Elections Administrator End of Year Report
Owen Smith, Spring 2021 Elections Administrator
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Introduction and Overview

Congratulations on being appointed the Elections Administrator! In this report, I will detail the processes I used in this election. I would recommend starting early and using your resources. In this job, you are bound by certain deadlines prescribed in the Standing Rules. Use Standing Rules and Constitution; they are your friend. Standing Rules Section 6 details the rules of elections, and the Constitution Article 5 provides a few more.

If you have a question, ask. There's someone who can help you with whatever you need to know. Don't be afraid to ask others for assistance or opinions with anything. Your main contacts should be Laura, Dr. Edwards, the past elections admins, and the President/Vice President. Get information from those folks (or others you trust) and then use your best judgement to make your decision.

You can ask your friends for help with putting up posters, organizing debates, proofreading things, etc. Just be sure to keep the things that only you are allowed to see, like the backend of the voting website, to yourself. In all things, remember that you are trying to make elections as smooth and easy as possible for candidates. Be flexible with optional deadlines and make yourself accessible.

And finally, promote the heck out of elections! Social media, posters, yardsigns, banners...anything you can get your hands on. If you can get more than 10% of campus (~500 people) to turn out, that's great! I'll further break down what I think are the most important parts of the job below.

Elections Handbook

The Elections Handbook is a valuable tool for you and for the candidates. It's everyone's guide to this process, including the administrator's. Try to start on the Elections Handbook at least three or four weeks before the opening of candidate declaration. It needs to be approved by the body (which takes two weeks, though it could take one if you suspend the Standing Rules) and you need some time to formulate the rules you believe to be best based on the previous rules, your opinions, and the opinions of others. The more eyes you can get the Handbook in front of before you bring it to the body, the better. The rules are common sense. If you go off of previous Handbooks, you should be fine.

The most important thing about the Handbook is to be flexible. I would strongly recommend writing deadlines to be as intentionally flexible as possible. And yes, it *is* a governing document, but your job is to make this process easy; being overly hard about every rule and deadline in the Handbook is no fun for anyone, especially you. Show grace and leniency. You will need to be strict about some things, like the deadline for petitions and serious campaigning violations, but, say, the social media post deadline? I

wouldn't worry too much. Again though, you run elections, and you will have to make some judgement calls.

One thing you might want to address in regards to the Handbook is the need for candidates to get signatures. We generally have low turnout in elections and usually not many candidates. There's an argument to be made for removing the petitions to increase candidate interest and participation in the elections. I used the online nomination petition, which was rather cumbersome, but using physical petitions is much less work for the Administrator, I've been told. People on the body are sure to have varying opinions on this, just as you might. Ask around and see if it's worth addressing!

Elections Hearing Board

Read the Standing Rules for more info on this (Article 6 Section 13). Talk with Dr. Edwards about this early on. You are obligated to create this 5-person board at least 2 weeks prior to the start of elections. Obviously, that may not be possible, since you may not know who is or isn't running by that time. Do the best you can with that—you likely won't field any formal complaints about elections stuff until after elections have started. Dr. Edwards and you will put your heads together to find at least 3 other senators not running who would best serve on the hearing board. I have no experience running one of these, but Dr. Edwards and Laura do. If someone files a complaint, work with the advisors, the Standing Rules, and the best judgement of the Hearing Board to reach an equitable outcome.

Forms and Such

There are several forms we used for elections this year; the Candidate Declaration Form, the Candidate Nomination Petition (for signatures), and the Campaign Staff Acknowledgement Form. Because of COVID, these operated online, using Formbuilder. In the event that we are online at any point in the future, make sure you communicate with Laura pretty early on to get access to all of these documents. Make sure their opening and closing times are consistent with what the body approved in the Handbook.

I definitely recommend operating with more physical paper in the future. I had the benefit of also being the Assistant IT Director and having access to the website, so posting stuff there wasn't an issue. If you don't have access to the website and/or aren't tech savvy, paper will be much easier. The Nomination Petition was the most challenging thing to operate online. I chose to use the website to report whether people met the signature requirement, but if they had paper signatures, they would know how many had signed their petition at all times. If you use paper, maybe consider setting up a dropbox outside the StuGov office in the SUB where people could turn them in. I've been told that's what we did in the past.

It was somewhat helpful to operate the Candidate Declaration Form online. Students had to log into TruView to use the form, so you got their email info, which made it very easy to communicate general announcements to all candidates. I'd recommend continuing that even after COVID. Beyond that, keep track of the forms and find some way to publish information you feel is necessary.

Required Meetings

We required all candidates to come to two meetings: a General Body Meeting and an Elections Info Session. Be lenient with them. If people miss, work with them. We really want to get more people to run, so flexibility on this is key. You can send them the minutes or a recording of the general body meeting, or record an info session and send it to people who can't make it. Attendance at these might be more important would be if we nixed the signature requirement. Then, attendance at these meetings would gauge candidates' connectivity as opposed to signatures.

The Voting Website

Students vote at vote.truman.edu. Talk to Laura about getting access to it early on. Familiarize yourself with how to add people and questions to the ballot. As with the forms, be sure it's set to open at the correct times. Check with the Executive Board to make sure all of the appropriate questions get on the ballot. For StuGov, all changes to the Constitution go on there. The Organizational Activities Funding Review Board (OAF) may have a question for the ballot, as well as SAB or FAC. The website should not difficult to operate, but ask around if you have questions on it.

Try to not check the ballot too often. You want to remain as neutral towards the outcome of the election as possible, even if you know/are friends with people who are running. After voting started this year, the IT Director suggested publishing the results of the election in real-time, as they came out. I think this is a really good idea. I don't know how this would work technologically but it would make it less stressful for you because you wouldn't be the only student who knows the results of the election before it's over.

