Northern Illinois University
Student Association
Bylaws, Part II
Elections Policy

UPDATED February 12th, 2016

ARTICLE I
VOTER ELIGIBILITY

Section 1
Voter Eligibility
Any student wishing to vote must have an official Z-ID number and password on file with Northern Illinois University and/or whatever else shall be determined by the Election Commissioner to prove student registration in order to have access to the online ballot. The stated criteria for valid ballots shall be clearly posted at all polling stations as well as the online ballot form. All disputes or questions concerning voter eligibility shall be directed to the Director of the Student Involvement and Leadership Development Office.

**ARTICLE II**

**REQUIREMENT OF NEUTRALITY**

**Section 1**

Public Neutrality

No member of the Board of Elections, the Vice President, or the Election Commissioner shall play an active role in the campaign of any candidate. Nor shall any of the above mentioned persons endorse, publicly support, or play an active role in advocating in public any candidate or referendum which is subject to election. However, the Vice President is exempt from these restrictions if they themselves are running for office.

**Section 2**

Penalties for Non-Neutrality

A. Any member of the Board of Elections, the Vice President, the Election Commissioner, or the Deputy Election Commissioner who fails to comply with the rule regarding Public Neutrality or whose misfeasance, malfeasance or incompetence jeopardizes the conduct of an election, will be subject to removal as prescribed herein and in the SA Constitution.

B. Any member of the Board of Elections is subject to removal by a 2/3rd majority vote of all other members of the Board of Elections for violation of Public Neutrality.

C. The Elections Commissioner is subject to removal by a 2/3rd majority vote of the Senate.

**ARTICLE III**

**SENATE VOTING DISTRICTS**

**Section 1**

Voting Districts

A. DISTRICT 1: This district shall be composed of those students residing in any university provided housing.
B. DISTRICT 2: This district shall be composed of those students residing west of Annie-Glidden Road and north of I-88, but still within the DeKalb City Limits.

C. DISTRICT 3: This district shall be composed of those students residing cast of Annie-Glidden Road and north of I-88, but still within the DeKalb City Limits.

D. DISTRICT 4: This district shall be composed of those students residing south of Interstate-88, or anywhere outside of DeKalb City Limits.

E. All questions and disputes regarding the district status of any candidate or student shall be directed to the Election Commissioner. Decisions of the Election Commissioner on the disputes referenced immediately above may be appealed to the Board of Elections.

Section 2
Senators per District

All districts shall be composed of ten (10) Senators.

Section 3
Census Committee

A committee shall be appointed whenever deemed necessary by the speaker of the senate or by a simple majority of the senate, to perform a university census. The senate may, at any time, vote to amend voting districts, or appoint a census committee, when it determines a change has occurred to student residency. A census shall be used to give the senate an accurate representation of the students’ places of residence. This representation will then be used to recommend to the senate on how to best compose the senate districts. The census committee shall be composed of one senator from each district and chaired by a member of the committee appointed by the speaker of the senate. It shall have no more than one month to complete its research and submit a proposal to the senate body.

ARTICLE IV
Candidate Qualifications

Section 1
Qualifications for Office

Refer to the SA constitution for most up to date qualifications.

Section 2
Release

All candidates running for office in the Student Association office must sign a waiver releasing their name and Social Security Number to the Director of SILD and Office Manager of the SA. The Director of SILD must then confirm that the candidate is in good academic standing through the office of Registration and Records. The Director of SILD must then inform the Election Commissioner of the candidate’s eligibility. The Election Commissioner will then
inform the candidate of their eligibility and right to run for the office. At no time shall the Election Commissioner see a candidate’s Social Security Number.

Section 3

Residency Requirements

All candidates must reside in his/her own representative district at the time that their candidacy packet is turned in

ARTICLE V

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Section 1

Selection of Members when the Senate is in Session

All persons interested in becoming members of the Board of Elections shall apply with the Office Manager of the Student Association or shall be nominated at a senate meeting by a member of the Senate. Those who shall qualify to hold a position on the Board of Elections shall appear at the same senate meeting. The senators shall vote on all candidates for membership on the Board of Elections at the same time. Each senator shall have one (1) vote. Senators who are being considered for positions on the Board may not vote in the determination of Board members. The seven (7) persons receiving the most votes shall become members of the Board. If a tie vote occurs, then the Senate shall vote again, only to break the tie and decide between those who are tied. The Senate meeting at which members of the Board of Elections are appointed shall be selected at the discretion of the Speaker of the Senate with the approval of the Senate and in coordination with the Vice President, Advisor to the Elections and the Elections Commissioner.

After the seven (7) members of the Board of Elections are decided, the senate will then select two alternate members to serve on the Board of Elections in the event that members are removed during the election process. The two individuals that the senate decided to be the alternates for the Board of Elections must be listed in the order in which they will assume the seats if a vacancy occurs. This order should be that the person receiving the 8th highest vote should be given first preference, the person receiving the 9th highest vote should be given second preference. In the event that there are no alternates, the senate must appoint and approve the first and second alternates to the Board of Elections in order.

Section 2

Removal of a Member of the Board of Elections

After a person becomes a member of the Board of Elections, they shall only be removed during an election by resignation, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Elections excluding the Board member in question, or in accordance with the Removal Process outlined in the Student Association Constitution.

Section 3

Selection of the Chair of the Board of Elections
The Senate shall vote a second time to choose one of the members of the Board and shall designate that person as Chair of the Board of Elections. The Senate shall vote with each senator having one vote. The person with the most votes shall become chair. If the Senate is not in session the Speaker shall designate one of the members of the Board to serve as its Chair.

Section 4

Removal of the Chair of the Board of Elections

After a person becomes the Chair of the Board of Elections, they shall only be removed during an election except by resignation, the Supreme Court, or in accordance with the Removal Process outlined in the Student Association Constitution.

Section 5

Qualification for Board Members

To serve on the Board of Elections, a student must not have been found responsible for academic misconduct, or be the defendant in any civil or criminal procedures with which the university is also a party. The student must also have and maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 during his or her tenure in office or be in their first semester at the University.

