

Elections Policies

Revised January 16th, 2023

Should there be a discrepancy between the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Policy and Procedures, and the RRCSA bylaws, the RRCSA bylaws shall take precedence.

SECTION 1: Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee

1.01 Membership

The processes of all elections of the Red River College Polytechnic Students' Association shall be the responsibility of the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee which is composed of the following:

1. Chief Returning Officer (CRO); and
2. Any Executive shall act as Chair; and
3. Another Executive shall act as Co-Chair; and
4. No less than four members of the Students' Association Board.
5. In the event that the Vice-President(s) are unable or ineligible to serve on the committee, the Executive Committee or the SAB shall appoint a new Co-Chair.
6. The Executive Director of the Students' Association will act as a consultant and advisor as needed.
7. Past President will act as a consultant and advisor.

1.02 Appointment

The committee shall have a minimum of four members at all times, during the academic year. If there are less than four members, the committee shall continue to operate and will actively look to recruit more members.

1.03 Responsibilities of the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee

The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee shall:

1. Adhere to and uphold the Association's Bylaws and policies as well as its Mission, Vision, and Values.
2. Conduct themselves in an ethical manner.
3. Refrain from advocating on behalf of any candidate during the entire course of the election process.
4. Enforce the rules and regulations governing the conduct of nominations, elections, and campaigns for Candidates.
5. Review and approve the Election Nominations packages, advising all nominees of said rules and regulations in writing.
6. Help create a media campaign to encourage students to vote.
7. Organize resources to meet the needs of the elections.
8. Report to the Executive Committee and the SAB all minutes of meetings and activities of the election.

9. Keep accurate minutes of all meetings and review of the final CRO Elections report which shall be presented to the Executive Team.
10. The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee must meet on a regular basis during campaigning period to deal with problems that the CRO cannot handle. All complaints will be heard and resolved by the CRO and/or Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee within two business days of being reported unless further investigation is required.
11. Review and recommend changes to the Elections Policy and Procedures.
12. Physically adjust, remove, or move any candidates' posters or banners as required.

In the event an Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee member wishes to stand for the election, that member must vacate their position on the Committee upon submission of their Nomination Package. For the duration of the election the Executive Committee may temporarily appoint someone to fill the position from the SAB.

SECTION 2: CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER (CRO)

2.01 Responsibilities of the Chief Returning Officer

The Chief Returning Officer shall:

1. Be a contracted position but cannot be a current student of Red River College Polytechnic or a staff member of the SA or College or have any relation to any of the candidates or be affiliated with any student political organizations.
2. Be hired or appointed before the start of nominations.
3. With electronic voting:
 - a. Work with the SA to have a process for each eligible student, confirmed through their student RRC Polytech HUB account to vote on the RRCSA website. Voters may receive a notification about voting via Learn, Student News, the RRCSA social medias and the RRCSA website.
4. Ensure the results are announced using at least two forms of SA media.
5. Act as Emcee at any election related public appearances.
6. Approve the voting ballot.
7. Randomly assign large hallway banner placement spots for Executive Candidates. The size of banner is to be determined by the number of candidates if applicable.
8. Enforce the election policies and administer demerits.

2.02 CRO Contract

The CRO will be:

1. Hired by the Executive Director and approved by the Chair(s) of the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee.
2. Required to hold a minimum 40-hour term in office during the campaign period.
3. Required to be available for an additional 25 hours for meetings, phone calls, and emails.
4. Responsible for keeping track of their hours and submit a written summary report following the election.

SECTION 3: EXECUTIVE OFFICER CANDIDATES

3.01 Eligibility

To be eligible to run for the election as an Executive Officer, a person must:

1. Be a registered Red River College Polytechnic student during the current academic school year of the election.
 - a. Students enrolled in programs with daytime co-op, work/school placement longer than 2 months, and apprentices will be ineligible to run for an executive position unless the student confirms their courses and program coordinator will allow their position campus office hours.
2. Meet the criteria established for the position as outlined in the RRCSA Bylaws, Article 8.
3. Be a member in good standing with the Students' Association.
4. Be a student enrolled at NDC or EDC for that specific position.
5. Not be an executive member, employee, former employee, or Students' Association Board member who has been removed from office with cause or has been designated as a 'member not in good standing with the SA'.
6. A cumulative (overall) GPA of 2.5 is required to run for and maintain an Executive Officer position for their full term of office.
7. A criminal record check must be submitted once elected
8. Be willing to make the individuals cumulative (overall) GPA available to the SAB, Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee, student population, and the RRCSA Executive Director.

