

USC Undergraduate Student Government 2018 Elections Code

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Undergraduate Student Government Elections Code

Article I: Fundamental Principles

I.A. The rules and procedures specified in this Elections Code shall apply to all Undergraduate Student Government (USG) Elections and are intended to supplement provisions of the USG Constitution and Bylaws pertaining to the conduct of the Elections.

I.B. All candidates shall be governed by the rules set forth in USG policies as identified in the current USG Constitution and Bylaws, the USG Code of Ethics, and the USG Elections Code.

I.C. In the event that the Elections Code conflicts with university policies as identified in SCampus, the university policies will take precedence.

I.D. In the event that the Elections Code conflicts with local or state law in any way, the law will take precedence.

Article II: Definitions

II.A. Throughout the Elections Code, a number of terms and titles are referenced. Their definitions are provided here. All times referenced in this document are in Pacific Standard Time (PST).

II.B. Regarding declaration of candidacy and application components:

II.B.1. Elections Application Part I [Digital Form]: The form available to students no later than Friday, November 17, 2017 that identifies an individual's desire to run for an elected position. This portion of the application confirms basic eligibility requirements and includes one's academic transcript, candidate platform, candidate questionnaire and candidate statement. The application will be due Saturday, December 2, 2017 by 4:00PM and may be submitted digitally.

II.B.2. Elections Application Part II [Supporting Materials]: These materials are due on Saturday, December 2, 2017 by 4:00PM in a sealed envelope to the USG Office. This portion of the application contains one's declared campaign team, campaign finance plan, a signed copy of the Elections Code, and a signed candidate agreement. Candidates will may submit a list of up to five members of their campaign team, which may not be altered. Part II of the Application may be submitted before Part I, but both portions must be submitted before the deadline. The two parts of the application together comprise one's Intent to Run.

II.C. Regarding candidacy and campaign teams:

II.C.1. Candidate: Any individual who meets the qualifications as outlined in Article V of the Elections Code and the USG Constitution and Bylaws and has successfully submitted and received approval for a candidate application or an official Write-In Candidate Form.

II.C.2. Campaign Team: Individuals who are identified as one of up to five principal members declared in a candidate's Intent to Run. These individuals coordinate a candidate's campaign, and thus serve as an extension of the candidate throughout the elections process.

II.C.2.i. Campaign Manager: A designated individual responsible for the status of a campaign. All presidential tickets must list a Campaign Manager. Any candidate may serve as their own Campaign Manager if desired.

II.D. Regarding campaigning and correspondence:

II.D.1. Correspondence: Defined as verbal, written, or other forms of communication between two or more parties in regards to the USG Election.

II.D.2. Campaigning: Any unsolicited or solicited action taken to advance or promote a certain candidate, ticket, or slate, including but not limited to: physically or technologically advocating for support or any action that may be defined as supporting a candidate, ticket, or slate; having campaign materials in plain view in areas where campaigning is restricted, regardless of intent; and utilizing individuals for campaign purposes with or without their proper consent.

II.D.3. Endorsement: Any announcement or publication by an individual or recognized student organization in support of an office seeker with the intention of advancing the candidacy of that individual.

II.E. Regarding significant dates during the elections process:

II.E.1. Intent to Run: A completed packet of both Parts of the Elections Application.

II.E.2. Preparation Period: The period following confirmation of an individual's candidacy prior to public campaign launches on Thursday, January 25th, 2018 at 6:59PM. During the Preparation Period, correspondence is limited to a candidate's running mate(s), campaign team, and the Director of Elections and Recruitment.

II.E.3. Point of No Return: The time at which a candidate may no longer make changes to their candidate statement, official responses, or platform, five days before the start of the Spring term (January 3, 2018) at 4:00PM.

II.E.4. Campaign Period Part I: The initial campaign period begins with the public campaign announcements on Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 7:00PM and runs through Tuesday, January 30 at 9:59PM. During this period, campaign teams will be permitted to begin any external interactions on behalf of their campaign and may now seek endorsements. All forms of physical campaigning are prohibited; no physical material will be permitted during this campaign period which includes but is not limited to: handouts, stickers, t-shirts, or any physical items endorsing a candidate or ticket.

II.E.5. Campaign Period II (Physical Campaigning): Begins on Tuesday, January 30 at 10PM until the Voting Period begins on Tuesday, February 13 at 12:00AM. During Campaign Period II, physical items promoting one's candidacy may be distributed and active campaigning on campus is permitted, including but not limited to the placement of signs on Trousdale Parkway.

