# The 40th Session of the Student Body Senate

# Florida International University

Miami, Florida

S.B. 04 021

The Elections Streamlining Act

# IN THE SENATE

January 22, 2024

Senate President Kaily LaChapelle and Student Body President Alexander Sutton introduced the following bill, which was presented on the Senate floor

# **A BILL**

To revise the Elections Code of the Student Government Association.

Be it enacted by the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University assembled,

Whereas, The Elections Code of SGA has not been updated since 2021,

Whereas, Periodical updates of the code are in line with best practice as elections unfold and processes are identified as needing updates,

Whereas, Three elections have been run under the current Elections Code, illuminating various opportunities to streamline and update processes within the Code that have been used and tested throughout the past three years,

**Now Therefore,** the Senate of the Student Body of Florida International University hereby amends the Title VI of the Statutes: the Elections Code, in accordance with the revisions contained in this bill.

**Now Therefore,** the numbering of clauses following section 6010 in the revised Elections Code shall be updated within the code to reflect the addition of a new section.

#### Title VI: The Elections Code

#### Section 6001 The Elections Board

- 6001.1 Composition and Purpose of the Elections Board
- The <u>eE</u>lections <u>B</u>board shall be comprised of an <u>E</u>elections <u>C</u>eommissioner, selected and appointed by the Student Body President and confirmed by the Senate. The <u>b</u>Board shall be further comprised of a <u>D</u>deputy <u>E</u>elections <u>C</u>eommissioner, appointed by the <u>E</u>elections <u>C</u>eommissioner and confirmed by the <u>S</u>senate. The <u>b</u>Board shall also be comprised of an additional three (3) <u>E</u>elections <u>B</u>board members, appointed by the <u>E</u>elections <u>C</u>eommissioner and confirmed by the <u>S</u>senate.
- The Elections Board shall organize and execute all general elections, special elections, run-offs, referendums, and recall elections.
- All members of the Elections Board, including the Elections Commissioner and Deputy Elections Commissioner, shall not be actively identified with any candidate, political party, and/or campaign for SGA, nor shall they act in a partisan manner while they are serving on the Board. In addition, no member of the Board may hold or be a candidate for an elected or appointed SGA position until the conclusion of their term as a member of the Board.
- The Elections Board shall have the power to create regulations not in conflict with the Elections Code or any other governing documents. All regulations created by the Elections Board shall be voted on and passed by a 2/3 vote of the Elections Board before being implemented.
- The Elections Board shall be responsible for the preparation of the ballot, which shall be approved and finalized by a majority approval of the Elections Board no later than five (5) university business days prior to the first day of voting in the elections. All qualified candidates will be listed on the ballot and organized by candidate position. The ballot shall clearly indicate which office the candidates are seeking.
- 6001.2 Description of responsibilities for the Elections Board Members
- The <u>Ee</u>lections <u>Ceommissioner shall be responsible for the administration of the <u>bB</u>oard, supervision of the individual members, and issuinge a final review on all materials needing approval by the <u>bB</u>oard.</u>
- The <u>D</u>deputy Elections Commissioner shall be responsible for the distribution of <u>E</u>elections <u>B</u>board materials, and the release of the Elections Board report to the Senate.
- 6001.2.3 Elections Board Members shall be responsible for assisting the Elections Commissioner and the Deputy Elections Commissioner as well as serving on the Eelections Bboard.

#### 6001.3 Duties of the Elections Commissioner

- The Elections Commissioner shall serve as the Cchairperson of the Elections Board and shall faithfully execute those duties and responsibilities designated by these Statutes, the Uuniversity policies, regulations, and the Student Government Constitution.
- The Elections Commissioner shall be required to serve three (3) weekly office held of the Executive Board.
- The Commissioner shall report to the Senate <u>at least once per month</u> and <u>attend</u> the Cabinet <u>at least once per calendar monthevery week.</u>
- The Elections Commissioner shall be responsible for instructing all election officials, Board members, and poll workers of the proper election procedures.
- The Elections Commissioner shall ensure that the application documents of all candidates are submitted to a Division of Academic and Student Affairs designee (hereafter "designee") for eligibility review.
- 6001.3.6 The Elections Commissioner shall be responsible for moderating Candidate Debates.
- 6001.4 Duties of the Deputy Elections Commissioner
- The Deputy Elections Commissioner shall prepare the report for the Elections Commissioner to submit to the Senate and the Cabinet.
- The Deputy Commissioner shall oversee the distribution of Elections Materials.
- The Deputy Elections Commissioner shall assume any responsibility given to them by the Elections Commissioner.
- 6001.5 Duties of the Elections Board Members
- The Elections Board is responsible must annually for prepareing a Candidate Packets for distribution. This packet shall be finalized no later than two calendar weeks before the close of registration for general elections. The packet must include at least, to include but not be limited to; this Elections Code, instructions on how to register as a candidate, qualifications for all elected positions, a tentative timeline for the election cycle, the University Posting Policy, any additional rules and regulations, and Candidate and Party Expense Report. The packet may contain additional materials at the discretion of the Elections Board.
- The Elections Board shall beis responsible for the execution opaf the elections code and shall make no regulation, decree or statement in contradiction with the code.
- The Elections Board is responsible for hosting at least two elections information sessions before the close of general election registration, and at least two candidate information sessions after the list of candidates has been finalized. Attendance is mandatory for all candidates and political party leadership at a minimum of one (1)

candidate information session. The Board shall present the Elections Code and the details of the election process, and it shall answer any questions from attendees. Elections information sessions shall be held virtually or in-person at either or both campuses at the discretion of the Elections Board.

- The Elections Board must release an SGA Election Voting Guide each year. This packet shall be finalized no later than six calendar weeks before the dates of the general election. It shall contain the submitted names, pictures, and platforms and biographies of all candidates running in the general election. It shall also contain a brief explanation of how and when to vote, and which candidates students are allowed to vote for based on delegation, campus, etc. The Elections Board shall disseminate this packet to the student body both electronically and in print format.
- The Elections Board is responsible for ensuring that all candidates are listed on the ballot with their correct political party affiliation. This shall be done by matching the political party affiliations indicated on each candidate's registration to a list of the party's nominees for each seat/position, as sent by each political party's chairperson to the Elections Commissioner. Only those candidates whose indicated party affiliation matches with the list of nominees provided by that same party's chairperson, shall have their party affiliation listed accordingly on the ballot.

