TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
Election Code
(Created by the Student Senate, March 3, 2006)

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

A. The following code is established to govern and guide all elections sponsored by the Tarleton State University Student Government Association. In addition, this code outlines the scope and authority of the Election Committee that will oversee all student body elections and other special called elections on the campus of Tarleton State University.

B. All candidates for a Student Government Association elected office or other elected positions must meet qualifications provided for them in the Constitution of the Student Government Association and this election code.

Article II. REGULAR FALL ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS

A. Homecoming Queen

1. Qualifications

   a. The Homecoming Queen may be any female student of Tarleton State University who is of junior or senior status. The female must have a 2.3 cumulative GPA and not be on disciplinary probation with the University.

   b. No person who has been Homecoming Queen in previous years shall be eligible for the honor again.

Election

   a. The election of the Homecoming Queen shall consist of two phases:

      (1) Each student at Tarleton shall be allowed to nominate three (3) different female students for the honor of Homecoming Queen.

      a. In the event that one female name appears three times on one ballot, that ballot will be counted as only one nomination for that individual.

      (2) The five eligible candidates with the most nominations shall have their name placed on the ballot for student body wide elections.

   b. The candidate receiving the most votes shall be crowned during Homecoming festivities.

Article III. REGULAR SPRING NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

A. Mr. and Miss TSU
1. Each student shall have the right to nominate three (3) different males and three (3) different females to reign as Mr. and Miss. TSU. Candidates must be of junior or senior classification and have a cumulative GPA of 2.3, and not be on disciplinary probation with the University.

   a. In the event that one female and/or male name appears three times on one ballot, that ballot will be counted as only one nomination for that female and/or male.

2. The three males and three females receiving the most nominations shall have their names placed on a final ballot. No person who has held the honor of Mr. and Miss TSU may hold that honor again.

3. The candidates receiving the most votes shall be elected Mr. and Miss. TSU.

B. Student Body President and Vice-President Elections

1. An application must be filed with the Office of Student Life three weeks prior to the date of the elections. This application must have the name of the candidate, the office the candidate seeks, and the year in which the candidate is running.

2. Candidates for Student Body President and Student Body Vice President must have a running partner and run together on the same ticket.

3. All eligible candidates will have their names placed on the ballot in an order drawn at random by the election committee and/or their advisor at the pre-election meeting. The Student Body President-Vice President ticket must receive a majority vote to be declared the winner.

4. The rules concerning election procedures must be obeyed and will be enforced by the election committee and the Student Government Advisor.

5. If a candidate fails to meet the minimum qualifications by the time he/she takes office, the next most vote receiver will assume that position. If only one candidate filed an application, the position will be filled from the Senate floor at the first meeting of the fall semester.

6. In the case that either candidate for Student Body President or Vice President resigns from the campaign, the remaining candidate for Student Body President or Vice President will have no later than three (3) days or 72-hours prior to the first Election Day to find a new running mate and present the new candidate to the election committee and SGA advisor.

   a. Extenuating circumstances include:

      1) Death
      2) Illness (Family or Self)
      3) Leaving the University
The discretionary power still resides within the Election Committee and SGA Advisor for final determination of any other circumstance that may arise.

b. To prove Extenuating circumstance the candidate who dropped from the ticket involved must meet with SGA Election Committee and SGA advisor to provide documentation and/or information for the candidate stepping down from his/her ticket.

C. College Senator Elections

1. Persons seeking a College Senator position must be a member of the respective Academic College to which they are applying. Candidates must sign up through the On-line election system administered by the Student Government Association and the Office of Student Life. All persons must have and maintain a 2.25 GPA throughout the term. All candidates must not be on disciplinary probation with the University.

2. All University Academic Colleges shall elect Student Senators to serve in the Senate.

3. Each College is allowed two senators with voting privileges.

4. The time and place of the elections shall coincide with the election of the Student Body President and Student Body Vice President.

5. No person shall file for more than one position in the Student Government Association.

6. An application must be filed with the Office of Student Life three weeks prior to the date of the elections. This application must have the name of the candidate, the office the candidate seeks, and the year in which the candidate is running.

7. If individuals do not sign up to have their names’ appear on the ballot and if no eligible write-in candidate is elected, the student body president will appoint eligible individuals to represent a college upon the confirmation of the senate.

8. The top two candidates who receive the most votes will be declared the winners using a plurality vote system.

9. In the event that three or more candidates apply for a particular college senator position than there shall be no write-in candidates in that particular college senator position. However, if two or less candidates apply for a particular college senator position than there shall be a write-in section on the ballot.