Section 6

Authority and Duties

A. The Board of Elections will assist the Election Commissioner and the Deputy Election Commissioner in the proper administration of all Student Association student elections and referenda and perform other duties as set forth herein.

B. The Board of Elections will composed of seven (7) members, including the Board of Elections Chair. The Election Commissioner or an Acting Election Commissioner and the Deputy Election Commissioner or an acting Deputy Election Commissioner shall not serve as a member of the Board of Elections.

C. The Board of Elections shall have the authority to issue sanctions to any candidates, their supporter, or any other person interfering with an election. Only the Board of Elections, not the Election Commissioner, shall have the authority to disqualify any candidate(s) for office or election. The Board shall do so with a majority vote. The Election Commissioner shall have the authority to issue sanctions to candidates, their supporter, or any other person interfering with an election. The Board of Elections shall define a sanction as a statement of guilt to a person for violation of the election procedures, SA policies, or University policies, which carries with it a penalty. All sanctions must be issued in writing; however a standardized form may be used.

D. All rulings of the Board of Elections shall be in writing and shall be posted in the Student Association Office and available for review by any member of the SA or the student body within twenty-four (24) hours. Board rulings can only be made when a quorum is reached. Quorum for the Board shall consist of four (4) members. If the Chair is not present at a meeting, those present shall select one of their members to serve as Chair for the remainder of the
meeting. The Election Commissioner, the Chair of the Board, the Board’s Official Advisor, or four (4) members of
the Board may call a meeting of the Board."

E. When the Board shall meet to discuss giving a student a sanction, the candidate so affected shall be invited to
the meeting and shall have the right to hear the argument against them from the Election Commissioner (or any other
accuser) and the right to respond for the same length of time. Another student during this process may represent the
candidate(s).

F. The duties of the Board of Elections shall include the publicizing and promoting of the elections. To ensure
adequate publication and promotion of the elections the Board of elections shall be split into two (2) groups of three
(3) board members. One group of three (3) shall focus on the senate elections and the other group of three (3) shall
focus on the executive elections. The Board of Elections Chair shall meet with both groups to assist with publicizing
and promoting the elections.

Section 7
Meeting Times

A. On the morning of each Election Day, the Board shall travel to each polling station. The Board shall insure
that all campaign materials and persons are removed from the polling station. The Board shall also insure that all
proper procedures are followed for the duration of the day.

B. On the day prior to each election the Board shall meet. Each day of the election, the Board shall meet
immediately following the closing of the polling stations and all events necessary to secure the voting machines. These
meetings shall serve as the only point on each Election Day in which disqualification as a punishment shall be
determined and issued. The Board shall hear all cases and issue all sanctions and/or punishments, in writing, that it
shall deem necessary, prior to opening the sealed report from the Tabulation Officer.

C. A meeting of the Board may be called by the Election Commissioner, the Chair of the Board, the Board’s
Official Advisor, or three (3) members of the Board.

D. A weekly meeting of the Board will be scheduled by the Election Commissioner to discuss the matters
concerning the election.

ARTICLE VI
ELECTION COMMISSIONER

Section 1
Selection when the Senate is in Session

The President with the approval of the Senate shall appoint the Election Commissioner for the Spring Election. The
President shall present their nomination of the Election Commissioner on the first regularly scheduled Senate meeting
of the spring semester.

Section 2
Selection when the Senate is Not in Session
When the Senate is not in Session, the President with the approval of at least three of the five members of the Board of Elections shall appoint the Election Commissioner. The Election Commissioner so appointed will hold office thereafter until the Senate can convene. If the President is unable to reach an agreement with the Board as to an Election Commissioner, then the Speaker shall appoint the Election Commissioner with the approval of at least three of the five members of the Board of Elections.

**Section 3**

**Removal of Election Commissioner**

After a person becomes Election Commissioner, they shall only be removed during an election except by resignation, the Supreme Court, or in accordance with the Removal Process outlined in the Student Association Constitution.

**Section 4**

**Qualifications for Office**

Refer to the SA Constitution for the most up-to-date qualifications for office.

**Section 5**

**Authority and Duties**

A. The Election Commissioner will administer all NIU Student Association elections and referenda in accordance with the SA Constitution, SA Bylaws, and Elections Policy. The Election Commissioner shall have responsibility for hiring, supervising, and processing payment for all poll workers. No person who is a student at NIU shall serve as a poll worker, except to fill in during emergencies as may occur and shall be defined by the Election Commissioner.

B. The Election Commissioner shall have the authority to issue sanctions to candidates, their supporter, or any other person interfering with an election. The Board of Elections shall define a sanction as a statement of guilt to a person for violation of the election procedures, SA policies, or University policies, which carries with it a penalty. All sanctions must be issued in writing; however a standardized form may be used.

C. All rulings of the Election Commissioner shall be in writing and shall be posted in the Student Association Office and available for review by any member of the SA or the student body within twenty-four (24) hours of business.

D. No sanction issued by the Election Commissioner shall carry with it a punishment that shall last for more than forty-eight (48) hours and/or cover more than three (3) buildings or locations. On the day(s) of an election, no sanction issued by the Election Commissioner shall carry with it a punishment that shall last for more than four (4) hours and/or cover more than one (1) building or location. The penalty for multiple sanctions may accumulate a series of sanctions that may last beyond the time limits indicated in this paragraph or cover multiple locations.
E. The Election Commissioner shall be responsible for holding the executive debate(s) in the weeks preceding the week of the Spring Elections.

F. No endorsement for any candidate may be written with chalk for the SA elections.

G. The Election Commissioner shall make every effort to monitor candidate’s online activities as related to campaigning.

H. The Election Commissioner shall contact Information Technology Services at each Northern Illinois campus before the close of the online ballot to get specific data of the time of any internet outage throughout the open hours of the election. The Election Commissioner may delegate this task to members of the Board of Elections and/or to the Deputy election Commissioner.

ARTICLE VII

Deputy Election Commissioner

Section 1

Selection of Deputy Election Commissioner

The election commissioner shall appoint a deputy election commissioner with the approval of the senate.”

