Tab 8: GPSC ELECTION POLICY

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OFFICE OF STUDENT GOVERNMENT
GRADUATE AND PART-TIME STUDENT COUNCIL OF KEAN UNIVERSITY
EXECUTIVE BOARD AND STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTION POLICY

The Graduate and Part-time Student Council Election Policy is a compilation of all the rules, regulations and guidelines duly established to ensure fair and accurate election proceedings within Graduate and Part-time Student Council of Kean University. No Graduate and Part-time Student Council procedure can conflict with any University procedure. All Candidates must meet the Kean University Student Leadership criteria and Office of Student Government criteria at time of application. Any candidate, or elected Officer/Representative who fails to meet Kean University requirements or requirements outlined in the Office of Student Government Policies and Procedures manual, including but not limited to GPA, credit and disciplinary guidelines, will not be able to run for any position.

CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

1. General Requirements: All candidates for the elective offices of Council Representative and Executive Board Officers must be recognized by the Office of the Registrar as either full-time matriculated graduate students or part-time matriculated students in either graduate or undergraduate programs of Kean University. The official records maintained by the Office of the Registrar shall be used as the final determination relative to the eligible number of credits and GPA of any candidate. Developmental courses do not count towards your completed credits. Check with registrar for clarification of credits.

2. Credits in Progress: Also, all prospective candidates must have at least 3 credits in progress, as recognized by the Kean University Registrar.

3. Free of Restrictions: All candidates must be free of any probation restrictions in University-wide disciplinary probation or higher level disciplinary sanctions (University-wide probation with restrictions, suspension or dismissal).

4. Graduate Candidates: Applicants for candidacy for Vice-President of Graduate Student Affairs must be a matriculated part-time or full-time graduate student. All Graduate Candidates must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

5. Part-Time Undergraduate Candidates: Applicants for candidacy for Vice-President of Part-time Student Affairs must be a matriculated part-time undergraduate student. All Part-time Undergraduate Candidates must have a
minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. Part-time students are any students registered for less than 12 credits.

6. PLEASE NOTE: The Kean at Ocean Council Representative must be a part-time undergraduate student, who has attained at least a Junior status (56-89.5 credits).

7. **24 Hour Confirmation Period for Position:** Those applying for Executive Board positions for Graduate and Part-time Student Council shall not apply for more than one position. Individuals running for Executive Board positions may also run for the position of Council Representative, but may not hold more than one position at any time. If any individual should win an election for more than one position, that individual must choose only one and make that decision known in writing to the Election Committee within the “24 hour Confirmation Period” immediately following the close of the elections. The position not chosen will be filled by the candidate receiving the next highest vote count for that position in the same election. If a candidate is disqualified the position will be filled by the candidate who received the next highest vote count for that position in the same election.

8. **Applying after Removal/ Resignation:** Any Graduate and Part-time Student Council Executive Board Officer or Council Representative who has resigned or been removed from his/her position is not eligible to run for any other elected position in the same semester, with the exception of April elections.

9. **Attendance Policy:** Executive Board Officers are allowed one (1) absence per semester (Fall/Spring) from a duly called Executive Board meeting and one (1) absence per semester from a duly called Council Meeting. Council Representatives are allowed one (1) absence per semester (Fall/Spring) from a duly called Council Meeting. Officers and Representatives who do not follow the above policy, will be removed from their position. Graduate and Part-time Student Council will give written notification within 5 days of the last absence. All absences must be presented both in writing and via email to the Secretary’s Office at least 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting. Absences will be accepted at the discretion of the Secretary’s Office and Director for extreme situations. If removed from Executive Board, you may not reapply until the following semester. Roll call is taken by the Secretary at each meeting. Once roll call has been called those who attend the meeting 15 minutes after the start of the meeting or leave 15 minutes prior to the end of the meeting without prior notification will be counted as absent. It is the responsibility of the Officer to let the Secretary know they are present after Roll Call has been called. If an Executive Board meeting is held any day other than scheduled meetings, employment will be considered an acceptable excuse. If an Executive Board Officer should miss a meeting due to a Student Org. function or a regularly scheduled athletic contest recognized by the NCAA or a practice for such
contest, it will not be considered an absence, provided a written excuse and/or schedule is given to the Secretary’s office prior to that semester.

10. **Kean Employment Restriction**: A candidate for any position in Student Government cannot be a full-time employee of the University. In the event that a student is elected to a position within the Graduate and Part-time Student Council and subsequently becomes a full-time employee of the University, that student will be required to resign their elected position.

