

Student Senate of Los Medanos College
Student Body Election Guidelines
Last Revised: 04/25/16

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§1. Definitions and Conventions

Within this packet, the following definitions and conventions shall be referenced:

- (a) **“All candidates Meeting”** The first meeting in which students who seek candidacy for office learn about the election process, rules governing the elections and other vital election materials.
- (b) **“Alternate”** is an authorized individual to serve as a representative for a candidate at the Candidates’ meeting.
- (c) **“Ballot”** A format used by voters to choose their candidates in any given election. The format may be in a paper, an op-scan sheet, or a computer format.
- (d) **“Campaign”** shall be defined as promotion of a candidate by the candidate and/or his/her staff
- (e) **“Campaigning”** shall be defined as any activity that attempts to convince potential voters to vote for the candidate or that organizes campaign activities.
- (f) **“Candidate”** refers to any person who has declared their candidacy completed the proper paperwork, and meets the qualifications for the office he or she seeks.
- (g) **“Smear Campaign”** shall be defined as any knowingly false information and/or comments provided to voters about candidate by another candidate or his/her campaign staff.
- (h) **“Staff”** refers to any person who is part of a candidates organized campaign effort.
- (i) **“College supplies”** includes but is not limited to letterhead, paper, business cards, campus mail, etc.

§2. The Elections Board

§2.1 Composition

- (a) A person shall be appointed by the Student Body President and approved by the Student Senate to chair The Elections Board.

- (b) At least four other members shall be appointed by the Student Body President and/or the Elections Board Chairman approved by the Student Senate, shall serve a term ending on the last day of the spring semester.
- (c) The Elections board shall within reason, reflect a cross-section of the student body.
- (d) The total number of members on the board shall be five plus the Advisor to the Board. The advisor to the Election Board shall be the Director of Student Life or his/her designee.
- (e) The Election Committee shall be composed close to the beginning of the spring semester.

§2.2 Restrictions

Candidates for student government elected offices and campaign staff shall not serve on the Elections Board.

§2.3 Duties of the Elections Board Chair

The Elections Board Chair shall be responsible for:

- (a) Ensuring that all of the duties prescribed to the Elections Board are fulfilled.
- (b) Preparing a written report of all Election Committee meetings and activities to be submitted to the Student Body President including
- (c) Preparing a budget to be sent to the Vice President of Finance of all items needed to be purchased for the election i.e.: supplies for advertisement.

§2.4 Duties of the Elections Board

The Elections Board will only enforce the specific guidelines outlined in this packet. The Elections Board shall be responsible for the following areas, specifically:

(a) General Elections:

- 1) Validating that all students who file meet the qualifications for candidacy. This includes validating a potential candidate's cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA). This process is coordinated through the Elections Board Advisor.
- 2) Counting the ballots within 5 business day of the close of elections, and posting the results upon the final review of all complaints presented at the time. Results shall be posted no later than 5 business days after the close of elections,
- 3) Archiving the ballots and results as soon as the newly-elected Student Body Presidents begins his/her term.
- 4) Actively assisting any Student Media interested in conducting a debate among candidates for office.
- 5) Planning election committee events such as a candidates forum, Q-A with Student Body Executive Officers and debates amongst candidates for office.

(b) Poll Sites:

- 1) Identifying, establishing, maintaining and staffing manual poll sites.
- 2) Identifying and maintaining electronic poll sites accessible via LMC homepage, to open no later than 9 am the first day of elections and to remain open 24 hours/day until the close of elections, if electronic voting is available for the election in question.

- 3) Provide informational leaflets announcing voting online and candidates running for office. These will be available in all College Computer labs, and Student Senate Office.
- 4) To clearly and uniformly mark all on campus polling locations five business days before the elections are supposed to begin.
- 5) Candidates must remove all campaign material within the computer labs one hour prior to the official opening of the polls.

(c) Information:

- 1) Publicizing such that college students have a reasonable opportunity to be aware of the elections process (i.e.: the dates and time of elections, events for elections, candidate information and the processes of election)
- 2) Maintaining election information on the Student Senate website including the Elections Guidelines, links to on-line voting, a list of candidates, elections results (once available).