Section 2

Removal of Deputy Election Commissioner

After a person becomes Deputy Election Commissioner, they shall only be removed during an election except by resignation, the Supreme Court, or in accordance with the Removal Process outlined in the Student Association Constitution.

Section 3

Qualifications for Office

To hold the office of Deputy Election Commissioner, a student must not be on academic probation or punishment for academic or criminal misconduct with the University, and the student must have and maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50, or 3.00 for Graduate Students, during his or her tenure in office or be in their first semester at the University the Deputy Election Commissioner shall be paid the same hourly rate as the lowest paid executive staff member for each hour worked. No person shall become Deputy Election Commissioner who already holds a paid position within the S.A. Any person who simply refuses to be paid for a specified period of time shall still be ineligible to hold the office of Deputy Election Commissioner. In addition, to hold the position an undergraduate student must also be enrolled in the same semester in which they shall serve for twelve (12) semester hour; all other students must also be enrolled for nine (9) semester hours.

Authority and Duties
A. The Deputy Election Commissioner will assist the Election Commissioner to administer all NIU Student Association elections and referenda in accordance with the SA Constitution, SA Bylaws, and Elections Policy.

B. The Deputy Election Commissioner shall have the responsibility of assisting the Election Commissioner in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.

C. The Deputy Election Commissioner shall not have the authority to issue sanctions.

D. The Deputy Election Commissioner shall not serve as a member of the Board of Elections.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**ELECTION PROCEDURES**

**Section 1**

**Training**

The Election Commissioner and members of the Board of Elections shall meet with the Board's Official Advisor(s) prior to the Candidates' Meeting for training.

**Section 2**

**Candidates’ Meeting**

A. On the Monday, four (4) weeks prior to the week in which a spring election occurs, the Election Commissioner shall hold a Candidates' Meeting for both Senate and Executive elections. The members of the Board shall attend the Candidates' Meetings. The Board shall schedule additional Candidates' Meeting if it shall deem it necessary, the same week as the first meeting and prior to the date on which Registration Packets are due.

B. Each Candidate Meeting shall consist of the following: (1) a comprehensive orientation to elections policy, (2) a copy of the Elections Policy shall be issued to each candidate, (3) Registration Packets shall be distributed, and (4) dates for all major election events - election days, Registration Packet due dates, etc… All candidates, including potential write-in candidates, are required to attend the Candidates' Meeting. Persons who do not attend a Candidates’ Meeting shall not be allowed to run in an election. All Candidates who wish to be on the ballot shall return their Registration Packets to the SA Office Manager or their designee prior 4 o'clock p.m. on Monday of the following week of the first Candidates' Meeting. All candidates shall request and shall be given a receipt for their Registration Packets noting the date and time. Ballot order for all elections shall be in the same order as the return of completed Registration Packets, with the first candidate for each office appearing first on the ballot. If two or more candidates turn in their registration packets at the exact same time, then random lot shall determine their order.
Section 3
Credentials and Endorsements

A. Any statement of credentials or endorsements which a candidate wishes to use in their campaign must be verified and approved by the Election Commissioner or his or her designee. Verification will be made with the resources available to the Student Association and/or evidence submitted by the candidate.

B. Each Candidate who wishes to assert their credentials must submit an application with the exact wording to be used in their campaign before registration packets are due.

C. Credentials will only require verification if they are held or awarded within the university and will be defined as including but not limited to:

1. Holding a position in a student organization, governing council, the Student Association or any committee or board, and any work performed therein.

2. Employment such as a Community Advisor or House Leader in the residence halls or a Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, or Administrative Assistant in any department of the University.

3. Scholarships, grants, awards, and recognitions received for academic performance, leadership, community service, etc.

4. Volunteer work for a University supported program.

5. Degrees or certificates earned at NIU.

D. Any quantification of credentials such as length of term, monetary amounts, number of persons, number of times awarded, etc. must be verified in order for the entire statement to be verified. If the accuracy of the statement is brought into doubt, the Election Commissioner will contact the candidate and ask to modify the statement accordingly or otherwise have it denied.

E. Each candidate who wishes to be endorsed by student organizations must submit an application listing them before registration packets are due. The Election Commissioner will contact at least two (2) officers of each organization listed to verify the endorsement.

F. Verified credentials and endorsements will be included in the candidate’s bio in the online ballot.

Section 4: Qualifications Check and Campaigning

The Election Commissioner shall check on the qualifications, credentials, and endorsements for all candidates on Tuesday and shall contact each candidate immediately and privately for confirmation of the results of the qualifications check. The candidates who are determined to be eligible shall be announced on the Wednesday following the Monday on which Registration Packets are due. Candidates who are not allowed to run may appeal to the Board. Election campaigning may begin on the next day, Thursday, following the announcement of eligible candidates.
ARTICLE IX
CAMPAIGNING REGULATIONS

Section 1
Printed Material

A. All candidates for all offices are required to file a signed copy of all printed campaign materials, including handbills and flyers, with the Election Commissioner before any material is posted or distributed. Statements on campaign materials must comply with the policy for credentials and endorsements in Article VII Section 3. The terms of this paragraph shall also apply to any yard signs or like objects used by any candidate. However, a candidate can choose to file a color photograph of the sign(s) to be posted instead of filing a physical copy of the sign(s).

B. All posted material must be visibly stamped by the Student Involvement and Leadership Development Office and the residence hall desk where applicable. One copy of all posted materials must be signed by the candidate(s) and left at the respective desk/office. In the case of yard signs or like objects, the office Student Involvement and Leadership Development thereof must approve the contents, and the location of the posting must be approved by the University Grounds Department, where applicable.

C. Unstamped/unapproved material campaign material will be confiscated by the Election Commissioner, Deputy Election Commissioner, or any Board of Elections member and kept on file with the Election Commissioner. In the event that more than ten (10) of said materials in violation of these regulations are collected and filed, the candidate(s) involved will be sanctioned to remove all of his/her/their posted material campus wide for a period of at least twenty-four (24) hours but no more than forty-eighty (48) hours by the Election Commissioner or the Board of Elections. The candidate(s) involved will be granted four (4) hours after notification of the sanction in which to comply. If they do not comply within that time, further sanctions will be enforced.

