergraduate Student Senate. Passage begins Recruitment Period.

After passage – SGA website is updated with Election Rules and Procedures and online forms. Appendix A and B can be submitted. SGA social media advertisement begins for interest meeting.

February 16, 2023

6:00 pm EST, SU-AUD – Interest Meeting for all interested students that want to learn more about SGA, how to get involved, and review the Election Rules and Procedures.

7:00 pm EST – End of Recruitment Period and beginning of Campaign Period. Nonpartisan electronic and mass communication may begin.

7:00 pm EST – Candidates and referendum sponsors are allowed to begin collecting petition signatures. This can only occur AFTER Appendix A has been submitted.

March 7, 2023

8:00 pm EST – Petition Deadline for candidates and referenda. Appendix A-D due.

March 10, 2023

By 6:00 pm EST – Candidates and referenda sponsors will be informed of discrepancies via email. Valid candidate, party, and referenda information is posted on SGA website. Can be updated at any time before March 27th by contacting the Election Commissioner (votesga@utk.edu).

6:00 pm EST – Campaigns that have verified petitions can go live with their websites and social media accounts may be created.

March 20, 2023

6:00 am EDT – Campaigns may begin to hold speaking engagements. Party/Independent Candidate representatives must have submitted Appendix B.

March 23, 2023

6:00 am EDT – Campaigns may begin partisan electronic communications. Mass communications cannot be used until the election opens.

March 27, 2023

By 6:00 pm EDT – Official ballot is posted to SGA website. Notify the Election Commissioner immediately if there are any ballot discrepancies.

March 28, 2023

6:00 pm EDT, SU-AUD – Candidate Debate is held.

March 31, 2023

11:59 pm EDT – Campaign Value Report #1 deadline. Submit via email to votesga@utk.edu. Deadline to submit any changes to the ballot or withdraw candidacy.

April 3, 2023

6:00 am EDT – Campaigns may begin to set up on campus. Campaigns may begin partisan mass communication. Campaigns may distribute and display campaign material. The ballot opens and votes may be cast.

April 5, 2023

5:00 pm EDT – Ballot closes.

5:15 pm EDT – If required, campaigns begin cleanup on Pedestrian Walkway and any other campaign locations.

By 5:30 pm EDT – Final Campaign Value Report (#2) deadline. Submit via email to votesga@utk.edu.

6:00 pm EDT, SU-174 – Election Certification Meeting where results are certified and announced. Campaigns may have 1 representative present to witness the proceedings. Following the meeting, certified results are posted on the SGA website.

Required Appendices Quick Reference

Appendix	Who must Complete?	When/Where	Due Date
A – Candidate Qualifying Statement	All Candidates	After passage of Election Packet on votesga.utk.edu	Tuesday March 7, 2023, at 8:00 pm EST
B – Party Registration/ Candidate Affiliation Form	All members of a party or independent candidate’s campaign	After submitting Appendix A. Executive Committee Members must submit before holding a public interest meeting. General members must submit before participating in a campaign. Found on votesga.utk.edu	For ballot placement, candidates must submit before Tuesday March 7, 2023, at 8:00 pm EST. General members may submit at any time
C – Petition Cover Sheet	All candidates and referenda sponsors	After collecting signatures gathered after Campaign Interest Meeting and Appendix A completion. Must be submitted ON PAPER to a member of the Election Commission	Tuesday March 7, 2023, at 8:00 pm EST
D – Petition Signature Form	All candidates and referenda sponsors	After collecting signatures gathered after Campaign Interest Meeting and Appendix A completion. Must be submitted ON PAPER to a member of the Election Commission	Tuesday March 7, 2023, at 8:00 pm EST
E – Campaign Value Report Form	Executive Treasurer Candidate if applicable, any other Executive Committee member/Independent Candidate otherwise	On the day of a deadline via email to votesga@utk.com	#1 Friday March 31, 2023, by 11:59 pm EDT #2 Wednesday April 5, 2023, by 5:30 pm EDT
F – Candidate Withdrawal Form	Any candidate wishing to withdraw from the race	After passage of Election Packet on votesga.utk.edu	Friday March 31, 2023, by 11:59 pm EDT
G – Public Forum Account Disclosure.	Any Executive Committee Member/Independent Candidate	Within 24 hours of account creation on votesga.utk.edu	No new accounts may be created after Monday April 3, 2023, at 6:00 am EDT

Article I General Information

- a.) 2023 Student Government Association (SGA) elections will be conducted from Monday, April 3, 2023, at 6:00 AM EDT to Wednesday, April 5, 2023, at 5:00 PM EDT.
- b.) Elections will be conducted using an online ballot accessible at votesga.utk.edu.
- c.) Positions on the ballot shall include Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, Student Services Director, and 52 seats in the Undergraduate Student Senate
 - i.) Any eligible voter, as outlined in Article II.a, may vote for the offices of Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, and Student Services Director.
 - ii.) For the Undergraduate Student Senate, any undergraduate eligible voter, as outlined in Article II.a, may vote for the candidates running for a Residential Senate Seat in the area where they currently reside and an Academic Senate Seat for their primary major.
 - 1. An undergraduate eligible voter enrolled in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences FUTURE Postsecondary Education Program will be considered part of the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences for the purposes of academic senate seats.
 - iii.) If one or more valid referenda are submitted and approved by the Election Commission, they will appear on the ballot.
 - 1. Any eligible voter, as outlined in Article II.a, may vote for all referenda.
- d.) The 2023 Election Rules and Procedures shall be enforced until the passage of a new election packet in 2024. The Election Rules and Procedures apply to all events related to campaigning, whether on or off campus.
- e.) Amendments can only be made to the Election Rules and Procedures during the approval process in the Undergraduate Student Senate or at the request of the Election Commissioner in accordance with Article III.a. If the Election Commission deems it necessary for an amendment to take immediate emergency effect, the change will be in effect until the next Undergraduate Student Senate session. The Election Commissioner must introduce the emergency amendment at the next session, and it must pass a majority vote to remain active.
- f.) Glossary of Terms
 - i.) Campaign Period – The period between the Election Interest Meeting until the results are announced.
 - ii.) Recruitment Period – The period between the passing of the Election Rules and Procedures in the Undergraduate Student Senate and the Election Interest Meeting. During this time, party members (who have already submitted Appendix B) may hold closed campaign meetings in accordance with Article IV.i and are encouraged to recruit potential candidates for other races and discuss the party platform.
 - iii.) Party – A group of affiliated candidates and students that serve to promote candidate(s) for the SGA Election. All parties must register with the Election

