



## Elections Commission

# Student Government Elections Policy 2023

### Commission Members

Evan Wadley '23	Chairperson
Sophia Gumina '24	Member at Large
~~~~~	Graduate Council
Joseph Friel '24	Undergraduate Council
~~~~~	Executive Board
~~~~~	Judicial Board
Timothy Miles '24	IFC
Nicole Gramenides '23	Panhel
~~~~~	Independent
Olin Ryan '23	Senator

Approved by the Elections Commission  
on 2/1/23 by a vote of 5-0-0.

Confirmed and enacted by the 52nd Student Senate  
on 2/8/23 by a vote of 12-0-0.

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# Student Government at **Rensselaer**

Student Government is one of the most interesting parts of life at RPI. Student leadership has been a staple in the RPI community since the founding of the Union in 1890. These days, there are many ways to serve. RPI student government has a three body system. A legislative body, the Student Senate; a financial body, the Executive Board; and a judicial body, the Judicial Board. Also, there are Class Councils that represent and hold events for each cohort, an Undergraduate Council to foster communication between the four undergraduate Class Councils, and a Graduate Council that serves graduate students. Greek Life and Greek organizations at RPI are overseen by the Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils.

This document has been prepared to explain the rules and regulations set by the Elections Commission to govern the Grand Marshal Week 2023 Elections. This document is divided into three articles, the first handling policies and rules for candidates to know during the election season, the second handling rules and guidelines for the Elections Commission, and the third handling conduct outside of election season.

## **Elections Commission Description**

The Elections Commission organizes, promotes, oversees, and executes Student Government elections. It is a senate committee comprised of one Chair, one Member at Large, one non-Greek-affiliated Representative, and one appointed Representative from each of: the Student Senate, the Union Executive Board, the Judicial Board, the Undergraduate Council, the Graduate Council, the Panhellenic Council, and the Interfraternity Council. Membership changes after every GM Week Election.

## **General Information**

### **Abbreviations Used**

- RPI = Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- EC = Elections Commission
- GM = Grand Marshal, the highest elected office
- PU = President of the Union, the chief financial officer of the Union
- UC = Undergraduate Council
- DCC = Darrin Communications Center
- SGS = Student Government Suite, Union Room 3120
- JEC = Jonsson Engineering Center

## **Locations**

- All notices regarding elections will be posted and all forms will be available in the SGS and/or on the elections website at <https://elections.union.rpi.edu>.
- Voting will occur in the DCC Great Hall, the Student Union, the Commons Lobby, the Folsom Library, and the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies.
- Information sessions will be held in the Rensselaer Union Student Government Suite (SGS). (Union 3120)

## **Website Function and Description**

The Elections Commission, in conjunction with the Rensselaer Union System Administrators, oversees and maintains the elections website. This website contains information about candidates who are running for an elected position and their number of approved nominations. Digital copies of the necessary forms and the Student Government Elections Policy (Elections Policy) can be accessed through the website. All rules in the Elections Policy apply to the website.

## **Preferred Names**

When submitting a candidacy form, candidates must provide their name as reported by the Registrar, and are able to additionally add a preferred name they wish to run as. On all Elections Commission documents and resources, the Elections Commission will use the provided preferred name. If any candidate wishes to use a different name than the one provided by the Registrar, they may request that the Elections Commission change their name. Candidates will be listed by their preferred name on the ballot, website, and other election material. Candidates may not change their preferred name once they submit their candidacy form. Candidates may not change their name to one that threatens or incites violence.

## **Equal Opportunity**

The Elections Commission strives to provide full and equal access for all candidates in the process of Student Government Elections. Any situation in which a candidate has a direct involvement and an unfair advantage in any aspect which may positively contribute to their chances of winning, or would negatively contribute to someone else's chances of winning may be considered a conflict of interest. The Elections Commission reserves the right to investigate and resolve conflicts of interest at their discretion.

# **Available Positions**

## **Grand Marshal**

The Grand Marshal (GM) is the highest elected office in RPI Student Government, serving as the leader and chief spokesperson for the student body. The GM presides over the Student Senate, the chief legislative and representative body of the Union. The GM has regular meetings with Institute officials and serves on a number of Institute committees. The time commitment required for this position is substantial. The position is open to any student who has been enrolled at RPI for at least one full semester.

## **President of the Union**

The President of the Union (PU) presides over the Executive Board, the budgeting group of the Union, and is the chief financial officer of the Union. The PU appoints all of the members of the Executive Board. Like the GM, the PU is in close contact with Institute officials. The time commitment for this office is substantial. The position is open to any student who has been enrolled at RPI for at least one full semester.

## **President of the Undergraduate Council**

The President of the Undergraduate Council (UP) presides over the Undergraduate Council (UC), the body which supervises the four undergraduate class councils. The UP nominates all UC officers and shall assume the duties of any unfilled officer position on the UC. The UP is responsible for upholding policies and bylaws, calling and presiding over meetings, and creating a year-end report to assist the next Undergraduate Council. The position is open to any student who has been enrolled in an undergraduate program at RPI for at least one full semester.

## **Elected Positions for the Classes of 2024, 2025, and 2026**

### **~ Class President ~**

The Class President presides over their Class Council. The President is responsible for protecting and upholding the bylaws established for their Class Council, organizing class activities, and calling and presiding over Class Council meetings. The Class President also must create a year-end report to assist the next class council. The Class President is also a voting member of the UC. Time commitments include at least four to six hours per week as part of the Class Council and UC and their committees.

### ~ Class Vice President ~

The Class Vice President will assume the duties of the President in their absence, and assists the President in their duties. The Class Vice President is also a voting member of both the class council and the UC. Time commitments include at least four to six hours per week as part of the Class Council and UC and their committees.

### ~ Class Senators (4) ~

The Senate is the chief legislative and representative body of the Union, presided over by the Grand Marshal. Class Senators must serve on at least two committees or chair one committee of the Senate. The time commitment is at least five to six hours per week including both Class Council and Senate commitments.

