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Northeastern University
Student Government Association

Elections Committee of the Senate

2011 REPORT
on the Fifth Direct Election of the President of the Association

compiled by
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with
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SUMMARY

Michael Sabo won the election against Sean Maloney, gaining 2484 of 3630 total student body votes.

As in previous elections, the voting period had a very strong start with the frequency of votes cast being highest during the first days of voting and then tapering off. The required 20% of votes was achieved and exceeded with an extension of the voting period. A total of 23% of the student body voted in this election, which was not as high as the past year, but higher than three of the five direct elections thus far.

THE MANUAL

Significant changes were made to the Manual this year. While some of these changes did make a great improvement in this elections season, the degree of change was small compared to past revisions. Each year the Manual and direct elections procedure become more stable, and fewer changes are needed.

A lot of text was taken out of the Manual that belonged in other governing documents, or does not belong in SGA documents at all. The Manual should not contain any language that stipulates who can sit on the Committee; such rules should be located in the Bylaws. The Manual should not cite University policy, though it can cite such policy for the purpose of directing candidates to University rules they should be aware of during the campaign season. One example of this is the University chalking policy. The Committee does not have the jurisdiction to interpret University policy and should not attempt to do so. A relevant administrator, such as an administrator in the Student Activities Office, should interpret such policy.

The manual was physically reformatted this year, owing in large part to President Ryan Fox. The formatting is now much more clear and concise.

The manual performed very well this year. All major changes in the manual seemed to be beneficial. Suggestions for future revision can be found in the "Recommendations" section.

SCHEDULE

Shortened Campaign Period

The timetable for this election season was shortened considerably. The Committee believed that a condensed period of campaigning would be best for both the individual candidates and for promotional efforts. As the campaign period is extremely stressful for candidates, a shorter campaign period allows them maintain vital momentum throughout the voting period. Furthermore, it seems best to avoid a drawn out promotional period in order to use a larger portion of the spring semester to cater to more direct student concerns.

Between the 2010 and 2011 election seasons, the campaign period was shortened from 22 days to 14 days. The voting period was shortened from seven (7) days to six (6) days. Coincidentally, the number of candidate debates scheduled was reduced from three (3) to two (2).

2010	
20 Feb	Intent to Run Form released via the Association website
21 March	Full Body Senate (Presidential Nominations)
	Candidate's Briefing
22 March	Campaign Period begins
23 March	Formal Debate: Hosted by WRBB, Moderated by Student Body President Fox
28 March	Campaign Expenditure Report Due (for week #1) at 12pm
29 March	Informal Debate: Hosted by Hunt. News and RSA, Moderated by Vice President Klotzbier
30 March	Online Voting Begins
04 April	Campaign/Voting Period Ends at 12pm
	Campaign Expenditure Report Due (for week #2) at 12pm
	Final Campaign Expenditure Report Due
	Campaign Expenditure Verification Meeting (via email)
	Full Body Senate (Internal Election Nominations)
11 April	Full Body Senate (Internal Election)

NOMINATIONS

Michael Sabo (outgoing Vice President for Academic Affairs) and Sean Maloney (outgoing Executive Vice President), were both successfully nominated for Student Body President at the Full Body Meeting on March 21st 2011. They remained candidates throughout the entirety of the campaign season.

THE CANDIATES'S BRIEFING

In the past the Candidate's Briefing has been a small meeting between the Chair, Committee members who were interested in attending, the candidates, and a representative from their campaign. This election season, the Committee took a new approach to the meeting, which involved making it a large-scale, kick-off event for the purpose of celebrating the commencement of the campaign season and providing information about direct election procedures for all those interested in attending. This year's Candidate's Briefing was scheduled for directly after the Full Body Senate in which the candidates were nominated, the evening before the official start of the campaign period.

Statement from Candidate's Briefing Point-Person: Aliana Akhtar

> "In working on the Elections Committee last year, as the point person for the Candidate's Briefing, I focused on working with the Chair in figuring out how to plan the event. This included making the agenda for the meeting, see attached, and how the room was to be set up. For the agenda, what the Chair and I found made sense, was to go over important parts of the Direct Elections Manual while talking about the forms, in order for the meeting to run smoothly. A complication that arose was last minute decorations. We had made a plan as to how we wanted the Senate Chambers to look like, but balloons were not the right colors and we didn't have string, so I would make sure that you have all of that set aside. I advise making folders for each one of the candidates, holding all materials that are spoken about for the campaign, including some extras of the financial forms. Next year, I recommend keeping the briefing as an open house, so that more people were able to learn about the election process. For future elections, I would work to make sure you have NUtv and the Huntington News to document the event, to get in touch with those student groups, speak with the Director of Communications. Lastly, for the

future, I would see if you can get the documents that are being spoken about are up on the computer and the screen. It makes it easier for explanation to the candidates on the Chair's part."- **Aliana Akhtar**

PROMOTION

Event Planning

With assistance from the Vice-Chair, the Chair chose a Point-Person for each event in the election season. The point people were as follows: Candidate's Briefing: Aliana Akhtar, Debates: Nicholas Naraghi, and Voting Stations: Terrence MacCormack.

Candidate Behavior

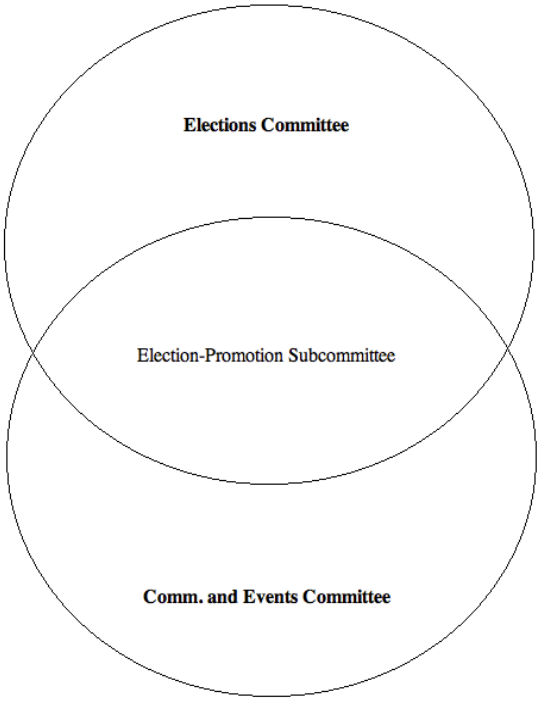
This year the Committee did a great job of communicating behavior expected of the candidates at SGA-related events that coincided with the campaign season. These events included Campus Invasion and Relay for Life. The candidates were expected to act as Senators, not as Candidates for both events. Behavior expected of candidates for Campus Invasion was stipulated in the Candidate's Briefing. Senator MacCormack drafted a "Memorandum of Understanding" for Relay for Life, which both candidates signed.

Purchases

The 2010 Elections Report mentions the need for capital investment. The Committee carried the "capital investment" initiative into this campaign season by way of purchasing a double voting station that can be used for years to come. In addition, the mouse pads purchased last year were used in the computer labs on campus, in accordance with the original intent in purchasing them last year.

The only other elections-related items that were purchased through the Committee were "Your Vote, Your Choice" pins to be handed out at voting stations.

Election-Promotion Subcommittee
In order to facilitate collaboration between the Elections Committee and the Communication & Events Committee, while still differentiating the responsibilities of the two committees, the Election-Promotion Subcommittee was created. The subcommittee worked out remarkably well this season, comprised of dedicated attendees who also sat on the Elections Committee and/or the Communications & Events Committee. The subcommittee met once a week or as needed, leading up to, and throughout the campaign season.



Electronic Communication
There were issues with email outages on two (2) occasions where voting reminders were scheduled to be sent out to the student body. This presumably resulted in lower, and delayed voter turnout.

DEBATES

Statement from Debates Point-Person: Nicholas Naraghi

"In order to provide students with an opportunity to see candidates and hear their platforms in person, the Committee coordinated two (2) debates for the Campaign Period. In the process of organizing the debates, the Committee worked with many student groups to attain sponsors for each event and reach out to the largest number of constituents possible. Between the debates, the student group sponsors were the Huntington News, the Resident Student Association, and WRBB.

Of the two debates, the Committee planned one for the Indoor Quadrangle on the first floor of the Curry Student Center and the other for the Library Quadrangle. Due to weather conditions, both debates were held in Curry Student Center's Indoor Quadrangle. Student turnout was limited for each debate, with less than 40 onlookers at any given time. Student attendance primarily consisted of individuals affiliated with one of the Campaigns, representatives of the sponsoring student groups, and members of the Committee. Additionally, the debate with food present from one of the sponsors had little extra attendance. It seemed that majority of the student body was either unaware or uninterested. As with the 2010 season, NUTV provided live coverage of the debates through their website, as well as uploading the videos from the debates after they occurred.