Commission prior to any events. Party registration paperwork can be found in Appendix A.

- iv.) Executive Committee Members – A party member with partial or total control over ideological and/or financial decisions of a party. If a candidate for Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, or Student Services Director is affiliated with a party, they are considered Executive Committee Members. Executive Committee Members must indicate their position when submitting Appendix B.
- v.) General Campaign Members – Any eligible voter, as outlined in Article II.a, who is formally affiliated with a party or Independent Candidate and is not an Executive Committee Member. All volunteers for events must be either General Campaign or Executive Committee Members. General Campaign Members must submit Appendix B before acting in this role. There is no limit to the number of General Campaign Members.
- vi.) Independent Candidate – A student seeking to run for a position without affiliation to a party. Independent Candidates may have campaign volunteers.
- vii.) Campaign – The organization supporting a party or independent candidate. Candidates, members of a party, and representatives and volunteers for an independent candidate are considered part of a campaign.
- viii.) Campaign Material – Any paraphernalia bearing the name of a candidate or party, including but not limited to flyers, literature, pamphlets, buttons, apparel, table-tents, and advertisements. Campaign materials must comply with all requirements outlined in Article IV.c. Campaign materials for past campaigns are not considered partisan after the Election Results are certified.
- ix.) Electronic Communication – Any communication by a candidate or party member to a potential voter via direct electronic means. This does not include intra-party communications.
- x.) Nonpartisan Communication – Electronic Communication that is general and about the election process and does not refer to any candidate or party. Nonpartisan Communications can occur during the Campaign Period only. Communication for the purpose of gathering signatures is considered nonpartisan as long as a party affiliation is not mentioned.
- xi.) Partisan Communication – Electronic Communication that mentions or endorses a candidate or party. Electronic Communication to advertise campaign interest meetings is allowed during the Recruitment Period. No other Partisan Communication can occur until the ballot opens on Monday April 3, 2023, at 6:00 am EDT.
- xii.) Mass Communications – Any direct/private communication by a candidate or party member to more than 1 person using an electronic messaging platform. Rules for mass communications are outlined in Article IV.d.
- xiii.) Public Forums – Any electronic platform on which a candidate, party, or campaign member could display partisan information to a group of people. Public forums include campaign websites and social media websites including but not

limited to Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Rules for public forums are outlined in Article IV.e.

- xiv.) Speaking Engagements – A gathering, either scheduled or impromptu, in which a member of a campaign speaks to a group of students on behalf of the candidate or party about campaign issues. Rules for speaking engagements are outlined in Article IV.g.
 - xv.) Campaign Interest Meetings – Public meetings to discuss campaign issues and recruit candidates/volunteers for a party or independent candidate. Rules for Campaign Interest Meetings are outlined in Article IV.h.
 - xvi.) Campaign Meetings – Private meetings for party/independent candidate campaign members to discuss campaign plans. Rules for Campaign Meetings are outlined in Article IV.i.
 - xvii.) Campaigning – Any partisan statement or display/distribution of campaign materials to one or more people outside speaking engagements, candidate debate, or campaign meetings. Rules for campaigning are outlined in Article IV.j.
- g.) After the inauguration of the new SGA administration, the acting Election Commission shall be disbanded. The new Student Body Vice President serves as interim Election Commissioner for any Judicial cases arising between inauguration and the naming of a new Election Commissioner by the Student Body President. During the interim timeframe, no changes can be made to the election packet by the interim Election Commissioner.

Article II Eligibility Requirements

- a.) Voter Eligibility
 - i.) An eligible voter is any graduate or undergraduate student currently enrolled at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville who is taking 1 or more credit hours, any student currently enrolled in the Volunteer Bridge Program taking 1 or more credit hours at Pellissippi State Community College, and any student currently enrolled in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences FUTURE Postsecondary Education Program taking 1 or more credit hours.
- b.) Ballot Eligibility
 - i.) An eligible candidate must be a full-time student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in good academic standing with the university at the time of the election and must submit all applicable forms on time.
 - ii.) Candidates running for Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, and Student Services Director must commit to completing 2 consecutive semesters (excluding summer and winter terms) in person at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as full-time students following their election.
 - 1. Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, and Student Services Director candidates must submit petition forms with at least 150 valid signatures.
 - iii.) Candidates running for Undergraduate Student Senate Seats must commit to completing 2 consecutive semesters (excluding summer and winter terms) either on

campus or abroad at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as full-time students following their election.

1. Undergraduate Student Senate candidates must submit petition forms with at least 25 valid signatures.
2. Candidates for Undergraduate Senate Residential seats must run in the housing area where they will reside beginning the fall semester after the election. A senator will forfeit their seat if they move from the district for which they were elected.
3. Candidates for Undergraduate Senate Academic seats must run for the academic college for their primary major at the time of submission of appendices. A senator will forfeit their seat if they change their college enrollment during their term.

iv.) Any eligible voter may petition for a referendum to be placed on the ballot.

