

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION



Elections Policy

Approved by the Board of Directors on: August 22, 2018

Amended by the Board of Directors on: December 12, 2023



Definitions:

1. "Academic Year" is defined as September 1st, of any given year to April 30th, of any given year;
2. "All-Candidates Meeting" means the mandatory and initial meeting for Candidates of the specified election after the nomination period is completed;
3. "Appeals Committee" means the committee that is responsible for any appeals that arise during NUSU elections;
4. "Board" means the NUSU Board of Directors;
5. "By-elections" means any election of Directors, Executives, and Student Senator representatives that is not a general election and is completed in order to fill positions that are vacant;
6. "By-Laws" means the NUSU By-Laws;
7. "Call of an Election" shall the period of time commencing from the date of advertisement until the end of the nomination period;
8. "Campaigning" shall be considered any act where a vote is solicited;
9. "Campaign materials" shall be defined as any and all materials used in the promotion of a Candidate containing their name, likeness, image or brand;
10. "Conflict of interest" refers to a situation in which the concerns or aims of two different parties are incompatible, or a situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity;
11. "CRO" means the Chief Returning Officer (See point 3.1.2);
12. "DRO" means the Deputy Returning Officer (See point 3.1.3)
13. "Elections" means any election for a NUSU position, including Directors, Executives, Directors, and Student Senators;
14. "Elections Committee" means the committee that is responsible for the administration and facilitation of all NUSU elections;
15. "Election Official" means one of the members of the Elections Committee;
16. "Elections Policy" means the policy that is outlined herein;
17. "Executive Committee" means the Executives of NUSU;
18. "Members" means any registered Nipissing University student, outlined by the NUSU By-Laws;
19. "Membership Lists" shall be defined as my.nipissingu.ca, nipissingu.ca, NUSU volunteer lists, NUSU volunteer Facebook groups, Blackboard class mailing lists or any other university information databases;
20. "Term" shall be defined as May 1 of the elected year to April 30 of the following year, lasting a total of twelve (12) months;



1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the proper procedures that are applicable to all elections and by-elections in order to ensure fair and nonpartisan administration of these elections, which shall be facilitated by the Elections Committee. This elections policy and all the provisions in it will be considered enforceable by the Elections committee for each election beginning from the Call of the Election until seven (7) days following the end of the voting period.. This policy acts as supplementary material to the NUSU By-Laws, specifically Article 9.0. In the case of any disagreement between the By-Laws and this policy, the By-Laws shall prevail.

1.2. Policy Amendments

The Elections Committee has the ability to propose amendments to the Governance Committee and Board on all relevant elections' policies, including this one stated herein, as long as they are in accordance with the NUSU By-Laws.

2. Elections Schedule

2.1. Schedule Approval

Any elections schedule shall be determined by the CRO in conjunction with the rest of the Executive and the Director of Communications.

- 2.1.1. All elections schedules must be approved by the elections committee before the Call of an Election
- 2.1.2. After the initial schedule is approved, the elections committee must be involved in all decisions surrounding the rescheduling or modification of an elections schedule. Meaning, the elections committee must vote on and approve any changes to an elections schedule.

2.2. Call of an Election

- 2.2.1. NUSU shall advertise the start of the nomination period for an election at least ten (10) business days in advance.
- 2.2.2. No two election periods may overlap. Meaning, the next Call of an Election may not take place until the results of any election currently taking place have been announced and the election results, and any outstanding appeals, have been settled.

- 2.2.3. The information provided by NUSU shall contain, but not necessarily limited to, the elections' schedule, the list of available positions, nomination packages, and this particular policy.
- 2.2.4. NUSU shall use their website, all relevant social media outlets, and any appropriate channels to advertise the elections.