II.E.6. Voting Period: The period in which undergraduate students may cast votes for a Presidential/Vice Presidential ticket and for Senators. Polls open on Tuesday, February 13 at 12:00AM and close on Friday, February 16 at 11:59PM.

II.F. Regarding violations and disciplinary action:

II.F.1. Complaint: Filed by any eligible student to the Elections Commission if they suspect a violation of the Elections Code has occurred. All complaints must identify a responsible party and must be based in factual evidence. No complaints will be accepted after Monday, February 12, 2018.

II.F.2. Violation: Undisputable disregard or contradiction of a policy as outlined in the Elections Code. Either filed directly by the Elections Auditor, or determined by the Elections Commission by vote. Violations shall always result in disciplinary action.

II.F.3. Strike: Applied to a candidate, ticket or slate if found guilty of a violation of the Elections Code. A total of seven strikes results in a candidate's disqualification.

II.F.3. Sanction: Disciplinary action applied to an individual, candidate, ticket, slate if found guilty of a violation. Sanctions are determined by the Elections Commissioners. More than one sanction can be granted for a single violation, depending on severity.

II.G. Regarding student government and members:

II.G.1 USC Undergraduate Student Government: The branches and affiliated agencies, which make up the official governing body of the undergraduate students at USC. These include: the Advocacy, Communications, Funding, Judicial, Legislative and Programming Branches and all assemblies, committees and other organizations, which are affiliated with any of the six branches. “USG” refers to the same organization.

II.G.2. Current member of USG: Any appointed or elected undergraduate student holding a position in any of the previously listed branches, with responsibilities and office hour requirements as specified in the USG Bylaws.

Article III: Elections Commission and Relevant Parties

III.A. The Elections Commission shall oversee the elections for the offices of President, Vice President, and Senators. The Director of Elections and Recruitment will oversee both the commission and all other elections matters.

III.A.1 The Commission shall be chaired by either the Director or Assistant Director of Elections and Recruitment, or by a third party if deemed necessary.

III.A.2. There shall be at least five additional voting members called Commissioners, who are not current members of Undergraduate Student Government, as stated in the USG Bylaws. Commissioners shall be appointed by the Director and Assistant Director(s) of Elections and Recruitment and confirmed by the Senior Director of Communications.

II.B. An Elections Auditor shall be appointed with the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the election. The Auditor may report violations at any point between the Preparation Period through the end of voting, and serves as a primary authority on the Elections Code independent of the Elections Commission.

III.B.1. The Elections Auditor shall be confirmed by a committee consisting of the Director of Elections, the current USG President, and Chief Justice.

III.B.2. The Elections Auditor shall be granted access to all campaign social media accounts, organized campaign events and campaign spending reports.

III.B.3. The Elections Auditor may not in any circumstance recommend sanctions to the commission and shall serve only as a reference or filing party in Elections Hearings.

III.C. No member of the USG Elections Commission shall endorse, campaign for, make a contribution to, or in any other manner support any candidate(s) or ticket(s) for any USG elected office or any USG Ballot Measure(s) except for their vote in the election. Interactions with candidates must be non-campaign related. Failure to adhere to this policy will be grounds for immediate removal of the commissioner and necessary disciplinary action for the respective candidate as determined by the Elections Commission.

III.D. The Elections Commission shall review complaints and will determine if a violation of the Elections Code has taken place, and reserves the right to make decisions and levy sanctions in matters concerning ambiguities, questions, or violations of the USG Elections Code.

III.D.1. The members of the Elections Commission shall have the power to determine an appropriate number of strikes and corresponding sanctions in response to a confirmed violation of the Elections Code.

III.D.2. For violations concerning but not limited to the USG Constitution, Bylaws, Code of Ethics, SCampus, state or federal law, the Chair of the Commission may order compliance and refer the complaint to the appropriate governing body.

III.D.3. Violations may also result in referral to Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (SJACS).

Article IV: Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

IV. A. Certain parties must remain neutral to preserve the integrity of the election process. The following parties are expected to maintain confidentiality and may not disclose any information shared to them regarding a candidate or campaign to any parties other than the Elections Commission or Director of Elections and Recruitment.

IV.A.1. The President, Vice President

IV.A.2. Speaker Pro Tempore of the Senate

IV.A.3. The Senior Director of Communications

IV.A.3. The Director of Technology

IV.B. The President, Vice President and Speaker Pro-Tempore of the Senate are explicitly prohibited from endorsing, or campaigning for any candidate or ticket.

IV.B.1. Violation of this policy may result in immediate disqualification of that candidate, party or ticket.