The format for both debates were created and approved by the Committee with the disposition of engendering the most interesting, yet unbiased form of conversation between the candidates. While the "formal" debate format was consistent with a typical competition-style debate, the "informal" debate allowed both candidates to freely express their opinions on the given topic within the time limit. The lack of structure in this section of debate created a much more engaging and tense interaction between candidates. Questions for the debate were generated by members of the Committee to emphasize differences between the candidates. This list of questions was not shared with anyone other than members of the Committee and the Moderators of the debates. At the end of the predetermined debate structure, any members of the audience were permitted to ask questions directed at either one or both of the candidates.

Throughout the election season, the candidates were criticized for having highly similar platforms. While those directly involved with the Association's activity could more clearly see the differences between the candidates, members of the student body argued that candidates we virtually the same.

Similarities could have come from working together on the 2009-2010 Association Executive Board together, participating in similar student groups, and keeping outlandish claims out of their platforms. Once again, the format and list of questions used for the debate were designed to demonstrate any differences between the candidates.

Moderators and sponsors did not see eye-to-eye with the Committee with their roles in the debates. In the search for moderators, the Committee decided that it would be ideal for members of the administration fulfill this role for the purposes of credibility and increased publicity. Early in the Elections season, Vice President for Student Affairs Klotzbier agreed to moderate one of the debates, but no administrator was found for the other debate. Instead, standing President Fox took the role of moderator a few days before the debate occurred. The Committee intended for moderators to facilitate timekeeping and ask questions from the list determined by the Committee in advance.

On the other hand, sponsors expected to be able to view and edit the format and list of questions before the debate took place. Sharing questions with student groups has the potential to be highly problematic, due to the lack of restriction on communication between sponsoring student groups and the candidates. The sponsors' confusion regarding their role in the debates was first discovered in an unofficial meeting between members of the Committee and representatives of each the College Democrats, the College Republicans, and the Political Science Student Association. On the day of the first debate, with an unexpected change in moderator and no way to be involved in approving the list of questions, these three student groups withdrew their sponsorship from the event.

Moving forward into future election seasons, it will be highly important to use previous years as a guide on the best way to execute debates. These debates have the potential to be highly informative for students, and in order to fulfill that potential, a largely increased number of students must attend. As such, the most important part of coordinating the debates for next year will be planning them in such a way that student attendance, participation, and interest will be increased. I highly suggest that before each event, more advertising is done for the debates specifically. In addition to advertising the information on various social media sites, fliers should be posted in dormitories and around campus. Additionally, I suggest not having the debates in a closed-off area such as the Curry Student Center, as to increase publicity and attract more individuals that were passing by. For the debate format, it will be important to focus on free-form debate, as that was the most productive this year. Regarding sponsors and moderators, I highly encourage the Committee to determine each of their roles in the debates *with* the parties that are interested, and doing so far in advance of the events as to avoid any confusion or last minute changes. Best of luck to next year's Committee in coordinating the debates and the election season as a whole."

-- **Nicholas Naraghi**

VOTING STATIONS

Statement from Voting Stations Point-Person: Terrence MacCormack

"Initial Statement

I was very excited to have the opportunity to work as a member of the Elections Committee in an expanded role as the point person for voting stations during the fifth student body election. Starting with the fall meetings of the Committee, it was apparent that the elections, in terms of publicity and voter turnout, could be greatly enhanced by the presence of voting stations at key points around campus. As publicizing SGA through the elections and increasing voter turnout were two goals I felt were very important to pursue, I was glad to have the opportunity to do so.

Planning

Some of the most important meetings regarding creation of voting stations took place in February and early March, as the Committee decided on the locations and times for the stations, the various restrictions that would be placed on candidates and campaign workers around the stations, and what kind of promotions would be done in conjunction with the stations. In my mind, the Committee was mostly productive on the discussion of these matters, but as would later be proven, perhaps our discussion regarding boundaries surrounding the voting stations did not need to be as intense as it was.

Committee collaboration was superb, however, regarding the times and locations of the stations. After discussing the general pros and cons of the various dates and times proposed, a Doodle (which I think is a great tool for the Committee to use in an expanded capacity in the future) was created and times were decided on that had the most Committee members available for staffing. In the end, the locations of the Freshmen Quad (5pm-8pm on March 30) and the Marino Center Atrium (11am-7pm on April 3) were chosen. A third station in International Village was discussed at length, but never implemented.

Similarly, the Committee spent its time well with regards to promotions surrounding the voting stations. It was decided that the SGA tablecloth, various promotional materials from Campus Invasion, and nonpartisan candidate information sheets would be the only materials needed. Specific promotional efforts were appropriately passed off to the Elections Promotions Subcommittee.

However, Committee discussion regarding the boundaries for the voting stations was unfortunately sometimes unproductive. No fewer than three Committee meetings were used to discuss the boundaries that would be placed around the voting stations, and how those boundaries would be enforced. In my mind, these discussions were often unproductive, simply due to the sheer number of people that were discussing it at once. Though this was an important element of discussion,

having ten to twelve people in a room trying to formulate a collective plan made things difficult. One thing that could be changed with regards to this process in the future is to perhaps have the Chair, Vice-Chair and Voting Stations Point-Person meet in advance, formulate a plan for boundaries that falls within the guidelines of the Direct Elections Manual, and present this plan to the Committee for review and approval. To have a blueprint on the table that can then be critiqued would speed the process up, as any discussion would pertain to changes to, rather than the creation of, a plan.

Overall, the Committee should be applauded for its planning efforts, though it is recommended that in general, from a logistical standpoint, plans be formulated outside of Committee meetings, to be presented to the Committee for review and changes. This would cut down on planning time, while still giving the Committee ample opportunity to have its say.

Implementation

With the voting stations set for Wednesday, March 30 from 5pm-8pm in the Freshman Quad, April 3 from 11am-7pm in the Marino Center Atrium, the Committee prepared to staff the stations, as required by the Manual. These locations were chosen based mostly on the availability of the Committee members, but unfortunately, attendance was somewhat lackluster as far as staffing. The reasons for this unfortunate circumstance are not difficult to pinpoint: finals were coming up and people were very busy. To prevent this from happening in the future, a larger pool of potential staffers should be looked at. Though the Manual currently dictates that members of the Committee be present at all times, this does not mean that other Senators should not be encouraged to also staff the stations. Perhaps a list of Senators and other Association members who are not campaign workers could be compiled. This group could be emailed about helping promote the nonpartisan efforts, specifically the staffing of voting stations.

That being said, the Freshman Quad voting station was mostly a success. Staffing was better here than at the Marino Center station. Though only about 100 people voted using this platform, it was superb advertising for the Student Body Elections that likely reached many more.

The Marino Center voting station was, however, another matter. Unfortunately, Sunday April 3 was also a date that the Elections Promotions Subcommittee chose as a day for "dorm-storming" and so a good majority of both the Committee and the subcommittee were occupied with that task. Both were important tasks, but it might have been beneficial to schedule them further in advance, as to avoid conflict. Additionally, the location of the Marino Center was chosen because of its proximity to Boloco, in the hopes of coordinating a promotion that might've included a free burrito when one voted. However, we were only really able to get coupons, which were not as enticing to potential voters. Also, the Marino Center was very quiet for most of the day, causing us to have to move to the Library Quad midway through, which did increase turnout a little. Finally, the timeframe of 11am-7pm was not ideal for a Sunday, and should be reworked.

One area in which problems were highly anticipated, but did not arise, was with regards to the boundaries set for candidates and campaign workers. Both candidates thankfully informed their campaigns to respect the boundaries set by the committee, and no problems were had with campaign workers intruding on boundaries. The Committee's strong stance on the enforcement of these boundaries, as well as informing both campaigns of potential consequences for violation, paid off.

Future Recommendations

Though this first year of voting stations was mostly a success, a lot can be improved upon. Four points come to mind. First, the Voting Stations Point-Person (if there is one next year) should take more of a lead early on in deciding on dates and locations, and setting boundaries for the candidates and campaigns, in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair. Second, more should be done to engage non-aligned Senators with the staffing of the voting stations. Third, it would be nice to schedule a little better so that no two promotions efforts happen on the same day. Finally, an alternate location from the Marino Center Atrium should be chosen for the second voting station (the Freshmen Quad one should remain). Perhaps International Village, the Library Quad or the West Addition of the Student Center should be considered.

Overall, it was valuable to have this position exist for the purpose of project implementation, and I was honored to hold it. The position could, though, perhaps do more with regards to project planning. Hopefully the individual that holds it this coming spring will be able to expand the role in that direction.

Final Thoughts

It is very important to continue voting stations next year, because they are an excellent way to promote the Student Body Elections. It should be pointed out to next year's Committee to not be discouraged if the stations do not yield a great number of actual votes. They are much more powerful as a promotional tool and should be viewed accordingly.

Additionally, we already have sustainable equipment, in the form of the voting station, tables, and tablecloths, for the implementation of voting stations. No further large purchases are really needed to keep these going (and speaking as the Association's incoming treasurer, I must say that our cash account really couldn't handle another large scale elections purchase anyway). There is really no reason to not continue them, so I hope that they are continued, and perhaps incorporate my recommendations, as well as those of this year's Chair.

