Student Organization Elections

Election and Selection Procedures for Student Organizations
Student organizations should outline their election procedures in their constitutions. Constitutions should be uploaded yearly to Presence/Marquee as part of the annual renewal process.

Renewing your student organization
https://www.marquette.edu/alumni-memorial-union/student-organizations/renewal.php

Student organizations renew their status each spring following spring break. Renewal consists of updating your organization roster, meeting times/location, and constitution.

Students who are listed on the organization roster as president and vice president will receive the email regarding renewal. **NOTE: keeping your rosters up to date and making sure someone is listed in those two roles will ensure you receive this information and other relevant news when it’s sent out.**

See the “End of Term Checklist” for videos of how to use Presence to manage your roster and other organization functions: https://www.marquette.edu/alumni-memorial-union/student-organizations/training.php

Student organization policies and officer requirements
To be eligible to hold an officer role, students must be full time undergraduate students AND must be in good standing with the university (not on academic or disciplinary probation).

Officers (and members) should familiarize themselves with the Student Organization Policies:
https://www.marquette.edu/alumni-memorial-union/student-organizations/policies.php

With regard to holding office, see specifically:
**Eligibility for Organization Membership**
https://www.marquette.edu/alumni-memorial-union/student-organizations/policies-organizations.php#eligibility

**Requirements for Officers**
https://www.marquette.edu/alumni-memorial-union/student-organizations/policies-organizations.php#officers

Things to Consider with regard to Elections
- Election/selection should be scheduled at a time of year that will allow for an adequate transition period for the new officers. **We recommend holding elections before the renewal process in March so that sitting officers can transition and the outgoing officers can complete the renewal, updating the roster to reflect the new officers.**
- Notification about election/selection and information about procedures should be announced to members far in advance (4-6 weeks is recommended).
- Ensure the election/selection is well publicized and that members are informed about each position’s responsibilities.
- Establish an impartial election/selection committee or chairperson to oversee the election/selection process (ex: the outgoing President, elections committee chair, etc.).
- Clarify who is eligible to run for an officer position.
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Election Procedures and Timelines

- **Elections should begin with an application or nomination period**
  - If an organization chooses to use an application process, there should be an adequate and well-advertised application period
    - 2-3 weeks is recommended application period
    - Consider who is responsible for creating the application and publishing it to members
  - If an organization chooses to use a nomination process, nominations can occur during a pre-determined meeting, or during an extended period of time leading up to election.
    - Nominations can be made verbally during a meeting, or members can use virtual/paper forms to nominate candidates anonymously
    - Members can nominate themselves along with other members
    - Procedures should specify whether a nominee needs to accept/reject their nomination

- **Your constitution should specify how elections will occur:**
  - Will you hold elections during a meeting?
  - Will you hold them online for a specific period?
    - For example, MUSG elects their president and Exec VP in spring and has a set day/time for elections. That date is set by the Elections Committee in consultation with MUSG’s Executive Board. Eligible voters receive email links to vote.
  - Who is allowed to vote? Only active members, and what does active mean? Constitution should spell this out.
  - If the nomination period ended prior to the election meeting, pre-made ballots should be prepared with the names of each candidate under each position.
    - Ballots can be virtual (google form, Qualtrics, Presence, etc.) or on paper.
    - It is recommended that organizations have some mechanism for conducting a run-off election (e.g. blank paper ballots) if a run-off election is specified as part of the process in the event of a tie.
  - Candidates should be given a chance to speak with voting members before elections occur.
    - Candidate speeches can occur during the voting meeting or prior to the meeting.
    - Candidates should be given a set amount of time to speak (2-6 minutes is recommended).
  - Procedures should specify whether candidates are allowed to vote, and whether candidates are allowed to stay in the room while voting occurs.

- **Voting procedures:**
  - Procedures should clarify the number of votes a candidate needs to win an election.
    - Majority of votes cast, 2/3 of votes cast, etc.
  - Procedures should clarify what happens in the case of a tie, or in the case that no candidate achieves the number of votes necessary to win.
    - An immediate run-off election between the two highest voted candidates is recommended.

Conducting and Election Using Involve

Conducting an election using Involve is as easy as creating a form in the platform. The benefit of using Presence is that you can limit access to just organization members as well as limit the number of responses a member can make to the form (i.e. the number of votes they can cast).

If you want your election to only be open to members of your organization, keep your roster up to date on Involve. (Find this on the MARQUEE 101 video at the 27:10 mark.)
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Whoever has organization admin access to your org can create a form. If the officer who you have designated to manage your org’s elections does not have this ability, email engaged@marquette.edu and the Student Engagement Staff will give that person access. We will likely not be able to respond immediately, so do this well in advance of your election!


