

# Luther College

## Student Senate Election Guidelines

The **Student Senate Election Guidelines and Application** is designed to facilitate fair and consistent Student Senate elections each year. The guidelines are not exhaustive; instead they provide the general framework for the annual Student Senate elections process.

### Student Senate Mission Statement

Our mission is to serve Luther students and student organizations by providing them with resources to achieve their goals, and to support the wider college community as it fulfills its mission.

### Membership

A. The Senate shall be comprised of the following student members who are responsible for carrying out their duties as defined in the bylaws:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Senior Class Representatives (3)
- Junior Class Representatives (3)
- Sophomore Class Representatives (3)
- Freshmen Class Representatives (3)
- Student Activities Council President
- Luther Congregation President
- Inter-Greek Council Representative
- Diversity Representatives (6)
- Wellness Representative
- Sustainability Representative
- Student Support Representative
- Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Representative
- Student Liaison to the Decorah City Council

B. The membership listed above represents the following groups/areas and also includes at least two advisors:

1. The **Executive Board**, consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and the chairs of the standing Senate committees.
2. **Class Representatives**, consisting of three members each from the Senior, Junior, Sophomore, and First-Year classes.
3. **Student Group Representatives**, consisting of the Student Activities Council President, Luther Congregation President, and Inter-Greek Council Representative.
4. **Diversity Representatives (6)**, who broadly represent race/ethnicity, culture/religion, and gender/sexuality.
5. **Representatives from College-wide Committees or Councils**, consisting of one representative each from the Wellness Committee, Sustainability Committee, Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, and the Student Support Representative.
6. The **Student Liaison to the Decorah City Council**.
7. **Senate Advisors**, consisting of the Vice President and Dean for Student Life and one of the Assistant/Associate Deans for Student Life, who serve as ex-officio, non-voting members. The

Senate may also appoint additional advisors to provide assistance and support.

- C. All members, excluding the advisors, must be full-time students in good academic standing as defined by the Registrar.
- D. Students running for the officer positions should intend on serving for the **entire academic year**.
- E. All members are elected, selected, or appointed in the manner as specified in the Senate bylaws.
- F. All Senators are expected to abide by the college's non-discrimination statement: "It is the policy of Luther College to provide equal educational opportunities and equal access to facilities for all qualified persons. The college does not discriminate in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other basis protected by federal or state law."

### **Positions and Election/Selection Method**

1. The following positions are filled through two campus-wide elections each spring semester as specified below:
  - a. President and Vice President Election. These two positions run as a joint ticket. The election for these positions will take place two weeks prior to the general elections for all other Senate positions.
  - b. General Senate Election. The positions which will run in this election are as follows: Secretary; Treasurer; Senior Class Representatives (3); Junior Class Representatives (3); Sophomore Class Representatives (3); Diversity Representatives (6); and Student Liaison to the Decorah City Council. For the Class Representatives, students vote for members of their respective class only.
  - c. The First-year Class Representatives (3) are elected within the first month of fall semester through an election in the respective first-year residence halls.
  - d. The following positions are appointed to Senate as a function of the Senator's specific student organization roles and responsibilities: Student Activities Council President, Student Congregation President, Inter-Greek Council Representative.
  - e. The following positions are appointed to Senate through a process determined and managed by the various Campus-wide Committees or Councils: Wellness Representative, Sustainability Representative, Student Support Representative, and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Representative.
2. Class Representatives run based on their designated class standing as determined by anticipated credit hours, for the beginning of the following fall semester, according to the Registrar's Office. If a student enters Luther with prior credit, he/she may decide to run as a representative for his/her entry cohort.

### **Timing of Elections/Guidelines**

1. The campus-wide spring semester elections will be held in mid-April each year at a time proposed by the Election Committee and approved by a vote of the Senate.
2. The "Election Guidelines" outlining the election process will be publicized, via a means determined by the Election Committee that, at a minimum, includes the following:
  - a. The date when applications are available. As a guideline, applications should be made available at least one month prior to the campus-wide election.
  - b. The date and time by which applications and signature sheets are due. As a guideline, all applications and signature sheets should be returned two weeks prior to the election. Candidates who submit applications after the due date may only run if their applications are approved by the Election Committee.
  - c. The prescribed manner for campaigning and advertising.
3. Because candidates must submit an application in advance of the elections, write-in candidates are not allowed on the ballot.
4. Any special elections throughout the year, if necessary, will be determined at a date and via a process as

determined by the Election Committee and approved by a majority vote of the Senate.

