

AR 22 In Support of a New Model for the Estimated Tuition Breakdown

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Sponsors: Student Affairs Committee, Joseph Lee, Bernadette De La Cruz, Ashley Carlisle, Austin Carlson, Sam Leonard

WHEREAS, The University of Texas at Austin has been experiencing budget cuts and tuition rate increases affecting both members of the student body as well as any family members who have a role in paying tuition; and,

WHEREAS, As a result, there is a growing discontent among students and family members alike due to increased and increasing financial pressures; and,

WHEREAS, We, as the Student Government of the University of Texas at Austin, serve as the official voice of students and exist to represent student interests to the UT-Austin Administration, among other audiences; and,

WHEREAS, In order to alleviate the growing anxiety among all tuition-paying persons, we request for the current estimated tuition breakdown located on the official website of the University of Texas at Austin¹ to be replaced with a new, more user-friendly model; and,

WHEREAS, The current estimated tuition breakdown provided online is inadequate in that it is only a representation of all students' tuition money combined into one lump-sum total² and does not provide any numerical figures that the average student can find applicable to the tuition rate for his or her college; and,

WHEREAS, The links provided to access the current estimated tuition breakdown are not in a easily visible location on the University of Texas at Austin website and are not publicized enough as many are unaware of its existence; and,

WHEREAS, Members of the Student Affairs Committee have met with the Budget Office of the University of Texas at Austin to discuss a new model to potentially replace³ the current estimated tuition breakdown; and,

WHEREAS, The potential new model consists of multiple estimated tuition breakdowns, one

¹ <http://www.utexas.edu/tuition/budget.html>

² As opposed to presenting a breakdown representative of each student's individual tuition by college.

³ The proposed new model of the estimated tuition breakdown is not the final model to be included in the official website of University of Texas at Austin. There may be minor adjustments necessary to accommodate the technical feasibility of the website.

for each undergraduate college at the University of Texas at Austin⁴; and,

WHEREAS, Each college's estimated tuition breakdown will provide numerical figures that are applicable to one average student⁵; and,

WHEREAS, Any links provided to access the new model of the estimated tuition breakdown will be located in a well-publicized and easy-to-access location on the official website of the University of Texas at Austin⁶; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, The Student Government of The University of Texas at Austin believes that the creation of a more user-friendly, more publicized, better detailed budget breakdown will alleviate the growing anxiety resulting from the increased and increasing tuition; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Student Affairs Committee would like to create a potential new model consisting of multiple estimated tuition breakdowns, one for each undergraduate college at the University of Texas at Austin,⁷ to be displayed on the "My Tuition Bill" webpage; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Members of the Student Affairs Committee, in cooperation with the Budget Office and any other necessary offices, will do everything in their power to ensure that the new model for the estimated tuition breakdown will be displayed on the official website of the University of Texas at Austin by the Spring 2012 semester; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, A copy of this legislation will be mailed to the University of Texas at Austin Office of the President, the Budget Office, the Office of the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, the Office of Accounting, Payroll Services, Campus Services Budget and Financial Reporting, the Office of the Vice President for Information Technology and The Director of The University of Texas IT Department.

⁴ 1) Architecture, 2) Business, 3) Communication, 4) Education, 5) Engineering, 6) Fine Arts, 7) Geosciences, 8) Liberal Arts, 9) Natural Sciences, 10) Nursing, 11) Social Work, and 12) Undergraduate Studies.

⁵ As opposed to the current estimated tuition breakdown providing numerical figures representative of all students' tuition money combined into one lump-sum total.

⁶ Final location of links is to be determined to ensure maximum publicity and accessibility.

⁷ 1) Architecture, 2) Business, 3) Communication, 4) Education, 5) Engineering, 6) Fine Arts, 7) Geosciences, 8) Liberal Arts, 9) Natural Sciences, 10) Nursing, 11) Social Work, and 12) Undergraduate Studies.

AB 4: Student Government Election Code for 2012 Elections
Authors: Internal Affairs Committee
Sponsors: Internal Affairs Committee

Campus Wide Elections Common Code

GENERAL PROVISIONS

- All groups participating in Campus-Wide Elections agree to adopt the Common Code and have their candidates and races adhere to the Common Code.
- All rules and regulations in this Code shall apply equally to campaigning both on and off campus.
- Situations not specified in this Code should be addressed by each group's respective election code.
- All groups may refer alleged violations of their election process to the Election Board.

