

Student Government Resolution 121.009

A Resolution Amending Election Procedures in the Governing Documents of the Student Government

Sponsored by: Owen Smith, Governing Documents Review Board Chair; Warren Barge, Student Affairs Committee Chair; Joshua Grandstaff, Health, Wellness, and Safety Co-Chair; Kennedy Cooper, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Chair; Mike Owsley, External Affairs Committee Chair; Maddie Meyer, Parking Appeals Committee Chair; Owen Hamill, Incoming Senator; Em Smith, Associate Senator

WHEREAS,

- The Student Government is the official governing body of the Student Association and exists to represent the present and long term best interests of the Student Association in the formulation of the University policy and in the fulfillment of the University's mission; and
- The Truman State University Student Government is bound by the rules detailed in its governing documents; and
- On October 3rd, 2021, President Shania Montúfar issued an executive order authorizing the creation of a Governing Documents Review Board¹; and
- Said executive order authorizes the Review Board to identify and make changes to necessary sections, clauses, and articles of the Student Government's governing documents to "Reform the requirements for Senior Senators to be less restrictive" and "Revise (the) method of election for Incoming Senators to reflect the fact that any student can vote for their election"; and
- In both 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, there were multiple unfilled senior senator positions; and
- At this time, there are two unfilled senior senator positions of the five available; and
- Reducing the number of terms required to be a senior senator would ensure those positions are filled while allowing the body to retain members with institutional experience; and
- While incoming senators must be students in their first semester at Truman, they represent all of campus; and

¹<https://senate.truman.edu/files/2021/10/An-Executive-Order-Establishing-a-Governing-Documents-Review-Board-for-the-Fall-2021-Semester.pdf>

- The current election procedures are such that a student may qualify to run for multiple positions; and
- This policy forces students to choose between positions when declaring their candidacy; and
- The impacts of such a choice may cause a candidate running for a position with few candidates to win a position, while a candidate with more votes running for a more competitive position may not win a position; and
- The Review Board believes candidates should not be punished for declaring their candidacy for one position as opposed to another, if they are equally qualified for both positions; and
- Eliminating the ability to choose between positions when declaring candidacy would eliminate this issue; and
- Amendments to the relevant sections of the Standing Rules and Constitution are available in the Appendices below:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT,

- Approves the proposed changes to the Standing Rules and the Constitution of the Truman State University Student Government and gives its consent to place the constitutional changes on the Spring 2022 general election ballot and up to a vote by the Student Association; and
- Shall immediately implement, upon approval by the Student Senate and contingent upon the approval by the Student Association on the constitutional amendments, the proposed amendments to the Standing Rules and Constitution of the Truman State University Student Government; and
- Approves ballot language for the proposed constitutional amendments to read: “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”; and
- Shall make, upon approval and immediate effect of the amendments to the governing documents, any corrections to section title or numbering in the table of contents of the governing documents;

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT OF TRUMAN STATE DIRECTS THAT,

- Future Governing Documents Review Boards review this policy to ensure its effectiveness and ease of implementation and make further or undo revisions as is necessary; and

- Additional copies of this resolution be disseminated to: President Sue Thomas; Truman State Board of Governors; Janna Stoskopf, Dean of Student Life; Office of Special Collections and the Truman Media Network.

Passed unanimous consent, December 12th, 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shania Montúfar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Shania Montúfar, President of the Student Association

Appendix A: Constitutional Amendments

Article V: Elections

Section 1: Terms

The Fall term shall be defined as the first day of first semester classes to the day before finals.

The Spring term shall be defined as the first day of second semester classes through the Spring transitional meeting. If a member of the Student Association serves for over one-half of a term in the executive or legislature beginning with the date of their confirmation by the Student Senate, their service shall count as a full term.

Section 2: Election Administration

Student Government elections shall be administered according to the Standing Rules.