2.3. Nomination Period

- 2.3.1. Nomination periods for elections shall be in accordance with the NUSU By-Laws, Article 9.0.
- 2.3.2. Student Senator positions shall adhere to the same NUSU By-Laws as both the Executive and Director-at-Large positions, according to Article 9.0.
- 2.3.3. By the end of the nominations period, if there are no eligible candidates running for a particular position, the elections committee may extend the nominations period for that particular position. However, the campaign period for any position may not begin until the nominations period for all positions has concluded.

2.4. Campaigning Period

- 2.4.1. The campaign period must not start before the All-Candidates Meeting, and shall commence no sooner than 9:00 am on the following business day after the All-Candidates Meeting for the election is complete.
- 2.4.2. Campaign periods shall not last longer than twenty (20) days, and must last for a minimum of five (5) days.
- 2.4.3. Campaign periods must start within five (5) days after the All-Candidates Meeting.
- 2.4.4. The campaign period shall still continue through the voting period.

2.5. Voting Period

- 2.5.1. The voting period shall run over a minimum of two (2) business days.
- 2.5.2. The CRO is responsible for arranging the online ballot system via Blackboard to notify the members of the corporation that the voting period has commenced, and the link to vote for their respective Candidates.
- 2.5.3. The CRO is further responsible for working with the Director of Communications to draft the email messaging to be distributed to students regarding elections and the creation of the ballot.

3. Election/Appeals Committee

3.1. Elections Committee Membership

- 3.1.1. The Elections Committee shall be comprised of:
 - 3.1.1.1. The Vice-President Finance and Administration, or designate (Chief Returning Officer – CRO);
 - 3.1.1.2. The President, or a designate (Deputy Returning Officer – DRO);
 - 3.1.1.3. Three (3) directors elected by the board.
- 3.1.2. Chief Returning Officer (CRO), appointed by the Board of Directors of NUSU in accordance with the Elections Committee, shall oversee the general conduct and execution of elections on behalf of the Board of Directors and shall fulfill these duties with all due diligence and impartiality.
- 3.1.3. Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) shall act in the capacity of the CRO when determined necessary by the Elections Committee or on behalf of the Board of Directors.
- 3.1.4. An election official shall:
 - 3.1.4.1. Act impartial in fulfilling their duties; and
 - 3.1.4.2. Not be a Candidate in any of the elections that they facilitate.
 - 3.1.4.2.1. If an Election Official intends to run in any of the elections, that said individual must supply written notice of conflict for that respective election to both the Executive Committee, and the Elections Committee. A new member must be elected by the Board to fill the temporary vacancy on the Elections Committee in order to meet quorum.

3.2. Appeals Committee Membership

- 3.2.1. The Appeals Committee shall consist of the following:
 - 3.2.1.1. One (1) Executive, to be determined by the present Executive Committee, who shall act as Chair;
 - 3.2.1.2. At least one (1) Staff Member, as determined by the Executive Committee and with approval of the Staff Member; and,
 - 3.2.1.3. Three (3) Directors-at-Large, elected by the Board of Directors.

4. Supplementary Code of Conduct

4.1. All Candidates running for election shall:

- 4.1.1. Be courteous, polite and respectful to the electorate, other Candidates,

the Elections Committee, the Appeals Committee, Executive members and director members currently serving in office, the staff of NUSU and the staff at Nipissing University;

