



HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
**Commission on Elections**

**Student  
Elections  
Code**  
*of 2024*

# Contents

Preamble .....	3
Article I – Declaration of Principles .....	4
Article II – The Commission .....	5
Election Deputies .....	7
The Electoral Tribunal .....	8
Article III – Candidacy .....	9
Elective Positions .....	10
Political Parties .....	11
Coalitions .....	15
Article IV – Campaign .....	16
Campaign Paraphernalia .....	18
Public Events .....	18
Impartiality .....	20
Finance .....	21
Article V – Elections .....	22
Election Precincts .....	24
Poll Watchers .....	24
Canvassing and Announcement of Results .....	25
Article VI – Referenda and Plebiscites .....	26
Article VII – Dispute Resolution .....	27
First Instance Proceedings .....	27
Appellate Proceedings .....	28
Article VIII – Offenses and Sanctions .....	29
Article IX – Appointments and Resignations .....	30
Article X – Amendments and Final Provisions .....	32

## Preamble

*Whereas*, the Holy Angel University studentry is governed and represented by the Holy Angel University Student Government (the “Government”), embodying the collaborative and genuine interest of the studentry;

*Whereas*, the key officers of the Government are elected regularly and annually by the studentry to represent their interests;

*Whereas*, the Constitution of the Holy Angel University Student Government (the “Constitution”) is the supreme law that defines and governs the operations of the Government and of other constitutionally-defined bodies;

*Whereas*, Section 7 of Article XII of the Constitution establishes the Commission on Elections (the “Commission”), with “the exclusive power and mandate to: direct, organize, and supervise elections, referenda, and plebiscites; verify the qualifications of elected or appointed officials; maintain the official list of elected officials; and register and administer political parties, alliances, and coalitions”;

*Whereas*, Section 11 of Article XII of the Constitution provides that the Commission shall write and promulgate a new elections code (the “Code”) to be ratified by the President and Governors in assembly, the University Senate, and the High Court;

*Whereas*, it is necessary to define a code to define, regulate, and delineate the elections processes, the functions of the Commission within its mandate, and of other related operations;

*Whereas*, on the 4th of January, 2025, the Commission approved and sent the proposed Code to aforesaid bodies for their ratification;

*Whereas*, on the 11th of January, 2025, the President and Governors in assembly had ratified the proposed Code;

*Whereas*, on the 15th of January, 2025, the University Senate had ratified the proposed Code;

*Whereas*, on the 13th of January, 2025, the High Court had ratified the proposed Code;

*Whereas*, after having been ratified by the aforesaid bodies, it is now incumbent that the Commission promulgates the ratified Code;

**THEREFORE**, the Commission on Elections hereby promulgates the following:

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## Student Elections Code of 2024

- § 1. *Title.* This Code shall be titled the “Student Elections Code of 2024”, otherwise known as the “Student Elections Code” or the “Elections Code”, and herein referred to as “this Code”.
- § 2. *Scope.* This Code shall apply in all electoral matters, including elections, referenda, and plebiscites, the registration and operation of political parties and coalitions, and the operations of the Commission on Elections and related bodies regarding those electoral matters.
- § 3. *Reserved mandates.* The mandates of the Commission not within the scope of this Code are exclusively reserved to the Commission, and the Commission shall have the power to enact rules and regulations for those reserved mandates.

*Provided,* any rules or regulations enacted pursuant to this section may be disapproved by the University Senate within 14 days of its enactment by a resolution with the approval of a two-thirds majority and the signature by the President, which shall cause said rule or regulation to be void and without effect.

- § 4. *Preemption.* This Code shall take priority over and preempt all other laws within the mandate and scope of any matter covered or reserved by this Code.

The Chairman shall determine and certify if any such law or any provision thereof is preempted in accordance with this section. The High Court shall have the jurisdiction to review the issuance of such certification.

- § 5. *Period between semesters.* For the purposes of this Code and unless otherwise specified, the period between the end of one semester and the beginning of the next semester shall be considered as an extension of the former.
- § 6. *Business days.* Unless otherwise specified, any reference to days in this Code shall be construed as business days, which shall mean weekdays and excluding public holidays and days where classes at the tertiary level are suspended.

### Article I – Declaration of Principles

- § 7. *Free, fair, honest elections.* It is the general interest of the Angelite studentry to hold free, fair, honest elections for the elective offices of the Government on a regular basis, as the means of the studentry to express their will for choosing their leaders to represent their interests.
- § 8. *Impartiality.* It is the general interest of the Angelite studentry that officials of the Government and the Constitutional Commissions, members of student publications, and instructors and employees of the University are impartial with regards to the election of student leaders and the campaign of candidates therein.
- § 9. *Right to vote.* It is the right of an Angelite student to a single and private vote, to elect their leaders as officers of the Government, which shall be inalienable, non-tamperable, and irrevocable unless by due process of law with due regard for the protection of the individual voter.
- § 10. *Right to speedy and fair resolution.* It is the right of an Angelite student to the speedy and fair resolution of complaints, disputes, and petitions made regarding electoral activities, under due process of law.
- § 11. *Right to run for office.* It is the right of an Angelite student to run for an elective office, provided such a candidate conforms to the requirements and qualifications of such office.

It is the right of an Angelite student over the age of majority to run for office without requiring the consent of their parent or legal guardian.

- § 12. *Right to self-organize.* It is the right of an Angelite student to self-organize into political parties and coalitions, and to have political parties and coalitions act and participate in electoral activities, in accordance with regulations prescribed by law.
- § 13. *Financial transparency.* It is the general interest of the Angelite studentry to hold every candidate, political party, and coalition to ethical standards of financial transparency.

## Article II – The Commission

- § 14. *Composition.* There shall be a Commission of Elections composed of Commissioners and a non-voting advisor, headed by a Chairman elected by the Commissioners from among themselves.
- § 15. *Commissioners.* The Commissioners shall be one person from each department, which shall be one department for each College, and a single at-large department for the whole University, and whose election shall be as provided for in this Code.
- § 16. *Tenure.* Commissioners shall enjoy tenure during their continuous stay at the University, and shall not be removed unless they lose their qualifications or are terminated by sanction of the High Court or by other provisions in this Code.

Continuous stay shall be construed as terminating either at the graduation of the Commissioner, or at one week after the start of classes for the semester if the Commissioner shall not have enrolled by then.

- § 17. *Adviser.* The adviser of the Commission shall be a non-voting member who shall serve *ex officio* from the Office of Student Affairs by designation of the Director of the Office of Student Affairs. In the absence or unavailability of the designated adviser, the Student Activities Coordinator shall act as adviser *pro tempore*.
- § 18. *Chairman.* The Chairman shall be a Commissioner elected by the Commission en banc to serve as the chief executive officer of the Commission. They shall serve concurrently as Chairman and Commissioner for their respective department.
- § 19. *Powers of Chairman.* The Chairman shall:
- (a) preside over meetings of the Commission;
  - (b) sign all letters and documents of the Commission;
  - (c) administer oaths in the absence of a Justice of the High Court;
  - (d) update the advisor of the Commission on the state of the Commission and its activities;
  - (e) delegate any or all of their powers and duties to other Commissioners;
  - (f) perform all necessary executive and administrative duties, functions, and responsibilities; and
  - (g) exercise such other powers and duties as provided by this Code, by the Commission, and by law.
- § 20. *Alternative title for Chairman.* The Commission may provide by resolution an alternative title for the office of Chairman.
- § 21. *Powers of Commissioners.* The Commissioners shall:
- (a) establish and maintain communications with their respective department;
  - (b) attend the meeting of the Commission; and

- (c) exercise the powers and duties as provided by this Code, by the Chairman, by the Commission, and by law.

§ 22. *Qualifications of Commissioners.* No person shall serve as a Commissioner unless they:

- (a) are currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree program of the University;
- (b) have at least one semester residency in their degree program and College;
- (c) have not been found guilty of committing a Class A disciplinary offense as stipulated in the College Student Manual;
- (d) have no more than two failing units in the previous and current semester;
- (e) have not served in an elective office of the Student Government
- (f) have not served as a member of a student publication for at least three months prior to their appointment; and
- (g) have never been affiliated with or been a member of a political party.

§ 23. *Election of Commissioners.* Upon the vacancy of the office of Commissioner for a department, the Election Deputies assigned to that department and who were in office at the time of the vacancy shall assemble to elect from among themselves a Commissioner for that department.

If there are no Election Deputies assigned to a department at the time of a vacancy of the office of Commissioner for that department, then the Commission of Student Organizations shall be responsible for the election of a Commissioner for that department.

