

2024 Official USG Election Rules

GENERAL CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

1. To be included on the official Undergraduate Student Government ballot, all petitioners must be registered in accordance with [University Policy](#) on participation in activities (enrolled in at least 8 undergraduate credit hours during the year of appointment, have a current GPA of and maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.25, have passed at least 6 or more hours in the proceeding semester, cannot be on semester warning or academic probation), meet all qualifications within the Undergraduate Student Government Charter including running for *one* elected position, use the standard petition form, collect the required names, valid signatures, of 1% or 201 of the Kent Campus undergraduate students registered for Spring Semester 2024. The deadline for completing petition forms is February 26, 2024 at 5:00pm.
2. Campaigning shall be defined as “the disbursement of any campaign literature or intangible media which includes, but is not limited to: flyers, pamphlets, handouts, posters, or other materials or media which display the name of a candidate; attending student organization meetings for the purpose of seeking endorsements; or representing oneself in any fashion as a candidate.”
 - a. All eligible candidates and their agents are obligated to comply with applicable federal, state, local, and university ordinances and regulations.
 - b. Any infraction of the rules and regulations for candidates and campaigning or university, state, local, or federal policies may result in the disqualification of the Candidate. Course of action to be taken in the event of rule violations or policy breaches shall be determined at the sole discretion of the Election Commission.
3. Each Candidate is to be considered to be the head of their campaign and therefore responsible for the conduct of their campaign. The Election Commission will contact the Candidate via email regarding any campaign infractions, posting violations, and approval or disapproval of campaign materials.
 - a. In the instance of Student Body President and Vice President, they are the heads for their joined campaign.
4. A Candidate must submit a [platform](#) proposal. The platform for any Candidate may be used in Undergraduate Student Government advertisements. Any photographs or videos taken of the Candidate will be used at the discretion of the Election Commission for these aforementioned advertisements.
5. Each Candidate will be required to remove flyers, stickers, all online media and any other traces of campaign initiatives or paraphernalia immediately following the end of the election.

6. For the 2024-2025 board, Student Body President and Vice President will run on a ticket together. It is required to have a Vice President running with Student Body President in order to have a spot on the ballot.
 - a. This also requires Student Body President and Vice President to gather signatures petitions together.
 - b. Their budget is also \$600 as they are two people.

VIOLATION OF RULES

1. The Election Commission is vested with the authority to oversee the implementation and enforcement of these rules by the Undergraduate Student Government Charter and Bylaws. The Election Commission may alter the interpretation or enforcement of these rules at any point. The Commission must notify each candidate of these changes before they become effective.
2. To report violations of campaign rules, contact the Election Commission via email with a detailed explanation and or images of the infraction. Inform the Election Commission first and foremost and refrain from informing other candidates.
3. After a report is filed, the Election Commission will notify the relevant parties within two business days asking for information and documentation of the violation.
 - a. For minor infractions, such as improper flyering, a warning will be issued for the first offense, a three day suspension from campaigning for the second, and an indefinite suspension from campaigning for the third offense, after which the Election Commission will hold a hearing on striking the candidate from the ballot.
 - b. For major infractions, such as unethical fundraising, an indefinite suspension from campaigning will be issued, after which the Election Commission will hold a hearing on striking the candidate from the ballot.
 - c. A quorum of a majority of the members and a simple majority is required to make a ruling. Quorum may also be at least the chair and one vice-chair and both would have to agree on the ruling. The Chair shall abstain from voting except in the case of a tie unless otherwise required to.
 - d. All rulings may be appealed to the Election Commission. Please direct all questions or concerns to oeader@kent.edu.
4. The Election Commission may enforce penalties as necessary to uphold the election rules. These penalties include but are not limited to: 1) removal or alteration of campaign materials, 2) reduction of campaign funds, 3) suspension of campaign, 4) the removal of the candidate from the ballot.

FUNDRAISING & EXPENDITURES

1. The total value of campaign expenditures is not to exceed \$300 for all candidates and positions.
 - a. Campaign expenditures shall be defined as any expense relevant for the purpose of 1) campaign material, 2) digital or physical advertisements, 3) in-kind material donations to the candidate
 - b. All monetary or in-kind donations must be reported on the [Campaign Finance Report](#) by March 20, 2024 at 5:00pm. Receipts should be included to ensure accountability and transparency.
 - i. If you did not receive or spend any finances for campaigning, the Campaign Finance Report is still required. Fill in '0' for all monetary costs.
 - c. Examples of allowable expenditures include flyers, business cards, and social media ads. Examples of prohibited expenditures include personal expenses, gift cards, and endorsements.