IV.C. Current elected executive officers should refrain from providing any advice, coaching or assistance to any candidate or ticket. Should a candidate's status be revealed to an executive officer prior to public campaign announcements, this knowledge shall be disclosed to the Elections Commission immediately.

IV.C.1. If at any point, advice or mentorship was provided to a candidate, the current elected executive officer must disclose the information provided to the Elections Team.

IV.C.2. Elections Team will consider the timeliness of the disclosure and weight of the information provided by the elected executive officer to determine if sanctions are necessary.

IV.C.3. The Director of Elections and Recruitment shall provide the means to dissipate the same information to all candidates if deemed necessary

IV.D. Any candidate who is a member of the Judicial Council or the Elections team must resign from their position upon submission of the candidate application.

IV.E. Under no circumstance may a public supporter of a candidate leverage their time volunteering at a polling booth to coerce or suggest that a voting students should vote for a specific candidate or slate.

IV.E.1. Should a student request advice when voting, the supervising poll worker shall furnish a copy of the official Voting Guide containing all candidate platforms.

Article V: Candidate Eligibility Requirements

V.A. All candidates must be undergraduate students who can verify that they will be a full time student at USC for the entire duration of the term and be enrolled in a minimum of 12.00 units as outlined in the USG Bylaws. Candidates may not study abroad during their Fall or Spring term while in office.

V.B. Candidates must fulfill all academic requirements stated in the USG Constitution and Bylaws, and must have and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.500 from USC or their most recent institution.

V.C. All candidates shall be in good standing with the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (SJACS), as determined by the Office of Campus Activities.

V.D. Any candidate who is a member of the Judicial Council or the Elections team must resign from their position upon submission of the candidate application.

V.E. No student shall hold or run for more than one elected USG position.

V.F. All prospective candidates must attend at least one of the Elections Information Sessions in Fall 2017, as well as attend all mandatory candidate events following the approval of their application.

Article VI: Declaration of Candidacy

VI.A. All students who wish to run for office must first submit Part I and Part II of the Elections Application, together informally known as one's Intent to Run.

VI.A.1. Part I of the Elections Application does not serve as a form of approval for a student as a candidate.

VI.B. All students running for an elected position must submit Part II of their application, complete with their signature and an original unofficial academic transcript, no later than Saturday, December 2nd, 2017, at 4:00PM. Failure to submit a complete application prior to the deadline may result in disqualification.

VI.B.1. Any student applying to run for an elected position for whom Spring 2018 is the first semester of study at USC must present an unofficial transcript from the previous institution they most recently attended.

VI.B.2. All components of the application must be enclosed in a sealed envelope and delivered to the USG Office (TCC 224).

VI.B.3. Upon receipt of the application, either the Director of Elections and Recruitment or the Office Manager shall sign and date the envelope.

VI.B.4. An electronic copy of the candidate's platform and candidate questionnaire responses must also be submitted via email to usgelect@usc.edu by the stated deadline.

VI.B.5. Candidates will receive an email confirmation from the Director or the Assistant Director of Elections and Recruitment usgelect@usc.edu upon the receipt and approval of

their application within three business days. Only upon approval from the Elections team may a candidate correspond to designated members of their Campaign Team.

VI.C. Upon submission of the application, all candidates' GPAs will be verified with the University and all previous institutions.

VI.D. Upon approval of the candidate's application, the name of the approved student or ticket, platform, and candidate statement will be provided to all students via the USG Elections website following Campaign Announcements.

VI.E. Upon approval of the candidate's application and approval of the candidate's Campaign Finance Plan by the Elections & Recruitment team, the candidate can begin spending money on their campaign.

VI.F. The Director of Elections and Recruitment shall submit all candidate statements, questionnaires and platforms to the appropriate campus media outlets. Platforms shall be posted on the USG website, in the Voting Guide, and in other locations if deemed necessary.

VI.G. Senate candidates may form groups of two, three, four, or five candidates; these groups are called slates and all running mates must be listed on each candidate's Intent to Run in Part II of the application. Senatorial candidates who are members of slates may file a common filing form and official platform, or may file them individually. The members of the slate may collaborate, share financial and volunteer resources and work together towards the Election of all members of the slate to the Senate.

VI.G.1. No individual candidate may be a part of more than one slate, nor shall any slate or member of a slate collaborate or in any way share resources with another slate.

VI.G.2. Slates are responsible for the actions of all slate members and individuals who are working for their respective campaign.

VI.H. Candidates for President and Vice President must register with the Director of Elections and Recruitment as a ticket, with a designated candidate for President and a designated candidate for Vice President.

