

Student Body Election Guidelines

I Election Timeline

Elections of student representatives from the student body population will occur according to the following cycles:

- A Seven students will be elected from all but the Senior Class – elections to be held in late March or early April in order for representatives to be in place no later than April committee meetings.
- B Three students will be elected from the incoming class with elections to be held in September for representatives to be in place before September committee meetings.
- C Elections must be announced at least 9 days before polls are scheduled to open. This must include at least 1 week (7 days, including 5 days in which classes are in session) during which interested students may collect petition signatures and complete the statement of intent. Petitions and statements must be turned in so as to allow the list of candidates to be circulated via e-mail at least 48 hours prior to the opening of the polls. If it is impossible to fulfill these guidelines due to class schedule conflicts, which may often be the case in September, then the guideline I.C. will be followed as closely as possible. In such extreme cases the Student Body President may extend grace on the guidelines as she or he sees fit.

II Candidate Requirements

In order for a person to run as a Student Body Representative, all of the following criteria must be met:

- A The person must plan on attending as a student for the entire academic year of service and be listed as a current student. Students must plan on taking at least 6 credits per semester and at least 15 credits per academic year. Each student must also maintain good academic standing with the Office of the Registrar (2.5 GPA).
- B The person must be from any of the first level degree programs offered by the seminary.
- C The person must submit a petition for nomination signed by 12 current students. Students who are eligible to sign the petition may be in any first level degree program and of any student status (Part-Time, Full-Time, Half-Time, etc.). Petitions for nomination must be available electronically and in hard copy, posted in a public location that is announced to the student body.
- D The person must submit a current photograph.
- E The person must submit a statement of intent to run as a Student Body Representative that details her or his reasons for wishing to serve the student body. The statement may not exceed 300 words. The photograph and the statement may not exceed one single-spaced page.
- F The photographs and statements of intent to run for all candidates will be posted electronically and in hard copy in a public location that is announced to the student body. In the event of a paper ballot this information must be posted at the polling location.
- G The person must commit to attend committee and council meetings for the academic year of service.
- H The person must commit to attend the two meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Seminary that will occur during the academic school year. One meeting will occur during the fall semester and one meeting will occur during the spring semester. These meetings will occupy the majority of the Friday afternoon/evening and the Saturday morning of the

respective weekends on which they fall. Meeting dates are set more than a year in advance and may be obtained from the Office of the President. Meeting dates are also posted on the Governance Calendar.

- I The person should be willing to advocate for the needs of students, but should vote based upon her or his conscience.
- J The person running as a student representative should also realize that there will likely be other time commitments as committee work continues throughout the year. In addition to full participation in the standing committee to which the representative is assigned, students may elect to serve on task forces of their respective committees or on special appointment committees.
- K The person running as a student representative must submit all required materials to the Student Body President by 1:00 P.M. on the Friday before the election begins.

III Election Administration Guidelines:

- A For the purposes of elections the Student Body will be defined as follows: all students who are in first level degree programs or in the ThM program. An enrolled student who is not in a first level degree program or the ThM program may appeal to the Community Affairs Committee for an exception to this guideline if they wish to vote.
- B The Student Body President is in charge of the electoral process. In the event that the Student Body President is running for election, the Community Affairs Committee will select another current Student Body Representative who is not running for re-election to oversee the electoral process
- C The Student Body President will advertise to the Student Body for those wishing to run for office. These advertisements, including criteria for the office, will be sent both as a hard copy via campus mail and electronically via the Students e-mail distribution list. Advertisements must be posted at least one week prior to the deadline for turning in petitions and statements of intent, including a span of at least 5 days during which classes are in session.
- D No student presently running in the election may assist with the election process. The only exception to this will be that the student may cast a ballot in the election. It is not appropriate for students running in the election to influence the voting process by spending unnecessary time around the polling location (if paper ballots are being used).
- E Campaigning Guidelines:
 - 1 Unsolicited e-mail campaigning will not be permitted.
 - 2 If a student decides to campaign for the election, the campaign will be done at the student's expense and all materials must be approved by the President of the Student Body and the Dean of Students. Facilities should be consulted before any materials are posted anywhere on campus other than bulletin boards intended for communication to the seminary community.
- F Electronic polling will be the preferred method of voting. In the event that electronic polling is not available, paper balloting must be approved by the Community Affairs Committee along with a schedule for polling hours that demonstrate faithful attempts to make voting as accessible as possible to the entire student body.
- G Guidelines for electronic ballots:
 - 1 Electronic polling will take place between Monday at 8:00 a.m. through Wednesday at 10:00 p.m.

- 2 A log in system must be in place that ensures each student may only cast one ballot for Student Body Representatives on which no more than seven votes may be cast.
- 3 The electronic ballot system must ensure that the name of the student who casts the ballot is not attached to the individual ballot. Each ballot must be anonymous. The ballots will be accessible for the entire duration listed in the election guidelines via a computer with an Internet connection.
- 4 Nominees will be listed on the ballot in alphabetical order by last name.
- 5 To assist with any complications or confusions that may arise, limited hours of polling will be available where students may cast their vote on a laptop computer in the Winn Center. The hours of these voting times will be posted on the Friday before the election and will also be sent out electronically.
- 6 The election results must be sent to the President of the Student Body as well as the Clerk of the Student Body so that the tally may be independently verified. Should a discrepancy in the tally arise after a second count of the votes an independent third count will be performed by the Dean of Students.
- 7 If it is the case that the Student Body Clerk or Student Body President is running in the election the vote count will be performed by a Student Body Representative(s) who is not presently running in the election.

