



## Election Rules for the 2019 Student Trustee Election

*Adopted by the Trustee Nominating Committee on Wednesday, 3 March 2010. Amended Thursday, 3 February 2011; Tuesday, 6 March 2012; Monday, 10 February 2014, January 21, 2016, January 15, 2019*

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### Preamble

Elections are the foundation upon which representative governance rests. These rules are designed to protect the rights of candidates, as well as members of the University community, and to ensure that the election process takes place in respectful and fair arena. Candidates and their supporters must follow all election guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in disqualification of candidates by the Trustee Nominating Committee, hereafter referred to as the committee.

### Section I: Candidate Information

#### 1.1. Eligibility

1. Candidates must meet all of the petition requirements by the petition deadline specified in the official calendar for the election in which they wish to run to be eligible to participate in that election as candidates.
2. The following rules apply to both **student and employee** candidates:
  - a. All candidates must attend mandatory meetings or send a proxy<sup>i</sup> on their behalf. If they fail to do so, they will be disqualified from the election.
  - b. All elected trustees are expected to remain in residence at the Ithaca or Geneva campus for the full duration of their terms.
  - c. Only the official petition forms issued by the Office of the Assemblies will be accepted.
3. The following rules apply only to **student** candidates:
  - a. Student candidates must be full-time students in residence at the Ithaca campus and be enrolled in or admitted to a course of study that will allow them to remain so until May in the final year of their two-year term as trustee. Students enrolled at the Geneva campus of the University are considered Ithaca students for the purposes of these rules. Undergraduate students may run for trustee in odd years and graduate or professional students may run for trustee in even years.
  - b. Each petition must have 300 valid, distinct signatures. Only signatures of those



- 40 eligible to vote in the election shall be valid. It is recommended that candidates  
41 collect more than 300 signatures in the event that some cannot be validated.  
42 i. All eligible students –undergraduates, graduates and professional students–  
43 vote in each election, even if their constituency is not being elected that year.  
44 c. Candidates running for Student-elected Trustee may not run for any other office  
45 concurrently. This would include races within the Student Assembly and Class  
46 Councils.  
47  
48 4. The following rules apply only to **employee** candidates:  
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50 a. Employee candidates must work full-time or part-time in a non-exempt, exempt, or  
51 academic non-professorial staff category;  
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53 b. Employee candidates must work at the Ithaca or Geneva campus; and,  
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55 c. Employee candidates must plan to remain so for the duration of their four-year term  
56 as trustee.  
57  
58 5. Each petition must have a total of 300 valid, distinct signatures. Only signatures of those  
59 eligible to vote in the election shall be valid. It is recommended that candidates collect more  
60 than 300 signatures in the event that some cannot be validated.  
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62 6. All petitions may be reviewed in the Office of the Assemblies (109 Day Hall, Monday-Friday  
63 from 9am-12:15pm, 1pm-4:30pm) by any member of the community who wishes to examine  
64 them. Petitions may not be photocopied. The Office of the Assemblies will contact  
65 petitioners within 48 hours of the petitioning deadline if their petitions are deemed invalid.  
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### 67 1.2. Online Registration Form

- 68  
69 1. Each candidate must complete the online candidate background questions and statement.  
70 Statements will be posted at the Trustee elections website, used on the ballot, and published  
71 in campus publications.  
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73 2. The Office of the Assemblies, located in 109 Day Hall, will take photographs of candidates  
74 prior to the petitioning deadline on the calendar. These photos and other candidate  
75 information will appear in campus publications, on the web and on the ballots. Candidates  
76 may also submit their own photograph for use in these official materials, per the  
77 size/resolution restrictions on the registration form.  
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## 79 **Section II: Election Guidelines**