### ~ Class Representatives (8) ~

The Class Council is responsible for planning activities and fundraisers, selecting a commencement speaker and class gift, planning Senior Week events, and representing the entire class to the rest of the student government. Eight Class Representatives are elected, though more students may apply for Membership-at-Large to a council.

## **Elected Positions for Graduate Students**

### ~ Graduate Senators (6) ~

There are six available positions for graduate students on the Senate. Graduate Senators are required to serve on the Graduate Student Council as well as one of the Senate's committees. Weekly time commitment is at least five to eight hours per week in addition to Graduate Student Council commitments.

### ~ Graduate Representatives (6) ~

The Graduate Student Council consists of Graduate Senators and six elected Graduate Representatives as well as members-at-large. The Graduate Student Council is responsible for representing the views of the graduate student body, and in charge of planning events that add to the graduate student experience.

## **Other Student Positions**

### ~ Greek Senators (2) ~

The two Greek Senators are members of the Senate who represent all students in fraternities and sororities. One must be an active member of an RPI-affiliated fraternity, and the other must be an active member of an RPI-affiliated sorority. These Greek Senators

are part of the Executive Committee of their respective Greek Councils, i.e. the Interfraternity Council or the Panhellenic Council. They are elected directly by the Greek students from all classes during GM Week. Greek status is determined by the Dean of Students Office.

~ Independent Senators (2) ~

The two Independent Senators are members of the Senate who represent all underrepresented groups rather than the students of a particular class. Unlike all other Senators, the Independent Senators do not report to any constituent council. These Senators are elected directly by students who are not affiliated with any fraternity or sorority from all classes during GM Week.

## **Elected Positions for Students Graduating in 2023**

~ Alumni President/Reunion Chairperson ~

The President is the leader of the Class and is responsible for the administration of class business and class spirit. As Reunion Chair, the President should be set to begin at the appropriate time to work with the Reunion Vice Chairperson and the Alumni Office to recruit a planning committee and help to plan a Reunion Weekend every five years.

~ Alumni Vice President/Reunion Vice Chairperson ~

The Vice President works closely and shares the responsibilities for maintaining class spirit and planning the next reunion with the Alumni Class President.

~ Alumni Secretary/Reunion Networking Coordinator ~

The Secretary will receive the list of class members and will set up appropriate networks for the purpose of maintaining contact with classmates between reunions.

~ Alumni Treasurer/Reunion Gift Chairperson ~

Primary responsibilities include correspondence to classmates regarding the class gift, recruiting other classmates to help with networking, and soliciting class members for donations. RPI staff support comes from the Reunion Giving Program Manager who will arrange to have letters prepared and mailed, provide lists for networking, and opportunities for training.

## **Faculty Senate Tenure And Promotion Committee**

The Faculty Senate Tenure and Promotion Committee includes a student elected position, chosen each year. Full professors may be nominated by themselves or other faculty for candidacy for the position by emailing the Chairperson of the Elections Commission or the

Grand Marshal. In order to help solicit nominations, the Elections Commission Chairperson will inform the Faculty Senate Tenure and Promotion Committee of the day campaigning begins so the committee can disseminate nomination information to appropriate members of the faculty. Each nomination must be seconded by another faculty member. This year, nominations and seconds are due by March 17th, 2023 at 5 PM. On the GM Week ballot, a description of the requirements of the position (full time, tenure) will be added to help aid voters in making appropriate write in votes.

## **Non-Elected Positions**

~ Executive Board Representatives (15-20) ~

The Executive Board (E-Board) is the budgeting group of the Union which supervises clubs and the Union building. Executive Board positions will be filled shortly after GM Week 2023 Elections.

~ Judicial Board Members (12) ~

The Judicial Board has appellate jurisdiction in alleged violations of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action by students or groups, and in civil cases between students and groups including all student government cases. The Judicial Board is comprised of the chairperson, six regular members and five alternate members.

~ Student Government Officers ~

The Student Senate, the Executive Board, the Undergraduate Council, and the Class councils all appoint their own officers who are not listed above. Excluding the president and vice president, these officers are appointed by the respective body within three weeks following elections. An applicant for one of these positions does not have to be a voting member of the body which the position serves.

~ Student Government Committee Members ~

Committees are groups where student government groups meet to create and work on projects and proposals. They are open to all members of the Union to join. Most committees are under the jurisdiction of the Senate or Executive Board.

## **Forms**

### **Candidacy Form**

The declaration of a student's candidacy for an office, including agreement to the election's Honor Code and sign policy. A Candidacy Form **must** be submitted before



candidates may begin soliciting nominations; it may only be submitted **after** attending a Candidate Information Session.

## **Nomination Form**

This form allows a constituent to nominate a student for a specific office. A candidate **must** attend an info session and submit a Candidacy Form **before** they may begin to solicit nominations.

## **Candidate Expense Form**

The list of campaign materials and expenses incurred as a result of campaigning. This is to verify candidates are under the spending limit for their race. Candidates will not be reimbursed for money they choose to spend.

## **Campaign Manager Form**

This form allows a member of the Rensselaer Union to serve as a Campaign Manager for a candidate. This form must be signed by both the candidate and the individual, and submitted to the Union Admin office before the individual can begin serving as a Campaign Manager.

## **Service Hours Form**

This form allows candidates to track their Service Hours. Each candidate is required to perform two hours of community service for an approved GM Week activity. Service hours forms must be signed by the member of the GM Week committee running the event in order to be valid.

## **Attendance Form**

See Article 1 Section 2 Clause 7 and 8 for information on the signature required on the attendance form.

## **Form Submission**

All forms must be submitted into the EC form dropbox, unless otherwise specified, by respective dates listed below on the schedule. The dropbox will be located on the bulletin board outside of the SGS. It is recommended that candidates keep duplicates of forms for personal record.

