



POLICY 3.01

ELECTION, REFERENDUM, AND PLEBISCITE MANAGEMENT

Election Conduct

POLICY INTENT

To ensure a fair election of members to AUSU Council, this policy, written in accordance with Article 9 of the AUSU Bylaws, sets out the process to be followed when conducting elections and by-elections.

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Council

POLICY

Timelines

- 3.01.01 To be sure that all aspects of the election are run properly, Council will adhere to the following timelines:
- 3.01.01.01 A General Election Date to occur within two years of the last General Election Date. This date must be set within 20 months of the last General Election date.
 - 3.01.01.02 A General Call for Nominations at least 30 days prior to the General Election Date.
 - 3.01.01.03 The Chief Returning Officer hired at least 7 days before the General Call for Nominations.
 - 3.01.01.04 The Nomination Period extends from the General Call for Nominations for at least 7 days but no longer than 21 days.
 - 3.01.01.05 The List of Nominees to be finalized within 5 days of the close of the Nomination Period, after which the names and bios of candidates who withdraw may still be included in any AUSU produced election materials.
 - 3.01.01.06 The Campaign Period shall extend from the date the List of Nominees is finalized until the end of the Voting Period.
 - 3.01.01.07 The Voting Period shall extend for four days, beginning on the General Election Date.

- 3.01.01.08 The ballot count shall be completed within four days of the end of the Voting Period.
- 3.01.01.09 The Appeals Period is a period of seven days immediately following any Ballot Count or Recount.
- 3.01.01.10 The Changeover shall occur no more than thirty days following the completion of all appeals periods.

Chief Returning Officer

- 3.01.02 Council will hire a Chief Returning Officer (CRO), as set out in the election timelines.
- 3.01.03 The CRO is responsible for monitoring all aspects of the election process, with the aid of AUSU staff and systems. These aspects include:
 - a) collecting nominations,
 - b) verifying the eligibility of nominees,
 - c) informing candidates of campaign policy,
 - d) enforcing campaign policy,
 - e) collecting votes,
 - f) confirming voter eligibility,
 - g) counting ballots, including for any recounts, and
 - h) reporting election results to Council.
- 3.01.04 The CRO will ensure that all information received remains confidential and that only the Ballot Count(s) for valid ballots are released to AUSU Council.
- 3.01.05 The CRO will be paid an honorarium of \$500. No reimbursement shall be made for any travel or accommodation expenses incurred by the CRO in the performance of duties.
- 3.01.06 The CRO is supervised by the AUSU Executive Director.
- 3.01.07 The decisions of the CRO shall be final.

Call for Nominations

- 3.01.08 Council will announce a General Call for Nominations as specified above in the election timelines.
 - 3.01.08.01 The General Call for Nominations will include:
 - a) Notification of the General Election Date, and the close of voting date,
 - b) Notification of the deadline for self-nomination,
 - c) Notification that all candidates are required to agree to the principles outlined in this Elections policy, and
 - d) Instructions on how to submit an eligible self-nomination.

List of Nominees

- 3.01.09 For General Elections, any Active Member in Good Standing may submit a self-nomination to run for a seat on Council.

- 3.01.09.01 A self-nomination must include:
- a) The member's full name, phone number, e-mail address, mailing address,
 - b) The member's AU student identification number,
 - c) The member's statement to consent to act, if elected, and
 - d) The member's agreement to abide by the AUSU general elections policies.
- 3.01.10 Self-nominations will be accepted from the General Call for Nominations until the end of the nomination period, the exact time of which is to be determined and announced by Council with the General Call for Nominations
- 3.01.11 Self-nominations received outside the nomination period shall not be considered eligible, though it shall not adversely affect the eligibility of any nomination submitted properly during the nomination period.
- 3.01.12 The receipt of each self-nomination will be acknowledged to the nominee within one business day of receiving it.
- 3.01.13 With the assistance of AUSU staff and, if necessary, the AU Academic Records Department, the CRO will verify that each nominee meets all eligibility requirements to run for AUSU Council. The CRO will create a finalized List of Nominees from all eligible nominations. The people on this list shall be the Candidates.
- 3.01.14 In the event that there are nine or fewer candidates by the close of the call for nominations, the CRO shall conduct the Acclamation procedure.
- 3.01.15 In the event that there are ten or more candidates at the end of the campaign period, the CRO shall conduct the Election procedure.
- 3.01.16 When the List of Nominees is finalized, the CRO will inform all eligible nominees of:
- a) their status as a candidate,
 - b) the start and end dates of the Campaign Period, and
 - c) campaign guidelines and policy.
- 3.01.17 The CRO will inform ineligible nominees of their lack of Candidacy and the reason for their rejection as a Candidate at the time that the List of Nominees is finalized.

