



A culture of recognition and mutual respect where the MRSA is an equal and valued partner in the MRU community.

Election Canvassing Policy		
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1.0 POLICY RATIONALE

These guidelines address the specific procedures, prohibitions and conditions under which a Mount Royal Staff Association (MRSA) Candidate may conduct a campaign during the election period.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.01 **By-Election** - An election held between general elections to fill a vacant seat or to replace a member of the MRSA Executive or MRSA Committee who has resigned or was required to step down.
- 2.02 **Campaign** - A systematic and assertive plan to put forward one Candidate over another. This includes activity by or on behalf of a Candidate meant to solicit support during the election period.
- 2.03 **Candidate** - A nominee who has been accepted by the Elections Chair to run for election.
- 2.04 **Canvassing** - Systematic and direct contact, including print materials and social media, with the voting members of the MRSA by a Candidate during an election period. This includes encouraging members to vote, and/or as the candidate's participation in a public forum.
- 2.05 **Elections Chair** - He/she shall oversee the entire process of any election, ratification or other ballot. The Elections Chair shall be responsible for the selection and appointment of the Poll Captain, Scrutineer and Ballot Counters. The Elections Chair shall work closely with the Nominations Officer to ensure a properly conducted election process. This position is necessary for both electronic voting and manual voting.

2.06 **Election Period** - The period during which Candidates are allowed to conduct a campaign. This is defined as starting the day after the closing of nominations up to twelve (12) hours before the start of voting as announced by the MRSA Executive.

2.07 **General Election** - An election in which members of the MRSA vote to elect a member to the MRSA Executive Board or an MRSA Committee.

2.08 **MRSA Executive** - Shall consist of its Officers and a minimum of eight (8) Directors-at-Large elected or appointed from the membership.

2.09 **MRSA Officer**- Includes the following positions: President, Vice-President(s), Treasurer/Secretary and the past President.

2.10 **Nominee** - Any MRSA member who has submitted a nomination form but has not yet been declared a Candidate.

2.11 **Voting Member** - Any MRSA member in good standing.

CANVASSING AND CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

The following is a summary of general information pertaining to canvassing during an election period. Any information further to this document supplied by the MRSA must be made equally available to all Candidates.

3.01 **Campaign Statement** – Each Candidate shall provide a campaign statement as required by the nomination procedure outlined in sections 11.04 of the MRSA Elections and Voting Policy and section 3 (c) of the MRSA Policy for Elections of Executive Board and Elected Committee Members.. These statements shall be available for all Voting Members to see during the election period and shall serve as the basis for the Candidate’s campaign.

3.02 **Campaign Materials** – Any item giveaway (sound, pamphlet, poster etc.) that is created or distributed to influence a Voting Member in favour of a Candidate.

Campaign Materials are subject to the provisions below:

- a. a poster shall be defined as an advertisement with dimensions not exceeding 11” by 17”;
- b. campaign materials shall be distributed only in allowed areas as defined by the MRSA (see 3.03);
- c. campaign materials must conform to Mount Royal University (MRU) standards laid out by the Human Rights Policy and the Offensive/Discriminatory Materials Policy or Provincial and Federal Laws;
- d. materials must not slander or defame another Candidate;

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- e. campaign materials must promote only one Candidate; and
- f. the MRSA will not contribute financially to any Candidate's campaign.

3.03 Permitted Location of Campaign Materials – Candidates may only distribute or post campaign materials in areas designated by the MRSA:

- a. the MRSA shall provide a space in the MRSA Staff Lounge for posting campaign materials that all Candidates will have equal opportunity to post in; and,
- b. no Candidate shall post campaign materials outside areas designated by the MRSA. This includes Main Street, the library, computer labs, classrooms or department offices (unless designated by the MRSA).

3.04 Canvassing – Canvassing may be carried out in person by the Candidate or a representative of the Candidate under the following conditions:

- a. the MRSA may provide a public forum for the Candidates;
- b. access to public areas on campus for the purpose of canvassing may not be unreasonably restricted to Candidates; and,
- c. while a Voting Member is in a designated voting space during a vote, no Candidate or representative of a Candidate shall attempt to influence that Member's vote. This applies to the designated voting station in the event of a paper ballot, or a Voting Member's personal workspace in the event of an electronic ballot.