## Public Record

Public record shall be defined as any record made available to all members of the Rensselaer Union. All decisions, sanctions, and official correspondence with candidates are considered public record. All election forms are considered private record. If any member of the Rensselaer Union would like to request to view any of the documents in the private record, they may do so by contacting the Chair or Vice Chair of the Elections Commission.

Any requested part of the private record:

1. Shall only be provided for viewing in its physical or digital form within the Elections Commission Office, and
2. No physical or digital copies will be distributed unless officially requested in a judicial inquiry.

## Elections Schedule

**February 21st** at 5:00PM:

Begin Campaigning

*The Poly's* candidates packets and interview sign up sheets released

**Information Sessions** (Weekdays from **February 21st** - **March 17th**, not including Spring Break):

These sessions will be held in the SGS, Union 3120 from **5-6 PM**.

**March 3rd:**

*The Poly's* portrait sign up deadline

**March 3rd:**

*The Poly's* interview sign up deadline for GM/PU/UP candidates

**March 13th-March 17th:**

GM/PU/UP interviews with *The Poly*

**March 17th** at 5PM:

Candidacy Forms, Preliminary Expense Forms Due to Admin Office

Preliminary Ballot Check

**March 17th:**

Primary Debates (If Necessary, sponsored by the CDTA and produced by RPI TV)

*The Poly* releases their GM Week issue and candidate endorsements.

## **GM Week is March 20th to March 24th, 2023**

### **March 20th:**

Primary Elections (If Necessary)  
Nomination Forms (Must be collected and submitted to the Elections website)  
Attendance Forms due  
Final Ballot Check  
At 5PM: Updated Expenses due (if primaries are held) to Admin Office

### **March 21st:**

GM/PU/UP Final Debates (sponsored by the CDTA and produced by RPI TV)  
At 10PM: Campaign Materials removed

### **March 23rd:**

Final Elections 8AM-6PM  
At 6PM: Final Expense Forms Due to Admin Office

### **March 27th:**

At 5PM: Service Hours Forms Due to Admin Office

## **Article I: Elections Rules & Candidate Expectations**

### **Section 1 - Eligibility and Multiple Offices**

1. Only members of the Rensselaer Union may be eligible to run for elections. Members of the Rensselaer Union are defined by the Rensselaer Union Constitution (Article II) to be those presently enrolled at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute who have paid the Union Activity Fee.
2. Candidates for all Student Senate positions, Class President, and Class Vice President must have a cumulative GPA of at least a 2.5 to be eligible for office, and candidates for Undergraduate President, President of the Union, and Grand Marshal must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 to be eligible for office, as determined by the Dean of Students. All students holding any leadership position in any Union organization must not be on academic probation, defined as having a GPA of 2.0 or above. Candidates will need to have their GPA verified by the Registrar's Office in the form of a stamp obtained on the candidacy form.
  - a. Students planning a virtual campaign or designated as off-campus can submit their form without this stamp, however, the requirements still apply and thus will have their cumulative GPA checked by Union Administrators.

- b. Appeals to this rule will not be heard.
- 3. Candidates may only run for offices that are open to their class years. No candidate may run for a position in two different class years at the same time or change class year affiliation within a given semester (unless due to Registrar error). No class year designation is given to graduate students. An undergraduate's class year is determined in one of two ways (using whichever method the individual wishes):
  - a. Number of credits as reported by the Registrar - in general: 0-30 credits for the Class of 2026, 31-60 credits for Class of 2025, 61-90 credits for Class of 2024, 91 credits and over for class of 2023.
  - b. Entry cohort, as reported by the registrar.
- 4. Students may declare candidacy, receive nominations, and run for up to two positions, however, they must designate one to accept by the ballot check deadline listed on the schedule should they win both positions. Selections can be made by emailing [rnc-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu](mailto:rnc-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu). If a candidate does not declare a preference by this date, and they win multiple positions, assumed preference is by ballot order.
- 5. Candidates are required to attend at least one Candidate Information Session before they may hand in their Candidacy Form. Dates, times, and locations of these sessions are listed earlier in this document and on the elections website.
- 6. Candidates must submit a Candidacy Form prior to campaigning or soliciting nominations.
- 7. The Elections Commission Chairperson, members of the elections commission, or any System Administrator that intends to run for any elected position (write-in or otherwise), or serve as a campaign manager, must resign from the Elections Commission before filing a Candidacy form or a Campaign Manager form.

## Section 2 - Nomination Procedures

- 1. A candidate must be nominated for their position by their constituents in order for their name to appear on the ballot.

Position	Necessary Nominations
Grand Marshal, President of the Union	300
Undergraduate President	200
Class of 2024, 2025, 2026 President or Vice President	150
Class of 2024, 2025, and 2026 Senator	100
Independent Senator, Greek Senator	100

Class of 2024, 2025, 2026 Representative	50
All Alumni Positions	30
Graduate Senator	6*
Graduate Representative	3*

\* Nominations not explicitly required for graduate students. Reference Clause 8.a for details.

2. Only designated areas of the GM Week 2023 Nomination Form may be used to solicit nominations.
  - a. The candidate's name and office to which they are being nominated must be submitted **prior** to obtaining any nominations. Each Nomination Form may be used by only one person seeking only one office. If the same person is seeking multiple offices, the candidate must use separate forms (candidacy and nomination) for each office. Signatures must be solicited in person by the candidate. No candidate may solicit signatures prior to filing a GM Week 2023 Candidacy Form and attending a Candidate Information Session.
  - b. Nomination Forms may only be signed by constituents of the office (defined as those who would be eligible to vote for the office according to Section 1). Each nomination must contain the nominator's Rensselaer Computing Services (RCS) ID and the last three digits of their Rensselaer Identification Number (RIN). All information must be legible.
    - i. Candidates may nominate themselves, and any constituent may nominate more than one person for the same office.
    - ii. Candidates are responsible for receiving the correct number of nominations. If nominations are invalidated by the Elections Commission, it is the candidates responsibility to acquire more nominations.
  - c. It is advised to get extra nominations, as approximately 15% of nominations on forms normally aren't able to be validated.
3. All Nomination Forms must be received by the Elections Commission by March 20, 2023. Candidates are required to, before submitting their nomination forms, enter their nominations electronically via the Elections website. Candidate Proxies will be allowed to aid their candidates in the entering of nominations, to ease the workload on candidates.
4. If there are issues with the system which allows candidates to electronically submit their own nominations, the Elections Commission will reclaim this responsibility.
5. Nomination forms must be submitted to the Union EC locked dropbox. The candidate is recommended to keep a copy for their personal records.
6. Nomination forms may not be submitted directly to the members of the Elections Commission.