VI.H.1. Candidates for President and Vice President may not form a slate with candidates for Senator.

VI.I. Anyone withdrawing from the election must do so in writing to the Director of Elections and Recruitment. This act is completed by filling out a Statement of Withdrawal, and must be submitted no later than Monday, February 12, 2018.

VI.J. If a member of a slate for Senate withdraws or is otherwise removed from the race prior to the election, the slate may continue without the candidate or add an independent, but still registered, candidate to their slate. If an independent is added, they must not already be part of another slate.

VI.J.1. If a member of a ticket for President or Vice President withdraws or is otherwise removed from the race prior to the Election, the remaining candidate shall name a replacement by Friday, February 9, 2018 at 6:00PM.

VI.J.2. If these changes are made after the ballots have gone to press, the ballot shall remain unchanged. In the case of online voting ballots, the web page shall be updated to indicate these changes.

Article VII: Preparation Period Rules

VII.A. The Preparation Period begins once a candidate or ticket's Elections Application has been received and approved, within three business days of its submission on Saturday, December 2nd. During the Preparation Period, communication is limited to members of one's official Campaign Team and to the Director and Assistant Director(s) of Elections. Candidates on a slate may communicate with the members on their fellow slate's campaign teams.

VII.A.1. The creation of private groups or participation in pre-existing groups via any form of electronic communication (such as through Facebook or Groupme) with the intention of sharing information about and furthering a candidacy is explicitly prohibited.

VII.B. During the Preparation Period, candidates are prohibited from asking for support or endorsement from Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs), and may not inform them of their candidacy.

VII.C. Candidates are prohibited from using or distributing any physical campaign materials until the Campaign Period II officially begins on Tuesday, January 30th, 2018 at 12:00AM.

VII.C.1. This includes but is not limited to: printed materials, posters, chalk, shirts, pamphlets, handouts, or any physical material.

Article VIII: Campaign Period Rules

VIII.A. There shall be a campaign period prior to the voting period starting on Thursday, January 25th, 2018, at 7:00PM and ending on Friday, February 9th, 2018, at 11:59PM.

Candidates and/or volunteers working for their campaign may not begin campaigning prior to the campaign period.

VIII.A.1. Campaign Period Part I will begin on Thursday, January 25th, 2018, at 7:00PM and end on Tuesday, January 30th, 2018, at 9:59PM with the launch of physical campaigning. During this period, candidates are permitted to expand communication beyond their campaign teams. They are now permitted to publicly declare their candidacy. No solicitation is permitted on campus with the exception of meeting on campus with a recognized student organization. No physical material may be handed out or present in campaigns during this time.

VIII.A.2. Candidates may utilize social media tools during Campaign Period Part I. This includes but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, webpages, and other non-physical, digital forms of communication. Any other form of social media in a mass messaging manner is prohibited, including but not limited to recognized student organization listservs, departmental listservs, and Facebook mass messaging; however, individual messaging through social media is allowed as well is posting in Facebook groups.

VIII.A.3. Candidates may begin meeting with recognized student organizations in person. All meetings must be confirmed by the organization with the approval sent to usgelect@usc.edu. Any and all email communication between the candidate and an organization must cc usgelect@usc.edu.

VIII.B. All volunteers and individuals campaigning on behalf of a candidate must follow the campaign rules set forth in this Elections Code. Individuals not declared on as members of a campaign team may be subject to sanctions independent of any candidate or ticket. Failure to adhere to the Elections Code may result in sanctions for the candidates or ticket involved, in addition to sanctions for the individual campaigning, as determined by the Elections Commission.

VIII.C. If a candidate determines that someone who has campaigned on their behalf without their knowledge may have violated the Elections Code, the candidate should immediately do what is within their power to terminate the actions which may be in violation of the Elections Code and document their efforts if possible to the Elections & Recruitment team.

VIII.C.1. Any person may still bring a charge against that candidate.

VIII.C.2. The Elections Commission will determine the ruling on such a charge.

VIII.D. All campaign materials shall be approved by the Directors of Elections and Recruitment. Approval will not be given until a candidate submits a detailed write up including a description of material, proposed use, and design.

VIII.D.1. Materials must be used in the approved manner as determined by the Elections Commission.

VIII.D.2. All visual campaign material must display the USG Elections logo, in either the black or white form, which will be provided to all candidates following the approval of their candidate application. Any alterations to the USG Elections logo are prohibited in any form.