### 80 81 2.1. Maintaining a Fair Environment

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- 83 1. Candidates and their supporters shall comply with the election rules stated here.  
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85 2. They shall not create an intimidating or uncomfortable environment for other candidates,  
86 students, or employees.  
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88 3. They must notify the committee of any potential violations immediately after they occur by  
89 emailing the Office of the Assemblies [assembly@cornell.edu].  
90  
91 4. They shall rectify any violations to the best of their ability upon notification by the  
92 committee.  
93  
94 5. Candidates and their supporters may not interfere or interact with other people who are in  
95 the process of voting and they must take reasonable measures to avoid the possibility or  
96 appearance of such behavior. Specifically, candidates and their supporters may not:  
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98 a. offer their personal computers or electronic devices for others to use in voting or  
99 operate voting booths and kiosks;  
100  
101 b. watch, speak with, or hover around people whom they know, or reasonably should  
102 know, to be in the process of voting with electronic devices or otherwise;  
103  
104 c. engage in campaigning activities at computer labs or in any other environment where  
105 people appear to be in the process of voting; or,  
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107 d. troubleshoot others' election difficulties or attempt to explain to others how to  
108 prepare and cast a ballot.  
109  
110 6. Candidates and their supporters should direct those who report difficulty voting to the  
111 Office of the Assemblies for support.  
112  
113 7. Candidates and their supporters may not exceed \$50 for out-of-pocket spending and value  
114 of donations of materials and professional services.<sup>ii</sup> Candidates must submit a Candidate  
115 Expenditure Statement Form along with any receipts and proof of fair market value to the  
116 Office of the Assemblies, 109 Day Hall, by the deadline specified in the elections calendar.  
117  
118 8. Candidates may be reimbursed for up to \$50 of allowable campaign expenses. Common  
119 allowable campaign expenses include: chalk, photocopies from on-campus vendors, domain  
120 name fees, and web hosting fees. Candidates should receive preclearance on expenditures to  
121 ensure that they are reimbursable. Only expenditures that are submitted on the official  
122 candidate expenditure statement form with the original receipt will be reimbursed.  
123  
124 9. Candidates and their supporters may not as an explicit or implicit condition for initiation to,  
125 admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in a group or organization compel



126 any person to endorse their candidacies, assist their campaigns, or act as supporters.

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128 2.2. Early Campaigning

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130 1. Candidates and their supporters must refrain from the following campaign activities until  
131 campaigning officially begins:

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133 a. disseminating printed or electronic campaign materials,

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135 b. advertising candidacy by chalk, poster, electronic, or other means, or,

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137 c. making speeches or statements about their candidacy to student organizations,  
138 employee organizations, campus organizations, university departments, or classes.

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140 2. Candidates and their supporters should consult with the Office of the Assemblies if they are  
141 unsure whether an action they are considering or undertaken might constitute early  
142 campaigning.

143

144 2.3. Compliance with Campus Life Policies and Conduct Codes

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146 1. Candidates and supporters acting on their behalf must be aware of and comply with all  
147 applicable campus policies and conduct codes, including but not limited to:

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149 a. University Postering & Chalking Policy,

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151 b. Campus Life policy for posting in Residence Halls,

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153 c. Dining hall policies, including a prohibition on distributing printed campaign  
154 materials in dining halls without permission from authorized staff, and,

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156 d. Campus Code of Conduct.

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158 2. Violations can result in disciplinary referral by officials responsible for their enforcement. In  
159 addition to any sanctions available to such officials under the terms of such policies and  
160 codes, officials may discipline candidates who violate these policies as provided in these rules  
161 and the committee may disqualify candidates in response.

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163 2.4. Campus Mail

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165 Use of Campus Mail to distribute campaign materials is prohibited.

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167 2.5 Standards for Petitioning and Campaigning in Classes and Residence Halls

168 The following standards apply to all potential candidates and nominated candidates. These standards



169 are intended to avoid conflicts of interest and to provide fairness in access to opportunities.

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171 1. No potential candidate may solicit nomination petition signatures immediately before,  
172 during, or immediately after a class for which they are a Teaching Assistant (TA) or grader.  
173 For reasons of fairness, no other potential candidates may solicit signatures in those classes,  
174 either. Nor may TAs solicit signatures from their own students when they encounter them in  
175 other situations. (The TNC recognizes that other students soliciting signatures on behalf of  
176 potential candidates may not know who is a student in a particular course and will not  
177 penalize potential candidates where there is no intention to violate the standard.)  
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180 2. No potential candidate may solicit nomination petition signatures in a residence hall where  
181 s/he is a Resident Advisor (RA) or Graduate Residential Fellow (GRF). For reasons of  
182 fairness, no other potential candidates may solicit signatures in those residence halls, either.  
183 Nor may RAs and GRFs solicit signatures from students in their residence hall who they  
184 encounter outside the residence hall. (The TNC recognizes that other students soliciting  
185 signatures on behalf of potential candidates may not know who lives in a particular residence  
186 hall and will not penalize potential candidates where there is no intention to violate the  
187 standard.)

