

GSG OFFICER ELECTIONS 2009

Election Plan

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The Election Committee can be reached at: <gsgelect@Princeton.EDU>. The members of the Committee are: Pablo Mosteiro <pablo@> (chair), Anand Ashok <aashok@>, Jeff Dwoskin <jdwoskin@>, Daniel Raburn <draburn@>, and Sam Taylor <samuelt@>. Our website is <www.princeton.edu/~gsgelect>.

1. KEY DATES

January 31 (Saturday), 5pm:

Deadline for students to make nominations.

February 9 (Monday), 5pm:

Deadline for nominees to accept nominations and submit candidate statements.

February 13 (Friday), 5pm:

Deadline for candidates to submit follow-up statements.

February 18 (Wednesday), 6pm:

"Meet-the-candidates" forum. (Tentative)

February 25 (Wednesday), 5pm:

Polls open.

March 4 (Wednesday), 5pm:

Polls close.

2. FULL TIMELINE

Items in bold are particularly important. *Items in italics are comments or non-committee items.*

November 12 (Wednesday):

- GSG Assembly forms Election Committee. Election Committee members get access to internal listserv and e-mail account.

The Election Committee email account is <gsgelect@Princeton.EDU>; this account is used for all contact with the graduate student body. The internal discussion list is <gsg-election@Princeton.EDU>, which archives to <gsgelect@>.

January 4 (Sunday):

- *Winter recess ends.*

January 7 (Wednesday), or earlier:

- Election Committee sends Election Plan to the Assembly.

January 8 (Thursday):

- Election Committee sends global e-mail announcing upcoming elections.

A "global" e-mail is an e-mail to the entire graduate student body.

January 14 (Wednesday):

- Election Committee finalizes text for officer duty summaries.
- *GSG Assembly modifies & approves election plan.*

The Assembly was discussing changes to the governing documents. See the GSG Assembly minutes from 2008.11 and 2008.12. If any pending amendments to GSG Constitution and By-laws have modified the Officer positions being elected or any election procedures, the election plan should be modified accordingly.

January 16 (Friday), or earlier:

- Election Committee verifies that the GSG housing and parking privileges are still in effect.

January 17 (Saturday), or earlier:

- Election Committee posts election plan to website.

The website should include the election plan, an overview of the election process & time-line, and a summary of the duties of each office. It should also include a list of candidates, candidate statements, and election results, as they become available. See last year's website <www.princeton.edu/~gsgelect/2008> for more information.

- Election Committee sends global e-mail soliciting nominations.

Any member of the graduate student body may nominate any member of the graduate student body, including him/herself. People can be nominated for multiple offices. As with all communication, nominations should be sent to <gsgelect@Princeton.EDU>.

January 28 (Wednesday):

- Election Committee sends reminder about deadline for nominations.

January 31 (Saturday), 5pm:

- **Deadline for students to make nominations.**

February 2 (Monday), or earlier:

- Election Committee informs nominees of their nominations.

Tell them whether or not they are eligible and who the other nominees are. Note: 2/3 of the committee needs to agree in order to deem a nominee unqualified, then Assembly must discuss. Also, candidate statements begin to be accepted.

February 4 (Wednesday):

- Election Committee establishes date, time, location, and format of the "meet-the-candidates" forum, as well as how to make a video recording of the event accessible to voters.

We will likely follow the recommendations of last year's Election Committee.

February 9 (Monday), 5pm:

- **Deadline for nominees to accept nominations and submit candidate statements.**

When in doubt, the last submitted statement prevails. A 2/3 majority is needed to determine if any statement is unlawful or otherwise contrary to University policy. Candidacy remains even then, and the matter is discussed with Assembly and University counsel.

- **Deadline for post-enrolled students to pay dues to be eligible to run in the elections.**

Note: DCE students are enrolled and have already paid dues. Only ET/DCC students should need to pay dues to run in the election.

February 11 (Wednesday):

- Election Committee presents list of candidates and any irregularities to the Assembly.
- Election Committee posts candidate statements and information about the "meet-the-candidates" forum; Election Committee notifies all candidates that this information is available.

February 13 (Friday), 5pm:

- **Deadline for candidates to submit follow-up statements.**

February 16 (Monday):

- Election Committee sends global e-mail publicizing the "meet-the-candidates" forum. (Tentative)

This global should be sent 2 days before the forum, whenever it is held.

- Election Committee validates balloting system.
- Election Committee posts follow-up statements on website.

February 18 (Wednesday), 6pm:

- **"Meet-the-candidates" forum. (Tentative)**

February 19 (Thursday):

- Election Committee posts video of "meet-the-candidates" forum online. (Tentative)

February 25 (Wednesday), 5pm:

- **Polls open;** Election Committee sends global e-mail announcing opening of polls.

February 26 (Thursday), 5pm:

- **Deadline for post-enrolled students to pay dues to be eligible to vote.**

Again, DCE students have normally already paid dues; this applies only to ET-DCC students.

March 2 (Monday):

- Election Committee sends intermediate voting reminder.

March 4 (Wednesday), morning:

- Election Committee sends "last-minute" voting reminder.