11. **No Write in Candidates**: No write-in candidates are allowed in the elections. Each candidate must apply by the deadline and have completed their application in its entirety.

1. A ticket is defined as a group of candidates forming a formal voluntary alliance who may engage in campaign activities on behalf of the entire membership of the ticket.

2. Each ticket must have a “Ticket Liaison.” The Ticket Liaison is the candidate running for the position of President, or the candidate running for the most senior position according to the Student Organization organizational chart. The Ticket Liaison **MUST** attend the Candidates Meeting. The Ticket Liaison must submit one ticket registration form that states the name of the ticket and is signed by the ticket liaison and all members of that ticket. Anyone who does not sign the ticket registration form cannot participate as a candidate on that ticket. Ticket names cannot include any candidate names.

3. A ticket may consist of as little as two (2) candidates. A ticket may consist of no more than sixty (30) candidates. Each ticket may not have more candidates running for office than there are positions available for that office. Each Executive Board position and Class Executive Board position may not have more than one candidate per ticket. Candidates for council representatives of each college or at large shall not exceed the maximum allowance (See 5. **Student Council Requirements**).

4. If a ticket is formed, the following information must be published on all posters and campaign literature of the ticket:
   a. The candidate’s name and position they are applying for
   b. Specification as to which student can vote for said candidate (i.e. a student can only vote for a representative in the college that the student is enrolled).

**CAMPAIGNING**
The Election Committee reserves the right, without notification to the candidates, to remove or prohibit any campaigning materials which are detrimental to the appearance of the campus or otherwise inappropriate.

1. **When to Campaign:** Only verbal campaigning will be allowed prior to the Candidates meeting. Written materials or other tangible campaign aids may only be used after the conclusion of the Candidates Meeting. Texting, websites, Facebook, MySpace, other social networking sites, etc. is discouraged prior to the Candidates meeting.

2. **Campaign Material Must Be Approved:** Any idea for campaigning, including the use of materials/equipment (example: the use of an outside vendor), with the exception of flyers and t-shirts, must be submitted with the candidates’ application for approval by the Director and Managing Assistant Director of the Office of Student Government.

3. **Required Information On Campaign Material:** Any printed material must state date, time, and online voting election information. If any candidate is not qualified to run in the election, their name and/or picture must be removed from ALL campaign materials.

4. **No GPSC Logo:** The logos of Graduate and Part-time Student Council cannot be used in any student’s campaign materials.

5. **No Use of Office Equipment:** Office of Student Government/Kean University offices, copy machines, and supplies cannot be used by any candidate for advancement of their campaign. Candidates will not be allowed to campaign at any Graduate and Part-time Student Council or Student Organization sponsored events, including any funded group events and non-funded group events. Examples include but are not limited to handing out campaign material and/or making campaign announcements.

6. **Posting:** Posting guidelines are available in the Center for Leadership and Service office located in UC 219. All candidates should review and abide by Center for Leadership and Service Posting Policy/Posting Sites guidelines prior to posting their campaign materials. All Signs, posters, flyers or other campaign materials shall not be attached to any trees or shrubbery on campus. All campaign materials should take into consideration campus appearance.

7. **No Residence Hall Posting:** There is no housing available at this time to Graduate and Part-time Undergraduate students. Therefore, no posting is allowed in Residence Halls for GPSC elections.

8. **Removal of Campaign Materials:** Candidates shall be responsible for removing all election campaign materials with their name on it within 24 hours after the close of the election.
9. **Election Committee:** The Election Committee is comprised of an executive board member (chair), GPSC Secretary and 2 Council Representatives. No candidate or candidate’s campaign supporters shall be allowed to serve on the Election Committee. No one that serves on the Election Committee can be related to, a boyfriend/girlfriend of, or have any other type of involved relationship to any candidates and/or other members of the Election Committee. **The Election Committee has the right to disqualify candidates for violations of the Election Policy.** Election committee may disqualify a candidate immediately in the case of a serious and intentioned violation that is shown to be the clear responsibility of the candidate. Any such violation should be brought in writing to the attention of the Election Committee. All appeals of any disciplinary action decided upon by the Election committee should be referred in writing to the Election Violation Appeals Board. All decisions of the Election Violations Appeals Board are final. This board is comprised of 4 members as follows: The Chairman of the Election Committee and 3 members from Graduate and Part-time Student Council that have not served on the Election Committee, one which will act as secretary during meetings. If all members of the Council are running for a position, any part-time or full-time graduate student or part-time undergraduate student may serve on the Election Committee or Violations Appeals board. This same appeals process will apply to any student government election. The Director, or representative, of the Office of Student Government will oversee these committees. If the Election Committee witnesses a violation or if clear evidence is submitted to the Election Committee for campaign materials including, but not limited to content, placement, structure, etc., the candidate will be issued a violation.