Advertising Elections

You want to use whatever means you can to promote elections to increase turnout. I'll detail a few ways I did it. I encourage future admins to be creative and solicit ideas from the body, as we can always do more to get people to vote, especially off-campus students.

Truman Today and All-School Emails

The Truman Today email goes out to all students each Monday. You should get an advertisement to them by the Wednesday before the opening of candidate declaration to get more people to run! And then, by the Wednesday before voting, send them a different ad advertising voting for all students. The President and Vice President sometimes send emails out to the whole student body, too. Try to have them send out notifications about both running for office and voting too!

Social Media Posts

Social media was not my thing, but with today's technology, anyone can design a post! I used Canva, a design app/website, to design Instagram posts advertising for almost every part of elections: the opening of candidate declaration, the posts promoting individual candidates, voting, etc. You can make as many as you like. Our following on social media is somewhat substantial, so more of these won't hurt. Communicate with the PR Director to get these posts up, as they have access to all of our social media. I don't think we properly utilized our Facebook or

Twitter, so I'd recommend future Administrators use those platforms as well, if possible. The Canva posts specifically designed for Insta will work on Facebook and Twitter, so you wouldn't need to create extra posts for other platforms.

Posters

We generally make an elections poster to put up on bulletin boards all over campus. This is something to work with the Executive Board on. They control the money for elections and thus the budget you have for posters. They designed our poster for this year, and all I had to do was put it up. Our poster featured a dinosaur, so you can get creative with this! Or you could let the E-Board handle it. Either way, you should coordinate with them. This is where you get your friends and other members of the body to help putting things up! We advertised both running and voting in the elections on our sign and put them up the week candidate declaration opened, but work with the E-Board to do what you feel is best.

Yardsigns

We bought yardsigns and stakes for use starting this year. There are 50 in total—if you choose to use them, save about 20 at any given time because (a) our campus is tiny and 50 yardsigns is excessive and (b) the more that are out, the more likely it is that they will be stolen. Communicate with Laura and the U&I to make sure you follow their rules for on-campus postings The yardsigns were intentionally made with extra space at the bottom so we could put the election dates for any given election on them. We printed out many slips of paper with the voting dates and secured them to the signs with packing tape. It worked reasonably well. We placed these out the Wednesday before voting started. I would say you don't need to put them out earlier than that. You can get help putting these out too.

Banners

We also bought giant banners to hang in front of the SUB to promote elections. Another thing you'll need to talk to Laura about. She'll put you in contact with the Physical Plant, who will put the banners up. We had them hang only during the week of voting, because the banners don't (and can't) have the election dates on them. Laura will help you out with this. You may need to spend some money for the rope for these banners, in which case you should also talk to the Treasurer and Laura.

Ultimately, we turned out more than 700 people to vote by doing all these things. It is a lot, but it can be done if you have the right people helping you.

Closing

The key to this job is asking questions and asking for help. You've got an entire body who will provide guidance and assistance with even the smallest things. The body is just as concerned with the elections going well as you are. Follow the precedent set by previous Handbooks and Administrators and everything should fall into place. There has also been some talk about creating a committee to run spring elections, because it is a ton of work for just one person to try to run all by themselves. Hopefully future bodies look into this idea. But no matter what, remember that you are a person and a student too. This can seem like a big responsibility, but don't neglect your mental health during elections,

especially in the spring around finals time. If you have any questions about elections, ask around or contact me. I'm willing to help and be a resource for you!

Respectfully submitted,
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Spring 2021 Election Results

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS
TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Positions | Candidates | Issues | View Ballot | Vote Dates | Results | Allowed Users | Site Pref

Results

(Clear Results)

759 Students have voted

Voting Senator 12
  Krishna Chebolu 359
  Grace Rowley 323
  Santino Bono 280
  Brenna Larkin 273
  Morgan Sprehe 267
  Warren Barge 263
  Mike Owsley 261
  Kennedy Cooper 257
  Sophia Tulipana 257
  Erin Woolf 255
  Esther Fox 248
  Josh Grandstaff 242
  Alex Crawford 238
  Mandi Wild 225
  Dan King 223
  Sam Myers 223
  Hannah Park 194
Senior Senator 3
  Emily Smith 438
  Maddie Meyer 384
  Joshna Karki 362
  PJ Wuennenberg 136
President/Vice President Ticket 1
  Shania Montufar and Ethan Kershaw 600
FAC President 1
  John Marx 519
FAC Treasurer 1
  Dylan de Leon 513
FAC Student Representative 1
  Olivia Baumann 401

Kevin Luft 178

Amendment to the Student Government Constitution
A vote yes on this measure shall be considered an approval of the changes proposed to the Constitution of the Truman State University Student Government; and a vote no shall be considered a disapproval of the changes proposed to the Constitution of the Truman State University Student Government. Attached below are copies of both the current and proposed amended version of the Constitution of the Truman State University Student Government. Old Version: https://senate.truman.edu/files/2021/03/Constitution-April-2020.pdf New Version: https://senate.truman.edu/files/2021/03/Resolution-120.019-Officially-Renaming-the-Diversity-Committee-to-the-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Committee.pdf

Yes: 505
No: 73

Suggested Changes to the CRP
Currently, $1.50 per student per semester is collected to support the Collegiate Readership Program. I support using this money to fund the New York Times Digital Readership Program for all Truman students. A vote yes will use the fee money to subscribe to the New York Times Digital Readership Program. A vote no will mean the fee money is collected for the 2021-2022 school year, and the 2021-2022 Organizational Activities Fee Review Committee will consider alternative uses for the fee money or the closing of the account.

Yes: 507
No: 127