3.02 Responsibilities of Candidates

The candidates shall:

1. Adhere to the rules and procedures as outlined in these policies and in the nominations package and adhere to all Students' Association bylaws, policies, and procedures including the Students' Association Mission, Vision, and Values Statement. (Most recently approved).
2. Behave in an ethical manner. Ethical behavior will be defined by the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee. The CRO will adjudicate breaches of ethical standards in conjunction with the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee. Their decision will be final. Slander and libel of any sort are strictly forbidden.
3. Attend a mandatory candidate information session before becoming an eligible candidate
4. Not bring any visible campaign material into the Students' Association Office (CM20 or P110) unless requested to and/or campaign out of the SA Office.
5. Refrain from using any Students' Association office space for campaigning purposes
6. Submit a list of campaign managers and staff working for the candidate before campaigning begins. Each candidate is responsible for the actions of the people they choose to represent them.

7. Submit all printed materials to the CRO via the SA website for creative content approval, prior to the use in campaigning. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure all approved content is printed appropriately according to the guidelines.
8. Put up and adhere to campaign materials as outlined in the Elections Policy & Procedures 6.03.
9. Supply any online, virtual, computer, Facebook, Twitter, etc. URLs being used for campaigning purposes, allowing the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee to investigate, ensuring all rules are being followed.
10. Adhere to the decisions of the CRO and Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee.
11. Submit ONE email address (academic email) to be used for all correspondence, including the SA, the CRO and the media.
12. Adhere to any on or off campus Health & Safety policies that Red River College Polytechnic enforces including vaccination or mask requirements that may be enforced.

3.03 Re-Election

A person who is currently in office and seeking re-election or a different position or a current staff member may remain in office under the condition they do not:

1. Campaign out of their office;
2. Bring campaign materials and/or equipment that are visible into the SA office.
3. Use any SA office space, material, or positional power for the purpose of preparation or campaigning.
4. No member shall be eligible to hold any combination of executive office for a period expanding more than three academic years and no more than two academic years in the same executive position.
5. Attend any public RRCSA related or RRC Polytech related events or gatherings.
6. A re-election candidate may choose to take a leave of absence from their executive position without pay during the campaign period.

3.04 Student Status

All the executives are required to be a current student at RRC Polytech and should be in good standing during their term in office and should be able to fulfill the work hours as mentioned in the bylaws.

3.05 Terms of Office

Executive Officers shall be in office:

1. For the Term of employment as stated in the Executive Employment Agreement.
2. During regular business hours of Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm; executives may schedule up to 5 office hours per week outside of normal business hours for assigned and approved meetings. (Subject to bylaw changes)
3. The President must work thirty (30) hours per week during their term of office

4. The Vice Presidents must work (20) hours per week during their term of office. For the Summer Operation office hours as set by the association, the VP's shall work 30 hours per week.
5. Executives may request in writing a 'leave of absence' without pay from their position which should be communicated and sent to the CRO, Co-Chairs, and executive director during the election nominations process if they have a co-op, internship, or practicum within their term of office. They may be allowed to continue as a candidate with the following conditions;
 - a) The co-op, internship, or practicum is two (2) months or less in duration;
 - b) The leave of absence duration length must be sent in writing during the nomination process before campaigning starts;
 - c) The 'leave of absence' must only be taken in the Spring or Summer term,
 - i. Will not be allowed to be taken in Fall or Winter term.
 - d) The executive must return to their position upon completion of their co-op, internship, or practicum;
 - e) They will commit to any official responsibilities, meetings, or other assigned duties by the executive committee prior to leaving on their 'leave of absence';
 - f) Will allow the SA to communicate this 'leave of absence to the student body during the election campaigning.

SECTION 4: ELECTION DATES

4.01 Availability

The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee shall review and approve the elections package with dates for opening and closing nominations and election matters.

SECTION 5: NOMINATIONS

5.01 Notice

1. The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee must begin advertising the election no later than thirty days from the nomination period opening. Nominations shall be open for a minimum of five business days.
2. If no candidate is nominated or confirmed as a valid candidate, nominations for that specific position shall automatically remain open for a predetermined time as set by the Elections, Appointment or Referenda Committee Chair(s). (Subject to bylaw changes)
3. Candidates may withdraw their nomination from an executive position up to 24 hours prior to voting starting and shall not receive any reimbursement for expenditures.