## 6001.6 Procedure for meetings of the Elections Board

- The Elections Board shall meet regularly at a consistent place, date, and time barring complications.
- The Elections Board shall take all actions not including campaign violation procedure through simple majority vote, except votes to penalize candidates or parties for campaign violations, which shall require a 4/5 vote.
- The Elections Board shall operate using the latest version of Robert's Rules of Order.
- Minutes for Elections Board Mmeetings shall be made <u>publicly</u> available. <u>upon</u> request
- All Elections Board meetings shall be open to the public, and meetings times and locations shall be advertised to the student body before any meeting of the Board takes place.

#### 6001.7 Procedure for Campaign Violation Hearings

- The Elections Board may not take action against a candidate until the completion of a full hearing. The procedure for this hearing is laid out below:
- Introduction of Violation Hearing: The Elections Commissioner shall call the meeting to order and <u>take roll</u> call—for the Election board members who are in <u>attendance at the violation hearing</u>.

6001.7.3 Statement of the Filer: The individual that filed the violation charge may make a statement to the Elections board regarding the violation and all evidence that the filer has submitted, as well as introduce the witnesses that will testify on behalf of the filer. 6001.7.4 Statement of the Accused Candidate/ticket: The accused may make a statement to the Election board regarding the violation and all evidence that the candidate/ticket has submitted, as well as introduce the witnesses that will testify on behalf of the accused candidate/ticket. 6001.7.5 Questioning of the Filer: The Elections board may question the individual who filed the violation charge 6001.7.6 Questioning of the Accused: The Elections based may question the accused candidate/ticket. Final Questioning: The Elections board may ask questions about all information 6001.7.7 that was presented 6001.7.8 Closing Statement of the Filer: The filer may make a closing statement to the Elections CommissionBoard Closing Statement of the Accused Candidate/ticket: The accused candidate/ticket 6001.7.9 may make a closing statement to the Elections board. 6001.7.10 Elections Board Deliberation: The Elections board shall deliberate to determine if a violation occurred and, if so, determine the appropriate sanction and inform the individual who filed the violation and the accused candidate/ticket of the decision. Sentence shall be carried out by a Unanimous vote of the Elections Board. All deliberations shall be public but closed to input from those in attendance. 6001.2.11 Either party may appeal a decision made by the Elections Board to the Supreme Court within 5 University Business Days. twenty-four hours of notification of the decision made by the Elections Board

#### Section 6002 Format of the Elections Timeline

- The annual Student Body Elections shall be carried out according to this timeline, barring extraordinary circumstances:
- Public announcement and opening of Political Party Registration Deadlines:, must Must occur at least close three (3) days before the opening of the political party registration period. elections qualification registration
- Opening of the Political Party Registration Period: the political party registration period must be open for at least twenty (20) university business days

- Close of the Political Party Registration Period: must occur at least three days before the opening of the candidate registration period
   Public Announcement of <u>Candidate Registration Deadlines: the date of opening and</u>
- Public Announcement of <u>Candidate Registration Deadlines: the date of opening and closing of elections qualification registration, this action m Must be take place n a minimum of three (3) days prior to the date of opening of the candidate registration period</u>
- 6002.<u>6</u>4 <u>elections qualification registration Opening of the Candidate Registration Period: , t</u>The <u>candidate registration period must be open for at least ten (10) University Business days</u>
- 6002.7 Close of the Candidate Registration Period
- 6002.8 Confirmation of Party Affiliation: No more than three (3) days after the close of the candidate registration period, each political party's chairperson shall send to the Elections Commissioner a list of the party's nominees for each seat/position.
- Public Announcement of the qualified candidates: must occur no later than one (1) week following the close of the <u>candidate</u> registration period.
- 6002.<u>106</u> Candidates Debate: must occur a minimum of three (3) days before voting opens.
- 6002.117 Elections Voting Occurs
- Announcement of the <u>winners results</u> of the elections: must occur no later than forty-eight (48) hours following the close of voting.

#### Section 6003 Political Parties

- 6003.1 Students will have the right to gather and support one or multiple candidates in the form of political parties.
- 6003.2 All political parties must be registered with Elections Board and meet the qualifications set forth in this Elections Code, or have been registered previously and planning to submit for re-registration.
- 6003.3 Candidates affiliated with a registered political party shall be able to have their party affiliation shown in the ballot for up to one (1) party.
- 6003.4 Parties shall be able to campaign for and support as many candidates as the number of seats in an election per position and delegation.
- 6003.5 Political parties will be responsible for reserving their tables and rooms and are held accountable for payments to the University at such rate as given. Political Parties are still required to inform the Elections Board of their campaign finance solicitation efforts. as per the Elections Code

- Political parties shall be subject to the same campaigning limitations and periods as established for candidates in general, making no new special rules or limitations
- Political parties are not subject to campaigning limitations and periods, and may promote themselves throughout the year as long as they do not support the candidacy or potential candidacy of any particular student(s).
- 6003.7 There shall be no membership requirements for political parties with regards to a minimum number of officers. Students shall form these entities in compliance with the stipulations of the Elections Code.
- 6003.8 Political Parties shall be chaired by a student who is not currently running for elected office. Political Parties may begin the search for qualified Ccandidates and inform them of their intent to select them for slating prior to the registration period opening.
- 6003.9 Political Party Registration shall be done using a digital platform specified by the Elections Board which shall include the following: Party Chairperson Name and Contact information, Party Treasurer Name and Contact information, Party platform, and a tentative slate of electable members for the party.
- 6003.10 For a political party to be considered qualified and registered, it shall have a Party
  Chairperson, a Party Treasurer, and at least one (1) candidate for any elected office it must
  maintain no less than fifteen (15) seats for an election not including the Presidential Ticket,
  and Gubernatorial seat. The Party Chairperson shall not be a candidate for any elected
  office. The registration period for political parties shall close at least three days before the
  opening of n general qualification the candidate registration period.
- of the party leaders to find qualified and registered candidates to fill the seats of the election prior to the close of registration. After registration, only those candidates who both (1) indicated their party affiliation during registration and (2) were listed by that same party's chairperson as the party's nominee for that seat, shall have their party affiliation listed accordingly on the ballot.
- 6003.12 Following the close of the general election, political parties must cease active to campaigning on behalf of individual candidates., fundraising, but However, parties may continue to operate on social media, may table, recruit membership, expand resources, and may generally promote themselves as organizations. in their general form until At the start of the next general election registration period, when theyeach returning party as well as newly formed parties must re-apply for registration in order to field candidates and appear on the ballot as a party.
- 6003.13 Political parties approved by the Elections Board shall have the same status and rights as Registered Student Organizations for the purposes of university policy. Parties shall have the ability to table, with any expenses associated with such activity being covered by the Room Rental Agreement. All parties must be given equal access to tabling opportunities.