§ 24. *Election of Chairman.*

- (a) Upon a vacancy in the office of Chairman, the Commission shall proceed to elect their Chairman through a secret ballot at a meeting within seven days of such vacancy.
- (b) In the initial round of voting, each Commissioner shall vote for any Commissioner, including themselves.
  - (i) If a single candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, then they are elected Chairman.
  - (ii) If there is a single candidate with an equal and highest number of votes and a single candidate with an equal and highest number of votes, then voting shall proceed to the runoff with those two candidates.
  - (iii) If there are multiple candidates with an equal and highest number of votes, then voting shall proceed to the runoff with those tied candidates.
  - (iv) If there is a single candidate with the highest number of votes and there are multiple candidates with an equal and second-highest number of votes, then voting shall proceed to the runoff with the candidate with highest number of votes and the tied candidates.
- (c) In the runoff, the candidate that receives the highest number of votes shall be elected Chairman.
- (d) The Commissioners may, before the start of the election of a Chairman, agree by unanimous consent to special rules and procedures on the conduct of the election, which shall be binding insofar as they are consistent with this Code.
- (e) The advisor of the Commission shall moderate and run the proceedings of the election of a Chairman. If there is ambiguity in such proceedings, the advisor of the Commission shall render a binding and non-appealable decision.

§ 25. *Resigning Chairman to nominate successor.* In case the Chairman resigns in good standing from their position, notwithstanding their continued membership as a Commissioner, they may nominate another Commissioner to succeed them in the office of Chairman.

If the Commission confirms the nominee at the next meeting after the resignation of the Chairman by a two-thirds majority vote, then the nominee shall be elected Chairman. Otherwise, the Commission shall proceed to elect its Chairman under Section 24.

§ 26. *Termination.* The Commission en banc by a two-thirds majority vote may suspend or terminate any Commissioner, which shall include the Chairman, from their office.

The termination of the Chairman shall not affect their position as a Commissioner, unless the Commission decides otherwise.

§ 27. *Acting Chairman.* If there is a vacancy in the office of Chairman or the Chairman is currently suspended, the longest-serving Commissioner, as determined by the advisor of the Commission, shall act as Chairman until either the election of a new Chairman or the end of the suspension of the current Chairman.

§ 28. *Emergency appointment of Commissioners ad interim.*

(a) In case of extraordinary and exigent circumstances wherein the number of regular Commissioners falls below the amount required for the proper functioning of the Commission as determined by its Chairman, the Chairman may, after consulting with the President, the Senate President, the Chief Justice, and the Chairmen of the Constitutional Commissions, appoint qualified persons to act as Commissioners *ad interim*.

(b) Commissioners *ad interim* shall be considered part of the at-large department, may exercise all powers and duties as a regular Commissioner, and shall serve in office until the election of regular Commissioners pursuant to Section 23.

(c) The Director of the Office of Student Affairs may exercise the powers of the Chairman within this provision should the Chairman be unable to exercise said powers or the office of Chairman is vacant.

§ 29. *Emergency orders.* In case of extraordinary and exigent situations which are not handled appropriately by this Code or existing regulations, the Chairman or any three Commissioners may make and promulgate the necessary orders, resolutions, or other issuances to resolve such situations.

Any issuances made under this section shall automatically lapse at the end of the next meeting of the Commission unless such issuances are ratified at that meeting, and any such issuances may be revoked by the Chairman at any time before their ratification.

### **Election Deputies**

§ 30. *Definition.* There shall be Election Deputies that shall assist the Commission in its activities and functions, who shall serve under the Commission and be assigned to a department, and exercise all powers and duties assigned by the Chairman or the Commission.

For the purpose of eligibility and qualification to other offices, they shall be considered as members of the Commission.

§ 31. *Assignment to departments.* Each Election Deputy shall be assigned at the time of their appointment to a department, which shall either be the department corresponding to the College they are enrolled in or the at-large department.

An Election Deputy whose assigned department is not either the department of their corresponding College or the at-large department shall either be re-assigned to the proper department or removed by the Commission.

§ 32. *Qualifications.* No person shall serve as an Election Deputy unless they:

- (a) are currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree program of the University;
- (b) have not been found guilty of committing a Class A disciplinary offense as stipulated in the College Student Manual;
- (c) have no more than two failing units in the previous (if any) and current semester; and
- (d) have not served as a member of a student publication or an elective office of the Student Government, for at least three months prior to their appointment; and
- (e) have never been affiliated with or been a member of a political party.

§ 33. *Appointment.* The Chairman or the Commission en banc may appoint qualified persons to be Election Deputies, subject to the disapproval by the Commission within 14 days of the appointment.

§ 34. *Suspension and termination.* The Chairman may suspend any Election Deputy for no more than 30 days if there is reasonable suspicion that they have acted egregiously in a manner that the Commission would likely find to be grounds for termination.

The Commission en banc may suspend or terminate any Election Deputy at any time for any reason.

§ 35. *Term of office; re-affirmation.* Election Deputies shall serve in their office until terminated by the Commission, except when suspended by the Chairman.

During the first meeting of the Commission for every academic year, the Commission shall affirm Election Deputies from the previous academic year for the continuation of their service. Election Deputies not affirmed at the end of such meeting shall be considered as having resigned from office.

§ 36. *Election Deputies nominated by student organizations.* The person nominated by each of the student organizations of each department shall be appointed as Election Deputies by the Chairman and assigned to that department. The nomination shall be made in writing.

A student organization shall only nominate an Election Deputy when the Election Deputy previously nominated by that student organization has left office or, within 14 days of their nomination, did not take up their office.

§ 37. *Election Deputies from class presidents.* If a College has no student organizations, then the class presidents in the Class Presidents' League of that College shall elect from among themselves an Election Deputy for the department of that College.

### **The Electoral Tribunal**

§ 38. *Definition.* There shall be an Electoral Tribunal (the "Tribunal"), an *ad hoc* judicial panel under the Commission which shall exercise exclusive original jurisdiction to hear, try, and dispose all cases, disputes, complaints, and protests regarding any and all electoral matters, such as candidate eligibility and violation of electoral offenses, including other matters provided for by this Code and by law, and excluding any case affecting the right to vote.

§ 39. *Composition.* The Tribunal shall be composed of three judges, one of which shall be the presiding judge, who shall be appointed by the Chairman from the Commissioners whenever there is a matter pending before the Tribunal.



If a judge of the Tribunal is unable to carry out the duties of their position, the Chairman may appoint another judge to take the former's place.

- § 40. *Recusal.* A judge must recuse themselves from any case which they are materially and substantially involved in as an aggrieved party.

The Commission may order any judge to recuse themselves from a case by appointing another in their place.

### **Article III – Candidacy**

- § 41. *Candidacy.* A person who shall run for office and be a candidate for an elective position shall have both submitted to the Commission a certificate of candidacy and other necessary requirements, and undergone verification of their qualifications for said elective position.

- § 42. *Requirement of eligibility.* A person who shall be a candidate for an elective position shall meet the eligibility requirements and qualifications for that position at the start of the period for the filing of candidacy and during their candidacy.

The eligibility requirements and qualifications for each elective position shall be published by the Commission.

- § 43. *Running only for one office.* A person who shall be a candidate must only be a candidate for one elective position at a time.

- § 44. *Leave of absence of incumbents.* An officer of the Government or the Constitutional Commissions shall be a candidate only if they take a official leave of absence from their position until at least after election day, and they designate another qualified person who is not a candidate to which they delegate the exercise of their powers and duties of their office for the duration of their leave of absence.

The leave of absence and the name of the designated officer shall be submitted in writing to the Commission.

- § 45. *College residency.* A person shall only run for or serve in an elective position at the college level if that position is of the same college to which that person is presently enrolled in.

- § 46. *Filing of candidacy.* A person seeking to become a candidate shall submit to the Commission the necessary documents during the period for the filing of candidacy, which shall be no less than 3 days and no more than 14 days during the pre-election period as prescribed by the Commission.

The Commission shall prescribe the necessary documents for the filing of candidacy, the place, mode, and manner of the submission of the certificate of candidacy and other documents as required by the Commission, and regulations for other matters related to the filing of candidacy.

- § 47. *Consent of parent or guardian for minors.* A person under the age of majority at the beginning of the period for the filing of candidacy shall be a candidate only if they submit a signed declaration of consent from their parent or guardian with a signed photocopy of the parent or guardian's ID card.

- § 48. *Independent candidates.* An independent candidate is any person who submits a certificate of candidacy without an affiliation to a political party.

