



# Grambling State University

## Student Government Association –Board of Elections

### Election Code (Hybrid Election Fall 2021)

All student Elections at Grambling State University and the entire election process will be conducted by the Student Government Association (SGA) via the Board of Elections (Article VI of the SGA Constitution), and will be monitored by members of the Board of Elections, SGA Advisor (SGAA) and the University's Internal Auditor. Inquiries, concerns, and investigations will be conducted by the Board of Elections and the SGAA, and will adhere to the guidelines in the SGA Constitution. If necessary, inquiries, concerns, etc., will also be reviewed by the Vice President for Student Affairs and/or his/her designee. The University Police Department will be on duty during Election activities and Election Day(s).

#### Section 1 Board of Elections

##### 1.0 Purpose

The Board of Elections shall administer all elections and nominations under the auspices of this Election Code, which is governed by Section 5 of the SGA Constitution.

##### 1.2 Members of the Board of Elections

This Board shall consist of the following five student members and one administrative member:

- a. The Elections Commissioner, appointed by the SGA President and approved by the Senate.
- b. The Deputy Election Commissioner, appointed by the Elections Commissioner and appointed by the Senate.
- c. Three non-SGA members of the general student body appointed by the SGA Advisor.
- d. An Administrative Representative to be appointed by the SGA Advisor.
- e. The SGA Advisor and University Internal Auditor serves as a consultants to the Board of Elections

##### 1.3 Eligibility

- a. Students vying for the positions of Election Commissioner and Deputy Election Commissioner must be elected;
- b. have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or above when he/she applies for office and must maintain a 2.5 grade point average throughout the term of office or be subjected to the loss of his or her position;
- c. remain a full-time student from the time of election throughout the term of office (an entire academic year/consecutive Fall and Spring semester);

- d. must be able to serve the entire term of office (an entire academic school year/consecutive Fall and Spring);
- e. candidates must not have been placed on disciplinary probation or suspension by the authority of the Office of Student Conduct at any point during the previous academic year nor while serving his/her term;
- f. members of the Board of Elections are not allowed to run for an office while serving as a member of the Board and must resign by the 14th class day of the spring semester If they are planning to run;
- g. no member of the Board of Elections may actively participate as a campaign manager, worker, etc., for any candidate in a given election; and,
- h. the Board of Elections shall have the power to enforce this Election Code (Article II, Section 5 and Article VI of the SGA Constitution).

#### 1.4 Duties of the Board of Elections (BOE)

- a. Print official ballot.
- b. Publicize the election and voting procedures.
- c. The method of ballot will be on-line voting.
- d. Making all rules and regulations concerning elections on constitutional amendments.
- e. Verify all qualifications of all candidates.
- f. Have primary jurisdiction in all cases involving the observance and execution of the Election Code.
- g. Issue sanctions for violation of the election code.
- h. Perform other duties concerning the administration of the election process consistent with the Constitution, bylaws and university regulations.
- i. Remove any Board of Election student member who shows bias for any candidate. Student will be removed from the Board by a majority vote of the remaining members. Any removed member may not serve on the Board, again.
- j. The Election Commission will provide a clearly defined non-campaigning zone. (No less than 50 feet of the identified buildings)
- k. Investigate all violations
- l. Be the official police of the election

- m. Make changes to the election code by a majority vote of the Board of Elections
- n. Manage all voter registration of local, state and national elections for the student body

**1.5 Duties of Election Commissioner (see Article II, Section 5, of the SGA Constitution)**

- a. Serve as the Chairman of the Board of Elections
- b. Supervise and direct the arrangements of the Board of Elections
- c. Announce rules and regulations of the Election Code.
- d. Be responsible for enforcement of this Election Code.
- e. Provide adequate information concerning all elections to all official university media prior to and following each election.
- f. Call meetings with the Board of Elections as deemed necessary.
- g. Provide needed information to each candidate on election procedure by the end of candidate declaration.
- h. Provide training for all members of the Board of Elections in their duties and responsibilities prior to each election.
- i. Maintain a permanent, public record of the final results of all elections.