- During periods of campaigning, each party shall have the right to have up to two tables (one at MMC and one at BBC) per day for five days in total during the campaigning period, which may include the two days of voting. In order to request their tabling, a party shall inform the Elections Board of the dates, times, and locations at which they would like to table, and the Elections Board shall then coordinate with the SGA Advisor to make all reservations as closely as possible to what was requested by the party. No party shall be given preferential treatment for tabling opportunities. The Elections Board shall set deadlines for parties to request their tabling, and shall then inform the parties as to the status of their tabling requests.
- During periods of non-campaigning, political parties may have the ability to table to promote themselves at the discretion of the Elections Board. Parties may not campaign for any individual or position while tabling outside of the campaign period.
- Students are not required to run with any political party in order to qualify for a position.

  Any student that meets the eligibility requirements may run for Senate, Student Body

  President / Vice President, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or any other elected office,
  either as an independent candidate or as a nominee of a political party.
- Candidates shall be permitted to change their party affiliation during the campaigning period with the express written agreement of the candidate and the chairperson of the party to which the candidate is affiliating. Candidates may not change their party affiliation within five (5) university business days of the start of voting. Parties which already have the maximum number of candidates for a seat or delegation may not accept additional candidates running for that seat or delegation.
- 6003.15.1 Candidates are permitted to drop their party affiliation and run independently by informing the Elections Commissioner of this change, without being required to inform the party chairperson of this change.

# Section 6004 Candidate Registration and Qualification

#### 6004.1 Qualification

- Any candidate or political party that wishes to qualify for the General Election must comply with the provisions of this Elections Code and the Student Government Association governing documents.
- Candidates must have achieved the minimum requirements to serve in the office they intend to be elected to by the date of registration for the election. The requirements for office are delineated in SGAC Article 7 and any other requirement delineated in the Constitution or Statutes of Student Government.

A student may be a candidate for only one (1) position at a time during any given 6004.1.3 election. 6004.1.4 The Elections Board may declare any candidate ineligible to run for and hold office with a simple majority vote of the Board's membership if a substantive error is found in the candidate's qualifications, and this error is found to be the direct responsibility of the candidate. A substantive error shall only include deliberate falsification of information, failure to complete all sections of the application, failure to maintain requirements, and failure to report necessary qualification information. Registration for the general election shall open on a date specified by the eElections 6004.1.5 <u>▶</u>Board. Registration shall remain open for ten (10) University Business Days. Following the close of election registration, any seats where there is no candidate registered shall open for an additional five (5) University Business Days. 6004.1.6 All Candidates and parties must complete their respective qualification registration forms required by this section of these statutes by the registration deadline. No more than three (3) days after the close of the candidate registration period, each 6004.1.7 political party's chairperson shall send to the Elections Commissioner a list of the party's nominees for each seat/position. The Elections Board will then match these lists to the political party affiliations indicated on each candidate's registration. Only those candidates who both (1) indicated their party affiliation during registration and (2) were listed by that same party's chairperson as the party's nominee for that seat, shall have their party affiliation listed accordingly on the ballot. 6004.1.87 A candidate may qualify to run for office under the name by which they are registered at FIU or a variation of that name, subject to Elections Board approval. A nickname may appear in quotation marks with the approved name of the candidate. 6004.1.98 Once a student has filed an application for a seat or office, they may not change to any other seat or office unless the original application is withdrawn and the application period is still open. 6004.1.10<del>9</del> Should a Presidential, or Vice-Presidential candidate be disqualified, unqualified, or withdraw, the remaining members of that presidential ticket shall have twentyfour forty-eight (4824) hours from notification to replace that person on the ticket to remain qualified for the election. Should this happen in the 4 University Business Days leading to an election, that ticket shall be considered disqualified and all votes casted in that election for the disqualified ticket shall be considered null and void A candidate or Political Party must file all registration documents with the Elections 6004.1.11<del>0</del> Board on or before the deadline date and time designated by the Elections Board as predicated in this Elections Code. 6004.1.12<del>1</del> For a Political Party to be considered valid it must submit all required documentation

to the <u>eElection</u>'s <u>commissioner</u> <u>Board</u> during the registration period.

- The Registration documents for qualification for individual seats shall be governed by two categories; the Presidential, and Vice-Presidential seats, and the Legislative and all other Seats.
- Presidential, and Vice-Presidential tickets shall complete the appropriate registration form together.
- 6004.2.3 Legislative <u>Candidates and all others shall complete their respective registration forms individually.</u>