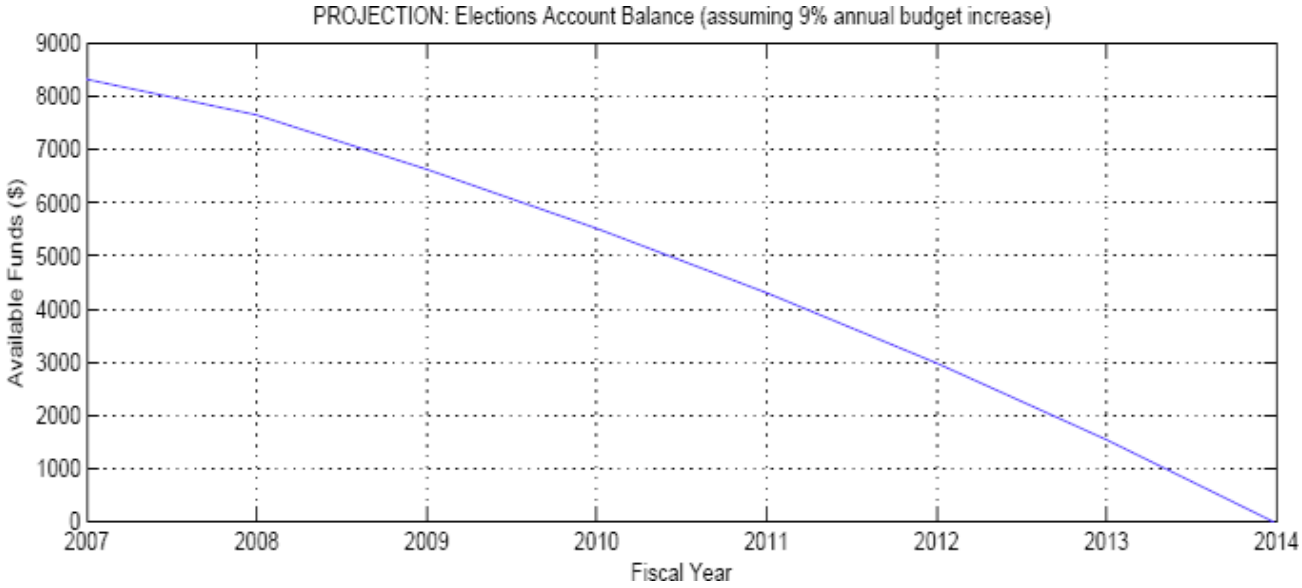
I do hope this report can be of use to the Committee next year, and I wish the members of the Committee best of luck in the planning and implementation of the sixth Student Body Elections!"

- Terrence MacCormack

FINANCIALS

The spending cap for each candidate was $500. Maloney spent $385.48, and Sabo spent $447.36. Total spending between all candidates was $832.84. This was $56.54 less than total spending in the 2010 season, indicating that the spending cap probably does not need to be raised for the coming year.

It is further noted that EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT campaign funding should be researched for the coming election season. If the EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT runs on the same ticket as the Student Body President, spending may not need to be increased for the coming year. However, if the EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT runs on a separate ticket they will need their own budget for campaigning. Separate funding for EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT candidates would mean the elections fund would run out long before year 2014, the year originally projected to the year when our funds would be depleted.



The Committee's outlook on future financial remains the same as in the 2010 Elections Report: "The fund continues to diminish with each passing election cycle, with no foreseeable solution for replenishment of the fund. The Committee has had prior minor discussions on the issue, but has resulted in no resolutions. It is recommended that the Committee look into the issue further."

One possible solution to this funding problem is to privatize the financing of campaigns. Please see Matthew Soleyn's addendum to the 2010 Elections Report for more information about this option. One foreseeable problem with this option is the fact that Elections Committee should not support a system in which a candidate with more money has an advantage in the election. If the campaign financing were to be seriously considered, the committee would have to institute a policy in which candidates could only use money they personally fundraise for the purpose of the election. They would not be able to utilize external funding. A potential problem that may arise from this is that said fundraising may violate the terms for Northeastern University's non-profit standing. This should be investigated further.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

Demerit Point System

Complying with the wishes of the 2010 elections Committee, a demerit point system was initiated during this elections cycle. The point system is excellent in theory. The decision to institute a 4-point limit to the system seemed to work out very well. The idea behind the point system is to demonstrate that small misdemeanors, although scaled differently than major demeanors, still make a difference in the scheme of their campaign. Problems arose with grievances in instances in which the Committee ruled that a campaign should be awarded one (1) demerit point, intending that the point be a warning, and in the case where the committee found a campaign guilty but did not award any demerit points. These Committee decisions were appealed and eventually rescinded through this process. The appeals made it seem like the Committee did not have much power. This signifies that both the Committee and Appeals board should continue to be extremely careful in their deliberations. If the Appeals Board always rules against the Committee's decision, the power of the Committee is somewhat lost.

Elucidating Grievance Claims

The Chair found it vital to identify each individual claim the Complainant made against the Campaign. Each claim should correspond to a singular section of the manual. One can see this reflected in the "Grievance Reports" section following. Identifying claims is essential in structuring debate in grievance hearings strictly around violations of the manual.

In the future the grievance form should have a section in which the filer notes exactly which sections of the DEPM a Campaign violates. If the filer is not knowledgeable enough to do this, perhaps the Chair should work with the filer to elucidate their claims in an organized way.

Merit Policies

It has become increasingly apparent that policies regarding finding merit in a grievance need to be more explicitly stated. While many, if not all, of these policies can be derived from the DEPM, the chair suggests enumerating such derivatives in order prevent future complications.

I. **Endorsement of a campaign via email or other messaging is considered campaign work if the email goes out to numerous recipients.** How many recipients constitute "numerous" recipients is up to the discretion of the Committee for the individual case of endorsement. An email endorsement to a private listserv, accessible to some individuals but not to others (specifically others on the opposite campaign) is especially problematic. Campaign work is not inclusive of endorsement via "Facebook status" or "tweet" as these methods of communication are acts of publicly exclaiming personal opinion that is not directed towards any specific parties.

II. **Evidence illustrating that individuals acted against Campaign A, cannot be directly used as evidence that supports a grievance against Campaign B.** Evidence must be provided that links the individuals to Campaign B. In a two-candidate race, it is easy to mix up the two forms of evidence. If one considers a three candidate race, however, it becomes apparent that evidence illustrating that individuals acted against Campaign A, cannot be directly used as evidence that supports a grievance against Campaign B, because this

evidence could equivalently be used as evidence that supports a grievance against Campaign C.

III. Section 6.3 “Candidates shall respect other candidates' right to campaign and advertise”, refers to Campaign A directly preventing promotional efforts of Campaign B. For example, Campaign A removes Campaign B posters. **This section does not refer to Campaign A negatively campaigning against Campaign B.**

IV. **The Elections Committee cannot and should not be responsible for interpreting University policy.** In referencing DEM Section 6.2 “Candidates and campaign workers are subject to University policies at all times”, a staff member or administrator must confirm that University policy was not abided by before a grievance claim referring to broken policy can have merit.

V. **Grievances filed anonymously should still contain contact information.** If a grievance is filed that contains no contact information, and the grievance is missing evidence to support claims, the Committee is not responsible for following up with the filer to obtain missing evidence. Without proper evidence, the grievance may be found without merit. An easy way to avoid this problem is for the anonymous filer to provide a low-risk amount of contact information, for example just a telephone number.

VI. **All new evidence from the Complainant must be submitted with the Grievance Form.** All evidence from the Campaign must be submitted at the beginning of the grievance hearing in which it is to be utilized. New evidence is separate from new argument.

Grievance Reports

#1

March 22nd, 10:31am

Merit Status: Approved
Complainant: Sean Maloney, Executive Vice President, SGA
Campaign: Sabo

Claim 1: The campaign places chalk advertisement in an area of campus that does not comply with the "Chalking Advertising Policy".

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.2 "Candidates and campaign workers are subject to University policies at all times."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: The chalking in question was done when the new Student Activities policy was not clear to candidates. The Sabo campaign is not held responsible for violating this policy.

#2

March 22nd, 11:18am

Merit Status: Approved
Complainant: Ryan Fox, President, SGA
Campaign: Sabo

Claim 1: Sabo campaign-related material was distributed before the campaign period.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 4.1 "The Campaign Period will commence at midnight or four (4) following the Candidate's Briefing, whichever comes first…" Section 4.1.1 "No campaign-related activities are permitted before this date."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: The Sabo campaign was determined to have no previous knowledge of the questionable email that went out to the NUCR listserv before the campaign period.

#3

March 22nd, 8:33pm

Merit Status: Approved
Complainant: Anthony Golia, Senator, SGA; Representative of the Sabo Campaign
Campaign: Maloney

Claim 1: Maloney campaign-related activity before the campaign period via Twitter.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 4.1 "The Campaign Period will commence at midnight or four (4) hours following the Candidate's Briefing, whichever comes first…" Section 4.1.1 "No campaign-related activities are permitted before this date."
Verdict: Not Guilty

Sanction: N/A
Notes: The tweet sent out by Mr. Maloney before the campaign period was not determined to be campaign activity.