**1.6 Duties of Deputy Election Commissioner (Article II, Section 5, of the SGA Constitution)**

- a. Assist the Election Commissioner.
- b. Serve as Vice-Chair for Board of Elections.
- c. Perform any duties given by the Election Commissioner.
- d. Meet with the Board of Elections when deemed necessary.

**1.7 Duties and Powers of the appointed members of the Board of Elections shall be to:**

- a. Assist the Board of Elections in making sure the campaign period runs according to the SGA Constitution and Election Code.
- b. Serve as the official police of the Elections
- c. Meet with the Board of Elections when deemed necessary
- d. Shall be 3-non SGA members of the student body to serve on the Board of Elections and shall be appointed by the SGA advisor

## **1.8 Jurisdiction (Article VI, of the SGA Constitution)**

- a. Board of Elections is the quasi-judicial body of the SGA.
- b. The Board of Elections will propose an Election Code with all necessary rules and bylaws that may not be in conflict with the SGA Constitution.
- c. All Board of Elections members are required to attend all scheduled election activities and meetings.
- d. The Board of Elections may make structural and grammatical changes to this code, as it deems necessary.
- e. The Board of Elections shall have the power to enforce this election code.

## **1.9 Regulations**

- a. Membership onto the Board of Elections shall be from date of appointment until end of the following spring semester. This time period may be adjusted by resignation, graduation, or interrupted education, which includes an internship or coop, unless removed.
- b. Three members of the Board shall be considered a quorum.
- c. All questions (written and signed by the submitter) before the Board of Elections shall be decided by majority vote.

## **2.0 Pre-Election Period**

### **2.1 Eligibility**

#### **a. SGA Executive Board**

1. Candidates must have at least sixty Grambling hours when applying for office.
2. Candidates must be able to serve the entire term of office (an entire academic school year, consecutive fall and spring semester).
3. Candidates must be and remain a full-time student from the time of election throughout the term of office (an entire academic school year, consecutive fall and spring semesters).
4. Candidates must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.8 or above upon qualifying for office per GSU transcript. He/she must maintain this average while in office or be subjected to the loss of his/her position.
5. Candidates must not have been placed on disciplinary probation or suspension by the authority of the office of Student Conduct at any point during the previous academic year nor while serving his/her elected term.
6. Candidates must be able to work effectively within the University system for his/her entire term.

7. Candidates vying for the position of President, Vice President, and Chief Justice are required to have served two (2) semesters in a constitutional SGA position as well as have held a leadership position (according to their bylaws) in a registered student organization, athletic or spirit group (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Royal Court Member).

8. Candidates vying for the position of Secretary/Treasurer are recommended to be skilled in typing, filing records and minutes, and office procedures.

9. Candidates running must file a Declaration of Candidacy Form and other necessary forms with the Board of Elections at the scheduled place and time to be announced.

**b. Class Officers**

1. Candidates must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or above when he/she applies for office and must maintain a 2.5 grade point average throughout the term of office or be subjected to the loss of his or her position.

2. Candidates must be and remain a full-time student from the time of election throughout the term of office (an entire academic year/consecutive Fall and Spring semester).

3. Candidates must be able to serve the entire term of office (an entire academic school year/consecutive Fall and Spring).

4. Candidates must not have been placed on disciplinary probation or suspension by the authority of Judicial Affairs at any point during the current academic year nor while serving his/her elected term.

5. Candidates for Senior Officers must have at least ninety (90) semester credit hours by the beginning of the Fall semester after the election.

6. Candidates for Junior Officers must have at least sixty (60) and no more than eighty-nine (89) semester credit hours by the beginning of the Fall semester after the election.

7. Candidates for Sophomore Officers must have at least thirty (30) and no more than fifty-nine (59) semester credit hours by the beginning of the Fall semester after the election.