- § 49. *Political party affiliation.* A person who is a member of or affiliated with a political party and who submit a certificate of candidacy shall have the signature of their political party's representative on that certificate.
- § 50. *Resubmission of documents.* During the period for the filing of candidacy, or at the Commission's discretion, a person may resubmit any document required by the Commission for their candidacy, including an amended certificate of candidacy, which shall be accompanied by a letter to the Commission containing the reasons behind the resubmission.
- § 51. *List of candidates.*
- (a) Within 14 business days after the period for the filing of candidacy, the Commission shall publish the official list of candidates, which shall at least include their names, the election position they seek to be elected to, and their political party affiliation.
  - (b) The Commission may at its discretion publish an unofficial list of persons seeking candidacy at any time before the publication of the official list of candidates.
- § 52. *Withdrawal.* A candidate who wishes to be withdrawn from the official list of candidates shall submit to the Commission a letter of their intention to withdraw, which shall be approved unless:
- (a) The ballot has been finalized;
  - (b) The submission of the letter of intention to withdraw is so late in the pre-election election that withdrawal of the candidate may cause large confusion to voters; or
  - (c) The Commission has reasonable suspicion that the withdrawal was not done by the candidate of their own free will, which shall be on the following grounds:
    - (i) Evidence or testimony from witnesses that the withdrawal was made under duress or undue external influence;
    - (ii) Irregularities in the letter, such as mismatched signatures or unclear candidates' information;
    - (iii) Contradiction of public statements made previously by the candidate; and
    - (iv) Other such grounds as the Commission may determine by regulation.
- § 53. *Replacement by political parties.* A political party whose affiliated candidate has been withdrawn shall be allowed, when the Commission in its discretion finds it meritorious and valid, to replace the candidate within 72 hours of the withdrawal. *Provided*, no such replacement shall be allowed within 7 days before election day.

### **Elective Positions**

- § 54. *Definition.* An elective position is an office where an electorate casts votes to elect a person running for that office.
- § 55. *University-level positions.* The elective positions at the university level shall be the following:
- (a) The President of the University Student Council;
  - (b) The Vice President of the University Student Council;
  - (c) The Directors of the executive Departments of the University Student Council;
  - (d) The Senators elected at-large of the University Senate; and
  - (e) Other such offices as the Commission may designate with the concurrence of the Office of Student Affairs.
- § 56. *College-level positions.* The elective positions at the college level shall be the following:
- (a) The Governor of the College Student Councils;

- (b) The Vice Governor of the College Student Councils;
- (c) The Councilors of the College Student Councils;
- (d) The Senators elected from the Colleges of the University Senate; and
- (e) Other such offices as the Commission may designate with the concurrence of the Office of Student Affairs.

§ 57. *Single-occupant positions.* The following elective positions shall each have one candidate to be elected:

- (a) The President of the University Student Council;
- (b) The Vice President of the University Student Council;
- (c) The Governor of the College Student Councils;
- (d) The Vice Governor of the College Student Councils;
- (e) The Senator elected from each of the Colleges of the University Senate; and
- (f) Other such offices as the Commission may designate with the concurrence of the Office of Student Affairs.

§ 58. *Multiple-occupant positions.* The following elective positions shall each have multiple candidates to be elected into office, the number of which shall be determined by the Commission prior to the election period:

- (a) The Directors of the executive Departments under the University Student Council;
- (b) The Councilors of the College Committees under the College Student Councils;
- (c) The Senators elected at-large of the University Senate; and
- (d) Other such offices as the Commission may designate with the concurrence of the Office of Student Affairs.

§ 59. *Determination of Departments and Committees.* For the purposes of determining the number of executive Departments and the number of College Committees that will be in existence for the next academic year and of determining the number of elective positions are open for candidacy, the Commission shall fix those numbers for an election, before any candidacy is filed and based on the enrollment statistics of the academic year of the election and any available projected enrollment statistics of the academic year in which the elected officers shall serve in.

Once fixed for an election, the Commission may not alter the number of elective positions without the consent of the Office of Student Affairs.

### **Political Parties**

§ 60. *Definition.* A political party is a group of students organized with the primary purpose of coordination of candidates and policy platforms or goals during elections.

§ 61. *Membership.*

- (a) The membership of a political party shall be composed of students, whose minimum number shall be at least ten. *Provided,* the Commission may increase the minimum number up to twenty.
- (b) A person shall be a member of no more than one political party at any given time.

§ 62. *Officers.* The political party shall establish its set of officers, including the head of the political party, and shall designate two or more of these officers to collectively represent the political party in all matters.

§ 63. *Database of membership.* A political party shall establish and maintain a database of its officers, members, and affiliates, which shall include their full legal names, contact details including their email address, and other pertinent information as may be required by the political party's policies and by electoral regulations.

The database shall be stored and handled in accordance with electoral regulations and privacy law and regulations.

For students, the student number shall be included. For alumni of the University, the college and the year of graduation shall be included.

§ 64. *Affiliates.* Affiliates of a political party refers to alumni of the University, who shall not be members of the party, but may assist, guide, or provide support to the political party and its members.

Affiliates of a political party shall not campaign directly or indirectly for a political party or any of its members.

§ 65. *Registration.*

(a) Any political party must be registered with the Commission, through the submission by an authorized representative to the Commission of the following requirements:

- (i) An application letter establishing the intent of undersigned signatories to form a political party, with its name, logo, slogan, and other identity or branding elements;
- (ii) The founding document, such as a constitution or charter, and all relevant by-laws;
- (iii) An initial database of membership;
- (iv) Copies of the signed admission statements of all members as specified in Section 67;
- (v) A signed manifesto of commitment to non-violence, as issued by the Office of Student Affairs; and
- (vi) Any other documents as may be required by the Commission.

(b) Upon receipt of the submission of the application letter and requirements, the Commission shall process the application within thirty days.

Once the application is verified and approved, the Commission shall endorse the political party to the Student Activities Coordinator for their acknowledgement.

Once acknowledged, the Commission shall issue a Certificate of Accreditation to the political party, which shall expire at the start of the immediately succeeding academic year; *provided*, if the certificate's expiry is within three months after its issuance, the expiry shall be extended for one more academic year.

(c) A political party shall be considered as registered once the Certificate of Accreditation is issued, and shall remain registered until the political party is deregistered.

§ 66. *Restrictions on registration.*

(a) No political party shall be registered whose primary branding is substantially similar to and may be confused by voters with a registered political party, an excluded political party, or a deregistered political party if such deregistration occurred within two calendar years.

The primary branding shall consist of any visible and tangible element that would be easily perceived and recognized as belonging to a political party, which shall at least include the primary accent colors of the branding.

- (b) No political party shall be registered if the political party itself, its registration, or its identity and branding contains any elements which are derogatory, vulgar, or repulsive and grossly contrary to the core values of the University.

**§ 67. Admission statements of members.** All members of a political party shall submit to the Commission a signed admission statement during the initial registration of the political party or upon the member's admission into the political party, which shall include:

- (a) The full legal name, student number, and email address of the member;
- (b) A declaration that the member has read and agrees to the political party's founding document and all relevant by-laws, including the requirements for membership and their rights and obligations as a member;
- (c) A declaration that the member agrees to abide by this Code and all relevant electoral laws and regulations;
- (d) A declaration that the member substantially agrees with the ideology, political ethics, and collective policy platforms of the party; and
- (e) An affirmation of the member's desire, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion, to enter as a member into the political party.

**§ 68. Semestral reports.** All political parties shall submit the following documents to the Commission after the end of the 1st and 2nd semesters and before the beginning of the next semester:

- (a) A summary report of all activities undertaken by the political party since its previous summary report;
- (b) The full amended version of its founding document and all relevant by-laws, if any amendments were made;
- (c) A complete copy of its database of membership at the end of the semester;
- (d) An honest and true accounting of its finances, in the form of a financial statement, up to its previous semestral report; and
- (e) All other documents required by the Commission by regulation.

**§ 69. Immediate reports.** All political parties shall report the following to the Commission within 24 hours of their occurrence:

- (a) Changes to the political party's identity or branding, such as the name, logo, and slogan;
- (b) Amendments or revisions to its founding document and all relevant by-laws; and
- (c) Changes to its database of membership, officers, or representatives.

**§ 70. Certificate of accreditation.** A political party is considered as accredited while its Certificate of Accreditation remains unexpired and valid.

**§ 71. Accreditation process.** Before any renewal of the Certificate of Accreditation, a political party must undergo accreditation, which shall be based on the political party's semestral reports, and other such documents that the Commission may request in furtherance of the accreditation.

The Commission shall issue a Certificate of Accreditation, which shall expire at the beginning of the immediately next academic year, unless there are valid grounds on which to defer the issuance thereof by the Commission.

