TITLE VI: THE ELECTION CODE

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Chapter 600: Introduction

600.1  Basis for Election

A.  In accordance with Florida Statutes (Title XLVIII Chapter 1004.26), “Each student government shall be organized and maintained by students and shall be composed of at least a president, a student legislative body, and a student judiciary. The president and the student legislative body shall be elected by the student body; however, interim vacancies and the student judiciary may be filled in a manner other than election as prescribed by the internal procedures of the student government.” Therefore, the University of North Florida Student Government will hold General, and/or Special, Elections occurring during the fall and spring semesters to elect a President, Vice-President, and Student Senators.

B.  The Student Government of the University of North Florida shall hold elections based on a system of declaration, where an individual student, who meets the constitutional requirements of candidacy may, with minimal barriers, avail themselves to the electoral process.

C.  All students actively involved in the Student Government System of Elections agree to uphold the Election Code and by extent the Election Policies and Procedures.

D.  The Government Oversight Committee shall be responsible for approving amendments to the Election Policies and Procedures.

1.  Amendments to the Election Policies and Procedures shall be subject to a special legislative process as follows:

   a.  All amendments must be proposed by the Elections Commissioner and forwarded to the Government Oversight Committee.
b. The aforementioned proposal must receive two-thirds (2/3) approval from the Government Oversight Committee, and then;

c. Be sent to the Senate President in the form of a Joint Resolution confirming legislative action, and then;

d. Be forwarded to the President for executive action.

2. A statute of limitation shall exist forbidding the adoption of amendments to the Election Code and/or the Election Policies and Procedures within ten (10) weeks of the nearest upcoming election.

Chapter 601: The Office of Elections

601.1 Formation

A. There shall be an Office of Elections responsible for the production and maintenance of all Student Government Elections.

B. The Office of Elections shall be an independent office of Student Government set apart from any one branch of government and having no reporting duties to, or oversight from, any officer of any branch and free from political pressures.

601.2 Purpose

A. The purpose of this office shall be to conduct the unbiased service of upholding the democratic process through elections.

601.3 Leadership

The leadership of the Office of Elections shall consist of:

A. The Elections Commissioner

1. The Elections Commissioner shall:

   a. Be appointed by the Student Government President, and;

   b. Be subject to confirmation by the Senate requiring a majority, and;

   c. Serve a term of two (2) years and be subject to reconfirmation after the first year by majority vote of the Government Oversight Committee, and;
d. Have the power to form Ad-Hoc committees, and;

e. Be responsible for proposing changes to the Election Policies and Procedures to the Government Oversight Committee, when necessary, and;

f. Make public an election timeline, containing all important dates, deadlines, and statutes of limitation prior to the start of each semester as they pertain to the upcoming General Election, and;

g. File all witnessed and reported violations of the Election Code and Election Policies and Procedures as Judicial Complaints against the accused candidate(s) within the constraints of the Election Policies and Procedures.

Chapter 602: Election Policies and Procedures

602.1 Creation

A. There shall be Election Policies and Procedures formed to govern the production and maintenance of Student Government elections, and;

B. They shall be formatted in such a way that they may be easily distributed to, and understood by, the Student Body, and;

C. The Election Policies and Procedures shall serve as an extension of statute, bearing full authority, and;

D. The Election Policies and Procedures shall not appear in full within statute, and;

E. The Election Policies and Procedures shall be outlined within statute for the purposes of continuity and the establishment of principles held paramount to our elections process, and;

G. All policies and procedures dictated in statute may not be superseded by the Elections Policies and Procedures.

602.2 Purpose

A. The Election Policies and Procedures shall serve as the binding guidelines for both the Office of Elections and all prospective candidates for election.
B. The Election Policies and Procedures shall dictate the manner and scope in which this government does apply restriction, resolution, and restitution in all election related matters.

602.3 Election Code of Ethics

A. There shall be an Election Code of Ethics that all students involved with the system of elections must agree to uphold.

B. The Election Code of Ethics shall exist as an accord established between all individuals participating in the system of election and the Student Government Association, and furthermore, the Student Body.

C. An Election Code of Ethics shall be provided within the Election Policies and Procedures and shall include, but are not limited to, the following provisions:

1. No person shall physically, emotionally, or mentally abuse any other candidate, student, or university employee.

2. No person shall misrepresent any material fact(s) through any campaign material(s) or action(s).

3. No person shall misrepresent any campaign material(s) or action(s) as being the property or undertaking of any other candidate or political party organization.

4. No person shall condone or authorize the destruction or theft of any candidate’s or political party organization’s campaign material(s).

5. No person shall commit written, printed, or verbal defamation.

6. Candidates and political party organizations are responsible for the actions of other individuals and/or organizations acting on their behalf at the direction of the candidate or political party organizations beyond a reasonable doubt.

602.4 Timeline

A. The Election Policies and Procedures shall maintain a section concerning election timelines.

B. Such a section shall contain, at a minimum, the following applicable provisions:
1. All General Elections, to be held once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester, shall be held between the eighth (8th) and the twelfth (12th) week of the semester.

2. All General Elections shall last for at least two (2) business days held in succession from the hours of 9:00AM to 7:00PM, at a minimum.

602.5 Candidacy

A. The Election Policies and Procedures shall maintain a section concerning candidates.

B. Such a section shall contain, at a minimum, the following applicable provisions:

1. Any student who meets the constitutional requirements for candidacy shall be able to avail themselves as a candidate for any election through the submission of a Candidate Declaration of Intent.