7. In addition to acquiring the necessary number of nominations, in order for a candidate's name to appear on the ballot, all candidates must attend at least one meeting in the body(s) that they are campaigning for. For students running for an undergraduate council or class council position, they must attend a meeting of the undergraduate council, any class council, class council committee, etc. For undergraduate students running for a position on the Senate, they must attend a Senate general body meeting, Senate committee meeting, etc. For students running for PU, they must attend an executive board meeting, business operations committee meeting, etc.
8. For proof of the fulfillment of Article 1 Section 2 Clause 7, the candidate must submit an Attendance form signed by one of the persons presiding over the mandated meeting(s). For locations and meeting times, find the calendar at [sg.rpi.edu](http://sg.rpi.edu) or contact the GM, PU, or UP at [gm@rpi.edu](mailto:gm@rpi.edu), [pu@rpi.edu](mailto:pu@rpi.edu), [up@rpi.edu](mailto:up@rpi.edu) respectively.
  - a. For graduate students running for a Graduate Representative or Graduate Senator position, completion of one attendance form described in Clause 7 is not required; however, completing one attendance form will serve as a substitute for three (3) of a candidate's required nominations. Graduate students running for a Graduate Representative position can attend Graduate Council meetings or Graduate Council Committee meetings and graduate students running for a position on the Student Senate can attend Senate General Body or Senate Committee meetings. Note: since students can nominate themselves, it is possible for graduate students to require zero external nominations to run for a position on the Graduate Council and 3 external nominations to run for a position as a graduate senator. Graduate students with questions or concerns about the nomination process can contact the graduate council president at [mcintk3@rpi.edu](mailto:mcintk3@rpi.edu) or the EC chairman at [rne-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu](mailto:rne-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu)

### **Section 3 - Finances**

1. A record of all expenditures must be kept during the campaign process (including items received for free) along with receipts for all purchases.
  - a. Any purchase made online, considered an online advertisement, or which results in campaign material which is not physically tangible must also be included in a candidate's Expense Form.
2. Spending limits by office:
  - a. Representative: \$150
  - b. Class President, Class Vice President, Senator: \$300
  - c. Grand Marshal, President of the Union, Undergraduate President: \$600
3. No candidate may be financially supported by funds or supplies provided by any

third party.

4. All printing for campaign purposes may be expensed at the following minimum rates:
  - a. 8.5x11" Black and White -- 30 cents/page
  - b. 8.5x11" Color -- 40 cents/page
  - c. 11x17" Black and White -- 60 cents/page
  - d. 11x17" Color -- 80 cents/page
  - e. Any printing done using reused paper may be expensed at 50% of the price of normal printing. Reused paper is paper that has already been printed on one or both sides.
5. Each candidate must submit a Preliminary Expense Report Form containing all expenses through March 20, 2023 to the Union Administration Office. Each candidate must submit a Final Expense Report Form containing all campaign expenses by March 22, 2023.
  - a. If there are runoffs, involved candidates must submit a second Final Expense Report Form containing all campaign expenses by a date to then be announced.
  - b. Candidates without any expenses must submit a blank Expense Report Form, expressing a total of \$0 in expenses, with their name on it.
6. Any service available to a candidate must be made available under the same terms to all other candidates running for the same office.
7. If a candidate is unsure whether any items they used should be expensed, it is their responsibility to check with the Elections Commission.

## **Section 4 - The Campaign**

1. Campaigning is defined as the promotion of any candidate or the promotion of a slogan, symbol, or idea for this purpose.
  - a. Any of the following may be considered active campaigning:
    - i. Dissemination of campaign material
    - ii. Public displays or actions intended to draw attention to one's candidacy
    - iii. Parties, assemblies, etc. at which attention is drawn to one's candidacy
  - b. Any of the following may be considered passive campaigning:
    - i. Wearing campaign material (shirts, buttons, hats, etc.)
    - ii. Addressing campaign-related questions

1. Any effort on the part of the candidate to prolong discussion on their candidacy will be considered active campaigning.
  - c. Nomination Solicitation is considered its own form of campaigning.
  - d. Affirming that one is running for a position will not be considered campaigning.
2. Active campaigning is not permitted:
  - a. In dining halls during dining hours
  - b. In lecture halls/classrooms during class hours.
3. Solicitation of nominations is not permitted in in lecture halls/classrooms during class hours, or any other scenario that impedes the Institute's formal academic process.
  - a. Respectful nomination solicitation is permitted in dining halls.
4. No candidate may begin campaigning until February 21, 2023. Candidates may not campaign or solicit nominations prior to submitting a GM Week 2023 Candidacy Form and attending a Candidate Information Session. Campaigning is allowed until March 22, 2023.
5. Candidates and their Campaign Managers may not break any Institute Rules and Regulations in the act of campaigning.
6. Campaigning may not disturb the academic process nor cause any physical damage to anything on campus. Use of classroom equipment (projectors, overheads, chalkboards, etc.) for campaigning purposes will be considered disturbing the academic process.
7. Candidates may not leave unsolicited voicemails or place campaign material in campus mailboxes.
8. Candidates may not send repetitive or multiple unsolicited messages or requests on social networks, requests may include but are not limited to joining a group, liking a page, or following an activity feed.
  - a. Students may opt-in to receive messages from a candidate but must be permitted to opt-out at any point.
  - b. Candidates are able to create their own social media pages or websites as part of their campaign.
9. Candidates are responsible for any messages or information posted on any electronic or other forum which they administer or are associated with.
10. No campaign material of any kind may be placed under doors.
11. No campaigning is allowed within a 100-foot radius or within sight of any polling location beginning at 10PM the night before the election.
12. Candidates or groups of candidates may reserve rooms or tables in the Union with the following restrictions:
  - a. The group will have the same rights as any outside organization not affiliated with the Rensselaer Union in terms of room reservations.
  - b. Any fines imposed by the Rensselaer Union on such a group for problems with the room shall be subtracted from said candidates' expenditure limit.