D. All campaign material which is stamped by the Student Involvement and Leadership development office, displayed in a manner that violates University Posting Policy, may be removed by the Election Commissioner or his/her designate, and the candidate(s) to whom the material belong(s) will be forbidden from displaying campaign materials in the building in which the offense occurred for a period of not less than twenty-four (24) hours, but not more than forty-eighty (48) hours.

E. No endorsement for any candidate may be written with chalk for the SA elections.

F. When candidates turn in their election packets they must do so personally and are required to wait outside the SA offices until the office manager arrives.

Section 2
Campaign Ticket

A. A campaign ticket shall be defined as a group of candidates running for offices in one branch of the Student Association. Any candidates for office shall have the right, if they so choose, to campaign as a ticket. This ticket shall be restricted to campaigning, endorsing, or supporting in any way for only their ticket in their respective branches for which they are candidates for office. Any sanctions that a candidate receives during the election shall also be enforced upon all other candidates in that ticket.
Section 3

University Buildings

A. Under no circumstances will any campaigning of any type be allowed in university classrooms from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. This shall include, but not be limited to, speeches given outside the scope of class work, posting materials, use of blackboards or passing out materials.

B. No campaigning will be allowed in university classroom buildings that might tend to disrupt or hinder scheduled classes.

C. No campaigning will be allowed in any of the libraries, with the exception of posting materials on public bulletin boards.

Section 4

Campaign Infractions

Candidate(s) found to be acting in variance with these regulations shall be subject to the following actions:

A. For the first offense, in a single location, the Election Commissioner or the Board shall forbid the candidate(s) from displaying campaign materials in the building or outdoor area (defined by the sanctioning body at the time the sanction is issued) in which the offense occurred for a period of time determined by the sanctioning body.

B. For each additional offense, in the same location, the Election Commissioner or the Board shall forbid the candidate(s) from displaying campaign materials in any and all university buildings, in addition to any sanctions imposed under clause A.

Section 5

General Restrictions

A. No campaign material shall be allowed where it may physically deface or destroy property. This includes but is not exclusive of, posted materials, stickers of any type, banners, brochures, palm cards, buttons, novelties, and/or anything physically written, printed or drawn in any medium in and/or on any public vehicle or surface. No campaign material shall be posted using any kind of adhesive material.

B. In questions of defacement or irremovability, a candidate or designee's successive demonstrations of removability in all instances shall be sufficient.

C. Excessive litter of campaign materials shall be determined as excessive under the discretion and authority of the Board of Elections and shall constitute a punishment equal to that of a sanction as outlined in the sanction procedures in the Election Policy. Candidates that are found to be in violation of this regulation must immediately
clean up and/or repair any and all damages they have caused. Those individuals found to be in violation will be held liable for any damages caused which require professional repair.

D. All campaign material sent through the mails must be properly postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service. Failure to do so will result in the candidate(s) being prohibited from campaigning in any and all residence halls where such materials were received, for the remainder of the campaign.

Section 6

Soliciting

No door-to-door solicitation of votes, or signatures, in residence halls may be done at any time. The only form of solicitation that may be done inside of the residence halls must be in a public lobby of the building and the candidate must obtain written permission from the Complex Coordinator, or Acting Complex Coordinator, of that residence hall complex. If a candidate wishes to obtain signatures from the students in the dining halls, they must also obtain written permission from that respective Unit Manager and the candidate may only solicit signatures in an area that does not disturb dining hall customers. No solicitation of votes shall be allowed inside of dining hall areas. Those found in violation of this regulation will be forbidden from campaigning in that residence hall complex for the entire duration of the election.

Section 7

Violations of Law

Any candidate found to have campaigned in a way which violates any federal, state, county, or municipality law(s) will automatically be disqualified from the election, no exceptions.

Section 8

Election Day Restrictions

A. On Election Day(s) no campaigning will be allowed within 100 feet of any polling station. This shall include any means of verbal or nonverbal communications. The Election Commissioner prior to the opening of the polls on the first day of the election shall establish exceptions for the purpose of practicality.

1. Candidates and/or their workers who violate this regulation may not be allowed to distribute literature in the vicinity of that particular polling station where the violation occurred for the remainder of the election.
2. For any further violation of this regulation after the first, the candidate and/or their workers will not be allowed to distribute literature anywhere on campus for the remainder of the election.

B. No campaigning will be allowed inside any university building where there is a polling station on the day of the election. Candidates who are found to be in violation of this whether by their own actions or through the actions of their workers may be forbidden from campaigning at that polling station for the remainder of the election. For any further violation of this regulation after the first, the candidate(s) may be forbidden from campaigning anywhere on campus. No Candidate shall be sanctioned for a violation of this section unless it is shown by a substantial weight of the evidence that the candidate or someone working on behalf of the candidate was the violator. Candidates shall not be considered to be in violation of this section simply because someone possessed their campaign material inside of a polling place.
C. Campaigning is forbidden on any Huskie Line Bus, stationary or in motion during the elections. A violation of this may result in a sanction left up to the discretion of the Election Commissioner. Bulletin Boards on Huskie Line Buses may be used for posting campaign material.

D. There shall be no pseudo-polling stations created by candidates, constituents, or other persons outside of the Election Commissioner’s designated polling stations. A pseudo-polling station is defined as an internet capable device(s) set up for the purpose of allowing fellow students to cast votes that is not an official polling station as determined by the Election Commissioner and the Board of Elections.

**Section 9**

**Sanctions**

A. Sanctions may be imposed for violations by candidates or persons campaigning on their behalf as stated in the Bylaws, even if the candidate does not have specific knowledge of the person acting on their behalf. Whenever a sanction is issued, the Election Commissioner shall notify the SA Office Manager as soon as possible. The Office Manager shall notify by phone the candidate(s) sanctioned and post the sanction in the SA Main Office within four (4) Business hours.

