



Policy Type: Board Policy **ELECTIONS & APPEALS**

The following policy and procedures will apply to all IGNITE Student Union (IGNITE) elections and by-elections. This policy exists to ensure the fair and unbiased administration of all elections and appeals processes.

Elected Positions with IGNITE

The following positions shall be considered for each election:

One President (Institution -wide election)

One Vice President Guelph-Humber (Guelph-Humber campus election)

One Vice President Lakeshore (Lakeshore campus election)

One Vice President North (North campus election)

A maximum of ten Directors (in accordance with the Constitution)

Election Administration Objectivity

The elections administration team shall be comprised of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO), the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), and the Executive Director (or designate). All elections administrators must be, and appear to be, objective and unbiased in their activities during elections. This is also required while considering any issue that comes before the CRO or DRO in the course of their electoral duties.

The CRO or DRO must not be involved as a candidate or on a campaign team in any election or by-election of which they administer. Should the CRO or DRO(s) wish to run for an elected position, they must resign their position. This must occur prior to the filing of nomination papers for the election or by-election in question.

Candidate Eligibility

Any full-time member, as per the Constitution, may run in any election for IGNITE, provided that they have proven to the CRO that they are eligible as defined by the Constitution.

MEMBERS REMOVED. A member of IGNITE whom has been removed from the Board of Directors or as an Executive from office may not run for a period of one (1) calendar year after the date of removal from office.

MEMBERS SUSPENDED. A member of IGNITE, whose eligibility rights have been affected by suspension from the Board of Directors or as an Executive, may not run in any election until the effects of the suspension has expired.



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MEMBERS RESIGNED. Any student who has been a member of IGNITE and resigned from the Board of Directors or as an Executive prior to being removed, or deemed removable in accordance with the Constitution may not run for a period of one (1) calendar year after the date of resignation.

MEMBERS ACADEMIC STANDING. Any student who has resigned or been removed from a position due to being placed on Academic Probation as defined by the candidate's Institution may not run for and/or participate on the Board of Directors or as an Executive for one (1) calendar year after the date of removal from office.

MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING. Any student who is regarded as having complied with all expectations of the Student Code of Conduct and deemed in good standing with the Institution may nominate or be nominated as a candidate. A student in good standing is one who has not been in violation with any Institution or IGNITE policies. Elected members are expected to maintain this good standing status throughout their term of office.

MEMBERS CAMPUS TRANSFER. Provided a written notice is received by the CRO from the Office of the Registrar prior to the close of nominations, students who are eligible full-time members of IGNITE, and have been accepted (and transferred) into a program of study at either of the four campuses, may run in the elections at their newly transferred campus.

MEMBERS IMMIGRATION STATUS. Immigration status does not bar a full-time member of IGNITE from running in any IGNITE election.

MEMBERS LEGAL AUTHORITY. A member who does not have legal authority to be employed full-time, and who wins an IGNITE election requiring them to work full-time, will be allowed to hold the position until the required authority to work for IGNITE has been obtained. Should work authority be denied, the individual must resign their position or fulfill their duties without pay.

EXTERNAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION OR ADVOCACY GROUP MEMBERSHIP. In accordance with and in support of the Constitution and Director Loyalty and Commitment policy, elected students who are Directors or Executives of external student associations and/or student advocacy groups not sanctioned by IGNITE are not eligible to become Directors or Executives of IGNITE.

Election Dates

An election must be held during the winter semester to elect students to represent all positions. The last voting day must occur at least five (5) days prior to the Annual General Meeting, which is deemed to be on, or near, March 31st in the winter semester.

Candidates must comply with all applicable dates that apply to them during the nomination, campaigning and voting periods.

Nomination Period

The Nomination Period for any election shall be a minimum of ten (10) consecutive business days.

The CRO and DRO are permitted to sign candidates' nomination forms and vote for any candidate, provided they are enrolled as a full-time student and have paid the respective student activity fee.



Any student expressing intent to run for an elected position with IGNITE will be deemed a candidate and therefore be subject to the provision and responsibilities outlined in this policy by the elections administration team.

