Definitions

USU Elections Advisor - the USU Elections Advisor is the Associate Director, Marketing and Programs. The Elections Advisor is responsible for supervising and evaluating the Elections Coordinator, providing general guidance throughout the elections planning process, and working with the Associated Students (A.S.) Elections Committee and University Advisor to the Elections Committee to ensure that A.S. and USU elections are held in accordance with existing campus policies and procedures.

USU Elections Coordinator - the USU Elections Coordinator is the Graduate Assistant for the Board of Directors. Duties of this position are included in Section VII. A.

USU Elections Steering Committee - the USU Elections Steering Committee is comprised of USU Elections Coordinator, USU Elections Advisor, Marketing Manager, BOD Chair and up to three (3) students appointed by the BOD Chair. This committee is responsible for providing direction for and oversight of the marketing, execution and evaluation of the USU Elections process.

School Days - the term "school days" is used throughout the document to denote the days that classes are typically in session (Monday through Friday)

I. NAME: This Code shall be named the University Student Union Code of Elections.

II. PURPOSE: The purpose of this Code shall be to establish guidelines for the administration of USU Elections, and to define the duties and responsibilities of all involved parties.

III. DATE OF EFFECTIVENESS/AUTHORITY: This Code shall take effect immediately upon approval by the University Student Union Board of Directors. This Code is established under the authority of USU Bylaws. Bylaw provisions shall prevail should a conflict occur.

IV. AMENDMENTS: This Code may be amended by the University Student Union Board of Directors with a majority vote of its present voting membership.

V. ELECTIONS TO THE BOARD: Each year five students shall be elected during the spring semester in accordance with USU Bylaws and regulations set forth by the CSU Chancellor's Office on the adjudication of student elections.

VI. TERMS OF OFFICE: The term of office for elected representatives shall be set forth in USU Bylaws Section III. C.1. a.

VII. GENERAL PROVISIONS: Elections are to be held during the spring Semester and on days mutually agreed upon by the A.S. Director of Elections and the USU Elections Steering Committee and approved by the A.S. Senate.
A. Duties and Responsibilities of the USU Elections Coordinator

1. The USU Elections Coordinator shall be responsible for the following:
   
a. Ensuring that the election process be carried out pursuant to the rules and regulations, procedures and policies of the Elections Code, the University Student Union Bylaws and those of the University
b. Working with the Elections Advisor to stay within the approved budget
c. In conjunction with the Marketing Department, creating marketing materials for the elections process
d. Collaborating with the Director of Elections for A.S. to incorporate the election of University Student Union Board of Directors members into the A.S./USU Spring Elections process
e. Attending A.S. Elections committee meetings
f. Arranging for preparation of all election materials including, but not limited to official ballots
g. Training Information Services and Special Projects staff to disseminate and collect applications from candidates
h. Working with USU Elections Advisor to complete the requirements for the on-line voting system, including ballot preparation, candidate statements, email alerts, requests for voter information and ITR data
i. Arranging for the securing of election materials including all confidential information
j. Presides over all complaints concerning election disputes of the USU Code of Elections and/or applicable university rules and regulations
k. Preparing final elections report after the elections, including recommendations for future elections
l. Chairing the Elections Steering Committee
m. Planning and hosting the Candidates Meeting
n. Gathering candidate statements and photos
o. Performing other related duties as assigned

B. USU Elections Steering Committee

1. The USU Elections Committee is responsible for carrying out the various tasks involved with coordinating the USU’s involvement in the spring Election process, including but not limited to:
   
a. Developing an election marketing plan, materials and key information
b. Assisting in efforts to publicize and administer the A.S./USU Spring Elections and subsequent results
C. USU BOD Student Member Candidate Qualifications/Requirements

1. USU BOD Candidates should meet all eligibility requirements set forth by the USU Board of Directors Bylaws Selection of USU Board Members- Candidate Qualifications Article III, Section C-1: subsections a-c. of the USU Bylaws
2. USU BOD Candidates listed on the ballot cannot serve on either the A.S. Elections Committee or the USU Elections Steering Committee, nor can they assist with A.S./USU Elections street team.
3. Each BOD candidate shall submit a completed elections packet to the USU Elections Steering Committee at or before the designated deadline as determined by the USU.
4. Each BOD candidate shall be required to attend a Candidate Orientation administered by the USU Elections Steering Committee.
5. Each candidate shall file a financial report by the deadline.
6. Each candidate shall be personally responsible for knowledge of the provisions of this Code and documents included in the elections packet.