APPROPRIATE CAMPAIGNING

1. Campaigning is explicitly prohibited in all residential halls on campus, with an exception for candidates who currently reside in a residence hall. Please contact your resident assistant or residence hall director for permission to post flyers.
2. Campaigning is explicitly prohibited in all computer labs on campus. Candidates are forbidden from altering computer screens to display campaign information.
3. Campaigning is explicitly prohibited on official Kent State University email LISTSERVS. Private email accounts and organization LISTSERVS are permitted.
 - a. For example, a candidate *cannot* campaign on the Women's Center LISTSERV but *can* campaign on the College Republicans LISTSERV with their expressed permission.
4. Campaigning is permitted in classrooms with the expressed permission of the professor.
5. Campaigning is permitted in academic buildings provided candidates abide by university policy and place campaign materials in appropriate areas.
 - a. Campaign materials, such as flyers, should *not* be removed, replaced, or relocated by anyone but the owner or the Election Commission.
 - b. Campaign materials, such as flyers, should *not* be distributed or posted in excessive or obscene amounts.
 - i. No more than 2 flyers should be posted on one bulletin board.
6. No university sponsored printers or copiers, including USG printers or copiers, may be used to print or copy campaign materials.

- a. If the candidate qualifies for needs-based printing through an on-campus program that is not university-funded (i.e. Student Support Services) the candidate can print using such services at a calculated rate that is equal to the current Kent State Library printing costs. This rate must be calculated up to the threshold of campaign budgets applicable to all candidates. Any printing should be included in candidates' campaign finance reports.
7. No university sponsored funds, including USG allocations, may be used to endorse a candidate or provide financial or material contributions to a campaign.
8. No sound amplifications may be used on any part of campus outside of university and or Election Commission sponsored events. This includes but is not limited to sound amplification from automobiles or megaphones.
9. No candidate may disseminate libelous or slanderous information regarding another candidate or current member of Undergraduate Student Government.
10. No candidates may receive endorsements from other candidates. Endorsements include but are not limited to 1) the physical or digital posting or distribution of campaign materials for one candidate by another candidate, 2) the distribution of written or verbal support by one candidate for another candidate, 3) the formation of a team or party of candidates to support one or more candidates.
 - a. In the instance of Student Body President and Vice President, they are the heads for their joined campaign and can endorse each other.
11. Candidates may not have expectations for endorsements from current members of Undergraduate Student Government, such as members of the Office of the President, Directors, or Senators. Current members of Undergraduate Student Government may make educated and respectful endorsements at their own discretion. In the case of libel and slander from current members at the expense of candidates, said current members will face consequences internally in line with Undergraduate Student Government's current disciplinary policy.
 - a. **Current Undergraduate Student Government members who are candidates in the 2024 election will adhere to rule 10.**
12. All campaign materials, physical and digital, must contain the following information:

Election Days: March 19th-20th 8am-5pm

Vote Online: kentstateusg.com OR flashline.kent.edu

13. Physical and digital materials do not require pre-approval from the Election Commission. By using these materials, a candidate declares they understand the rules and procedures pertaining to creating and distributing campaign materials. The Election Commission encourages any candidate with questions regarding the appropriateness of their campaign material to contact a commissioner.

14. The Election Commission is vested with the authority to remove or censure, with discretion, all material that violates these rules as agreed upon by the candidate. A candidate may appeal this decision as outlined in **Violation of Rules**.

ELECTION DAY PROCEDURE

1. The polls will open on March 19th, 2024 at 8:00am and close at 5:00 pm on March 20th.
2. All voting is virtual, accessible via the [Undergraduate Student Government website](#) or [Flashline](#).
3. Candidates are prohibited from soliciting votes using personal devices such as cellphones, laptop, or tablets.
4. Should an election result in a tie, the result shall be decided by flipping a coin.
5. Candidates are encouraged to join a virtual election results party on March 20nd at 7:00pm, when unofficial results are released.
6. Election appeals resulting from error are due March 22th, 2022 at 12:00pm. The official results will be released April 5th 2024 at the Undergraduate Student Government public meeting.

IMPORTANT DATES

1. Throughout the election process there will be several important dates involving informational sessions, candidacy forums, debates, etc. Candidates are required to attend at least *one* public forum and both debates. For a schedule of the election, [click here](#). Invitations and reminders will be emailed to candidates by the Election Commission.
2. If candidates cannot attend a required event, *contact the Election Commission as soon as possible for an exemption*. Otherwise, the Election Commission may file a complaint and respond accordingly.

INELIGIBILITY OR SUSPENSION OF CAMPAIGN

1. Candidates who violate these rules are subject, per this agreement, to suspension or removal from the election.
2. Candidates who win their respective elections but are determined to have violated the rules within twenty-four hours of the conclusion of the election may see their election results invalidated. Should the Election Commission hold a hearing and invalidate the results, the second-place candidate will be selected as the winner.
3. After the certification of the results by the Election Commission, no candidate may challenge the results, nor may the Election Commission invalidate the results for whatever reason.

CONTACT INFORMATION

1. For all intents and purposes, the Chair of the Election Commission serves as the chief administrator of the Election Commission:
2. For all intents and purposes, the Vice-Chair of the Election Commission serves as the administrative assistant to the Commission and assumes the duties of Chair should the Chair be unable to fulfill their duties:
3. For all intents and purposes, the Commissioners of the Election Commission serve as the administrative body of Commission and assumes the duties of the Chair and Vice-Chair should they be unable to fulfill their duties:
4. For all intents and purposes, the Election Commission serves as the ultimate authority over the Undergraduate Student Government elections.
5. Any questions, comments, or concerns should be directed to oeader@kent.edu