B. In addition to the sanctions stated herein, the Board of Elections shall disqualify a candidate at any time before, during or after an election upon commission by the candidate or person(s) acting on behalf of the candidate of one or more of the following: five (5) or more separate violations of the SA election procedures before election day or three (3) or more separate violations of the SA election procedures on election day(s). Any disqualification under this rule is not appealable, and is automatically overturned if appeal of the individual violations lowers the total number of sanctions below the disqualifying number.

C. Any fraud relating to the election including, but not limited to, altering or destroying voting machines, buying votes, intimidating other candidates or voters, or repeated interference with another candidate’s campaign. If the candidate(s) or candidate's workers are caught interfering with another candidate(s) campaign, the applicable sanctions, or even disqualification from the race entirely will be levied upon the interfering candidate(s). Any sanction disqualifying a candidate under this rule may not be appealed; only the existence of the violation itself may be appealed and, if the violation is overturned, the resulting disqualification will automatically be overturned as well.

D. A note to disqualify a candidate from an election shall require five (5) of the seven (7) members of the board to agree in writing, with the exception of automatically disqualifying offenses as listed herein.

E. The Election Commissioner shall notify the candidate in writing of any sanction(s) and the reason(s) for the imposition of the sanction(s) as soon as possible after the imposition thereof. A copy of the written sanction(s) will be filed in the Office of the Student Association and will be available for review by any member of the NIU student body. If additional evidence relating to a violation for which a candidate has been sanctioned or evidence of additional violations comes to the attention of the Election Commissioner after notice of original sanction(s) was provided to the candidate, the Election Commissioner will send separate written notice to the candidate of such new grounds or additional sanctions as soon as possible.

**Section 10**

**Representatives of Candidates**
A. Individual candidates and candidates campaigning as a team will be held responsible for the actions of all persons campaigning on their behalf either as individuals or as a team. Violations of these regulations will be charged against the candidate(s) themselves, and whenever applicable punishment for such violations will be levied upon the candidate(s).

B. Any individuals campaigning on behalf of a candidate will be considered representatives of that candidate even if the candidate did not request or instruct the individual to do so if and only if it can be shown that the candidate was aware that the individual was campaigning on their behalf.

C. Any candidates that find individuals campaigning for their benefit without permission should immediately report such an occurrence to the Election Commissioner. Failure to do so will warrant the candidate becoming responsible for that individual’s conduct as a representative.

Section 11
Effects of Disqualification

In the event a candidate is disqualified, the candidate will not be allowed to assume office and any votes cast for him/her will not be counted and will be reported as disqualified votes. A disqualified candidate will be disqualified for the entirety of the election for which he/she ran for office, including special or run-off elections. Sanctions and punishments, including disqualification of a candidate, will remain in effect pending the outcome of any appeals. Each sanction must be appealed individually.

ARTICLE X
CANDIDACY
Section 1
Registration

A. Each candidate for executive office must have the signatures of at least 400 fee-paying NIU students on his/her official petition. Each person who shall sign a petition shall give his or her printed name, signature, Z-ID number and local home phone number. The registering candidate cannot sign his or her own petition on their behalf. The Board of Elections shall check on the validity of signatures by randomly calling thirty (30) or more of the names listed on each candidate’s petition.

B. Each candidate for legislative office must have the signatures of 50 fee-paying NIU students on his/her official petition. Each person who shall sign a petition shall give his or her printed name, signature, Z-ID number and local home phone number. The registering candidate cannot sign his or her own petition on their behalf. The Board of Elections shall check on the validity of signatures by randomly calling seven (7) or more of the names listed on each candidate’s petition.

C. Candidates for Student Association offices must do each of the following, prior to campaigning or being placed on the ballot:
1. Attend the candidates' meeting.
2. Receive, complete, and return the registration packet, with petitions
3. Provide proof of student status, hours enrolled, and residency upon request.
4. Qualify for office.
5. Receive notification from the Elections Commissioner of eligibility for office.

D. These rules shall apply to all candidates, including write-in candidates. Any candidate, who begins to campaign for office prior to being notified by the Elections Commissioner, shall be disqualified from election to office and from holding office.

Section 2

Unqualified Candidates

Candidates for any SA office are required to obey all applicable rules. Candidates who fail to qualify under all the rules described herein shall not be considered candidates. They shall not be allowed to campaign for themselves, nor shall they be placed upon the ballot.

ARTICLE XI

ELECTIONS PROCEDURE

Section 1

Names

The following stipulations shall govern the acceptable forms of a candidate's name, as it is to appear on the petition/ballot:

A. The candidate's surname must appear in its full legal form.

B. The candidate's given (first) name or contracted form of that name must appear on the petition/ballot preceding his/her surname. The initial form of the candidate's given name may be used preceding a middle name in its full, diminutive or contracted (but not initial) form preceding the surname.

C. The Candidate's middle name in its full, diminutive, contracted or initial form may appear at the discretion of the candidate in accordance with the above rules.

D. The Candidate's nickname may appear on the petition/ballot placed anywhere between the given name/initial and legal surname. The candidate may use no more than one nickname on any petition/ballot. Any such nickname shall be enclosed in quotation marks wherever it appears.

E. No designation of title or degree may appear on any petition/ballot.

F. The Candidate’s nickname or party name may appear on the petition/ballot placed anywhere between the given name/initial and legal surname. The candidate may use no more than one nickname of no more than twenty characters, and no more than one party name composed of no more than twenty-five characters on any petition/ballot. Any such nickname shall be enclosed in quotation marks wherever it appears and any such party name shall be enclosed in parentheses.”
Section 2

Petitions

All petitions and all sheets therein on which candidates for office seek signatures shall include the following:

A. The name of the candidate on whose behalf the petition is being signed in compliance with the appropriate section of the SA Bylaws.
B. The office being sought.
C. The district of candidate residency.
D. All other wording as shall be required/determined by the Elections Commissioner.