- 4.1.2. Refrain from harassment or otherwise “aggressive campaigning” towards any member of the student body or electorate, regardless of whether they have chosen to exercise their vote;
- 4.1.3. Refrain from slander, defamation of character, harassment, verbal or physical abuse, threats, sabotage of other campaigns;
- 4.1.4. Refrain from spreading misinformation about the corporation in part or as a whole;
 - 4.1.4.1. If misinformation is spread by a Candidate, a statement will be made and circulated by NUSU providing the quote of the misinformation made and the correct information. The identity of the Candidate who made the false claim may be provided, per the discretion of the Elections and Appeals Committees.
- 4.1.5. Refrain at all times from excessive profanity, slander, derogatory statements, or disrespecting the election process;
- 4.1.6. Never issue, condone or otherwise endorse offensive statements regarding culture, race or group of persons;
- 4.1.7. Not use NUSU resources for electoral purposes unless explicitly permitted to do so by policy or a mandate from the Elections Committee;
- 4.1.8. Not purposefully engage in behaviour that would result in a demerit being issued as outlined in policy;
- 4.1.9. Not campaign in the NUSU office at anytime; and,
 - 4.1.9.1. This includes not entering the outlined area of the NUSU office during the campaigning period as determined by the Elections Committee. This only pertains to the NUSU offices and not the entire NUSU Student Centre or Info Desk.
- 4.1.10. Follow Nipissing University’s Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities at all times.

5. Nominations

5.1. Eligibility of a Candidate

- 5.1.1. To be eligible to run in a NUSU election, said person must be a paying member who has paid all relevant ancillary fees of the organization,

- enrolled in courses for the entirety of the current and upcoming academic year at least one course per Fall and Winter semester.
- 5.1.1.1. In the case where a student is enrolled in co-op, the student will still be eligible to serve as a Candidate.
 - 5.1.1.2. In the case where extenuating circumstances apply to why the student was unable to be enrolled in courses both semesters, the student may appeal to the Elections Committee and the CRO, and they will make a decision based on evidence provided whether the student can serve as a Candidate.
 - 5.1.1.3. All Candidates must be at least eighteen (18) years of age on the final date on which Nomination Packages can be submitted.
 - 5.1.2. The CRO shall complete all verification of the nomination packages within forty-eight (48) hours following the close of the nomination period. Upon the completion of the verification process, the CRO shall determine the eligible Candidates.
 - 5.1.2.1. A member who returns their nomination form and other required election materials after the completion of the nomination period will not be considered and will be ineligible for candidacy.
 - 5.1.2.2. In the event that a nomination form contains a minor error or omission, the CRO shall provide the member with two business days to correct and submit their nomination package.
 - 5.1.2.2.1. A “minor omission” does not include omissions in the “Student Supporter/Signatures” field. One of the fields of a supporter missing may be considered a minor omission, but not the lack of a supporter in its entirety.
 - 5.1.3. All directors of the board shall be entitled to nomination as Candidates in any election for a position on the Senate, Board of Directors, or as an executive, provided:
 - 5.1.3.1. They are students at Nipissing University, and who have paid the appropriate fees for membership of NUSU;
 - 5.1.3.2. No Candidate shall use their position for promotion of their candidacy;
 - 5.1.3.3. No Candidate shall use NUSU assets other than what is provided to them by the Elections Committee to promote or develop any campaign associated materials.
 - 5.1.3.4. They declare a conflict of interest to the Board of Directors during the election period.



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- 5.1.4. If a member of the Executive Committee is nominated for an elected position, they must take an unpaid leave of absence from their office or use their vacation time or time in lieu during the election period.
 - 5.1.4.1. Prior to the leave of absence, the individual will be responsible for coordinating communication
- 5.1.5. No individual may be nominated for more than one (1) position in the Student Union during any election.
 - 5.1.5.1. Students may still run for and sit on both the Board of Directors and Academic Senate, as they are considered two (2) separate organizations.
- 5.1.6. If a student has successfully been elected to an Executive position they are not eligible to run for another Executive position that is within the same term. If a student has successfully been elected to an Executive position for a currently occurring term, they may run for an Executive position for the subsequent term.
- 5.1.7. A student who has been successfully elected can complete up to four (4) Terms in any number of Executive positions. Serving a Term includes students who served as an Executive in a Term but not for a full Term.