DEFINITIONS

- "Student" refers to any person whose name appears on the current roster of the Registrar of the University. Only students may actively seek office or vote in Campus-Wide Elections.
- "Campus-Wide Elections" refers to any election involving multiple entities that are to be governed and conducted by the Office of the Dean of Students.
- "Group(s)" refers to the five organizations that utilize and participate in Campus-Wide Elections. They are as follows: Graduate Student Assembly, Student Government, Texas Student Media, the University Co-operative Society, and University Unions.
- "Election Board" or "ESB" refers to the Election Supervisory Board established by the Student Government Constitution and defined within this Code.
- "Candidate" refers to any student consenting and/or endeavoring to be elected as expressed by filing to run for office in accordance with this and all respective Codes.
- "Worker" refers to any person that contributes time, effort, or services for the purpose of supporting or furthering a candidacy, where the candidate or agent has knowledge of said contributions.
- "Agent" refers to any candidate-appointed worker who is authorized to speak and act on behalf of the candidate.
- "Campaign Materials" refers to all materials and literature concerning any candidate but excludes any individual endorsement not approved by the candidate.
- "Campaign" and "Campaigning" refer to statements, literature, activity or deliberate use or distribution of materials that have the effect of soliciting votes or interest for a candidate or elective office. Campaigning should only occur during the official campaign period as defined in this Code.
- "Polling Location" refers to any internet-enabled device available for public use that is being used to vote in Campus-Wide Elections.
- "Advisory Opinion" refers to any opinion issued by the Election Supervisory Board concerning any matter affecting the Campus-Wide Elections that may not be included within the language of the Election Code.

- “Campus-Wide Elections Filing Agreement” refers to the document signed by the candidate that acknowledges the candidate is aware of and will adhere to the Campus- Wide Elections Common Code.
- “Day” is one 24-hour period. A day includes both weekdays and Saturday and Sunday.
- “Week” is defined as seven calendar days.

ELECTION SUPERVISORY BOARD

□ The Election Supervisory Board shall be responsible for the administration of Campus-Wide Elections.

Selection

- The Election Board shall be assembled through an application process, to be completed no later than the last day of classes in the spring semester. A total of nine members will be selected to comprise the Election Board from the applications submitted.
- Election Board members will be selected through an application and interview process.
- Each group participating in Campus-Wide Elections will put forward one representative to participate in the selection of the Election Board members.
- Election Board members must have completed 12 or more credits at The University of Texas at Austin at the time of application. In order to be eligible to serve on the Election Board, students must not be serving a discipline penalty and they must have and maintain a minimum 2.5 grade point average while serving on the Board.
- Individuals holding or endeavoring to run for an elected position in one of the groups that participates in campus-wide elections are not eligible to serve on the Election Board.
- Any member of the Election Board may be removed for just cause by a unanimous vote of the Appellate Court. The selection committee will then convene and determine a replacement.

Positions and Responsibilities

- The Chair of the Election Board shall be selected in the initial application and selection process. He or she shall facilitate and organize the necessary meetings and hearings in order to accomplish tasks set forth by this Code.
- The Election Board shall appoint a Secretary who shall be responsible for recording the minutes of its meetings and hearings, and keeping records of all opinions, rulings, and filings required of candidates under this Code. The Secretary shall provide a written copy of all decisions concerning individual candidates to the candidates involved. Failure to do so may result in revocation of duties by the Election Board Chair.
- The remaining members of the Election Board shall be assigned an equal group of candidates for whose questions, complaints, and financial statements they are responsible.

VIOLATIONS

Hearing and Procedures

- Members of the Election Board are prohibited from filing complaints. Any other student may file a complaint with the Election Board. All complaints must be filed under the name of the student filing the complaint. The Election Board shall act on all complaints within two days after they are received by either dismissing the complaint or calling a hearing under the provisions of this subchapter.
- The Election Board may dismiss a complaint if:
 - The complaint was not filed within a reasonable amount of time;
 - The complaint fails to state a cause of action for which relief may be granted;
 - The complaint has not and likely will not suffer injury or damage.
- If a complaint is not dismissed, then a hearing must be held. The Election Board shall inform, in writing or via e-mail, the complaining party and all individuals or groups named in the complaint of the time and place of the hearing. The parties are not considered notified until they have received a copy of the complaint.
- The hearing shall be held at the earliest possible time, but not within twenty-four (24) hours after receipt of the notice described in the previous section, unless all parties agree to waive the 24-hour time constraint. This 24-hour time constraint is waived if the complaint is filed during the voting period.
- At the time a notice of a hearing is issued, the Election Board, by majority vote, may issue a temporary restraining order if it determines that such action is necessary to prevent undue or adverse effects on any individual or entity. Any restraining order, once issued, will remain in effect until a decision of the Election Board is announced after the hearing or until rescinded by the Election Board.
- All Election Board hearings, proceedings, and meetings must be open to the public, except for the deliberations that determine the outcome of complaint hearings.
- All parties of the Election Board hearing shall present themselves at the hearing or authorize an agent in writing to carry on said proceedings in their stead. Parties may be accompanied by any other student from which they can receive counsel and have the option to be represented by that counsel.
- For any hearing, a majority of sitting Election Board members must be in attendance with the Chair of the Election Board presiding. In absence of the Chair, the responsibility to preside shall fall to an Election Board member designated by the Chair.
- The Election Board shall determine the format for the hearing but must require that both the complaining and responding parties appear physically before the Board to discuss the issues through a complaint, answer, rebuttal, and rejoinder format, when applicable. The purpose of the hearing is to gather the information necessary to make a decision, order, or ruling that will resolve an election dispute. To effectuate this purpose, the following rules should prevail at all hearings:
 - Complaining parties shall be allowed no more than two witnesses; however, the Election Board may call witnesses in accordance with previous sections of this Code. If said witnesses are unable to appear at the hearing, signed affidavits may be submitted to the Election Board Chair for the purpose of testifying by proxy.
 - All questions and discussions by the parties in dispute shall be directed to the Election Board.