#### Section 6005 Elections Ethics Code

- 6005.1 No candidate/ticket shall misrepresent any material fact in campaign material or in campaigning in any form.
- 6005.2 No candidate/ticket or individual shall knowingly provide false information before the Election Board.
- 6005.3 No candidate/ticket or individual shall misrepresent any campaign material as being the material of any candidate/ticket other than themselves.
- 6005.4 No candidate/ticket shall condone or authorize the destruction or theft of campaign material of another candidate.
- 6005.5 No candidate/ticket shall commit slander or libel.
- 6005.6 No candidate/ticket shall commit or attempt a bribe, as defined as a direct monetary payment from one candidate to another person of their own funds a prize, reward, gift, or favor bestowed or promised with a view to influence the action of another to vote, not vote, or vote for or against a particular candidate/ticket and/or any other item on the ballot, in any way.
- 6005.7— No candidate shall alter their legal name provided by the University when placing such on the ballot.
- 6005.7 No candidate shall authorize a purchase of campaign materials to be purchased with A&S fee funds by an A&S fee funded entity. (Campaign materials are defined as materials specifically purchased with the primary intention of being used to influence students to vote in favor of a candidate/ticket.) This shall not apply to Elections-Board-approved tabling covered by the Room Rental Agreement, which is permitted.
- 6005.8 No candidate/ticket shall commit or attempt to commit extortion or blackmail.
- 6005.9 No candidate/ticket shall use Student Government Property or Activity and Service Fee Funds to actively campaign
- No Candidate/Ticket may condone, authorize or in any way attempt to coerce or encourage another student, candidate, or /ticket to violate or undermine the rules/regulations in these statutes or the Student Government Constitution.

6005.10 All student organizations other than SGA, as well as any entity, program, division, or unit of the university, shall have the right and ability to endorse any candidate(s), ticket(s), or party/parties running in an election. Individuals shall have the right to make endorsements regardless of any position they occupy at the university. No candidate shall be penalized for receiving the support or endorsement of any organization or entity other than SGA.

#### Section 6006 Elections Rules

- 6006.1 Candidates shall be held responsible for the violation of statutory rules for which they have violated or others at their express behest have violated.
- 6006.2 For the purpose of this section of these <u>sS</u>tatutes, <u>"candidate"</u> shall refer to the candidate themselves and any person or entity operating on their express intent.
- 6006.3 No Candidate shall violate the posting policy of Florida International University, but administrators and relevant building authorities may make specific exceptions to the posting policy at the request of candidates.
- 6006.4 No Candidate shall post any campaign material, be it digital media, fliers, postings, solicitations, and the like, which advertises or promotes alcohol consumption or drinking, demeans or humiliates another candidate, party, person, group, student organization, or University department, depicts or expresses's sexual or discriminatory messages, or contains demeaning portrayals of individuals or groups based on race, religion, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, physical condition, disability, or mental state.
- 6006.5 No Candidate shall engage in the disbursement distribution of promotional material which impedes the passage of automobile, cars, pedestrian, or bicycle traffic. The disbursement distribution of promotional material must not interfere with or obstruct the orderly processes of the University or its academic mission.
- 6006.6 Regardless of the University Posting policy nNo candidate may post, distribute campaign materials or campaign within 100 feet of the physical space of knock on the doors of the dormitories or off-campus housing spaces in order to campaign, but candidates are permitted to campaign and distribute campaign materials within on-campus and off-campus housing spaces.
- 6006.7 Regardless of the University Posting policy, no Candidate shall post, distribute campaign materials or campaign in <u>academic spaces</u>. This includes the physical space of a classroom, this shall extend to official online forums including Canvas, Zoom Classrooms, or other academic settings. This does not include of the express intent of an academic professor for that course.
- 6006.8 Candidates may make use of <u>S</u>cocial <u>M</u>media and <u>D</u>digital <u>M</u>media platforms throughout the elections process. Should the candidate wish to ensure that a post does not violate the elections code, they may choose to submit this post to the Elections Board for verification.

- 6006.9 No <u>Candidate shall utilize the physical space of the Student GovernmentSGA</u> Onffices or <u>chambers, resources, physical</u> or <u>SGA</u> virtual spaces for the purpose of campaigning. This <u>shall include but not be limited</u> to <u>engage in</u> the distribution of flyers, promotional material, tangible campaign materials (i.e. <u>Bb</u>uttons, shirts, pens, etc.) or other material to campaign.
- No Candidate shall campaign within 100 feet of a physical voting place as determined by the Elections Board The Elections Board shall delineate the extent of the area surrounding a physical voting place within which all campaigning shall be prohibited. The area shall extend to at least 10 feet away from the voting place and no more than 100 feet as determined by the Elections Board. The no-campaigning areas shall be delineated through a visible physical demarcation such as tape. No candidate shall campaign within such area.
- 6006.11 Political Parties shall follow all rules and regulations that individual candidates must adhere to, including but not limited to the rules set forth in this <u>sS</u>tatute and the ethics code for campaigns.
- Presidential Candidates may consider and offer appointments to fill desired appointable and internally elected seats during and before the elections process. A candidate for president, or vice president may not be offered appointments conditional on their withdrawal, but may be offered an appointment should they voluntarily withdrawal or not qualify for the race.
- Presidential Candidates may consider and bind themselves to the appointment of the following positions before the election: (Comptroller; Chief of Staff; Attorney General; and Press Secretary. Executive Administrator, Justices of the Supreme Court, and Governor of the Biscayne Bay Campus (should there not be a governor on the ballot)).
- Should a Presidential candidate choose to bind themselves of to these appointments, they must submit a list of the appointments to the Elections Board along with their signature and the signatures of those seeking appointment, and an affirmation of their decision. This information shall be made available upon request to any who wish to view it. The candidate must also announce their list of appointments within 5 University Business Days (Monday- Friday while school is in session) through written declaration or a post on social media. A candidate who chooses to bind themselves to these appointments shall not make an appointment to the contrary upon assuming office unless the bound appointee voluntarily withdraws themselves from consideration in writing or otherwise becomes ineligible to hold office.
- The only method to disband the intent of appointment should beis the written withdrawal of an appointee to the <u>eE</u>lections <u>bB</u>oard.
- 6006.13 Candidates may inform others of their intent to run for election prior to the registration period, but may not actively campaign, nor fundraise before the close of the registration period.
- 6006.14 Independent (no party affiliation) presidential tickets and independent Governor / Lieutenant Governor candidates shall have the ability to table, with any expenses

associated with such activity being covered by the Room Rental Agreement. All tickets / Governor / Lt. Gov. candidates must be given equal access to tabling opportunities.