8. Candidates for Freshman Officers (Freshman is classified as a person that has 0-29 credit hours) must show proof of enrollment, have a full time student status of 12 credit hours and maintain this status from the time of applying for office until the end the term. In the event that a Freshmen candidate began school in summer, the 2.5 grade point average requirement also applies. A

9. Candidates must be in good standing with the university when applying for office and throughout his or her term of office.

10. These officials must be elected by their respective class.

11. Candidates running must file a Declaration of Candidacy Form and other necessary forms with the Board of Elections at a scheduled place and time to be announced.

### c. Royal Court

1. Have completed and passed a specified number of class hours to qualify and to run for a position.

Miss GSU—A minimum of 90 credits by the beginning of the Fall semester and a graduating senior.

Miss Senior—A minimum of 90 credits by the end of the beginning of the Fall semester

Miss Junior—A minimum of 60 credits by the beginning of the Fall semester

Miss Sophomore—A minimum of 30 credits by the beginning of the Fall semester

Miss Freshmen—must be enrolled as full time and have no more than 0-29 credits.

2. Have and maintain a verifiable 2.5 or above cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) per GSU transcript.

3. Remain enrolled as a full time student throughout the fall and spring semesters of the reign. (Otherwise, crown and privileges will be forfeited).

4. Must be in good standing with the University (i.e. academic, judicial, etc.). Never have had a judicial record nor have been sanctioned during her tenure at the University.

5. Never married or have any children (birth/adopted).

6. Candidates must be and remain a full-time student from the time of election throughout the term of office.

## 2.2 Schedule of Events

a. the pre-election and election period will be determined by the SGA Advisor and the Election Commissioner.

b. There will be no run-off election except in the event of a tie.

c. A special election of any type may only be held when determined by the Board of Elections or University Administration.

- d. A brief description of the parade route will be provided.
- e. A MANDATORY INFORMATION SESSION (INTEREST MEETING) will be scheduled for all POTENTIAL CANDIDATES. All potential candidates who are unable to be present MUST submit a letter of absence stating why you will not be present. Proof of absence will be expected (Example: Doctor's Excuse, work schedule, etc.) Only those potential candidates will be allowed to continue in the election process. Students will be allowed to request a Letter of Absence Template from the Board of Elections. The Letter of Absence should be completed and emailed to elections@gram.edu by 5:00 pm prior to the event in which they wish to be excused from.
- f. All election events will be conducted on-line with the exception of the candidate's parade and the Queen's Showcase. There will be no Face to Face campaigning (i.e. dorm walks, boosters, passing out of materials etc.)
- h. Each candidate will be required to sign-in and sign-out with the Election Commissioner (or his/her designee) prior to departing the premises. (Parade, etc.)
- i. Sponsors are not allowed to actively participate in campaign election process. (Example: parade, booster, etc.)

### 2.3 Nominations

- a. Nominations shall be held at least one week prior to elections.
- b. Candidate must be nominated at the Nominations Convention.
- c. All nominations must be made from the floor of the convention hall. Order of nominations will progress from bottom up, meaning from Associate Justice to President.
- d. In the case of an excused absence, a prospective candidate must submit a typed letter explaining his/her absence to the Board of Elections email. Should the candidate's letter of absence be approved, a candidate must provide a letter of acceptance of the nomination by the time of the Nomination Convention. Candidates will be allowed to request a Letter of Acceptance Template via email from the Board of Elections. The Letter of Acceptance should be completed and emailed to elections@gram.edu by 5:00pm prior to the event in which they wish to be excused from.
- e. Before a student's name is placed on the ballot, he/she must be cleared by the Registrar's office for grades and classification and by the Vice President for Student Affairs and The Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.
- f. All appeals to the decision letter must be submitted to elections@gram.edu within 24 hours of receipt of letter.
- g. Only undergraduate students can nominate students for undergraduate positions.

## 2.4 Fall Elections

- a. Student must present a valid fee sheet when applying for office. (Fee sheet will be verified.)
- b. All appeals to the decision letter must be submitted to the Board of Elections within 24 hours for fall elections.
- c. Candidate must complete and submit all necessary forms by deadline set forth by the Board of Elections.