Campaign

- 3.01.18 AUSU will endeavor to provide a number of campaign opportunities for candidates, which may include such things as:
- a) Publication of an individual summary statement of no more than 100 words in various AUSU media,
 - b) A public discussion forum dedicated to election campaign notices and questions,
 - c) Scheduled chat times and interviews to be included in the AUSU This Month column in The Voice, and/or
 - d) Other means as Council determines appropriate.
- 3.01.19 Any campaign opportunity AUSU provides will be provided equally to all candidates.
- 3.01.20 AUSU may additionally declare certain campaign opportunities as requirements to maintain

their active candidacy. These shall be referred to as campaign requirements.

- 3.01.20.01 Any campaign requirements must be declared by AUSU before the start of the nomination period, disclosed to the candidate in the response to their self-nomination, and include a deadline within the campaign period by which the requirement is to be fulfilled.
- 3.01.20.02 Any campaign requirement must be reasonable in nature and must apply equally to all candidates.
- 3.01.20.03 If attendance is required, AUSU shall ensure that there are a reasonable variety of opportunities for attendance, in order to accommodate the wide variety of schedules of AUSU members.
- 3.01.21 Any candidate that does not fulfill a campaign requirement by the stated deadline shall have their candidacy revoked, and they shall not be permitted to be a Candidate in the current General Election.
 - 3.01.21.1 Any person may lodge a protest with the CRO about a campaign requirement on the grounds that it does not fulfill one or more of the restrictions listed above.
 - 3.01.21.2 If a protest is made, the CRO will determine if the requirement made by AUSU is reasonable in nature, applies equally to all candidates, and if candidates were provided the required notice. If attendance was required, the CRO will also determine if the variety of opportunities for attendance were sufficient.
 - 3.01.20.3 If the CRO determines that the campaign requirement did not meet one or more of the above restrictions, any former candidate who had their Candidacy revoked for not fulfilling that campaign requirement shall have their Candidacy reinstated.
- 3.01.22 The CRO will decide, upon being provided evidence, if any complaint against a Candidate for campaigning in contravention of this policy is valid.
- 3.01.23 If a Candidate is found to be campaigning in contravention of this policy, their Candidacy shall be revoked, and they shall not be permitted to be a Candidate in the current General Election.

Campaign Materials

- 3.01.24 As a condition of candidacy, candidates agree to provide AUSU and The Voice the irrevocable, non-exclusive, non-transferable rights to use and/or reproduce any campaign materials in any format. Candidates further agree that AUSU may modify the materials in such manner that makes their transference to other mediums possible.
- 3.01.25 No candidate may post campaign materials without proper permission from the owner of the location or site on which the materials are posted.
- 3.01.26 All physical campaign materials must be removed by the end of the Voting Period.
- 3.01.27 Campaign materials may not interfere with the normal operations of AU or AUSU.

- 3.01.28 Campaign materials must be able to be cleanly and completely removed without difficulty, as such, no campaign materials should be made of adhesive materials such as stickers.
- 3.01.29 No candidate may post campaign materials that violate the law or Charter of Rights and Freedoms or that provide access or reference to other materials that do.
- 3.01.30 Candidates are not granted any special rights to make use of AUSU and/or AU copyright materials (ie logos, slogans, etc.) and must adhere to all copyright legislation.
- 3.01.31 No candidate may post campaign materials that provide false information about other candidates.

Acclamation

- 3.01.32 If there are fewer than 10 valid candidates following the Nomination or campaign period, to ensure that the membership has the opportunity to reject any candidate(s), the following acclamation procedure will be followed.
- 3.01.33 The CRO will, with the assistance of AUSU staff, ensure that each member has access to an acclamation package that includes at least:
- a) A list of the candidates and their individual summary statements,
 - b) Instructions on how to obtain their ballot online or by alternative means,
 - c) Instructions to include their student ID and full name as part of their ballot for verification of Active Member status,
 - d) Instructions that they may vote Yes or No for each individual candidate,
 - e) Notification of the start and end of the voting period,
 - f) Notification that failure to follow any of these instructions will result in a spoiled ballot that is not counted, and
 - g) Notification that any candidates with more Yes votes than No votes at the end of the voting period shall be considered elected.
- 3.01.34 For the purposes of this section, it is sufficient if the Acclamation Package is posted online in a place where any AUSU member in good standing can access it with the use of a standard computer and web-browser.

Election

- 3.01.35 If there are ten or more valid candidates following the campaign period, the CRO will, with the assistance of AUSU staff, ensure that each member has access to an Election Package which will include at least:
- a) A list of the candidates and their individual summary statements;
 - b) Instructions on how to obtain their ballot online or by alternative means;
 - c) Instructions to include their student ID and full name as part of their ballot for verification of Active Member status;
 - d) Instructions that they may vote for no more than nine candidates;
 - e) Notification that failure to follow any of these instructions will result in a spoiled ballot that is not counted;
 - f) Notification of the start and end of the voting period; and
 - g) Notification that the nine candidates with the most votes at the end of the voting period shall be considered elected.
- 3.01.36 For the purposes of this section, it is sufficient if the Election Package is posted online in a

place where any AUSU member in good standing can access it with the use of a standard computer and web-browser.

