

Student Assembly Elections Q&A

Q: When is the Student Assembly election?

A: Saturday, April 30, 2022

Q: How do I participate?

A: The election is open for public viewing. However, only voting delegates as defined by SUNY rules and Student Assembly Bylaws may cast ballots. Details are still being confirmed, but it is anticipated that voting delegates will be able to participate either at an in-person site or remotely via teleconference.

Q: How do I know if I am a voting delegate?

A: Student Assembly Bylaws state a voting delegate must be:

- 1) A graduate or undergraduate student enrolled for credit at any SUNY campus;
- 2) Elected to serve as a voting delegate by their campus student body; and
- 3) In good academic standing, with an overall GPA of at least 2.0, which must be confirmed by System Administration in writing from your campus.

Each member institution has one voting delegate representative for each 4,000 full-time equivalent students or fraction thereof. Voting delegates are confirmed in advance of each election by System Administration in coordination with campuses.

Q: How many voting delegate representatives comprise the Student Assembly?

A: Per 2022 enrollment data, there are currently 112 voting delegate representatives which make up the SUNY Student Assembly. Only these members elect the 4 officers, as well as the Representatives within each respective caucus. Each campus is guaranteed a minimum of 1 voting delegate representative (the campus SGA president) for the first 4,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment (or fraction thereof), with an additional voting delegate representative provided to campuses for each additional 4,000 FTE enrollment (or fraction thereof). Prior to the start of spring semester, System Administration notifies each campus of their total number of voting delegate representatives, so campus SGAs can plan and conduct elections accordingly per SUNY Board of Trustees rules.

Q: Who comprises the “Executive Board”?

A: Only the 4 elected officers (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary)

Q: Who comprises the “Executive Committee”?

A: Per SUNY Board of Trustees Regulations, the Executive Board, 16 Elected Representatives, and the Executive Cabinet Members (Chairs of Committees, Directors, etc.). Only members of the Executive Board and elected representative have Executive Committee voting rights.

Q: What positions are on the ballot?

A: Executive Board Officers: Student Assembly President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary; and Executive Committee Representatives as follows:

- Three undergraduate representatives from University Centers
- Three representatives from other state-operated campuses
- Two representatives from technology colleges and/or statutory colleges
- Two graduate representatives from University Centers
- Six representatives from community colleges

Q: Do I need to be a Student Assembly member to run for an officer position?

A: No.

Q: Am I qualified to run for a Student Assembly officer position?

A: Any graduate or undergraduate student enrolled for credit at any SUNY institution may run for a Student Assembly officer position, so long as they meet any eligibility requirements to serve on the campus student government organization. Candidates must not have previously served two academic year terms in the office position in which they are seeking office.

System Administration verifies eligibility with campuses after the nomination form is submitted. Candidates must have a 2.5 GPA, with written confirmation from their campus.

Q: Do I need to be a Student Assembly member to run for an Executive Committee Representative position?

A: Yes. You must be a certified voting delegate representative for your campus to run for a Representative seat.

Q: Am I qualified to run for an Executive Committee Representative position?

A: To be eligible to run for one of the 16 Executive Committee Representative positions, candidates must first be a current Student Assembly voting delegate for their campus and may only run for a seat within their respective caucus.

System Administration verifies eligibility with campuses after the nomination form is submitted. Candidates must have a 2.0 GPA, with written confirmation from their campus.

Q: How do I get on the ballot?

A: Interested candidates for an Officer position do not need to be a current Student Assembly member but must have their candidacy nominated by any Student Assembly member from any SUNY campus who is a certified voting delegate.

Interested candidates for one of the 16 Executive Committee Representative positions must be a voting delegate for their respective caucus and be nominated by any Student Assembly member from any SUNY campus who is a certified voting delegate.

Nominations are due to the Student Assembly and SUNY System on or before April 8th in order to have eligibility confirmed before the election date.

Nomination forms must be submitted via email to elections@sunysa.org.

Nomination forms are available at <https://www.sunysa.org/conference-1>

Eligibility must be confirmed as outlined above.

Q: As a candidate, do I need to be present at my election?

A: Yes, candidates must be present (in-person or virtually) during their election procedure, other than deliberation, to be considered qualified. Candidates may not be present during deliberation of their election.

Q: Do candidates have an opportunity to address the electing body?

A: Yes, under section 5.01(e), on the day of elections, all candidates will be given the opportunity to give a brief, 3 minute speech. Candidates will also field a set amount of randomized questions from the electing body, with answers limited to 1 minute.

The Student Assembly and SUNY System Administration may conduct one or more candidate forums 1-2 weeks before the election in order to give sufficient time for candidate platforms and positions.

Q: Can I be removed as a candidate from the ballot?