188

189 3. Once nominated, candidates may campaign to classes for which they TA (but not to the  
190 specific sections that they lead) or in residence halls where they serve as RAs or GRFs. In  
191 classes, candidates must have permission of the instructor and must include information  
192 about the overall election (so that students can look for information on other candidates).

193

194 As these are new standards, the TNC will take into account intent and good faith in assessing  
195 particular claims of violations.

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### 196 Section III: Petition and Campaign Penalties

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198 1. The committee shall determine whether or not a candidate has committed a campaign  
199 violation. Campaign violations may result in appropriate remedial measures determined by  
200 the committee up to and including disqualification of a candidate. Should the committee  
201 decide that a violation or series of violations have been committed on such a scale as to alter  
202 the fairness of the election, it may disqualify a candidate by two-thirds majority vote of  
203 members present. Any concerns or complaints may be sent to the Office of the Assemblies  
204 [assembly@cornell.edu].  
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207 2. All campaign materials, either physical or electronic, published by candidates and/or their  
208 supporters are to promote only the Student Trustee candidate. Any materials that include the  
209 names, positions, or any other information regarding other elections are strictly prohibited.

210

211 3. All candidates are expected to act in conformity with all standing rules and regulations of the  
University, including the *Campus Code of Conduct*.



212 [https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/policy/CCC.pdf.] Violations of the Code  
213 should be referred to the Judicial Administrator for appropriate action.  
214

## 215 Section IV: Election Procedures

### 216 4.1. The Elections Calendar

- 217 1. The committee shall adopt a calendar for spring elections. The committee may adopt  
218 different calendars for the student and employee elections, if both are held in the same  
219 semester.  
220
- 221 2. Consideration shall be given to any religious holidays that may fall during the election period,  
222 so that the right to free religious observance is afforded to all potential candidates.  
223
- 224 3. A public Candidate Forum will be held for trustee candidates.  
225  
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### 227 4.2. The Trustee Nominating Committee

- 228 1. There shall be a nominating committee consisting of:
  - 229 a. Up to four current or former trustees, appointed by the Board of Trustees. One of  
230 whom shall be a current or former faculty-elected trustee, up to two of whom shall  
231 be the incumbent student trustees, and one of whom shall be a current or former  
232 employee-elected trustee. An employee-elected trustee or a student-elected trustee  
233 who is a candidate for reelection shall not be appointed.
  - 234 b. Two undergraduate student members, named by the Student Assembly, and one  
235 graduate or professional student member named by the Graduate and Professional  
236 Student Assembly, who are not candidates for the trustee position.
  - 237 c. In the years when there is an employee-elected trustee vacancy, three employee  
238 members named by the Employee Assembly. These individuals shall not be  
239 candidates for the trustee position, and shall, insofar as possible, represent statutory  
240 and endowed, exempt and nonexempt employees.
  - 241 d. Chairperson - The Chairperson shall be elected by the Board of Trustees from  
242 among the trustee members. A Vice Chairperson may also be appointed.  
243
- 244 2. All members of the committee shall serve one-year terms, starting as soon as possible at the  
245 beginning of the academic calendar year and ending on the last day of scheduled exams for  
246 that academic calendar year.  
247
- 248 3. Trustee Nominating Committee members are expected to abide by the highest standards of  
249 personal conduct and integrity. Members must excuse themselves from serving on the  
250 Trustee Nominating Committee if they plan to take part in any campaign, including, but not  
251 limited to, running as a candidate, participating on a campaign team, and/or participating in  
252 any activity or deliberation associated with the endorsement of a candidate. All conflicts  
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255 should be considered and resolved before the election cycle begins. Members should also  
256 recuse themselves from any committee deliberation that may present a conflict of interest.

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258 4. The committee shall meet as soon as possible after each challenge deadline.

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260 5. The committee shall verify election results.

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#### 262 4.3. The Office of the Assemblies

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264 1. The Office of the Assemblies by delegation from the committee shall prepare all printed  
265 material and distribute election materials.