Any student running for President must attain two hundred (200) full names, signatures and student numbers from full-time members of IGNITE at any given campus. The signatures must include a minimum of 50 signatures from two other campuses other than their registered home campus.

Any student running for Vice President must attain one hundred and fifty (150) full name, signatures and student numbers from the full-time Members of the respective campus they are running to represent (i.e. Lakeshore position requires signatures from Lakeshore full-time students).

Any student running for a Director position must attain one hundred (100) full names, signatures and student numbers from the full-time Members of the respective campus they are running to represent. However, candidates running for the Director position in Orangeville must attain twenty-five (25) full names, signatures and student numbers from the full-time Members of that campus.

Students returning nomination packages after the deadline will not be considered for candidacy in the election process.

IGNITE may verify with the Institution's Office of the Registrars the eligibility of each candidate, as defined in the Constitution, upon the close of the nomination period. The CRO and Executive Director (or designate) will confirm each candidate's respective eligibility for the election.

Upon completing the eligibility process, the elections administration team will determine the number of positions acclaimed and the number of eligible candidates for each remaining open position. If only one person is nominated for any Executive or Board of Director position, the candidate shall run a campaign based on a "Yes/No" ballot.

Should the outcome of a "Yes/No" ballot result in a "No" vote, then that particular position shall remain vacant, and the vacancy must be filled in accordance with the Constitution.

All Candidates Meeting #1:

The elections administration team will conduct a meeting to introduce all the election officials and eligible candidates. The Election and Appeals policy will be reviewed in detail, allowing each candidate to address any questions and/or concerns they may have regarding the election policy.

The Election Forums will be confirmed at this meeting. Also, the Election and Judicial Review Committee (EJRC) will be named and verified as acceptable. This will include the names of the standing EJRC members and the names of the alternates for this committee. Candidates are required to provide notice, in writing, informing the CRO of any conflict of interest regarding the elections administration team or EJRC members and alternates no later than 4:00 p.m., the day before polls open.

Campaigning begins within ten (10) business days following the Nomination Period and extends a minimum of five (5) consecutive business days.

Campaigning is defined as: an activity that promotes a candidate, either verbally, written, or digitally. A candidate may use any number of different methods of campaigning, as long as the financial parameters, policy guidelines, and time limits are observed. Candidates should verify with the elections administration team for guidance with respect to any campaigning material that might be considered offensive to others or against a policy. Any campaign material found to be offensive will be immediately dealt with by the elections administration team.

INTEGRITY POLICY. Candidates for election are required to demonstrate the integrity expected of elected office. Candidates should demonstrate fairness and goodwill to fellow candidates. Candidates are not permitted to engage in negative campaigning practices against a fellow candidate, IGNITE or the Institution. Candidates must run their respective campaigns in a positive spirit. Violations will be subject to penalty by the elections administration team.

EMPLOYMENT ON CAMPUS PROVISION. The elections administration team recognizes that students interested in running for elected positions may have jobs that are necessary to afford the education they are pursuing. As a result, candidates are permitted to have jobs, in any capacity, on campus during the nomination, campaigning and voting periods. Candidates are responsible for not doing any elections-related activities while they are working in a part-time capacity at the Institution. Violations of this provision will be dealt with through penalties as determined by the elections administration team.

The only exception to this provision is that current elected and hired positions within IGNITE may not continue their regular duties unless approved by the elections administration team. Candidates that currently hold IGNITE positions at the time of the nomination, campaigning and voting period are not permitted to wear any official IGNITE staff branded clothing.

Candidates are responsible for removing all of their campaign materials around the Institution by the end of the voting period. In the event of non-compliance, candidates will not receive reimbursement of their elections expenses.

No new campaign material can be created or posted after the opening of polls.