SECTION 6: CAMPAIGNING

6.01 Participant Regulations

1. Campaigning shall be open for a minimum period of five school days.
2. All candidates shall be elected as individuals
3. All election advertising can contain only one candidate's name or photo.
4. At no time can any election advertising make reference of any kind to any candidate other than the candidate the advertising is intended for.
5. Support of another candidate is not allowed including but not limited to verbal or written support.
6. All campaigning and advertising intended for a specific candidate is the sole responsibility of that candidate.
7. Posters and campaign materials may be left up during the voting period but must be taken down before a designated date as set out in the Elections package or be subject to demerits.
8. Candidates may campaign during the voting period
 - a. Candidates may walk past voting stations but are not allowed to campaign within 15 meters of voting stations
9. Online campaigns may remain open during voting but must be shut down within the same time frame as other Poster and Campaign Materials.

6.02 SAB Regulations

1. No member of the Executive, SAB, Students' Association Staff or College Staff, shall actively campaign on behalf of any candidate written or oral.
2. All members of the SAB must remain impartial during the election process and shall not support any one candidate. SAB members wanting to campaign on behalf of and/or publicly support a candidate should resign from their SAB position or be subject to SAB discipline with removal from the board.
3. SAB meetings should not be held during campaigning or poll voting days.
4. A SAB meeting will be held no later than April 12, 2023 following the close of polls to directly deal with elections issues.
5. No member of the Executive, SAB, Admin or College staff shall like, follow or share social media postings made by candidates. If anyone in the above-mentioned groups were "friends" or "following" a person prior to the submission of nomination papers, they should "unfriend/unfollow" that individual during the election period.

6.03 Campaign Materials

1. Candidates may post printed material on SA poster boards around the campus.
2. Printed material must have the SA stamp of approval and be numbered.
3. No printed materials are allowed on walls or windows.
4. No printed materials are allowed in the libraries, classrooms, cafeterias, or any unauthorized College facility.
5. The Cave, Lockers Lounge and Workshop can be used to campaign and post material.
6. Posters can be posted on yellow banner SA bulletin boards only.
7. Candidates must create a campaign poster. The poster will be used for SA election advertisement.

8. Posters shall be no larger than 8 1/2" x 11' portrait orientation, printed with a maximum set at 50. Printed posters to be numbered and stamped consecutively in the SA office. (612x792 72dpi) Digital posters/images used in previous campaigns may not be used by any candidate on social media sites or on printed materials.
9. Campaign materials may not include the official logos of RRC Polytech or RRCSA.
10. Social media usernames and/or websites used for campaigning may not include "Red River College Polytechnic Students' Association", "Red River College Polytechnic", or any official abbreviations of either organization.
11. Handouts must be approved and shall be no larger than 4"x 4" to a maximum of 100.
12. Each candidate's material cannot be placed over any other candidate's material or any other material on the board to a limit of one poster per person per board.
13. All campaign material (printed/online) must be removed before a designated date as set out in the elections package or be subject to demerits.
14. Email contact information provided by the college to students for course work, communication with instructors etc. shall not be used for recruitment of support and campaigning purposes.

6.04 RRCSA Media/Advertisement

1. Candidates will provide their campaign poster and positioning statement which may be used on RRCSA social media sites including but not limited to websites, projector, digital TV's etc.

6.05 Radio/TV

1. All costs associated with radio and television advertising will be the candidate's responsibility and must be included in the campaign expenditures form.

6.06 Technology

1. Websites and online activities may only be developed and accessible during the campaigning period.
2. Promotion of websites will be considered campaigning material.
3. The Elections and Referenda Committee must be provided with website addresses, URLs, and viewing access to all content.
4. Other technological campaigning must be in accordance with College Policies.

6.07 Expenditures

1. Each candidate is permitted to spend no more than \$300 on campaigning and material.
2. The Students' Association will reimburse up to \$75 of the allowed \$300 spending for campaign material with receipts submitted.
3. All receipts of expenditure will be submitted electronically through the RRCSA website by 12pm on the last day of voting or be subject to demerits and/or discipline up to removal as a candidate
4. No reimbursement will be made unless receipts are handed in.

5. The CRO may award three infraction demerits for every \$75 spent over the maximum on top of the five demerits awarded for going over the \$300 budget.

SECTION 7: VOTING

7.01 Elections Days

The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee shall approve dates for Elections.

7.02 Who Can Vote and How

Every eligible member of the Students' Association shall be entitled to one vote for the election of each Executive Officer, provided that member:

1. Accesses the link to vote through the SA's website (rrcsa.ca) can access their valid RRC Polytech student HUB account and supplies their valid student number.
2. Meets the criteria of a SA member in good standing as outlined in the Association bylaws.