10. All candidates who apply for college senator positions shall be placed on the ballot in an order drawn at random by the election committee and/or their advisor at the pre-election meeting.

11. In the event of a tie situation, the Student Body President will host an interview process to determine the victor.
12. College Senators may be impeached for any reason with a 2/3 vote of the members of the Student Senate.

D. Sophomore, Junior, Senior, and Graduate Senators

1. The class senators shall be elected during the election of Student Body President and Student Body Vice President.

2. Each class will have representation of three student senators.

3. Persons seeking a Class Senator position must be a member of the respective class to which they are applying, for the academic year for which they are applying for. Candidates must sign up through the online election system administered by the Student Government Association and the Office of Student Life. All candidates must have and maintain a 2.25 cumulative GPA throughout the term. Candidates must not be on disciplinary probation with the University.

4. An application must be filed with the Office of Student Life three weeks prior to the date of the elections. This application must have the name of the candidate, the office the candidate seeks, and the year in which the candidate is running.

5. If individuals do not sign up to have their names appear on the ballot and if no eligible write-in candidate is elected, the student body president will appoint eligible individuals to represent a class upon the confirmation of the senate.

6. The top three candidates who receive the most votes will be declared the winners using a plurality vote system.

7. In the event that four or more candidates apply for a particular class senator position than there shall be no write-in candidates in that particular class senator position. However, if three or less candidates apply for a particular class senator position than there shall be a write-in section on the ballot.

8. All candidates who apply for class senator positions shall be placed on the ballot in an order drawn at random by the election committee and/or their advisor at the pre-election meeting.

9. Class Senators may be impeached for any reason with a 2/3 vote of the members of the Student Senate.

10. In the event of a tie situation, the Student Body President will host an interview process to determine the victor.

11. No person shall file for more than one position in the Student Government Association.
Article IV. WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

A. Write-in candidates shall be legal as set forth in the terms in Article III, Sections C and D.

B. There shall be no Write-in candidates for Student Body President/Vice-President.

C. Any write-in candidate receiving enough votes to be considered winner of an election must meet the basic qualifications for holding that office/position.

C. No candidate who has been disqualified from an election shall be considered as a write-in for the same election.

Article V. PROCEDURE IN CASE OF A TIE / SPECIAL ELECTIONS

A. All run-off elections shall be supervised in the same manner as the original election.

B. If there are no candidates for Student Body President and Vice-President a special election will be held from the Senate floor.

C. The Election Committee shall authorize a Referendum Election at the request of the Student Government Association and/or the university administration.

Article VI. CAMPAIGN PROCEDURES

A. All eligible candidates with intentions on running for President, Vice-President, and College Senator or Class Senator are required to attend a pre-election meeting, which will be hosted by the election committee.
   1. The pre-election meeting will be held the day after applications are due.
   2. Failure to attend the pre-election meeting by any candidate will result in immediate disqualification of that candidate.
   3. All candidates elected to a Student Government Association office will be required to attend a post-election meeting in order to gain more knowledge about the Student Government Association and elect a President Pro-tem of the Student Senate.

B. Campaign materials may be posted beginning two weeks prior to the date of the election. Posting is defined as displaying of campaign placards, banners, sandwich boards, flyers, promotional buttons/ribbons, and any electronic medium including websites, emails, or videos.

C. Every candidate for any elected position is responsible for knowing and obeying all campaign procedures. Failure to comply with these regulations shall subject the candidate to disqualification.

D. Every candidate is responsible for all signs, ribbons, posters, and handbills containing the candidate’s name.

E. The use of paints, whitewash, ink chalk or similar material on any University property is prohibited. No holes may be dug on campus.
F. Any sign placed on campus must be in good taste or it will be removed and subject the individual responsible for the sign to appropriate disciplinary action or disqualification.

G. No bands or public address systems that disrupt university activities/functions shall be allowed.

H. Rallies or other forms of demonstrations must be approved by the Office of Student Activities and scheduled with the Dean of Student Life in order to avoid conflicting times of rallies.

I. All signs, posters, etc., must be removed by 12:00 midnight on the 2nd day following the election unless a run-off is necessary, in which case the candidate involved in the run-off may leave their campaign literature posted until 12:00 midnight on the 2nd day following the run-off. If a candidate’s campaign material is not removed by the time specified above, then the candidate will be warned for the 1st offence, but will have to pay a fine to the Office of Student Activities for the 2nd offense. The fines will be issued on a “per day” basis as follows:
   1. $1 for every piece of material 8.5”x11” or smaller.
   2. $3 for every piece of material larger than 8.5”x11”.