A: The Parliamentarian may only remove candidates if they do not meet qualifications as outlined above.

Q: When are nomination forms due?

A: In 2022, nomination forms are due on or before April 8th to allow for full consideration and the opportunity to cure any deficiencies in eligibility documentation. Student Assembly Bylaws require that nominations be accepted “from the floor” on the date of the election, however for any such nominations to be considered by the Parliamentarian, they must have the complete and uncontroverted eligibility documentation. Any incomplete or inaccurate documentation automatically nullifies the nomination.

Q: What if I am qualified but my campus is slow to respond to this request?

A: Contact System Administration Student Assembly Advisor Katie Dame for immediate assistance on this matter at Katie.Dame@suny.edu or 518-320-1668.

Q: If I submitted my nomination form on or before April 8th, and there is an error, do I have time to fix it?

A: Yes, the Parliamentarian and System Administration must review nomination forms and verify eligibility. Any concerns will be shared with the candidate in advance and any deficiencies must be remedied prior to the date of the election.

Q: If I am told that I am ineligible to run for an officer position, but meet all necessary criteria, what recourse do I have for appealing the decision of the Parliamentarian?

A: Any factual election disputes should be adjudicated by the Rules Committee. If a student wishes to appeal a decision of the Rules Committee, they should contact Student Assembly Parliamentarian Sowad Ocean Karim at elections@sunysa.org. The SUNY Office of the General Counsel is available to provide guidance in the event of rule or Bylaw disputes.

Q: Are candidates for any of the officer positions permitted to play a role in the elections process?

A: No. Bylaws prohibit candidates for office from participating in the election process in any way other than through their own campaign activities. Election disputes are managed by the Parliamentarian, with matters concerning regulations or Bylaws handled at the direction of the SUNY Office of General Counsel. True factual disputes are to be adjudicated by the full Rules Committee.

Q: Who manages Student Assembly elections?

A: Per SUNY Board of Trustee regulations and Student Assembly Bylaws, the Election Chair designated by the President manages the election process (in the event they are not themselves candidates for office), with various certifications managed by System Administration. The SUNY Office of General Counsel acts as a resource in all elections to ensure rules and regulations are followed and to advise when process concerns arise.

Q: Does the Parliamentarian always oversee elections?

A: As per Student Assembly Bylaws section 2.02(d), the President is responsible for chairing the election of the elected officers or designating a chair in their stead in the event they are a candidate.

Q: Are appointed Student Assembly members qualified to cast votes?

A: No, while any student may serve in an appointed Student Assembly position at the recommendation of the President and confirmation of the Executive Committee, only students elected by their campus as voting delegates may cast ballots.

Q: Do I need to be present during the election to cast my vote, or can I submit my vote in advance?

A: You cannot submit a vote in advance. If you are concerned that you will not be able to be present during some or all of the election process, you can select an "alternate" voter from your campus to represent you in your place. Be sure to fully document in writing any alternate designation at least 48 hours in advance with the System Administration. Any alternate must be verified in good standing by System Administration in advance of the election.

Q: Can other delegates vote on my behalf ("proxy")?

A: Representatives must act in person and not by proxy. However, an "alternate" is not considered a proxy and has all the voting rights assigned to a representative.

In other words, as defined in SUNY regulations, if you are a representative planning to vote for Candidate A for President, but cannot participate in the election, you cannot grant a specific "proxy" to another delegate to bind them into casting a vote in your place for Candidate A. You can select an "alternate" voter in advance, to represent your campus in your place (any qualified student), but that

alternate voter will have all voting rights assigned to a representative and can cast the vote for any eligible candidate they so choose.

Q: What if I have technological access issues that prevent my participation in the election?

A: System Administration previously provided laptops to Student Assembly Executive Committee members who had access concerns, and we can help to ensure every voting delegate has access during the election. Any voting delegate with these concerns should contact Katie Dame at Katie.Dame@suny.edu for assistance.

Q. What if I require other accommodations to participate in the election?

A: The Student Assembly and SUNY System Administration are committed to ensuring a fair and accessible Student Assembly election. Any student who is concerned with accessibility issues or who would like to request a disability or religious accommodation should contact AccessibleSUNYSA@suny.edu and please copy elections@sunysa.org for any accommodation issues. SUNY System Administration will work collaboratively with the Student Assembly on responding to any requests or concerns.

Q: Is the vote a secret or public ballot?

A: Under the Bylaws, all elections must use a secret ballot, and if no person receives a majority of votes cast, a run-off election is to be conducted immediately to choose from the two candidates receiving the largest number of votes cast.

Q: What happens upon conclusion of the election?