## 2.5 Campaign Procedure

- a. The Board of Elections shall set forth the formal time for the beginning and ending of campaigning; any formal or active campaigning outside of the specified time will be cause for disqualification.
- b. Formal campaigning shall be defined as appearance or presentation of platform for soliciting voters, and displaying or distributing of campaign material. Candidates should submit the name of their campaign manager and active campaign workers on the form provided by the Board of Elections. All campaign workers must be a registered undergraduate student at the university.
- c. Active campaigning shall include participating in Board of Elections sponsored events, word of mouth campaigning and activities/actions or events authorized by the BOE; there will be no restrictions on securing a campaign manager and organizing a platform.
- d. Use of University technology is prohibited for use when campaigning for any candidate (i.e., "The Gramblinite", KGRM, Media Boards).
- e. The only social media outlets that will be allowed for campaigning purposes is "Instagram and "twitter". All posts must have the hash tag: #GramElections2K21.
- f. There will only be four ground sign per area designated by the Board of Elections. The ground signs will not be any larger than 4' x 3' including stake.
- g. No personal computers, laptops, iPads/tablets, cell phones or any technology devices with internet access are allowed for voting purposes and active campaigning. (This means passing the listed items from person to person in an effort to allow for voting.)
- h. Until the election period, no potential candidate may pass out any goods, materials, or services, make public announcements or presentations on behalf of the SGA or themselves, announce their possible candidacy, or post on any social media about their possible candidacy.
- i. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated in any form. (Definition: the electronic posting of mean-spirited messages about a person (as a student) often done anonymously.)



### 3.0 Voting

- a. The Board of Elections will designate the dates and hours for voting.
- b. NO campaign material may be given and/or verbalized within 50 feet of the designated voting locations (i.e. absolutely no visible campaign apparel within voting locations (computer labs, etc.). Campaign apparel includes but is not limited to T-shirts, buttons, hats, etc.)
- c. The Board of Elections shall be responsible for the tabulation results for all elections, and they shall not begin until the polls are officially closed. Announcements of official results shall be made within at least two business days after ballots have been counted. On-line voting will be handled by the SGA Advisor, Vice President of Student Affairs and the University's Internal Auditor.
- d. The returns shall contain all persons winning in each election. The election results shall be placed in several areas (Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Student Government Association Office, and will be additionally announced on KGRM once the Election Commissioner has verified beyond a doubt). All records shall be kept on file by the Internal Auditor's Office, SGA Office, and the Vice President of Student Affairs' Office.

### 4.0 Restrictions and Guidelines

- a. There will be no campaigning that will compromise the dignity or integrity of the University. All campaign materials and practices are subject to approval by the Board of Elections. The Board of Elections may add additional regulations concerning campaigning as it deems necessary, as long as it is in accordance with the SGA constitution.
- b. There shall be no campaigning that will disturb class; this may include announcements during or prior to the beginning of classes.
- c. Flyers of any kind (size, shape, etc.) ARE NOT allowed to be used for campaign purposes, personal promotions, etc. This also includes business cards.
- d. Any person who qualifies as a candidate for any election will not hold the Board of Elections, Student Government Association or Grambling State University responsible for the infringement of any copyrighted material or monies lost during the election period.
- e. No campaigning material may be placed inside or on any buildings, light posts, telephone posts, statues, monuments, sidewalks, steps, or the square (Unless approved by the Board of Elections).
- f. No candidate or campaign member may make any negative public statement that will injure the reputation or character of another candidate. The Board of Elections reserves the right to decide what constitutes defamation.

g. Each candidate will be held responsible for making certain displays are removed by 11:30 a.m. on the last day of campaigning, which will be determined by the Board of Elections.

h. All candidates participating in the Parade will not be allowed to use eighteen wheelers, motor cycles, 3 or 4 wheelers, helicopters, fire trucks, limousines, animals, fire or explosives. The Vice President of Student Affairs, the SGA Advisor or the Board of Elections, and any other necessary departments must approve any other vehicles and/or special causes. A candidate shall have no more than three (3) cars in the parade. In order to participate in the parade all vehicles must be present by 4:00 p.m. on the given day and the Election Commissioner will assign positions in the parade. Parents may drive in the parade due to insurance issues but they may not wear any campaign paraphernalia. (A University employee can only drive their car if they are the parent.)