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267 2. The Office of the Assemblies shall validate petitions as follows:

268 a. Check each petition for the required number of signatures and validate candidates  
269 and signatures as to eligibility to sign petitions.

270 b. Bring any petitions it finds invalid to the committee for action.

271 c. Make petitions available to any member of the community who wishes to examine  
272 them.

273

274 3. The Office of the Assemblies will set a deadline by which students must be fully registered  
275 to be eligible to vote. Only full-time students who have no holds on their registration before  
276 this deadline may vote in the election.

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#### 278 4.4. Conduction of Election and Tabulation

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280 1. The order in which names appear on the ballot shall be randomly selected.

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282 2. The Office of the Assemblies will tabulate votes using the Hare System.

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284 3. The Office of the Assemblies will post preliminary results as soon as possible after the  
285 committee has ruled on any challenges.

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287 4. A printout of election results shall be available in the Office of the Assemblies, 109 Day  
288 Hall, for one year.

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#### 290 4.5. Challenges

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292 1. Any member of the Cornell community, except members of the committee, may submit a  
293 challenge, and all challenges are public documents.

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295 2. The Committee (as a whole, with majority in favor) may submit a challenge.

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297 3. Petition and election challenges must be submitted to the Office of the Assemblies, 109 Day





- 298 Hall, by the petition deadlines specified in the elections calendar.  
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300 4. No challenges or further supporting documentation will be accepted after these deadlines.  
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302 5. Challenges must be in writing and accompanied by the following supporting  
303 documentation:  
304 a. challenger's name  
305 b. candidate's name  
306 c. date of challenge  
307 d. reason for challenge and supporting evidence  
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309 6. The Trustee Nominating Committee should be prepared to meet immediately following the  
310 petition and election challenge deadlines to rule on all challenges.  
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312 7. Anyone who has submitted or is named in an election challenge shall be notified by the  
313 Office of the Assemblies 24 hours in advance of any Trustee Nominating Committee  
314 meeting held to consider that particular challenge. Written statements may be addressed to  
315 the Trustee Nominating Committee prior to their meeting.  
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317 8. The Trustee Nominating Committee will meet in closed session to decide on the merit of  
318 the challenge. For each challenge, the committee will determine:  
319 a. whether a preponderance of evidence substantiates each alleged violation; and,  
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321 b. which, if any, substantiated violations or combination thereof altered the fairness of  
322 the election to the extent the challenged candidate should be disqualified.  
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324 9. For each challenge, the committee will report to the challenger(s) and the challenged  
325 candidate all evidence received, any violations substantiated, and any decisions to disqualify  
326 the challenged candidate.  
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328 10. A challenged candidate may review challenges in the Office of the Assemblies, 109 Day Hall  
329 and address written statements in response to the committee. The deadline for responses is  
330 set in the elections calendar.  
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332 11. An appeal process is provided to assure challenges are fairly decided in a manner consistent  
333 with these rules. Appeals must be submitted to the Judicial Codes Counselor (the reviewer)  
334 by email no more than 24 hours after the preliminary report has been provided to parties to  
335 the challenge. The reviewer must review the preliminary report and associated documents  
336 and issue a decision that either upholds the preliminary determination or requests  
337 reconsideration. The reviewer must provide a copy of the decision to members of the  
338 committee and all parties to the challenge. The reviewer may request that the committee  
339 reconsiders its preliminary determination if they find:  
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- 341                   a. the committee committed a prejudicial error in interpreting these rules;  
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343                   b. the committee rendered a decision clearly against the evidence; or  
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345                   c. new evidence was discovered after the preliminary determination and could not have  
346                   readily been discovered before the determination, which would change the outcome.  
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348           12. The determination of the committee after resolution of appeals shall be final. The committee  
349           will release a final, public report identifying all violations substantiated and any decisions to  
350           disqualify challenged candidates.  
351  
352           13. Members of the committee and parties to a challenge may not share the contents of  
353           challenges, evidence, or decisions submitted to or received from the committee, except when  
354           explicitly permitted by these rules or by the committee. Unauthorized disclosure of  
355           confidential information may result in a disciplinary referral.  
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<sup>i</sup> The proxy must identify the candidate whom he or she represents when attendance is taken.

<sup>ii</sup> Professional services are defined as services provided in exchange for financial compensation. Services donated by current Cornell students are excluded from this limitation.