

# **Minnesota State College Student Association Election Policy & Procedures**

## **Section A: Election Policy**

The MSCSA Election policy has been adopted by the MSCSA GC and the MSCSA General Assembly. The MSCSA Election Policy shall outline the procedures for ALL official MSCSA elections and Candidate Meet-n-Greet sessions. Any exceptions to these procedures shall only be allowed by a 2/3 vote of the MSCSA GC prior to the start of the election process.

The Steering Committee and Cabinet shall be the official election judges consistent with this policy and the MSCSA bylaws and the MSCSA Staff shall be the official election moderators and shall be responsible for counting all ballots, which shall be verified by at least one of the official election moderators.

The MSCSA Staff, under the direction of the Executive Director, will preside as election moderators over the election processes of all Cabinet members, Student-At-Large members, and their respective Alternates as stated in the MSCSA Bylaws.

The election judges shall serve during all elections consistent with the MSCSA Bylaws, except for Presidents' Group Chair & Vice-Chair and Regional Officer Elections, which shall be conducted according to their Bylaws. Each of these groups may request the assistance of election moderators or judges during elections not being held by the moderators and judges.

Once the Steering Committee is formed, the President may charge the Steering Committee to serve as the election judges over which the Cabinet may generally serve at his/her discretion.

## **Section B: Election Procedures**

1. The Election judges will review candidate credentials and certify candidate eligibility according to the MSCSA bylaws in Article V, Section E.
2. The election process will be open to the Steering Committee, the MSCSA Staff, Officers, GC and PC members, and voting/non-voting delegates of member associations. Guests of member associations will be welcome to observe the process from a reserved area apart from the voting delegation.
3. Candidates for office will be sequestered during the balloting process. Candidates must surrender all cellular phones or other communication devices prior to being sequestered.
4. Ballots may be cast electronically as technology allows. Electronic balloting is preferred, but paper ballots may be used.
5. Voting shall be open for a fixed interval whenever possible in the case electronic balloting is used.
6. Each Region or GC member will have one (1) question per office, which must be provided to the MSCSA Executive Director at least five (5) business days prior to the start of the General Assembly or GC meetings. A region or GC member that does not provide their question to the Executive Director at least five (5) business days prior to the start of the General Assembly or GC meeting shall be considered to have passed on their question. Revision and selection of the final questions are left to the discretion of the Executive Director. Questions of a personal nature are not allowed.
  - a. In the event that a Region's GC Representative and Alternate GC Representative are both considered vacant, each CSG shall be allowed to submit a question for elections to the MSCSA Executive Director in

accordance with the same policies and procedures set forth above. The Executive Director shall choose a question from those submitted to be the official question for that Region. Finally, the President shall verify the authenticity of the question with the CSG Presidents of that Region.

7. One candidate will have the floor at a time with other candidates for the positions sequestered out of the room at the time of questioning. Each candidate will be given the opportunity to deliver a one (1) minute opening statement and a one (1) minute closing statement. Candidates shall be allowed one (1) minute to answer each question.
8. After the questions have been answered by each eligible candidate and prior to votes being cast in a round, there shall be a three (3) minute caucus period for CSG Presidents or their designees to confer with their delegations.
9. A list of candidates' names will be displayed in front of the room, whenever possible.
10. Candidates will be allowed to distribute campaign material in accordance to the guidelines outlined in the MSCSA Candidate Meet-n-Greet Procedures; however, this material cannot be larger than 11" x 17". No material shall be posted on the property of the conference site, except during the designated Candidate Meet and Greet sessions at the MSCSA Spring GA or as directed by the election moderators.

### **Section C: Special Elections**

Special elections (elections held at GC Meetings where there are more than four candidates) will follow the procedures laid out in the MSCSA Election Procedures except:

1. After each round of balloting the candidate or candidates receiving the least number of votes shall be automatically dropped from the ballot for the next round of voting;
2. In the case that multiple candidates receive the same number of votes and the dropping of those names would lead to only one name remaining on the ballot, those names will not be dropped;
3. Voting will continue using this process until one candidate has received a simple majority of the votes from the GC;
4. During the voting process, every member of the GC shall have the option of requesting an additional one (1) minute speech from every candidate remaining in the voting, with a total of two (2) extra speeches being allowed over the length of the election;
5. After the fifth round of balloting, each remaining candidate shall give an additional one (1) minute speech; and
6. Following each of the three (3) possible extra speeches, a one (1) minute caucus will be granted to allow GC members time to discuss the next round of balloting with their regions.

### **Section D: MSCSA Candidate Meet-n-Greet Procedures**

Designated Candidate Meet and Greet sessions shall occur at the Spring General Assembly and whenever a session is scheduled at a different conference or time only after the nomination floor has been closed, but before the candidate forums have occurred.

1. Each candidate will be given designated table space to serve as the campaign booth, and candidates may add any booth decorations in good taste. Decoration of the campaign booth is left to the imagination and discretion of the candidates, but displays behind the booth may not be higher than 8 feet tall. The depth of the booth cannot exceed 6 feet. Use of electrical outlets is not permitted.