D. Filing

1. Prior to each election, the USU Elections Steering Committee shall:
   a. Announce and publicize an opening filing period of at least ten (10) school days.
   b. Prepare an elections packet for all potential BOD candidates that will include information regarding the USU Board of Directors committees and related responsibilities.
   c. Establish deadlines for candidates to make a formal declaration of candidacy and to file the standard application forms.

E. Financial Provisions

1. Each candidate shall be limited to expenditures and/or donations not to exceed $500.
2. Financial statements shall be submitted to the USU Elections Committee detailing each campaign expenditure within seven (7) days after the close of the voting. Said reports shall include receipts for each expenditure.

F. Voting Results

1. A single election shall be held for the five elective offices each spring.
2. The five students receiving the greatest number of votes in the general election shall be elected to the USU Board of Directors. The vote shall be by simple plurality.
3. Students shall have the option of voting for a write-in candidate. Such candidates must meet all specified requirements in order to be certified to take office. Any candidate who appears to have won a seat must meet all specified requirements before being declared the official winner of the seat.
4. In the event that two (2) or more candidates running for a seat on the Board shall have received the exact same number of votes, there shall be a runoff. When
possible and to alleviate the need for a runoff election, the online system should employ an instant runoff election option in which voters will rank their selection of candidates. If this is not feasible, a runoff election shall take place no sooner than two (2) regular school days and no later than 10 school days after the primary election. Runoff elections will be held, when possible, in conjunction with the any runoff elections that the A.S. is holding. Voting locations and times will be determined by the USU Elections Steering Committee in consultation with the USU Elections Advisor(s). Should A.S. and the USU be able to hold a joint runoff election, the voting locations and times will be determined in collaboration with the A.S. Elections Director and Advisor(s). A maximum of $200 may be spent by each candidate in a runoff. There shall be no space on the ballot for write-in candidates during a runoff.

5. Voting may occur through the use of an online process, in accordance with the user terms and agreement. Special circumstances dealing only with USU elections and requiring the use of a paper ballot shall be determined by the USU Elections Steering Committee.

VIII. CAMPAIGNING AND PUBLICITY

A. General Policies

1. Campaigning and publicity will be conducted in a spirit of good sense and good taste.
2. All campaigning will be done in accordance with all university policies and procedures and the regulations of the University’s office of Student Development & International Programs/Matador Involvement Center (MIC).
3. All illegal or improper campaign material will be immediately removed and properly disposed of.
4. All campaign flyers, billboards and other items will be taken down or removed from campus by 4:30 p.m. sharp the Friday following the election days. Recycling of unused paper related marketing materials is appreciated and encouraged.
5. Campaigning activities during an A.S./USU election are limited to current, matriculated students of this University.
6. Personal campaigning during the two election days will take place outside of all university buildings. The exception will be if the candidate has scheduled, with a president or professor, to meet an organization, club or their class to discuss their candidacy. Any violation of this policy may result in a fine being assessed at the discretion of the USU Elections Steering Committee.
7. To ensure that the flow of traffic in and out of campus buildings is in no way inhibited, no campaigning or publicity shall be permitted within 25 feet of any campus building.
8. BOD candidates may not advertise on USU or A.S. Campus Information Screens.
9. Any candidate, slate, or campaigner may not escort a voter to any location where a student may vote. Any violation of this policy will result in a fine being assessed at the discretion of the Elections Committee.
10. In conformity with the laws of the state of California, support or endorsement of any USU candidate/slate by any faculty, staff, administrator, university department and/or university auxiliary is strictly prohibited. Examples include but are not limited to:
   
a. Students campaigning while working on campus  
b. Flyers being distributed or posted in university businesses, department and/or faculty offices  
c. Faculty, staff, or administrators speaking in support of any particular candidate and/or slate

11. All emailing that is campaign related or that involves the campaign of a candidate/slate is to adhere to the university’s policy on electronic media and posting.

12. All web pages that are related to, created for, and/or found to involve a candidate’s/slate’s campaign must follow the university’s policy concerning electronic media and posting. The web pages should display candidate statements and/or slate platforms.

13. All USU funded events will be non-partisan. If a USU funded event has been found to invite, schedule, and/or permit a candidate/slate to speak or campaign then the event must permit all candidate(s) slates to speak or campaign.

14. All handouts must be approved by the Matador Involvement Center (MIC), must adhere to current campus policies related to time, place, and manner, and must be disclosed in the candidate’s financial statement.

