

PRSSA 2012 OFFICIAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION GUIDELINES

I. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- A. A student interested in running for a PRSSA National Committee office must be:
1. a member in good standing of an active PRSSA Chapter;
 2. able to maintain PRSSA membership for the duration of his or her term on the National Committee; and
 3. a full-time student from the time he or she is elected through the fall semester/quarter.
- B. Candidates for National President must have served on the National Committee for at least six months. If only one candidate for National President has served on the National Committee for six months, candidacy will open to all PRSSA members who meet all other requirements.

II. NOMINATION PROCEDURE

- A. An individual seeking national office must submit to PRSSA Headquarters:
1. the official nomination form which cannot be altered in any way. Changes in the size or format of the form will be grounds for disqualification. Duplicate copies and supplementary pages will not be accepted and shall be grounds for disqualification;
 2. a 250-word typed essay identifying your favorite leader and explaining your choice; and
 3. one letter of recommendation from the Chapter Faculty or Professional Adviser.
- B. Nomination forms, the essay and letter of recommendation from a Chapter Adviser submitted by the candidates will be mailed to delegates prior to the Assembly.

III. ELECTION TIMETABLES

- A. Each candidate seeking a national office will have the opportunity to address Assembly Delegates at a special session held during the Assembly.
1. The current National Committee officer reserves the right to ask the first or last question, within the given extended question-and-answer period.
 2. Presentations by candidates for vice president offices shall last no longer than five minutes. Presentations by candidates for National President shall last no longer than ten minutes.
 3. After the candidates' presentations, delegates may ask questions to all of the candidates. This question-and-answer forum shall last 15 minutes for each office. An extension of the question-and-answer forum can be granted only by a vote of the Assembly.
 4. The National President shall preside at all meetings of the National Assembly. Parliamentary procedures will be followed during the Assembly, as specified in the PRSSA National Assembly procedures manual.
 5. If the National President is a candidate for office, the Immediate Past President shall preside at these sessions.

- B. When more than one candidate runs for any position, the order of presentations will be decided by a drawing conducted by the presiding officer at the onset of the session.
- C. Candidates running for office remain in the room when other candidates present their speeches; however, they may not direct question(s) to another candidate for the same office.
- D. Only official Assembly Delegates shall be allowed to direct questions to the candidates. No delegate shall be allowed to ask a candidate a second question until all other delegates have had the opportunity to question that candidate.
- E. All questions must be directed to all candidates. An Assembly Delegate cannot direct his or her question to a specific candidate, but rather must pose a question that all candidates can and shall answer.
- F. If the Assembly deems that none of the candidates for an office are qualified, the Assembly may choose to not to fill the office and re-open the position for additional nominations at a later date. An Assembly Delegate must make a motion to leave the office open and the motion must be seconded. The motion will be opened for debate, and then must be approved by a two-third majority vote.

IV. NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

A. National Committee Members

- 1. The presiding officer accepts nominations from the floor before the candidate speeches.
- 2. Nominations will be accepted only from Assembly Delegates. The nomination must be seconded by an Assembly Delegate from a Chapter other than the one sponsoring the nominated candidate.
- 3. Candidates nominated from the floor must meet the requirements for candidate eligibility. All nominated candidates must meet with the appointed election officials immediately following the session to verify their qualifications. They must verify their PRSSA membership by showing their membership card or a letter from their faculty adviser. The nominated candidate must be approved by a majority of the elections subcommittee to officially qualify as a candidate.
- 4. Anyone who runs from the floor must supply copies of his/her nomination form, essay and letter of recommendation to all the delegates.
- 5. Candidates nominated from the floor shall be eligible to present speeches during the designated session and shall be treated in all respects as an official candidate.

V. CAMPAIGN PRACTICES

A. Rules for Campaigning

- 1. The official nomination form, essay, letter of recommendation, candidate's speech and question-and-answer forum shall be the sole basis on which elections shall be carried out.
- 2. All candidates must make their presentation in person.
- 3. Absolutely no campaigning either before or during the National Assembly is allowed. Infringements of this ruling, either by the candidate or the candidate's supporters, shall be grounds for immediate disqualification of the candidate by the Elections Subcommittee.

