

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT OF PRINCETON
UNIVERSITY



THE SENATE

princeton university, princeton, new jersey

Senate Resolution 6-2017

Submitted by DANIEL QIAN '19, Vice President

Resolution

Amending the USG Referenda Handbook by temporarily shortening the referendum process for the Winter 2017 referendum cycle only, in order to call a vote on referenda before winter term ends without denying referenda sponsors and opposition parties the time needed to gather signatures and campaign

Whereas the current USG Referenda Handbook calls for a five-week referenda process—one week to finalize the question language for a referendum, one week for the referendum party to collect signatures, one week for the opposition coalition to form, one week for campaigning, and one week for voting,

Whereas while we have already begun the referenda process, we did not wish to consider the Thanksgiving break week as a full week in the process. There are only three weeks left in the winter term and there is therefore no way to call a referendum election that accords with the process in the Handbook; in order for the referendum process to occur, the schedule must be shortened,

Whereas in shortening this schedule, it is important to allow a full week for signature collection while classes are in session, as well as to allow a full week of campaigning while classes are in session,

Whereas USG also needs sufficient time to finalize and approve ballot language, and an opposition party needs time to form,

Digest:

- **Section 1** of the amendment establishes the schedule for the Winter 2017 election cycle in the Referenda Handbook. Key points of difference for this new schedule include a single week for both the referendum party's collection of signatures and the formation of the opposition party, instead of one week to collect signatures and a second week for the opposition party to form.
- **Section 2** makes a technical change associated with the overlap of the opposition party's week to form with the referendum party's week to collect signatures.

- **Section 3** temporarily allows the referenda schedule for this election cycle to be decoupled from the USG candidate election schedule.

Now therefore be it

EXPLANATION—Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter with ~~strikethrough~~ is material to be omitted.

Resolved by the Senate of the Undergraduate Student Government (a majority of the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. Section 3 of the USG Referenda Handbook is amended to read as follows:

Subsection (A)

The following schedule applies to all referenda cycles after the Winter 2017 referenda cycle. This section has no effect on the Winter 2017 referenda cycle:

- For all petitions submitted, the Chief Elections Manager will serve as the Vice President’s designate for receiving petitions and will immediately inform the Vice President of their submission.
- The Chief Elections Manager shall establish and make public a way of delivering the petition that is identical to the requirements of candidate’s submission of registration forms. This will include the identical drop-off location, times, and deadlines.
- Before a sponsor begins collecting signatures on a referendum petition, the text of the referendum measure must be reviewed and approved by the USG Vice President, Executive Committee, and Senate for neutral wording and clarity.
- Not later than 4 weeks before the start of a scheduled election, a potential sponsor of a referendum measure shall contact the Chief Elections Manager and Vice President to discuss the proposed text of the referendum measure.
- After receiving the proposed text, the Vice President, Chief Elections Manager, USG Executive Committee, and the USG Senate subsequently and in that order shall have 1 week to work with the potential sponsor on the text of the proposed referendum measure, review the text for neutral wording and clarity, and either approve or disapprove the text of the proposed referendum measure.
- If the USG Senate approves the text of the proposed referendum measure, the potential sponsor may begin collecting signatures for the petition to have the referendum measure appear on the ballot during the USG election in question. The petition must be submitted to the Chief Elections Manager not later than 2 weeks before the start of the scheduled election at 12 p.m. (Monday). A petitioner may begin collecting signatures starting at 12 p.m. on

the Monday before the due date for the required number of signatures and will be guaranteed a total of 7 days to collect signatures.

- In the week preceding the campaign period for candidates and referenda parties, the USG Chief Elections Manager will publicly announce that a referendum has been placed on the ballot for the upcoming election. If a party wishes to form in formal opposition to the proposed referendum, they will have 1 week to inform the Chief Elections Manager of their intent to formally oppose the referendum and Chief Elections Manager shall take whatever logistical action needed for voting preparations involving the opposition.
- Both the petitioners and opposition will not be allowed to campaign until beginning at noon on the Monday preceding the beginning of the voting period (1 week before elections). This campaign period shall last one week and coincide with the same time period as the candidate campaign period.

Subsection (B)

The following schedule applies to the Winter 2017 referenda cycle only. After the Winter 2017 referenda cycle, the following schedule will have no effect:

- ***For all petitions submitted, the Chief Elections Manager will serve as the Vice President's designate for receiving petitions and will immediately inform the Vice President of their submission.***
- ***The Chief Elections Manager shall establish and make public a way of delivering the petition. The drop-off location for referenda petitions and USG candidates' submission of registration forms shall be identical.***
- ***Before a sponsor begins collecting signatures on a referendum petition, the text of the referendum measure must be reviewed and approved by the USG Vice President, Executive Committee, and Senate for neutral wording and clarity.***
- ***A potential sponsor of a referendum measure shall contact the Chief Elections Manager and Vice President to discuss the proposed text of the referendum measure no later than Friday, November 17, 2017 at 12 p.m.***
- ***After receiving the proposed text, the Vice President, Chief Elections Manager, USG Executive Committee, and the USG Senate subsequently and in that order shall have ten days to work with the potential sponsor on the text of the proposed referendum measure, review the text for neutral wording and clarity, and either approve or disapprove the text of the proposed referendum measure (until Tuesday, November 28).***
- ***If the USG Senate approves the text of the proposed referendum measure, the potential sponsor may begin collecting signatures for the petition on Tuesday, November 28, 2017 at 12 p.m. The petition must be submitted to the Chief Elections Manager not later than Tuesday, December 5, 2017 at 12 p.m. A petitioner will be guaranteed a total of 7 days to collect signatures.***