Section 3

Number of Votes

In Senate election only, each student shall be eligible to vote for up to, but not exceeding eight (8) candidates in any district. In all executive elections, each student shall be eligible to vote for only one (1) candidate for each office.

Section 4

Voting Machines

The Election Commissioner shall provide the voting machines(s) at each polling station. All voting machine(s) shall be delivered to the polling station by the Commissioner or any officially designated member of the Board of Elections.

Section 5

Poll Workers

The Election Commissioner will be charged with the responsibility of dividing voting machines, poll workers, and polling station according to the districts as outlined in the SA Bylaws. Two (2) poll workers will be assigned to each polling station according to the districts as outlined in the SA Bylaws. Two (2) poll workers will be assigned to each polling station at all times during the election. If at any time two (2) poll workers cannot be present at a polling station, it shall be temporarily closed in accord with Section 10, Paragraph D of this Article.

Section 6

Voting Times

A. The polls shall be open for two consecutive days from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for Fall and Spring elections. Additionally, voting can be done online beginning from 9:00 a.m. the first day until 6:00 p.m. the following day.
B. The online election ballot is set to be open for 33 hours. In the event of an Information Technology Services internet outage on any campus of Northern Illinois University, the open hours of the online ballot will be extended by the amount of minutes of said outage.

C. The online election ballot is set to be open for 33 hours. In the event of an internal malfunction with the system through which the ballot is being provided (Huskie Link or otherwise) causing widespread inaccessibility, the open hours of the online ballot will be extended by the amount of the minutes of said internal malfunction.

**Section 7**

**Polling Stations**

The following locations shall have permanent polling stations: Holmes Student Center, DuSable Hall, New Residence Hall Community Center, LaTourette Hall, the Nursing Building, Founders Memorial Library, Music Building, and Barsema Hall. An official record of poll workers and voters shall be maintained at each polling station.

**Section 8**

**Voter Identification**

Any eligible student wishing to vote online must simply access a voting machine at a polling station or an internet capable device to access their ballot. In the event of an online malfunction, students wishing to vote by paper ballot must present a valid NIU student ID and/or whatever else is determined by the Election Commissioner to prove district residency and/or student registration in order to obtain a paper ballot. The paper ballot may be obtained in the SILD office and for the paper ballot to be counted as legal, it must be initialed by the director of SILD. The ballot must be cast in front of an employee of SILD to ensure proper voting procedure is followed.

**Section 9**

**Voting Procedure**

A. After determining a voter’s eligibility, the poll worker will provide a voting machine for the voter to use.

B. Each voter shall cast his/her vote on the voting machine if voting at the polling station

C. In the Senate election, each voter is allowed to vote for up to eight (8) candidates. These votes can be cast for candidates running in any district.

D. Polling stations are to remain open at all times during the hours designated herein, unless closed for good and sufficient cause by authority of the Election Commissioner or Acting Election Commissioner. In the event a polling station is closed, written notice will be provided of the time the said polling station will reopen, if known, and of the location(s) of other polling stations where students may cast their votes.

E. A voting machine may be impounded at any time by authority of the Election Commissioner or Acting Election Commissioner for good and sufficient cause.

F. In the case of either of the above instances, the Commissioner is required to file an official written report stating the reasons for the temporary closure or impoundment within four (4) hours of its occurrence.
Voters may vote online from the beginning of the election to the end of the election via an applicable voting machine.

SECTION 10
Polling Station Identification

A. Upon the days of elections, banners identifying the buildings labeled as polling places are to be displayed on the outside of the location and nearest to the voting area. The banners will be neutral as well as advocating only that a SA sponsored election is taking place inside.

B. The Student Association logo must appear on all banners/signs displayed at the polling locations.

C. Banners must display the name of the building in which a polling place is located to avoid confusion and to allow easy recognition for their placement.

D. All banners and signs will remain visible and displayed during the duration of the Election Day, and will be removed upon the end of the final voting day.

ARTICLE XII
RUNOFF AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Section 1
Runoff Elections

A. During the determination of winners for an executive election, if no candidate receives a majority of votes, then the winner shall be determined by a runoff election. Only the two (2) candidates with the highest vote total may be eligible candidates during the runoff election, except in the following cases:

1. If no candidate receives a majority and there are more than two (2) candidates tied for the highest vote total, then only those candidates tied for the highest vote total will be eligible candidates during the runoff election.

2. If no candidate receives a majority vote, there is no tie for the highest vote total, and there is a tie for the second highest vote total, then only those candidates tied for the second highest vote total and the one with the highest vote total will be eligible candidates during the runoff election.

B. During the determination of winners for a senatorial election, if there is a tie between the candidates competing for the final seat(s), the winner shall be determined by a runoff election. Only the candidates between whom the tie occurred will be eligible candidates during the runoff election.

Section 2: Special Election

In the event of an invalid election, the winner shall be determined by a special election, during which all individuals who were valid and qualified candidates in the invalidated election will be candidates in the special election.
Section 3: Procedure

A. A runoff or special election shall be held no later than one week after the election results are determined.

B. The winner of a runoff or special election shall be determined by a plurality vote.

C. No write-in candidates will be allowed during a runoff or special election. Any individual(s) who were write-in candidate(s) for the general election or invalidated election shall be placed on the ballot for a runoff or special election, respectively.

D. In the event of a tie during a runoff or special election an additional runoff election will be held, following the guidelines contained herein.

Section 4: Campaigning and Voting

A. All campaign rules and restrictions that apply to a general election will also apply to a runoff or special election.

B. Rules regarding voting, voter eligibility, voting methods, and voting locations that apply to a general election will also apply to a runoff or special election.

C. Voting will take place from 9:00am to 6:00pm for one day only.

D. All rules and restrictions that apply to the voting days of a general election will also apply to the voting day of a runoff or special election.

Section 5: Board of Elections and Election Commissioner

The Election Commissioner, Deputy Election Commissioner, Chairman of the Board of Elections, and the Members of the Board of Elections shall remain the same between a general election and a runoff or special election. The Board of Elections will be required to meet prior to the start of the election day and at the end of the election day, subject to the same requirements prescribed for a general election.