If the issuance of the Certificate of Accreditation is deferred, the Commission shall request any necessary documents and other information from the political party to rectify the deferral, and shall issue the Certificate of Accreditation once all grounds have been rectified to the satisfaction of the Commission.

- § 72. *Grounds for deferral of accreditation.* The following shall be grounds for the deferral of the issuance of the Certificate of Accreditation of a political party:
- (a) Missing or incomplete submission of semestral reports;
  - (b) Discrepancies in submitted financial statements;
  - (c) Tampered or missing submissions of documents;
  - (d) Significant deviations of submitted documents from other documents previously submitted to the Commission, without concrete reasons for those deviations; and
  - (e) Other such grounds as the Commission may provide by regulation.
- § 73. *Immediate review of accreditation.* The Commission may order a review of a political party's accreditation if there is a compelling reason based on evidence that substantial changes to the political party have caused it to be significantly and substantially different from its known status and state at its previous accreditation, and that order shall include a list of all documents or information as may be required by the Commission from the political party.
- Should the political party fail to submit the required documents as detailed in the order within 14 days of its issuance, the political party shall lose their accreditation.
- § 74. *Below minimum number.* A political party whose membership falls below the required minimum number and fails to return back to above the required minimum number after 14 calendar days shall lose their accreditation.
- § 75. *Loss of accreditation.* A political party which loses accreditation for any reason shall have 30 calendar days after such loss to be re-accredited by the Commission. If a political party fails to be re-accredited by the Commission after that duration lapses, the party shall be automatically deregistered.
- Provided,* the Commission may extend such duration by up to 30 calendar days for extraordinary and compelling reasons which the Commission finds meritorious.
- § 76. *Inactivity.* A political party which fails to have any of its members run for office as a candidate in a regular election, whether the candidate is elected or not, for two consecutive regular elections shall be automatically be deregistered.
- § 77. *Internal organization.* The organization and structure of a political party shall be at the discretion of its members, subject to its founding document and the general oversight of the Commission.
- § 78. *Restriction on membership changes.* No admission or expulsion of a member or affiliate of a political party shall be valid within 48 hours before election day, unless there is an extraordinary and compelling reason for an expulsion that the Commission finds meritorious.
- § 79. *Allowed activities.* A political party may undertake, perform, and organize the following activities outside of the pre-election period:
- (a) Activities taking place during the freshmen orientation;

- (b) Activities taking place at a student activities festival;
- (c) Orientations of members and affiliates;
- (d) Meetings of the political party; and
- (e) Activities exercising the right to freedom of speech and expression, wherein those activities cannot be construed as campaigning for a future election.

**§ 80.** *Reporting of activities.* A political party shall inform the Commission of any activity, whether on the University premises (“on-premises” or “on-site”) or online, at least 24 hours before the start of such activity, and shall submit to the Commission a summary report of the activity within 48 hours of its conclusion.

*Provided,* for activities done during any day of the campaign period, the political party may defer the submission of the summary report to within 72 hours after election day, and shall instead inform the Commission within 24 hours of the activity’s conclusion.

**§ 81.** *On-premises activities.*

- (a) All activities of a political party shall comply with the guidelines set by the Office of Student Affairs for the conduct of on-site student activities.
- (b) All on-site activities of a political party shall be limited to recruitment, orientation, and recalibration of its members, and shall not be a cover for any sort of campaign outside of the campaign period.
- (c) Any recruitment interviews and meetings of a political party held on-site shall be held in closed-door venues, meaning inaccessible to the general public, and shall be witnessed by a representative of the Commission.

**§ 82.** *Off-campus activities.* A political party shall not organize any in-person activities outside of the University premises.

### **Coalitions**

**§ 83.** *Definition.* A coalition is a formal temporary association between independent candidates, political parties, or both, for the purposes of joint campaigning, sharing or pooling or resources during campaign, or otherwise achieving a shared goal for the duration of the pre-election period up to and including election day.

**§ 84.** *Registration.*

- (a) Any coalition must be registered with the Commission, through the submission by an authorized representative to the Commission of the following requirements at most one week after the release of the official list of candidates:
  - (i) An application letter establishing the intent of undersigned signatories to form a coalition, with its name and other identity or branding elements;
  - (ii) A membership list, which shall at least include the names and the contact details of each member;
  - (iii) A signed manifesto of commitment to non-violence, as issued by the Office of Student Affairs; and
  - (iv) Any other documents as may be required by the Commission.
- (b) Upon receipt of the application letter and requirements, the Commission shall process the application within seven days.

Once the application is verified and approved, the Commission shall endorse the coalition to the Student Activities Coordinator for their acknowledgement.

Once acknowledged, the Commission shall issue a Certificate of Registration to the coalition, which shall expire 30 days after the end of the election.

§ 85. *Representative.* The political party shall at all times be represented by at least one individual person who is a member of the coalition, who shall have full authority to decide on behalf of the coalition.

§ 86. *Internal organization.* The organization and structure of a political party shall be at the discretion of its members, subject to the general oversight of the Commission.

§ 87. *Admission and expulsion of members.* Any admission or expulsion of a member of a coalition shall be reported to the Commission in writing within 24 hours of their occurrence.

No admission or expulsion of a member of a coalition shall be valid within 48 hours before election day, unless there is an extraordinary and compelling reason for an expulsion that the Commission finds meritorious.

§ 88. *Reporting of activities.* A coalition shall inform the Commission of any activity, whether on the University premises or online, at least 24 hours before the start of such activity, and shall submit to the Commission a summary report of the activity within 48 hours of its conclusion.

*Provided,* for activities done during any day of the campaign period, the coalition may defer the submission of the summary report to within 72 hours after election day, and shall instead inform the Commission within 24 hours of the activity's conclusion.

## Article IV – Campaign

§ 89. *Definition.* Campaigning is any action or solicitation of action by any member of the University, such as a candidate, political party, or coalition, which either supports or opposes a candidate, whether individually or collectively as part of a coalition or a political party, and is intended to sway public opinion to cause others to vote for or against a candidate on the basis of their candidacy, political and ideological platforms, personality, identity, or other characteristics.

Campaigning includes the use and display of campaign paraphernalia.

§ 90. *Physical and digital campaigning.* Physical campaigning is any campaigning done face-to-face or in-person.

Digital campaigning is any campaigning done on any online or digital platform, including on social media platforms.

§ 91. *Non-campaigning acts.* Acts done in the exercise of the freedom of speech and the freedom of the press to objectively inform the public about the electoral process, including the platforms and identities of any campaign, political party, and coalition, without intention of partiality or bias for or against any particular candidate, shall not be considered as campaigning.

§ 92. *Regulations.* The Commission shall regulate all acts of campaigning, and shall promulgate any necessary rules pursuant to this Code for the regulation thereof.

§ 93. *Campaign period.* No act of campaigning shall be done outside of the campaign period, which shall be a period of time no less than 10 days and within the pre-election period as designated by the Commission.



- § 94. *Required posts.* The Commission may require candidates, political parties, and coalitions to disseminate and post articles on their digital platforms or other public platforms, within the following subject matters:
- (a) Important announcements regarding the conduct of the election; and
  - (b) Information on the importance of voting and the electoral processes before or at the beginning of the campaign period.
- § 95. *Office of Student Affairs guidelines.* All acts of campaigning performed within the University premises shall comply with the guidelines set by the Office of Student Affairs for the conduct of on-site student activities.
- § 96. *Campaign headquarters.*
- (a) Independent candidates, political parties coalitions shall have the right to request and be provided a location within the University premises to be their campaign headquarters for the campaign period.
  - (b) The campaign headquarters shall be kept orderly and clean, and no item within shall be placed or stored in a way that would impede the flow of ingress or egress.
- § 97. *Health and safety.* An act of campaigning shall not be prepared or performed which shall endanger or threaten the health and safety of any person involved in or within the proximity of that act.
- § 98. *Campaigning outside University premises.* A physical act of campaigning shall not be done outside of the University premises.
- § 99. *Third-party services within University premises.* Any act of campaigning which shall involve external, outside, or third-party services or businesses to be present within the University premises shall require the approval of the Commission and the Office of Student Affairs.
- § 100. *Solicitation of outside figures.* A candidate, political party, or coalition shall not solicit any material or content to be used in campaigning from any person or entity not affiliated with the University by past or present employment or enrollment.
- § 101. *Rebroadcasting of unsolicited outside content.* A candidate, political party, or coalition shall not use, distribute, or rebroadcast in any form any unsolicited material content to be used in campaigning from any person not affiliated with the University by past or present employment or enrollment.
- § 102. *Invitations by University instructors.* University instructors may extend an invitation to candidates, political parties, and coalitions to their classes or lectures in aid of academic instruction and for the purpose of providing testimony or opinion on politically related matters.
- Provided,* any such invitation must be extended to representatives of other political parties, and coalitions to ensure a balance of viewpoints and fair representation. A candidate, political party, or coalition who plans to accept such an invitation shall ensure that other political parties and coalitions have received an invitation to the same.
- § 103. *Enforcement with OSA.* The Commission shall collaborate with the Office of Student Affairs for the enforcement of all pertinent rules and regulations regarding campaigning and campaign paraphernalia during the election period.