During periods of campaigning, each independent ticket / Governor / Lt. Gov. candidate shall have the right to have one table per day for five days in total during the campaigning period, which may include the two days of voting. In order to request their tabling, an independent ticket / Governor / Lt. Gov. candidate shall inform the Elections Board of the dates, times, and locations at which they would like to table, and the Elections Board shall then coordinate with the SGA Advisor to make all reservations as closely as possible to what was requested. No independent ticket / Governor / Lt. Gov. candidate shall be given preferential treatment for tabling opportunities. The Elections Board shall set the deadlines to request tabling, and shall then inform the independent tickets / Governor / Lt. Gov. candidates as to the status of their tabling requests.

# Section 6007 Campaign Finance Regulations

- 6007.1 Individual candidates shall file a Final Campaign Finance Report, which shall include the expense and donation forms found in the Candidate Packet. The Final Expense Form must be completed, signed, and submitted to the Elections Commissioner no later than 6:00PM on the last day of the General Election. Expenses and donations must be reported at actual cost or value to the candidate.
- 6007.2 If documents are not fully and accurately submitted, the candidate is subject to a campaign violation pursuant to disqualification.
- 6007.3 Political Parties shall file a Final Campaign Finance Report. The Final Campaign Finance Report must be completed, signed, and submitted to the Elections Commissioner no later than 6:00PM on the last day of the General Election. Expenses and donations must be reported at actual cost or value to the Party.
- 6007.4 If documents are not fully and accurately submitted, the party is subject to a campaign violation pursuant to disqualification of the party in question. Should a party be disqualified for violating campaign finance reporting, said party may not apply in the next election to be registered. Additionally, it shall be the determination of the Elections Board should further action need be taken against individual party members.
- 6007.5 Allowed Expenditure by election seat
- Presidential, Vice-Presidential tickets, and candidates for BBC Governor Gubernatorial Ticket shall not exceed \$5,000
- 6007.5.2 Senators shall not exceed \$1,000
- 6007.5.3 Any additional category going for election shall not exceed \$500

- 6007.5.4 Political Parties shall not exceed \$3,000 (separate from individual members)
- Donation limits shall be set at half of the allotted campaign expenditure allowance
- 6007.6 No candidate may authorize a purchase of campaign materials to be purchased with A&S fees by SGA, Student Activities and Services Fees, or an A&S fee funded campus organization.s' funds may be used for candidates' campaigns (Campaign materials are defined as materials specifically purchased with the primary intention of being used to influence students to vote in favor of a candidate/ticket.) This shall not apply to Elections-Board-approved tabling covered by the Room Rental Agreement, which is permitted.
- 6007.7 Candidates may spend personal funds before the date of registration without notification, but must report said expenditure in the final expense report.
- 6007.8 Fundraising by individual candidates will be allowed beginning the day immediately after the deadline to submit registration documents to the Elections Commissioner. The Elections Commissioner must be notified of fundraising, but need not approve such an activity. Should a candidate be found to have fundraised prior to the start of the fundraising period, they shall be immediately disqualified found guilty of at least a tier three violation. Fundraising excludes use of personal funds in support of the election process. Political parties are exempt from this regulation.

#### Section 6008 Candidates Debate

- 6008.1 The Elections Commissioner shall be responsible for holding and moderating at least one candidate debate for the Presidential, and Vice-Presidential, and BBC Governor Candidates. This Debate shall be structured in the following way:
- 6008.2 The Presidential Debate shall be no shorter than 30 minutes and no longer than one hour.
- 6008.3 The Vice-Presidential Debate and the BBC Governor Debate shall each be no shorter than 20 minutes and no longer than 30 minutes.
  - The BBC Governor Debate may be at the same date and location as the other candidates' debate, or may be a separate event on the Biscayne Bay Campus, at the discretion of the Elections Board.
- 6008.4 Candidates shall not be given the questions that will be asked at the debate in advance.
- 6008.5 Candidates shall have equal time to respond in a debate.
- 6008.6 The Debate shall be publicly announced no later than 72 hours prior to the start of the debate -and shall occur no later than seventy-two (72) hours prior to the start of the general election voting.

- 6008.7 Should the Presidential, or Vice-Presidential, or BBC Governor seat only have one candidate, that candidate shall be considered the President-elect, /Vice-President-Eelect, or BBC Governor-elect from the date of close of registration, and the debate shall transition to a town hall format for the maximum allotted time for a debate.
  - The debates must be broadcast, livestreamed, virtually remotely accessible for attendees and participants, must be recorded, and accessible to the public.
- 6008.8 The student media outlet(s) or any other media organization shall be permitted to host additional debates, town halls, or forums at their discretion with the consent of all invited candidates wishing to be involved. Such activity shall not be regulated by the Elections Board, but candidates participating in such events shall remain bound by the Elections Ethics Code and Elections Rules.

# Section 6009 Special Elections, and Run-Offs, and Referendums Elections

- Should a position for which there is no remedy in the governing documents of appointment not be elected in a general election, The Senate may call a special election through a bill which shall pass by a may be called by a quorum of the Senate with simple majority vote. The bill shall specify the terms of this election, including the date(s) and times that voting will be open, locations of voting (if applicable), and any other details as shall be necessary. Further terms and details of the special election may be determined at the discretion of the shall be specified by either the bill or the Eelections commissioner Board.
- Special elections may be called for the following reasons: to fill vacant Senate seats; for a vote by the student body to ratify a constitutional amendment; to fill any position for which there is no remedy of appointment; or to accomplish any other legitimate purpose.
- 6009.2 Run-off elections shall be held to determine the winner of an election in the following circumstances: (1) an election is tied; or (2) no Presidential ticket achieves Should a seat in a general election receive an equal number of votes or fail to reach the threshold for the election (a simple majority of votes. In the event of a tie, all tied candidates shall advance to the of at least 52% for presidential tickets), a run-off election for the seat/position they are running for. In the event of no Presidential ticket achieving a simple majority of votes, the top-two vote-getting tickets shall advance to the run-off election for the Presidential ticket. be held between the candidates who entered the situation. ThisRun-off elections shall be held seventy-two (72) hours following the announcement of election results. Should no candidate win the run-off or should another tie occur, the Senate shall decide whether to implement another series of run-off elections, or decide to vacate temporarily leave the seat vacant through a two-thirds (2/3) super-majority vote.
- 6009.3 The Senate may call a referendum on any issue affecting the student body or the university.