Any, and all, handouts or flyers intended for distribution must first be submitted to the elections administration team for approval prior to distribution. The only acceptable method of distributing handouts or flyers is by direct contact between a candidate and a student. Handouts and flyers cannot be left undistributed, for random pick-up, in any area of the Institution. The areas restricted from all forms of campaigning, including the distribution of handouts or flyers, are:

- Administration Offices (i.e. academic school offices)
- All glass and mirrored surfaces (especially doors)
- All IGNITE Property
- All elevators, stairwells and stairs
- Athletics (external only, not inside fitness facilities)
- Bridge between Humber ITAL and the University of Guelph-Humber
- Guelph-Humber Atrium



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- Student Residence Buildings (cafeteria and main floor lobby area only)
- Washrooms

Electronic Campaigning

Websites, personal email distributions, personal listserv messages, social networking sites and all other conceivable methods of electronic campaigning are permissible as a means of communicating a candidate's platform to the student population so long as they comply with all campaign regulations with respect to the integrity provisions in this policy. Candidates may not use Humber or Guelph-Humber listserv distributions.

No new electronic campaign messages can be created or posted after the opening of polls. In questionable situations, the elections administration team will make a discretionary judgment as to the intent and harm of such instances.

IGNITE Property

Any candidates with keys to IGNITE property will relinquish their keys and pass codes to the Executive Director (or designate) before election campaigning begins. At no time during campaigning are candidates permitted within IGNITE offices without prior consent from the elections administration team. IGNITE resources are restricted to all candidates for election purposes. Any candidate found using IGNITE resources for election purposes are subject to immediate disqualification.

Candidates who are affiliated with IGNITE clubs and associations are permitted to continue participating with their respective club, provided that they are not using their club position to unfairly leverage their campaign or candidacy in the elections process. Violations of this provision are subject to penalty by the elections administration team.

Monetary Limitations

Presidential candidates may spend up to three hundred dollars (\$300.00) in an election campaign. Candidates for Vice President may spend up to two hundred dollars (\$200.00) and candidates for a Director may spend up to one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in an election campaign.

Any free, or donated, materials must be itemized (verified as to its value) and verified by the elections administration team prior to the distribution of such materials. The value of such free, or donated, materials will be included in the monetary limitations set forth. All receipts for campaign expenses must be submitted to the elections administration team prior to the opening of polls to avoid disciplinary action. Written notification must still be submitted to the elections administration team should any candidate not have incurred any expenses related to their campaign.

Candidates who win an election will not be reimbursed for their election expenses. Unsuccessful Presidential candidates will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$150.00; Vice Presidential candidates will be reimbursed a maximum of \$100.00; and a maximum of \$50.00 for Director positions, for their allowable election expenses, provided the expense report and receipts are submitted according to this policy.

The voting period will be at least twenty-four (24) hours during any number of consecutive business days in a one-week period and cannot occur during the Reading Week.

A candidate who has been disqualified by the elections administration team prior to the open of polls will not be listed on the ballot. A candidate who is disqualified after the open of polls will continue to be listed on the ballot.

Candidates must allow students to vote without undue influence or duress of any type during the voting period. Any candidate found or suspected to be participating in voter misconduct will be subject to immediate disqualification by the elections administration team.

All Candidates Meeting #2:

All candidates must attend All Candidates Meeting #2, at the close of voting, to sign off on the election results to acknowledge that the election was fair, binding and conclusive. No candidate may launch an appeal based on the electronic vote tabulation process.

A candidate's signature on the elections release form bars the candidate from appealing the results of the election based on the process up to, and including, the close of voting stations.

Any position with a candidate who has signaled intent to appeal prior to the close of polls will not have its results reported. The Executive Director (or designate) will store the electronically-tabulated election results in a secure location until the Election and Judicial Review Committee renders its final ruling.

The Executive candidate with the most votes shall be declared the winner of their respective election. In the case of a tie, a run-off election between the tied Executive candidates will take place with an additional day of voting occurring by the Friday, one week following the normal close of the voting period. All eligible members of IGNITE associated with the position being contested may vote in the additional voting day.

The Director candidate(s) with the most votes per campus shall likewise be declared the winner of their respective election. In the case of a tie, and if necessary to determine the outcome of the number of Director positions per campus, a run-off election between the tied Director candidates will take place with an additional day of voting occurring by the Friday, one week following the normal close of the voting period. All eligible members of IGNITE associated with the position being contested may vote in the additional voting day.