5.2. Nomination Package

- 5.2.1. The CRO, along with the Elections Committee, will create the required materials that pertain to the particular election that will be available in the NUSU Student Centre and on the NUSU website at the start of the nomination period.
- 5.2.2. This should include:
 - 5.2.2.1. Acknowledgement and Authorization Form;
 - 5.2.2.2. Contact Information Form;
 - 5.2.2.3. All-Candidates Meeting Attendance Exemption Form;
 - 5.2.2.4. Student Signatures for Nomination Form or equivalent in extenuating circumstances;
 - 5.2.2.5. Campaign rules;
 - 5.2.2.6. Social Media Disclosure Form;
 - 5.2.2.7. Link to both the elections policy, and NUSU By-Laws;
 - 5.2.2.8. Important dates pertaining to the election;
 - 5.2.2.9. Elections Committee contact information; and,
 - 5.2.2.10. Written Agreement by the Candidate to Adhere to the Elections Policy Form.

5.3. Nomination Protocol

- 5.3.1. Members running for a position must:
 - 5.3.1.1. Obtain the nomination package;
 - 5.3.1.2. Fully review and understand all contents within the package;
 - 5.3.1.3. Return their completed packages to NUSU prior to the All-Candidates meeting;
 - 5.3.1.4. The NUSU employee who receives that package shall sign, and mark the time and date that the package was received, and pass the package along to the CRO;
 - 5.3.1.5. The CRO shall store the signed forms of the nomination packages in a secured domain or location, along with any other confidential information; and,
 - 5.3.1.6. All required materials must be submitted before the end of the nomination period, and associated deadline to be eligible for candidacy. Accommodations for technical difficulties can be made, but must be agreed to by the elections committee before the passing of the deadline.

5.4. Nomination Signatures

- 5.4.1. In order to be nominated for any of the positions as stipulated below, the potential Candidates must acquire a certain number of signatures from the members, along with their printed name, student number, and their University student email.
- 5.4.2. Some positions require a different number of signatures:
 - 5.4.2.1. Executive position (President; Vice-President, Finance & Administration; Vice-President, Advocacy & Awareness; and, Vice-President Student Life) – 25 Member signatures;
 - 5.4.2.2. A Director-At-Large position – 10 Member signatures;
 - 5.4.2.3. An Undergraduate Student Senator position (Arts & Science, Professional Studies & Education) – 10 Member signatures;
 - 5.4.2.4. A Graduate Student Senator – 5 Member signatures

5.5. Withdrawal of a Nomination

All nominees and/or Candidates may withdraw their nominations by providing an email from the Candidate's Nipissing student email account to the CRO or a current member of the Executive Committee who is not up for election.

5.6. All-Candidates Meeting

- 5.6.1. The CRO will facilitate and organize the All-Candidates Meeting for all NUSU elections at the end of the nomination period and before the start of the campaign period.
- 5.6.2. The approved Candidates must attend the All-Candidates Meeting.
- 5.6.3. In the event that the Candidate cannot foreseeably attend the All-Candidates Meeting, the Candidate must notify the CRO prior to the end of the Nomination Period. .
- 5.6.4. If the Candidate fails to attend the All-Candidates meeting, that Candidate will automatically be disqualified from the election.
- 5.6.5. If, for whatever reason, the date, time, or location is not mentioned in the 'Nominations Package' or if, for whatever reason, the date, time or location of the All-Candidates Meeting must be changed, all Candidates must be notified of the All-Candidates Meeting at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance.
 - 5.6.5.1. A Candidate missing the All-Candidates Meeting that has been changed may appeal their disqualification.
- 5.6.6. The All-Candidates Meeting shall contain the following agenda items:
 - 5.6.6.1. The introduction of Elections Committee members;
 - 5.6.6.2. The introduction of the Candidates;
 - 5.6.6.3. A review all pertinent policies and rules;
 - 5.6.6.4. The provision of contact information for Elections Committee members;
 - 5.6.6.5. A review of the election appeals process; and,
 - 5.6.6.6. An opportunity for Candidates to ask questions or address concerns.