2. Candidate Declarations of Intent shall include:
   
   a. An agreement on the part of the candidate to abide by the Elections timeline published by the Elections Commissioner.
   
   b. An agreement on the part of the candidate to abide by and uphold the Election Code of Ethics.
   
   c. An agreement on the part of the candidate to submit a Candidate Financial Statement, as dictated under the Election Policies and Procedures.
   
   d. An agreement on the part of the candidate to indicate his or her chosen Student Government political party affiliation, whereas “Independent” is an option.
   
   e. An agreement on the part of the candidate to the SG Authorization and Release form to allow for verification of records.

3. Candidacy may be withdrawn up to the time the ballot may no longer be changed by presenting a written and signed Statement of Withdrawal to the Elections Commissioner.

602.6 Political Party Organizations
A. The Election Policies and Procedures shall maintain a section concerning political party organizations.

B. Such a section shall contain, at a minimum, the following applicable provisions:

1. Political party organizations may herein be known as PPOs.

2. PPOs shall be registered with the Office of Elections.
   a. PPOs shall need only file a Party Declaration of Intent containing the signatures of two (2) currently enrolled student members to become registered.
   b. PPOs shall, by registering with Student Government, agree to operate under the laws of Student Government.

3. PPOs shall select a chairperson.
   a. The two (2) currently enrolled student members must consent to place the name of the party chairperson on the Party Declaration of Intent and verify it with their signatures.

4. PPOs shall be able to file joint campaign finance reports.
   a. Political party organizations shall designate at the time of formation whether or not they intend to file a joint campaign finance report.

5. There shall be reasonable naming restrictions for PPOs.

6. The submission of a Declaration of Intent for a PPO shall render the party registered for a full year from the date of submission. Once an annual registration expires, a new Party Declaration of Intent must be filed.

602.7 Campaigning

A. The Election Policies and Procedures shall maintain a section in regards to campaigning.

B. Such a section shall contain, at a minimum, the following applicable provisions:
1. There shall be restrictions on campaign signage location and duration of placement.

2. There shall be restrictions regarding the manner in which a person may campaign.

602.8 The Ballot

A. The Ballot shall serve as the vehicle for the democratic process, carrying the will of the Student Body on all Constitutional and statutorily granted affairs.

B. The Election Policies and Procedures shall maintain a section concerning ballots.

C. Such a section shall contain, at a minimum, the following applicable provisions:

1. Each ballot produced for a Student Government election shall be created and formatted by the Office of Elections.

2. The final version of each ballot must be made public by the Elections Commissioner five (5) business days preceding the nearest upcoming election.

3. Absentee ballots shall be made available by the Office of Elections.

4. All proper Constitutional Referenda and Plebiscites shall be placed on the ballot.

5. Candidates affiliated with the same political party organization shall appear together in a grouping.

6. Voters shall have the ability to select up to twenty (20) candidates within a single party with a select-all box. This option shall be made available for each party on the ballot. If a party has more candidates than offices available that party will forfeit the select-all option.

7. Candidates choosing to run as independents shall appear together in a grouping.

8. There shall be a presentation of all candidates’ platforms to be available to the individual voter upon viewing of the ballot. Such platforms shall be regulated by the Election Policies and Procedures.
9. No changes shall be made to an election ballot within two (2) business days of the election.

10. Further format regulations may be established by the Elections Policies and Procedures if they do not conflict with those statutorily mandated.

602.9 Polls

A. The Election Policies and Procedures shall maintain a section concerning the polls.

B. Such a section shall contain, at a minimum, the following applicable provisions:

1. There shall be at least two (2) polling stations provided by Student Government made available to the Student Body during an election.

2. A protected polling region shall exist surrounding all Student Government polling stations not to exceed seventy-five (75) feet within which all applicable Election Policies and Procedures shall be strictly monitored and enforced.

3. There shall be poll workers who meet the requirements dictated within the Election Policies and Procedures who are selected and overseen by the Elections Commissioner

Chapter 603: Enforcement

603.1 Disqualification

A. Upon receipt of all Candidate Declarations of Intent, the Elections Commissioner shall have five (5) business days to review them. On the sixth (6th) business day following the candidate submission deadline the Elections Commissioner shall issue all notifications of disqualification to candidates that have failed to meet the constitutional requirements for candidacy.

B. The Elections Commissioner shall make known all disqualifications.

603.2 Violation

A. All complaints alleging violation of the Election Code and or the Election Policies and Procedures shall be handled as Judicial Complaints.

603.3 Invalidation
A. Any Activity and Service Fee paying student may file a special Judicial Complaint with the intent to invalidate an election within two (2) business days of the conclusion of said election.

B. A special Judicial Complaint is subject to special provisions outlined in the Judicial Policies and Procedures.

603.4 Special Election

A. In the event of the invalidation of an election, the Elections Commissioner must call a special election within three weeks or before the end of the semester, whichever comes first.

B. The same ballot must be used for this election; exceptions are limited to candidates who wish to or are required to be removed from the ballot and any plebiscite the Senate chooses to add to the ballot.

603.5 Statute of Limitations

A. No election may be invalidated once it has been validated.

603.6 Assumption of Office

A. Election Results

1. Election results shall be released by the Office of Elections in accordance with the Election Policies and Procedures.

B. Validation

1. The Elections Commissioner shall prepare elections results in accordance with the Election Policies and Procedures and present them in the form of a Senate Bill to the Senate with the sponsorship of the Government Oversight Committee Chairperson.

2. All elections results bills must be forwarded to the Senate no later than ten (10) business days following the close of the election if all pending elections related Judicial Complaints have been resolved.

3. The Senate must vote to validate the election by majority approval of the bill.

4. If the Senate validates the election, all newly elected candidates shall be installed.

C. Installation
1. All Senatorial candidates shall be installed at the first Senate meeting following the validation of the election.

2. Presidents and Vice-Presidents-elect shall be sworn in as dictated by Title III.