

ELECTION POLICY

**POLICY: EL-01
ELECTIONS**

Reviewed	Executive Director	July 2022
Approved	Executive Committee	July 2022

POLICY INTENT

This policy applies to all elections and appointments organized by the SABVC to fulfill requirements of the Bylaws. All Candidates and Registered Campaigns are required to familiarize themselves with the content of this policy and the Bylaws.

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DEFINITIONS

“Active Member” means an individual who satisfies the membership criteria as defined in the Bylaws.

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“All-Candidates Forum”	means an event organized by SABVC which provides a public opportunity for Executive Candidates to present their platforms and answer questions from the Membership.
All-Candidates Meeting	means a mandatory information session which all Candidates and Campaign Team members must attend prior to the election.
“Appointment”	means the process which vacant Councillor, Executive, or Board of Governors Representative positions are required to be filled as per the Bylaws.
“Board of Governors Representative Appointment”	means the process by which Students' Council vote for a Board of Governors Representative through nominations received according to Appointment Schedule described in section 1.2. The appointment is decided by a Simple Majority of votes.
“Campaign Teams”	means individual(s) associated and assisting a Candidate in an election.
“Campaigning”	means any activity by a Nominee, Candidate, or Campaign Team with the intent of soliciting votes in their favour, including personal, public, and online campaigning.
“Campaigning Period”	means the dates approved by Council for which Candidates and Campaign Teams may campaign.
“Candidate”	means an approved individual who has successfully submitted a Nomination Package, and officially announced by the CRO to have met the eligibility criteria for candidacy in an election for either an Executive position or a position on Council.
“Chief Returning Officer”	(CRO) means an individual hired by the SABVC to ensure compliance with our Bylaws and policies, and to assist in conducting free and fair elections.
“Executive Director”	means an individual responsible for managing and overseeing all activities pertaining to the elections and appointments. When the Executive Director is absent, the Acting Executive Director will take over and assume the Executive Director's responsibilities.
“Nomination Period”	means the dates approved by Students' Council for which interested SABVC Members may submit a Nomination Package to the CRO.
“Nominee”	means a person who has submitted a Nomination Package for a position in an election, but who is not yet confirmed as a Candidate by the CRO.
“Notice of Appeal”	means a written letter of intent by an SABVC Member to appeal a decision made by the CRO and/or the Electoral Committee.

- “Online Campaigning”** means any campaigning or activity intended to solicit votes that occurs on the Internet including social media, websites, blogs, online forums, etc.
- “Personal Campaigning”** means in-person communication intended to inform a person of one’s intent to run in an election, including personal conversations, building a campaign team, requesting nomination signatures, etc.
- “Public Campaigning”** means any activity or attempt to solicit votes and persuade eligible voters in a particular direction for voting. Public Campaigning includes but is not limited to: engaging in conversation with multiple people; classroom visits or presentations; public speaking; distributing campaign materials; etc.
- “Registered Campaigns”** means an individual or group that registers and is sanctioned with the SABVC to campaign their opinion on a Referendum.
- “Sabotage”** means defacing, removing, or attempting to damage any campaign material.
- “Undue Influence”** means attempting to influence an SABVC Member by:
- a. Making use of or threatening to make use of any force, violence, or restraint; and/or
 - b. Inflicting or threatening the infliction of any injury, harm, or loss to an SABVC Member.

1. Election and Appointment Scheduling

- 1.1 Elections shall be held twice per year.
 - 1.1.1 Executive elections shall be completed by March 31, unless otherwise approved by Council.
 - 1.1.2 Students’ Council elections shall be completed by September 30, unless otherwise approved by Council.
- 1.2 Appointments for Board of Governors Representative shall be held once per year.
 - 1.2.1 Appointment for external candidates shall be completed by March 31, unless otherwise approved by Council.
- 1.3 SABVC staff members shall recommend for approval the dates for the Nomination Period, All-Candidate Meeting(s), Campaigning Period, All-Candidate Forum (for Executive Elections only), and voting days.
- 1.4 The September election dates shall be approved by the Executive Committee. The March election and appointment dates shall be approved by Students’ Council.
- 1.5 The Nomination Period shall normally extend for at least ten days or for a sufficient amount of time to allow for maximum awareness and the greatest number of Nominees as possible.
- 1.6 Campaigning Period shall:

- 1.6.1 Normally extend for up to ten days, or a sufficient amount of time as determined by the approving body as per Section 1.3 to promote the election and voting options to SABVC's Active Members;
 - 1.6.2 Be scheduled to start after at least one All-Candidate Meeting; and
 - 1.6.3 Be completed after the close of the polls on the last day of voting.
- 1.7 Voting days shall normally extend for the last two or three days of the Campaigning Period, subject to scheduling with Bow Valley College (BVC).