- c. Listings on room or table reservations shall be put under an individual's name. Listing shall read: "Private Meeting – [Candidate's Name]"
  - d. Rooms reserved for these purposes are restricted in attendance to registered candidates.
13. No Institute logos or logos of Institute related organizations may be displayed on any campaign material.
14. The RPI Elections website will provide an additional medium for campaigning. Candidates are expected to abide by the website's Terms of Service. Violating these terms constitutes a violation of the Student Government Elections Policy and sanctions will be imposed at the discretion of the Elections Commission.
15. The Elections Commission shall be the authority for interpreting and enforcing the rules for all campaigns.

## **Section 5 - Extended Sign Policy**

This sign policy is in effect starting on January 21st and will conclude after the end of the election cycle. It only applies to material related to the 2023 GM Week Elections. These rules shall override all other Institute sign policies.

### **Policies Governing Content and Style of Campaign Material**

1. All campaign material must be clearly identified with the candidate's name and legitimate contact information (email and/or phone number). Contact information must be minimum 12 pt size in Times New Roman or equivalent font.
  - a. Any campaign material viewable from multiple sides must include contact information on all viewable sides.
  - b. No poster may exceed 24" in either dimension.
  - c. Definition of poster is subject to Elections Commission interpretation.
2. No campaign material may display any Institute logos, logos of Institute-affiliated organizations, or Institute-affiliated personnel.
3. Campaign displays comprised solely of tape are prohibited.
4. Duct tape may not be used anywhere.
5. Candidates may only use masking tape to attach campaign material to objects other than trees.
6. No excessive use of tape when posterizing.
7. Banners are defined as a large hung or carried advertisement. For the purposes of this election, they are a minimum 2' in either dimension. For smaller banners, refer to rules about posterizing.
8. Banners with the words 'election', 'gm week', 'vote', or any other explicit elections advertisement, in at least 3" tall font, or the candidate's face in at least real life scale size can be expensed at half the cost.
9. Banners attached to trees must be tied to the trees using string.
10. Chalk may not be used anywhere.
11. Respect other candidates and their campaigns. Do not tamper with or poster over

other campaign materials. Do not place tape over the tape securing signs or posters from other individuals or groups.

### **Policies Governing the Location of Campaign Material**

12. Campaign materials inside the Rensselaer Union building must be approved and stamped by the Union Administration Office and campaign material may only be placed on approved bulletin boards. There is a limit of 15 posters per candidate, 12 of which may not exceed 8.5" x 11", the remaining two posters may not exceed 11" x 17". No posters may be placed on the outside of the Rensselaer student Union.
13. No campaign materials may be posted in public areas of residence halls, other than candidates' doors and other residents' doors with their permission.
14. Banners larger than 24" by 36" on the exterior of residence halls must be approved by the Office of Student Living and Learning and may only be hung from a window with that room's residents' permission.
15. No campaign material may be attached to or cover the glass surface of any public door.
16. Campaign material may not be placed on any vehicle without the permission of the owner. Campaign material placed on vehicles must conform to local, state, and federal law.
17. Excessive postering in one location is prohibited. The Elections Commission will determine what constitutes "excessive postering" on a case by case basis.
18. No posters may obstruct Institute signs or previously placed posters. Tape securing posters may not touch, with the sole exception being posters belonging to the same candidate's campaign.
19. Candidates may not place banners on the 15th Street footbridge unless previously gone through the approval process.
20. No posters are allowed on the entrance area glass windows, doors, or wall of the JEC (except on bulletin boards).
21. No campaign material is allowed in or around any polling location within a 100 foot radius and/or within the line of sight of the building encompassing a polling location after 10PM on the evening before any election in which a candidate is running.
22. Endorsements or elections-related publications are not allowed in or around any polling location within a 100 foot radius and/or within the line of sight of the building encompassing a polling location after 10PM on the evening before any election in which a candidate is running.
23. Placing posters on the ground or sidewalks is prohibited.
24. Reserving space for future use is prohibited.
25. Pedestrian pathways may not be blocked. A 7-foot height clearance is required.
26. Campaign material is restricted to an area of "8.5 by 11" on each bulletin board. Bulletin boards with multiple surfaces count as one bulletin board.

27. No campaign material is permitted within any Rensselaer construction site.
28. The Elections Commission may remove any posters found in violation of the extended sign policy.

## **Section 6 - Write-In Candidates**

1. Write-in votes are permitted in all elections except Runoff Elections. Eligible write-in candidates receiving sufficient votes in the Primary Election will appear on the final ballot.
2. Write-in candidates must meet the qualifications for the office to which they are elected and are subject to the same rules as registered candidates, including those related to finance.
3. Write-in candidates may inform the Elections Commission of the name that the candidate will be recognized by throughout the election. This specifically pertains to the name that will be counted for write-in votes.
  - a. If a name is not provided, the Elections Commission will use the name recognized by the Registrar.
4. Write-in candidates do not have to file any forms, except for an Expense Form if requested by the Elections Commission. Write-in candidates are restricted to Extended Sign Policy regulations.