Ballots

- 3.01.37 The CRO shall, with the assistance of AUSU staff, ensure that the handling of the ballots is done in a secure manner and that no Active Member has the ability to provide more than one ballot.
- 3.01.38 All ballots are to be stored securely, whether received by electronic or other means, including telephone message.
- 3.01.39 At the close of the voting period, all ballots are to be compared to a Master List of Active Members as provided by the AU Registrar and an identifying mark placed beside that member's ID if a ballot has been cast. The same mark is to be placed on the ballot so it may be retrieved by the CRO if required.
- 3.01.40 If a Ballot is received and the member is not on the Master List, that ballot is to be set aside for that count. These ballots shall be retained in case of a recount.
- 3.01.41 If more than one vote is received from a member, the CRO shall retrieve all ballots from that student and set them aside and not include them that count. These ballots shall be retained in case of a recount.
- 3.01.42 The CRO shall never divulge or permit to be divulged which member has cast which ballot.
- 3.01.43 The CRO shall be responsible for verifying and reporting the count of the ballots within four (4) days from the close of the voting period.

Scrutineers

- 3.01.44 The CRO may, with the assistance of AUSU staff, ensure at least one impartial scrutineer is hired to assist in the collection, validation, and counting of the ballots.

Results

- 3.01.45 The CRO shall provide a report to the current AUSU President indicating the names of the Candidates and the total number of votes received by each, duly signed by the CRO and any scrutineers.
- 3.01.46 The results shall be announced by the President at a Special Meeting of Council which is to be held within 24 hours of the CRO providing them to the President, and shall be announced to the public at this time.
- 3.01.47 In the event of a tie for the ninth seat on Council a secondary vote shall be held.
- 3.01.48 For a secondary vote, the ballot shall only include the names of all the Candidates tied for the last position on Council and shall be prepared within 72 hours of the Special Meeting called by the President.

- 3.01.49 AUSU will announce the secondary vote on its front page within 24 hours of the Special Meeting.
- 3.01.50 The voting period for any secondary vote will be two days.
- 3.01.51 All ballots for a secondary vote are to be handled in the same manner as for the General Election.

Re-Counts

- 3.01.52 Only valid candidates who are not elected may request a re-count. This must be done by forwarding a registered letter within 7 days of the election announcement to AUSU, stating their request and reason that they feel a re-count is warranted.
- 3.01.53 Scrutineers hired may be re-employed for this purpose or another scrutineer may be hired, at the discretion of the CRO.
- 3.01.54 The CRO shall conduct any recount, observed by any scrutineers, and provide a report of the list of names and their associated vote counts duly signed by the CRO and all scrutineers to Council within four (4) days of the last ballot count.
- 3.01.55 Council shall provide a copy of this report to all Candidates.
- 3.01.56 If there is any change to the vote based on the recount, any Candidates who have failed to get elected have 7 days following the announcement of the recount results to submit a request for a recount, which is conducted in the same manner.
- 3.01.57 In the event that a charge of electoral misconduct is alleged against the CRO, AUSU shall retain a chartered arbitrator to decide the issue. If the arbiter concludes that the charge was made without grounds, the member making the charge shall no longer be considered in good standing, until such time as a resolution is passed allowing the member to resume good standing.

Changeover

- 3.01.58 At the close of elections a changeover meeting of council will be scheduled, to occur no more than thirty days from the announcement of the final result of the ballot count and all re-counts.
- 3.01.59 At the changeover meeting, the President and Councillors, whose terms (if not re-elected) expire immediately, shall turn over their books of office and any properties of the AUSU without delay, and remove all private AUSU materials and student data from their computers and destroy all hard copies of such materials which are not returned to the AUSU office.
- 3.01.60 The Councillors-elect shall take office at the close of the changeover meeting. At this meeting, they shall elect from among themselves, those Councillors who shall hold offices of President, Vice-President External and Student Affairs and Vice-President Finance and Administration.
- 3.01.61 During the changeover period, Councillors-elect will have access to Council e-mail and will be expected to take an active role in becoming oriented to AUSU Council. They will be paid

a nominal honorarium of \$150 a month during the orientation and changeover period. Councillors who have been re-elected in this general election are not eligible for the Councillor-elect honorarium.

- 3.01.62 Any AUSU-related expenses incurred by Councillors-elect during the orientation process will be considered eligible for reimbursement, subject to approval in accordance with AUSU financial policies.
- 3.01.63 During the changeover period, a review will be done of external committees to determine whether new representatives shall be appointed once Councillors-elect take office.
- 3.01.64 The outgoing council is to make every effort to ensure that the Councillors-elect begin their terms with a good understanding of the current activities of Council and their roles on Council, and are familiar with all AUSU policies, bylaws, and procedures.

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date: December 19, 2005

Updated Date: November 24, 2009

Mandatory Review by Date: November 24, 2011