10. **Candidate Composure:** All candidates are encouraged to follow both the spirit, as well as the letter, of the policy. It is further recommended that candidates should limit their rhetoric and written material to present their own positive characteristics and avoid employing any negativity toward other candidates.

11. **Election Results:** The results of any election will become official 24 hrs after the close of the election, provided no person has filed a written objection with the Election Committee concerning the result of the election. In the event that there is any contesting of the result of the election, the Election Committee shall make an initial determination as to the official outcome. Any appeals of the results of any Graduate and Part-time Student Council election will be adjudicated by the Election Violations Appeal Board. As in all other such appeals, their decision is final.

**ELECTION VIOLATIONS APPEALS BOARD:**

1. **Composition:** This board is comprised of seven (7) members as follows: The Chairperson of the Election Committee and 1 Election committee member, Student Organization Secretary or Assistant Secretary and four (4) Student Council representatives, each from different classes and/or colleges that have not
served on the Election Committee. If all members of student council are unavailable to serve or are running for a position, any full time matriculated undergraduate student may serve on the Violations Appeals board. The Director, or Director’s designee, supervises all Election Violations Appeals Board meetings. The Director has the right to consult the Kean University attorney when necessary.

2. **Powers:** The Election Violations Appeals Board and Director, or designee, is authorized to enforce the election policy. The Election Violations Appeals Board and Director, or designee, reviews appeals submitted by a complainant and/or defendant in a case that has been previously reviewed and closed by the Election Committee. The Election Violations Appeals Board and Director, or designee, reviews old and new evidence regarding the case. The board has the authority to confiscate and/or photograph evidence in reference to the case. Any new evidence directly brought forth by the Election Violations Appeals Board or Director, or designee, will be considered significant. The board has the power to override the original decision by the Election Committee and determines the sanction (see **SANCTIONS**) for the pending case. The decision of the Election Violations Appeals Board and Director, or designee, cannot be appealed or overridden. The decision is final.

3. **Responsibilities:** The Election Violations Appeals Board must be present at the Candidates Meeting, Candidates Debate, at the close of election and election results announcements. The Election Violations Appeals Board must make themselves readily available throughout the elections process.

**VIOLATIONS APPEALS**

1. **Submitting an Appeal:** Any Kean University student may appeal a decision made by the Election Committee to the Director of the Office of Student Government. Appeals will not be accepted prior to the Election Committee reaching their decision. Appeals will be accepted up to two (2) business days after the Election Committee has informed both parties (the individual who submitted the complaint and the candidate the complaint was brought against) of their decision.

   All appeals must be in writing and must state the original complaint, any relevant facts regarding the alleged violation, including but not limited to, specific rule violated, when and where the violation occurred and whom, if any, additional witnesses cited the violation. In addition, the appeal must state the decision reached by the Election Committee and why the individual submitting the appeal does not agree with the Election Committee’s decision. The appeal may also identify any new evidence regarding the case and should justify why the appeal should be considered.
2. **Processing an Appeal:** The Director will advise the chair of the Election Violations Appeals Board of the appeal and the chair will call an Election Violations Appeals Board meeting. Appeals will be addressed on a case by case basis. The Elections Committee must submit all documents reviewed, along with their findings to the Election Violations Appeals Board. The Election Violations Appeals Board and the Director, or designee, will review the appeal and all evidence gathered by the Elections Committee. The Election Violations Appeals Board, along with the Director, or designee, will make the determination on whether another hearing needs to be called. If a hearing is called, the Election Violations Appeals Board may call the individual who made the original complaint, the candidate in which the original complaint was brought against, any previous witnesses to support either side, and/or any new witnesses to support either side. The Election Violations Appeals Board may gather and/or review new evidence. The Elections Violations Appeals Board and the Director, or designee, will determine the appropriate sanction (see **SANCTIONS**) or dismiss the appeal. If necessary, the Director will consult with the Kean University attorney. Both the individual making the original complaint and the candidate in which the complaint was brought against will be notified of the results of the hearing through verbal and written notification within twenty-four (24) hours after the Election Violations Appeals Board and Director, or designee, have reached a decision. Once the candidate is officially notified regarding a violation, the candidate must immediately rectify the situation or disqualification of the candidate/ticket may occur.