H Guidelines for Paper Ballots

If paper ballots are to be used, the following criteria must be met:

- 1 The guidelines for electronic balloting could not be satisfied.
- 2 The Community Affairs Committee has approved paper balloting.
- 3 Paper ballots will be composed by the Student Body President and will list the nominees in alphabetical order by last name.
- 4 The dates and times of polling must be approved by the Community Affairs Committee, and must reflect good faith attempts to make polls as accessible as possible to all students. Information on polling hours will be released at least 2 days before the opening of the election. Polling hours will include at least one day of evening hours.
- 5 The polling location will be at a table clearly marked in the Winn Center. On this table will be a voter registration student sign in sheet. A copy of the statements of intent, as well as a photo of each nominee will be posted next to the voting table.
- 6 Any student may assist at the poll, provided that the student is not listed on the ballot as a nominee. All students who assist in polling will be trained by the Student Body President to ensure as uniform a process as possible.
- 7 Students may vote only once. To ensure that students do not vote more than once a student sign in sheet will be present at the polling place. Each student must sign in before she or he may receive a ballot.
- 8 All votes must be placed in the official ballot box, which will be locked. The Student Body President will be charged with keeping track of the box throughout the week of the election, but the key to this box will be held by the Clerk of the Student Body. The box will not be opened until after the voting period.
- 9 After the voting period the President of the Student Body and the Clerk of the Student Body will each perform an independent count of the votes. If there is a discrepancy in the count, the President and Clerk will perform a second count. If the discrepancy persists, a count will be done by the Dean of Students to resolve the discrepancy.

10 If it is the case that the Student Body Clerk or Student Body President is running in the election, the vote count will be performed by a Student Body Representative(s) who is not presently running in the election.

- I Seven students will be elected from the student body to serve as Student Body Representatives during the spring semester previous to the academic year the Student Body Representatives will serve. An additional three Student Body Representatives will be elected from the body of incoming students before the first committee meetings of the fall. The number of elected Student Body Representatives will total ten. These dates and numbers are set to ensure that Student Body Representatives are able to fully participate in the governance of the seminary at the beginning of the academic year.
- J Write-in candidates will be allowed. If it is the case that a person is elected as a write in candidate, she or he must fulfill all of the election criteria, with the exception of the submission of a statement of intent and photograph, and agree to serve in the position. If it is the case that a write-in candidate is elected but opts out of serving in the position, then the vacancy will be filled by the student with the next highest number of votes.
- K Election results will be announced by the Student Body President. Each nominee will be informed of the election results personally before the results are released to the broader campus community. The elected individual's names will be posted electronically through e-mail as well as being posted on the intranet. A hard copy of the names of the elected individuals will be posted on the bulletin board outside of the mail center in Nelson Hall.
- L Anyone who observes a violation of the election guidelines may call for an investigation of the election and/or the person(s) who were the source of this violation. The Community Affairs Committee will handle any cases that may arise, and the decision of this committee will stand.
- M Election results will be certified by the Community Affairs Committee either at the next scheduled committee meeting or via an e-mail vote.
- N Should one of the Student Representative positions become vacant, a general election will be held to fill the position, unless it is very near the end of term.

IV **Election of the Student Body President and Student Body Clerk**

The Election of the Student Body Clerk and Student Body President will follow the guidelines for the election of Student Body Representatives with the following modifications:

- A Only students who have been elected as Student Body Representatives may choose to run for the positions of Student Body President and Student Body Clerk.
- B An elected Student Body Representative may not run for both positions.
- C Elected Student Body Representatives wishing to run for either the position of Student Body President or Student Body Clerk will submit a statement of intent for the position for which she or he is seeking election to the current Student Body President by 12:00 P.M. on the Friday before the election. These statements of intent will be sent to the student body through email by 5:00 P.M. on that same Saturday. The statements will also be posted by the polls as well as in Nelson Hall.
- D Job descriptions for the position of Student Body President and Student Body Clerk will be provided to students running for each position.
- E Write-in candidates will not be allowed for Student Body President or Student Body Clerk if the write-in is a person who was not previously elected as a Student Body Representative.

F Should either the position of Student Body President or Student Body Clerk become vacant, a replacement will be elected by the remaining Student Body Representatives from among themselves.

G A Student Body President cannot succeed himself or herself in that position.

V **Other Elections**

There will be, on occasion, student elections for purposes other than Seminary Council Representation. These will include the election of Theological Seminary Advisory Delegates for General Assembly, or other purposes. Other elections should follow, as closely as possible, the guidelines set out above, unless there are specific guidelines that take precedence, such as requirements for candidacy. Any major departures from the guidelines above should be approved by the Community Affairs Committee.

VI **Amendment or Suspension**

Amendments to these guidelines or suspension of specific guidelines must be approved by the Seminary Council through the Community Affairs Committee.