## **Election Committee**

1. The Committee shall be chaired by a non-campaigning Senator selected by the Senate.
2. The Committee shall include at least two additional non-campaigning Senators as appointed by the Senate.
3. The advisor(s) to the Student Senate shall be ex-officio members of this committee and will assist the chair in managing the elections process.
4. The Election Committee shall annually review the "Election Guidelines," revise as needed, and present them to the Senate annually prior to the election process.

## **Election Committee Duties**

1. To ensure the "Election Guidelines" are followed and carried out by the candidates and the Election Committee.
2. To advertise the elections and introduce the campus community to the candidates and their platforms.
3. To sponsor and advertise a Candidates' Open Forum. This Forum provides an opportunity for candidates to introduce themselves to the Luther community and may be used by the President/Vice President candidates as a means of sharing their election platforms.
4. To determine and manage the election method (most likely electronic voting) and the vote tabulation method (most likely instant runoff voting).

## **Position Descriptions**

1. **General Expectations for All Positions**
  - a. Uphold the Senate constitution and bylaws.
  - b. Attend the weekly Senate meetings (or have a proxy attend instead).
  - c. Actively participate in at least one Senate committee.
  - d. Gather issues, ideas, and concerns from constituents and relay them to Senate.
2. **General Expectations for Executive Board Members**
  - a. Return to campus early at a date specified by the President for an Executive Board retreat.
  - b. Meet as an Executive Board, generally once per week, at a time determined by the President.
3. **President**
  - a. Provide overall leadership and direction to Senate.
  - b. Serve as the primary student liaison on student issues to the administration.
  - c. Meet regularly with the College President and Senate advisors.
  - d. Establish the weekly Senate meeting agenda; serve as the presiding officer at Senate meetings.
  - e. Appoint Senators to committees, with the approval of the Senate.
  - f. Maintain regular contact with committee chairs.
  - g. Be responsible for relaying all pertinent information to Senate as a whole.
  - h. Serve as the chair of the Executive Board.
  - i. Serve on the Campus Life Committee.
  - j. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Senate President.

4. **Vice President**
  - a. Monitor Senate committees as needed.
  - b. Establish the agenda and serve as the presiding officer at Senate meetings in the absence of the President.
  - c. Provide leadership to ad hoc committees as needed.
  - d. Assist the President in fulfilling his/her duties.
  - e. Serve as the Senate Historian.
  - f. Serve as Luther's representative to the Iowa Student Congress.
  - g. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Senate Vice President.
5. **Secretary**
  - a. Keep and promptly publish minutes of all Senate meetings.
  - b. Take attendance at Senate meetings and publish it as part of the minutes.
  - c. Notify the officers of Senators who are absent from meetings.
  - d. Keep and store complete records of all Senate business.
  - e. Maintain an operational list of Senate meetings.
  - f. Serve as the presiding officer at Senate meetings in the absence of the President and Vice President.
  - g. Serve as a member of the Communication Committee.
  - h. Work with the Communication Committee to ensure that the appropriate communication methods, such as the Senate website, KATIE, Facebook, etc. are updated appropriately and regularly.
  - i. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Senate Secretary.
6. **Treasurer**
  - a. Serve as the Senator responsible for monitoring the Senate budget.
  - b. Work with the Executive Board and advisors on budget issues.
  - c. Create a budget at the beginning of each semester, monitor expenditures, and periodically update the Senate on income and expenses.
  - d. Serve as a member of the Co-curricular Activities/Student Leadership Committee.
  - e. Work with the Co-curricular Activities/Student Leadership Committee in establishing the application, funding criteria, and process for allocating funds to students and student groups.
  - f. Work with the Communication Committee in communicating the funding proposal timeline and criteria to student organization leader.
  - g. Maintain contact with all groups awarded funds to ensure fiscal accountability.
  - h. Serve as contact to Senators who need funds for various Senate functions.
  - i. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Treasurer.
7. **Student Liaison to the Decorah City Council**
  - a. Attend all regular City Council meetings.
  - b. Attend at least one sub-committee of the Council regularly.
  - c. Offer a report to Student Senate on City Council initiatives and opportunities for collaboration.
  - d. Organize events or publicize on-campus issues pertinent to both the city and the college.
  - e. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Student Liaison to the Decorah City Council.
8. **Class Representatives**
  - a. Gather input on issues, ideas, and concerns from peers to bring before Senate.
  - b. Utilize social networking and other communication means to engage classmates.
  - c. Provide updates to classmates on Senate activities.

