



Election protocol and ballot instructions for the 2006 Graduate Student Council Officer Elections

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) will be holding its 2006 Officer elections at the April General Council Meeting (GCM) to be held on April 5th, 2005 in Room 4-163. GSC Representatives are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the voting procedure and the election ballot information prior to the GCM. If there are any questions, please contact the GSC Vice-President at gsc-vice-president@mit.edu.

Voting Procedure for the GCM

Overview

The GCM will begin at 5:00 pm or when quorum is met. The Vice-President is charged with presiding over the elections of the GSC Officers. The election procedure is delineated in the GSC Constitution Bylaws in Article IV.E. The elections will proceed starting with the office of President, followed by Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If one nominee is not elected to the office that they were nominated for, they have the option to run for the next position when that position comes up for election.

The Vice-President will read the list of candidates for each position and at that time ask the candidates if they accept their nominations. It has been a traditional courtesy that if there is only one candidate nominated for a position, the nominee declines the nomination and thus opens the floor for new candidates to be added to the election roster for that position. At this time, the nominee is re-nominated and seconded by the GSC Representatives. If the nominations are refused and the floor is opened for new candidates, any new candidate nominated must be present at the GCM at the time the nomination is introduced. If a nominated candidate declines the nomination, there will be no more nominations for said candidate.

Each election (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) will consist in:

- Candidates Introductions
- Questions and Answers
- Candidates' vote
- Discussion
- Voting and Counting
- Announcement of Results



Candidates Introductions

The candidates will each give a speech which shall last no more than 5 minutes. Speeches will be given in alphabetical order of candidates. If a candidate exceeds the allowed time, they will be asked to stop at 5 minutes. Candidates shall not be interrupted by the audience. There shall not be any time extension.

Questions and Answers

After the speeches, the candidates will answer questions from the Council Representatives (“GSC Representatives”) and other members of the audience. The GSC Vice-President will preside over the question and answer period. The GSC Representatives are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting of their position. All questions will be addressed to all candidates, and shall take no longer than one minute. Questions will be answered in cascading order, starting with the alphabetical order: the first question will be answered first by Candidate 1, second by Candidate 2, etc.; the second question will be answered first by Candidate 2, second by Candidate 3, etc., and Candidate 1 will answer this question last. Candidates will be allowed two minutes to answer each question.

The Q&A session will be divided into 10-minute rounds. After the first round is completed, if more time is needed, a motion to extend for 10 minutes shall be made and seconded by Council Representatives. This motion will be considered by the GSC Vice-President, who may decline to grant such an extension. At maximum, there shall be no more than three rounds of questions.

Candidates’ vote

Once the Q&A session is over, Candidates shall cast their ballot if they are eligible voters, and leave the room.

Discussion

When Candidates have left, a confidential discussion amongst Council members will take place. All Council members are asked not to disclose any of this discussion. This discussion will be moderated by the GSC Vice-President.

Council members are allotted 2 minutes per question, comment or answer they contribute to the discussion. The discussion will be divided into 10-minute rounds. After the first round is completed, if more time is needed, a motion to extend for 10 minutes shall be made and seconded by Council Representatives. This motion will be considered by the GSC Vice-President, who may decline to grant such an extension. At maximum, there shall be no more than three rounds of questions.



Voting and Counting

After the discussion, voting Council members will be asked to list the Candidates in order of preference and the votes will be counted using the full preferential method: if not one candidate receives a majority of first choice votes, the candidate with the fewest first place votes will be eliminated and their votes will go to the candidate that was listed as a second choice. This process will continue until a candidate receives a majority of the votes. See additional information below.

Ballots will be tallied by members of the Graduate Student Council or of the Graduate Student Body designated by the GSC Vice-President.

Announcement of Results

Once all votes are counted, the GSC Vice-President will ask the Candidates to come back in the room, and will announce the results. Candidates who are not elected are presented with the option to run for the next office.

Eligible Voters

All voting Council members in good standing are eligible to vote. Voting Council members are: 2005-2006 Officers and Executive Committee Chairs (to the exception of the GSN Editors), and Council Representatives (“GSC Representatives”) who provided their GSC Representative Application before March 1st, 2006, 5pm, to the GSC Vice-President.

Note that GSC Representatives who submit their application after the March 1st, 2006, 5pm deadline will not be allowed to vote during the April 5th, 2006 Election General Council Meeting. However, they will be allowed, and indeed are encouraged, to attend the elections meeting.

Ballot Information

Full preferential voting information and sample ballots are provided below. Please read and follow instructions as any deviation from this procedure will discount your vote. Information and illustrations on full preferential voting and ballots were taken from:

http://www.eca.gov.au/systems/single/by_category/preferential.htm

http://www.seo.sa.gov.au/apps/uploadedFiles/news/88/Returning_Officers_Instruction_Manual.pdf



Preparation of Ballots

Ballots shall be prepared by the GSC Vice President. The order of candidates will be alphabetical. The ballots shall include a total of 5 boxes and names / lines to write in names for the case where late candidate entries occur.

Method of Voting

The method of voting is the full preferential method with ‘bottoms up preferential’ counting. That is, candidates with the least number of votes are excluded from the count until the number of candidates remaining in the count is 50% + 1.

