

Charter of the Campus Student Election Commission



Revised: December 5, 2023
Approved 4 - 0



I. Overview

- a. The Campus Student Election Commission (CSEC, or the Commission) is an independent body of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. The Commission administers the election of the student members of the Illinois Student Council (ISC), the University Senate, the Student Trustee, and the Student Organization Resource Fee (SORF) Board. Additionally, the Commission adjudicates election disputes and administers the campus referenda process.

II. Authority and Scope

- a. The Commission is organized under the authority of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA), who is empowered by the University Statutes and General Rules to create any committee to assist the VCSA in the execution of the responsibilities of the office.
- b. The Commission's organization is further authorized by agreements by and between the Commission and other University entities pertaining to the fulfillment of the Commission's purposes.
- c. The Commission's existence shall be in perpetuity for so long as the aforementioned authorities remain in effect. No past or future action of another University entity shall terminate the Commission's existence unless such action stems from a superseding authority.
- d. The Commission shall have the purpose of executing and the right and responsibility to execute activities that put questions of election, policy, or governance before the students of the Urbana-Champaign Campus of the University of Illinois as required by the University or requested by its students, faculty, or staff. This shall include but not be limited to the following:
 - i. The Commission shall administer, on behalf of the VCSA, the annual election of the Student Trustee from the Urbana-Champaign Campus to the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois System.
 - ii. The Commission shall administer, on behalf of the Illinois Student Council, the annual election of the Student Body President and Vice President and ISC Congress members.
 - iii. The Commission shall administer, on behalf of the VCSA, any and all referenda submitted to a vote of the students of the Urbana campus at the University of Illinois.
 - iv. The Commission shall administer, on behalf of the Senate Committee on Elections and Credentials, the annual election of student senators for such

representative units as determined by the Senate Committee on Elections and Credentials.

- v. The Commission shall administer, on behalf of the Student Organization Resource Fee (SORF) Board, the annual election of the voting student membership.
 - vi. The Commission shall administer, on behalf of the governing organizations of the student body, the annual election of students to positions subject to popular vote but not filled by election to the Senate of the Urbana-Champaign Campus.
 - vii. The Commission shall administer the election of the officers of any Registered Student Organization (RSO) or University entity whose voting membership consists primarily of students at the agreed-upon request of an RSO or University entity.
- e. The Illinois Student Council (ISC) shall have the authority to change and update the Student Election Code.
- i. The Commission shall retain the authority to make comment and provide input throughout the annual Student Election Code review process.
 - ii. The Commission and ISC shall be responsible for jointly setting the deadline by which ISC must submit the final version of the Student Election Code preceding the annual student election in the spring.
 - iii. The Commission retains the authority to modify the Student Election Code per the requirements set forth by other stakeholder bodies.
 - iv. If ISC fails to submit an updated version of the Student Election Code by the previously agreed-upon deadline, the Commission shall have the power to adopt the previous year's version of the election code with approval from the VCSA.
- f. The Commission shall have the sole authority to enforce the election code and adjudicate any disputes arising from violations thereof.
- g. The Commission has a duty to uphold neutrality and conduct business in a parliamentary spirit. In keeping with these principles, the Commission has responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:
- i. The Commission shall have the responsibility to proactively consult with the VCSA and other University entities, and the freedoms of the Commission shall not preclude the Commission from this responsibility.

- ii. The Commission shall ensure that its actions or inactions do not place the University in a position of additional legal, financial, or reputational risk unless University personnel with the authority to assume such additional risks have approved the Commission's plans.
- h. The Commission shall have the rights afforded to it by virtue of its status as a campus commission within Student Affairs as provided by university policies and long-standing precedent. These include, but are not limited to:
 - i. The Commission shall have the right to enforce its authority where specifically empowered to do so and otherwise seek enforcement of its authority from the VCSA or other University entities.
 - ii. Notwithstanding any of the foregoing statements in this article, the Commission may do everything necessary, suitable, convenient or proper for the accomplishment of any of the Commission's present purposes subject to the limitations imposed explicitly or implicitly by law, regulation, policy or permissible action or inaction of the University, University personnel, or governmental authorities.

III. Structure and Membership

- a. The Commission is open to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in good standing and enrolled at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. All candidates applying for the Commission must complete an application which will be reviewed by the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson(s), and faculty advisor(s). The application will be continually available online at <http://studentelections.illinois.edu/>. Submitting an application to be on the Commission does not guarantee appointment. The Commission will set its own criteria for membership and will be solely responsible for appointing new members. The CSEC has established the following membership criteria:
 - i. Individuals appointed to the Commission may not hold or run for any office for which the Commission oversees elections.
 - ii. Members will be expected to act impartially. When substantive concerns over a member or potential member's ability to be impartial are raised, the CSEC has the duty to preserve its integrity and remove that member from the CSEC or reject that potential member's application by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.
 - iii. The Commission shall have a minimum membership of five (5) students. When such a minimum cannot be achieved following efforts to fill the

membership, the Commission may operate in its full capacity with a smaller membership. Operating with less than five (5) members shall require the consent of the VCSA or the VCSA's designee.