2. Election Advertising

- 2.1 Students' Council and Executives are responsible for working together with SABVC staff members to ensure important details of the election are well advertised including the Nomination Period, the All-Candidates Forum (when applicable), and the voting days, to encourage a high number of Nominees and high voter turn-out.

3. Responsibilities

Executive Director

- 3.1 The specific duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director regarding SABVC elections and appointments include:
- 3.1.1 Recommending elections and appointments dates;
 - 3.1.2 Recommending the CRO name to the appropriate approving body as prescribed in this policy;
 - 3.1.3 Reviewing the Nomination Packages to determine eligibility;
 - 3.1.4 Chairing, or appointing a delegate to chair, an All-Candidate Forum for Executive Elections and determining the format in consultation with the CRO;
 - 3.1.5 Publishing the official results of elections and appointments to the SABVC community;
 - 3.1.6 Receiving and analyzing criminal record checks of all elected Candidates for the Executive positions.

Chief Returning Officer

- 3.2 Refer to the Chief Returning Officer Policy for more information.

Poll Clerks

- 3.3 Poll Clerks will be assigned in case the voting process is held in person. Poll clerks shall:
- 3.3.1 Be responsible for confirming an individual's status as a Member prior to voting at the polling stations;
 - 3.3.2 Not be involved in any campaign and may not openly support a particular Candidate;
 - 3.3.3 Report to the CRO with any questions or concerns;
 - 3.3.4 Sign an agreement form stating that they understand the importance of their role and agree to the specifications and responsibilities listed in this policy.

4. All-Candidates Meeting

- 4.1 After the close of the Nomination Period and prior to the beginning of the Campaigning Period, at least one All-Candidates Meeting shall be held. During the meeting:
 - 4.1.1 Nominees must be in attendance in order to successfully be considered a Candidate in the election;
 - 4.1.2 The CRO, or delegate, shall review important policies and specifications for the Election.
 - 4.1.3 The CRO shall officially declare the names of all approved Candidates.
 - 4.1.4 All Candidates shall receive a copy of the Bylaws and the policies relevant to the position for which they are running.

5. All-Candidates Forum

- 5.1 Before voting begins, an All-Candidates Forum will be held to provide Executive Candidates an opportunity to connect, answer questions, and present their platform with members.
- 5.2 All Executive Candidates must attend the mandatory All-Candidates Forum. Candidates may not send a representative to stand-in on their behalf.
- 5.3 All candidates will be presented with a list of topics. They are encouraged to research to prepare for the All-Candidates Forum. Candidates will be asked questions on these topics.
- 5.4 The Electoral Committee is responsible for determining the format of the All-Candidates Forum.

6. Candidates Eligibility and Requirements

- 6.1 As per the bylaws, to be eligible for nomination to an SABVC election, Candidates shall:
 - 6.1.1 Be an Active Member of SABVC, and have an honest intention of remaining a Bow Valley College student and an Active Member for the duration of the term for which they are seeking election;
 - 6.1.2 Be attending classes at the main downtown Calgary campus, or be easily accessible to this campus, due to the requirements of Council to attend meetings and represent SABVC on the main campus for the duration of the term for the office or seat for which they are seeking election;
 - 6.1.3 Be free of Academic Misconduct and BVC Learner Code of Conduct sanctions one year prior to the elections and during elections;
 - 6.1.4 Having not been on academic probation for one year prior to the nomination package submission;
 - 6.1.5 Be eighteen years of age or older;
 - 6.1.6 Be one of the following if they are a candidate running for office as a Councillor:
 - A new student of BVC; or a returning student of BVC who has not been enrolled in a program or course at BVC for a full calendar