6. Campaign Period

6.1. Campaign List

- 6.1.1. The Elections Committee, in conjunction with the Communications Department, shall advertise a list of all the election Candidates and the positions they are running for through the NUSU website and on NUSU social media platforms.
- 6.1.2. The list of candidates will be sorted alphabetically by last name.

6.2. Campaign Rules

- 6.2.1. The CRO must approve of any and all types of campaign action or

- medium in use.
- 6.2.2. Campaigning shall commence at 9:00am on the outlined date following the adjournment of the All-Candidates Meeting and shall end at 11:59pm the day voting closes.
 - 6.2.3. There shall be no active campaigning after the campaign period ends.
 - 6.2.4. The CRO shall be responsible for determining whether any specific action or medium shall be deemed to be campaigning.
 - 6.2.4.1. The CRO's decision regarding campaigning may be appealed to the Appeals Committee by contacting the Appeals Committee at electionsappeals@nusu.com.
 - 6.2.5. All Candidates shall refrain from endorsing, supporting, or campaigning on behalf of another Candidate running for a position.

7. Campaign materials

7.1. Guidelines

- 7.1.1. The following campaign materials will be due by the end of the nomination period.
 - 7.1.1.1. Campaign material include:
 - 7.1.1.1.1. Posters/Graphics;
 - 7.1.1.1.2. Platforms;
 - 7.1.1.1.3. Headshots.
- 7.1.2. Campaign posters shall be submitted electronically to the CRO and DRO for approval in a PDF format, or brought to the NUSU office.
- 7.1.3. Campaign handbills must be submitted electronically to the CRO and DRO for approval in a PDF format, or brought to the NUSU office.
- 7.1.4. Candidates are permitted to send their platforms and headshots electronically in a PDF format to CRO for approval. Once approved, in conjunction with the Communications Department, the CRO shall place the platforms and headshots on the NUSU website, and social media channels.
- 7.1.5. During the election periods, the following persons or organizations must remain neutral on all social media outlets:
 - 7.1.5.1. Members of the NUSU Board of Directors not standing for election, including but not limited to the Chair, Directors-at-Large, and Executives;
 - 7.1.5.2. All Elections and Appeals Committee members; and,
 - 7.1.5.3. All NUSU employees.

7.2. Quantity of Campaign Materials

- 7.2.1. Candidates who are pursuing multiple positions for NUSU and Nipissing University elections (ie. Senator and Director-at-Large) shall be entitled to use the amount of campaign materials as though they were pursuing both positions independently.
- 7.2.2. For Candidates whose campaign materials go missing or are vandalized, the CRO shall grant a supplementary number of posters, equal to the number missing, upon review.
- 7.2.3. Quantities, styles, and types of all campaign materials shall be set at the discretion of the CRO and outlined in the nomination package.

7.3. Campaign Budget

Candidates shall not be permitted to incur any costs associated with their campaign.

7.4. Restrictions on Campaign Materials

- 7.4.1. All election posters must be removed twenty-four (24) hours after the voting period ends.
 - 7.4.1.1. Although there is no formal discipline for failing to do so, it is integral that this is followed by all candidates, to respect the use of space allowed by Nipissing University. Disregarding this jeopardizes NUSU's ability to continue the practice of posters.
- 7.4.2. All Candidates running for an elected position within NUSU shall be required to include the students' name, which election they are running for, and the position they are running for on all campaign materials.
- 7.4.3. Campaign materials will not include any mention of another Candidate or Position, or include NUSU, Nipissing, or other affiliated logos and slogans.
 - 7.4.3.1. "NUSU" may be included when mentioning the election they are participating in (ex. NUSU Director Elections, NUSU Executive Elections, NUSU President) and when linking NUSU materials for the purpose of the election (ex. "Go to nusu.com/elections to view my platform.")
- 7.4.4. Candidates may not use the NUSU logo, NUSU slogans, or wear NUSU clothing and/or accessories in the course of their campaign.
- 7.4.5. Campaign materials must meet a certain professional standard. That standard is at the discretion of the elections committee. This is due to the

fact that NUSU is a registered Non-Profit Organization with a professional reputation to maintain. Conflict with the application of this language may be appealed through the appeals process.