## **Section 7 - GM Week Participation**

1. Every candidate is required to perform two hours of service for the GM Week Committee. A list of events, dates, and times will be available through the Elections Commission.
2. Participation in an event during GM Week not sanctioned by the GM Week Committee will not satisfy the service requirement.
3. All sign-ups must be completed by March 17, 2023 at 5PM. The sign up list will be emailed out to candidates.
4. Candidates may not campaign while completing service.
5. Candidates must sign in and out with the GM Week Committee member running the event, or a Union Affiliated Staff member. Failure to sign in or out may prevent a candidate from receiving credit for the service.
6. The Elections Commission may create elections related service opportunities in addition to the GM Week Committee as needed to allow candidates to complete their two hours of service.
7. All registered Grand Marshal and President of the Union candidates are required to participate in the GM Week Debates. Failure to do so, without valid excuse, will result in sanctions by the Elections Commission. The Primary Debate will be held on Friday, March 17th, if necessary, and the Final Debate will be held on Tuesday, March 21st.

8. Candidates are not allowed to poll sit in order to complete their service requirement.

## **Section 8 - Proxies**

1. In limited circumstances, such as temporary or permanent disabilities or the candidate's participation in the Rensselaer arch program, the candidate may select a Candidate Proxy. The Elections Commission will evaluate the candidate's request and develop a list of activities in which the Candidate Proxy may participate and limitations the proxy must abide by. Those limitations will include:
  - a. The Candidate Proxy must be a member of the Rensselaer Union.
  - b. The Candidate Proxy must not be running for any office.
  - c. The Candidate Proxy must not be a current Officer of the Union.
  - d. The Candidate Proxy must state that they are acting as a proxy for a candidate.
  - e. If the Candidate Proxy commits a violation, the candidate is also liable and may be assigned a penalty.
  - f. The Candidate Proxy and the candidate may not simultaneously participate (in the role of the candidate) in any activity.
  - g. A candidate may only use one proxy during the course of the elections.

## **Section 9 - Violations**

1. Any alleged violation of election rules may be submitted to the Elections Commission for consideration, in accordance with Article II, Section 6.
2. All violations will be considered on a case by case basis.
  - a. In the event of there being multiple violations up for consideration at a given time, the violations will be considered in an order relative to the severity of the supposed violation, with the most serious accusations considered first.
3. The Elections Commission shall decide on violations by utilizing the preponderance of evidence standard.
  - a. This process may take into account physical evidence, eyewitness accounts, or other forms of evidence.
4. Candidates being investigated by the Elections Commission for serious violations (including but not limited to a breach of the Candidate Honor Code) will be notified in accordance with Article II, Section 6. In these situations, candidates are allowed to request a hearing within 12 hours of this notification. If so, a hearing must take place within 12 hours of the candidate's request.
5. Candidates who wish to appeal the outcome of any sanction, decision, or appeal hearing must do so within 24 hours of its posting.
6. The chairperson of the EC may issue a preliminary decision that must be ratified or reversed by the EC by majority vote within 24 hours of the decision being issued. If no ratification or reversal of such a decision is made within the 24 hours of allotted

time, the decision is considered reversed.

- a. Any decision made in this way must be clearly labeled as a chair-made preliminary decision, and updated with the final outcome.
7. All appeals must be filed with and heard by the EC before an appeal on the issue is filed with the Union Judicial Board.
- a. Appeals of sanctions will not be heard by the Judicial Board before being brought to the EC.

## **Section 10 - Candidate Honor Code**

1. Every candidate for a student government office is expected to adhere to the following basic principles:
  - a. To adhere to the spirit of the election,
  - b. To conduct one's campaign openly, fairly, and honestly,
  - c. To discuss issues and participate in fair debate with opponents, respecting their views and qualifications,
  - d. To present one's record and policies with sincerity and frankness, criticizing without fear and without malice the record and policies of opponents that merit such criticism,
  - e. To neither engage in nor be involved with unfair or misleading attacks upon the character of an opponent, nor engage in invasions of personal privacy unrelated to fitness for office,
  - f. To not participate in or condone any appeal to prejudice,
  - g. To neither use nor be involved in the use of any campaign material or advertisement that misrepresents, distorts, or otherwise falsifies the facts regarding an opponent,
  - h. To clearly identify by name the source of all advertisements and campaign literature published or distributed as part of one's campaign,
  - i. To uphold the right of every eligible student to full and equal participation in the electoral process,
  - j. To publicly repudiate support deriving from any individual or group whose activities would violate this Honor Code, and
  - k. To not abuse the process of the Rensselaer Union Student Government Elections.

## **Article II: Elections Commission Procedures**

### **Section 1 - Sanctions**

1. The Elections Commission may issue and enforce any one or some combination of these penalties for a violation of election rules:
  - a. Warning against future offenses.

- b. Removal of some or all campaign rights including postering location and time and in-person events.
  - c. Removal of a candidate's name from the ballot.
  - d. Upon election to office, ruling a candidate ineligible to serve for any portion of their elected term.
  - e. Barring a candidate from running from office for any duration.
  - f. Reduction of a candidate's maximum expenditure limit.
    - i. Any reduction cannot go below an amount that has already been spent.
  - g. Requiring additional nomination signatures.
  - h. Monetary fines charged to a student account.
  - i. Referral to the Judicial Board for disciplinary action.
  - j. Referral to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action.
  - k. Community service either on- or off-campus, to be completed by a specified date. Candidates who do not complete their required community service will be sanctioned appropriately.
  - l. Any other action the Elections Commission deems appropriate within the scope of elections and in accordance with all Institute, local, state, and federal regulations.
2. Certain violations carry a mandatory minimum sanction:
- a. Turning in nomination forms before or at the same time as turning in a candidacy form for a position.
    - i. This will result in the invalidation of all nominations already collected for that position.
  - b. Posters found within a 100 foot radius and/or within line of sight of the room encompassing a polling location after 10PM on the evening before any election in which a candidate is running.
    - i. This will result in the poster being removed and discarded, and for each poster found the candidate will be sanctioned with 15 minutes of community service.
    - ii. No more than three hours of community service can be given in this way.
  - c. Candidates who fail to turn in one or more expense forms:
    - i. Candidates who fail to turn in the preliminary expense form will receive 30 minutes of community service.
    - ii. Candidates who fail to turn in the final expense report form will receive one hour of community service.
3. The EC reserves the right to not enforce any of the sanctions, including rules with minimum sanctions, as posted above.