Claim 2: Undocumented campaign worker.
Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.4 "Each candidate shall maintain a list provided to the Committee disclosing campaign workers."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: The tweet sent out by Mr. Maloney and the related tweet from Ms. Daly was not determined to be campaign activity; therefore Ms. Daly was not acting as an undocumented campaign worker.

#4

March 23rd 8:00pm
Merit Status: Approved
Complainant: Anthony Golia, Senator, SGA; Representative of the Sabo Campaign
Campaign: Maloney

Claim 1: Campaigning in a restricted area.
Violation in Question: DEM Section 3.4 "The chair shall notify all candidates of the place and times of all voting stations and regions that are off limits during the [Candidates'] Briefing."
Verdict: Guilty
Sanction: One (1) Demerit Point
Notes: Mr. Maloney was determined to have been acting as a candidate at the SGA Campus Invasion event. The assigned sanction is intended as a warning to the Maloney Campaign to be cautious of campaigning in regions that were deemed off limits by the Committee.

#5

March 29th, 10:00am
Merit Status: Approved
Complainant: Anonymous
Campaign: Sabo

Claim 1: Creators of two fake Maloney twitter accounts are undisclosed campaign workers.
Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.4 "Each candidate shall maintain a list provided to the Committee disclosing campaign workers."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: The creators of the fake Maloney twitter accounts were not determined to be campaign workers.

Claim 2: The creators of the fake Maloney twitter account/undisclosed campaign workers intimidated voters with their actions.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.6 "Candidates and campaign workers are prohibited from intimidating voters or directly facilitating voting."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: This Claim is dependent on Claim 1.

Claim 3: At least one campaign worker intimidated voters by way of sending out a Facebook poll marked with the Sabo campaign logo.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.6 "Candidates and campaign workers are prohibited from intimidating voters or directly facilitating voting."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: Nick Beek was determined to not be a campaign worker at the time the poll was created.

#6

March 29th, 10:04pm

Merit Status: Not Approved
Complainant: Anthony Golia, Senator, SGA; Representative of the Sabo Campaign
Campaign: Maloney

Claim 1: The campaign placed chalk advertisement in an area that is off-campus, violating a Campus Activities advertising policy.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.2 "Candidates and campaign workers are subject to University policies at all times."
Verdict: N/A
Sanction: N/A
Notes: Grievance #6 does not have merit. The Elections Committee cannot interpret University policy.

#7

March 29th, 9:50pm

Merit Status: Approved
Complainant: Alexandra Herndon, Senator, SGA
Campaign: Sabo

Claim 1: The Sabo campaign has an undocumented campaign worker.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.4 "Each candidate shall maintain a list provided to the Committee disclosing campaign workers."
Verdict: Guilty
Sanction: None
Notes: Ms. Patten was determined to be acting as a campaign worker. She was an undisclosed campaign worker, because all information was never provided in her disclosure. No sanctions were applied as the Chair made the "missing information for a campaign worker on the Campaign Worker Disclosure sheet means that the campaign worker is not considered disclosed" interpretation last evening.

#8

April 1st, 1:57pm

Merit Status: Approved
Complainant: Maya Quijada, Senator, SGA
Campaign: Maloney

Claim 1: The Maloney campaign has an undisclosed campaign worker.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.4 "Each candidate shall maintain a list provided to the Committee disclosing campaign workers."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: President Ryan Fox was not determined to be an undisclosed campaign worker for the Maloney campaign.

Claim 2: An undisclosed campaign worker from the Maloney campaign prevented the Sabo campaign from campaigning.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.3 "Candidates shall respect other candidates' right to campaign and advertise."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: This Claim is dependent on Claim #1.

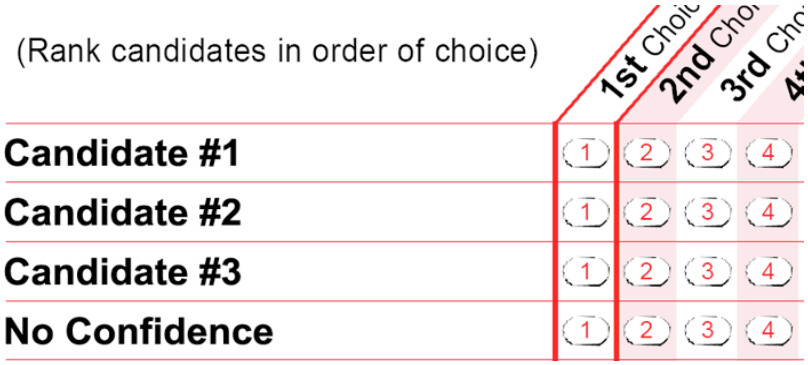
Claim 3: An undisclosed campaign worker intimidated voters.

Violation in Question: DEM Section 6.6 "Candidates and campaign workers are prohibited from intimidating voters or directly facilitating voting."
Verdict: Not Guilty
Sanction: N/A
Notes: This Claim is dependent on Claim #1.

Result Validation Meeting
The chair was not privy to the results, via the results validation email, before the results were announced at the Full Body Meeting for internal elections. This was due to the fact that the Chair was running for Executive Vice President. There were concerns that the Chair could then structure her platform to fit well with that of the President-elect, potentially giving the Chair an advantage over the other candidate running for EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT.

Ballot Structure
The Committee was able to make a large amount of changes to the ballot this year. This was mostly due to early collaboration with Information Services, the first meeting with them occurring on January 11th between the Chair, President Fox, and Derrick Navisky, a representative from IS. Changes to the ballot included: reduction of text, added Twitter and Facebook automatic updates, reformatted "No Confidence" option, added links to more information on "No Confidence" and Presidential responsibilities, and an added live vote count which was displayed on the Association website.

In accordance with the recommendation from the 2010 Elections Report, the Committee added IRV to the DEPM. However, the Committee decided only to implement IRV for three (3) or more candidates. Currently IS does not have an IRV ballot template. The Committee should work with IS to resolve this early on. The ballot structure should look similar to the image below.



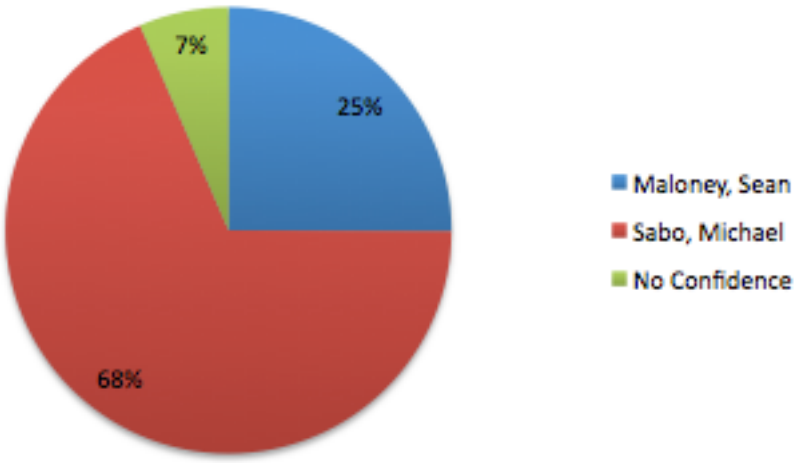
Voting Extension
The 20%-of-the-student-body voting requirement was eventually reached, but an extension in the voting period was necessary to achieve this. The Committee voted to extend the voting period by the maximum five (5) days. In this period of time the Committee, Subcommittee, and Communication & Events Committee worked tirelessly to reach the voting minimum. These groups utilized an additional voting station and dorm-storming, dorm-storming being most effective by far.

Voting turnout was presumed to be lower due to candidate similarities and a couple of unfortunate, cross-campus email outages, which prevented mass mailings from getting out to the student body. This being said, the low vote count was still a surprise to the Committee, as promotional efforts were increased this year and the voting station option was utilized.