J. All campaigning in the housing facilities must be with the written permission of the Director of Residential Living and Learning. Approved campaigning should not disrupt normal living conditions.

K. No candidates or persons helping individual candidates shall sponsor an alcohol related activity and/or event to gain campaign votes.

L. All students running for an elected office shall follow the “Signs and Publicity Regulations,” stated by the Office of Student Activities.

ARTICLE VII. THE BALLOT

A. In all student body elections, a student presenting valid TSU pin number if voting on-line, shall be presented a ballot. Any ballot in which the student identification number cannot be verified shall be disqualified.

B. Each ballot shall contain the following information:
   1. The name of the election.
   2. A notice which states that the ballot in question is an official SGA ballot.
   3. The names of all candidates.
   4. Any other information deemed necessary by the appropriate Student Government officials.
   5. A notice that a valid TSU identification card or pin number must be presented.

C. All ballot positions will be determined by drawing.
D. In the event the election committee chooses not to use the established on-line voting procedures or technical problems arise with the system, appropriate securities measures will be developed to authenticate the election.

ARTICLE VIII. POLLING LOCATIONS AND REGULATIONS

A. A polling location is defined as computers owned and operated by Tarleton State University on campus and connected to the University's network, and used to distribute and collect voting ballots.

B. Notification of the time and places of polling shall be published at least two weeks in advance in the school newspaper, or other official notification of the student body elections shall take place. In the case of a run-off, the student body will be notified five days prior to the election. The election committee reserves the right to establish alternate notification time frames.

C. The on-line voting system will become accessible at 9:00 am on the first day of a nomination/election and will remain accessible 24 hours a day during set election day(s). The on-line voting system will close at 4:00 pm. on the last day of set nomination/election. The Election Committee reserves the right to open polls at other times as they deem necessary.

D. Individuals who are seeking an office of position that is elected by campus wide vote and their name appears on the ballot, shall be prohibited from establishing and/or soliciting at a polling location. This includes connecting any extra computers on campus, to the university's network, other than what is previously set up by the university (i.e. library laptops, etc.).

E. Alternate polling locations shall be set by the Election Committee in consultation with the advisor of SGA prior to the date of the election.

F. No campaign materials may be posted in the University library or University computer labs and campaign materials may not be attached to any University computer or computer desk.

ARTICLE IX. ENFORCEMENT OF ELECTION RULES AND BALLOT COUNTING

A. The Election Committee of the Student Government Association shall be the official election judges.

ARTICLE X. The SCOPE AND AUTHORITY OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE

Section I. Election Committee

A. The Election Committee members shall be appointed by:

1. The Student Body President

2. The Committee shall be made up of at least five (5) members.

3. No chairperson or member of the Committee shall be a candidate for any SGA election during the term in which they serve.

4. The Student Body Vice President will serve as Chairperson of the Election Committee and will be an Ex-Officio member.
5. The advisor of the Student Government Association shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Elections Committee.

B. Duties of the Election Committee shall be defined as the following:

1. Execute the election rules as defined by the Election Code.
2. Serve as the official election judges.
3. Tabulate the results for all elections held by the student body.
4. Provide a copy of the Election Code to each candidate for all student body elections.
5. Inform all candidates of the rules and regulations of the election.
6. Make election rules available to any student desiring a copy.
7. Investigate and assess sanctions against candidates who violate the Election Code rules and regulations.
8. Conduct official hearings concerning violations of the election code.
9. Meet periodically to review the Election Code and forward suggestions to Student Government for approval.
10. To ensure fairness of all elections.
11. The election committee shall hold a pre-election meeting to:
    a. Discuss the election code in detail.
    b. Answer any election related questions/concerns.
    c. Officially announce all eligible candidates.
    d. Determine the ballot order of the candidates.
    e. Obtain and discuss other information to be posted on the ballot (pictures, biography information, etc.)

Section II Authority of Election Committee

I. Complaint Procedures

A. Reporting Violations or Filing Protest
1. The Election Committee shall consider all requests for recounts and protests.
2. Any student who wishes to report an alleged violation of the Election Code must do so by filing a written account of the occurrence of the alleged violation to the Election Committee in the Office of Student Life anytime prior to the election, or up to two university working days following the close of the election polls.
3. The complaint should be submitted in writing with the date, time, and description of the incident in question, as well as specifying the section of the Election Code in question.

4. When a complaint is filed, it should include the name of the person filing the complaint along with the name of the candidate against whom the complaint is filed. No anonymous complaints will be accepted.