VIII.D.3. All campaign material shall contain no “fighting words,” meaning language which (a) the speech, considered objectively, is abusive and/or insulting rather than a communication of ideas, and (b) is actually used in an abusive manner in a situation that presents an actual danger that it will cause a breach of peace.

VIII.D.4. All campaign material may not contain any derogatory language or material that is aimed at harming a specific person or an organization’s reputation.

VIII.E. No more than 25 Trousdale Signs, per campaign will be permitted on Trousdale Parkway at one time. Trousdale Signs should measure no larger than 18 inches by 24 inches.

VIII.F. Campaign material shall not be posted on the doors, walls, ceilings, or floors of University Housing Facilities. All campaign materials must adhere to SCampus rules and regulations as well as all rules listed in the Elections Code. Posting campaign materials is prohibited in the following areas or in the following ways:

VIII.F.1. All trees and hedges

VIII.F.2. The ground (taped or loose). The signs can, however, be staked to the grassy interior on Trousdale parkway.

VIII.F.3. Campus or University-owned buildings, including but not limited to glass windows, doors, walls, columns, and all publically or externally visible spaces.

VIII.F.4. Tommy Trojan, Hecuba, Traveler and all other statues.

VIII.F.5. Trash cans

VIII.F.6. All lamp posts

VIII.F.7. Emergency campus phones

VIII.F.8. Parking lots and structures

VIII.F.9. On top of other previously posted campaign materials

VIII.F.10. In chalk form—chalking sidewalks, buildings, etc. is prohibited.

VIII.F.11. On parked or moving vehicles inside university property.

VIII.F.12. On bikes or on parked vehicles.

VIII.G. Candidates are not allowed to campaign within any University Housing Facilities unless attending a meeting of a recognized student organization (i.e. building government meetings).

VIII.G.1 Door to door soliciting within any USC Operated and Managed Housing Facilities is strictly prohibited.

VIII.H. Any campaign material found in violation of the Elections Code is subject to immediate removal, and/or sanctioning by the Elections Commission.

VIII.I. There shall be no campaigning, nor shall there be any campaign materials, within 50 feet of the polling sites (including all space surrounding and above the polling site) during the Elections period.

VIII.J. No campaign materials may be stored, visible, worn, or temporarily placed in the USG office at any time during the Campaign or Voting period.

VIII.K. Candidates must remove all campaign material by 5:00PM the day after voting closes.

VIII.K.1. Failure to remove all campaign materials by the designated deadline is subject to sanction by the Elections Commission. Candidates will be fined \$5 per sign left on Trousdale following 5:00PM the day after voting closes.

VIII.L. Candidates are responsible for any campaign party held on their behalf.

VIII.L.1. A campaign party must be accounted for in full in the candidate, slate, or ticket Campaign Finance Plan. This includes but is not limited to all food, beverages, decorations, and entertainment.

VIII.M. The consumption or distribution of alcohol or drugs at any event related to a candidate's campaign (or which has any campaign materials present) is strictly prohibited.

Article IX: Voting and Polling Places

IX.A. Voting is limited to currently enrolled USC undergraduate students, and each student is permitted only one vote throughout the Elections period.

IX.A.1. Students studying abroad or in a recognized partner program, as well as students enrolled in a progressive degree program who maintain their undergraduate student status are also permitted to vote.

IX.A.2. Each student retains the right to partially, or completely abstain from an element of the USG Election.

IX.B. Voting will remain accessible to all students regardless of ability status, via digital and physical ballots.

IX.B.1 The ballot will clearly state that students do not need to vote for a President and Vice President in addition to all 12 senators, and instead can choose to abstain from voting for any candidates or vote for as many or as few candidates as they would like.

IX.B.2 An abstention choice will be clearly outlined on both the printed ballot and the digital ballot.

IX.C. Candidate statements and official platforms will be provided to the public via the official USG Elections Voting Guide, which will be made available upon public Campaign Announcements.

IX.C.1. The official USG Elections Voting Guide will be provided at every physical polling place.

IX.D. The voting period shall be Tuesday, February 13, 2018, Wednesday, February 14, 2018, Thursday, February 15, 2018, and Friday, February 16, 2018. Online voting will be available from 12:00AM on Tuesday, February 13, 2018, to 11:59PM on Friday, February 16, 2018, unless extenuating circumstances (as determined by the Elections Commission) arise.

IX.E. The Undergraduate Student Government shall provide at least three official public polling sites on the days of voting, as stated in the USC Undergraduate Student Government Bylaws.

