



Election Rules 2023-2024

A. Election Committee

This committee is made up of the GSA President, Senior Vice President of GSA, and GSA advisor. The Election Committee is responsible for drawing up the procedures for the election and for implementing the election.

B. Voting

1. All Bentley MS and MBA Graduate students are eligible to vote: Full-time and Part-time students.
2. The link for voting will be sent through e-mail to all graduate students. Students may need to check their SPAM and JUNK email accounts to retrieve the email.
3. The students will be able to vote only once and the voting process will be handled by the GSA Election Committee.

C. Eligibility

1. Nominees (President and Sr. Vice President) must be able to serve for the entire academic year of their term, so they must be graduating no sooner than May 2024.
2. Nominees should have a minimum GPA of 3.20 and be in good academic standing at the University.
3. A President nominee and a Sr. Vice President nominee must run together as one group.
4. A nominee may not run for more than one position, or in more than one group.
5. A President nominee and a Sr. Vice President nominee must submit the application together as one group.

D. Conduct of Candidates

1. Campaign Funding
 - a. GSA will cover all printing costs of flyers. Campaign-related flyers can be printed at the Business Center located on the 3rd floor of the Student Center.
2. Campaign Posters
 - a. All the campaign posters should be in accordance with the Bentley Poster policy. The policy is an attached separate document.
 - b. All posters must be removed from the campus on the day following the elections. Candidates are

responsible for removing their own campaign signs.

3. Bentley Policies

Candidates are expected to comply with University policies and procedures. It is the candidate's responsibility to inquire about any University policies and procedures, which may govern their behavior in the election. Candidates' who willfully or inadvertently disobey college policies or procedures to gain an advantage in the election **may be subject to disqualification.**

4. Campaigning for votes

- a. Candidates are encouraged to discuss their campaign with individual students and/or with groups of students on campus.
- b. Candidates are allowed to campaign in classrooms, but campaigning must not cause disruption. Please take permission from your respective faculty members beforehand.

5. Candidates and other persons who campaign on the behalf of the candidates are expected to conduct themselves as responsible graduate students and to comply with all existing rules and regulations of the college. In the event that the above listed persons are found in violation of this policy, the candidate could be disqualified and other students may also be subjected to any disciplinary action outlined in Bentley policy.

6. No candidate can campaign negatively about the opposing team(s). If found guilty, the candidates will be disqualified.

E. Disputes, Discrepancies, and Grievances

I. Grievance

Any person, having witnessed a candidate or a member of a candidate's campaign team in violation of any of the Election Rules, may file a grievance to the Election Committee. This file should include questions pertaining to:

- A. Specific rule violated or misinterpreted (article and section);
- B. Specifically when and where violated; and
- C. Other witnesses

All grievances must be filled out no later than five business days (a business day is Monday through Friday) after the polls have closed on the last day of election.

II. Hearing

It shall be the right of any candidate to petition by filing a grievance with the Election Committee. Upon the submission of a grievance, the election for the office will be considered "in dispute." If the grievance addresses an action that would invalidate a candidate, a public hearing regarding the incident indicated by the petitioner in their grievance, shall be reviewed. The Election Committee may take steps, if necessary, to place temporary sanctions on a candidate's campaign until the time of a hearing. The Election Committee shall schedule the hearing for some time convenient to the interested parties.

Once a candidate has signed a grievance and it has been filed, the Election Committee is responsible for

notifying all candidates and individuals against whom a grievance has been filed, and those who have filed grievances as to the place and time of the hearing. The notification should be made within forty eight (48) hours of poll closing.

Procedure for Election Hearing may look like the following; however, based on individual schedules and the nature of the complaint, the Election Committee may need to adjust the meeting format and/or have separate meetings:

- A. Meeting is called to order.
- B. The rule in question is cited and read by the Election Committee Chair (GSA Advisor).
- C. The petitioner is heard.
- D. The defendant's case is heard.
- E. The petitioner's witnesses are heard.
- F. The defendant questions the petitioner's witnesses.
- G. The Election Committee members question petitioner and petitioner's witness.
- H. The defendant's witnesses are heard.
- I. The petitioner questions defendant's witnesses.
- J. The Election Committee members question defendant and defendant's witness.
- K. Recess for deliberation (Deliberations are closed).
 - a. Members vote on the resolution of the case. (Tie votes will be resolved by a vote from the Chair (GSA advisor)
 - b. If case is found in favor of the petitioner, the members will vote on prescribed sanction, if any.
- L. Formal decision is read by Chair with applicable sanction.
- M. Meeting adjourns.

Rulings of the Election Committee may be appealed to the Election Committee if the appeal has merit.

III. Sanctions

Any violation of polices **may** lead to the invalidation of any candidate. If the applicable sanction for a filed grievance is not invalidation and at least one (1) member of the Election Committee has witnessed the violation, then the Election Committee may meet to decide on sanction(s) without a hearing.

The Election Committee may enforce, but is not limited to, the following sanctions:

- A. Provide a verbal warning of violation.
- B. May reduce the campaign funds.
- C. Invalidate a candidate.
- D. Recommend disciplinary action from Bentley administration.

Additional situations that would require a hearing to determine a candidate's campaign validity:

- A. Extreme cases of libelous statements about opponent.
- B. Extreme propagation of falsehoods about oneself.
- C. Distributing or promising money, currency, or coin of any notion.

Clear and convincing evidence must be provided in each case.

F. Vote Tallying Process

1. The tallying process is done through the electronic election system. The tallied votes will be confirmed by:
 - a. The Election Chairperson & GSA Advisor
 - b. The president of GSA
2. Candidate who receives a simple majority vote shall fill the selected position.
3. In the event of a tie, there will be a recount of votes. If the recount results in a tie, a revote will be arranged by GSA.

G. Polls

1. No candidate for office or member of a candidate's campaign committee will serve on the Election Workgroup. Nor will any person with a "strong personal bias or relationship" will serve on workgroup related to elections. This clause will also apply to any Parliament who may have a "strong personal bias or relationship" towards a candidate(s).
2. The voting link will be active only during the voting period and will close at 11:59pm on the final day of voting.

H. Release of Election Results

Full results of the election, giving the number of votes received for each registered candidate, will be sent by the GSA President to the entire graduate population. Prior to this email, all candidates will be notified of the results in a meeting held by the election committee. This is done as a courtesy to all candidates and allows for election discussion and ways to better improve the process.

I. Disqualification of a Candidate

1. Any candidate found to be in violation of the election rules may be disqualified.
2. A full report of the disqualification will be presented to the candidate being disqualified.

J. GSA Fair Elections Statement

The Graduate Student Association strives to create a transparent, equitable and fair election process. Each year the Graduate Student Association reviews and evaluates the campaign rules and election process, and the Election Committee welcomes feedback from all graduate students. Candidates who believe that a possible violation has occurred are encouraged to file a complaint according to the grievance process.

Mahwash Hoti (President)

Jamila Allou (Sr. Vice President)

A.J. Darcey (GSA Advisor)