### **Campaign Paraphernalia**

- § 104. *Definition.* Campaign paraphernalia are any items or effects made for the primary purpose of being used in or in aid of campaigning, whether physical or digital, and including any textual, visual, and auditory contents thereof.
- § 105. *Physical and digital paraphernalia.* Physical campaign paraphernalia shall be any tangible item or artifact that is physically present and perceptible.
- Digital campaign paraphernalia shall be any substantive visual or auditory content posted to any social media platform or other digital platform.
- § 106. *Regulations.* The Commission shall regulate all campaign paraphernalia, and shall promulgate any necessary rules pursuant to this Code for the regulation thereof.
- § 107. *Approval of paraphernalia.*
- (a) Candidates, political parties, and coalitions shall not use or display any campaign paraphernalia without having it approved for release by the Commission.
  - (b) Any substantial revision or modification to any campaign paraphernalia which has been previously approved by the Commission shall require the re-approval of the Commission for the revised or modified campaign paraphernalia.
  - (c) Physical campaign paraphernalia which require substantial production for a considerable amount of time or cost shall be submitted to the Commission for its approval prior to that production.
- § 108. *Disallowed content.* Campaign paraphernalia shall not contain the following:
- (a) Derogatory remarks directed at any candidate, political party, or coalition, or any member of the general public;
  - (b) Vulgar, obscene, or highly offensive language or content;
  - (c) Information or content which is grossly irrelevant to their purpose as campaign material;
  - (d) Any item or content disallowed by the Office of Student Affairs under the College Student Manual, including firearms, deadly weapons, and pyrotechnics;
  - (e) Other forms of information or content as the Commission may prohibit on the bases of public policy, honest and fair electoral practices, and protection of the rights of individuals.
- § 109. *Preparation of paraphernalia.* No preparation of physical campaign paraphernalia, except for minor repairs, minor completions of paraphernalia which cannot be accomplished outside of the University premises, and other such acts as the Commission may allow, shall be allowed within the University premises.
- § 110. *Storage of physical paraphernalia.* Any physical campaign paraphernalia within the University premises which are not in use or in public display shall be stored at the campaign headquarters of those who own or created the paraphernalia, or at any other place with the approval of the Commission.
- § 111. *Removal before election day.* All physical campaign paraphernalia within the University premises shall be removed before election day, or by order of the Commission.

### **Public Events**

- § 112. *Definition.* A public event is some occasion or occurrence connected to any ongoing or planned electoral activity, which may be conducted online or in person, and is accessible or

available to the general public to partake in, participate, or observe at the time of the event's occurrence or through recorded means, which shall include but is not limited to the following:

- (a) Town halls;
- (b) *Miting de avances*;
- (c) Debates; and
- (d) One-on-one or collective interviews of candidates.

§ 113. *Time frame.* No public event shall be held outside of the campaign period; *provided*, the Commission may provide special permission for certain public events to be held outside of the campaign period.

§ 114. *Regulations.* The Commission shall regulate the organization and performance of public events, and shall promulgate any necessary rules pursuant to this Code for the regulation thereof.

§ 115. *Notice of public events.* The Commission shall be informed at least one week, or such reasonable period as the Commission may require, before any public event is to be held, which shall include the following details:

- (a) Nature and object of the public event;
- (b) Venue, date, and time of the event;
- (c) List of expected attendees or invitees, including any moderators;
- (d) Contact information of the organizers of the public events; and
- (e) Other pertinent details of the public event as required by regulation.

§ 116. *Moderators of public events.*

- (a) A moderator of a public event, whether called by that title or by any other title, shall have the power to issue warnings and penalties to its participants, particularly any candidates.
- (b) A moderator of a public event shall be affiliated with the University by past or present employment or enrollment, and shall not be affiliated or connected with any political party for at least 3 years before the start of the event.
- (c) In a public event with moderators present, then at least one moderator must be an employee of the University.
- (d) The Commission shall determine what classes of public events require the presence of moderators.

§ 117. *Independent organization.*

- (a) The management, operation, preparation, and performance of a public event shall be an internal matter for its organizers; *provided*, the organizers may request the assistance of the Commission in the organization of the public event.
- (b) The Commission shall be kept informed by the organizers of the status of the public event from time to time before, during, and after the public event, in accordance with regulation.

§ 118. *Approval of program.* No public event shall be held without the Commission's approval of its general program flow and expected list of attendees and invitees; *provided*, the Commission's approval shall not be withheld except in egregious cases where the performance of the public event would be grossly contrary to the public interest.

§ 119. *Ongoing classes.*

- (a) No public event shall be held which shall grossly disturb or disrupt ongoing regular classes occurring near the venue of the public event.
- (b) The organizers of a public event may request the Commission to send a letter, addressed to the Deans of the Colleges or the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University, requesting to suspend or cancel classes to allow students to attend the said public event.

§ 120. *Invitation to publications.* The Commission shall invite the student publications, both at the university level and the college level, to organize or sponsor a public event for candidates for university-level positions and for college-level positions respectively.

The Commission may organize or sponsor a public event at the university level and the college levels if a student publication refuses the invitation to organize or sponsor a public event.

§ 121. *Online public events of political parties.* A political party shall not perform or organize any online public events outside of the campaign period.

### **Impartiality**

§ 122. *Definition.* Impartiality shall be to remain neutral and unbiased towards any candidate, political party, coalition, or any campaign thereof, and to act without favor or disfavor with regards to candidates, political parties, coalitions, or their campaign, with equal application to all those aforementioned.

§ 123. *Breaches.* Breaches of impartiality shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Giving donations, gifts, or gratuities;
- (b) Campaigning on behalf of a candidate or party;
- (c) Using their office or position, including any resources directly or indirectly available to their office or position, to give special advantage or disadvantage to a candidate or party; and
- (d) Other such analogous acts.

§ 124. *Impartial officers and persons.* The following shall observe impartiality in elections:

- (a) Employees of the University, including its instructors, administrators, and non-teaching personnel;
- (b) Officers of the Government and the Constitutional Commissions, excluding the Commission on Elections, in their official capacities;
- (c) Members of the Commission on Elections and the Election Deputies; and
- (d) Members of student publications.

§ 125. *Disposition of breaches.* Breaches of impartiality committed by the following shall be disposed of in the following manner:

- (a) Those committed by members of student publications shall be referred to the student publication's editorial board and the Office of Student Affairs;
- (b) Those committed by employees of the University, including its instructors and administrators, shall be referred to the Human Resources office of the University; and
- (c) Those committed by any other persons not otherwise provided for by the Commission shall be referred to the Commission and the Electoral Tribunal, and may be referred to other appropriate offices as necessary.

§ 126. *Campaigning in private capacity.*

- (a) Members and officers of the Government and the Constitutional Commissions, excluding the Commission on Elections, may campaign for candidates, political parties, and coalitions in their capacity as private individuals.
- (b) Members and officers campaigning under this section must exert and undertake reasonable efforts to ensure that their membership or office shall not be construed as campaigning for or against any candidate, political party, or coalition, and among those reasonable efforts shall be:
  - (i) Hiding any obvious and public display of their office on social media platforms on their personal account; and
  - (ii) Other such efforts and actions that the Commission may direct.
- (c) No member or officer of the Government or the Constitutional Commissions shall use their office in any capacity for their campaigning under this section, including the use of any official platforms or contact methods of their office or others.

**Finance**

§ 127. *Submission.* Candidates, political parties, and coalitions shall maintain an honest and true account of their finances with regards to their campaign and other electoral matters, and shall submit this accounting in the form of a financial statement within 30 days after election day and as the Commission may require from time to time, in accordance to any regulations the Commission may promulgate.

§ 128. *Particular inclusions.* The following items shall be included as part of or as supplement to a financial statement submitted under Section 127:

- (a) The names and contact information of any person who has given or provided any donations, gifts, or gratuities;
- (b) Information on the current and future handling of excess funds and assets, including the name and contact information of any person who shall hold and manage the funds after the election; and
- (c) Other such information and items that the Commission, with the concurrence of the Commission on Financial Audit, shall require.