  The results of the referendum vote shall be non-binding but shall serve as an indication of the sentiments of the student body as a whole. Referendums may be held during general elections and shall appear on the same ballot, or may be held during a special election, or

- may be held as their own independent election. All students shall be allowed to vote in any referendum. To call a referendum, the Senate shall pass a bill by a simple majority vote, and the bill shall specify the exact wording of the referendum, and when and how the referendum shall be held.
- 6009.4 In the event that a special election or referendum is mandated as a result of a petition gaining the valid number of signatures, the Senate shall set a date for the special election or referendum unless it was specified in the petition. The Senate may pass a bill providing any additional regulations or details for a special election or referendum. Further terms and details of a special election or referendum may be determined by the Elections Board.
- 6009.5 Petitions for special elections, referendums, and recalls may be done by paper petition or by electronic petition. The Elections Board shall make a petition template accessible at all times to the student body. In addition, the Elections Board shall make an electronic petition template accessible at all times to the student body, which shall allow students to sign the petition by giving their Panther ID and name on the online form; virtual petitions may be done through Google Forms, Microsoft Forms, or a similar platform, at the discretion of the circulators of the petition. The Elections Board shall determine the validity of the paper or electronic signatures, which shall be appealable to the Supreme Court.

#### Section 6010 Recall Elections

- 6010.1 This section derives its authority from section 1004.26(4)(b) of the Florida Statutes.
- 6010.2 Any elected or appointed officer of the Student Government Association may be removed from office by the majority vote of students participating in a recall election held under this section.
- A recall election is a ballot measure that seeks the removal from office of an elected or appointed officer of the Student Government Association.
- Recall elections shall be initiated when the Elections Commissioner receives a petition for a recall election against a particular official signed by the required number of students.
- The grounds for the removal of a Student Government Association official must be expressly contained in the petition and are limited to the following: malfeasance, misfeasance, neglect of duty, incompetence, permanent inability to perform official duties, or conviction of a felony.
- The recall election must be held no later than 60 days after the filing of the petition to the Elections Commissioner. The Elections Board shall fix a day and time to hold the recall election.
- The only students permitted to vote in a recall election shall be the students represented by the official being recalled according to the official's delegation/constituency.

- An official subject to recall shall have the right to resign before the election takes place. Should the official resign, the recall election shall be canceled.
- 6010.3 The ballot at the recall election shall contain the following question: "Should be removed from the office of ?" Using the name of the official being recalled. There shall be only two options to vote on this question: "Yes" and "No"
- 6010.4 Following the conclusion of the voting in the recall election, the Elections Commissioner shall announce the results of the election.
- 6010.5 Should a simple majority of the students that voted in the recall election vote "yes" to remove an official from office, the official shall be given forty-eight (48) hours to appeal the results to the Supreme Court. Should the official choose not to appeal within forty-eight (48) hours, the official shall be removed from office. Should the official choose to appeal the results of the recall election, the Supreme Court shall rule to uphold or overturn the results based solely on whether proper procedure was followed throughout the recall election process. Should the Supreme Court uphold the results, the official shall be removed from office. Should the Supreme Court overturn the results, the official shall retain their position.

# Section 6010 Campaign Violations

- 6010.1 The Elections Board may sanction a candidate or party through the hearing process. For any sanction to be deemed valid it must be approved by a unanimous 4/5 vote consent of the Elections Board Mmembers contributing to a quorum. Sanctions and Violations shall be governed according to the following categories:
- 6010.1.1 Tier One Violations shall be the most egregious violations of Campaign Integrity. In order to be found guilty of a Tier One Violation, a candidate or party must have taken an action contrary to the will and intent of the Student Government Governing Documents or directed someone to do so or not tried to stop a violation from occurring. Tier One Violations shall include, but are not limited to: violating section 6005 of this Elections Code, failure to attend meeting session as mandated by this Elections Code, exceeding allowed campaign spending or donation limits, misrepresentation or forgery of any required election paperwork, attempted or successful fraud in the voting process, campaigning in clearly marked restricted areas during voting hours, destruction or defamation of personal/private/University property, threat or use of verbal or physical abuse against any person, use of SGA physical or virtual spaces to campaign, an individual disparaging another candidate or party via any form of communication, and having been impeached and removed from a Student Government Office less than one semester prior to the date of the elections. be limited to Violations of Section 6005 and 6006
- Tier Two Violations shall be <u>mid-level offenses</u>. <u>violations that are the result of the explicit action of the candidate/party or taken at their behest</u>. <u>Tier Two Violations shall include, but are not limited to: violating section 6006 of this elections code, repeated Tier Three violations, repeated Posting Policy violations, tardiness in the</u>

submission of Estimated Campaign Finance Reports, violations committed by Campaign Volunteers (when evidence of Candidate or Party involvement is not clear), early campaigning and/or violating the campaigning timeline restrictions. violations of any section of the Student Government Elections Code not including Sections 6005 and 6006

- Tier Three Violations shall be violations that are the result of negligence and are not intentional. A <u>violation shall be considered a \*Tier \*Three \*Violation can be achieved</u> if it is proven that a candidate did not attempt to stop a known violation taken in their name.
- 6010.2 The Penalty for Violations relating to the tier of offense shall be conducted as follows:
- A Tier One Violation, after voted on by the Board, shall be constrained to Disqualification of a candidate, group of candidates, or a party. Should a party be disqualified, the individual members of a party may remain on the ballot and be considered valid, just not have a party affiliation shown.
- A Tier Two Violation, after voted on by the <u>bB</u>oard, shall be constrained to restraint from campaigning for the remainder of an election, or suspension of digital campaigning for the remainder of an election. Penalties can be compounded and are nonexclusive.
- A Tier Three Violation after voted on by the board shall be constrained to restraint from campaigning for a maximum of seventy-two (72) hours and a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours and/or censure.
- 6010.3 At the discretion of the Elections Board's finding, Political Parties are responsible for the actions of those candidates for which they campaign and/or represent on the ballot. A Political Party may be penalized for any and all violations for which a candidate is accountable. The Elections Board may follow the same tier system for any subsequent penalties levied against a Party
- 6010.4 Candidates may appeal the <u>any</u> decision of the <u>Executive Elections</u> Board on matters of governing document regulations to the Supreme Court.
- 6010.5 Candidates or parties that are disqualified by the Elections Board, but appeal their disqualification to the Supreme Court within twenty-four (24) hours of the Elections Board's decision, shall not have the disqualification announced to the public, and the party / candidate(s) shall remain on the ballot unless the Supreme Court upholds the decision to disqualify.
- 6010.5.1 If a candidate / party that is disqualified does not appeal the decision within twenty-four (24) hours, the Elections Board may disclose news of the disqualification to the public; this still does not prevent the candidate / party from exercising their right to appeal.
- 6010.5.2 Candidates / parties disqualified by the Elections Board must immediately be made aware of the disqualification as soon as the Board makes the decision, and they must