(d) All Candidates Meeting:

- 1) Organizing and running the Candidates Meeting.
- 2) Determining a random ballot order to be posted by 8am the next business day. Candidates have five business days to submit written corrections of their names. If no change is submitted within five business days, candidates forfeit their right to appeal the elections based on the listing of their name on the ballot.

(e) Campaign Guidelines Enforcement:

Ruling on all properly submitted election-related violations and clarifying procedure as needed.

§3. Elections Procedures

§3.1 Qualifications for Candidates for Elected Positions.

All candidates:

- (a) Must meet the provisions of Student Services Procedure 3008.
- (b) Candidates may file for only one position in any election.
- (c) Students who have been removed from office in the past academic year shall not be eligible to run in the upcoming election.

§3.2 Running for Office—Nominations:

Students seeking to become a candidate for elected office shall be nominated by picking up a nomination form and collecting 50 signatures to be considered a candidate on the ballot. Only completed forms shall be accepted.

§4. Elections Timeline

The timeline for elections will be proposed by the Elections Board and ratified by the Student Senate by the board's third meeting in February.

§5. Campaign Guidelines

Candidates shall be responsible for knowing the Campaign Guidelines. By running for office, candidates agree to adhere to all of the Election Guidelines. Ignorance of these regulations, either by the candidate or their staff, shall not be an acceptable defense in response to an election violation.

§5.1. General Guidelines

- (a) Any person who fails to attend the Candidate's Meeting or to send a designated alternative will not be allowed to have a place on the ballot.
- (b) Campaign materials must be distributed in accordance with College policies for registered student organizations. After being presented with these policies at the Candidate's Meeting, the Elections Board will enforce violations against these policies.
- (c) Candidates are responsible for the actions of themselves and their campaign staff.
- (d) A candidate may not use college supplies in an effort to campaign. College supplies that are made available for student purchase or general student use may be used.
- (e) Candidates and their staff may not conduct smear campaigns. Any candidate convicted of running a smear campaign will be automatically disqualified, and a \$25 fee will be paid to the Student Senate.
- (f) Candidates and their staffs must follow college policy on posters and e-mails. No candidate or supporter may remove another candidate's posters.
- (g) Campaigning is prohibited in the Student Senate office.
- (h) There shall be no campaigning within 50 ft. of an official polling site on the days of elections.
- (i) Candidates and their staffs shall not expend any funds or aid in any effort to exert undue influence over the voting process.

§5.3 Sandwich Boards.

- (a) Displayed outdoors only.
- (b) Each sandwich board should be properly secured.

§5.4 Computer Labs.

Campaigning is prohibited in all computer labs on the days of elections.

§5.5 Unofficial Polling Stations

Candidates/campaign staff shall not establish their own poll sites. This includes but is not limited to providing computer or other electronic services for the purpose of voting.

§6. Campaign Expenses

§6.1 Spending Limits

- (a) Candidates may spend no more than \$100 in the General Election.

- (b) Donations may not total more than half of the allowable expenses (\$100.00) in each election and do not count towards the spending limit. Time, services, and/or materials donated by someone who normally charges shall count towards total donations.

§6.2 Expense Reports

- (a) Candidates must submit a campaign expense sheet (included in the Candidates Packet) by 9 am the business day after the close of Elections.
- (b) Original receipts must also be submitted.
- (c) No candidate shall assume office until a campaign expense sheet has been submitted and inspected by the Elections Board.
- (d) Campaign expense sheets are public records, and any individual may have access to information contained in the sheets.
- (e) Falsifying information on the campaign expense sheet is grounds for disqualification.
- (f) Any funds expended prior to the Candidates' Meeting shall be included in the campaign expense report.

§7. Violations

§7 .1.Reporting Violations

All alleged violations must be submitted in writing to the Student Senate Office no later than one week day while class is in session after the alleged violation occurred. The report must include the time, date and location of the alleged violation and must bear the name, email, and phone number of the person reporting the alleged violation.