B. Elections Information Stations

1. The USU Elections Steering Committee, in conjunction with A.S., will annually prepare procedures for the establishment, security and publicizing of Elections Information Stations.
   
a. Voting information and times shall be determined by the USU Elections Steering Committee in conjunction with the A.S. Director of Elections.  
b. This information must be included in the General Elections Calendar each year.

C. Meet & Greet

1. A Meet & Greet may be held to allow candidates to interact with and be interviewed by members of the Daily Sundial. The date and time of this event is to be determined by the USU Elections Coordinator in consultation with the USU Elections Advisor(s).

IX. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES:

A. The Elections Steering Committee shall have general supervisory authority over the conduct of the election of this corporation.
B. Any and all complaints regarding election irregularities or misconduct should be addressed in writing to the USU Elections Steering Committee and filed with the USU Administrative Office by 4:30 p.m. on the Friday following the last day of voting.

C. The USU Elections Steering Committee will consider any and all complaints or disputes informally within five (5) school days of the complaints or disputes being brought to the attention of the USU Elections Coordinator and/or USU Elections Advisor.

D. Failing informal solution, the USU Elections Steering Committee will hold a formal hearing to resolve complaints and/or disputes within ten (10) school days.
   1. The USU Elections Coordinator shall inform the affected parties of complaint(s) at a previously designated location.
   2. Parties to the dispute shall be informed of the date and time the hearing is scheduled for five (5) school days in advance of the hearing.
   3. Both sides have the option of submitting written arguments.
   4. The USU Elections Coordinator shall arrange for a hearing before the USU Elections Steering Committee with all affected parties within ten (10) school days.

E. The formal hearing(s) shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedure:
   1. The USU Elections Coordinator will preside over the hearings, but must allow the members their right to questions and raise points in the meeting.
   2. The plaintiff shall verbally present his/her opening arguments and then the defendant will do the same.
   3. Following presentations of arguments, the USU Elections Steering Committee will hear the plaintiff's case. Then the defendant will present his/her case.
   4. Following presentations of each party's case, evidence and testimony, rebuttals will be in order, alternating plaintiff to defendant.
   5. After all rebuttals have been heard, closing arguments will be in order. The plaintiff will close first, followed by the defendant.
   6. Change in procedure shall be allowed when sanctioned by the USU Elections Coordinator and/or with stipulation of both parties prior consent.
   7. The decision of the Committee will be based on simple majority of voting members present.
   8. Minutes will be kept of such hearings by the USU Elections Advisor.
   9. Formal hearings may only be conducted if quorum is present.
F. The USU Elections Steering Committee may initially then take any or all of the following remedial actions:

1. Issue a formal, written warning.
2. Issue a formal, public letter of reprimand.

If the preceding proves insufficient, the USU Elections Steering Committee (in consultation with the USU Elections Advisor) may, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total voting membership then take the following actions:

3. Adopt a motion on censure.
4. Disallow a member-elect from assuming office.

G. Actions F.3 and F.4 may be appealed to the USU Board of Directors, but request for such appeal must be filed within (5) working days after the decision of the USU Elections Steering Committee has been made. The USU Board of Directors shall have final jurisdiction over appeals.

H. The USU Elections Steering Committee shall have the authority to levy the following penalties upon candidates(s) who fail to attend the Candidates Meeting or who fail to file his/her financial statements in a timely manner.

1. All candidates must attend the Candidates Meeting, unless arrangements are made with the USU Elections Coordinator prior to the meeting. Failure to attend or make prior arrangements will result in the exclusion of said candidate's name on the ballot of the election in question.

2. All candidate(s) must file a Financial Report with the USU Administrative Office by 4:30p.m. on the Friday following the last day of voting.

   a. Failure to submit a Financial Report, or failure to abide by specific financial guidelines, will result in the USU Elections Steering Committee having the option to take action as prescribed in Article IX, Section F of this Code.

I. All decisions by the USU Elections Steering Committee in cases of election misconduct will be prominently posted and will also be reported in writing with an explanation within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding weekends).

X. **REGULATIONS:** The USU Code of Elections, in defining and outlining procedures governing USU Elections, shall be empowered by and limited to the policies of:

1. The State of California
2. California State University, Northridge
3. University Student Union, California State University, Northridge

XI. **ENABLING CLAUSE:** This Code shall supersede all USU Code of Elections approved prior to June 13, 2011.

*Approved by the Board of Directors on X.*