- There shall be no direct or cross-examination of any party or witness by complaining or responding parties during hearings.
- Reasonable time limits may be set by the Election Board, provided they give fair and equal treatment to both sides.
- The complaining party shall bear the burden of proof.
- Decisions, orders, and rulings of the Election Board must be concurred to by a majority of the Election Board present and shall be announced as soon as possible after the hearing. Such decisions may be delivered orally or in writing. The Election Board shall issue a written opinion of the ruling within twenty-four (24) hours of announcement of the decision. The written opinion must set forth the findings of fact by the Election Board and the conclusions of law in support of it. Written opinions shall set a precedent for a time period of three election cycles for Election Board rulings and shall guide the Election Board in its proceedings. Upon consideration of prior written opinions, the Board may negate the decision but must provide written documentation of reasons for doing so.
- If the decision of the Election Board is appealed to the Appellate Court, the Election Board must immediately submit its ruling to the Court.

Remedies and Sanctions

- Violations of the Code shall be divided into four classifications:
 - Class A violation shall result in a fine.
 - Class B violation shall result in a moratorium of campaigning.
 - Class C violation shall result in a combination of moratorium of campaigning and a fine.
 - Class D violation shall result in a disqualification from the election.

Within the ranges established by the Election Board, the Election Board shall select the amount of the fine or length of the suspension most appropriate to both the severity of the infraction and the intent of the violator as determined by the Election Board.

- If a candidate, or a candidate's agents or workers, commits a violation resulting in a fine, the Election Board has the authority to fine the candidate. Any fine or total amount of fines against a candidate in an election cycle may not exceed the spending limit as defined by each race's respective code of origin.
- If, after a hearing, the Election Board finds a candidate, or a candidate's agents or workers, has committed a Class B or Class C violation, the Election Board may restrict the candidate, or the candidate's agents or workers, from engaging in some or all campaign activities for some or all of the remainder of the campaign. If an order is issued covering only part of the remaining campaign period, it shall take effect within 24 hours so that after its termination, the candidate will have an opportunity to resume campaigning during the days immediately prior to and including the election days.
- If, after a hearing, the Election Board finds that provisions of either this Code or decisions, opinions, orders, or rulings of the Election Board have been violated by a candidate, or a candidate's agents or workers, has committed a Class D violation, the Election Board may disqualify the candidate.
- Any complaints concerning voter fraud filed through the Election Board must be immediately and wholly turned over to the Office of the Dean of Students.

APPEALS

- Any party adversely affected by a decision of the Election Board may file an appeal with the Appellate Court within twenty-four (24) hours after the adverse decision is announced, unless the Election Board's decision takes place during a voting period. The Appellate Court shall have discretionary appellate jurisdiction over the Election Board in all cases in which error on the part of the Election Board is charged.
- The decision of the Election Board shall stand and shall have full effect until the appeal is heard and decided by the Appellate Court.
- The Appellate Court shall hear appeals of the Election Board rulings as soon as possible, but not within twenty-four (24) hours after the Election Board delivers to the Appellant and the Appellate Court a copy of its written opinion in the case. Appeal may be heard prior to this time, but only if the Appellant waives the right to a written opinion and the Appellate Court agrees to accept the waiver.
- The Appellate Court shall review findings of the Election Board when appealed. The Appellate Court may affirm or overturn the decision of the Election Board, or modify the sanctions imposed.
- The Appellate Court shall have full authority to fashion an equitable remedy appropriate to the circumstances of the case, but should endeavor to avoid remanding the case to the Election Board.
- The Appellate Court shall be made up of two law students and one law professor to be appointed by the Student Bar Association.