Voting Procedures

Candidates, who are eligible to vote, will be given one ballot on which to cast their votes. They will write in any new names added to the candidate roster. Eligible candidates will vote and turn in their ballot to the GSC Vice-President. After candidates have left the room, ballots will be handed out to the voting body. At this time any new candidates who have been nominated will have her / his name on the blank lines in the ballot.

The voter will designate a top choice for a given officer position with a number ‘1’. Then the voter shall proceed to the next available candidate until all the candidates or all the candidates minus 1 have had a preferential number assigned to them. There will be 5 minutes allowed to fill in the ballot. At this time the Vice-President will collect the ballots and the aforementioned individuals shall leave the room for the counting of the ballots.

A voter is permitted one and only one vote.

Formality of Ballot

Each ballot must rank all named candidates for a position in preferential order (except for the least desired candidate, see attached example). If a voter leaves the ballot completely blank, or fails to include all candidates in their prioritization, then that vote will be discarded. This may cause a recasting of all votes of the general assembly. If a voter spoils a ballot, the voter shall contact the Vice-President for a new ballot. The elector shall turn in the spoiled ballot before receiving a new ballot.

A ballot is informal if:

- It is not an official ballot from the GSC Vice-President
- It is blank (has no vote indicated on it)
- Marked with a tick (✓) or a cross (×)
- It is signed by the voter
- Does not indicate the order of the voter’s preference for **all** candidates



See diagram below for examples.

EXAMPLES OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL BALLOT-PAPERS

Ballot-papers are Formal and admitted to the
Count as long as the voter's intention is clear

<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 BLUE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 GREEN</p> <p>FORMAL</p>	<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 BLUE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> GREEN</p> <p>FORMAL</p>	<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 BLUE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 GREEN</p> <p>FORMAL</p>
<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLUE <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> GREEN</p> <p>INFORMAL</p>	<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 BLUE <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 GREEN</p> <p>INFORMAL</p>	<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 BLUE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> GREEN</p> <p>INFORMAL</p>
<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 BLUE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 GREEN</p> <p>INFORMAL</p>	<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 BLUE <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> GREEN</p> <p>INFORMAL</p>	<p>BALLOT PAPER <small>PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX INDICATE ANY OTHER CHOICE</small></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GREY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 YELLOW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 BLUE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 GREEN</p> <p>INFORMAL</p>



Counting of the Ballots

The Vice-President shall oversee the counting of the votes. After all votes have been cast, the following shall remove themselves from the room to count the votes: the GSC Officers and Administrators, and any other individual designated by the GSC Vice-President. The Secretary shall count the votes and the GSC Administrators shall assist in the counting and the verification of the votes. This count will be verified by two separate individuals to be chosen by the GSC Vice-President. The Treasurer will tally the votes. The final outcome will be presented to the GSC Representatives by the Vice-President before the election for the next office proceeds.

Winner of the elections shall constitute a 50% + 1 vote.

An example is provided below:



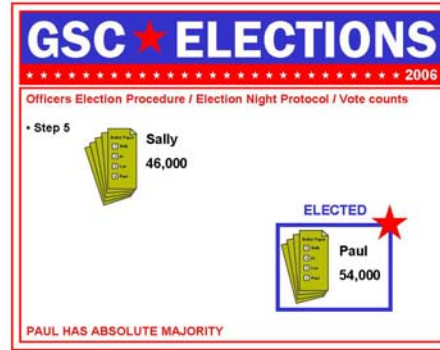
Step 0. There are 4 candidates: Sally, Jo, Lee, and Paul.

Step 1. After the first count, Sally was designated #1 on 33,000 ballots, Jo was #1 on 21,000, Lee on 16,000 and Paul on 30,000. No Candidate gets absolute majority (50,000 votes). The Candidate with the lowest number of votes (Lee) is eliminated.



Step 2. Lee's ballots are redistributed to other candidates. Sally receives 7,000 ballots (with Lee as #1 and Sally as #2), Jo receives 4,000 ballots (that had Lee as #1 and Jo as #2), and Paul receives 5,000 (that had Lee as #1 and Paul as #2).

Step 3. The new count is: Sally with 40,000; Jo with 25,000; and Paul 35,000. No Candidate has absolute majority and Jo is eliminated.



Step 4. Jo’s ballots are redistributed to Sally and Paul. Sally receives 6,000 ballots (that listed either Jo as #1 and Sally as #2, or Jo as #1, Lee as #2, and Sally as #3); and Paul receives 19,000 ballots (that listed either Jo as #1 and Paul as #2, or Jo as #1, Lee as #2, and Paul as #3).

Step 5. The new count is: Sally with 46,000 and Paul 54,000. Paul has the absolute majority and is elected.

Results of the election

Results of the election will be presented after the election of each office. The results will also be posted on the GSC website no later than 72hrs after the Officer Election GCM. The GSC Representatives shall be notified of the results by e-mail.

Celebration of election results

All individuals attending the Officer Election GCM are invited to attend the Muddy Charles Pub for a celebratory evening after the GCM. Outgoing and incoming Officers are expected to attend the celebration at the Muddy Charles Pub.