A: Under the Bylaws, the ballots will be counted by the President, Secretary, Parliamentarian, and a representative from System Administration. If any of the aforementioned officers are a candidate in the election they shall recuse themselves from validating that set of ballots as candidates are not to play any role in the management of the elections process for their election race. The Student Assembly Parliamentarian and System-designated advisor will confirm the validity of votes immediately upon conclusion of voting before winners are announced. Once that occurs, the Parliamentarian then submits formal written certification to System Administration and the SUNY Board of Trustees.

Q: What is the term of service for the elected officers?

A: The term runs from June 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023.

Q: What are the responsibilities of the 4 elected officers?

A: Detailed responsibilities can be found at https://96b4cd6e-7352-4023-8996-01c269f81c68.filesusr.com/ugd/f298b6_754f9ca46ee94caebfeb6f664c6bee6e.pdf

Past officers regularly volunteer to speak with candidates; System Administration can help facilitate these conversations.

Q: Is training available for elected officers?

A: Yes, under section 2.02(e) of the Student Assembly Bylaws, the President is responsible for organizing a transition of officers between the time of election and June 1st. SUNY System Administration will work collaboratively with SA leadership to train newly elected SA members on the proper protocols for SA administration, including how to work with SUNY System, processes and procedures under the SA bylaws and SUNY BOT Policies. SUNY System Administration will also work collaboratively with SA to offer training for all SA members on bylaws; governance issues; ethics; diversity, equity and inclusion; democracy and more which must be completed by all voting and non-voting members before any official business can resume.

Q: Do elected officers need to maintain a minimum GPA?

A: Yes, if an elected officer's cumulative GPA drops below 2.25 at any time during their service, their position will automatically become vacant and the process for filling that position as outlined in the governing regulations and bylaws will begin.

Q: Do elected Executive Committee Representatives need to maintain a minimum GPA?

A: Yes, if an elected Executive Committee Representative's cumulative GPA drops below 2.0 at any time during their service, their position will automatically become vacant and the process for filling that position as outlined in the governing regulations and bylaws will begin.

Q: Who receives stipends?

A: All elected officers, executive committee representatives, and as many appointed officers as deemed appropriate, may receive stipends subject to the availability of funding.

Q: Does one need to be a Student Assembly representative to receive a Student Assembly stipend?

A: No, stipends are at the discretion of the President and elected officers with approval by the Executive Committee.

Q: Who verifies and processes stipends?

A: Once approved by the Student Assembly Executive Committee, stipends are verified and processed by System Administration in accordance with processes established by the Office of the New York State Comptroller.

Q: What is the overall annual budget?

A: Historically, the Student Assembly has operated at the level of funding around \$57,000.

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Additional Funds</i>	<i>Stipend Expenditures</i>
2016-2017	55,958	-	15,102
2017-2018	55,958	-	15,000
2018-2019	55,958	78,750 ¹	46,001
2019-2020	55,958	78,750 ¹	44,532
2020-2021	55,958	14,042 ²	40,857

¹ In FY 18/19, SUNY allocated an additional \$157,000 to the Student Assembly to be used during FY's 18/19 and 19/20

² In FY's 20/21 and 21/22, SUNY allocated additional funds to increase the Student Assembly budget to \$70,000

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Additional Funds</i>	<i>Budgeted Stipend Expenditures</i>
2021-2022	55,958	14,042 ²	49,750
2022-2023	55,958 ³	100,000 ⁴	TBD

³ Anticipated funding as FY 22/23 budget has not been enacted.

⁴ In FY 21/22, SUNY allocated an additional \$100,000 to the Student Assembly to be used during FY 22/23, subject to SUNY oversight, for operational support and for attending and/or sponsoring conferences, events, and regional meetings, but not for scholarships or stipends.

Q: Who receives stipends?

A: The current budget enacted by the Student Assembly includes 33 stipends, totaling \$49,750 (71% of all funding). The list of stipend recipients proposed and approved by the Student Assembly Executive Committee for the current budget is as follows:

<u>2021/2022 Budgeted Stipend Amounts</u>	
<u>Position</u>	<u>Amount</u>
President	\$8,000.00
Secretary	\$7,000.00
Treasurer	\$7,000.00
Vice President	\$7,000.00
Chief of Staff	\$3,000.00
Policy Director	\$1,500.00
Director of Communications & Public Relations	\$1,000.00
Director of Government Relations	\$1,000.00
Parliamentarian	\$1,000.00
Chair of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	\$750.00
Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	\$500.00
Chair of Student Success	\$750.00
Vice Chair of Student Success	\$500.00
Chair of Safety & Wellness	\$750.00
Vice Chair of Safety & Wellness	\$500.00
Representatives (16 Seats)	\$500.00
Communications Specialist	\$500.00
Chair of State Operated Campuses	\$250.00
Chair of Community Colleges	\$250.00