Results

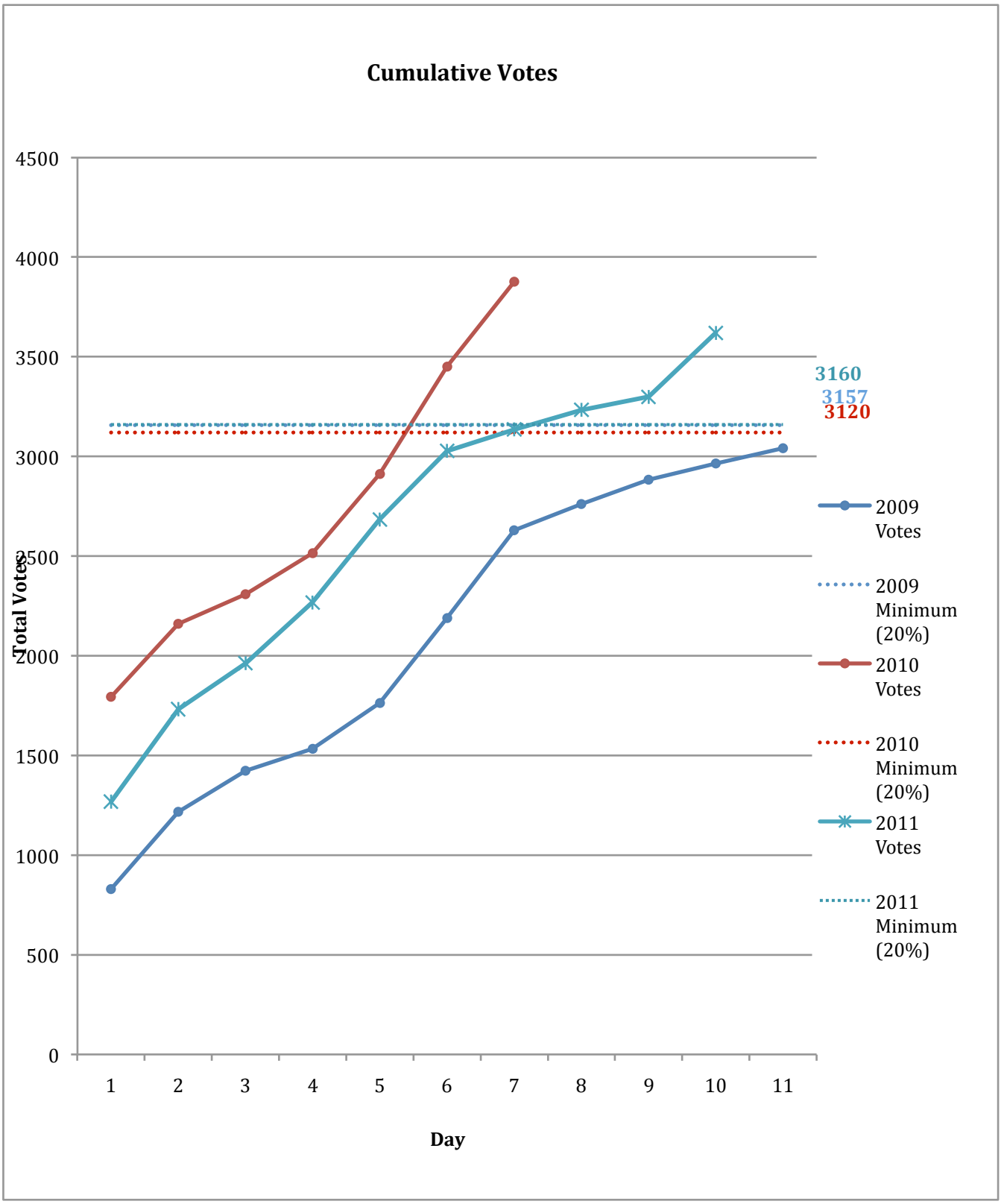
With 2484 votes (68% of the total), Michael Sabo won the election. Because there were only two candidates in this particular election, preferential voting (as defined in Robert's Rules of Order) was used, rather than Instant Runoff Voting (IRV).

Twenty-three percent (23%) of the student body voted. The minimum vote necessary was twenty percent (20%).

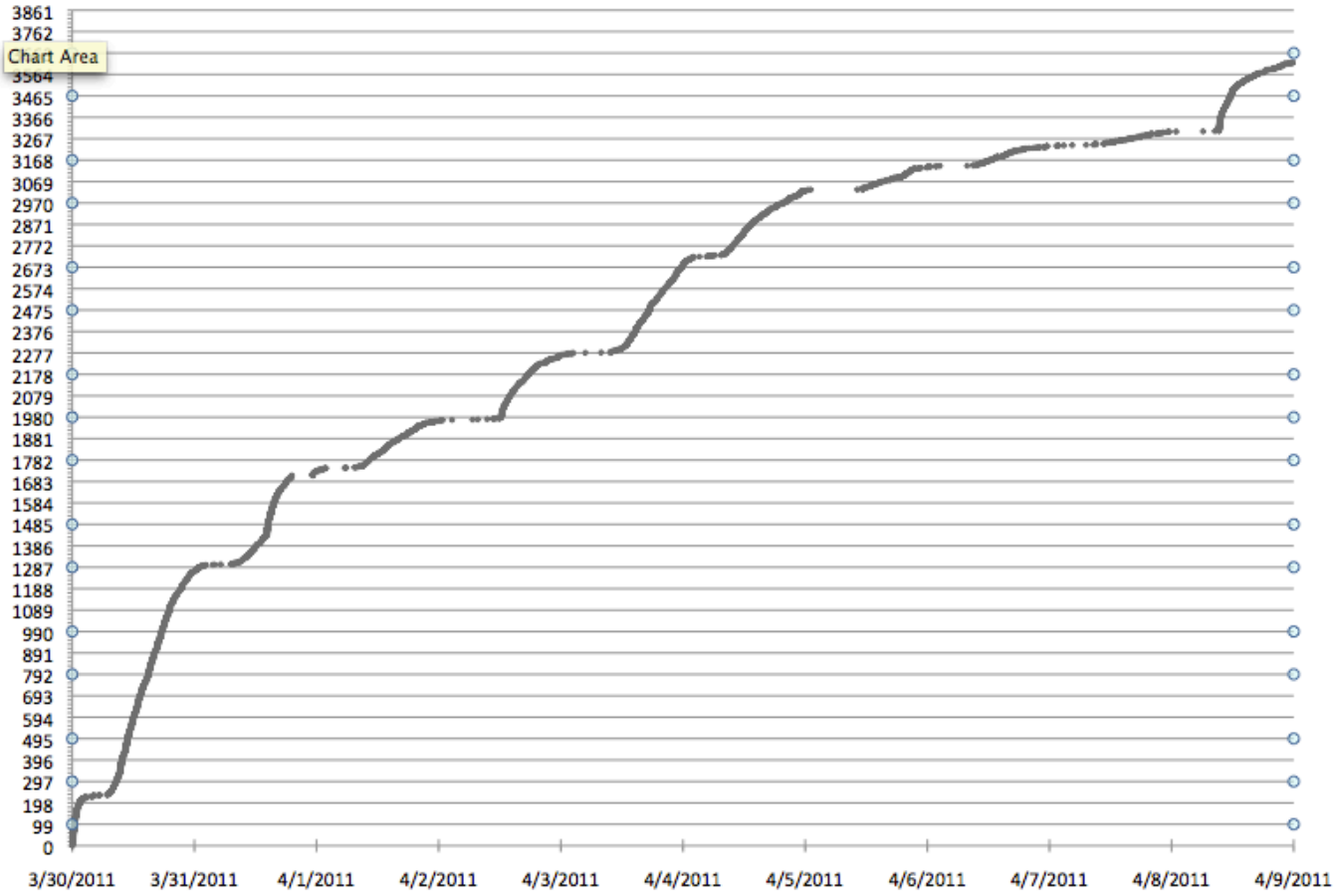


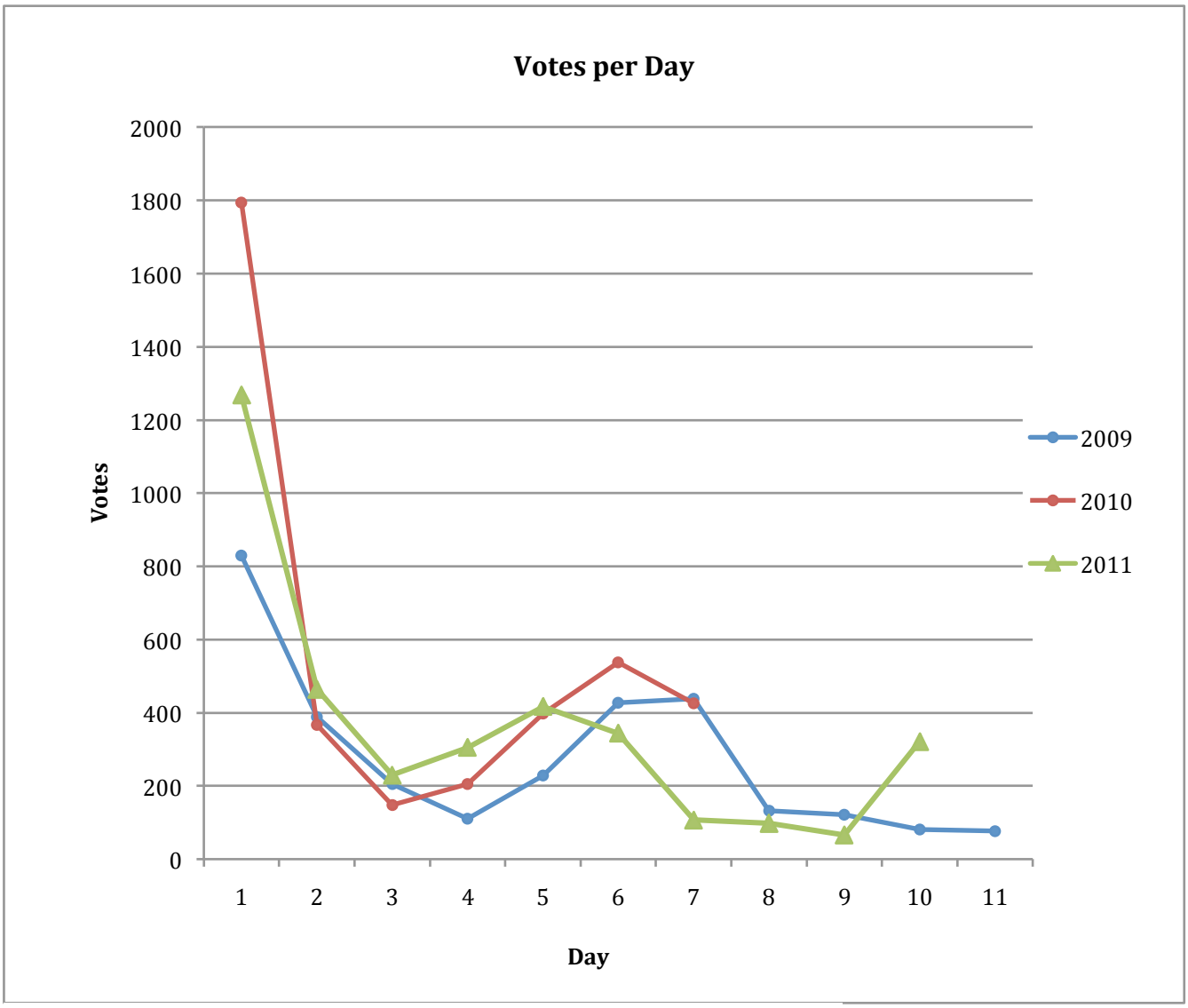
2009		2010		2011	
Votes	Candidate	Votes	Candidate	Votes	Candidate
2007	Fox, Ryan	1801	Fox, Ryan	910	Maloney, Sean
535	Soleyn, Matt	1704	Sabia, Amanda	2484	Sabo, Michael
499	No Confidence	371	No Confidence	236	No Confidence