ARTICLE XIII

TABULATION

Section 1

Tabulation Procedure

A. After the closing of the polls, the poll worker(s) shall wait for the Election Commissioner or his/her designated representative to arrive, identify his/herself, and secure all elections materials and voting machines before leaving.
B. All ballots are to be counted at one location. Ballots are to be counted by the Tabulation Officer as designated by the Election Commissioner. Ballots may be counted by electronic means. The Board prior to reviewing election results shall review all problem ballots.

C. Any executive election candidate whose name appears on the ballot may designate one (1) person to observe any discussion of the validity of ballots. All candidates who shall campaign as a team may be required to choose only one observer to represent the entire ticket. Candidates may not represent themselves during this process. Any action by the candidate’s designated observer that disrupts the counting of the ballots will be cause for the observer’s removal and will constitute a campaign violation, which may subject the candidate to disqualification at any time. During, the counting of ballots by machine those present shall be restricted to the Tabulation Officer, Board members, the Election Commissioner, Vice President, and the Board’s Official Advisor(s).

D. Once the voting machines have arrived and counting has begun, no candidate or candidate’s representative, other than a designated observer, will be permitted to be present in the area where the counting is taking place.

Section 2

Valid and Invalid Votes

The following votes shall not count in the determination of winners and shall be considered invalid votes for the office(s) so affected, and only for the office so affected. All valid votes on the same ballot for other offices shall be counted:

1. Votes for disqualified or unqualified candidate(s);

2. If votes for the candidate intended is not able to be determined in the opinion of the Board of Elections, they shall not count for the office so indicated. However, it shall be counted for all offices which the intended vote is able to be determined.

Section 3

Valid and Invalid Ballots

The following paper ballots shall not count in the determination of winners and shall be considered invalid votes for all the offices listed on the ballot:

1. A vote for an unregistered or disqualified write-in candidate;

2. A vote for a registered write-in candidate, but the name of the candidate is misspelled;

3. Ballots which are profane; and

4. Ballots on which a non-person is marked (such as animals or cartoon figures).

Section 4

Valid Votes and Ballots
Only the following votes shall count in the determination of winners and shall be considered valid votes for the office(s) so affected, and only for the office so affected. All valid votes on the same ballot for other offices shall be counted: and
1. A paper ballot which is properly initialed, but which is unmarked for any office;
2. A vote for a registered, non-disqualified write-in candidate, with the correct spelling of the candidate’s name; and
3. A vote for a non-disqualified candidate listed on the ballot, even if written in.

Section 5
Invalid Elections

A. Other than votes and ballots for disqualified candidates who appeared on the ballot, if the total number of invalid ballots in any election is greater than 5% of the total ballots cast in that election, the entire election will be ruled invalid. Ballots cast for a disqualified candidate will be disregarded for purposes of this Section, and will not count as either valid or invalid ballots.

B. An invalidated election must be re-run as a special election within one week of the invalidation.

C. Upon completion of the counting of the ballots, the Commissioner or a designated member of the Board shall make a reasonable attempt to contact all candidates or their official representatives as is feasible to locate at that time, and notify them of the results, prior to releasing the total to the public.

D. All returns shall immediately be made open to the public when the ballots have been completely tabulated and Paragraph D of this Section has been fulfilled.

E. All ballots and petitions must be accounted for and saved by the Election Commissioner for sixty (60) days. Following that time they shall be destroyed. The Election Commissioner shall issue a report of the results to the Senate and the President of the SA.

Section 6
Advance Copies of the Ballot

Copies of the voided, official ballot shall be given to the Tabulation Officer in the weeks prior to the first day of elections for the purpose of inputting the ballot online. If changes are made to the official ballot after this time, copies shall immediately be made available to the Tabulation Officer. After the machine counting process, the Tabulation Officer shall return all election results sealed to the Election Commissioner and Board Chair.

Section 7
Determination of Winners

A. The candidate receiving a majority of all legitimate and valid votes cast for the office in question shall be considered the winner for the offices of President, Vice President, or Treasurer. If no candidate shall receive a majority, then a run-off election for those candidates with the two highest vote totals shall be held.
B. The eight (8) Senate candidates with the most votes for each district shall be the winners. If a tie occurs, then a runoff election shall be held.

C. The person with the most votes in a runoff election shall be considered the winner. If a tie occurs, then a new runoff election shall be held. All runoff elections shall be held within one week and shall be for one day only.

D. Write-in candidates shall be considered legitimate candidates and shall be allowed to win elections provided that the Board has not disqualified them.

Section 8

Write-In Candidates

A. Spaces must be provided on the ballot for write-in candidates. These spaces must equal the number of available seats being contested. The ballot will instruct the voter that he/she may write in as many candidates as seats available in any district.

B. Write-in candidates shall register one version of their name, which must obey the same rules listed for candidates whose names appear on the ballot. Only this registered name shall be accepted as a vote for the candidate. To be valid, a vote for a write-in candidate must be cast in the correct manner, which will be as follows: 1) the name written on the ballot must be identical in form and spelling to the name which the write-in candidate registered.

C. If a write-in candidate has not properly registered two (2) calendar weeks prior to the election, the votes cast for the candidate will not be counted in the determination of winners for that office, even though that ballot itself is still valid. The remaining votes will determine the winner. Any candidate who is not properly registered may not win an election and shall be considered disqualified.

D. Small technical errors, such as spelling mistakes do not make a vote illegal as long as the voter’s intent is discernible.

E. All write-in votes cast for persons who have registered as write-in candidates will be counted and reported with the election results. A write-in vote cast for a person whose name already appears on the ballot will be counted as a vote for that candidate. Any write-in candidate may win an election if he/she complies with the registration requirements of the election procedures.

ARTICLE XIV

APPEALS

Section 1

Right to Appeal

A. All candidates will have the right to appeal any sanction imposed on them or ruling issued against them as prescribed herein.