§ 129. *Candidates part of political parties or coalitions.* A candidate who is a member of a political party or a coalition shall not be required to submit a financial statement, upon submission to the Commission of a sworn declaration that they have made no expenditures and hold no funds as an individual separate from those of the political party or coalition.

The sworn declaration of the candidate shall be attached to the submission of the financial statement made by the political party or coalition they belong to.

§ 130. *Financial consultation.* The Commission shall ensure that adequate assistance and consultation is available to all candidates, political parties, and coalitions for the maintenance of their financial accounting and for the creation of their financial statement, with the collaboration of the Commission on Financial Audit.

§ 131. *Audit of financial statement.* Within 14 days of the submission of a financial statement, the Commission shall invite the Commission on Financial Audit to conduct an audit of the financial statement, and the report of that audit shall be released to the Commission and to the Office of Student Affairs.

The Commission shall determine when to release or not the report of the audit of any financial statement.

- § 132. *Outside donations.* A candidate, political party, or coalition shall not accept any donation, whether in cash or in kind, from any source not affiliated with the University by past or present employment or enrollment.
- § 133. *Solicitation of donations.* A candidate, political party, or coalition shall not solicit for any donations, whether in cash or in kind, from any persons outside of their political party or coalition.
- § 134. *Prosecution.* Prosecution of candidates, political parties, or coalitions for violations of campaign finance regulations shall be allowed up to 14 days after the submission of their financial statements, and up to 14 days after the release of the audit report from the Commission on Financial Audit, or whichever is later.

*Provided,* no prosecution shall be entertained after 60 days have elapsed after the submission of the financial statements.

### Article V – Elections

- § 135. *Definition.* An election is an electoral activity, and the manifestation of the electorate's will to elect certain candidates to elective positions to serve in political offices. It is composed of the pre-election period, election day, and the proclamation of winning dates after election day.
- § 136. *Regular and special elections.* A regular election is an election held as required by the Constitution on an annual basis, which shall be no earlier than the midterm period and no later than the final period of the second semester of an academic year.
- A special election is an election held at any time outside of the period for a regular election, which shall be called for either by legislation for a specific purpose or by a resolution of the Commission en banc, and in either case with the consent of the Office of Student Affairs.
- § 137. *Pre-election period.* The pre-election period shall be the period of time as designated by the Commission before election day, during which the bulk of electoral activities shall take place in, including the following:
- (a) The period for the filing of candidacy, as described by Section 46;
  - (b) The campaign period, as described by Section 93; and
  - (c) The orientation of candidates regarding their duties and rights under this Code and other electoral regulations.
- § 138. *Election schedule.* The Commission shall promulgate the election schedule before the start of the pre-election period, which shall include and fix the dates of the start and end of the pre-election period, the election day, and other important dates and events as the Commission may deem necessary.

Modifications to the election schedule shall be made by the Commission with consultation of the Office of Student Affairs.

- § 139. *Election day.* The election day shall be the day or days on which voters shall cast their votes within the designated hours of those days, which shall not exceed 5 days in any case.

The Commission may extend the election day to occur over multiple days, if the Commission should determine that the interests of the Angelite studentry shall be best served by such extension.

- § 140. *Online and physical voting modalities.* There shall be two modalities for use in an election, which refer to the method by which a voter fills out the ballot and casts their vote:
- (a) The online voting modality shall refer to voting where each voter uses a digital online platform to cast their vote through their appropriate interface.
  - (b) The physical voting modality shall refer to voting where each voter marks a ballot paper and deposits it in the appropriate receptacle in an election precinct to cast their vote.
- § 141. *Voting modality in use.* The voting modality in use for an election shall be the online voting modality. Provided, the Commission may resolve to switch to the physical voting modality when it is technically infeasible or impossible to hold the election through the online voting modality
- § 142. *Mock election.* The Commission shall organize and hold a mock election at least two weeks before election day, to test the voting modality in use and afford interested parties the opportunity to test the voting modality.
- The Commission shall invite the candidates, representatives of political parties and coalitions, the members of the press, and other members of the general public to participate in the mock election.
- The results of any mock election shall not be released by the Commission.
- § 143. *Votes for persons not on list of candidates.* No vote for a person whose name does not appear on the official list of candidates shall be counted as votes for the person.
- § 144. *Finalized ballots.* The ballot shall be finalized by the Commission within 48 hours before election day. No change shall be made to the finalized ballot except in the discretion of the Commission for exceptional situations.
- For the physical voting modality, the ballot may be finalized within one week before election.
- § 145. *Ballot details.* The ballot shall clearly indicate the name, the resident College, and the political party or coalition affiliation of each candidate.
- The Commission may include additional details for each candidate; *provided*, all candidates across all elective positions shall be given equal treatment in the display of these details.
- § 146. *Reporting of voter turnout.* When it is technically feasible, the Commission shall report from time to time during election day the turnout of voters, either as a number or as a percentage, which may be broken down by each College.
- § 147. *Isolation of candidates.*
- (a) The Commission may resolve, with the concurrence of the Office of Student Affairs, the Campus Services and Development Office, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and other appropriate offices of the University, to isolate and sequester candidates, and other persons as the Commission may determine, during election day.
  - (b) Isolated candidates and persons shall be excused from their classes, shall be physically present (except for valid reasons which the Commission shall ascertain) at a designated venue under the supervision of the Commission, and shall not be allowed to communicate with anyone outside of the designated venue except during emergencies or as the Commission may allow.

(c) Isolated candidates and persons shall not be barred from the exercise of their right to vote, but isolation shall be maintained as reasonably practicable during that exercise of their right to vote.

§ 148. *Commissioner and technical staff access.* For the online voting modality, only the Commissioners, technical staff approved by the Commission, and other persons as the Chairman may deem necessary for the election's continued operation, shall have access to the control and monitoring interface of the election platform; and the contents of that interface shall be kept secret by those persons except when otherwise authorized by the Commission.

§ 149. *Regulations.* The Commission shall organize and regulate the conduct of elections and the respective voting modalities, and shall promulgate any necessary rules pursuant to this Code for the regulation thereof.

### **Election Precincts**

§ 150. *Definition.* An election precinct is a place designated by the Commission for the casting of votes by voters, in either election modality, in secrecy and under the supervision of the Commission.

§ 151. *Precinct supervisor.* Each election precinct shall be supervised by a precinct supervisor at all times, who shall be a Commissioner or an Election Deputy as designated by the Chairman.

The precinct supervisor shall maintain the orderliness and cleanliness of the election precinct, ensure the secrecy of all ballots cast within the election precinct, and exercise all necessary efforts for the proper and efficient proceedings of the election precinct.

§ 152. *Remaining within precincts.* No person shall be allowed to remain within an election precinct or remain in the immediate vicinity of an election precinct unless they are:

- (a) Voters in exercise of their right to vote;
- (b) The members of the Commission;
- (c) The Election Deputies;
- (d) University employees called for technical expertise or support;
- (e) Active poll watchers; and
- (f) Other persons permitted by the precinct supervisor.

§ 153. *Restricting access.* No person shall restrict or bar access to any person allowed under Section 152 from arriving from or leaving an election precinct, except as allowed under this Code.

§ 154. *Expulsion.* The precinct supervisor shall have the power to expel or bar persons under reasonable suspicion or evidence of disrupting the election proceedings, or violating the policies or regulations of an election precinct.

### **Poll Watchers**

§ 155. *Definition.* A poll watcher is a person appointed to observe the proceedings of election precincts and generally of the election, for the purpose of ensuring the transparency, efficiency, and honesty of the election process.

§ 156. *Qualifications.* No person may be a poll watcher unless they:

- (a) are currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree program of the University;
- (b) are not a member of the Government or any Constitutional Commission;



- (c) have not been found guilty of committing a Class A disciplinary offense as stipulated in the College Student Manual; and
- (d) are not a candidate in the election.

§ 157. *Appointment.* Poll watchers shall be appointed at most 1 week before election day, during a period of time as the Commission shall designate, in the following manner:

- (a) The editor-in-chief of each student publication may appoint up to an equal number of poll watchers as there are election precincts;
- (b) The Commission may invite other persons to be poll watchers, who shall be appointed by the Chairman.

The appointment shall be in writing and shall be sent to the Commission along with any other documents that the Commission shall require.

§ 158. *Public list of watchers.* The Commission shall publish the list of verified poll watchers at least 5 days before election day.

§ 159. *Substitutions.* After the publication of the list of verified poll watchers under Section 158, substitutions of a poll watcher on the list shall only be allowed up to 24 hours before election day.