IX.E.1. The creation of unofficial public polling sites, which includes but is not limited to the distribution of paper or online ballots in a public setting, is prohibited and subject to sanction by the Elections Commission.

Article X: Campaign Finance Rules

X.A. Each candidate or ticket must submit a preliminary Campaign Finance plan in the Elections Application Part II, due at 4:00PM Saturday, December 2, 2017.

X.B. Subsequent proposed purchases not listed on the campaign finance plan must first be approved by a member of the Elections Team.

X.C. Each candidate must submit their final Campaign Finance Plan, listing all expenditures made during the Preparation, Campaign and Voting period, within 24 hours of the close of voting.

X.C.1. Components of the Campaign Finance Plan: The campaign finance plan must include the following information to be approved by the Elections Commission:

X.C.1.i. Contact information for each vendor used, including a website and phone number where applicable.

X.C.1.ii. Quantity estimates for each product to be purchased.

X.C.1.iii. Line item budget sheets, including an estimation of campaign spending.

X.D. Candidates are not permitted to make purchases toward their campaign until after their full Elections Application and preliminary Campaign Finance Plan have been approved.

X.D.1. Candidates may change their Campaign Finance Plan and are not bound to purchase any item listed in their initial proposal.

X.E. The Elections Commission has the right to approve or deny any proposed campaign expenditure at their discretion.

X.F. The ticket consisting of a candidate for President and a candidate for Vice-President shall be limited to combined expenditures of \$1,500 (including taxes, shipping, and handling).

X. F.1. Discounted materials shall be permitted if the discount is public. In the case of discounts made exclusively for candidates, candidates must include fair market value (FMV) on their budget report instead of their exclusive rate, and must also factor in California Sales Tax.

X.G. Each individual Senatorial candidate, not a member of a slate, is permitted to spend a maximum of \$300 excluding taxes, shipping, and handling.

X.H. Slate spending:

X.H.1. A slate of two senatorial candidates shall be limited to combined expenditures of \$400 excluding taxes, shipping, and handling.

X.H.2. A slate of three senatorial candidates shall be limited to combined expenditures of \$500 excluding taxes, shipping, and handling.

X.H.3. A slate of four senatorial candidates shall be limited to combined expenditures of \$600 excluding taxes, shipping, and handling.

X.H.4. A slate of five senatorial candidates shall be limited to combined expenditures of \$700 excluding taxes, shipping, and handling.

X.I. The candidates may be reimbursed a maximum of \$30 for shipping and handling expenses that exceed the designated budget for their position.

X.I.1. Further shipping and handling costs must be paid by the candidate or team.

X.J. Unless otherwise determined, Undergraduate Student Government will reimburse all candidate expenses within designated campaign spending guidelines, given the correct paperwork.

X.J.1. If insufficient funds exist in the Undergraduate Student Government budget, candidates will be reimbursed in a manner proportional to their position's campaign spending cap.

X.J.2. The Director and Assistant Director of Elections and Recruitment shall create reimbursement guidelines for allocated funds.

X.K. A report of all contributions and expenditures as well as the original receipts for all campaign materials must be submitted to the Chair of the Elections Commission by 6:00PM on Friday, February 9, 2018.

X.K.1. In the case of discounted, donated, or previously owned materials, candidates must submit the contact information of the vendor through which the material was originally purchased and/or received, including all applicable receipts, which must be included as an expenditure on the Campaign Finance Plan.

X.K.2. Following the conclusion of the voting period, additional access to campaign social media accounts shall be granted to the Elections Auditor, if not already granted, for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of reported ad spending.

X.K.3. Failure to submit or fully disclose all contributions and receipts is a severe infraction of the Elections Code and may result in the disqualification of the candidate.

X.L. Any expenditure made on behalf of a candidate, slate, or ticket shall be subtracted from the applicable spending limit, based on its fair market value as determined by the Elections Commission.

X.M. Candidates may not accept or offer any monetary contributions in exchange for personal or political gain during any point in the Elections period. Services provided free of charge must be declared, and are subject to examination by the Elections Auditor.

X.N. Candidate purchases are subject to further investigation by the Elections Auditor.

Article XI: Endorsement of Candidates

XI.A. Candidates may be endorsed by any recognized student organization, as defined by the Office of Campus Activities or Office for Residential and Greek Life. Endorsements are due by the Friday prior to voting at 8:00PM. Any email communication between candidates and recognized student organizations CC'd to the email address usgelect@usc.edu.

XI.B. Student organizations wishing to make endorsements must complete an official USG Endorsement Application and be confirmed by the Elections Commission prior to the endorsement publication.