Any additional or new evidence may be brought forth at any time by any one (1) of the Election Violations Appeals Board members or the Director, or designee. A decision may be reached by this evidence alone.

The decision of the Election Violations Appeals Board cannot be appealed or overridden. The decision is final.

**VOTING**

1. **Who Can Vote:** Any part-time or full-time, matriculated, graduate student of Kean University and any part-time, matriculated undergraduate student of Kean University, is eligible to vote in the Graduate and Part-time Student Council elections for Executive Board and Council Representatives. Part-time students are any students registered for less than 12 credits.

2. **When Can Students Vote:** Voting will take place on the specified dates and times determined by the Office of Student Government.

3. **How Students Can Vote:** To be eligible to vote all students must access the network and secure their “password” ID. Any questions, during this initial process should be directed to the Election Committee chairperson, the Professional Services Specialist, the Managing Assistant Director or the
Director of the Office of Student Government. All voting will be conducted via the Kean University E-mail Network.

4. **Students Must Cast Their Own Vote:** Any individual that is voting must cast their own vote. Candidates cannot ask students for their ID’s or passwords and cast anyone’s vote.

5. **Ballot:** The location of elected office positions and candidate names on any ballot will be arranged according to the highest ranking positions first and followed by the candidate’s last name in alphabetical order.

6. **Illegal Voting:** Any person who illegally votes or illegally attempts to vote shall be denied the right to vote in any Graduate and Part-time Student Council sponsored election for a period of one year following the violation. If a vote is declared illegal, that vote is null and void in the election. Graduate and Part-time Student Council will report this to the Office of Student Conduct.

7. A copy of the Election Policy shall be made available in the Graduate and Part-time Student Council Office located in UC 340 and on www.kean.edu/~gpsc.

**ELECTION RESULTS**

1. The results of any election will become official 24 hours after the close of the election, provided there are no outstanding complaints and/or appeals. Results will not become official until the Election Committee and/or Election Violations Appeals Board has reviewed and reached a decision on all outstanding complaints/appeals. Any Kean University student may appeal the results of the election. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Director of the Office of Student Government within 24 hours after the official announcement of the results of the election. The appeal must state why the individual thinks the election results are in error. The Director will then inform the chair of the Election Violations Appeal Board, who will call a meeting. As in all other such appeals, their decision is final.

**SANCTIONS**

The Election Committee may enforce, but is not limited to, the following sanctions which may be issued to the candidate or to the entire ticket based on the violation:

1. Provide a verbal warning of violation with notification that future violations may result in disqualification.
2. Provide a written warning of violation with notification that future violations may result in disqualification.
3. Restrict candidate campaigning before elections are over.
4. Disqualify the candidate.
5. Disqualify the ticket.

**A candidate may receive multiple violations for the same violation to the election policy. For example: A candidate is violating the Election Policy by soliciting in the Residence Life Area and the candidate receives a violation. Then, the candidate continues to solicit on separate occasions; each separate occasion will count as a separate violation.**

Grounds for Automatic Dismissal

1. Falsification of any document submitted in the application and/or to the Election Committee
2. Falsification of testimony to the Elections Committee
3. Failure to comply with previous sanctions
4. Failure to abide by Student Code of Conduct
5. Candidate is issued three sanctions for any three violations

**Upon disqualification, the candidate has 24 hours to remove all candidate materials that promote their candidacy.**

6. Election committee may disqualify a candidate immediately in the case of a serious and intentioned violation that is shown to be the clear responsibility of the candidate.

**SPECIAL ELECTION PROCEDURES**

If at any time a vacancy occurs on the Executive Board that requires a separate election, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. If a vacancy occurs in an Executive Board position, other than that of President, any matriculated graduate or part-time undergraduate student in accordance with the candidate requirements may run for the open position. Council Members will elect a candidate to fulfill the position.

2. The Vice-President of Graduate Student Affairs shall assume the position of President should that position become vacant. Subsequently, any matriculated graduate student in accordance with the candidate requirements may run for the open position of Vice-President of Graduate Student Affairs. Council Members will elect a candidate to fulfill the position. Should the Vice-President of Graduate Student Affairs refuse the position of President, the Vice-President of Part-time Student Affairs shall assume the position of Presidency. Subsequently, any matriculated part-time undergraduate student in accordance with the
candidate requirements may run for the open position of Vice-President of Part-time Student Affairs. Council Members will elect a candidate to fulfill the position.

3. Filling Executive Board vacancies will be the first order of business on the President’s agenda. All vacancies will be announced at the first possible meeting following the vacancy. The required election will take place at the second next possible meeting using a secret ballot process.