

ELECTION PROCEDURES

WCCFT
WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

February 2013

WCCFT ELECTION PROCEDURES

For purposes of this document, use of email will satisfy the “in writing” requirement.

I. Elections Committee

- A. The Elections Committee shall be a special committee of the Union.
- B. A committee of three members shall be appointed. No one seeking election shall serve on the Elections Committee. The members of the Elections Committee shall designate a chairperson.
- C. Designation of committee members
 - 1. Union members may volunteer to serve on the Elections Committee.
Those interested must contact the Secretary regarding their intent to serve as volunteers.
The first three volunteers shall serve on the committee for the elections at hand. The Union Secretary and other volunteers may assist the committee in the election process but not in the ballot counting.
 - 2. Any member of the Elections Committee who is a candidate for office in a particular election shall be disqualified from participating on the Committee during that election.
- D. Responsibilities of the Committee
 - 1. To provide all Union members with written notice of the procedures governing elections, including, but not limited to, the procedure for nomination of candidates, voting procedure including the time, place and method of voting, and the procedure by which voting irregularities in the results of the election may be challenged.
 - 2. To ensure that due notice is given members of matters concerning nominations, elections, and certification of election results.
 - 3. To administer all elections in accordance with the published rules and timetables.
 - 4. To investigate allegations of improper election conduct and to recommend to the Executive Committee appropriate disposition of such allegations.
 - 5. To devise and implement, with the approval of the Executive Committee, procedures for handling special elections which, because of time or other unusual constraints, do not permit application of the published election procedures.

II. Election of Officers, Convention Delegates & Alternate Delegates

- A. The rules described in this section shall apply to the election of the President, Vice- President, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Committee Members (including an adjunct representative), Convention Delegates and Alternate Delegates for NYSUT.
- B. Nominations
 - 1. Nominations for officers and delegates shall be solicited in a written notice to all members, to be delivered during the first week of March of each odd-numbered year. Nominations will also be requested at the March general membership meeting.
 - 2. The letter in which nominations are solicited shall announce the closing date for acceptance of nominations (the last Wednesday of March), the rules governing nominations, and the date when ballots will be mailed to members.

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3. Nominations shall be submitted in writing to the Elections Committee chairperson or in person at the March general membership meeting. The Elections Committee chairperson shall contact each nominee to receive written permission for his/her name to appear on the ballot. Members can self-nominate. If the nominee does not give his/her written permission to appear on the ballot within seven business days of the close of nominations, his/her name will not be on the ballot.

C. Notification

1. After the closing of nominations, the Elections Committee chairperson shall inform all members of the nominees for each position. The notice shall specify the ground rules governing statements by candidates. The notice shall repeat the date when ballots will be mailed to members.
2. After the closing of nominations, the Elections Committee chairperson shall invite each candidate to submit by a date to be specified by the Committee a statement of his/her position. The statement shall be submitted by the designated date via the candidate's WCC email account. The statements shall be of a reasonable length, to be specified by the Elections Committee. The Elections Committee will send the statement to the website editor for posting on the website.
3. The Elections Committee chairperson shall: notify each nominated candidate of all election and campaign rules, including the right of the candidate to inspect, but not to copy, once within 30 days before the election, a list of all members eligible to vote; the right of the candidate to distribute campaign literature to members at each candidate's expense; and, to further advise the candidates and current elected office holders about the prohibition against the use of Union and/or College funds (including facilities, equipment and supplies) to support any person's candidacy for office. In addition, candidates will be informed that the Union logo or letterhead may not be used for partisan political purposes during the conduct of an election, although incumbent elected officials may continue to use these items for Union purposes during the course of the election. Candidates shall also be advised of the date, time, and place of the ballot pickup at the post office and the tally of ballots, and their right to have observers at each of these activities.

III. Voter Eligibility

Any member in good standing shall be eligible to vote. This shall include any person who has fulfilled the requirements for membership, and who is on the membership list of the WCCFT as of close of nominations. A list of members who join after that date must be kept by the Secretary and the Chairperson of the Elections Committee, and those people shall also be permitted to vote.