§2. Ruling on Violations

Enforcement of the Campaign Guidelines shall be the responsibility of the Elections Board. Rulings occur upon a majority vote of the Elections Board and will require quorum.

§7.3 Types of Violations

Candidates found in violation of the Campaign Guidelines can expect to receive one of three responses: a notification, warning, or disqualification. Notifications and warnings are cumulative over the course of the General and Run-Off Elections.

§7.4 Notifications

Notifications will be issued for minor violations, violations where good faith effort was made to adhere to the Campaign Guidelines or if the Elections Board rules that a regulation was unintentionally broken. A candidate may receive an unlimited number of notifications during a campaign. However, should a pattern of abuse be detected, a warning may be issued.

§7.5 Warnings

Warnings will be issued for blatant violations. A candidate may receive an unlimited number of warnings. However, upon the issue of each third warning, a disqualification hearing will be scheduled.

§7.6. Disqualification

Candidates will be disqualified only for blatant disregard of the Campaign Guidelines. Disqualified candidates are not eligible to be appointed to any elected Student Senate office. Disqualification for blatant violations or after every third warning will be subject to the disqualification hearing guidelines.

§7.7 Disqualification Hearing

A disqualification hearing will include the entire Elections Board and the candidate. During the hearing, the accused will be questioned by the Elections Board. The candidate will have the right to know who their accusers are. The candidate will also be recognized to speak in their defense. The Elections Board will then meet as a private jury to decide on the issue of disqualification. A majority vote of the entire Elections Board is required.

§7.8 Violation Announcements

All violations become public knowledge following the ruling of the Elections Board. Violations will be posted in the window of the Student Senate Office by 8:00 am the **business** day following an Elections Board ruling.

§7.9 Violations Appeals

Notification Appeals: Notifications are final and are not subject to appeal.

Warning Appeals: A candidate may appeal a warning in writing within one class day after the violation has been announced. Warning appeals should be addressed to the attention of the Elections Board Chair. All warning appeals by a candidate will be ruled on prior to a disqualification hearing of a candidate.

§8. Elections Appeals

§8.1 Appeals of the General or Run-Off Election

All appeals must be submitted in writing by 5:00 pm the **business** day after the election. The appeal must include the name and the phone number of the person submitting the appeal and should detail what occurred that caused an inaccurate election result. The appeal shall name which races the appellant believes to have been affected. The Elections Board will meet on the night following the election to rule on all appeals.

§8.2. Appeal of the Elections Board decision, appeals of an election, or appeal, of a disqualification

Appeals must be turned in to the Student Senate Office by 5:00 pm the business day following the Elections Board decision. The Student Senate will hear the appeal. A hearing must be held prior to any scheduled Run-Off Elections. The Appellate Body's decision is final and is not subject to appeal. The Los Medanos College Associated Student Senate shall hear the appeal within 10 business days or before the new officer takes office.

§9. Determination of Winners

§9.1 General Elections

Results will be posted in the Student Senate Office and on the Student Senate website no later than 5 business days after the close of elections. Under no circumstances shall the results for a particular race be posted if an appeal affecting that race has yet to be definitively decided.

- (a) Student Body Officers: The winner shall be the candidate who receives a simple majority of the votes cast. In the event that no candidate receives a majority (more than 50%) of the vote, a run-off election shall be conducted. The top two candidates will be in the run-off. If there is a three way tie, all three candidates will be in the run-off.

§9.2 Run-Off Elections

The Run-Off Election will be held in the same manner as the General.

§9.3 Certified Results

Immediately after posting the results of an election, the elections board shall prepare in a permanent fashion, a list of all candidates and the votes each received, certified to be correct by the signatures of the Elections Board Chair and the Advisor to the Election Board. Five such copies shall be prepared, one to be sent to each of the following:

- (a) Current Student Body President
- (b) Student Senate Archives
- (c) Office of Student Life
- (d) President of Los Medanos College
- (e) Los Medanos College Campus Newspaper

§10. Modifications

Changes to these guidelines can be made by a two-thirds vote of the present Student Senate.