B. All appeals of sanctions or rulings issued by the Election Commissioner must be given to the Board of Elections. Only the Board may hear appeals regarding sanctions or rulings issued by the Election Commissioner. Any student may appeal any ruling made by the Election Commissioner, relating to an election in which the person
appealing is a candidate or voter, to the Board. However, the student making the appeal must be affected by the ruling. For the purposes of this section rulings shall include actions and decisions.

C. All appeals related to the constitutionality of actions taken by the Board of Elections must be given to the SA Supreme Court. Only the Supreme Court may hear appeals regarding constitutional interpretation, and the Supreme Court may only hear cases regarding constitutional interpretation, or violations by the Board of Elections, of the Constitution or Bylaws. Any student may appeal any ruling made by the Board, relating to an election in which the person appealing is a candidate or voter, to the Supreme Court. However, the student making the appeal must be affected by the ruling.

Section 2

Filing an Appeal to the Board

A. Prior to Election Day: All appeals to the Board must be filed within twenty-four (24) hours of the notice of action or decision of the Election Commissioner. Such time of action or decision must be written on the hard copy of the decision or action posted in the SA office. All appeals will be in writing and will be directed to the Chair of the Board of Elections who will, within four (4) hours of receipt of the appeal, notify the Elections Commissioner, Board of Elections Members, and other persons whom it may be reasonably assumed are relevant parties to the appeal, of both the filing of the appeal and the time at which a hearing will be held on the appeal. The SA Office Manager may receive appeals on behalf of the Chair, but shall immediately notify the Chair of the filing appeal.

B. The Board of Elections will hear and rule on any appeal within two (2) days, except on election days. Each day of elections and prior to reviewing any election results, the Board shall meet at the end of each election period and hear all requests for appeals that are pending. On the day of an election appeals may be made in person at the meetings of the Board, no written appeal is necessary. The Board of Elections may uphold, reverse, or modify any action or decision of the Election Commissioner appealed to the Board.

C. No appeal may be made to the Board after eighteen (18) hours after the close of the polling stations on the last day of the election, unless entirely new information has been discovered and the person making the appeal could not be properly expected to have known about the information.

D. During an appeal all elections will proceed as scheduled, unless the Board concludes that the conduct of a fair election has been rendered impossible due to a violation(s) of the election procedures.

E. In the event of an appeal, the Election Commissioner will impound all ballots and seal all election results pending the exhaustion of all appeals to the Board of Elections and the SA Supreme Court.

Section 3

Filing an Appeal to the SA Supreme Court

A. The submission of an appeal to the Supreme Court must be made pursuant to the procedures set forth by the Supreme Court’s Code of Procedure, or in its silence by the Chief Justice. Copies may be obtained from the SA Main Office.

B. The Supreme Court’s role in the appeals process is only to rule on constitutionality. The Supreme Court may act to interpret the Constitution and Bylaws, and may overturn decisions of the Board of Election if such a decision directly violates the Constitution or Bylaws. However, the Supreme Court may not overturn a sanction of the Board of Elections, or similarly overturn a decision not to sanction, unless making such a decision was a strict violation of the Constitution or Bylaws, or the Board committed reversible error when
making the decision by violating the Bylaws, Election Procedure, or Constitution. The existence of reversible error may only be grounds to overturn a sanction, but may never be cited as grounds to overturn a decision not to sanction.

**Article XV**

Expenditure Reporting

**Section 1**

Requirement to Disclose

A. All candidates shall be required to keep record of all campaign expenditures and provide proof of those expenditures. This report can come from a ticket and/or a candidate.

B. All candidates shall be required to keep record of all campaign contributions that shall include the following minimum requirements:

1. Name of contributing organization or individual
2. Amount contributed

C. All candidates shall be required to keep record of all campaign contributions that they make from their own personal resources that shall include the following minimum requirements:

1. Individual contributions
2. Amount contributed

D. All candidates shall keep records of all donated goods and services along with the fair market value of those services that shall include the following minimum requirements:

1. Name of contributing or individual
2. Type of donated goods and services
3. Value of donated goods and services

A service provided free of charge by a member of the Student Body shall not constitute a campaign contribution, but must still be recorded.

E. Fair market value shall be defined as the price at which the property would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or to sell and both having reasonable service is offered at a discounted price, and the discount in questions is not available to the general public, the price available to the general public must not be reported as the fair market value.

**Section 2**

Financial Disclosures
A. The method and format of all financial disclosure shall be at the discretion of the Election Commissioner, with the approval of the Student Association Treasurer. If the Treasurer is a candidate themselves then the Deputy Treasurer will be required to approve these disclosures. If the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer are both candidates themselves, then the Vice Chair of the Finance Committee will be required to approve these disclosures.

B. All candidates shall disclose each expense and/or donation to the Election Commissioner as it occurs. No candidate shall be allowed to use campaign material without first reporting its financial record to the Election Commissioner.

C. All candidates shall submit a projected final expense report before the open of polls on the first day of voting that shall include:

1. All campaign expenditures  
2. Fair market value of all goods and services  
3. Contributed funds

A. A final financial report shall be submitted by the close of polls on the final date of polling and it shall include:

1. A full account of all campaign expenses  
2. A full disclosure of all donated funds, services and materials  
3. Copies of all receipts and financial records associated with the campaign:

B. Any candidate, or ticket, who is found to have falsified, or omitted, any information relating to this article shall be immediately disqualified for all offices in which the candidate, or ticket, are a candidate(s) for.

Section 3

Public Reporting

A. The Election Commissioner, with the guidance of the Student Association Treasurer shall make the financial records of each campaign public, before any election results are announced. If the Treasurer is a candidate themselves then the Deputy Treasurer will be required to make the financial records of each campaign public. If the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer are both candidates themselves, then the Vice Chair of the Finance Committee will be required to make the financial records of each campaign public. Each record shall be made public record upon receipt from each candidate.

B. Election Commissioner shall create a final financial report of all campaigns that shall be documented by the Student Association Historian for public review. The report shall include:

1. The total amount of election expenses from the ticket and/or candidate  
2. A financial report of each ticket and/or candidate  
3. A record of any financial violations.