

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION



ELECTION PROCEDURE AND POLICY
FALL 2011

Introduction

The following is a guideline on Boston University International Affairs Association executive board elections. This is based upon best practices of the organization. This document does not hold the weight of the constitution and the constitution should be deferred to in all instances of contention between this document and the constitution.

As constitutionally mandated, the Vice President shall oversee all nomination and election proceedings. The exception to this rule is if the vice president may potentially be running for an open eboard position. In that event, the president shall oversee all election and nomination proceedings. In the event that the president is not able to uphold this duty (due to impeachment or other circumstances) then the duty shall fall to the secretary.

Membership

A member is any full-time undergraduate at Boston University who fits the following criteria: Attends at least half of the weekly meetings in a semester, staffs either BosMUN or BarMUN, sits on the editorial board for the IRR for at least one semester. If members who have previously met these criteria are abroad for a semester, they maintain their status as a full voting member and maintain all rights and privileges that members who are at Boston University enjoy.

Election Framework

When there is an impending executive board vacancy, elections should be held to fill the position(s) within a reasonable time frame. Executive board positions for president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, marketing director, head delegate, and editor-in-chief of the International Relations

Review are generally held in late April and individuals from within the BUIAA membership are elected hold those posts until the end of the Spring semester next year.

The Secretaries General for BarMUN and BosMUN also hold their posts for one year, but on a different timeline than other members. Elections for a new SG are held one month after the conference concludes.

Generally elections are scheduled early enough (aka not at the very last meeting of the year) to allow for some overlap between the outgoing and incoming executive board so help ensure as smooth a transition as possible.

Scheduling Elections

For all executive board positions, in the event of anticipated vacancies (such as the academic year ending or executive board members going abroad in the spring), elections should be scheduled far in advance and knowledge of these elections should be made known to the general club membership within a reasonable time period.

For all executive board positions, in the event of an unexpected immediate executive board vacancy (such as a sudden resignation or impeachment), a special election shall be held as soon as reasonably possible to fill the position.

Nominations

Generally, the membership should have the ability to nominate individuals for executive positions for a one week period which shall be well publicized.

Any voting member can nominate another voting member for an executive board position. This is done via email to iaa@bu.edu in which the member

clearly indicates who they nominate and for what position. Verbal nominations are not an acceptable form of nomination, nor are emails to other accounts or other forms of electronic communication (gchat, etc). No nominations shall be accepted after the publicized nomination deadline. Members may not nominate more than one individual for a position.

For a nomination to stand and an individual to qualify to stand for election to the executive board, they must receive two separate nominations per position they have interest in running for or others have interest in seeing them run for. Self-nominations are an accepted form of receiving one of the two requisite nominations.

If there is a member of the executive board who is likely to be nominated for a position, their access to all official executive board e-mail accounts (iaa@bu.edu and all other accounts which redirect to the same inbox) shall be temporarily suspended. This is to maintain fair elections for all candidates. If the sitting executive board member had access to the nominations and subsequent proposals of other candidates, that individual would have an unfair advantage.

During the nomination process the executive board member may not share in any way information about what individuals have or have not been nominated for positions with anyone who is not on the executive board in addition to anyone who has been nominated or may be nominated for a position.

Accepting nominations

Within 24 hours of the deadlines for nominations, the Vice President (or other executive board member presiding over elections) shall send out an individual email to all candidates nominated. They will be informed of their nomination to positions which they received two nominations from voting members. Candidates should have 24-48 hours to respond and accept or

decline their nominations to the positions which they have received nominations for. Candidates can only accept their nomination for one position. Candidates shall not be informed of which other individuals have been nominated for any positions as this information should not influence their decision regarding which nomination to accept.

Once all nominated individuals have replied to their nominations, all candidates shall be informed of which individuals are running for what positions.