Section 3: Eligibility Requirements

Any full-time student with a minimum cumulative 2.75 Grade Point Average shall be eligible to run for office. No student shall be eligible to seek election to more than one Student Government position at a time. Further eligibility requirement include:

Suggested Changes (additions in green, suggested deletions in red)

- A. Any student **running for election who is** in their first semester at the University, excluding summer or winter interim sessions, shall **be eligible to** run as an Incoming Senator;
- B. Any student meeting the necessary requirements for office **not running as any other type of senator** shall **be eligible to** run as a Voting Senator;
- C. Any **undergraduate** student **running for election** who has served **for either two** terms as an elected member of the Student Government, **four** terms as an **appointed** member of the Student Government Executive Committee, or **four** terms **as a member of the Student Government** as an elected member of the Student Government and two terms as an **appointed member of the Student Government Executive Committee** shall **be eligible to** run as a Senior Senator;
- D. Any graduate student **running for election** shall **be eligible to** run as a Graduate Senator;
- E. Any pair of students shall be eligible to run as a ticket for President and Vice President.

Suggested Changes (with only suggested changes)

- F. Any student **running for election who is** in their first semester at the University, excluding summer or winter interim sessions, shall run as an Incoming Senator;
- G. Any **undergraduate** student **running for election** who has served **either two** terms as an elected member of the Student Government, **two** terms as an appointed member of the Student Government Executive Committee, or **four** terms **as a member of the Student Government** shall run as a Senior Senator;
- H. Any graduate student **running for election** shall run as a Graduate Senator;
- I. Any student meeting the necessary requirements for office **not running as any other type of senator** shall run as a Voting Senator;
- J. Any pair of students shall be eligible to run as a ticket for President and Vice President.

Section 4: Length of Term – Spring Installation

Clause 1

The President, Vice President, three senior senators, and twelve **voting** senators shall be elected in the Spring general election for a term beginning at the transitional meeting and ending at the next transitional meeting.

Clause 2

Installation of these members shall occur providing the member meets the necessary requirements. Installation of students nominated and confirmed to fill vacancies in these seats shall occur after their confirmation.

Section 5: Length of Term – Fall Installation

Clause 1

Two senior senators, three **voting** senators, a graduate senator, four incoming senators, and any positions vacant before petitions for elections are made available to the Student Association for the Fall general election shall be elected in the Fall general election for a term beginning at the date of installation and ending at the next transitional meeting.

Clause 2

Installation of these members shall occur at a regular Fall meeting, no later than the date specified in the standing rules, providing the member meets the necessary requirements. Installation of students nominated and confirmed to fill vacancies in these seats shall occur after their confirmation.

Appendix B: Standing Rules Amendments

Article IV: Elections

Section 9: Ballots

Clause 8

In the Spring general election, all students may vote for up to one presidential ticket. There shall be three senior senators, and twelve voting senator positions up for election.

Clause 9

In the Fall general election, there shall be students will be allowed to vote for up to four incoming senator, and up to one graduate senator, and all students will be allowed to vote for up to two senior senators and four three voting senator positions up for election. In the fall general election, any vacant positions vacant before the beginning of candidate declaration shall be voted on in a manner similar to other races.

Clause 10

In any spring or fall election, all incoming, voting, senior, and/or graduate senator candidates shall be placed into one combined race on the ballot, and the number of candidates students may vote for is equal to the combined number of incoming, voting, senior, and graduate senator positions open.

Section 10: Election Validation

Clause 1

The Election Hearing Board, chaired by the Ethics Justice, shall validate the election results.

Clause 2

Following the announcement of the vote tally, the results must be kept for one year and be made available to the public upon request.

Clause 3

At the conclusion of the fall election, incoming, senior, and graduate senator positions shall be awarded before voting senator positions. At the conclusion of the spring election, senior senator positions shall be awarded before voting senator positions.

Clause 4

The incoming senator candidates from the combined race who receive the most number of votes in the fall election shall be incoming senators.

Clause 5

The senior senator candidates from the combined race who receive the most number of votes shall be senior senators.

Clause 6

The graduate senator candidate from the combined race who receives the most number of votes in the fall election shall be the graduate senator.

Clause 7

The remaining candidates in the combined race who receive the highest number of votes shall become voting senators. This includes any candidates who qualified as an incoming, senior, or graduate senator candidate but were not awarded one of those positions. (For an explanation, click [here](#).)

Clause 3

Incoming senators shall be the four candidates who receive the highest number of votes from incoming students.

Clause 4

Senior senators and voting senators shall be those candidates who receive the highest number of votes.

Clause 58

The President and Vice President shall be the candidates who receive the highest number of votes.

Clause 69

The validated results shall be recorded in the Ethics Justice's end of the year report.

Clause 710

The breakdown of the validated votes shall include: 1) Total votes cast 2) Total votes cast for each position 3) Total votes cast for each candidate.