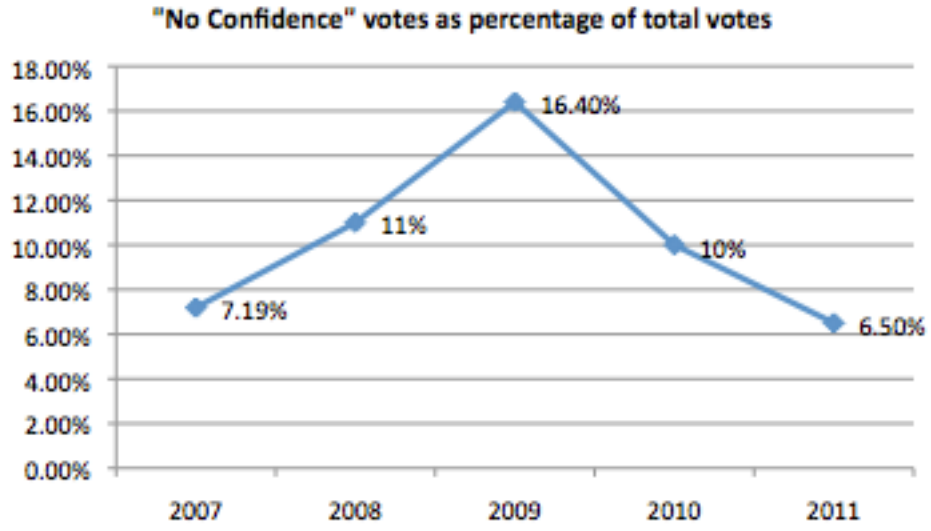
	2009		2010		2011	
Day #	Votes	Total Votes	Votes	Total Votes	Votes	Total Votes
1	830	830	1794	1794	1268	1268
2	388	1218	367	2161	464	1732
3	205	1423	148	2309	230	1962
4	111	1534	205	2514	305	2267
5	228	1762	398	2912	417	2684
6	428	2190	538	3450	344	3028
7	439	2629	426	3876	107	3135
8	133	2762			98	3233
9	121	2883			66	3299
10	81	2964			321	3620
11	77	3041				


Cumulative Votes
4500
4000
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
Total Votes
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
Day
3160
3157
3120
2009 Votes
2009 Minimum (20%)
2010 Votes
2010 Minimum (20%)
2011 Votes
2011 Minimum (20%)

Detailed Cumulative Votes

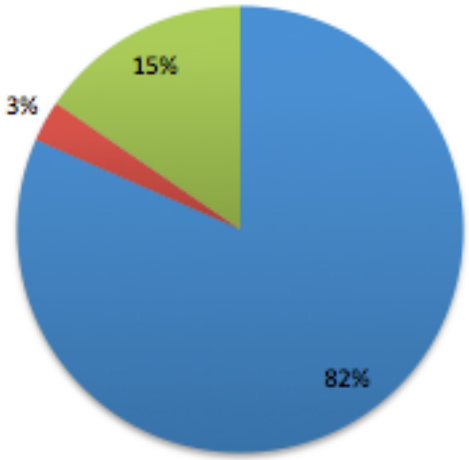



Votes per Day
Votes
2000
1800
1600
1400
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
Day
2009
2010
2011


"No Confidence" votes as percentage of total votes
18.00%
16.00%
14.00%
12.00%
10.00%
8.00%
6.00%
4.00%
2.00%
0.00%
7.19%
11%
16.40%
10%
6.50%
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011

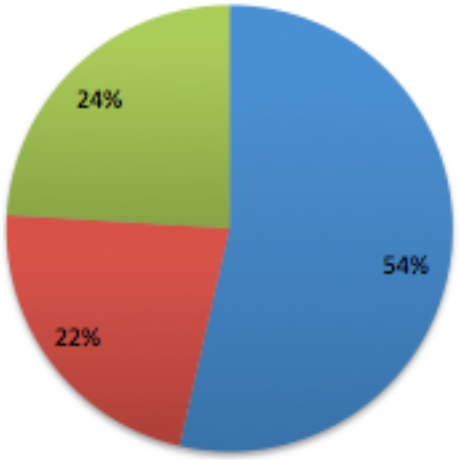
Referenda Question 1:
Student Representation within the Board of Trustees (SSB SP-11-101)

Yes	No	Abstain
2771	101	525



Referenda Question 2:
Direct Election of the Student Government Associations Executive Vice President (RG SP-11-101)

Yes	No	Abstain
1821	759	817



ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Structuring and the Candidate's Briefing

The DEPM does not include that stipulations mentioned in the Candidate's Briefing must be followed. This was an issue in grievance hearings. A quick –fix for this issue would be to add to the manual that all rules mentioned in the Candidate's Briefing must be adhered to, however the Committee should think twice before placing something like this in the manual. This would essentially enforce a system in which the Committee can add any rule they please to the Manual by mentioning it in the Candidate's briefing, bypassing Senate approval.

Instead, the Committee needs to keep in mind that anything that isn't in the DEPM by the end of the fall semester is simply unenforceable. This is why it is vital to leave some room for Committee interpretation within the DEPM. This good practice as 1) the Committee is more able to adapt to surprises that occur during the campaign season and 2) the DEPM remains a timeless document that does not need to be updated each year with frivolous specifics.

Referencing Forms

Similar to the suggestion above, all election forms that are required of candidates should be clearly referenced in the DEPM so as to make them more enforceable.

Grievance Hearing Script

It is suggested that the Committee add, "Collect all Campaign evidence" and "Declare all witnesses" to the top of section A.3 Procedure. Grievance hearings this season could have been greatly expedited if these items were attended to before moving forward with the procedure.

Campaign Worker Disclosure

Required information needs to be explicitly denoted on the Campaign Worker Disclosure form. One cannot require that a student supply their Student ID.

The Committee should look into adding a timeframe in which a campaign worker needs to be officially declared by way of submitting a new disclosure form to the Chair, or sending the Chair the worker's signature via email. In the Candidate's Briefing this year, the suggested timeframe was 24 hours, however since this was not documented in the DEPM the rule could not be enforced. Whether a potential campaign worker should be allowed to start campaign work before his or her documented signature is given to the Chair is an issue for debate.

Defining a Campaign Worker

Work needs to be done to better define a campaign worker. Currently there is conflict between the two ways in which someone can become a campaign worker. One can become a campaign worker by either signing a campaign worker sheet or by conforming to the definition of the campaign worker in the manual. The dual definition of a campaign worker caused a lot of problems in grievance hearings and should be reviewed.

Organizing Definitions in the DEPM

There is a lot of text in the manual that pertains to defining elections-related terminology, rather than stating a policy. These definitions should be moved to an appendix to the manual so as to

make the manual more clear. The Direct Elections Manual was renamed the Direct Elections *Policy* Manual this year for a reason.

Whole Number Demerit Points
The manual should make clear that the Committee can only assign whole number demerit points. Also, the number of demerit points that was originally intended to lead to campaign disqualification was four (4), not three (3). This error should be addressed immediately, as it greatly affects the functioning of the point system.