1. A referendum sponsor must submit petition forms with at least 200 valid signatures

v.) All candidates that are current SGA members must be in good standing as defined by their branch's respective bylaws.

vi.) The Election Commissioner will make all final decisions on candidate eligibility. If there are questions about a decision, submit them to the Election Commission via email (votesga@utk.edu) within 24 hours of a decision for review.

b.) Undergraduate Student Senate Apportionment

i.) There are 32 Academic members and 20 Residential members to be apportioned based on student population in each academic college and housing area.

ii.) Representation and apportionment are determined using the method of equal proportions. All colleges and residential areas will be given a priority value based on the following formula:

$$\text{Priority Value} = \frac{\text{Constituency Population}}{\sqrt{n(n+1)}}$$

Where n is the number of Senate seats apportioned. All colleges and residential areas begin with $n = 1$ and this is incremented if it has the highest priority. Then priority values are recalculated, and the process repeats until all seats are assigned to a constituency.

iii.) Official reports from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment are to be used to obtain the latest student headcount.

iv.) For the 2023 elections, Undergraduate Student Senate seats are apportioned as follows:

Academic College	Number of Senators Elected
College of Architecture and Design	1
College of Arts and Sciences	9
College of Communication and Information	2
College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences	4
College of Nursing	1
College of Social Work	1
Haslam College of Business	8
Herbert College of Agriculture	2
Tickle College of Engineering	4
Total	32

Residential Area	Number of Senators Elected
On-Campus (Non-Greek)	6
Off-Campus	12
Fraternity Park	1
Sorority Village	1
Total	20

Article III The Election Commission

- a.) The Election Commission shall have all executive and regulatory authority pertaining to student elections. Election Commission members shall be members chosen by the Student Body President and confirmed by the Undergraduate Student Senate. The Student Body President shall designate one member of the Election Commission to be the Election Commissioner.
 - i.) Members of the commission shall be prohibited from maintaining an affiliation with candidates or parties.
 - ii.) Membership on the commission may be terminated if the member is no longer a student enrolled at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
 - iii.) The Election Commission shall be dissolved upon swearing in of the new administration at the transition ceremony.
 - iv.) The Election Commission consists of ex officio members (the current Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, and Student Services Director) unless current office holders decline their right to serve on the Commission and any additional members chosen by the Student Body President and approved by the Undergraduate Student Senate.
 - v.) The Election Commission shall have standing to act as a complainant for disputes arising from a violation of the election rules and procedures per the Judicial bylaws (Article V, Section 2).
 - vi.) The Election Commission shall be charged with:

1. Subject to the approval of the Undergraduate Student Senate, making edits to the Rules and Procedures Packet each year and selecting election dates.
2. Clarifying the Rules and Procedures governing student elections to all interested parties.
3. Issuing official warnings to candidates and parties.
4. Issuing non-binding, official recommendations that determine violations and sanctions of candidates and parties to the Judicial Branch.
5. Verifying all necessary petitions and forms for the Student Government Association elections. The Election Commission shall verify the good standing of all candidates by March 10, 2023. Any discrepancies must be communicated to the involved parties.
6. Marketing and promoting the elections. Promotional materials placed by the Election Commission are not bound by Campaign Material requirements.
7. Advising the Judicial Branch on matters of statutory enforcement and complaint resolution during the campaign period and monitoring compliance of rulings by the Judicial Branch.
8. Certifying, announcing, and publishing the official election results within 24 hours upon the close of voting.

vii.)The Election Commissioner shall have the power to:

1. Write and present the Election Rules and Procedures to the Undergraduate Student Senate
2. Issue official warnings and recommendations to the Judicial Branch
3. Close online voting if they decide the program can no longer operate fairly and properly.
4. Extend online voting operating hours in extraordinary circumstances.
5. Change any and all dates, times, and locations when deemed fit.
6. Make amendments to the Election Rules and Procedures after its approval if any of the following conditions are met:
 - a. The Election Packet is found to have conflicting information.
 - b. The Election Packet is found to be promoting undesirable behavior as deemed by the Judicial Branch.

- b.) The Judicial Branch shall directly hear complaints regarding the Election Commission and shall determine violations and give sanctions to candidates and parties.
- i.) Members of the Judicial Branch shall be prohibited from maintaining any political affiliation with candidates and parties.
 - ii.) Neither the Judicial Branch nor members thereof shall have standing to act as a complainant in disputes arising from a violation of the election rules and procedures.

Article IV Procedures

a.) Petitions

- i.) To encourage meeting constituents and engaging with the student body, petitions must be collected in person on paper. Petitions for all positions and referenda are

required to be submitted to the Election Commission by Tuesday March 7, 2023 at 8:00 pm EST. As mentioned in Article II.b, the minimum signature requirements are as follows.,

1. Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, or Student Services Director—150 valid signatures
 2. Undergraduate Student Senate Academic or Residential Seats—25 valid signatures.
 3. A valid referendum—200 valid signatures.
- ii.) All signatures must be collected using copies of Appendix D and signatures must be made using ink pens. (No pencil allowed).
 - iii.) Candidates are only permitted to obtain signatures in residence halls by people they already know; solicitation is not allowed in residence halls.
- b.) Referenda
- i.) The sponsor of any referendum must schedule a meeting with the Election Commissioner before the petition deadline to preliminarily verify the validity of the referendum.
 - ii.) The Election Commissioner shall invalidate any referenda that meets any of the following criteria:
 1. Appendix C is found to be deficient
 2. Failure to collect 200 valid signatures or any other reason Appendix D could be invalid (including fraud)
 3. Frivolous or offensive referendum content
 4. Language or content that violates university policy, state law, and/or federal law
 5. Failure to schedule a meeting with the Election Commissioner prior to the petition deadline
 6. For any other reason deemed relevant by the Election Commissioner
 - iii.) A written decision detailing the reasoning behind a rejection shall be provided to the sponsor of the rejected referendum within 48 hours of the decision. Decisions are eligible for appeal to the SGA Judicial Branch
 - iv.) Valid referenda shall be posted online at votesga.utk.edu by March 27, 2023, at 6:00 pm EDT. Objections to the ballot language of any referendum must be submitted in writing to the Election Commissioner by March 27, 2023, at 11:59 pm EDT.
 - v.) Any referendum must receive a majority of all votes cast in the SGA elections to be passed.
 - vi.) The implementation of any passed referendum falls upon the new SGA administration, relevant campus groups, and campus administration. The Election Commission shall hold no responsibility regarding referenda implementation other than administration of the vote.
- c.) Campaign Materials
- i.) Campaign materials shall not be designed to include or imitate any trademarked logo or copyrighted design held by an individual or organization without the campaign receiving permission.

- ii.) Campaign materials shall only be placed or distributed in areas designated or approved by the Election Commission. Prohibited areas include but are not limited to automobiles, utility poles, statues, monuments, steps, bike racks, bicycle chain guards, trees, bushes, and newspaper/magazine stands.
- iii.) Campaign materials shall not be slid under doors, adhered to the door, or placed on the doorstep of individual residence hall rooms or off-campus residences.
- iv.) Campaign materials shall not be placed in classrooms regardless of instructor permission.
- v.) Campaign materials shall not be placed on private property without explicit permission from the owner(s).
- vi.) There shall be no marking made in support of a candidate or party on any buildings, sidewalks, or other property. No chalking is allowed.
- vii.) Campaign materials shall not be adhered anywhere on campus grounds using any type of self-adhesive material (tape, glue, picture hanging strips, etc.) Prohibited locations include but are not limited to doors, utility poles, sidewalks, and windows.
- viii.) Campaign members may distribute and wear campaign materials beginning Monday April 3, 2023, at 6:00 am EDT.

d.) Mass Communications

- i.) Nonpartisan mass communication is allowed during the Campaign Period for candidates and party members with any eligible voters who have given their contact information (including phone numbers, GroupMe, social media, etc.) for any purpose.
- ii.) Partisan mass communication for any purpose is prohibited until the ballot opens. Candidates and party members may only contact eligible voters that have given contact information for any purpose.
- iii.) Obtaining and using contact information including but not limited to phone numbers and email addresses from directories for use for a campaign is a direct violation of the University of Tennessee's Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Policy and violating campaigns shall be subject to sanctions. Listservs may never be used.

e.) Public Forums

- i.) Campaign websites and partisan social media posts on the campaign and candidate social media sites can be made public at 6:00 pm EST on Friday, March 10, 2023. Prior to this date and time, no announcements or partisan messages may be public by parties, candidates, or general campaign members.
- ii.) Social media posts and accounts run by Parties that exist, even if only on "private" (Private meaning that the account/post is active and able to be seen, but not followed, by anyone on the site), before 6:00 pm EST on Friday, March 10, 2023, will be a direct violation of the Election Rules and Procedures.
- iii.) Campaigns are required to report all social media accounts and public forums in Appendix G. Beginning on Friday, March 10, 2023 at 6:00 pm EST, any social media accounts and forums not reported within 24 hours of their creation shall be a

violation of the Election Rules and Procedures and may result in a suspension of the offending account/forum for an amount of time, as deemed by the Judicial Branch.

- iv.) Personal social media accounts are not required to be listed on Appendix G.
 - v.) Private or direct messages sent through social media or a public forum that endorses or mentions a particular candidate or Party are considered a form of electronic or mass communication, depending on the size of the party sent to, and shall be regulated as such.
 - vi.) Use of anonymous social media or communication platforms is strictly prohibited. Any candidate or campaign member found using such platforms for anything regarding the campaign process shall face severe sanctions, up to and including disqualification.
- f.) SGA Neutral Space Provision
- i.) All SGA spaces and platforms must remain neutral on all election matters. SGA spaces include, but may not be limited to, any SGA event, meeting, other official gathering, and the Student Engagement Suite (Student Union Room 174). SGA platforms include, but may not be limited to, all SGA social media accounts, group messages, official statements/press releases on behalf of SGA, and the SGA website. No partisan mass communication is allowed on these platforms.
 - ii.) For any official election event during the Campaign Period, an appropriate separation distance from an SGA space is 50 feet.
- g.) Speaking Engagements
- i.) Campaigns may begin holding speaking engagements on Monday March 20, 2023, at 6:00 am EDT.
 - ii.) Campaigns are always prohibited to hold speaking engagements with students gathered for the purposes of an academic class session.
 - iii.) Obtaining petition signatures is not classified as a speaking engagement.
 - iv.) Campaign materials may not be passed out at speaking engagements outside of the election week.
- h.) Campaign Interest Meetings
- i.) Campaigns may hold interest meetings at any point during the Campaign Period, given the organizer is a candidate or Executive Committee Member that has already submitted Appendix A and B.
 - ii.) Interest meetings can only be advertised via word of mouth or in accordance with rules regarding electronic and mass communications.
- i.) Campaign Meetings
- i.) Campaigns can hold meetings at any point during the Recruitment or Campaign Periods.
 - ii.) Only students that are officially affiliated with a party or independent candidate and have completed party registration (Appendix B) can attend these meetings.
- j.) Campaigning
- i.) Campaigning is only allowed while the ballot is open from April 3, 2023 until April 5, 2023.