- be informed about: their right to appeal the decision, as well as their right to not have the decision announced if appealed within the twenty-four (24) hour window.
- 6010.6 All penalties imposed by the Elections Board shall take effect immediately upon the decision being made by the Board. The Elections Board does not have the power to issue a delayed-effect penalty or a penalty that takes effect in the future.
- 6010.7 Any candidate or party against whom a Writ is filed must be informed of the filing of the Writ immediately by the Elections Commissioner. No trial or hearing against any defendant may begin without the presence of the defendant(s) unless it can be proven that the defendants are aware of the date and time of the trial/hearing and have refused to attend.

  No trial/hearing may be held against a defendant without the defendant being informed at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

# **Section 6011 Voting procedures**

- 6011.1 Each student desiring to vote shall present to the poll workers his/her current valid FIU Panther ID student identification card. There shall be at least one in-person voting location at MMC and one at BBC.
- 6011.2 Registered students will also be given the opportunity to vote online by accessing the appropriate election website. After each election, the Elections Board, the Senate, and the Student Body President shall give feedback to the Division of IT about the voting portal and potential improvements for future elections.
- 6011.3 In order to vote, students must enter student identification into the voting system.
- 6011.4 Students shall be eligible to vote only for candidates representing the college, unit, group, or section to which they are currently a member of. For College Senators this requires that a student be an enrolled member of that college. For Housing Senators, This shall be determined by place of residence in On-Campus Housing., ffor Lower and Upper Division Senators, this shall be determined by credits taken., ffor graduate senators, this shall be determined by a student's enrollment in a graduate program., ffor the Presidential and, Vice Presidential, and Gubernatorial Ticket, all students shall be eligible to vote.
- 6011.5 All eligible students waiting to vote at the time the polls close shall be permitted to vote after having been given an access marker of some sort
- 6011.6 No voting records or ballots shall be destroyed until the time for contesting an election has expired, until the time for contesting an election has expired, all complaints are resolved, and the elections are certified by the Elections Board.
- 6011.7 In the event that the online voting system fails, a University-Wide e-mail must be sent out within -twelve (12) hours of the system failure, notifying students of the paper ballot voting procedures and physical polling locations. The voting period must then be extended for an additional twenty--four (24) voting hours starting at the time that the e-mail is sent.

- 6011.8 If the number of ballots cast differs from the number of voters registered as having voted on the voting lists, the Elections Board shall investigate the discrepancy and determine appropriate action in a speedy and public manner
- 6011.9 If the number of voters cast in any sections of the elections exceed the number of persons logged in to vote by two- and one-half percent (2.5%) or more, those sections of the election shall be declared invalid only if the discrepancy would affect the outcome
- 6011.10 Students shall be <u>eligible able</u> to vote for <u>as many candidates as</u> the number of seats in a given <u>election\_delegation</u>; <u>i.</u> e.g., <u>For a A division\_delegation</u> where there are 4 seats available, students shall be able to vote for a maximum of 4 candidates.
- 6011.11 Voters seeking to vote for the Governor of the Biscayne Bay Campus, <u>Lieutenant</u>
  Governor of the Biscayne Bay Campus, and BBC At-Large Senator, <u>Lower Division</u>
  Senator and/or <u>Upper Division Senator</u> must <u>be students pertaining to the Biscayne Bay</u>
  Campus as defined by Constitutional requirement. <u>adhere to the qualifications set forth in SGAC§10.01.6</u> Voters seeking to vote for the FIU at I-75 Senator must be students
  pertaining to FIU at I-75 as defined by Constitutional requirement.
- 6011.12 All positions up for election shall include the option of write-in candidacies.
- Should a name receive a sufficient number of write-in votes to win an election, the student who won by write-in shall submit their Panther ID to the Elections Board within forty-eight (48) hours of the elections results announcement, to be checked for eligibility. Should the student meet the eligibility qualifications to hold the office to which they were elected, the student shall have won the seat. Should the student not meet the qualifications, they shall be considered disqualified from the election and unable to have won.
- Write-in votes that vary slightly in spelling or punctuation, but are reasonably meant to be votes for the same individual, shall be counted as votes for the same individual.

## Section 6012 Procedure for Contesting an Election

- 6012.1 Any Candidate for election shall have the right to petition to contest the results of an election.
- 6012.2 The complaint must be made in writing to the Elections Commissioner no later than <u>forty-eight\_twenty-four</u> (4824) hours after the conclusion of voting and shall include:
- 6012.2.1 The name(s) of the individual(s) against whom the complaint is being brought about
- The specific section(s) of the Elections Code which are alleged to have been violated
- 6012.2.3 The specific nature of the alleged violation(s)
- The name(s) and signature(s) of the person(s) bringing forth the complaint

- 6012.3 Upon receipt of a complaint, the Elections Board shall make a determination as to whether a hearing is necessary based upon whether there has been probable cause shown that a violation has occurred
- 6012.4 Both the complainant and defendants must receive written notice of the time and location from the Elections Commissioner no less than <u>forty-eight</u>twenty-four (4824) hours before a hearing is conducted
- 6012.5 The complainants may withdraw the complaint prior to the Elections Board taking final action;
- 6012.6 The Elections Board, upon finding a candidate guilty of committing an election violation, will decide the just penalty for the violation
- 6012.7 Any appeals for violation penalties will be sent to the Supreme Court for a second hearing
- 6012.8 All pending grievances regarding elections must be resolved prior to the results of the General/Special Election being announced