## **Section 2 - Hearing Procedure**

1. At an appeal hearing, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. The chairperson of the Election Commission will preside.
    - i. In the event of the absence of the chairperson, the vice-chairperson of the commission is empowered as acting chairperson.
  - b. The defendant shall make their opening statement.
  - c. Any witnesses brought forward by the defendant shall be called first, followed by any witnesses called by the EC. All witnesses shall be questioned first by the party calling them, and then by the opposing party.
  - d. Following the testimony of witnesses, the EC may question the defendant.
  - e. A second round of witness questioning may then occur.
  - f. The defendant shall make their closing statement.
  - g. The hearing will then be closed for deliberations.
  - h. The EC shall issue its decision in writing immediately following deliberations.
2. The Elections Commission shall decide on all alleged violations within 12 hours of the conclusion of the hearing.
  3. Notification of all sanctions, decisions, and hearings will be communicated to all candidates as soon as they are available.
    - a. The text of any sanction, decision, or the result of a violation hearing will be made public on the Elections Commission public box, accessible through the Elections Website.

### **Section 3 - Primary and Final Elections**

1. A Primary Election may be held at the discretion of the Elections Commission if there are more candidates than twice the number of available positions.
2. A sample ballot will be made available to the candidates at least 48 hours prior to the start of polling for an election. For candidates campaigning and soliciting nominations for two positions, a single position selection must be made before the sample ballot deadline, should the candidate win both positions. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that their name appears and is accurate before the ballot check deadline. The Elections Commission will not be responsible for unreported errors.
3. Polling for an election may not begin sooner than 24 hours after the posting of the final ballot.
4. The order in which candidate names appear on the ballot is determined randomly.
5. The Elections Commission will report the number of ballots received, the number of votes received for each registered candidate, and the number of votes received for all valid write-in candidates receiving over 5% of the votes. Additional write-in information may be released at the Commission's discretion. Additional demographic information may also be released.

## Section 4 - Election Procedures

1. Elections shall be conducted using a voting system adopted by vote of the EC and confirmed by the Student Senate.
  - a. Operation of the voting system shall be managed by the chairperson of the EC.
  - b. In the event of a malfunction, defect, or other circumstance that renders the approved voting system unsuitable for use, elections may be conducted by paper ballot at the discretion of the EC.
  - c. In the event an eligible voter is not able to vote using an electronic system, they may be provided with a paper ballot as an alternative at the discretion of a member of the EC.
2. The EC has the right to designate “poll workers” for a single election to assist in supervision of voting at designated poll booths only during the duration of voting time, defined as the timeframe from the start until the close of polls for a single election. Poll workers cannot be candidates running for any position.
3. At least one member of the EC or EC designated poll worker must be present at each poll site for voting to occur.
4. A quorum of the EC will be present to certify the results of an election.
5. The EC has the right to suspend or hold election results if deemed appropriate. It may suspend any election, in its entirety, indefinitely. It may hold any individual race results for up to 48 hours after the close of that race.
6. In the event of a tie, a runoff election will be held at a date and time to be determined by EC.
7. All requests for recounts, challenges, and other inquiries must be made to the EC **in writing** within 24 hours following the posting of election results. The EC will prepare a written summary of the circumstances surrounding a recount, challenge, or other inquiry to be provided to the Judicial Board, Student Senate, or any other member of the Rensselaer Union upon request. Only constituents of a given position may contest the result of that position.
8. Primary Election results will be emailed to all candidates and shared with the campus community as soon as they are available.
  - a. If election results from a primary need to be held, the original announcement time will be considered the close of primary polls.
9. Final Election results will be announced at a time and place decided by EC.
10. In the event of a candidate’s disqualification due to violations of this document, the candidate with the next highest number of votes will assume office.
11. No person may access the EC office, a room booked by EC, or any other EC facility (including but not limited to poll booths, elections materials, or the voting system) without prior authorization of the EC.
12. No person is permitted to access the voting system adopted by the EC during an active election, nor access the vote totals for any election during or after an election, without the authorization of the chairperson of the EC.



13. In the event paper ballots are used, then:
  - a. All ballots will be counted by at least two members of EC to verify the results. In the event of a dispute, an additional member of EC will count until the dispute has been resolved.
  - b. Election ballots will not be disposed of until at least ten business days after the election results are posted.
14. Any eligible voter is able to request an absentee ballot from the EC. The absentee ballot will be sent via email to the requester as soon as the ballot has been finalized; the ballot may also be picked up in person by 5pm the night before an election. The ballot must be in the possession of the EC by the close of polls in order for the ballot to be counted for that election.
  - a. Students participating in the Rensselaer arch program will be automatically placed to vote as a junior. If their credit allows them to also vote as a freshman, sophomore, or a senior, they may reach out to [rne-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu](mailto:rne-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu) and a special ballot will be made available.
  - b. Paper absentee ballots may be submitted to the voting lockbox located inside the Student Government Suite (Union 3120).
  - c. Electronic absentee ballots may be submitted to [rne-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu](mailto:rne-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu).