Election Material

All candidate have the right to prepare materials as part of their campaign. The BarMUN and BosMUN SGs, in addition to the Editor in Chief of the IRR must draft conference/publication proposals to be distributed to the general membership in the weekly email for the week of the election as well as posted on the website. Persons running for the position of president or head delegate are also strongly encouraged to create a proposal as well. If a candidate would like to submit a proposal it must be submitted to iaa@bu.edu 12-24 hours before the weekly email is sent out to the membership.

Candidates are encouraged to speak with the person who currently holds the office they are running for before the election.

In addition, all candidates are allowed to create presentational material to present during the election (such as a power point), but this is not mandatory. Candidates must keep in mind the amount of time they will have to present during the election when crafting their presentation.

Elections

The Vice President (or whichever eboard member is running the election) is responsible for producing ballots for each position being voted on in the election. Scraps of paper are not acceptable for full-fledged elections.

Candidates will be given the opportunity to give a presentation to the general membership as to why they should be elected to the position they are running for. Candidates should present in alphabetical order within their position, unless there is a legitimate reason to reorder the candidates. The time allotted to these presentations is determined based upon how many people are running for the position and how many people are running in the election overall, but is generally around 3 minutes. Once each candidate within a position has had an opportunity to present, the election moderator will run a Q&A session in which the general membership can ask questions of all candidates for a position. Once the Q&A has concluded, ballots shall be distributed and the position voted upon.

Voting

Any voting member can vote, but they must be present at the election in order to maintain their right to vote. This is to ensure that the voting members are as informed and engaged in the election as possible and are making an informed decision when voting in the next eboard members. Exceptions to this rule are members who are abroad. They may send in their votes within a window of time proscribed by the Vice President (or other executive board member running the elections) but they should be due before the elections begin so as to be counted toward the election without any confusion. The only exceptions for members who are in Boston are if they have a class during the weekly meeting time or other exceptional circumstance. If either of these conditions is met, then the voting member must specify why they cannot attend the election and then clearly indicate

which individual they would like to vote for in each position. They must also meet the email vote deadline which shall be before the election begins. Unacceptable reasons to submit an absentee vote via email are having a paper to write, midterm the next day, friend in town, etc.

Each open executive board position shall be voted upon independently at the close of the Q&A. Ballots shall be distributed by the VP (or other executive board member running the election) with the help of around 3 other executive board members, none of whom can be running for an executive board position at that time.

Members will be given a few minutes to cast their votes and have them be collected by the aforementioned election officiators. The officiators will make sure that all members present are given a ballot to vote, including the candidates up for election. The officiators will then collect the ballots, making it clear to the members present that the ballots are being collected and once they leave the room no more ballots will be accepted. Once all ballots are collected the officiators will leave the room, with the exception of the Vice President (or the other executive board member leading the elections) who will remain in the room to continue moderating the elections.

The other officiators will leave the room to count votes. Votes shall be counted independently at least twice by the officiators. If there are more than one candidate running for a position, run-off elections shall be instituted until one of the remaining two candidates receives a majority.

The winner of any eboard position shall not be announced until all positions have been voted on and ballots counted. This is to ensure that the outcome of the election of any position does not influence the vote of any other position. Once all positions have been voted on and counted and run-off elections held, the winners of all positions shall all be announced at once. The vote breakdown shall not be announced to the general membership and will only be told to candidates for that position who ask. All ballots shall be kept by the VP (or eboard member who ran the elections) for a one week period, when any inquiries into the election can be made. After that

one week period, the ballots may be destroyed and inquiries into the election may be denied.

Post Elections

Once elections have occurred, before newly elected candidates are given access to executive board email accounts, all nominations and absentee ballots must be deleted and then removed from the trash folder so they cannot be retrieved to protect the rights and privacy of IAA members.

At least one executive board meeting should be held with both executive boards present. This is also true for when SGs are elected.

Once a new executive board is elected it should start taking on the functions of the executive board. However, the outgoing executive board is still the 'reigning' executive board until the current Boston University academic term officially comes to a close. At that point the official handover between outgoing officers and incoming officers is official. Secretary Generals assume their position one week after their election. Officers elected in all other special elections (eg non-regularly scheduled mid-semester elections) assume their positions one week after their election.