2. Booth spaces will be assigned alphabetically by last name within offices sought (i.e., all Presidential candidate booths will be located in the same section. A Presidential candidate whose last name begins with "A" would be assigned the first space in the row of Presidential candidate booths, and so forth...).
3. Campaign booths need not be elaborate. No campaign materials are allowed to be posted on the hotel and convention center property. However, a candidate is allowed to bring cork boards, easels or other surfaces on which they can post campaign materials behind his/her booth.
4. Candidates and all meet and greet participants must respect the booth spaces of other candidates. Do not campaign in front of other candidates' booths or be disruptively loud.
5. Candidates are responsible for removing decorations and materials from their campaign tables and for cleaning their assigned table spaces.
6. The Executive Director or designated staff member and the election judges shall adjudicate complaints or disputes that arise during the meeting and greet. Any decision reached shall be final.

### **Section E: Undue Influence & Unfair Advantages**

1. MSCSA Staff and Cabinet are prohibited from publicly endorsing a candidate or using their position to unduly influence the results of an election. The Executive Director or designated staff member may investigate and address influences of undue influence; and
2. The use of MSCSA resources to aid or support any campaign for any office shall be strictly prohibited. The Executive Director or designated staff member may investigate and address issues of inappropriate use of MSCSA resources.

### **Section C: Cabinet/Student-at-Large Application & Nomination Procedures**

1. A member seeking election for the Cabinet or Student-at-Large positions must submit the following materials to MSCSA at least four (4) weeks prior to the Spring GA for the Steering Committee to approve:
  - (A) An application stating he or she will be able to serve as an Cabinet member or Student-at-Large Representative for the coming year;
  - (B) A Requirement Eligibility Verification Form;
  - (C) A one-page biographical sketch or resume; and
  - (D) A leadership survey.
2. A candidate for a Cabinet or Student-at-Large position must be a currently registered student and meet the minimum requirements as defined in Article V, Section E of the MSCSA Bylaws. These requirements must be maintained throughout the candidate's term of office if elected.
3. Eligible individuals may submit materials for more than one Cabinet or Student-at-Large position.
4. If fewer than two (2) candidates have been selected for a Cabinet or Student-at-Large position prior to the Spring GA, nomination for said office can only then be accepted from the floor on the first day of assembly; and;
5. Candidates running unopposed must be accepted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the GA. In the event the candidate doesn't receive two-thirds (2/3) vote, nominations shall be reopened and may be accepted from the floor.

**Section D: Voting**

The GA shall be composed of the voting delegation from each CSG and:

1. Roll call shall be taken at the beginning of each voting session. Voting delegates must be present for roll call or they may not cast votes during the session. The MSCSA staff shall record the results for reference during the remainder of the session;
2. Each campus voting delegate present for a GA may serve as a proxy for one additional vote for their CSG. All CSGs must register for their proxy votes during the posted registration time on the GA itinerary. Any CSGs that are not present during the posted registration time will lose their proxy votes unless the CSGs contact the MSCSA during registration time to inform them or the President determines that extenuating circumstances exist;
3. CSGs previous year's Spring Full Year Equivalent (herein referred to as FYE) shall be used to determine the maximum number of votes allowed in accordance with the following chart:

<b>Campus FYE*</b> <b>Totals</b>	<b>Votes</b> <b>Received</b>
0-750	5
751-1500	6
1501-3000	7
3001+	8

The MSCSA shall be responsible for researching and monitoring the most current FYE published, calculating the maximum number of votes per campus, and having the information available for campus voting eligibility prior to opening the registration period for the GA;

5. The president of each CSG, or his/her designee, shall serve as the Chair of their delegation during the GA; and
6. No CSG may proxy their votes to another campus for the GA.

#### Section E: GA Balloting

1. All elections shall be by secret ballot and in accordance with the MSCSA Election Policy, Procedures, and Bylaws;
2. The CSG President, or his/her designee, will report to their regional representative to pick up the appropriate number of ballots for their campus.
3. After each round of ballots is cast, they shall be counted and the results announced. A candidate for a Cabinet member position or At-Large Representative must attain fifty five percent (55%) of the votes to win the election for that position during the first three (3) ballots. In balloting rounds that result in an unsuccessful election, the following guidelines shall be followed until a successful election has occurred:
  - a. Candidates with less than ten percent (10%) after one (1) ballot shall be dropped from the ballot;
  - b. Candidates with less than twenty percent (20%) after two (2) ballots shall be dropped from the ballot;
  - c. After the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) ballot, the two (2) candidates who have received the most votes shall remain on the ballot for the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) and final ballot; and
  - d. The candidate who receives the most votes on ballot four (4) shall win the election.
4. Blank, spoiled, or abstaining ballots shall not count in the number of ballots cast.
5. After each ballot cast, the results will be distributed to the candidates. Each candidate will have one (1) minute to decide if they wish to withdraw from future ballots.
6. Unsuccessful candidates for office are eligible to run for another office if nominations are reopened under Article IV, Section C, Numbers 4-5;
7. Newly elected Cabinet and Student-at-Large Representatives will be sworn in at Spring GA. Newly elected Cabinet and Student-at-Large Representatives must complete the transitional conference or an equivalent training process; and;
8. The ballots for Cabinet and Student-at-Large positions shall be kept on file by the MSCSA for sixty (60) calendar days after the election takes place.