The request to substitute a poll watcher shall be submitted in writing to the Commission, who shall respond within 24 hours to accept or reject the substitution, and whose determination shall be final and unappealable.

§ 160. *Powers and duties.* A poll watcher shall:

- (a) observe the election proceedings of an election precinct or in general;
- (b) observe the isolation of candidates, in accordance with Section 147;
- (c) have the right to raise any complaint or error regarding election proceedings to the precinct supervisor or any member of the Commission;
- (d) be informed from time to time by the precinct supervisor of the proceedings of the election precinct;
- (e) be informed by the precinct supervisor of any major decisions made in the course of their official duties;
- (f) be informed by the Commission of any major decisions made in the course of the elections;
- (g) exercise other such powers and duties provided by this Code or by electoral regulations.

§ 161. *Right of complaint.* A poll watcher shall have the right to raise any complaint or error regarding election proceedings to the precinct supervisor or any member of the Commission, whether within an election precinct or outside it, which must be noted by the precinct supervisor or member of the Commission.

§ 162. *Secrecy and non-interference.* A poll watcher shall not materially interfere with election proceedings except when exercising their right of complaint.

A poll watcher shall keep and maintain the secrecy of votes cast within an election precinct, and shall not directly communicate with voters within an election precinct.

#### **Canvassing and Announcement of Results**

§ 163. *Canvassing of votes.* After election day, the Commission shall meet to canvass the votes, and shall continue to meet until the canvassing is finished. The Commission may adjourn to another place or another time to continue or finish canvassing.

§ 164. *Remaining within canvassing area.* No person may remain within or be in close proximity to the canvassing area except for:

- (a) The members of the Commission;
- (b) The Election Deputies;
- (c) Active poll watchers; and
- (d) Other persons allowed by the Chairman.

§ 165. *Election results.* The results of the election shall consist of the following:

- (a) The number of votes for all candidates;
- (b) The names of the elected candidates for all elective positions; and
- (c) Statistics on the turnout of voters for the election, which may be broken down per College.

§ 166. *Determination of winners.*

- (a) For single-occupant positions, the candidate with the largest number of votes shall be elected.
- (b) For multiple-occupant positions, the candidates to be elected shall be determined in the following manner:

A list shall be drawn up of the candidates running for said position, and shall be sorted in order of their number of votes from highest to least, with ties in the number of votes resolved as provided by subsection (c).

Starting from the top of the list, candidates shall be drawn from the list in that order and shall be elected, until the required number of elected candidates is reached.

- (c) Ties in the number of votes for either single-occupant or multiple-occupant positions shall be resolved through drawing of lots, which shall be done in public after the number of votes are determined and in the presence of the candidates and poll watchers.

§ 167. *Announcement of results.* Once the results of the election have been ascertained, the Commission shall proceed to announce those results in the presence of the candidates, poll watchers, representatives of coalitions and political parties, and the general public.

§ 168. *Recount of ballots.* For the physical voting modality, the Commission may order a recount of ballots for particular positions when it deems necessary.

## Article VI – Referenda and Plebiscites

§ 169. *Definition.* Referenda and plebiscites are electoral activities and are the manifestation of the electorate's will regarding questions submitted to it, such as for the ratification of laws or amendments to the Constitutions, determination of the electorate's will on some policy or position, or other questions as may be provided for by law.

The term "referendum" and "plebiscite" are synonyms for the same electoral activity, and any reference to either term shall be construed as also being a reference to the other term.

§ 170. *Call for referenda.* A referendum may be called whenever the following occurs:

- (a) A revision to the Constitution requires a referendum to be called for its ratification; or
- (b) The University Senate enacts legislation calling for a referendum.

§ 171. *Holding of referenda.* A referendum shall be held by either voting modality as provided for by this Code under Section 140, and shall be organized and held by the Commission.

A referendum may be held concurrently with an election.

§ 172. *Regulations for referenda.* Provisions of this Code and other regulations related to the conduct of elections shall apply to the conduct of referenda, to the extent that they are applicable to the conduct of referenda as determined by the Commission.

The Commission may promulgate rules and regulations for the conduct of referenda.

### **Article VII – Dispute Resolution**

§ 173. *Definition.* An electoral dispute refers to any formal complaint, protest, or disagreement concerning:

- (a) Alleged violations of this Code or other electoral regulations;
- (b) Candidate eligibility and qualifications;
- (c) Election results and electoral processes; and
- (d) Any other electoral matter under the jurisdiction of the Commission or the Tribunal.

§ 174. *Jurisdictions.*

- (a) The Electoral Tribunal shall hear cases in the first instance, and shall decide on matters of law and matters of fact.
- (b) The Commission en banc shall hear appeals on the decisions of the Tribunal on matters of law or on procedural defects.
- (c) The High Court shall hear appeals in its discretion on the decisions of the Commission en banc.

§ 175. *Rules and procedures.* The Commission en banc shall promulgate the rules and procedures of pleadings, petitions, and cases before it and the Tribunal, which are subject to the disapproval of the High Court.

#### **First Instance Proceedings**

§ 176. *Tribunal clerk.* The Chairman shall designate a Commissioner to act as clerk of the Tribunal, who shall:

- (a) receive complaints, petitions and other pleadings for the Tribunal;
- (b) coordinate with the Chairman for the appointment of judges of the Tribunal when a case is before the Tribunal;
- (c) schedule the hearings and the cases to be heard before the Tribunal;
- (d) maintain the records of cases before the Tribunal; and
- (e) exercise other such powers and duties provided by the Chairman, by the presiding judge of the Tribunal, or by electoral regulations.

§ 177. *Filing of complaints and petitions.* A complaint or petition shall be filed with the clerk of the Tribunal who shall schedule the case before the Tribunal, which shall contain the following:

- (a) The name and contact information of the complainant;
- (b) A detailed statement of the facts, allegations, and any reliefs sought; and
- (c) Supporting evidence, documents, or affidavits.

§ 178. *Commission to initiate cases.* The Commission may initiate a case on its own initiative, or upon receipt of reasonable evidence, testimony, or informal complaints.

§ 179. *Form of proceedings.* The Tribunal shall determine for itself, consistent with its rules and procedures, on the form of the proceedings before it, which shall either be:

- (a) An adversarial form, where the Tribunal shall hear evidence and arguments between opposing parties to reach a decision; or
- (b) An inquisitorial form, where the Tribunal takes an active role in the investigation of facts and evidence to reach a decision.

**§ 180. Hearings.**

- (a) The clerk of the Tribunal shall schedule the hearings of the Tribunal, and shall notify the parties no later than 3 days prior to the hearing date.
- (b) All hearings shall be held in public, unless the Chairman or the Tribunal determines that confidentiality is required for the protection of privacy or sensitive information.

**§ 181. Case submitted for decision.** A case before the Tribunal shall be deemed submitted for decision or resolution either upon the filing of the last pleading, brief, or memorandum, or upon the decision of the Tribunal, as required by the rules of the Tribunal or the Tribunal itself.

**§ 182. Decision.** The Tribunal shall issue a decision within 7 days after a case is submitted, which shall include findings of fact, conclusions of law, and any appropriate remedies, sanctions, and orders.

The decisions of the Tribunal shall be deemed final and executory within 3 days of its issuance, unless stayed by the Tribunal or the Commission en banc.

### **Appellate Proceedings**

**§ 183. Appeal from the Tribunal.** An appeal from the decision of the Tribunal shall be made within 5 days of its receipt of the decision, which shall be filed with the clerk of the Tribunal who shall forward the same to the Chairman, and which shall contain the following:

- (a) The statement of the grounds for appeal;
- (b) References to specific legal errors or procedural defects alleged; and
- (c) Supporting evidence, documents, or affidavits.

**§ 184. Grounds for appeal.** An appeal to the Commission en banc shall be made only on the following grounds:

- (a) Errors in the application or interpretation of this Code, any electoral regulations, or the law; or
- (b) Procedural defects that may have materially affected the outcome of the case.

**§ 185. Summary dismissal.** The Chairman or the Commission en banc shall summarily dismiss any appeal made to the Commission en banc which are:

- (a) Frivolous or without legal bases and grounds; or
- (b) Filed in bad faith or for purposes of delay.

**§ 186. Review by the Commission en banc.** The Commission en banc shall review the decision of the Tribunal based on the record of the case and the filed appeal, and no new evidence or witnesses shall be introduced.

The Commission en banc may affirm, reverse or modify the decision of the Tribunal, or remand the case to the Tribunal for further proceedings.