- ii.) Only campaign members that have submitted Appendix B can partake in campaigning activities.
- iii.) Campaigning is not allowed inside any residence hall, academic building, computer lab, dining hall, or the Student Union. This includes distributing any campaign materials.
 - 1. Apparel, pins, buttons, and other campaign materials can be worn or displayed on personal property in these locations, but no material may be distributed.
 - 2. No campaign material may be brought into any computer lab. Setting computer desktops or virtual backgrounds to campaign information or logos is prohibited.
- iv.) Campaign material shall not be affixed to the exterior of any university building. No campaign materials may be left unattended in any outdoor setting except with permission from the Election Commissioner.
- v.) Campaign Stops are any events during the election period that occur in a public space and are freely accessible to the general public. Campaign stops demonstrate involvement in the election process, disseminate the views and platforms of a particular candidate and/or party, and/or actively solicit votes or support from members of the student body.
 - 1. Campaign stops may only occur after 6:00 am EDT Monday, April 3, 2023, when campaigns are allowed to begin distributing material to the general public.
 - 2. A campaign stop may feature the use of campaign material so long as it conforms to Election Rules and Procedures pertaining to the content and location of campaign materials.
 - 3. Each campaign must have the time, date, and location of any campaign stops pre-approved by the appropriate university officials, if needed (i.e., Facility Services).
 - 4. The hanging or posting of appropriate campaign material must comply with University Policy and Hilltopics. Any material to be distributed must be in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal laws.
 - 5. Litter produced by an individual and/or group as a result of leafleting is the responsibility of the individual and/or group. Deliberate littering may result in sanctions.
- vi.) The official clean-up effort shall be at 5:15 pm EDT, Wednesday, April 5, 2022, on the Pedestrian Walkway, if applicable. A campaign representative must check-in with the Election Commissioner to be counted as present. Failure to check-in by 5:30 PM EDT and participate in clean-up will result in sanctions.
- vii.) Negative Campaigning – There is zero tolerance for negative campaigning and personal attacks. Any malicious personal attack on another candidate or campaign representative is prohibited and will result in sanctions.

k.) Voting

- i.) The election shall be administered using a secure survey website/election software and can be completed on any personal or university owned devices connected to the internet.
- ii.) The voter may scroll through the ballot screens and change their original selections before submitting their final vote.
- iii.) Any voting irregularities or difficulties should be promptly reported to the Election Commissioner via email (votesga@utk.edu).
- iv.) For the 2023 SGA Elections to be considered complete, the survey hosting server must be online and functioning the entire duration of the voting period. In the case of technical difficulties, the Election Commissioner may extend voting time.
- v.) No candidates, campaign members, or campaign volunteers may touch another potential voter's voting device.
- vi.) Any individual or group may not set up personal computers as "ad hoc" polling stations. The setup of a computer, mobile phone, tablet, or other internet-accessible devices in a public or private location by a campaign to solicit voters to vote on said device shall be considered vote tampering and will result in a penalty.
- vii.) The Election Commission shall oversee the staffing and publicizing of any official polling locations in on-campus facilities during election week. These locations shall be publicized using official SGA platforms in advance and are subject to the SGA neutral space provision. As such, there shall be no campaigning within 50 feet of an Election Commission polling station.
- viii.) The collecting of NetIDs and passwords or any other fraudulent activity for use in voting is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate disqualification.
- ix.) The Election Commission reserves the right to include optional surveys in the ballot.
- x.) In cases where voters wish to cast write-in votes, they will type the name of the candidate into the electronic system. Write-in candidates must comply with all candidate qualifications outlined in the Election Rules and Procedures and accept the position but are not subject to petition and other form requirements.

I.) Election Complaints

- i.) Any student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville shall be able to file a complaint that alleges a violation of these rules and procedures against a party or individual candidate.
- ii.) All complaints shall be directed through the Judicial Branch of the Student Government Association. The Judicial Branch will determine final violations and issue final sanctions.
 - 1. An aggrieved party may file an appeal to request an en banc hearing before the Election Council.
- iii.) Questions regarding the interpretation of the Election Rules and Procedures shall be directed towards the Election Commissioner at votesga@utk.edu.
 - 1. An aggrieved party may file an appeal to request a hearing before the Judicial Branch.

- iv.) The Election Council shall be composed of the Judicial Branch and the Election Commission
 - 1. The Election Council shall have complete discretion on whether to grant an appeal and may dismiss any appeal with or without further disposition.
 - 2. The formats for filing an appeal and all subsequent hearing(s) shall follow procedures substantially similar to those outlined in Article IV, Section 2-6 of the Judicial Branch Bylaws.
- v.) As the Election Packet is in effect year-round, complaints regarding elections may be filed at any time.
 - 1. Any substantive complaints about violations of the election rules and procedures must be filed before 5:00 pm EDT on Wednesday, April 12, 2023.
 - 2. Substantive complaints refer to those that regard the rules and procedures outlined in this packet.
- vi.) Any complaints filed after 5:00 pm EDT on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, must be regarding mechanical or electronic irregularities of the election, i.e., graduate students voting in Undergraduate Student Senate Off-Campus elections, OR must be able to provide direct and substantial evidence that a substantive violation occurred and would have changed the outcome of the election.
- vii.) Complaints
 - 1. All initial complaints shall be filed with the Judicial Branch through the complaint submission form found on the Judicial Branch's SGA website.
 - 2. When filing complaints, evidence must be provided to demonstrate the alleged violation.
 - 3. Evidence must be clear, obtained in ethical ways, and determined relevant by the Election Commission.
 - 4. When filing complaints, the rule of the alleged violation must also be cited.
 - 5. Filings that do not include this information will not be considered.
 - 6. Once a complaint is filed, the Judicial Branch shall review the submission.
 - 7. Should the claim be deemed substantial, the Judicial Branch shall schedule a hearing of the complaint, pursuant to the Judicial Bylaws Article IV
 - 8. Complaints shall only be brought, argued, or defended by active students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as defined in Article I, Section C, Subsection i.
- viii.) The Judicial Branch reserves the right to dismiss a complaint based on any of the following conditions:

1. The complaint has been ruled on previously, i.e., case precedent. In the case of dismissal due to case precedent, the Judicial Branch may issue a summary judgement.
 2. The complaint is insubstantial.
 3. Any other reason that the Judicial Branch deems just.
- ix.) Once an official opinion has been issued by the Judicial Branch, an aggrieved party may file an appeal to request an en banc hearing before the Election Council.
1. Cases regarding Election Rules and Procedures may only be appealed once to the Election Council.

m.) Election Sanctions

- i.) All sanctions issued by the Judicial Branch may include but are not limited to:
 1. Restricting when, where, and how campaigning can occur
 2. Disqualification
 3. Fines in the case of violation of the Clean-Up Agreement
- ii.) All sanctions should be proportionate to the severity of the violation found.
- iii.) Votes may be taken away from a candidate in any of the following situations:
 1. There is a case of mechanical or electronic irregularity with the voting procedures.
 2. There are no other possible sanctions due to the timing or the severity of the violation, but the violation does not warrant a disqualification.
- iv.) When considering disqualification from the election process, these bodies must determine:
 1. Whether or not there was a substantial violation with evidence that is demonstrative and convincing, and if so;
 2. Whether or not said violation could have materially changed the outcome of the election.
 3. If both criteria are true, disqualification may be applied.

n.) Election Results

- i.) The candidate receiving the highest number of all votes tabulated for each Student Government Association position will be declared the winner of that election.
- ii.) After the certification of the election, the Election Commission shall announce the official results upon completing a tally of the votes and shall make a release of the results available on the Student Government Association social media and website, as well as make the results available to the Editor-in-Chief of the Daily Beacon.
- iii.) Election results shall be printed and reviewed in the presence of the Election Commission. Each party and independent candidate may have 1 representative present to observe the proceedings.
- iv.) Upon completion of tabulation, the Election Commission shall certify the election results as being final and valid by an affirmative vote of at least a majority of the members present.

- v.) Any student wishing to contest the validation of the election results of the 2023 SGA Elections must file an appeal to the Judicial Branch within 7 days of the announced results.
 - 1. Charges filed contesting the validity of said election shall be reviewed by Judicial Branch to decide whether there is a substantial irregularity, and if so, the Judicial Branch shall send those charges to the Student Conduct Board for review.
 - 2. If the Judicial Branch finds that a substantial irregularity does not exist, then the complainant may appeal to the Student Conduct Board pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.
 - 3. Upon receiving charges contesting the validity of said election from the Judicial Branch, the Student Conduct Board shall decide whether there is a substantial irregularity, and if so, whether said irregularity could have materially altered the outcome of the election.
- vi.) A majority vote of the Student Conduct Board is necessary to invalidate the certified election in total or in part.
 - 1. The Student Conduct Board's decision will be limited to those candidates affected by the original question of validity.
 - 2. Any candidate not involved in the original question of validity, but affected by the Student Conduct Board's decision, shall have the right to appeal to the Student Conduct Board by means of the previously outlined procedure.
- vii.) Failure to appeal within prescribed time will void any claim or challenge.
- viii.) In addition to hearing disputes concerning violations of the Standards of Conduct, the Student Conduct Board shall also be the University body that hears disputes concerning the interpretation of the Student Government Constitution and disputes concerning the results of Student Government elections as stated in Section 8.7 of the Student Code of Conduct.
- o.) Special Elections and Runoffs
 - i.) In the event of a tie for any position, a runoff will be held on Monday, April 10, 2023, from 6:00 AM - 5:00 pm EDT.
 - ii.) The placement of each candidate's name on the ballot will be identical to the original ballot; however, the names of candidates not involved in the runoff will be deleted.
 - iii.) In the event of an election discrepancy, a Special Election for affected candidates shall be held by Monday, April 17, 2023, from 6:00 AM - 5:00 pm EDT.
 - iv.) All Special Elections or runoff elections shall be publicized through SGA's social media and other available means.

Article V Campaign Finance

a.) Definitions

- i.) Monetary Donations - Any money, including cash, checks, gift cards, or personal money orders from candidates, parties, campaign members, or other contributors

intended to promote a particular candidate or party shall be designated as “Monetary Donations.”

1. Monetary donations can never be accepted from any of the following, although not limited to these: an outside organization, special interest group, and/or student organization outside of SGA.
- ii.) Special interest group – a group of people or an organization seeking or receiving special advantages, typically through political lobbying.
1. Accepting monetary donations from an outside special interest group or from any student organizations other than the Student Government Association may result in disqualification.
- iii.) Non-Monetary Donations - Donations, goods, or services from a business or individual intended to promote a particular candidate or party shall be designated as “Non-Monetary Donations.” Non-Monetary Donations must be recorded in Appendix E.
1. Non-monetary donations can never be accepted from any special interest group. Receiving non-monetary donations from a special interest group may result in disqualification.
 2. Non-monetary donations must still be recorded towards a campaign’s total budget, just as purchases would be.
 3. This includes any materials given to a candidate or party that they did not purchase.
 4. Any discount that amounts to over an 80% reduction of an item’s retail price are considered non-monetary donations. As such, they should be recorded with the value of the original retail price.
 5. Any discount that amounts to less than an 80% reduction of an item’s retail price is considered a monetary expense. As such, they should be recorded with the exact price the candidate paid for the item.
 6. Any materials previously owned by a campaign member is not a donation. As long as the material is not distributed to potential voters, it does not need to be reported (e.g., grills, tents, tables, and other items of that nature).
 7. Any donation from an immediate family member or household member of any candidate or campaign member shall be considered a monetary donation, regardless of if it could be classified as a non-monetary donation.
 8. The Election Commission strongly encourages the use of non-monetary donations, to relieve the financial burden of candidates to use money to obtain materials for their campaign, such as food, shirts, etc.
- iv.) Campaign Expenditures - Any monetary expense or non-monetary donation accepted and used to promote a campaign or independent candidate.
1. All campaign expenditures must be reported on Campaign Value Reports.

