

ELECTION REPORT

Fall 2013



FRESHMAN AND TRANSFER ELECTION

ELECTION AND DISPUTES COMMISSION

Greg Mercer, Chairman

Riley May, Commissioner
Emily Daniel, Commissioner
Danny Lee, Commissioner
Jared Pelech, Commissioner
Chloe Shreve, Commissioner

Summary of Events

Pre-Election Preparation

The Commission decided to utilize the same candidacy packets as the previous election. A flyer to encourage voting was designed, and copies were posted at various locations around campus; we have subsequently decided that we are not satisfied with how effective the posters and fliers were. The Student Government advisor utilized social media to reach out to potential candidates and voters. Additionally, the EDC planned to encourage voting through a voting kiosk in the Johnson Center, which was conducted during the voting period on Tuesday, October 15 from 12 PM to 2 PM and Wednesday, October 16 from 1 PM to 2 PM. The EDC tried to entice more voters by offering cookies for any person to vote at the Kiosk in the Johnson Center as well as offering a Mason Spirit Pack, which included items from the bookstore such as a sweatshirt, window sticker, tee shirt, a mug and other items. As usual, there were 10 Senate seats to fill in this election, and we were pleased with the turnout of candidates. We had a final total of 20 candidates.

Election Procedures and Timeline

The front desk of the Office of Student Involvement distributed packets for candidacy. As potential candidates arrived, the front desk made sure to ask whether they were available for the senate meetings on Thursdays. If they stated that they were available, the potential candidates were allowed to sign out a packet. This year's sign-out sheet included name, email address, and G-Number.

The packets became available on Monday, September 12 at 12:00pm and were due back to the drop-box in the office by noon on Tuesday, September 20 at 12:00pm, a period of eight calendar days. After the completed candidate packets were turned in, the Student Government Advisor verified them. On Friday September 21 at 5:00pm candidate notifications were sent out. On Monday, September 24 at 5:00pm in Mason Hall, the Commission hosted a candidate meeting to explain the process, entertain any questions the candidates may have regarding campaigning. The campaign period began on Tuesday September 25 at 12:01am. During the campaign period, Commissioners held publicly available office hours every day. Candidates utilized these office hours in order to ask questions and turn in election forms.

Voting took place on Collegiate Link between October 15th at 12:15am and October 17th at 12:15am. On the 18th of October at 12:00 noon, the Commission publicly announced and certified the results. The candidates were then informed on whether they had been or elected, or were otherwise notified. Additionally, results were posted on a white board at the entrance of the Student Involvement office.

Through the course of this election cycle, there were no official grievances filed.

Notes for the Next Cycle

The Election and Disputes Commission has taken a serious look at the freshman election and participation on the ballot remained the same compared to last year; the participation in the poll was a low turnout. We are not satisfied with the turnout we received, and have resolved to boost participation in subsequent elections. The EDC has decided to have each commissioner handle a specific aspect of election advertisement. The EDC plans to print more posters in general and increase advertisement presence in freshman living areas, especially during subsequent freshman elections. The EDC plans to create higher quality posters that encourage students to vote and participate in student government. The EDC plans to partner with other student organization to encourage voter turnout. The Commission would like to allow for the candidates to be allowed to campaign during the election time in allocated areas under the supervision of a member of the Elections and Disputes Commission. The Commission intends to partner with the Resident Advisors to have a poster on all floors that encourages members to vote. The Commission also intends to focus much more on advertising in the areas frequented by the Freshman Class by organizing two (2) meet and greets where all of the Candidates would be allowed to talk freely with students and try to impress the importance the election has on the University. One problem that is constantly at the forefront is the lack of seriousness towards SG and this is something that all branches must try to reconcile by advertising their accomplishments with greater efficiency so that students will begin to realize the importance of their Senators.