XI.B.1. Student organizations may endorse only one Presidential ticket and up to 12 senatorial candidates.

XI.B.2. Endorsements must reflect the beliefs of the student organization and only following a majority vote by either the executive board or general membership of an organization will an endorsement be valid. Endorsements filed without meeting these requirements may lead to sanctioning for the offending candidate.

XI.C. Any current member of Undergraduate Student Government must disclose any public support of candidates to a recognized student organization of which they are a member, if the discussion of endorsement of USG candidates arises. They must forfeit their right to contribute in endorsement deliberations and their right to vote in endorsement decisions by their organization.

XI.C.1. If that member chooses to remain affiliated, the organization of which they are a member forfeits any and all rights to endorse a candidate. If violated, the endorsement is deemed void.

XI.D. Campaign material, including digital posts, may not imply, in any form, an endorsement by USG or Graduate Student Government.

XI.E. USG Programming Assemblies, the five Greek Councils, and the Recreational Club Council (RCC) may not endorse candidates, but individual member organizations under the Programming branch or RCC may endorse candidates without using the specific name of the Assembly or “RCC” in their endorsement. Individual chapters under one of the five Greek Councils may endorse candidates without using the specific Greek Council title in their endorsement.

Article XII: Complaints and Violations

XII.A. The Elections Commission shall have original jurisdiction over complaints filed against candidates and individuals for violations of the Elections Code.

XII.B. The Commission must have a quorum of at least four Commissioners, and the Chair of the Elections Commission, and USG Graduate Advisor to conduct business regarding complaints, infractions, and sanctions.

XII.B.1. Any and all complaints must be filed within 36 hours of the incident occurring. No complaints will be accepted after the 36 hours expire.

XII.B.2. No complaint will be accepted after 10:00AM on Monday, February 12, 2018. Any violations brought forth to the Elections Commission after this date, including but not limited to excessive campaign spending, may be brought to the Judicial Council.

XII.C. Any USC student may file a complaint with the Elections Commission. No member of the Elections Commission is permitted to file a complaint.

XII.D. All complaints must be signed. Additionally, all complaints must specify the provision of the Elections Code the accused candidate(s) has/have allegedly violated. Complaints must contain factual evidence of an infraction of the Elections Code, including but not limited to photographs, photocopies of evidence, and signed statements of witnesses accompanied by contact information.

XII.E. After a complaint has been filed with the Elections Commission, the voting members of the Commission have 36 hours to decide whether to hear the case, and 72 hours to reach a decision from the time the complaint is filed. The Elections Commission will rule on whether or not to hear a case based on the provision of evidence that suggests a violation of the Code.

XII.E.1. Between the date of a candidate's confirmation by the Associate Director of Elections and Assistant Director of Elections and the end of Winter Recess, the voting members of the Commission have 48 hours to decide whether to hear the case, and 72 hours to reach a decision from the time the complaint is filed.

XII.E.2. In case of a deadlock, the Chair of the Commission shall make the final verdict, but shall not vote otherwise unless fewer than five commissioners are present.

Article XIII: Hearings, Sanctions and Disciplinary Action

XIII.A. After deciding to hear a complaint case, the Chair of the Commission will notify all pertinent parties by email and will set a time and date for a hearing. Hearings may not begin after 11:00PM.

XIII.B. During the hearing, candidates shall have the right to hear a full statement of the complaint against them and to know the identities of those filing the complaint before the Elections Commission determines whether or not an infraction has taken place. All parties shall have the opportunity to confront the opposing party, to speak on their own behalf and produce witnesses on their own behalf before the Elections Commission determines whether or not an infraction has taken place.

XII.C. A professional staff member of USC campus activities must be present. member of the USC faculty and/or staff may be present to serve as a witness to time and to regulate the proceedings. This member shall not contribute their opinions on any matter during the hearings or deliberations, unless specifically asked by the Chair of the Elections Commission.

XIII.C.1. Hearings shall not be open to the general public, including but not limited to members of the press and general student body. Hearings are only open to: the accused, the members of any opposing ticket, the complainant, any witnesses, a USC faculty member and/or staff as mentioned in members of the Commission, and the Director and Assistant Director(s) of Elections and Recruitment, the Election Auditor, and the USG advisors.

XIII.C.2. Any comment to the press by any participant in a hearing will lead to a sanction (as decided by the Elections Commission) for the respective party the participant is representing.

XIII.D. Following the proceedings, an official audio or video transcript shall be recorded, and a written copy of the transcript will be released to both the general public and the press. An official copy of the transcript shall be available in the USG office for public consumption as soon as a verdict is reached.