2. All Campaign Value Reports must be published on the SGA website by the Election Commission within 12 hours of receipt.
- v.) Total Operating Budget - All monetary expenses and non-monetary donations count towards the total budget. Monetary expenses plus the amount of non-monetary donations shall not exceed the spending limit outlined below.
1. Compliance with the spending limit is mandatory. The Election Commission is responsible for validating and approving the records of all parties and independent candidates.
 2. Failure by a party or independent candidate to submit a complete Campaign Value Report (CVR) by the specified deadlines or failure to adhere to the spending limits will result in a violation of the Election Rules and Procedures. Intentionally falsifying the nature of a donation or expenditure may result in disqualification from the campaign.
- vi.) SGA Supplemental Funding – Campaigns and independent candidates are allowed to request funds from SGA for use during their campaign.
1. Parties and independent candidates may request up to 50% or \$500, whichever is less, of their monetary portion of their total budget as Supplemental Funding.
 2. A maximum of \$2,000 will be allocated by SGA towards Supplemental Funding. Funding will be granted on a first-come, first served basis up to their maximum allotment.
 3. To receive supplemental funds, parties and independent candidates must complete a purchase request that includes the name of the party or independent candidate, first and last name of the executive treasurer and student body president candidates' names, item(s) for purchase, estimated cost, and applicable vendors.
 4. Supplemented purchases must be reported on a party or candidate's appropriate Campaign Value Report (CVR) within the time period purchased.
 5. Supplemental Funding will be documented as monetary funding.
 6. Items that are available to purchase through supplemental funds include, but are not limited to stickers, buttons, patches, individually packed snacks, and print material.
- b.) All forms regarding campaign finances must be completed by the Executive Treasurer candidate if affiliated with a party, by any executive committee member if no Executive Treasurer candidate is affiliated with a party, or by the candidate of an independent campaign.
- c.) Campaign Value Reports must be submitted by email to the Election Commissioner (votesga@utk.edu) on Friday March 31, 2023, by 11:59 pm EDT and April 5, 2023, by 5:30 pm EDT
- d.) Limits on Donations and Expenditures
- i.) The Total Operating Budget for a Party shall not exceed \$2,200, with a cap of \$1,320 for monetary donations and \$880 for non-monetary donations.

- ii.) The Total Operating Budget for an independent candidate for the office of the Student Body President, Vice President, Executive Treasurer, or Student Services Director shall not exceed \$1,760, with a cap of \$1,100 for monetary donations and \$660 for non-monetary donations.
 - iii.) The Total Operating Budget for an independent candidate for the office of a Student Senator shall not exceed \$550, with a cap of \$385 for monetary donations and \$165 for non-monetary donations.
 - iv.) The total value of any singular item (i.e., a single item in a bulk order or a single stand-alone product) reported on a Campaign Value Report shall not exceed \$330.
- e.) Proper Reporting of all Non-Monetary Donations and Expenditures
- i.) All independent candidates and parties shall submit a complete series of formal documents known as the Campaign Value Reports (CVR) in which parties and independent candidates report current expenditures-- this includes monetary expenses and non-monetary donations.
 - ii.) All receipts of expenses, statements for non-monetary donations, and other documentation should be recorded in chronological order and assigned an item number that corresponds with the appropriate CVR.
 - iii.) Every candidate for office must agree to the spending limit. This is included in the qualifying statement when signing Appendix A.
 - iv.) Already reported expenditures do not need to be repeated on the second CVR. See example CVR.
 - v.) Each CVR will be thoroughly checked and verified by the Election Commission with appropriate measures to maintain the integrity of the financial reporting process.
 - vi.) Basic office supplies, such as pens and notebooks, do not have to be listed in the CVRs. CVRs should, however, include items bought in bulk such as reams of paper, tape (of all kinds), etc.

Appendix A: Candidate Qualifying Statement

ALL candidates must complete this form before Tuesday, March 7, 2023, by 8:00 pm EST.

I, _____, intend to be in school as a full time student (undergraduate taking at least 12 credit hours) and to remain in good standing if running for Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, Student Services Director, or Undergraduate Student Senate; agree to schedule no other activity that would conflict with the regularly scheduled meeting time of the position for which I am running; am currently enrolled at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and am enrolled in my particular college (if applicable) and will reside in my particular Senate area (if applicable).

I fully understand that University Policy as defined in Hilltopics applies to my conduct and that removal of opponent's campaign materials and/or defacing University Property is grounds for disqualification from this election and/or forfeiture of office.

I acknowledge that adherence to the prescribed spending limits is mandatory. Furthermore, I realize that all expenditures and non-monetary donations shall be included in Campaign Value Reports and that all receipts of expenditures and other documentation recording campaign budgets should be submitted to the Election Commissioner with the CVRs.

I further acknowledge that failure to comply, either individually, or on the part of my Party, with the financial guidelines as established by the Election Rules and Procedures will result in official action by the Election Commission and may lead to the disqualification of my candidacy for office and my dismissal from the campaign process by the Judicial Branch.

