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Committee: Internal Affairs

SGA Elections Commission Accountability Act

Whereas, It is in the best interest of the Students of the University of Houston and the candidates running for positions in the UH Student Government Association to have an elections process that is clear and efficient, and

Whereas, The SGA elections of 2013 were an improvement over past elections but still faced many logistical and organizational problems, and

Whereas, The Senate Committee on internal affairs along with other SGA members met with University officials and past Elections commission members to find out how the process could be made more efficient, and

Whereas, during these meetings, the Senate Committee on Internal Affairs was able to identify deficiencies in the election code that led to problems during the 2013 SGA elections, and

Whereas, holding the members of the elections commission accountable is an integral part to ensuring the elections process runs smoothly and efficiently, and

Whereas, ensuring that the Senate is kept informed of the progress being made by the elections commission will ensure that the commission is up to date in fulfilling its job.

Therefore enacted by the Senate of the Student Government Association of the University of Houston that the following changes be made to the Election code:

Amend Title 2, Section A of the SGA election code to the following (changes bolded):

A. Staff Members

1. The Commission shall be composed of a Chief Election Commissioner and two (2) Associate Commissioners. The Chief Election Commissioner shall be appointed by the Student Government Association Attorney General with the advice and consent of the Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote. ***The associate election commissioners shall be appointed by the Chief Election Commissioner*** with the advice and consent of the Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

2. Members shall be chosen based on experience, integrity, impartiality, and good judgment. They shall be individuals who, at the time of appointment are not elected or appointed officers or

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- i. This does not include Student Government Association representatives on university committees.
 - ii. In addition members of the Commission should be currently enrolled students in good academic and disciplinary standing with the University.
3. The Senate must appoint three (3) Election Commission positions by the last Senate meeting in November. If the Senate does not make appointments to the Commission positions by the last meeting of November, the Student Government Association Advisor will be given the ability to choose three (3) qualified applicants for the positions.
4. The Chief Election Commissioner shall set the minimum hours per week for the Commission
- i. These hours will apply Monday-Friday, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. beginning at least four (4) weeks prior to the election.
5. The Chief Elections commissioner shall divide the duties between the two Associate Commissioners.
6. Election Commissioners shall serve one (1) term beginning at the time of appointment and ending on March 31st of the administration.
7. If the Chief Election Commissioner becomes vacant than the Attorney General shall appoint and the Senate shall confirm the appointment. Any vacancies with the Associate Election Commissioners shall be appointed by the Chief Election Commissioner and confirmed by the Senate.
8. *The Attorney General shall have the power to appoint an acting Chief Elections Commissioner, pending Senate confirmation of the acting Chief Elections Commission.*
9. *In the event of misconduct or failure to meet the duties of the election commission the faculty advisor shall have the sole power to remove a member of the elections commission.*

Be it further enacted by the Senate of the Student Government Association of the University of Houston that the following changes be made to the Election code: Amend Title 2, Section A of the SGA election code to the following (changes bolded):

C. Powers and Responsibilities of the Commission

1. The powers and responsibilities of the Chief Election Commissioner shall be to:
 - serve as the administrative head of the election process, the Chairman of the Election Commission, and to have charge over all elections personnel,
 - remain impartial to any candidates or parties participating in any election,
 - execute the provisions of the Student Government Constitution relative to elections and all other provisions of this Code,
 - have the authority to expend such funds as appropriated to the Election Commission's use,
 - ~~with the consent of the Election Commission, submit a calendar with the days of the election time frame numbered two (2) weeks prior to the first day of filing as specified in Article IV,~~

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- administer and set provisions for special elections where provided for in the Election Code and other Student Government documents,
- and prepare an Election Journal to be submitted at the end of his or her term.

2. The Election Journal should include, all complaints and responses to complaints, any results from the Election Trial Board and/or Student Government Association Court of Appeals, ideas for upcoming commissions on improving the election process, and any other pertinent information all submitted by the Attorney General. ***In the event that an appointment is made during the last meeting of the semester the Chief Elections Commissioner must submit the election calendar to the senate electronically within two weeks.***

3. The Election Journal should include comments by the Commission, election results, ideas for upcoming on improving the election process, and any other pertinent information the Commission deems necessary.

4. Copies of the Election Journal shall be kept with: the Student Government Association Secretary, on the official Student Government Association website, as well as the Election Commission.

5. The Chief elections commissioner must present an election calendar to the Senate at the next regular Senate meeting following his or her appointment.

6. The elections calendar presented to the Senate must include but not be limited to:

- ***Candidate Filing Period***
- ***Campaign Period***
- ***Candidate Forum***
- ***Debate(s)***
- ***Polling Period***
- ***Announcement of election results***

7. The Chief elections commissioner must present a progress report to the student body at the senate meetings following his or her appointment except the meeting prior to and during election week. The progress report shall be presented by the SGA advisor at the meeting prior to and during election week. In the event that the Chief Elections Commissioner can not report to the student body at a regularly scheduled SGA meeting the report may be presented by one of the members of the elections commission.

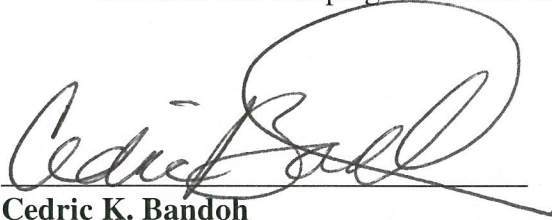
5. The powers and responsibilities of Commission shall be to:

- organize and coordinate all necessary materials and personnel for the efficient and prompt execution of the General Election, and all other Student Government Association elections provided for in this code,
- ask the Student Government Association Advisor, when necessary, for advisory opinions on election code procedures and provisions.

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- ensure proper appointment of all candidate positions as prescribed by the Student Government Association Constitution,
- Ensure the correct online posting of ballots, proposed constitutional amendments and any other official publications of the Commission.
- The Commission shall also ensure that proposed constitutional amendments will contain in their entirety the proposed changes and the existing sections of the Constitution, certify elections and campaign materials as prescribed in the Election Code.



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APPROVED

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