

In light of the errors and changes in the New Student Elections (NSE), the UBE has issued a statement to outline the relevant events:

To the University Community,

On Monday, October 9th, ballots became live for the New Student Elections, consisting of seven races: First Year Council (FYC) President, FYC Vice President, Student Council First Year Representatives, Student Council Transfer Student Representative, Student Council Undergraduate International Student Representative, Graduate International Student Representative, and UJC Data Science Representative. After receiving notice of eligible candidates not being present on the ballot, the UBE withdrew the ballot after some votes were cast, and a new ballot was released at 4:00 pm the same day. The UBE was then later informed that several races were not being conducted through ranked choice voting, a requirement per the UBE's Election Rules & Procedures.

The UBE considered three options as a result: (1) to withdraw the ballot for a second time and issue a new one, (2) to hold a Special Runoff Election for the top two candidates in races that did not see a candidate win more than 50% of the vote, or (3) to decide the winner based on who won the most votes regardless of if any candidate reached a majority. The UBE rejected the first option, feeling that to release a new ballot under such short time constraints would decrease turnout and create an inaccurate picture of voter preferences. The third option was rejected, as well, as it did not align with the UBE's Election Rules and the UBE believed that such a decision would harm election integrity. Thus, a runoff election, which is permissible under the UBE's Election Rules and preserves the protections of ranked choice voting, was chosen.

Following feedback from affected candidates, the UBE has outlined the following parameters of the Runoff Special Election:

- The NSE ballot closes at 11:59 pm on Wednesday, October 9th. The results will be uploaded to the UBE's website the next morning. Only races that do not see one candidate gain more than 50% of the vote will advance to the next election.
- Candidates who qualify for the runoff (the top two vote getters) will have until 6:00 pm on Thursday, October 10th to inform the UBE if they choose to withdraw or continue their candidacy.
- Campaigning can begin immediately, but there will be a prohibition on further campaigning beginning on October 12th and ending on October 15th. Voting will begin on October 16th and will close on October 18th, with the results being announced the next day.

In order to further ease the burden initial campaigning may pose on candidates, the UBE intends to, in addition to providing reimbursements (up to \$75, consistent with the UBE's Spring

Election policies), work to provide equal advertisement for all candidates' platforms in an unbiased manner. To allow candidates to enjoy their Fall Break, a suspension of campaigning will occur between October 12th and October 15th. The UBE also intends to work directly with the selected candidates to ameliorate their additional campaigning concerns and help them in any way that is consistent with existing regulations.

A lengthier examination into the issues impacting New Student Elections elections will be released in November through the UBE's Fall Elections Analysis Report (this will be posted on the UBE's website). This will also include the actionable steps the UBE will take to prevent these obstacles from occurring in the future.

The UBE wants to commend the actions of the affected candidates throughout this whole process. Their feedback and engagement has been greatly appreciated and we look forward to seeing what they will accomplish in the future. To the voters, we thank you for casting your ballots these past three days and hope to see you cast your votes once again next week.

Please direct any inquiries or comments to ube-admin@virginia.edu.

Signed,

Zach Lederer, *University Board of Elections Chair*

Maggie Doyle, *University Board of Elections Vice Chair for Elections and Voter Education*

Haley Barrett, *University Board of Elections Vice Chair for Candidates*

Abby Nickelson, *University Board of Elections Vice Chair for Rules and Administration*

Max Fleisher, *University Board of Elections Vice Chair for Marketing and Outreach*