I have read and thoroughly understand all of the Election Rules and Procedures. Furthermore, I fully understand that ignorance of the Election Rules and Procedures shall not be an acceptable defense in response to any offense committed in any election under these Election Rules and Procedures; in addition, my responsibility for adherence to all of the Election Rules and Procedures shall encompass my own actions and the actions of any agents or workers campaigning on my behalf.

Candidate Legal Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

NetID: _____

Candidate for:

- Student Body President
- Student Body Vice President
- Executive Treasurer
- Student Services Director

Undergraduate Student Senate – Academic Seat

College: _____

Undergraduate Student Senate – Residential Seat

Area: _____

Appendix B: Party Registration/Candidate Affiliation Form

ALL party members, independent candidates, and independent campaign members must complete this form before participating in any campaign event. Candidates must submit before Tuesday, March 7, 2023, by 8:00 pm EST.

I, _____, a member of my respective Party or independent candidate's campaign, fully understand that University Policy as defined in Hilltopics applies to my conduct, and that removal of opponent's campaign materials and/or defacing University Property is grounds for disqualification from this election and/or forfeiture of office on the part of candidates I assist.

I have read and thoroughly understand all of the Election Rules and Procedures. Furthermore, I fully understand that ignorance of the Election Rules and Procedures shall not be an acceptable defense in response to any offense committed in any election under these Election Rules and Procedures.

Legal Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

NetID: _____

Party Name/Candidate Affiliation: _____

Executive Committee Position, If Applicable: _____

Appendix C: Petition Cover Sheet

ALL candidates and referendum sponsors must submit this sheet ON PAPER to a member of the Election Commission and attached to a completed petition by Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 8:00 pm EST.

We, the undersigned petition that _____ be placed on
Candidate/Referendum Name

the ballot for the 2023 SGA Election for:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Body President | Student Services Director <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Body Vice President | Undergraduate Student Senate <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Treasurer | Referendum <input type="checkbox"/> |

I, _____ of _____
Candidate/Sponsor Legal Name Party/Independent Candidate/Sponsoring Organization

do affirm that the below named students are eligible voters in accordance with the Election Rules and Procedures and are part of the constituency that could vote for this office or referendum.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

The Election Commission must physically receive petitions by 8:00 pm EST, Tuesday, March 7, 2023. You are encouraged to collect more signatures than the minimum to account for any invalid signatures. The minimum signature requirements are as follows:

- **200** valid signatures are required to place a referendum on the ballot. The sponsor must also schedule a meeting with the Election Commissioner before the petition deadline.
- **150** valid signatures are required for this petition if a candidate is running for Student Body President, Student Body Vice President, Executive Treasurer, or Student Services Director.
- **25** valid signatures are required for this petition if a candidate is running for the Undergraduate Student Senate.

ATTACH COMPLETED PETITION FORM(S) TO THIS PAGE PRIOR TO SUBMISSION. ONLY THE PETITION FORM PROVIDED IN APPENDIX D AND COPIES THEREOF ARE PERMITTED

Appendix D: Petition Signature Form

ALL candidates and referendum sponsors must submit this sheet ON PAPER to a member of the Election Commission and attached to a completed petition cover sheet by Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 8:00 pm EST.

Candidate/Sponsor Legal Name		Office/Referendum Name	
	Legal Name (First and Last)	NetID	Signature
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
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8			
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25			

I, _____, do hereby acknowledge that I have reviewed the above listed names for accuracy and legibility. In addition, I certify that these signatures are legitimate.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix E: Campaign Value Report Form

#1 Due Friday March 31, 2023, at 11:59 pm EDT

#2 Due Wednesday April 5, 2023, by 5:30 pm EDT

CVR # _____ Party/Candidate Name: _____ Exec Member Name: _____

Item #	Item Description	Non-Monetary or Monetary?	Source	Amount	Monetary Balance post-transaction	Non-monetary Balance Post-transaction
			TOTAL			
Signature: _____				Date: _____		

This Campaign Value Report must be submitted with all corresponding receipts for expenditures and statements supporting non-monetary donations. For each non-monetary donation listed above, fill out the following:

Item #	Products Donated	Qty	Value (\$)	Donor Name and Address	Contact NetID

By submitting, the Executive Committee member named above affirms that the products listed on this form were donated to _____ at no cost to the party/independent candidate.
 Party/Independent Candidate Name

Appendix F: Candidate Withdrawal Form

Due Friday March 31, 2023, by 11:59 pm EDT

I, _____, a candidate running for a position in the Student Government Association Election, withdraw my candidacy for consideration and ask that my name be removed from the Election Ballot.

I have read and thoroughly understand all of the Election Rules and Procedures. Furthermore, I fully understand that ignorance of the Election Rules and Procedures shall not be an acceptable defense to any offense committed in any election under these Election Rules and Procedures.

Candidate Legal Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

NetID: _____

Candidate for:

- Student Body President
- Student Body Vice President
- Executive Treasurer
- Student Services Director

Undergraduate Student Senate – Academic Seat

College: _____

Undergraduate Student Senate – Residential Seat

Area: _____

Appendix G: Public Forum Account Disclosure

This form must be completed within 24 hours of creation of any website or social media account.

Social media platform or public forum type (Instagram, Linktree, Website, etc.)	Social media handle or website address

I, _____, certify that the above listed social media accounts and/or public forums are operated by the Party/Independent Candidate.

I have read and thoroughly understand Article IV.e of the Election Rules and Procedures regarding social media and public forums. Furthermore, I fully understand that ignorance of any part of the Election Rules and Procedures shall not be an acceptable defense in response to any violation.

Legal Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Executive Committee Position: _____