**§ 187. Decision.** The Commission en banc shall issue a decision within 10 days after the acceptance of the appeal.

The decisions of the Tribunal shall be deemed final and executory within 3 days of its issuance, unless stayed by the Commission en banc or the High Court.

**§ 188.** *Appeal from the Commission en banc.* An appeal from the decision of the Commission en banc, in the form of a petition for certiorari, shall be made within 7 days of its receipt of the decision, in the form and manner as required by the rules of the High Court, and only on the following grounds:

- (a) A significant question of law;
- (b) A constitutional issue; or
- (c) A gross violation of due process.

### **Article VIII – Offenses and Sanctions**

**§ 189.** *General offenses.* It shall be an offense to:

- (a) falsify, tamper with, or submit fraudulent documents to the Commission;
- (b) misrepresent, conceal, or withhold required information in any lawful proceeding;
- (c) disrupt, interfere with, or obstruct election activities or processes without just cause;
- (d) refuse to comply with lawful orders or summons issued by the Commission or Tribunal;
- (e) violate any electoral regulations enacted by the Commission;
- (f) violate any prohibition imposed by this Code or electoral regulations; or
- (g) fail to perform any duty or requirement imposed by this Code or electoral regulations.

**§ 190.** *Coercive offenses.* It shall be an offense to:

- (a) coerce, threaten, or intimidate any voter, election official, candidate, or person seeking to become a candidate; or
- (b) unduly influence candidates to withdraw their candidacy or alter their campaign conduct.

**§ 191.** *Impartiality offenses.* It shall be an offense to:

- (a) campaign for or against any candidate, party, or coalition in violation of impartiality; or
- (b) use the office or position of a member or officer of the Government or a Constitutional Commission for campaigning.

**§ 192.** *Election integrity offenses.* It shall be an offense to:

- (a) tamper with voting equipment, ballots, or results to alter the outcome of an election;
- (b) commit any act of fraud, such as vote-buying, vote-selling, or impersonation;
- (c) obstruct the voting process, including canvassing or proclamation of results.
- (d) disrupt or disturb the conduct of elections or canvassing proceedings;
- (e) fail to comply with lawful orders of election officials; or
- (f) refuse to leave election precincts or venues when instructed.

**§ 193.** *Imposition of sanctions.* The Commission or the court may impose any sanctions as authorized by law and by this Code on a person or entity adjudged guilty of violating electoral regulations.

**§ 194.** *Campaign suspension.* The sanction of campaign suspension may be imposed on any person or entity, which shall bar them from any acts of campaign for the duration of the suspension.

During the campaign suspension, the sanctioned person or entity shall immediately cease any acts of campaigning, and shall remove any publicly visible campaign paraphernalia as the Commission or the court may direct.

§ 195. *Campaign ban.* The sanction of campaign ban may be imposed on any person or entity, which shall permanently bar them from any acts of campaign indefinitely.

This sanction shall only be lifted by order of the Commission or the court.

§ 196. *Cancellation of candidacy.* The sanction of cancellation of candidacy may be imposed on any candidate, which shall immediately cancel their certificate of candidacy, and remove them from the official list of candidates, and from the ballot if not yet finalized.

§ 197. *Disqualification of candidate.* The sanction of disqualification may be imposed on any candidate, which shall immediately cancel their certificate of candidacy, and remove them from the official list of candidates, and from the ballot if not yet finalized, and shall bar them from ever running for or holding public office in any capacity in the future.

§ 198. *Suspension of coalition.* The sanction of suspension may be imposed on a coalition, which shall immediately suspend the coalition from exercising any rights and privileges of being a coalition for the duration of the sanction.

§ 199. *Dissolution of coalition.* The sanction of dissolution may be imposed on a coalition, which shall immediately cause the coalition's registration to be revoked and the coalition to cease existing.

§ 200. *De-accreditation of political parties.* The sanction of de-accreditation may be imposed on a political party, which shall cause the Certificate of Accreditation of the political party to be immediately revoked.

§ 201. *Suspension of political parties.* The sanction of suspension may be imposed on a political party, which shall immediately suspend the political party from exercising any rights and privileges of being a political party for the duration of the sanction, and shall immediately lose its accreditation.

The political party shall not be considered for automatic deregistration due to loss of accreditation for the duration of its suspension. The loss of accreditation of a political party shall be considered as having occurred at the end of their suspension.

§ 202. *Deregistration of political parties.* The sanction of deregistration may be imposed on a political party, which shall cause the political party's registration to be immediately revoked.

§ 203. *Exclusion of political parties.* The sanction of exclusion may be imposed on a political party, which shall cause the political party's registration to be immediately revoked, and bar any political party from being registered which may be construed as being similar in form or in substance, including its membership and its identity and branding, to the sanctioned political party.

This sanction shall only be lifted by order of the Commission; *provided*, this sanction shall not be lifted within one year of its imposition.

### **Article IX – Appointments and Resignations**

§ 204. *Supplemental provisions.* The sections of this Article shall be construed as a supplement to any regulations made by the Commission under their reserved mandates as specified in Section 3, and the Commission may supplement, modify, overrule, or abrogate any section of this Article through those regulations.

§ 205. *Definitions.* A resignation is a voluntary act of an incumbent officer to vacate their office.

An appointment is an act of filling a vacant office with a person to serve in said office, done by a competent authority in pursuance of a law or other obligation.

§ 206. *Vacancy and mandatory appointments.* An appointment may be of two classifications:

- (a) A vacancy appointment is an appointment made to fill a vacancy in an office whose previous incumbent has left or been removed from that office; and
- (b) A mandatory appointment is an appointment mandated by the Constitution or by law to be done at a certain time, except when such appointment falls within the definition of a vacancy appointment.

§ 207. *Made in writing.* Resignations and appointments must be made in writing, in the form, manner, and contents as the Commission may require.

§ 208. *Resignations.* A resignation, in the form of a written letter, shall be communicated by the resigning officer or their corresponding head of the department, division, agency, or body to the Commission.

A resignation shall become effective once approved by the Commission, whose effect shall be dated to the original effectivity as stated in the resignation letter.

§ 209. *Countersignature of resignations.* A resignation shall be valid only when it is signed by the resigning officer, and countersigned by any of the following:

- (a) The adviser, who is an employee of the University, of the department, division, agency, or body to which that officer is under;
- (b) The adviser of the Commission;
- (c) The Student Activities Coordinator of the Office of Student Affairs;
- (d) The Director of the Office of Student Affairs; or
- (e) Any other person as the Commission may provide by regulation.

§ 210. *Appointments.* An appointment, in the form of a written letter, shall be communicated by the appointing authority to the Commission.

An appointment shall become effective once approved by the Commission, whose effect shall be dated to the original effectivity as stated in the appointment letter.

§ 211. *Provisional exercise of powers and duties.*

- (a) Once an appointment letter has been received and acknowledged by the Commission, the person named in the letter to be appointed to an office may provisionally exercise the powers and duties of that office in an acting capacity until the Commission has finished verifying the qualifications and communicated the same, or unless the Commission bars that person from exercising those powers and duties.
- (b) The provisional exercise of the powers and duties of an office shall not be construed as service in that office until the appointment has taken effect after it is approved by the Commission.
- (c) The provisional exercise of the powers and duties of an office shall be limited to those powers and duties of a ministerial character and not of a discretionary character.

§ 212. *Appointment vested to body rather than officer.* A power of appointment vested in a department, division, agency, or body, without specific reference to an officer therein to exercise said power, shall be exercised by its head.

## Article X – Amendments and Final Provisions

§ 213. *Amendments.* Amendments to this Code, which include total revisions, shall be initiated by the Commission, and shall require the ratification of the President and Governors in assembly, the University Senate, and the High Court.

Once approved, amendments shall take effect immediately unless otherwise specified in that amendment.

§ 214. *Assignment to departments.* The Chairman shall have the power to reassign the Commissioners to the various departments within 14 days of the effectivity of this Code.

§ 215. *Political parties known to USEC.* Political parties known to the University Student Elections Commission to be existing and active immediately prior to the ratification of the current Constitution shall be considered as provisionally registered under this Code for up to the end of the academic year of this Code's effectivity, and whose registration shall expire if the political party fails to be accredited within that period.

For the purposes of eligibility to any office, present or past membership or affiliation to a political party shall continue to be recognized even if such membership or affiliation took place before the promulgation of this Code to political parties known to the University Student Elections Commission and its predecessors.

§ 216. *Separability.* If any part or provision of this Code shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

§ 217. *Effectivity.* This Code shall enter into force upon its promulgation by the Chairman after the ratification of the President and Governors in assembly, the University Senate, and the High Court.