- 7.4.6. Candidates are permitted to wear Nipissing University, Lakers, or Residence clothing, as long as they do not appear in campaign materials or during NUSU organized election events (i.e. Executive Debate).
- 7.4.7. Candidates may not use materials gained from current or past positions at NUSU (ex. Headshots)
- 7.4.8. Either the CRO or a member of the Elections Committee must stamp/sign/agree/date all Candidates campaign material confirming that it was reviewed and approved
- 7.4.9. The Chief Returning Officer or a member of the Elections Committee shall have the discretion to not approve promotional material if they feel that it is in violation of the By-Laws, NUSU policies, Nipissing University's policies or Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities or any applicable laws,
- 7.4.10. The use of trademarks, registered trademarks and/or copyrighted material should not imply endorsement for a Candidate.
- 7.4.11. There shall be no endorsements for Candidate.
 - 7.4.11.1. Any conflicts of interest must be declared. Conflicts may include, but are not limited to :
 - 7.4.11.1.1. previous/current romantic relationships
 - 7.4.11.1.2. roommates/housemates
 - 7.4.11.1.3. potential hand in guidelines/legislation for the elections

7.5. Placement of Campaign Materials

- 7.5.1. No promotional materials shall be distributed or posted off campus.
- 7.5.2. Promotional materials must be distributed and/or posted in the areas designated by the Elections Committee.
- 7.5.3. No promotional materials shall be distributed and/or posted at or within a Residence Complex.
- 7.5.4. Candidates are not permitted to campaign in any area involved in a NUSU business operation (ex. Student Bar or Restaurant, NUSU Office)
- 7.5.5. Campaign materials must be compliant with all Nipissing University policies.
- 7.5.6. Only sticky tack/putty may be used to attach promotional materials to appropriate surfaces, as outlined in the All-Candidates Meeting.
 - 7.5.6.1. Thumb tacks or staples may be used to attach promotional

materials to general bulletin boards only.

- 7.5.7. All Candidates must submit a list of poster locations to the CRO or a member of the Elections Committee within twenty- four (24) hours of the placement of any posters. This will be provided at the All-Candidates Meeting.

8. Social Media

- 8.1. All elections-based social media accounts must be officially declared and approved by the CRO.
- 8.2. The CRO must have access to all social media being used for campaigning by each Candidate.
- 8.3. The Elections Committee has the authority to determine what are and what are not appropriate social media campaign materials. All materials must abide by the supplementary code of conduct provided in section 4.
- 8.4. The Elections Committee also has the authority to determine what constitutes personal social media accounts, group accounts and what constitutes a social media platform.
- 8.5. Materials can only be posted on personal social media accounts and shared by personal media accounts. This means that campaigning cannot take place on group accounts, chats, or pages.
- 8.6. No Board Member can endorse a Candidate on social media on behalf of a group, club, society or team.
- 8.7. Potential Candidates may not use social media channels to promote any candidacy or potential candidacy prior to the commencement of the campaign period.
- 8.8. Not to use NUSU or Nipissing logos on their social media unless sharing posts directly from NUSU regarding elections.
- 8.9. Candidates can share NUSU elections items on their social media, for example: date of debate, campaign period graphics.
- 8.10. All accounts or pages used for the sole purpose of campaigning must be deleted, made private, or cease to exist to the public within twenty-four (24) hours after the campaigning period.
 - 8.10.1. Candidates are not permitted to create a Facebook page.
- 8.11. Mailing Lists
 - 8.11.1. Contacting students through a mailing list must not infringe on students' privacy.