5. Upon confirmation of a scheduled hearing by the Election Committee, the accused candidate will receive a copy of the complaint filed against him/her.

B. Committee Responsibilities

1. The Election Committee shall within a time frame of two university work days of the protest filing deadline, to determine the validity of the protest, and submit their findings to the Dean of Students immediately following the meeting.

2. Any additional evidence or violations that are uncovered in the process of research shall be included in the protest. The Election Committee shall consider violations by a candidate other than the defendant that are uncovered in the process of research as separate protests.

a. Procedures for Hearing

1. If the Election Committee deems a hearing necessary, it shall be held within ten (10) university working days after the last day of the election. The Election Committee shall give at least two (2) university working days notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing to all parties involved.

2. Each candidate shall be allowed ten (10) minutes to present his/her case. At this time, evidence may be presented to the Election Committee (photographs, written statements, etc.) The contesting candidate shall be allowed to speak first.

3. Each candidate shall be allowed one, five (5) minute rebuttal, with the defending party speaking last.

4. The Election Committee will then, if necessary, question each candidate.

5. Each party will be allowed one, three (3) minute closing statement.

6. The Election Committee shall meet in private to deliberate on the hearings and the written evidence provided, and render a decision. Within one (1) university working day thereafter, the committee shall submit to the parties a written report including the grounds for the decision.

   a. No Election Committee member who is running in the election in question will be eligible to serve on the appeals board.

   b. Both parties involved in the complaint have the right to protest a committee member in the hearing based on a conflict of interest. The Election Committee will vote as to whether or not the protested member must step down from the hearing board.

7. Only members of the Election Committee, the Dean of Student Life, the contesting candidate, and the accused candidate may be present in the hearing room. All persons present at the hearing shall treat the matters discussed therein with confidence.

8. Extenuating circumstances may cause the Election Committee to deviate from the defined time frames.
C. Resolution of the Complaint and Sanctions

1. The Election committee reserves the right to use its discretion in the interpretation of the Election Code.

2. The Election Committee will take two votes. The first vote will determine if the accused is responsible or not responsible for the alleged violation. If a simple majority finds the accused responsible, the Election Committee will take a second vote to determine the sanction.

3. The Election Committee shall:
   a. Determine that a violation of the Election code did not occur, or;
   b. Determine that a violation of the Election Code did occur but was not of a serious nature. In this event the Election Committee shall determine that a sanction is deemed unnecessary, or;
   c. Determine that a violation of the Election Code did occur and was of a serious nature. In this event the Election Committee shall take one of the following actions:
      I. Issue a cease and desist order enjoining the actions constituting the violations to remain in effect for the duration of the campaign period.
      II. Determine a sanction as deemed appropriate by them
      III. Disqualify a candidate.

4. In the event that a candidate is disqualified:
   I. If a candidate is disqualified and he/she is one of the two (2) candidates with the highest number of votes, and no one has the majority, the two (2) candidates other than the disqualified candidate, with the greatest combined number of votes shall be certified as the candidates for run off.
   II. If the disqualified candidate received a majority of the votes cast in the election, a new election between all other candidates shall be held.
   III. If a candidate other than the disqualified receives a majority of the votes counted, including those votes for the disqualified candidate, the election results shall stand.
   IV. If a candidate is disqualified during a run off election, the candidate from the general election with the next greatest number of votes will enter the run off election.
   V. If a candidate is disqualified and he/she is one of only two candidates, the candidate remaining shall be declared the victor.

4. Any disqualified candidate shall lose the right to run for office for fourteen months from the date of the offense.

ARTICLE XI  DECLARATION OF VICTORY

Tabulation of the votes shall be under the direction and supervision of the Election Committee and the Dean of Student Life.

A person must have greater than 50% majority of the votes in order to obtain victory for the position they are seeking. If there is no candidate with greater than 50% majority, a run-off will be held between the two candidates with the most votes.

Official nomination/election results shall be posted by 10:00 am the next official work day following an election. This rule applies to all elections except for the Homecoming Queen election.
ARTICLE XII   TERM OF OFFICE

Individuals elected to office will serve a one-year term. The term of office will begin on June and run through May.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENT TO THE ELECTION CODE

A. Student Government may amend the Election code by a majority vote of its members upon recommendation by the Election Committee or the Executive Council.

Revised and adopted by the Tarleton State University Student Government Association Student Senate and House of Representatives on the 3rd day of February, 2010.

Official Election Code is kept on file in the office of Student Government Association Advisor.