March 4 (Wednesday), 5pm:

- **Polls close.**

March 6 (Friday), or earlier:

- Election Committee provides preliminary vote counts to the Assembly and the candidates.

March 11 (Wednesday):

- *GSG Assembly certifies the election results.*
Note: For quorum, at least 10% of the graduate student body must have voted.

April 1 (Wednesday), or earlier:

- Pending certification of the election results and no concerns within the Election Committee, the Election Committee gives the password to gsselect@ and any other election materials to the new Executive Committee.

April 8 (Wednesday):

- Election Committee dissolves after delivering final report.

3. DISCUSSION TOPICS

Note: The content of this section has not been updated from that of the draft that was submitted to the Assembly. "Rebuttal statements" are now referred to as "follow-up statements."

1. Rebuttal Statements

The GSG's Institutional Review Committee recently recommended that candidates be allowed to submit "rebuttal statements". These are statements which candidates submit after having an opportunity read the statements of other candidates. The main purpose of "rebuttal statements" is to allow candidates to respond to popular but impractical ideas of other candidates.

Within the Election Committee the votes for including rebuttal statements were: 2 for, 2 against, and 1 abstain.

If "rebuttal statements" are used, are they allowed to be open-ended or are they required to be responses to other candidates' statements?

2. Improve Meet-the-Candidates Forum

The Election Committee will adopt most of the suggestions of last year's Election Committee. This includes having a concrete structure for the event and recoding the event and posting a movie file online. We will work out the details later.

3. No Candidate Photos

Last year, there was a suggestion for candidates to include photos along with their statements. Many candidates may have broad face-recognition but little name-recognition.

The Election Committee voted 4 to 1 to **not** include candidate photos.

Note that candidate photos have not been included in the past.

4. Do Not Allow Re-Voting

Last year's Election Committee flagged re-voting as a concern. That is, once a voter has voted, should they be able to change their votes?

The Election Committee voted 4 to 1 to **not** allow students to re-vote in the on-line elections.

This is the same as the policy in past years.

5. Establish Formatting Rules of Candidate Statements

There were essentially no rules for the formatting of candidate statements last year. While we are not aware of any past problems, we feel that it is useful to have some rules. We still need to work out some of the details, but below are some ideas:

a. Email & Personal Website. Each candidate may submit a preferred email address (if different from their Princeton address) and a personal website URL, which will be hyperlinked. Candidates may submit a website URL at any time. (Note: We allow URLs to be submitted after the candidate statements to discourage candidates from submitting a link to a blank page in case they want to later establish a website.)

b. Formatting. Candidates are allowed to use simple text (ASCII printable characters and newline) as well as emphasis / italics. Any other formatting request, such as hyperlinks, will be ignored. (Candidates can still include URLs in their candidate statements, but they will not be hyperlinked.)

c. Length. Candidate statements are limited to 3000 characters. (The longest one last year was about 3300.)

d. Misc. All candidates will be clearly told these rules. We will try to provide some basic technical assistance to candidates.

6. No Release of Intermediate Information

The Election Committee will not release any intermediate information about the status of nominees, candidates, or polling. Obviously, communicating with an individual nominator / nominee / candidate about her or his correspondence with us is still allowed. Announcing withdrawals of candidacy is also allowed.

This rule seems fairly obvious, but was not formally adopted last year.

7. Scrupulous Neutrality & Integrity of Elections

Members of the Election Committee shall remain *scrupulously* neutral. Members shall not take part in

any campaigning, not even passive involvement to encourage interest in the election process. If the Committee needs any outside assistance, the outside assistance will be given only the minimum amount of access necessary to assist the Committee, and their access shall be revoked as early as possible.

8. Officer Duty Summaries

We will work on a summary of the officer duties based off of last year's. We may also include the following ideas: (1) officers are being elected to serve the Assembly and not to pursue a personal agenda; and, (2) historically, most of the officers have spent a lot of their time working collectively on the advocacy and administrative work of the GSG.

A. MAJOR RULES CONSTRAINTS FOR ELECTION TIMELINE

Below are excerpts from the By-Laws regarding some of the major election constraints.

BL III 4 "(1) the Election Committee shall be created before the end of December; (2) the Election Plan shall be approved by the Assembly before the end of January; (3) the outcomes of this balloting shall be certified by the Assembly before the end of March."

BL III 5.b "The approved plan shall be made available for public view by the committee within 72 hours after it was approved."

BL III 5.d "The deadline for nominations shall be no less than two weeks after the Election Plan is made public. Within 48 hours after the nomination deadline, the committee shall inform each nominee of all Offices for which he or she was nominated...."

BL III 5.e.iii "The deadline for acceptance of nominations and for submission of candidate statements shall be ... no earlier than one week after all nominees were informed ... of their nominations."

BL III 5.f "After the deadline for submission of candidate statements, the Election Committee shall report in a meeting of the Assembly on all candidates for each Office and if any candidates were deemed not qualified."

BL III 5.g "The list of candidates and the relevant candidate statements ... shall be made available to the members of the Graduate Student Body ... after the final list of candidates is approved and no less than two weeks before the opening of the polls."

BL III 5.j "For each Office on the ballot, quorum shall be met if the number of voters is at least 10% of the number of enrolled graduate students..."