i. Individuals riding on cars in an unsafe manner or inappropriately will be removed from the parade. There will be no individual parades for any candidate.

k. A candidate may only use a nickname for marketing purposes only. However, vulgar nicknames will not be allowed. Nicknames will not be placed on ballots and, if used, must be used as follows (For example: Brittany "Bri" Williams).

l. The order of names on the ballot will appear in alphabetical order.

m. Students are not allowed to distribute clearly labeled trademark, company logo (e.g., Coca Cola, Nabisco, Wendy's, McDonald's, etc.) consumable food items during election activities.

n. All candidates running for any position in the Student Government Association election will be treated fairly and impartially.

o. Students will not be allow to have campaign materials in academic buildings nor polling areas.

p. NO PARENTS OR NON STUDENT RELATIVES ARE ALLOWED TO ACTIVELY CAMPAIGN ON GSU'S CAMPUS. (All campaign workers must be a registered student at the university.)

q. No loud profane music.

r. All SGA Executive Board Candidates must be present for the debate.

s. There will be no physical campaigning.(ie. Setting up booths, passing out materials, or any other form of physically soliciting votes.

t. NO RESIDENCE HALL WALKS are allowed. If found in violation, candidate may be subject to disqualification.

- u. No candidate or members of a campaign team are allowed to collect G-numbers to vote for students. If found in violation, candidate may be subject to disqualification.
- v. Only undergraduate students can participate on the campaign teams of students seeking undergraduate positions; however, graduate students can only participate in the campaign of Miss GSU.
- w. Acceptance letters confirmation email must be sent for each Candidate's name to appear on the ballot.
- x. No University sponsored teams and groups can endorse a specific candidate.
- y. The current members of SGA, Royal Court, and Board of Elections cannot endorse any candidates nor participate on a candidate's campaign team.

### 5.0 Violations and Penalties

a. Any student who wishes to report an alleged violation of the Election Code must do so by filing a written account of the alleged violation to the Board of Elections email (elections@gram.edu) within 24 hours of the alleged occurrence.

b. Any breach of rule in the Election Code or University rules by candidate will result in the following penalties:

1<sup>st</sup> Violation - Warning

2<sup>nd</sup> Violation - 24 hour Campaigning Band (No active campaigning and removal of ground signs.)

3<sup>rd</sup> Violation - Disqualification

The Board reserves the right to use its discretion in the interpretation of the Election Code.

c. All candidates are responsible at all times for the conduct of their campaign workers and themselves. Anyone in violation will automatically be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

d. Any candidate may contest election results any time before the official results are posted, by notifying the Office of Student Affairs in writing at studentaffairs@gram.edu. The Board of Elections may order a recount if deemed necessary or a new election if it will insure a fair result. The Board of Elections will establish the procedure of the new election.

### 6.0 Legalities

a. All elected SGA officials shall assume office in late May 2021.

b. All officials shall take oath of office in the fall semester.

c. Appointed officials shall assume office after being approved by the Senate.

- d. All officials shall serve until the day of spring commencement.
- e. The Associate Vice President of Student Affairs/Dean of Students will handle the Oath of Office for the Student Government Association.
- g. Any student found in violation of any negative posting on any social media forum regarding a candidate will be referred to the office of Judicial Affairs.
- h. If a candidate contests the election results then the Board of Elections shall have one week after the filing in which to decide what action is to be taken. The Board of Elections will make all decisions regarding disqualifications. Any appeals must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs by email at [studentaffairs@gram.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@gram.edu) within 24 hours of the Board of Elections' decision.

## 7.0 Amendments

Amendments to this election code that are not structural or grammatical are made at the discretion of the Board of Elections by a 2/3 majority vote of the board.