XIII.E. All verdicts and sanctions will be emailed to the involved parties and posted on the USG Elections website within 24 hours of the ruling.

XIII.F. The burden of proof is on the plaintiff/complainant. Decisions may not be made based on claims made without evidence.

XIII.G. Upon the charge of any violation of this Election Code, the Elections Commission reserves the right to employ the following guidelines in determining appropriate sanctions:

XIII.G.1. The validity of the charge.

XIII.G.2. The severity and effect of the offense on the election.

XIII.G.3. The intent of the offender and/or their campaign team.

XIII.G.4. The number and severity of previous violations made by the offender or their campaign team.

XIII.G.5. The cooperativeness of the offender and/or their campaign team.

XIII.G.6 The context in which the violation occurred.

XIII.H. All sanctions shall be determined by the Elections Commission in what they determine to be fair and just practices. The Commission shall determine appropriate sanctions in relation to the violation committed.

XIII.I. Each ticket, slate and candidate will be allotted seven strikes, with the seventh strike leading to disqualification. Strikes are counted in a running total. It is up to the Elections Commission to decide if a complaint does or does not warrant a strike. Tickets, slates, and candidates may receive more than one strike per infraction hearing. The Commission may warrant a sanction based on the following approved sanctions below:

XIII.I.1. A written warning will be issued to the ticket, slate, or candidate.

XIII.I.2. Immediate removal or dissolution of the violating material.

XIII.I.3. Loss of one full day of any and all forms of physical campaigning on campus.

XIII.I.3.i. If the sanction is given to any ticket, slate, or candidate before the period that physical campaigning begins, the sanction date will be placed on hold until physical campaigning begins. The date is up to the discretion of the Elections Commission.

XIII.I.4. Loss of one full day of any digital campaigning which includes but is not limited to Facebook statuses, tweets, or Instagram posts by a candidate, ticket or slate's Campaign pages, personal accounts, and their campaign team's personal accounts.

XIII.I.4.i. No further purchases may be made during this period, and all existing digital ad campaigns must be paused for the duration of the period.

XIII.I.5. Loss of an additional day of in-person campaigning by the candidate or ticket on Trousdale as determined by the Elections Commission.

XIII.I.6. Loss of an additional day of digital campaigning as determined by the Elections Commission.

XIII.I.7. Removal of Trousdale signs for the remainder of the campaigning period.

XIII.I.8. Complete loss of campaigning on the platform on which a violation has occurred.

XIII.I.9. Complete loss of digital campaigning, including deletion of previous posts.

XIII.I.10. Disqualification of a candidate or entire ticket or slate from the elections and consideration for their desired position(s).

XIII.J. Any sanction given to a candidate, slate, or ticket may be appealed to the Judicial Council.

XIII.J.1. The Judicial Council shall have 24 hours after the appeal is filed to decide whether or not to hear the appeal. If the Council decides to hear the appeal, it shall have another 24 hours to reach a decision.

XIII.K. The Director and Assistant Director of Elections and Recruitment shall have the official jurisdiction over all campaign issues. Any responses received from a USG member, an Elections Commissioner, or an Elections Committee member are not valid until verified by one of these two individuals.

Article XIV: Write-In Candidates

XIV.A. Write in candidates must submit their application by 6:00PM on Friday, February 9th, 2018. They must follow all rules set forth in this Elections Code that take effect after this date.

XIV.B. “Write-In” Candidates names will appear on the elections website or verbally presented as an option at physical polling booths if their candidacy is approved with sufficient time to allow for such arrangements.

Article XV: Ballot Counting Requirements

XV.A. A Student Affairs staff member and at least one member of the Elections Commission must be present at the ballot counting. The Elections Commission shall invite a member of the faculty, staff and a representative of appropriate campus media to be present, but their attendance shall not be mandatory.

XV.A.1. Physical ballots shall be stored in a locked office desk to which only the Director and Assistant Director of Elections and Recruitment and USG Advisors have access.

XV.B. The USG Director of Technology shall make all efforts possible to maintain the integrity and security of online ballots and will cross-validate results before declaring results official.

XV.C. In the case of a runoff or other Special Election, the USG Senate will approve matters concerning the Special Elections Code. The results will be published in the *Daily Trojan*.

XV.D. An announcement of the official Elections Results will be made on Tuesday, February 13th, 2018, at 7:00PM at USG Senate in TCC 351. The results will be officially certified the following Tuesday, February 20th, 2018, at 7:00PM, by a Director of Campus Activities.