ELECTION TIMETABLE

- The Campus-Wide Elections shall be held on two (2) consecutive weekdays during the last full week of February, with a full week beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday. Poll hours for the Campus-Wide Elections shall be from 8:00 am on the first day of voting in the Campus-Wide Elections until 5:00 pm on the second day of voting in the Campus-Wide Elections.
- In the case of a run-off in any race, voting will take place exactly one week after the Campus-Wide Elections. Poll hours for the run-off election shall be from 8:00 am on the first day of voting in the run-off election until 5:00 pm on the second day of voting in the run-off election.
- No changes to the Common Code may be enacted within four (4) weeks of the Campus- Wide Elections.
- A list of all candidates campaigning for races in their organization must be submitted by each group to the Office of the Dean of Students by 12:00 noon on the day of the Candidate Seminar.
- The Election Board shall advertise the complete ballot, with proper ballot order, in the student newspaper of the University at least seven (7) days prior to the Campus-Wide Elections.
- The Election Board shall designate a publically acceptable place to post the following information on each candidate: name, position sought, major(s), and a statement of no more than 150 words. The Student Government Executive Alliance will be allowed to have a statement of 300 words. The Election Board shall be able to restrict any false information.

CANDIDATES

- All candidates must adhere to the qualifications set forth in this Code, University policy, the General Information Catalogs, and all statutes enforceable by the Election Board and/or the Appellate Court.
- All candidates must be deemed eligible by the respective election code of the group for which they are running in order to be able to participate in Campus-Wide Elections.

Filing

- The filing period shall open at 9:00 am on the first day of the spring semester and shall remain open for two weeks.
- Each candidate must complete and submit a Campus-Wide Elections Filing Agreement for each race s/he is entering to the respective group by the filing deadline.
- Each group is responsible for paying a \$20 filing fee for each candidate running in its respective races. A candidate's fee may be waived if s/he provides justification of a financial hardship. The determination of financial hardship for a candidate will be made by the respective entity in which the individual is seeking an elected position.
- A copy of this Code shall be made available to each candidate by the time of filing.

Candidate Seminar

- The Election Board shall set the Candidate Seminar date. The exact time and place of the Seminar shall be set no later than the beginning of the filing period.
- The Election Board shall set the agenda for the Candidate Seminar. The agenda must include the assignment of ballot positions in accordance with this Code, and may include explanations of this Code, review of the election timetable, and answering of candidate questions. Attendance at the Candidate Seminar is required of each candidate running in a race that is part of the campus-wide elections process. Failure to attend the Seminar shall not be an acceptable excuse for violating this Code.
- If the candidate has an excused absence as determined by the Election Board, then s/he may send an authorized agent in her or his place. The Election Board must be notified of the substitution at least 24 hours in advance of the Candidate Seminar.
- Ballot positions for all candidates in all races shall be decided during the Candidate Seminar by blind drawing or other satisfactory, secret, random method devised by the Election Board. After all ballot positions for all races are determined for those present, the same process shall be used to determine ballot position for the absent candidates.
- No absent candidate may receive a ballot position above a candidate who was present at the Candidate Seminar. The first ballot position available to absent candidates shall be after the last position assigned to a candidate who was present.
- Each group will be responsible for certifying each candidate's eligibility before the Candidate Seminar. Candidates who fail to meet eligibility requirements will be disqualified immediately and notified of this action in writing.

Financial Disclosures

- Each candidate must keep accurate and up-to-date records of all campaign receipts and expenditures. A template for use by all candidates will be developed by the Election Board and provided to each group by the first day of filing.
- No candidate is allowed to contribute financially to another candidate's campaign. Sharing of campaign money and resources is strictly prohibited.

CAMPAIGNING

- Each group participating in Campus-Wide Elections will set its own spending limits for campaigns and is responsible for enforcing these limits with the candidates running in their respective races.
- All candidates are prohibited to solicit or bring attention to their campaign or election before the appropriated time. The aforementioned includes all attempts to secure endorsements, sponsorships or any other presentation of information made for public consumption or use. Campaigning excludes the personal, individual recruitment of team members.
- Details regarding campaigning for a particular race not covered by this Code fall under the jurisdiction of the race's respective group.

POLLING LOCATIONS

- The Election Board shall have jurisdiction over all polling locations on the days of elections governed by this Code. All polling locations must abide by the Code.
- The Election Board is responsible for hosting two on-campus polling stations. The locations of these stations must be published on-line and publicized at least 24 hours before the start of the first election day.
- The Election Board may set limitations on the hours of operation for the polling stations but may not deny the right to vote to any person standing in line to vote at the time the polling station closes.

ELECTION RATIFICATION

- The Dean of Students and the Election Board Chair shall ratify all races that are part of Campus-Wide Elections immediately following the closing of polls.
- Results of any election under this Code shall be announced no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the polls close for the election. The location of the both the announcement and posting of the results is to be announced by the Election Board no later than the Candidate Seminar.