Precedent of Not Sharing Questions
Policy pertaining to not sharing debate questions should perhaps be added to the DEPM. There was a lot of tension surrounding related issues this year.

Campaign Worker Sign-In Privileges

The Committee should consider the implications of giving sign-in privileges to a campaign designee. The issue came up this year as both candidates were on co-op during the day, and therefore their campaigns were not able to access residence halls for promotional purposes during this time.

Parliamentary Inquiry in Grievance Hearings
"Point of inquiry" should be changed to "point of parliamentary inquiry" in section A.2.3 of the Grievance Hearing Procedure in order to prevent confusion.

UNCHARTED TERRITORY

Direct Election of the Executive Vice President

After much contention in Senate this year, the question of DE of EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT was put to the student body through the new referenda system. The student body ultimately voted in favor of directly electing their EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT (see "Voting & Results" above).

The Committee spent much of the fall semester discussing potential procedure for DE of the EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT. The Committee ultimately came to a non-binding consensus to institute the following changes to the manual should the EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT be directly elected:

1. The Executive Vice Presidential candidates will be nominated by a Presidential candidate.
2. The candidates for Executive Vice President will be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the Senate via roll call.
3. If a candidate is not confirmed, the Presidential candidate is obligated to nominate another candidate for Executive Vice President. In this case, the "Intent to Run" form will be waived.

The Committee has not considered the previous changes since the fall 2010 semester. I am confident that the Committee will revisit the above changes in depth this coming year.

GLOSSARY

Association: Student Government Association
Chair: Chair of the Elections Committee
Committee: Elections Committee
DEPM: Direct Elections Policy Manual
DE: Direct Elections
IRV: Instant Runoff Voting
IS: Information Services
Subcommittee: Election-Promotion Subcommittee

ADDENDA

Those involved with the 2011 Elections were invited to write personal addenda to the Elections Report. Addenda are presented as submitted.

1. Addendum I, Submitted by Anthony Golia IV; Comptroller, Student Government Association; Campaign Manager, Mike Sabo for Student Body President Campaign; [redacted]

Opening Words

My first active interaction with the Student Government Association was just over 15 months ago, when I was approached by a friend to get involved on a campaign. This individual was running for Student Body President and wanted to know if I was interested in volunteering. Almost instantly, I knew that SGA was an organization I wanted to be involved with. Less than a month later, I was officially a Senator. I began my tenure with the Association by working on the Waiting List project for VP Sabo. Although I branched out from what brought me into the Association and into Academic Affairs and Finance Board, elections was always near to my heart. It was hardly even October when VP Sabo and myself were going over the prospects of a presidential campaign. By the time the New Year opened, it seemed like the campaign was already in full swing, with the basic foundation having already been laid. However, I don't believe any of us knew exactly what we had signed up for. I can safely say that the three weeks of the campaign were the must brutal, emotional, and trying weeks of my life. I learned a lot about the Association, it's members, and campaigns in general that I felt needed to be shared with all to ensure proper growth of the elections process, and to allow for successful elections in the future. My recommendations are broken up into two categories—the first being drawn from my experience directly involved with a campaign, and the second being my experience as Comptroller of the Student Government Association.

Suggestions for the Future

1. The elections promotions strategy must be revamped and expanded: I'm going to preface this by saying I know the Association did an unprecedented amount of promotion this year. However, with all due respect, I know I can speak for myself and my campaign team when I say that the promotional strategy needs to be changed. It seemed the bulk of the Association's general advertising was done on Twitter and Facebook, with the creation of the Twitter debates and the NU Votes Facebook fan page. However, most of the people who follow us on Twitter and those who joined the group either were directly related to a campaign or a member of the Association. We were preaching to ourselves. We gained very little by wasting such valuable resources on forms of advertising where we were broadcasting our message to members of the Association and it's extended family. We need to get this message out to the students. President Sabo, myself, and 21 other students were out

knocking on doors within the first week of the election. We were generally greeted with 1 of three greetings: 1) There's an election going on? Seriously? What is it about? 2) I've heard of you, I've seen your chalk around campus! or 3) Are you running unopposed? The majority of students we spoke to weren't aware an election was going on until well into when voting started—which was when the voting booths and Elections Promotions dorm storming had began. Once the Association started reaching out to students outside of it's little bubble, the elections began to be widely known. It is my recommendation that the Association devotes fewer resources to social media such as twitter and Facebook, and more resources to student outreach such as dorm storming earlier in the election. Social media and email blasts just aren't cutting it. Additionally, I think ideas like a banner over Forsyth St. or going into classrooms to talk directly with students and professors are far better ones than just a twitter debate. The people we need to reach are the ones who aren't likely to vote. If you look at our Facebook friends or Twitter followers, they are not this demographic. I do not think it's a coincidence that President Sabo won by such a huge margin when a large portion of his campaign was done grassroots style—taking the message directly to the students rather than putting it up online for the students to come to him.

2. Do NOT continue the elections prizes for voting: I think the prizes did more harm than good. The increase in voting wasn't worth the headache that came with it. If you look at the list of free haircut winners, it is by and large either 1) an SGA member 2) a friend of an SGA member, or 3) someone involved with another student organization, but is still an active member of Northeastern's other student organizations. I think this fact was made worse by the lack of effective promotions mentioned in my previous point. The prizes can only be effective if we market them, however if we're doing marketing it should be for the election in general and not the prizes. Bribing students to vote didn't work this year, and I think our resources should be better spent on the promotions of elections in general.

3. Designate someone to be able to swipe into buildings when the candidate is on co-op: This seems to be straightforward. Both candidates were on co-op this elections cycle. Since the candidate is the only one who can swipe in campaign workers to campaign, this was next to impossible to accomplish. We found a way by having point people in each building we could call on to sign us in, however this isn't ideal by any means. The Campaign should be able to designate a worker, say the Campaign Manager, to be the one person to sign people into buildings. This person would be fully responsible for the actions of all inside of the building. I feel this is a small change that will increase elections promotion substantially, allowing both campaigns to dorm-storm in a much more timely and effective manner.

4. Potential SAF Funding for Elections? I will preface this by saying I am 100% opposed to the Student Activity Fee funding elections. Off the top of my head, funding of elections would violate 3 portions of the SAF Policies Manual. I also don't feel like it is in the best interest of the Student Body for them to be footing the bill for what has largely been a push by the Administration at Northeastern for increased direct elections. However, should the leaders of the Association decide the best route is to have the SAF fund elections, I will gladly give my professional opinion on the best way to make it happen. First and foremost, a referendum needs

to be passed allowing the SAF to fund elections. The Mission of the SAF, the inherent partisanship of elections, and the exclusive nature of those who can run for the office are the three main obstacles that can only be overcome via a campus wide referendum. Additionally, with SGA already receiving roughly $5 from every student's annual SAF payment, I think it would be in our best interest publically to put it to referenda rather than just making it happen. This referendum should say which positions it seeks to directly elect, and set a maximum amount to be paid for out of the SAF. This funding of elections cannot merely be tacked on into SGA's Annual Budget—it would have to be it's own separate budget. Should SGA propose this in it's Annual Budget without doing the above mentioned path, I feel there will be a backlash from students and the Finance Board alike, which will result in not getting the funding but also getting the backlash of public opinion.

5. Privatization of campaign finance. It is my opinion that privatization of campaign funds is the way to go here. I know that it's been said before, so I will be brief. A budget index for each candidate can be set up through SABO. Candidates are only able to deposit and spend out of this account. The penalties for spending anything outside of this account will be harsh—4 points for the first infraction. We can still have the limits in place, $500 maximum, however students are invited to solicit donations on their own via fundraising. All of this money will be accounted for. I also believe that this extra fundraising aspect will promote elections effectively, since the candidates will be reliant on how effective they are in getting their name out to earn money. I honestly believe if we implement this method, we will be able to surpass 30% turnout within the first year, with an eventual increase to 50% turnout in the not so long term.

Final Words

I really want it to be clear my addendum is written with the best of intentions. I recognize the hard work members of the Elections, Elections Promotions, and Association in general did this past year. I honestly believe everyone gave it their all and everyone did what they thought was best at the time. I also believe hindsight is 20/20, and we zshould all be able to learn from the past. I wanted to share with everyone my observations on the past, so we can build a strong foundation in which to grow off of for the future. I think it is very important for those not involved with the campaigns directly to be able to see things from that side in order to better address concerns which may not be anticipated or realized until you've experienced them directly. I've definitely enjoyed my ~2 years in the Association, and there's nothing more I'd rather see than it continue to grow. I will always remain available to any individual who wishes for expertise regarding the Student Activity Fee Policies Manual, the Finance Board Manual, or the Direct Elections Policies Manual or wants to discuss any of my ideas in further detail.