- iv. The absolute maximum for the membership of the Commission is fifteen.
- b. Executive officers, including a Chair and Vice Chair(s), for the Commission will be elected at the final Commission meeting of the academic year by the current Commission membership.
 - i. The Chair is the chief executive officer of the CSEC. In the case of a tie among voting members, the Chair will cast the deciding vote. The chair shall also be responsible for planning and leading ordinary meetings of the Commission and is primarily responsible for external outreach. They will also hold an ex-officio seat on the Senate Committee on Elections and Credentials unless this position is appointed to another member of the Commission by the Chair.
 - ii. The Vice Chair will oversee the recruitment of the CSEC and aid the Chair in conducting his/her duties. The Vice Chair shall also be responsible for the communication of election violations to candidates. The Vice Chair is a voting member of the CSEC on all matters. A second Vice Chair may be elected by the Commission to assist in their duties.
- c. Non-executive officers, including a Parliamentarian and Secretary, will be elected at the final Commission meeting of the academic year by the current Commission membership. Non-executive officers are voting members of the CSEC in all matters.
 - i. The Parliamentarian is responsible for ensuring all CSEC meetings are conducted in the spirit of parliamentary procedure and in compliance with the Charter. The Parliamentarian shall also be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the Charter and communicating with partners during the annual review of the Student Election Code.
 - ii. The Secretary is responsible for keeping minutes of CSEC meetings, maintaining Commission records, and keeping an archive of documents and communication templates.
- d. If all officer positions are not filled at the last regular meeting of the academic year, the Commission is empowered to recruit and elect members to fill vacancies over the course of the summer and the following academic year.
- e. All other appointed members of the Commission will be voting members on all matters. Appointed members of the CSEC can be removed from the

Commission by an affirmative two-thirds vote of the Commission if the Chair, faculty advisors, or any member of the Commission concludes that the individual has failed to complete their duties or endangers the neutrality of the Commission. Reasons for removal may include but are not limited to:

- i. Failing to attend and participate in scheduled meetings
 - ii. Failing to respond to email correspondences
 - iii. Breaching the unbiased and confidential nature of the Commission
 - iv. Failing to abide by rules and regulations in the Commission charter
 - v. Violating the Commission's expectations of impartiality
- f. The Commission shall have five (5) ex officio members assigned to it by its campus stakeholders.
- i. Ex officio membership shall be apportioned as follows:
 - 1. ISC - Two (2) members appointed by the executive.
 - 2. University Senate - One (1) member appointed by the body.
 - 3. SORF - One (1) member appointed by the body.
 - 4. Student Trustee - One (1) member, if not running for re-election.
 - ii. Ex officio members shall have full speaking privileges during CSEC meetings, but they shall not vote in all matters except regarding the Election Timeline.
 - iii. Ex officio members shall not participate in the adjudication of election disputes.
 - iv. Ex officio members shall not support any student running for an elected position.
 - v. Ex officio members can be expelled from the commission following an affirmative two-thirds majority vote by the Commission's membership in the case they are found in violation of the above.

IV. Governance and Operations

- a. As part of the governance structure of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the CSEC may amend its rules and regulations for governance with two-thirds of members present and voting. Additionally, the CSEC will adhere to the following operational guidelines:

- i. The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be the parliamentary authority for the Commission and its subsidiaries.
 - ii. The Commission shall have advisors assigned to the Commission by the VCSA or its designee. Any advisors shall have speaking privileges in any meetings of the Commission or its subsidiaries, but they may not make motions or vote.
 - iii. The Commission shall not engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran. The Commission shall comply with all nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action laws, orders, regulations, policies, and procedures promulgated by Federal or State government entities or the University.
 - iv. The Commission is committed to ensuring the utmost transparency and accessibility of its proceedings. Consequently, all meetings where a vote is being held shall be open to the public. Furthermore, each meeting will open with a period for public comment.
- b. During the adjudication of election disputes and candidate mediation, the Commission will abide by the procedures set forth in this charter unless extraordinary circumstances arise.
 - i. Impacted candidates will be notified of a complaint against them within 48 hours if the CSEC determines that the complaint has true merit.
 - ii. Impacted candidates will have 48 hours to respond, either accepting or denying responsibility.
 - 1. If the individual accepts responsibility, the investigation will end, and the CSEC will levy appropriate sanctions as defined in Chapter X of the Student Election Code.
 - 2. If the individual denies responsibility, the CSEC will proceed with a formal hearing which will proceed as follows:
 - a. A date will be set by the CSEC. The affected candidates, complainants, and appropriate witnesses, as determined by the CSEC, will be invited to attend the hearing. The hearing may take place in person or virtually.

- b. The candidates and the complainant will be provided no less than 48 hours to submit relevant evidence or a request for a witness to the CSEC in advance of the hearing.
- c. At the time of the hearing, the respondent will be invited to provide a statement on the allegations and answer questions from all members of the CSEC. The complainant may also make a statement. The hearing will proceed regardless of the attendance of either party.
- d. Following this, appropriate witnesses, approved by the CSEC in advance, will have the opportunity to answer questions from the CSEC and the parties in attendance.
- e. Finally, the respondent(s) will have the opportunity to offer a closing statement.
- f. Following the hearing, the CSEC will deliberate, determine responsibility, and levy sanctions where appropriate. The affected parties will be notified, in writing, of the outcome of the hearing within 48 hours of the conclusion of the hearing.
- g. In situations where the CSEC has determined that a violation has occurred and a Tier 2 or greater sanction has been applied, the respondent reserves the right to appeal the decision to the VCSA.