- *On or before Tuesday, November 28, 2017 at 12 p.m. the USG Chief Elections Manager will publicly announce any referenda that have the potential to appear on the ballot for the upcoming election. The Chief Elections Manager will include a disclaimer in this announcement stating that each referendum will only appear on the ballot if the referendum party obtains the required number of signatures before the deadline.*
- *If a party wishes to form in formal opposition to the proposed referendum, they will have until Tuesday, December 5, 2017 at 12 p.m. to inform the Chief Elections Manager of their intent to formally oppose the referendum. The Chief Elections Manager shall take whatever logistical action needed for voting preparations involving the opposition.*
- *Both the petitioners and opposition will not be allowed to campaign until Tuesday, December 5, 2017 at 12 p.m. (1 week before elections). This campaign period shall last one week.*

SECTION 2. Section 5 of the USG Referenda Handbook is amended to read as follows:

- Petitions for referenda must have exactly one official sponsor that shall serve as official representative of the petition and referenda in all cases.
- This sponsor may be an individual or an ODUS-recognized student organization, but should accurately represent the effort to bring the referenda to election.
- After a potential sponsor has contacted both the Chief Elections Manager and Vice President, the USG President will make public to the undergraduates that a potential referendum will appear on the ballot, provided the proposed text is approved and the sufficient number of signatures collected, and shall invite any interested parties to form an official opposition group.
- Any interested undergraduates should immediately contact both the Chief Elections Manager and the Vice President to inform them of their interest.
- *For all election cycles after the Winter 2017 election cycle*, interested parties shall have 1 week following the sponsor's successful completion of sufficient collection of signatures to form an official opposition group. *For the Winter 2017 election cycle only, interested parties shall have 1 week following the Chief Elections Manager's announcement of a potential referendum to form an official opposition party.*
- The official opposition party shall be finalized by the beginning of the campaign period, which shall begin no earlier than 1 week before voting begins.
- Both the sponsor and opposition must sign a form with the Elections Managers subjecting both parties to the Elections Managers' supervision and all official rules governing the referendum process, including penalties.

- Failure to sign the form after a petition has been approved for the ballot will either disqualify the referendum or exclude the opposition as an official party to the aforementioned referendum.
- The sponsor is responsible for attending at least one of the Election Information Sessions hosted by the Elections Managers prior to an election cycle.
- When the sponsor is a student organization, the President of that organization may receive prior approval from the Elections Managers to appoint an alternative representative to attend this meeting.
- Student organizations that serve as sponsors, or the opposition, may employ the efforts of non-members, as well as the support of other student organizations and entities, but must serve as the primary advocate or opponent, respectively, of the referendum. Individuals that serve as sponsors should, in good faith, be acting of their own volition (not in their capacity as a member or leader of an organization), but may employ the efforts of other individuals and organizations.
- Co-sponsorships of organizations and individuals will not be officially recognized by the USG for the purposes of the election.
- The sponsor's and opposition's names will appear on the ballot, should the referendum be successfully petitioned and brought to election.
 - Each referendum will be accompanied by pro and con statements to appear on the ballot. Each side is allotted 300 words for their statements. Before the referendum is put to a vote, each side will be allowed to read the other's statement and prepare a 150-word rebuttal, also to appear on the ballot.
- The sponsor will be responsible for defending the referendum against all challenges brought to the Elections Managers and/or the Senate, and will be responsible for all communications between the USG (including, but not limited to, the Elections Managers, President, Vice President, and Senate) and the referendum.
 - When the sponsor is a student organization, the President of that organization will be responsible for the aforementioned obligations as well as any other cases where the petition and/or referendum would require representation. The President of the student organization in official opposition will be responsible for the aforementioned obligations as well as any other cases where the petition and/or referendum would require representation.

SECTION 3. Section 6 of the USG Referenda Handbook is amended to read as follows:

- Both the official sponsors and opponents of the referendum, as well as all ODUS-sponsored groups involved in the support or opposition of a referendum, shall comply with all candidate campaign rules as outlined in Sections 1-10 of the Elections Handbook and *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*.

- *For all election cycles after the Winter 2017 election cycle*, official sponsors and opponents shall have the same time period as candidates for office to campaign for their respective side (1 week). *This requirement does not apply to the Winter 2017 election cycle.*
- *For all election cycles after the Winter 2017 election cycle*, official sponsors and opponents shall comply with the same schedule as candidates for office during the elections cycle pertaining to campaigning, expenditure reporting and all other duties required of candidates. *This requirement does not apply to the Winter 2017 election cycle.*
- On a case-by-case basis, the Chief Elections Manager shall handle any complaint or dispute pertaining to a referendum measure and may assign penalty points for a violation of the campaign rules. (Procedures on this can be found in section 10 of the Elections Handbook).

Approved November __, 2017.

With __ Voting Members of the Senate present and
By a Vote of __ In Favor, __ Against, and __ In Abstention

DANIEL QIAN '19,
Vice President of the Undergraduate Student Government and
Presiding Officer of the Senate.

Attest:

TRACI MATHIEU '20,
Executive Secretary of the Senate.