2. Addendum II, Submitted by Ryan Fox; Student Body President 2009-2011; Computer Engineering 2011, [redacted]

Over the past five years, I have seen direct elections since the beginning of their most recent implementation. Direct elections have been held in the past within the

Association, but have failed, largely due to the inherent difficulties involved with the lack of an online ballot. Despite challenges faced by direct elections in years past, they are currently at their strongest point to date. With a recent referendum to implement direct election of the Executive Vice President, students provided a positive litmus test of the future of direct elections at Northeastern.

Recent-term direct elections are emerging from their infancy within the Association and procedures have become stabilized. New techniques were introduced during this past election to allow for greater communications and student involvement and I encourage the Elections Committee to continue to look for improvement opportunities. After considering the evolution of direct elections over the past five years, the following are my thoughts and recommendations as the Association enters its next era with direct elections. It is an exciting time to look back at the past five elections and to look forward at the potential of even greater student engagement within their Student Government Association through elections.

It is important to remember that voter turnout is closely related to the effectiveness of the Association in the year leading up to elections. When students are keenly aware of the relevance of the Association, not simply the President, they are much more likely to vote for future leadership.

Manual

The Direct Elections Policies Manual has been refined and hardened over the past five elections and has evolved into a strong document. As new situations and conditions arise, changes will undoubtedly continue to be needed. In particular, the Manual should be updated to address the inclusion of referenda in the election process, with necessary Bylaw changes made as well to clearly articulate the requirements.

Additionally, requirements of the candidates and the committee should be carefully considered for efficiency and necessity. The campaign period is a busy time and every minute spent on administrative tasks, whether by the candidate, campaign workers, or members of the Association, is a minute taken away from election and candidate promotion. The length of grievance hearings should carefully be considered as well, as the current procedures were often redundant and dilatory.

Campaign Period

The campaign period was shortened during the 2011 elections, to allow for a more concentrated effort and to limit the distraction to the Association in its mission of responsiveness to student issues and concerns. This shortened period forced campaigns to release platforms on day 1 and to hit the ground running, both positive attributes over the lingering campaign periods of years past. Students want to vote once they have made their decision and lose interest when being told to wait two or more weeks.

Although the voting period was extended this year, that was largely due to the technology issues affecting the ballot in close proximity to large advertising efforts, and the minimal differentiation between the candidates' platforms, not the shortened campaign period.

Restricted Areas

While cumbersome for the Committee, it is important for the Association to provide candidates with full disclosure regarding physical promotion efforts that necessitate restricted areas on campus. Campaigns put in a great deal of planning of specific promotion efforts and it is unfair and unfortunate for that work to be compromised by last minute restrictions. In particular, the Committee should be sure to consider debate, tabling, and polling station locations, as well as other general Association events and potential rain-dates. Areas restricted, but not used in the end, are much better than potential conflicts or grievances over interference in spaces that were not restricted at the time of the Candidates Briefing.

Debates

Debates can be a key opportunity to see candidates discuss issues head-to-head. When structured well, debates encourage candidates to differ on key issues and how they would address them on campus. In recognition of the miscommunications during the 2011 election, roles of those involved in moderating and sponsoring debates should be clearly defined in advance. Moderators should retain the freedom to develop and pose questions at their sole discretion, with suggested questions provided by sponsors if desired.

While turnout was less than ideal at this year's debates, the impact of the debate as a whole should be considered. Media coverage and awareness of the debate by students passing by can extend the influence. Nevertheless, the Committee should look to return debates to outdoor, high-traffic locations around campus.

Prizes

Prizes were a new component introduced in the elections this past year. Areas businesses were eager to get involved and support the elections, and the prizes were a good attention grabber for students with little knowledge of elections. With the introduction of prizes and the advertising of them targeted at students less likely to vote, many students who had voted in years past were surprised by the prizes after casting their votes.

This surprise was further compounded when they found the vote counter on the Association's website. The counter was also new this year, as a way to provide transparency and awareness of the current vote totals. Previously, the counter was only visible by the chair of the Elections Committee. Some members of the

Association were called out publicly for timing votes off of the vote counter to win iterative-based prizes. The counter received over 15,000 views from nearly 2,000 unique visitors, negating the claims that it was not well advertised. That being said, the Committee should further publicize the counter. To ensure full awareness, the vote counter should be displayed on the opening screen of the ballot as well.

Moving forward, it would be better to use smaller prizes for the iteration prizes and larger prizes for random or non-iteration awards. Further, the space between different iteration levels should be adjusted to encourage a consistent jump-then-coast of vote tallies. The proximity of awarding prizes to the 99th and 100th voters encouraged a large jump near those prize levels, but also caused a long coast in between.

Overall, prizes can be a great, no cost, method to encourage students to get more information on elections. Prizes highlight the importance of the ballot and personal statements, as many students that go directly to the ballot make their decision on the information provided there. Although it may seem as though prizes create rash voting decisions, the ballot questionnaire and informal discussions with students do not confirm this presumption.

Funding

The future of direct elections funding has been discussed increasingly in recent years. The initial funds to support the direct election were provided as a gift from a donor, which has allowed for an open and fair election, regardless of personal financial means. Moving forward, it is important to find alternative solutions to privatization of funding, which prioritizes candidate financial capacity over effectiveness of campaigning on a budget. In a similar way, internal candidates are restricted to the Association-provided campaign materials. Buying a position should not be permitted within the Association in any capacity. Additionally, spending records indicate that the $500 provided to each candidate is more than adequate.

Alternatives to privatization are three-fold: gift from a donor, funding from the University, or funds from the Student Activity Fee, listed in order of feasibility and idealness. An extension to the current gift has not been ruled out and should be pursued with University Advancement.

Funding is in place currently for the next few years however it is important to begin to lay groundwork for elections beyond that term.

General Promotions

Advertising is a crucial component of the elections process. This past year, the Association utilized a mutual subcommittee between the Elections Committee and the Communications and Events Committee. With this, some concern emerged regarding the impartiality of members of the Communications and Events Committee. Due to this, and the fact that the capacity of the Elections Committee has

expanded to allow for the assumption of the advertising duties, the Elections Committee should assume all responsibilities related to elections, including promotions.

Promotions by the Association were at an all-time high this past year and the results were evident. The "Issues" series of posters and an email allowed students to connect with candidate stances on the issues they ranked as most important during Campus Invasion during the first week of elections. This email generated the highest open and click-through rate of any email the Association has distributed to date. The "Issues" series should be distributed issue-by-issue, instead of in one email blast, and be published throughout the campaign period. It is clear that students are interested in the issues and the side-by-side comparison of the candidates.

Email marketing is a strong tool to lay the groundwork of the election and to encourage voting. It should continue to be leveraged in a consistently-branded election series. The campus-wide email distributed through Student Affairs was moved to 24 hours before voting closed this year, rather than at the opening of voting. This allowed the urgency to be stressed and an email through the Association's list communicated the opening of voting instead. The Association should request an additional email from Student Affairs on the first day of campaigning, serving to announce the election, candidates and provide a base knowledge for candidates and promotion efforts to build off of.

To supplement electronic efforts, tabling should be utilized during the initial campaign period to provide elections awareness. Voting stations continue to be a great awareness tool in high-traffic areas, even if relatively few students vote at the actual station.

Investments should continue in promotion of elections that are reusable and long-lasting. Over time, the Association will build an inventory of promotional materials that can be rolled out easily each year during elections.

Outreach

One of the greatest assets an advertising campaign can have is a group of mavens, or unassociated influential individuals encouraging friends and followers to engage with the focus of the campaign. The Committee should work to establish elections mavens in different sectors of the student body. Working with these individuals to provide them resources they need to encourage voting in their sub-communities at Northeastern can greatly increase the voter turnout.

The ballot introduced additional social sharing options this year, which were used to tap into the influence of individual students. To take these improvements one step further, the Committee should consider implementing a system that tracks the influence of voters on fellow students. Similar to LivingSocial, when a student votes, a unique short-link would be generated. Any other students using this short-link to access the ballot would add a point for the influencer. The students with the most points (influences) at the end of the elections would win a prize. This would

incentivize individual, unassociated students to explain and encourage the elections within their realm of influence. Attach a reward for any student who influences five others and the effect of this could be remarkable.

Ballot

Many improvements were made to the ballot for the 2011 elections. The implementation of Facebook and Twitter integrations, as well as simplifying the No Confidence selection made the ballot easier to use and a more effective tool. Moving forward, additional efforts should be focused on the ballot to ensure clarity for students-at-large, who may have not interacted with elections previously.

From a technical point of view, Google Chrome support should be raised as an issue and the ability to re-enter the ballot to complete referenda voting should be considered. Currently, a student who casts a vote for President then closes the ballot has no option to return and vote on the referenda questions.

Direct Election of the Executive Vice President

As the Association begins a new era of direct elections with the introduction of the President/EVP ticket, it is important to consider the education efforts necessary for students-at-large. It will be important for the roles of each of the positions to be clearly articulated. Additionally, the Manual should be scrutinized to avoid loopholes that the additional candidate on a ticket may open.

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The future of direct elections at Northeastern is strong and exciting. Best of luck and feel free to contact me with any questions or needed clarification.