## **Section 5 - Irregularities**

1. In the case of certain irregularities, the Elections Commission has prepared proper procedures to follow.
  - a. A total of 100 backup paper ballots will be kept at each station, to be given to voters in case of voting system technical issues at the discretion of the EC member or poll worker at that location.
  - b. If a candidate wishes to withdraw from a race after the final ballot has been made public:
    - i. Candidates will not be allowed to do so. Instead, the commission will inform the candidate that they will remain on the ballot, but should decline the position in the case that the candidate wins.
  - c. If submission of votes is not possible at more than one station:
    - i. Inform all voters at the station that voting is not available at that poll site temporarily, and recommend that they go to another polling location.
    - ii. If functionality can be restored within 15 minutes, then no further action is necessary and the election will continue.
    - iii. If the functionality is restored between 15 minutes and 2 hours, the polling hours for all stations will be extended by that amount.
    - iv. If the functionality is not restored within 2 hours, the election will be suspended, invalidated, and a re-election will be held.
  - d. If submission of votes is not possible at only one station:

- i. Inform all voters at the station that voting is not available at that poll site temporarily, and recommend that they go to another polling location.
  - ii. If functionality can be restored within 15 minutes, then no further action is necessary and the election will continue.
  - iii. If functionality is not restored within 15 minutes, the polling hours for all stations will be extended by that amount, with a maximum of two hours added in this way.
- e. If there is an emergency that requires a building containing a poll site to be evacuated:
  - i. Close all voting machines and take filled paper ballots outside to the safest of one's ability.
  - ii. Follow the procedure outlined in (d).
- f. If a member of EC unexpectedly leaves their position without replacement:
  - i. If the chair leaves, the vice chair assumes their duties.
  - ii. If both the chair and vice chair leave, the remaining members elect a new chair immediately.
  - iii. If another member drops, new quorum will reflect new membership, and the commission will proceed as normal. If total membership drops to 5 or lower during an election, that election will be suspended, invalidated, new membership will be appointed immediately, and a re-election will be held.
  - iv. The commission reserves the right to sanction any such member in accordance with Article II, Section 1.
- g. If a member of EC violates election procedures, or substantially fails to uphold their duties of office:
  - i. The commission can vote by two thirds of total voting membership to suspend a member from all EC duties for the remainder of that election. Disciplinary action will be decided upon after the close of polls.
- h. If the EC is notified that there is someone actively tampering with the election proceedings:
  - i. EC will immediately examine the claim and the evidence that has been brought forward. EC will determine if the evidence substantiates adequate concern to suspend the election.
    - 1. If the claim does not bring adequate concern, the election will conclude as normal.
    - 2. If the claim does bring adequate concern, voting will be suspended. If EC can determine and remove the cause of the tampering within 2 hours, voting will reopen and the polling hours will be extended by a full 2 hours. Otherwise, the election will be invalidated.

- ii. In either case, election results will be suspended until EC can determine if there was tampering, and if that tampering would have affected the outcome of one or more races.
  - iii. If tampering affected the outcome of a race, a re-election will be held for that race.
- i. For absentee or paper ballots:
  - i. A report of how many absentee ballots EC receives electronically will be tallied as they come in.
  - ii. A report of how many paper absentee ballots are submitted will be tallied as they are taken out of the box.
  - iii. All backup paper ballots at each station will be numbered in the order that they are printed. When counting any paper ballots, they will be put in numerical order to determine whether any have been lost.
  - iv. Paper ballots that have been ruined or mis-voted are marked as such (void) as a voter requests a new one.
  - v. If there are ballots missing, we will tally the number. If the number of ballots missing could affect the outcome of a race, then a re-election will be held for that race.
- j. If a candidate commits an infraction during polling hours:
  - i. We will inform the candidate of what violation they have committed, and request that they adjust their actions in accordance with election procedures.
  - ii. If a candidate fails to do so, or continues breaking election rules, then the chairperson has the ability to issue a preliminary sanction. This sanction will be communicated to the candidate immediately, and will be ratified or reversed following elections but before the counting of votes.
- k. If a formal complaint, accusation of broken election procedures, or any other claim against a candidate is delivered to the EC during polling hours:
  - i. The case will not be considered until after the close of polls, but before the counting of votes.
- l. If a candidate commits an infraction after the close of polls, but before the announcement of election results:
  - i. The commission will convene and discuss the infraction immediately.
- m. If an individual submits more than one ballot:
  - i. If the ballots are identical, only count their ballot once.
  - ii. If the ballots are not the same, discard all ballots from that individual.

## **Section 6 - Notification**

1. Written notifications to the EC can be provided by:

- a. Sending an email to rne-chair@union.lists.rpi.edu.
- b. Submitting a signed letter addressed to “The Elections Commission” to the Union Administration Office during business hours.
- c. Submitting a signed letter in person to the chairperson of the EC.
2. Written notifications to candidates can be provided by:
  - a. Sending an email to the candidate’s Rensselaer-provided email address.
  - b. Personal delivery of the letter from a member of the EC.
  - c. Calling or texting a candidate’s phone number.
  - d. Delivery of a letter to a candidate’s US Postal Mailbox or Campus Mailbox.

## **Section 7 - Removals**

1. A member of the Elections Commission may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the total voting membership of the committee.

## **Section 7 - Authority of the Elections Commission**

1. The Student Senate is granted the authority to oversee elections by Article VIII of the *Rensselaer Union Constitution*. The Student Senate, by approving this document, grants this power to the Elections Commission. The interpretation of these rules is up to the discretion of the Elections Commission. Any official decisions made by the Elections Commission may be appealed to the Judicial Board.
2. This document may be amended by the Elections Commission subject to the approval of the Student Senate. Minor revisions, including but not limited to typographical mistakes, deadline extensions, and logistical issues that do not affect the overall fairness of elections may be altered by a vote of the Elections Commission. These changes must be made public on the elections website, and they are subject to appeal by the Judicial Board.

# **Article III: Pre-Campaign Guidelines**

## **Section 1 - Pre-Campaigning**

1. Pre-campaigning is defined as the promotion of any candidate or the promotion of a slogan, symbol, or idea for this purpose. This includes:
  - a. Solicitation of nominations
  - b. Dissemination of campaign material
  - c. Public displays or actions intended to draw attention to one’s candidacy
  - d. Parties, assemblies, etc. at which attention is drawn to one’s candidacy
  - e. Wearing campaign material (shirts, buttons, hats, etc.)
  - f. Addressing campaign-related questions

- i. This includes any effort on the part of the candidate to prolong discussion on their candidacy.
2. Pre-campaigning is not allowed until a candidate has filled out a candidacy form to run in a GM week election.