#### Section 6013 Election Results and Tabulation

- 6013.1 Following the Close of the General Election, results must be released within 48 hours of the close of the voting period. Should there be appeals, the results shall be released with those positions contested bearing the words "pending appeal"
- 6013.2 The Elections Commissioner shall release the results of the election for all positions that have been duly elected regardless of a pending run-off election. Should there be a run-off election the release of the results shall indicate the pending run-off or vacancy

#### **Section 6014 Definitions**

- 6014.1 Active Campaigning Any display or distribution of <u>campaign materials</u>, as defined in this <u>Elections Code</u>; and any direct and obvious solicitation of a student to vote for a candidate. tangible items or electronic media with the express intent to influence a third party to vote for a candidate
- 6014.2 Authorized by Candidate Candidate's written approval
- 6014.3 Bribe A prize, reward, gift, or favor bestowed or promised with a view to influence the action of another to vote, not vote, or vote for or against a particular candidate/ticket and/or any other item on the ballot, in any way. Any item distributed by the Elections Commission Board shall not constitute a bribe or bribery.
- 6014.4 Campaign Expenses The proven purchase or value of any tangible items and/or electronic media which contribute to a candidate's campaign and/or infers that a candidate/ticket intends to run for an elected Student Government officeany campaign materials, as defined in this Elections Code; or any service or good donated to the candidate with the intent of

- promoting or aiding the candidate in his/hertheir campaign. This must include sales tax or any other secondary costs for all goods and services.
- 6014.5 Campaign Materials Any tangible items and/or electronic media specifically purchased with the primary intention of being used to influence students to vote in favor of which contribute to a candidate's campaign and/or infers that a candidate/ticket\_intends to run for an elected Student Government office
- Campaign Period Time set by the Elections Board in which campaigning is able to occur.
- Campaign volunteer Any individual who self-affiliates with a particular candidate or political party participating in an election
- 6014.6 Candidate An individual seeking election to any Student Government position
- 6014.7 Defendant A candidate or party against whom a writ has been filed alleging a violation of the elections code
- Days All references in the elections code to time shall be based on University Business

  Days.
- 6014.7 Contribution Any service, goods or sum of money donated to the candidate with the intent of promoting or aiding the candidate in their campaign.
- 6014.8 Electronic Media Any campaign materials transferred electronically including, but not limited to, e-mails, websites, and social networking sites
- 6014.9 Endorsement To formally support a given candidate or ticket
- 6014.10 Fundraising The accepting of funds, donations, and/or goods received as a result of solicitation for a candidate or party
  - Physical Assistance Includes but is not limited to finances, campaign materials, or personnel.
- 6014.11 Libel A method of defamation expressed by print, writing, pictures or signs; any false and unprivileged publication that is injurious to the reputation of another,
- 6014.12 Majority Vote Minimum of fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of the vote/votes
- 6014.13 Partisan Publicly stating approval or disapproval of a candidate/ticket
- 6014.14 Preponderance of Evidence Means that evidence, considered as a whole, shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not. This is the standard used in adjudicating all violations within the Elections Commission Board.
- 6014.15 University Business Day One (1) university Business day shall be considered as any weekday, Monday through Friday, in which at least one (1) class is officially scheduled.
- Referendum Election the submission of a proposal to a direct popular vote of the Student Body. A referendum petition must be signed by at least 250 students, or a number of students totaling fifteen percent (15%) of the number of votes cast in the most recent

- general election, whichever is less. These petitions shall be submitted to the Elections Board.
- <u>Recall Election Any student has the right to submit a petition to recall an elected SGA</u> official, as stated in the Constitution and the Florida Statutes.
- 6014.16 Slander Oral defamation; the speaking of false or malicious words concerning another, whereby injury results to a person's reputation
- 6014.17 Tangible Items Any campaign materials that are inanimate and may be seen or touched.
- 6014.18 Third Parties Individuals or organizations other than the candidate/ticket themselves
- 6014.19 Third Party Advertising Solicited or unsolicited support for a candidate/ticket by an organization or individual other than the candidate/ticket themselves.
  - Ticket Two candidates that run together and are elected together for Student Body

    President and Vice President. This shall also be referred to as the Presidential ticket. The

    Governor and Lieutenant Governor of BBC shall not run as a ticket, and shall be

    separately elected seats.
- 6014.20 Unauthorized by Candidate Anything without a candidate's written approval
- 6014.21 Date of registration for the election- The first date registration opens for the election in question

## **Senate Bill Transmission Form**

This bill is presented by the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University. It is presented by the Senate President Pro-Tempore and affixed with the signature of the Senate President. Both the Senate President and the Senate President Pro-Tempore affirm that the information presented below is accurate and that the bill has successfully passed in the Senate of the Student Body. The bill is presented on this day and at this hour for signature or veto.

SB 04 021				
Date Introduced:	01/22/2024			
Committees Assigned:	(1) Graduate and Professional Student Committee (2) Rules and Administration			
GPSC:	6	0	0	
	For	Against	Abstaining	
Rules and	4	0	0	
Administration:	For	Against	Abstaining	
Vote on the		_	_	
Senate Floor:	21	0	0	
4/8/2024	For	Against	Abstaining	
Signature of the Senate President		Signature of the Senate President Pro Tempore		

# Presidential Signature of a Senate Bill

On this day, at this time, and in this place, the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University does hereby present this bill to the desk of the President of the Student Body for signature or veto. The Senate has passed this bill and all its accompaniments, in accordance with the Constitution and Statutes of the Student Government Association at Florida International University. It is presented in good faith, whereas the officers of the Senate have affixed their signatures to affirm that the bill has followed due procedure and is valid. The Senate will await your decision.

	SB 04 021
Wall to	
- I while	
Kaily LaChapelle, Senate President	

Karina Hernandez, Senate Floor Leader

Tiara Campbell, Senate President Pro-Tempore