- year; or a returning student with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) at BVC of at least 2.00;
 - Attending classes at the main downtown Calgary campus;
 - In the case of the Regional Representative, attending classes at any other BVC campus due to the requirements of Council to attend meetings remotely (online);
 - Be free of a criminal record during elections.
- 6.1.7 Be one of the following if they are a candidate running for office as an Executive or Board of Governors Representative:
- A student at BVC for at least one semester with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.50;
 - Attending classes at the main downtown Calgary campus;
 - Be free of a criminal record prior and during elections.
- 6.1.8 In the case of a Candidate running for office as an Executive, they must not have served as an Executive, for three or more terms, whether consecutive or otherwise, unless five years has passed since the end date of their most recent term.
- 6.1.9 In the case of a Candidate running for Council, they must not have served as a Councillor for three or more terms, whether consecutive or otherwise, unless five years has passed since the end date of their most recent term.
- 6.2 The successfully elected Candidates for Executive positions must supply a criminal record check at the start of their term.
- 6.3 Candidates may only run for one position, either for Council or for one of the Executive positions, including the Board of Governors Representative position.

7. Nomination and Nomination Package

- 7.1 In order to seek election or appointment, Members must be nominated by not less than fifteen Active Members and submit a nomination package to SABVC. These two mandatory steps in the nomination process are required to become a Candidate.
- 7.1.1 Active Members may sign multiple nomination forms as it is not a promise to vote but is simply an acknowledgement of support.
- 7.2 SABVC shall communicate to potential Nominees the due date of the nomination package.
- 7.3 It is the sole responsibility of the student seeking nomination to ensure that their package is completed accurately and submitted on time.
- 7.4 Nomination packages shall include:
- 7.4.1 A statement that the person seeking nomination is willing and able to perform the duties and responsibilities of a Councillor or of the office for which they are seeking candidacy as an Executive or Board of Governors Representative;
- 7.4.2 A statement that the person seeking nomination is bondable, and a disclosure of any criminal record;

- 7.4.3 A list with a minimum of fifteen Active Members' names and signatures supporting the person as a Nominee;
- 7.4.4 Information verifying that the person satisfies the criteria of a Candidate set out in section 6;
- 7.4.5 A candidate profile
- 7.4.6 An agreement form signed by the Nominee stating that they:
 - Have read the applicable rules, policies, and Bylaws;
 - Would fulfil the requirements of their position;
 - Agree to and is able to attend the All-Candidates Meeting (not applicable for Board of Governors Representative appointment);
 - Agree to and is able to attend the All-Candidates Forum (not applicable for Council election and Board of Governors Representative appointment); and
 - Grant the Executive Director permission to access their student records at BVC to confirm eligibility of their nomination.
 - Provide other information as required in the prescribed form of nomination package in effect from time to time.
- 7.5 Should the Executive Director find any Nominee ineligible, the Executive Director may grant the Nominee 48 hours to rectify or resolve the issue in order to be deemed an eligible and approved Candidate.

8. Campaigning

- 8.1 No potential Nominee, approved Nominee, or Candidate shall begin Public or Online Campaigning of any kind until the start of the Campaigning Period.
- 8.2 Campaigning material and messages shall:
 - 8.2.1 Include the Candidate's full name;
 - 8.2.2 Not be demeaning or harmful in any way and should hold to the standards of BVC Learner Code of Conduct; and
 - 8.2.3 Only be distributed in approved locations predetermined by the CRO.
- 8.3 Any Candidate wishing to present to a class must receive preapproval from the Instructor.
- 8.4 Staff members and current Executives and Councillors shall not use SABVC time, resources, or current position to campaign for themselves or to assist Candidates.
- 8.5 Staff members and current Executives and Councillors may not publicly endorse Candidates.
- 8.6 An All-Candidates Forum shall be held for all Executive elections.
 - 8.6.1 All Candidates shall attend the Forum as it is mandatory.
 - 8.6.2 The Executive Director shall chair the Forum, or delegate an alternate, and determine the format and Candidate order in consultation with the CRO.

9. Candidate Conduct

- 9.1 Refer to the Election Candidate Manual for information regarding candidate conduct.