- 8.11.1.1. Any use of an official mailing list to acquire student emails is strictly prohibited (this includes Blackboard).
- 8.11.1.2. The use of user-generated mailing lists (contacts already in your address book or friends the Candidate has on a social network) is allowed.

9. Voting

9.1. Eligible Voters

Eligible voters are members who are outlined in the By-Laws.

9.2. Means of Voting

- 9.2.1. Voting shall be conducted by online ballot through their single sign on account (SSO) through the Blackboard Portal.
- 9.2.2. The CRO is responsible to send in all Candidate information such as the name and position of the Candidate to the respective individuals at the university who control Blackboard for voting.
- 9.2.3. Voting shall be conducted for a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours.
- 9.2.4. The Member shall receive an email through their student email address on voting instructions and the link to Blackboard to vote. Each Member is entitled to one (1) vote per position.
- 9.2.5. Members' votes shall remain anonymous once verified by the registrar at Nipissing University.

9.3. Results

- 9.3.1. The Candidate with the most votes by the members shall be declared the winner of their respective position.
- 9.3.2. Only the CRO, DRO, Elections Committee and Director of Communications shall be the recipients of the election results from Blackboard voting sent by the University.
- 9.3.3. The results shall not be disclosed until they have been officially announced by NUSU as approved by the CRO.
- 9.3.4. Election results must be released within one business day of the close of the voting period under usual circumstances.
- 9.3.5. All appeals shall be heard and ruled upon prior to the opening of the results.
- 9.3.6. In the event that a Candidate is in a disqualification process, the board shall make a ruling prior to viewing the results.

- 9.3.7. In the event of a tie between Candidates for a position, a by-election between the two Candidates shall occur within seven (7) days of the close of the voting period. This by-election shall consist of one (1) voting day. The voting system for the one (1) voting day shall be administered online via Blackboard.
- 9.3.8. In the event that the winning Candidate is disqualified, the following rules will apply:
 - 9.3.8.1. For the seven (7) day period following the close of the voting period, in the event that a successful Candidate in an election is disqualified, the runner-up of that respective position shall be the new successful Candidate. After the seven (7) day period, vacancies will be dealt with in accordance with the By-Laws.
 - 9.3.8.2. If the respective position is a single Candidate position, a by-election shall be held at a later date in order to fill that position.

10. Demerits, Disqualifications & Appeals

At any point during the Campaign Period, any Nipissing student, faculty, or staff member can contact elections@nusu.com with questions, concerns, or complaints surrounding a Candidate and/or their Campaign. All official complaints shall remain confidential, and only the Elections Committee will know the identity of the complainant.

10.1. Demerits

Each Candidate will be contacted about any potential demerit, and have 24 hours to respond. The CRO, with the assistance of the DRO, shall be responsible for enforcing campaign regulations, and shall have the power to levy demerits against any Candidate for any infraction of the By-Laws, policies or Code of Conduct related to elections.

- 10.1.1.1. In the case that three (3) demerit points are charged to a particular Candidate, for actions committed by the Candidate, the CRO shall disqualify the Candidate.
- 10.1.1.2. In the case of a severe infraction by a Candidate, the Election Committee in accordance with the Appeals Committee may disqualify the Candidate.
- 10.1.1.3. In the case of a Candidate being disqualified, the referendum question shall continue regardless.
- 10.1.2. Written (through email) notice of any violation will be provided to the

Candidate. Direct messaging through NUSU social media platforms shall be paired with email notification when linked to a social media infraction.