3.05 Canvassing Through Social Media –Canvassing with social media may be conducted as follows:

- a. social media includes the use of mediums such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogs, and any other online platforms;
- b. use of social media must conform to the [MRU Social Networking Guidelines as posted on the MRU website](#);
- c. social media may not be used by a Candidate to spam or otherwise harass Voting Members or Candidates;
- d. Candidates may not subscribe Voting Members to social media channels without their knowledge and consent; and,
- e. Candidates may not conduct a campaign through official MRU social media channels.

3.06 Timeframe –Campaigning or canvassing of any type may only be carried out during the election period as follows:

- a. no campaign materials may be distributed before the Candidates are publicly announced; and,
- b. Active canvassing must cease at least twelve (12) hours prior to the election.
- c. Candidates may not attempt to influence voting members in or around a designated voting place during the voting period.
 - i. In the case of a paper ballot this includes the official polling stations.
 - ii. In the case of an electronic ballot this includes a voting member’s personal workspace or any location where a computer may be used for voting.

4.0 ALLOWABLE RESOURCES

This section outlines which resources are and are not allowed to be used by Candidates in the course of their campaign.

4.01 Use of MRU and MRSA logos – Candidates are prohibited from using the official logos of Mount Royal University and the Mount Royal Staff Association in campaign materials. The MRSA shall not be seen to support any one Candidate over another. Such materials include, but are not limited to: posters, banners, pamphlets, correspondence, websites, and MRU business cards.

4.02 Use of MRSA Resources –The Mount Royal Staff Association will not contribute resources directly or indirectly to an individual Candidate’s campaign.

- a. These resources include but are not limited to MRSA facilities, funds, printing, and information on voting members.
- b. The MRSA will provide an orientation regarding the MRSA campaigning process to which all Candidates are invited.

5.0 ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES

This section outlines which activities are allowed during the canvassing period.

5.01 Candidate Communication – After the closing of nominations and the beginning of the election period, the MRSA Elections Chair shall arrange a Candidate communication with all eligible Candidates. This communication will outline the Canvassing Policy. The following will take place in the communication:

- a. the MRSA Elections Chair will announce all eligible Candidates, the dates of upcoming forums and permitted campaigning locations if necessary;

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b. the MRSA Elections Chair will also explain any spoiled nominations if applicable.

5.02 Candidates Forum – The MRSA may conduct a public forum for all Candidates running for Executive Board and Committee membership.

a. This forum may be scheduled during the canvassing period.

b. Only candidates are permitted to participate in the forum.

c. MRSA members shall be invited to attend the forum.

d. The forum may include a platform presentation followed by a question and answer period.

5.03 Canvassing During MRU Events – Candidates may attend MRU events for the purpose of meeting voters.

5.04 Elected Officers – Elected Officers of the MRSA who are running for re-election may not campaign or canvass in the service of their duties.

6.0 PROHIBITIONS

This section deals with activities which are not allowed to be carried out by Candidates or representatives of Candidates.

6.01 Communication – No Candidate shall intentionally disperse campaign information directly through the MRSA. This includes:

a. soliciting votes through official MRSA communication (i.e. emails and/or letterhead);

b. interoffice mail or MRU email distribution lists;

c. official MRU communication channels, including MRU media boards, official memos, FaceTime or other publications;

Any information about an election distributed through the MRSA shall include all eligible Candidates with equal representation from each, and MRSA communications may not advocate for any one Candidate over another.

6.02 Gifts – No Candidate or representative of a Candidate shall accept or give a gift or other advantage that might influence them in the performance of their campaign or to sway a voting member. No Candidate or representative of a Candidate shall promise gifts, services, committee appointments etc. to a voting member in the event that the Candidate is elected.

6.03 Undue Influence – No Candidate or representative of a Candidate may verbally or physically threaten another Candidate or voting member with the intent of influencing that member’s vote.

6.04 No Candidate or representative of a Candidate may canvass or conduct a campaign within twelve (12) hours of a vote taking place.

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1.0	01/04/2014		
1.1	13/11/2014	Executive Board	Canvassing guidelines for MRSA candidates
1.2	4/22/2020	Executive Board	Updates to canvassing guidelines for MRSA candidates