- d. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of Class Representative.
9. **Wellness Representative**
- a. Attend the weekly Wellness Team meetings.
  - b. Provide pertinent wellness updates in Senate meetings.
  - c. Report back to the Wellness Team on conversations happening in Senate.
  - d. Perform other duties that pertain to the office Wellness Representative.
10. **Sustainability Representative**
- a. Attend Sustainability Council meetings.
  - b. Provide pertinent sustainability updates in Senate meetings.
  - c. Report back to the Sustainability Council on conversations happening in Senate.
  - d. Participate on the Campus Betterment committee of Senate.
  - e. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of Sustainability Representative.
11. **Student Support Representative**
- a. Attend pertinent Student Support Representative meetings, such as Student Academic Support Service meetings, Disability Services, Active Minds, etc.
  - b. Provide pertinent student support updates in Senate meetings.
  - c. Report back to various support groups on conversations happening in Senate.
  - d. Bring constituent needs/concerns to Senate.
  - e. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of Student Support Representative.
12. **Representatives to the Board of Regents (3)**
- a. Attend general meetings of the Board of Regents and any assigned committees.
  - b. Report back to pertinent groups on conversations happening in Senate.
13. **Diversity Representatives**
- a. Two of the elected Diversity Representatives will be selected by the Diversity Council to serve on Council.
  - b. Attend meetings of organizations that fall under particular diversity categories: Gender/Sexuality: PRIDE, LC Fems; Race/Ethnicity: BSU, ISAA, HOLA, ASAA, Enlaces; Culture/Religion: MSAA, College Ministries Organizations (CSC, LCMS), Ethnic Beats, Secular Student Society, etc.
  - c. Provide pertinent diversity updates in Senate meetings.
  - d. Report back to pertinent diversity groups on conversations happening in Senate.
  - e. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of Diversity Representative.
  - f. One representative will serve on Campus Life Committee.
14. **Student Activities Council President**
- a. Serve as a liaison between the Student Activities Council (SAC) Executive Board and Senate.
  - b. Serve as a member of the Co-curricular Activities/Student Leadership Committee; report on new student organizations and constitutions.
  - c. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Student Activities Council President.
15. **Student Congregation President**
- a. Serve as a liaison between College Ministries groups and Student Senate.
  - b. Give monthly updates on different events of College Ministries/Luther Congregation.
  - c. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Student Congregation President.
16. **Inter-Greek Council Representative**
- a. Serve as a liaison between the Inter-Greek Council (IGC) and Senate.

- b. Provide pertinent IGC updates in Senate meetings.
- c. Report back to IGC on conversations happening in Senate.
- d. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Inter-Greek Council Representative.

**17. Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Representative**

- a. Serve as a liaison between the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and Senate.
- b. Provide pertinent SAAC updates in Senate meetings.
- c. Report back to SAAC on conversations happening in Senate.
- d. Perform other duties that pertain to the office of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Representative.

## **Timeline for the 2015 Elections**

**February Senate organizes an Election Committee.** The Election Committee outlines election guidelines and presents process to Student Senate. Election Committee advertises positions and sets date of the Candidates Open Forum/Presidential and Vice Presidential Debate.

**March 8 Applications available in the Student Life Office, Dahl Centennial Union, 2nd floor, as well as the Student Senate website.**

**April 1 Completed President and Vice President Applications are due by 5:00 p.m. in the Student Life Office.**

**April 2 Active campaigning for President and Vice President may begin by candidates at 12:01 a.m.** (see Campaign/Advertising Guidelines section).

**April 4 The Student Life Office will send a brief e-mail message to off-campus students,** encouraging them to watch their e-mail inbox for the link to online presidential voting on April 11-12.

**April 7 The Candidates Open Forum/Presidential and Vice Presidential Election Platforms will be held at 6:00 p.m. in Valders 362** on this date. All candidates are invited to attend this forum.

**April 8 Active campaigning for President and Vice President ends at 11:59 p.m.**

**April 9-10 President and Vice President Election Days.** Elections occur online via any computer terminal from 10:00 a.m. on April 9 to 3:00 p.m. on April 10. Voting shall be conducted using "Instant Runoff Voting," a method of voting that determines a majority winner in a single election, no matter how many candidates are running. Voters rank order the candidates for each position in order of preference. Graduating seniors may participate in voting for the positions of President and Vice President.