- 10.1.2.1. Notice of violations on the last day of the campaign period shall be given or emailed directly and immediately to the Candidate by a member of the Elections Committee.
- 10.1.2.2. Only appeals that may cause a disqualification will be heard on the last day of campaigning, and notice of appeals must be given.
- 10.1.2.3. Candidates disqualified on the last day of campaigning will still be permitted to passively campaign until such a time that their appeal has been resolved.
- 10.1.3. The categories and levels for demerit points shall consist of the following:
 - 10.1.3.1. Minor offences worth one (1) demerit point. Minor offences include, but are not limited to:
 - 10.1.3.1.1. Promotional material violations.
 - 10.1.3.1.2. Campaigning violations.
 - 10.1.3.1.3. Distribution of unapproved campaign materials.
 - 10.1.3.1.4. Endorsing or campaigning for a Candidate running for another position.
 - 10.1.3.1.5. Endorsement of a Candidate following withdrawal from the election period.
 - 10.1.3.2. Moderate offences worth two (2) demerit points. Moderate offences include, but are not limited to:
 - 10.1.3.2.1. Repetition of minor offences.
 - 10.1.3.3. Major offences worth up to three (3) demerit points. Major offences include, but are not limited to:
 - 10.1.3.3.1. A violation of the Candidate Code of Conduct (Section 4) has occurred;
 - 10.1.3.3.2. Slander (verbal defamation of character not based on proven fact);
 - 10.1.3.3.3. Libel (written defamation of character not based on proven fact);
 - 10.1.3.3.4. A violation of debate etiquette has occurred;
 - 10.1.3.3.5. Misconduct/disrespect towards other people/groups per the discretion of the Elections Committee;

- 10.1.3.3.6. Passing the front desk area in the NUSU office;
- 10.1.3.3.7. Using material in excess of what was provided to each Candidate by the Elections Committee;
- 10.1.3.3.8. Abuse of Candidate or campaign member's position;
- 10.1.3.3.9. Use of official mailing lists of the NUSU and Nipissing University.
- 10.1.3.4. The CRO, where necessary, may declare an act not mentioned in the above examples to be within one of the three categories.

10.2. Disqualifications

- 10.2.1. At any point, should the CRO, DRO, member of the Elections Committee, or the Executive Committee feels that a Candidate has conducted themselves in ways unbecoming of an elected representative of students (including but not limited to perceived violation of the Student Union Code of Conduct, should it apply, public inappropriate behaviour (including but not limited to slander or libel as defined in section 1.3.3), or violation of any legislation), the Chair of the Board will call a special meeting of the Board of Directors to review the Candidate's candidacy.
 - 10.2.1.1. In order for a Candidate to be removed from the elections process via a special meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors must vote in favour of disqualification with a 2/3 majority of all voting members present.
 - 10.2.1.2. In the case where a Candidate's candidacy is being reviewed by the Board of Directors, said Candidate, will be provided with twenty-four (24) hours notice of the meeting to prepare their defence.
 - 10.2.1.2.1. In the case of a request for disqualification on the last day of the campaign period, the Candidate will be given a minimum of one hour to prepare for the meeting.
- 10.2.2. At no point shall any Candidate or Party be penalized due to the Executive Committee, the Chief Returning Officer, the Deputy Returning Officer or any Elections Committee member erring in the interpretation of their respective responsibilities and/or duties under Student Union Policy or failing to provide clear, accurate, unbiased and timely instruction or direction.

10.3. Appeals Process

- 10.3.1. A Candidate must give written notice (in person or by email) to the CRO of any appeal of any decision made or demerit awarded by the CRO or DRO by 4:00pm the following business day.
- 10.3.2. At this point, details regarding the reason for appeal should be provided to the Appeals Committee by the Candidate in writing. If the candidate wishes to verbally speak to their appeal alongside the written rationale, they may include that in their notice of appeal, and a meeting will be scheduled.
- 10.3.3. Any disqualification will be treated as automatically appealed, and the Appeals Committee must hear the case within a reasonable time.
- 10.3.4. Any decision reached by the Appeals Committee shall be final and shall be communicated to the relevant Candidate by such means as are deemed appropriate.
- 10.3.5. In the case of an appeal from a Candidate for an elected Student Senator position to a Nipissing University body, the Senate Speaker, secretary and general member, or their designate, shall be permitted to attend the appeals' meeting and cast a vote