4. The use of campaign materials, before or during the National Assembly, is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, commercially printed or handmade campaign or promotional buttons, posters, balloons, table cards, banners or newsletters. Any material visibly or audibly expressing support of a particular candidate is forbidden.
 5. Candidates cannot use any form of visual or audiovisual aid for their speech except for the microphone from which the speaker must speak.
 6. Contact by the candidates or their supporters with Assembly Delegates prior to the National Assembly, by any medium, shall also be prohibited and shall be grounds for disqualification of the candidates.
 7. If defeated for the position for which a candidate is nominated, the candidate may be nominated for one, and only one, additional position.
- B. Candidates shall not solicit or use personal endorsements from any source. This includes, but is not limited to, endorsements from PRSSA Chapters, employers, Faculty and Professional Advisers, professionals and peers. Use of endorsements shall be grounds for disqualification. This rule does not apply to the letter of recommendation required in the application.
 - C. The purpose of the speeches and the question-and-answer forum shall be to clarify and/or amplify the candidate's platform or position and to present personal attributes and qualifications. Unfavorable comments shall not be directed to any candidate by an opponent, Assembly Delegate or other Assembly participants.
 - D. Candidates and their supporters shall not misrepresent facts or engage in malicious or unethical behavior. They shall not in any way attempt to unethically persuade or entice Assembly Delegates, or disobey any of the rules or procedures of the elections process.
 - E. Current PRSSA National Committee members shall not publicly support or assist a candidate for office. This does not, however, prohibit such members from encouraging PRSSA members to run for national offices and more fully participate in the affairs of the Society.

VI. THE ELECTIONS ELIGIBILITY AND RULES SUBCOMMITTEE

- A. The Elections Eligibility and Rules Subcommittee (aka. the Elections Subcommittee) shall coordinate and supervise the nomination and approval of national candidates, as well as the campaigning, voting and election procedures at the National Assembly.
- B. The Elections Subcommittee is responsible to distribute and collect official ballots.
- C. The Elections Subcommittee serves as the official policing body of the National Elections. They have to enforce ethical behavior on the part of the candidates and the delegates, and enforce the time limits for candidate speeches and Q & A sessions.

VII. ELECTION PROCEDURES

- A. Election of national officer candidates shall follow the agenda drawn up by the Elections Subcommittee.
- B. All elections shall be held under a majority elections system. In the case of a failure to reach a simple majority on the first ballot, the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes shall participate in a runoff election held under a plurality voting procedure. In the event of a runoff (see VII, B), the two remaining candidates will each be given one minute to briefly state why he or she should be elected and then a vote will immediately follow.
- C. The Chair of the Elections Subcommittee shall appoint one or more persons to act as tally clerks for all elections.
- D. Assembly Delegates
 - 1. The presiding officer will call roll at the National Assembly meeting to ensure proper Assembly Delegate representation. A master list of Assembly Delegates shall be available to the Elections Subcommittee, should the authenticity of a delegate be in question.
 - 2. There shall be no provision for absentee ballots. Votes may be cast only by Assembly Delegates present at the National Assembly meeting.
 - 3. Assembly Delegates not able to attend either the candidate speeches or the National Assembly meeting because of an emergency must immediately notify and be excused with reason by the PRSSA Director of Education or National President of PRSSA. Absent Assembly Delegates not so excused shall forfeit their travel allowances.
 - 4. In the case of an excused emergency absence by an Assembly Delegate, the elected alternate or appointed representative may substitute for the Assembly Delegate, if the Elections Subcommittee is notified of such a substitution.

VIII. SANCTIONS

- A. In the event of alleged infractions of campaign rules and/or ethical behavior, the Elections Subcommittee shall have original jurisdiction through a majority decision.
- B. Candidates who violate the Elections Subcommittee rules shall be immediately disqualified.
- C. In case of appeal, the Elections Subcommittee shall present factual reports to the PRSSA National Committee at a special meeting during the Assembly. The accused candidate shall have the opportunity to present his or her case to the National Committee. The National Committee shall decide by a majority of those present and voting, if a quorum is present. The National Committee shall have final jurisdiction in all decisions.
- D. Any and all alleged infractions committed before or during the Assembly must be brought directly to the attention of the Parliamentarian. In this case, the Parliamentarian will call for a break in the Assembly procedures for discussion of this matter before an appointed committee.