Disputes

Candidates should be cognizant of the penalty process the elections administration team will use during the nomination, campaign and voting process. The elections administration team will use a three strikes protocol. Candidates found to be in violation of this policy will be first issued a verbal or written warning regarding the offence. A second violation of this policy may lead to the forfeit of the candidates' election reimbursement. A third violation of this policy will result in disqualification of the candidate from the elections process. Candidates are advised that the elections administration team can proceed to any of these three steps should the violation of policy be severe in nature.



A dispute is determined as any conflict a candidate may have with the decision, or action, taken by the elections administration team that impacts their specific candidacy. At any time during the election, a candidate who wishes to address such a decision, or action, taken by the elections administration team must make an appointment with the elections administration team. At this meeting, reasonable steps will be taken to resolve the issue, and the candidate may begin the appeals process (see the Appeals section of this policy).

Appeals must be officially submitted before the close of polls.

Election and Judicial Review Committee

Members of the Election and Judicial Review Committee (EJRC) will not be involved in any election campaign. Involvement includes any activities that could be construed as endorsing a candidate (i.e. putting up posters or wearing campaign paraphernalia). All Election and Judicial Review Committee members must be, and carry the perception of, complete impartialness.

Members of the EJRC must immediately disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the elections administration team.

The Appeals Process

Any candidate wishing to appeal an election has until the close of polls to file a Notice to Appeal with the Executive Director (or designate).

A Notice of Appeal must include a Letter of Reasons pertaining to the appeal. A Letter of Reasons states, in a logical manner, the reasons for the appeal and shall include any documentation being used in support of the appeal.

The Executive Director (or designate) will make the candidate's Notice of Appeal and Letter of Reasons available to the CRO and EJRC once received. In addition, the CRO shall provide the Executive Director with a summary that states, in a logical manner, why the CRO made the decision being appealed and any documentation being used in support of the CRO's decision must be attached, this will include a copy of the disciplinary decision (s) handed out by the CRO to the candidate.

Upon review of these documents, the EJRC will render a decision as to whether they wish to proceed to an official committee hearing to evaluate the appeal or outright dismiss the appeal request for insufficient reasoning.

In the event that the EJRC elects to proceed to an official committee hearing, the election results for the position in question will remain sealed and be stored in a secure area until the EJRC renders its final decision and directs the CRO to report the election results.

The Pre-Appeal Hearing Process

The Committee shall meet to review the appeal and must render a decision within five (5) business days of receiving the Notice of Appeal.

Upon receipt of the appeal package from the Executive Director (or designate), the EJRC members will review the contents, consider which individuals they wish to call at the hearing as well as any additional evidence materials available, and prepare for the appeal hearing.

The Appeal Hearing Process

The appeal hearing shall take place at a time and location determined by the Executive Director (or



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designate) and disseminated to the appropriate parties twenty-four (24) hours in advance of such a hearing.

Each appeal before the EJRC shall be conducted in private. Only the appealing candidate and the CRO shall be permitted to remain in the room throughout the hearing.

At the appeal hearing, the EJRC will inform the CRO and the appealing candidate that this is an impartial body that will listen objectively to the information from both sides, asks questions when it deems appropriate, and render a decision. The EJRC will state that its decision is final and binding.

The EJRC will alternate statements between the appealing student and the CRO. The parties may call the witnesses, only if approved by the Committee members. Each appealing candidate will be permitted a five (5) minute opening statement followed by a five (5) minute CRO rebuttal. After the CRO rebuttal, an additional five (5) minute rebuttal will be entitled to the appealing candidate. The remaining time will be allotted for witness statements and questions from Committee members.

Appeal Hearing Conclusion

After hearing all submissions from the parties, the EJRC shall meet privately to deliberate their decision. The Committee's decision shall be made on a majority vote. In the event of a tie vote, the Committee shall continue deliberating until a majority vote is achieved.

The Committee's decision shall include a specific direction to the CRO (i.e. report the election results, run a new election, disqualify candidate(s), etc.).

Immediately after a decision has been reached, EJRC must communicate its decision to the Executive Director (or designate), who shall notify the CRO and all of the affected candidates within twenty-four (24) hours of the decision.

The appeal process shall take no longer than five (5) business days, unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the Appeals Committee from completing its work within that time period. If this is the case, the appeals process will conclude as soon as reasonably possible.

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