**April 15 Completed Applications for all other Senate positions are due by 5:00 p.m. in the Student Life Office.**

**April 16 Active campaigning for all other Senate positions may begin by candidates at 12:01 a.m.** (see Campaign/Advertising Guidelines section).

**April 19 The Student Life Office will send a brief e-mail message to off-campus students,** encouraging them to watch their e-mail inbox for the link to online voting on April 25-26.

**April 22 Active campaigning must end by 11:59 p.m.**

**April 23-24 General Member Position Election Days.** Elections occur online via any computer terminal from 10:00 a.m. on April 23 to 3:00 p.m. on April 24. Voting shall be conducted using "Instant Runoff Voting," a method of voting that determines a majority winner in a single election, no matter how many candidates are running. Voters rank order the candidates for each position in order of preference. Graduating seniors may participate in voting for the positions of Secretary, Treasurer, Liaison to the Decorah City Council, and Diversity Center Representatives; they may not vote for Class Representatives.

**April 24 Election Committee tallies the e-ballots for each position.** Election Committee notifies candidates about the outcome.

## **Campaign/Advertising Guidelines for the 2015 Elections**

1. Active campaigning for President and Vice President may begin on April 1 at 12:01 a.m. Campaigning for

other Senate positions may begin on April 16 at 12:01 a.m. The idea is to confine active campaigning by candidates to a seven-day window (April 1-8 for President and Vice; April 16-23 for other Senate positions). In order to have a fair process that only extends over a defined period, candidates are required to refrain from publicizing their candidacy via electronic means (Facebook, text messaging, e-mail, etc.), printed materials (letters, posters, flyers, etc.), and door-to-door/word-of-mouth campaigns outside of the campaign period. The candidates for President and Vice President are required to obtain proof of support in the form of 48 student signatures (see attached P/VP Support Sheet) in the efforts to foster dialogue. The candidates for all other positions on Senate are required to obtain proof of support in the form of 25 student signatures (see attached General Member Support Sheet).

2. Each President and Vice President ticket will be allowed a stipend of \$10 from the Student Senate budget to pay for campaign-related expenses. Receipts must be submitted to the Student Life Office for reimbursement.
3. Candidates may wish to consider advertising using posters, information flyers, social networking sites, etc. and must adhere to advertising guidelines as established by the Student Activities Office, Residence Life, and/or outlined in the college advertising guidelines listed below.
4. The general college advertising guidelines, as outlined in the Student Handbook, must be followed for all election advertising. The guidelines may be obtained online:  
<https://reason.luther.edu/studentlife/dean/studenthandbook/policies/advertising/>
5. Each printed piece receiving a stamp from Student Activities Office/Residence Life Office must contain the following phrase: "Elections organized by Student Senate." They may not state: "Sponsored by Student Senate" (to ensure there is no implied endorsement by Senate of any particular candidate).
6. If materials are displayed in the Dahl Centennial Union, candidates must consult with Student Activities Office on appropriate easel placement and display case.
7. The general area of the Marty's lobby may not be reserved by individual candidates. Senate will reserve the case for a uniform display of President/Vice President candidates and to provide general election information.
8. Candidates should use common sense when campaigning. Candidates should refrain from "mudslinging," negative messages, personal attacks, etc. Candidates must not deface, remove, or tamper with other candidate's campaign materials.
9. Door-to-door campaigning is allowed and encouraged. Residence hall policies regarding quiet hours, intervisitation hours, etc. must be respected.
10. Candidates are responsible for removing their own campaign materials within 24 hours after the election.
11. The election committee may take action on candidates who do not adhere to the election guidelines and/or to common standards of election decency; this may include removal from the ballot.

### **Campaign/Election Complaint Procedures and Resolution**

1. Students who wish to file a complaint about a violation of campaign/election guidelines should do so in writing and should submit the complaint to the Student Life Office, Dahl Centennial Union, 2nd floor.
2. The complaint will be reviewed by the incumbent officers of the Student Senate (as long as they are not involved in the complaint), members of the election committee, and the Student Senate Advisors. This group will hear the complaint, determine whether or not they believe a violation of these guidelines has occurred, and determine appropriate sanctions and/or resolution if it is determined that the election guidelines were violated.

### **Questions?**

If you have any questions, please contact Maggie Steinberg ([steima05@luther.edu](mailto:steima05@luther.edu)), Chair of the Election Committee. You may also contact the Student Senate Advisor Corey Landstrom ([landco01@luther.edu](mailto:landco01@luther.edu)), in the Student Life Office.