LASA Student Council Virtual Elections

LASA
Liberal Arts and Science Academy

Running for Student Council

Information and Application

Election Timeline

- Your application to Student Council is due Wednesday, April 7th
- Turn in your election at **lasastuco.org/run**
- You will be notified if your application has been approved by April 10th
- A candidate zoom meeting to discuss rules will take place on April 12th
- Your video and written statements are due April 16th
- Campaigning will take place from April 17th to April 25th
- Voting will take place from April 26th to May 2nd
- Results will be announced on May 3rd

How will online elections be different from regular Student Council Elections?

The Student Council election process should always be equitable. It is our wish that no one feels that they can't run due to a lack of resources. If at any time you feel that you don't have the resources for a part of the elections process, please email the senior LASA Student Council President at leadership@lasastuco.org

What is Student Council?

Student Council is LASA's student government organization made up of four officers from each class. Student council is responsible for planning many school events, providing academic and social support to students, and acting as a link between administrators and students. More information about Student Council and its responsibilities can be found at lasastuco.org.

What are the expectations of officers?

Student Council meets every Wednesday during lunch. When applying, ensure that you are available during this time. This is important for all officers. It is expected that officers not only attend meetings, but also invest significant time outside of the meetings into student council. It is typical to expect around two hours of work per week outside of meetings.

How can you run for office?

Fill out the google form at lasastuco.org/run and email a screenshot of your grades and name to melissa.driscoll@austinisd.org (Mrs. A, the student council sponsor and theater teacher). To run, you must have an average above an 80 in all of your fall semester class averages and no referrals or other disciplinary infractions. Fill out the form and send the email no later than 11:59 pm, April 7th. If you have been approved to run, you will be contacted by the email address you provided in the form by April 10th. **Do not begin campaigning until approved to do so.**

Online Election Campaign Rules and Procedures

General Process

Student Council recognizes that face-to-face campaigning is an integral part of the Student Council election process. Although in the past there have been strict social media and online campaign guidelines (including via text/direct message), these are being loosened as direct communication campaigning via text is a reasonable substitute to in-person campaigning. Remember that you leave a semi-permanent digital footprint.

- All candidates will be allowed a one to two-minute video. We will send you questions to base your video and written answers around, but you are welcome to discuss anything that doesn't violate the guidelines in this document.
- The videos and written statements will be distributed publicly to the entire student body. Consider this when you are making your statements.
- Your video and written statements will be screened to ensure that it complies with the rules of the election.
- Social media campaigning isn't allowed (except for posts made on the official Student Council Instagram), but campaigning to individuals is.
- There will be designated days for each class to submit posts to the official LASA Student Council Instagram.
- **All candidates will be tested on their understanding of the rules before they can campaign.**

Overarching Rules

• Most importantly, run a campaign **in good faith**. That is, respect the spirit of the campaign as not a competition but of a process allowing people to learn more about you as a person and for them to determine if you are the most qualified candidate to be on student council. Be kind and don't say anything that you wouldn't say to a person's face.

• Don't do any of the following (IMPORTANT!):

  o Give policy promises
  o Endorse candidates for other positions
  o Talk negatively about other candidates
  o Make threats (even if within official AISD policy) of any kind
  o Advocate your candidacy before the candidate zoom meeting.
  o Advocate your candidacy during the week of voting.

• Giving policy promises is not the same as saying why you would be a good fit for student council, which is allowed

• Social media campaigning **isn't allowed** on your personal social media pages. You may only submit posts to the student council Instagram page, @lasastudentcouncil (send your posts to leadership@stuco.org). Each grade has designated days to campaign (these days will be given later in the candidate Zoom meeting). You are allowed a maximum of one post per designated day on the student council Instagram page. Send all posts at least 24 hours in advance. The general guidelines for campaigning apply online.

• You **are** allowed to campaign via text (or related services such as WhatsApp, GroupMe, and Instagram direct messages). You are also allowed to campaign via group chats, but only via group chats that aren't for the sole purpose of your student council campaign. **You can't create group chats for the purpose of promoting your student council campaign.**

• All statements about your election should be made by you. **You are responsible for your friends' actions**. Tell them not to campaign for you. If you feel you are at a disadvantage, reach out to [leadership@lasastuco.org,](mailto:leadership@lasastuco.org) and we will find a reasonable substitute. For instance, if you don't have a social media account, you might be allowed a longer video/written statement

• Do not mention what middle school or elementary school you came from in your campaigning. Regardless of background, you all go to LASA now, and that is all that should matter when running.

• You might be thinking right now that you can get away with situations that marginally don't violate the rules, or you could be thinking of some loophole. **Don't act on these thoughts**. Even if this is how you don't normally behave in the online world, you must behave according to these rules if you do not want to be disqualified.

Online Election Campaign Rules and Procedures

Specific rules and tips about the video and written statement

- We recommend that you plan your answers ahead of time. If you talk off the cuff on your video, you could end up giving vague answers.
- No special effects are allowed in your video. It should just be you talking.
- All of the overarching rules apply to your video and written statement as well.
- You are allowed to talk about your accomplishments/what you have done in the past.
- The video should just be you talking about why you are running
- Your video should begin with the phrase "Hello! My name is____, I am in the class of___, and I am running for_____." Slight variations of this are allowed as long as the information is all there.

How to report violations of rules

It is critical to maintain election integrity to ensure a fair election for all candidates. If you see or hear of any campaign violations, email leadership@lasastuco.org or Mr. Paulson (andy.paulson@austinisd.org). Encourage your friends to do the same. All reports will remain anonymous.

Examples of Correct Interactions

On the week of voting

Person X: Hi there! I'm still on the edge of who to vote for. Could you give me some reasons why I might vote for you?

You: I'm sorry, I'm not allowed to campaign on the day of elections. Remember to vote by Friday though!

During the campaigning week: Text Message

"Vote for me for Sophomore Student Council Vice-President! I've been a part of club X for the past year and love to help out in student activities. I'm enthusiastic about representing the issues of the sophomore class, and I have the leadership skills necessary for Student Council as demonstrated through the volunteering activities I've organized in the past." *Probably wouldn't be this long though and you can have school appropriate graphics added to it.*

Examples of Incorrect Interactions

On the week of voting

Person X: Hi there! I'm still on the edge of who to vote for. Could you give me some reasons why I might vote for you?
You: I've been a member of club X for the past couple of years. I also have a lot of volunteer experience through my time at X, and I am good at communicating and listening to complaints of other people, one of the qualities needed in Student Council members. *While this would be a great response during the campaign, you aren't allowed to campaign while the election is taking place.*

During election week: Text Message

Vote for me for Sophomore Student Council Vice-President! If you don't vote for me, I'll quit my role as Y for club X, and I have more volunteering experience than candidate Z. *Don't make threats of what will happen if you don't run, and don't compare yourself to other candidates.*