



MOTION

Rensselaer Union 55th Student Senate

Date: October 7, 2024 | Motion #2

WHEREAS the 2023-2024 Elections Commission has detailed many issues with the 2024 Grand Marshal Week Election, which included issues properly synching candidates names to the Elections Website and reflecting candidates preferred names on the ballot ¹;

WHEREAS The 2023-2024 Election Commission struggled to maintain a sufficient number of poll workers during the 2024 GM Week Elections, as evident in the Elections Commission motion to allow candidates to serve as poll workers during the GM runoff election¹;

WHEREAS the 2023-2024 Elections Commission collaborated with Rensselaer Union System Administrators to maintain digital election infrastructure and to resolve issues during the 2024 GM Week Elections such as the potential votes dropped in the Rensselaer Union Voting System (RUVS), changing candidates names to their preferred names, and the voter lists by class; and

WHEREAS many of these changes would be addressed by changes in the policy of the Rensselaer Union, and the 55th Student Senate believes these changes should reside outside of the election policy for Freshmen and GM Week Elections;

It shall hereby be the policy of the Rensselaer Student Union that:

The following policy be made part of the standing policy of the Rensselaer Union and this action of the 55th Student Senate be referred to as the "2024 Election Reform Policy".

SECTION 1: DEFINITIONS. The following terms be defined as follows, which shall only be used for the purposes of this policy and shall not be applied elsewhere in the Union:

- (a) 'Elections Commission' shall refer to the body of the Student Senate empowered to carry out student government elections;
- (b) 'System Administrator' shall refer to Rensselaer students employed in a part time capacity to administer the technical systems of the Union;

¹

<https://sites.google.com/view/rpistugov/student-senate/committees/elections-commission?authuser=0>



- (c) 'Union Staff' shall refer to full time, paid employees of the Union, which includes but is not limited to the Director of the Union and their assistants; and
- (d) 'Student Workers' shall refer to Rensselaer students, employed by the Union, as according to decisions by the Executive Board, and managed by the Union staff.

SECTION 2: UNION STAFF. The Union Staff will work alongside the Election Commission to create additional work opportunities for Student Workers during the Election.

- (a) The Election Commission will designate which hours will be available for the Student Workers to aid in the election and what election-related tasks may be performed.
 - (i) No Student Workers shall be placed under any direction but that of an appointed member of the Election Commission during poll sitting.
- (b) The Union staff will be responsible for deciding how many hours will be permitted for individual workers, the verification of these hours, and the communication of these opportunities.
 - (i) Any additional logistical requirements to facilitate these workers being made available will be a Union staff responsibility.
- (c) No benefits provided by the Union Executive Board or the Election Commission to volunteers shall be provided to Student Workers, nor to any other workers who are compensated monetarily.
- (d) As per the Union Constitution, the Union Executive Board shall be responsible for budgeting and operational decisions not explicitly delegated to the Election Commission.
- (e) No Union Staff or Student Worker shall provide an unequal advantage to any candidate at any point during the election period.

SECTION 3: DIGITAL TOOLS. Digital systems of the election shall include but are not limited to the Rensselaer Union Voting System and the admin panel of the Election Website.

- (a) The Elections Commission shall designate additional digital systems as needed prior to an election.
- (b) The designated Union staff overseeing the System Administrators may be granted complete access to the digital system; no other Union staff may be granted complete access.
- (c) No member of the Union who has declared their candidacy for any office shall be permitted access to any digital system of the Election System.



- (i) No member of the Union may assume an elected office as a result of an election where they possessed access to the digital election system, unless they assume an empty position following the appropriate appointment procedures after the election.

SECTION 4: WEBTECH-SYSTEM ADMIN AGREEMENT. The previous agreement of relationships between the System Administrators and the Student Senate's Web Technologies Group shall remain as a non-binding document guiding the two groups with their respective responsibilities².

- (d) Should any agreements conflict with the yearly election policy, the yearly election policy shall be the superseding policy.

SECTION 5: SYSTEM ADMINISTRATORS.

- (a) For the period of time between the opening of the election and the closing, as defined by the Election Commission, the System Administrators shall designate an individual on their team as a contact for the Election Commission.
 - (i) The exact responsibilities of this individual in regards to elections shall be determined in the yearly election policy or via additional motions passed within the Elections Commission, which shall be made public.
 - (ii) This individual shall have the election infrastructure as their first priority during the duration of the Election.
- (b) The existing procedure to determine the priorities and work allocation for the System Administrators shall be modified in consideration to the following, in regards to the Elections Commission digital systems:
 - (i) The Union Executive Board and Union Staff Members shall take into consideration the state of the Election digital infrastructure when determining the priorities of the System Administrators.
 - (1) No priority shall be set that would prevent the System Administrators from ensuring a working election infrastructure prior to an election;
 - (2) The Lead System Administrator, in collaboration with the Union staff, shall be responsible for determining if clause (1) applies, and if so, shall be responsible to adjust the priorities as such; and
 - (3) The current priorities of the System Administrator shall be made available to the Election Commission on request.

² <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hgAOdJGaoe4VGSSfmw6Uof-eKXNSTYSG/view>



(c) No System Administrator shall provide any advantage, unequal treatment, or an endorsement to a candidate or group of candidates.

So MOVED BY

Ria Massoni

Graduate Senator

AND SECONDED BY

Andrew Wu

Class of 2027 Senator

VOTE

11-00-01

PASSES | FAILS