2. Then go to your admin dashboard.

3. Choose organizations from the left menu. You will only see the orgs to which you have administrative access.

4. Choose the appropriate organization.
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5. Then click on forms and “Create a new one.”

6. Click Settings and title your form appropriately. We suggest using a date in the title so it is easy to identify the form.
7. In settings, select “Visibility” and “Require Login.” Requiring login ensures only those on your roster can vote. **NOTE:** You do have to make sure your roster is up to date and includes eligible voters. See “Organization Roster” on page 11 of this document.

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9. Then set the time and date for the form to be open.

10. If you want the form to only be visible/available to your organization members, choose “Attached to Organization” under the “Visibility” tab. Again, you do have to make sure your roster is up to date and includes eligible voters. See “Organization Roster” on page 11 of this document.
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11. Whoever creates the form is the owner. You can also control who has access to your elections form by these options:
   - User—individuals (enter their name)
   - Member type (officer role)
   - Role (Organization administrator). Those who have admin access to your organization (at the time of renewal, the default is president and VP get admin access).
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12. Save your work (and do so often throughout the build). Save is way at the top!

13. Now go to build your form. Click “Fields”. Then add your field of choice. The most logical is “choice.” Drag that field onto your form.

14. Name your field, for example “vote for president.”
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15. You can choose how large the field will be on the form (meaning how much space the question takes up on the screen). You can also choose how you want your choices to appear (as drop down, list, check boxes—We like checkboxes!). You also need to enter your candidate’s names as choices. NOTE: We don't recommend making the field required because you want to give voters the option to not vote on that ballot if they so choose. If you have some reason for requiring a response, you should include an option that says “I do not wish to cast a vote in this race.”

Continue to add choice fields for each candidate. (Repeat steps 13-15.) And save your form often!

16. Share the link out with eligible voters.

Portal Link

https://marquette.presence.io/form
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Keeping your roster up to date!

1. In your admin dashboard, click “Organizations” and choose the organization of which you are updating.

2. Click the 3 dots and choose roster. (You can then right click your mouse to “open in a new tab.”)

3. Click the “add members” option and enter person’s name or email.
Impeachment and Removal

Student organizations constitutions should detail the impeachment and removal procedures. Below are elements for your organization to consider, review and or adapt to be included in an organization’s constitution.

Grounds for Removal
Constitutions should specify the grounds for removing an officer or member

Ex: failure to uphold the responsibilities of their position, use of derogatory language, bullying, harassment, theft, repeated disruptions during meetings, or any other action deemed unacceptable by the current Student Disciplinary Regulations (Code of Conduct)
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Procedure for Impeachment

- Procedures should outline how the removal process is initiated. Impeachment may be initiated through:
  - a formal complaint made to the executive board by any member of the organization
  - a petition that is signed by a specified number of members (2/3, majority, etc.)
  - a vote by a specified number of officers (2/3, unanimous, majority, etc.)

Impeachment hearing

- Procedures should clarify who is able to participate in the impeachment hearing.
  - All members present, dues paying members, etc.
- Organizations should announce the charge brought against an individual to general membership and provide evidence to support the claim.
  - Specify when this will occur (at least one week prior to the hearing is recommended)
- Clarify whether the individual in question is allowed to argue a defense in front of voting members.
  - Specify the amount of time the member is able to speak.
- Consider how the vote should be conducted.
  - Specify whether the member in question is allowed to vote or be present in the room.
  - Specify whether voting members are allowed time for deliberation, and whether the member in question can participate.
- Consider whether the vote is conducted by secret ballot (virtual or paper form), show of hands, or roll call.
  - Specify the number of votes needed to impeach/remove the member in question.
  - Majority of votes cast, 2/3 of votes cast, etc.

Appeal of Impeachment

- Procedures should clarify whether there is a set time period in which an appeal can be made (ex: within one week of the vote).
  - Specify who oversees the appeal process (Advisor, President, officers, etc.).
- Consider how the appeal can be made.
  - For example, the member in question can submit a written request (email or hard copy) for appeal outlining the reasons for the appeal to the individual(s) responsible for overseeing the appeal process.
- Determine how the decision is made and within what time frame the decision must be made
  - Ex: The officers and Advisor of the organization must decide to approve or deny the appeal within 10 days of receiving the appeal.
- No secondary appeals permitted (a member cannot attempt to appeal an appeal).
- In the case of membership removal, constitutions should specify when/if membership can be reinstated.
  - Ex: membership may be reinstated 366 days after removal

Questions? Ask the student orgs team engaged@marquette.edu