10. Voting & Ballot Counting

- 10.1 All Active Members of SABVC are eligible to cast one vote per election.
- 10.2 In the event only one nomination is submitted for a position, Active Members vote to approve or disapprove the Candidate.
- 10.3 Names on ballots should be in alphabetical order by last name.
- 10.4 According to the CRO, a ballot may be spoiled if the voter's intent is unclear.
- 10.4.1 Item 10.4 is not applicable in case of online voting.
- 10.5 The CRO shall ensure that all used and unused ballots are transported in a secure way at the beginning and close of each voting day.
- 10.5.1 Item 10.5 is not applicable in case of online voting.
- 10.6 Prior to each election, the Electoral Committee shall determine areas on campus and a perimeter surrounding the voting station(s) in which Candidates and Campaign Teams shall not enter, except to cast their vote.
- 10.6.1 Item 10.6 is not applicable in case of online voting.
- 10.7 The Candidates receiving a plurality or majority of votes cast shall be declared duly elected and are to take office on the dates specified within the Bylaws.
- 10.8 Each Candidate may appoint a Scrutineer to oversee the counting of ballots.
- 10.8.1 Item 10.8 is not applicable in case of online voting.
- 10.8.2 In case of online voting, the CRO and the Executive Director are responsible for announcing the results provided by the online system and in the presence of a minimum of two witnesses. Witnesses can be any Active Members of SABVC.
- 10.8.3 Scrutineers and witnesses will have to leave their phones with the CRO during the viewing of the results.
- 10.9 As per SABVC Bylaws, ballots shall be destroyed only after a Simple Resolution is passed to do so by Council, which shall not be made earlier than seven business days following the close of voting or, where an appeal has been made, until the Appeals Committee has made a final determination on the matter.
- 10.9.1 Item 10.9 is not applicable in case of online voting.
- 10.10 Any specific processes for online voting may be determined by the Electoral Committee prior to the commencement of the election.

11. Results

- 11.1 Election and appointment results shall be published to Membership on SABVC website and social media.
- 11.2 The Executive Director is responsible for informing the results to all SABVC community, including but not limited to:
- 11.2.1 Candidates, nominees, and registered campaign groups;

- 11.2.2 SABVC staff members;
- 11.2.3 SABVC current student leaders;
- 11.2.4 BVC departments;
- 11.2.5 Any Association that SABVC is a member of; and
- 11.2.6 Bank manager and all other administrative institutions that require the Executives' information on their records to operate.

12. Appeals Committee & Process

- 12.1 Prior to each election, the Executive Director shall be responsible for seeking nominations for membership on the Appeals Committee and recommending the members to Council.
 - 12.1.1 Composition of the Appeals Committee will consist of:
 - Three SABVC Active Members at large;
 - An SABVC staff member as ex officio.
 - 12.1.2 Members of the Appeals Committee must be ratified by Students' Council.
 - 12.1.3 The three committee members shall appoint one member to take on the role of Chair of the Appeals Committee.
 - 12.1.4 No member of the Appeals Committee, while participating in an appeals process or serving on the Appeals Committee, shall seek nomination or run in any SABVC elections, or be a current member of Council or Executive Committee.
 - 12.1.5 The Appeals Committee shall receive a compensation for their service for each Election. The amount of the compensation shall be determined by Students' Council prior to the appointment of Committee members.
- 12.2 Candidates wishing to appeal a decision of the CRO must submit a written Notice of Appeal to the Appeals Committee within five business days following the close of voting, outlining the details of their concern.
- 12.3 The Appeals Committee shall be responsible to review any Notice of Appeal within two business days and decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for an investigation.
 - 12.3.1 If the Appeals Committee decides to investigate an appeal, they may require the appellant to present any required information.
- 12.4 The Appeals Committee Chair shall communicate the appeal conclusion and decision in a report to Students' Council and the involved individuals.
- 12.5 The Appeals Committee has authority to overturn any decision made by the CRO and/or the Electoral Committee.
 - 12.5.1 All decisions of the Appeals Committee are final.

13. Election Vacancies

- 13.1 In the event the election and/or appointment process is not able to fill an Executive, Board of Governors Representative, and/or Council position, the Executive Director is

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responsible for presenting an action plan to the Students' Council. The action plan may include but is not limited to:

- 13.1.1 Hire temporary staff member(s) to fill the role until an election is called;
- 13.1.2 Extend current student leader's term;
- 13.1.3 Call for a by-election;
- 13.1.4 Wait for the next election; or
- 13.1.5 Call for an appointment process.

RELATED POLICIES

EL-01-A Election Candidate Manual

EL-02 Chief Returning Officer Policy

GV-01-A Students' Council Procedures

GV-01 Policy on Role of Students' Council

GV-02 Policy on Role of Executive Committee

GV-04 Policy on Role of Board of Governors Representative

GV-05 Policy on Role of Executive Director