7.03 Ballots

1. Ballots will be ordered alphabetically by candidates' last name for each position
2. Preferred names will be shown in brackets after their legal name.
3. Placement of positions on ballot shall be in the order of President, VP Academic, VP External Affairs, and VP Internal.
4. Candidates running uncontested will have yes/no/abstain options on the ballot with the "Yes" box first.

7.04 Counting Ballots

1. With online voting, the CRO, Executive Director or Election Co-Chairs will receive and review the electronic ballot results from the SA website authorized operator and/or computer system.

SECTION 8: WINNERS

The CRO or Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee will contact each candidate and let them know the standing results within 24 hours of the election polls closing. Official results will be published and/or announced in two forms of the Associations' media within two weeks of the election.

SECTION 9: DISPUTES

1. All disputes or concerns must be brought to the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee within two working days of the occurrence.
2. Elections results will be stored with the Students' Association for a period of thirty (30) calendar days after the election. At that point, the information will be filed provided any concerns have been resolved.
3. Candidates must bring all complaints to the CRO and Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee Chair so that the committee can fully research the dispute in a timely fashion. The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee and/or CRO will make a judgement regarding the dispute and the decision will be final. All disputes will be dealt with by the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee within two school days unless more time is needed to investigate.
4. Any candidate wishing to appeal their demerit assessment(s) may need to meet with the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee, CRO and/or ED who will assess the risk to the association where they will make a recommendation to the CRO who will determine the appeal request.

SECTION 10: DEMERIT SYSTEM

The Demerit System provides points to be assessed against a candidate for a variety of infractions. The guideline sets out a list of infractions and corresponding demerits. Upon reaching ten (10) demerits, candidate will meet with the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee or CRO to discuss issues pertaining to the existing demerits and the impending demerit limit. Upon reaching fifteen (15) or more demerits, the candidate shall be disqualified from the election immediately. Once a candidate is disqualified, they shall not be reimbursed for any expenditures and all election sites shall be taken down. The application of the Demerit System can be found in the Election Procedures document. The CRO has the right to recommend and enforce demerits that are not specifically detailed in the Demerits section. The candidate may not appeal their disqualification to the SAB as the decision of the CRO or Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee is final.

SECTION 11: STAFF ELECTION GUIDE

1. RRCSA staff must remain impartial during the election process where all candidate questions must be directed to the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee, CRO or designate.
2. Candidates needing more information regarding the election, any candidates or elected student job descriptions may set up a meeting with the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee Chair(s) or designate through the SA offices.
3. Election Nominations Procedures will be available online at rrcsa.ca.
4. The SA/staff will supply each Executive candidate with material (paper/pens/paint/tacks) for their large hallway/atrium banners. Any additional candidate campaign banner/supplies may be purchased and claimed through the campaign expense form.

SECTION 12: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROJECTOR

1. The Editor-in-Chief will ensure all candidates posters and/ad's get onto the Projector website, as submitted, on the approved day, as set out in the election procedures.
2. The members of the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee will not interfere with the editorial content of articles.

SECTION 13: CANDIDATE QUESTION, ANSWER, AND SPEECHES

1. The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee may require a candidate to prove contested statements and/or claims.
2. The CRO or a person designated by the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee will act as the Emcee at the public events.
3. The speaking time for each candidate speech is set at 3 minutes. If the speaker goes over the time set, the video available on the SA websites will be edited down to the 3 minute guideline.

SECTION 14: REFERENDUM QUESTION AND NEGATIVE CAMPAIGNING

1. The Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee must receive the referendum question a minimum of 30 days prior to the start of the election.
2. The referendum question must be formed in a positive manner.
3. Campaigning material for referendums must be reviewed by the Elections, Appointment and Referenda Committee chair
4. Social media for referendums must comply with election rules.
5. Negative campaigning or opposing the referendum with posters and media is allowed however anyone wishing to set up a campaign for or against a referendum must submit their intentions with posters and media sites to the SA president.
6. The CRO will determine if the negative or opposing campaign meets the elections rules and guidelines.
7. Any unethical campaigning behavior will not be allowed to continue or be tolerated as determined by the CRO or Elections and Referendum Committee. Unethical behavior will be defined by the CRO in conjunction with the Elections, Appointment, and Referenda Committee which will be measured against the RRCSA bylaws, policies, RRC Polytech policies, and provincial/federal election campaigning guidelines as determined by the CRO.
8. Negative campaigning (personal or otherwise) must be validated with the CRO or Elections and Referendum Committee before being allowed to continue. All material must be sent to the CRO for review to ensure it doesn't breach any policies or bylaws.

SECTION 15: No Election Candidate and/or Vacant Executive Position

1. Subject to change as per bylaws.