IV. Mail Ballot Procedures

- A. Elections shall be conducted by mail ballot, except where the Elections Committee, by unanimous vote, determines that time does not permit a mail ballot. If in-person balloting becomes necessary, the Elections Committee shall develop and administer procedures for in-person and/or electronic balloting in conformity with the applicable regulations of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (Title IV, LMRDA).
- B. The Union shall maintain a mail box for the exclusive use of elections by mail. The ballots shall be picked up and transported by at least two members of the Elections Committee and counted the same day, if possible, by the Elections Committee.

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C. Balloting

1. Ballots shall be prepared by the Elections Committee with the assistance of the Secretary. The names of the candidates for each office shall be listed in alphabetical order. The Elections Committee chairperson shall certify and maintain a record of the total number of ballots distributed.
2. Within two days of the April general membership meeting, the Elections Committee shall send a ballot to each member. Ballots shall be distributed by first-class mail.
3. The Union shall rent and maintain a mail box for the exclusive use of the mail ballot, for the period between when ballots are mailed to the membership and the date ballots must be returned.
4. Balloting shall be conducted by the double-envelope system. Each member eligible to vote shall receive:
 - (a) Instructions for voting
 - (b) One official unmarked ballot
 - (c) One ballot envelope
 - (d) One return-addressed envelope, with voter identification, name, and address.

The return address shall be the mail box maintained by the Union for the election.

5. Instructions for voting shall include the following:
 - (a) Mark the squares next to the names of the candidates of your choice in the space provided. Do not make any other marks on the ballot.
 - (b) Place the marked ballot in the ballot envelope.
 - (c) Place the ballot envelope in the return-addressed envelope.
 - (d) Place a stamp on the envelope and mail it in time to arrive before 12:00 noon on the specified date. Ballots received after that time will be invalidated.
 - (e) Ballot secrecy can be maintained only if you follow instructions and personally mark and mail your ballot.
6. Notice will be distributed to all Union members stating the mailing date of ballots. In the event that a member claims not to have received a ballot, he/she must notify the Elections Committee chairperson, who shall prepare a new return-addressed envelope, which shall be marked "Replacement Ballot." The new ballot can either be picked up at the Union office (from the chairperson or a designated agent of the chairperson), or the individual can request that the ballot be mailed if time permits. In the case of mailing, the Union does not guarantee that the ballot will reach the member in time for balloting. A signature will be required to either pick up or have the new ballot mailed. All other voting procedures shall apply.

B. Collection and Counting of Ballots

1. All candidates shall be notified in advance of the designated time and place for the collection and counting of ballots. They and/or observers of their choice shall have the right to be present during the collection of the ballots from the mailbox and the counting of the ballots in the Union office.

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2. At the designated time, the Elections Committee, or at least two designated members of the Committee, shall obtain the ballots from the mailbox. The Committee chairperson, or designated Committee member(s), shall retain custody of the ballots until the ballots are released for counting. Every effort should be made to count them on the same day as they are removed from the mailbox.
3. The Elections Committee shall record the number of envelopes received.
4. In the event of a contested election result, the Elections Committee shall arrange the return envelopes in alphabetical order to determine that each voter name is valid for that election. A return envelope bearing a voter name which is not valid for the election at hand will result in the invalidation of that vote. If more votes are found to be invalid than the vote margin between contestants in the election, a new election will be held for that office.
5. The Elections Committee shall separate the ballot envelopes from the return envelopes and shall retain the return envelopes.
6. The Committee shall remove the ballots from the ballot envelopes.
7. All ballots shall be tallied twice unless unusual circumstances dictate otherwise at the sole discretion of the Elections Committee.
8. Ballots which do not designate any choice or which designate more than the allowable number of choices for a given office shall be invalidated.
9. The Committee shall prepare a final tally sheet. The final tally sheet shall be signed by all Committee members, candidates and observers present during the counting.
10. The Committee shall preserve, in its custody, for one year, the record of the election which shall consist of:
 - (a) Copies of all notices concerning the election.
 - (b) Return envelopes of all ballots.
 - (c) All marked and invalidated ballots.
 - (d) Tally sheets.

C. Certification and Publication of Election Results

1. Within 48 hours of the counting of ballots, or no later than the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting, the Executive Committee shall be asked to consider the election results.
2. The Elections Committee chairperson shall present a complete report of the count and, if appropriate, shall recommend certification of the results by the Executive Committee.
3. Once the results have been certified by the Executive Committee, the Secretary shall distribute a notice of the results to the membership. The results certified by the Executive Committee shall be final, subject only to an appeal of the election results.

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