

UNK Student Government Election Guidelines 2026

Dates: Wednesday and Thursday, March 4 and 5, 2026

Candidates filing for the 2026 University of Nebraska at Kearney Student Government Election and who intend to run for the office of Senator,

Vice President, or President must abide by the following election guidelines. Furthermore, be it known that any infringement upon the rules outlined in this act or outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Associated Students of the University of Nebraska – Kearney may result in having the candidate’s name removed from the election ballot.

SECTION ONE

Application Guidelines

1. All candidates running for Student Body President/Student Regent and Student Body Vice President must fill out an application, which are located online or in the Nebraskan Student Union Engagement Office. The last day to file the said application, with all required fields completed, will be no later than **February 13, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.** Central Standard Time.
2. Prior to filing, all candidates must attend a mandatory informational meeting in the Student Engagement Office on **February 3 at 4:00 p.m. or February 10 at 5:00 p.m.** If candidates cannot attend, please make prior arrangements with the election commissioner.
3. All candidates running for the office of Senator in the Student Senate must complete an application and have all required fields filled in and submitted no later than February 13, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time. Please note that if you are running the Student Senate, hereinafter referred to as the Senate, you will be running in the open seat that is associated with your college major.
4. Candidates running positions on UNK Student Government must be in good standing with the University of Nebraska-Kearney and must meet other requirements according to the UNK Student Government application.
 - a. According to the Student Conduct Policy “good standing” is defined as: “Generally, students who violate the student code of conduct more than once or violate the code in an egregious manner (i.e., physical fight, drug dealing, etc.) will likely be sanctioned with a minimum of a probationary period and therefore would be considered not in good standing. However, for most first-time violations a sanction of a probationary period is not typically used and therefore the student would be considered in good standing.
5. Candidates are required to provide a detailed list of all campaign agents on the day applications are submitted. All President, Vice President, and Senate candidates will be held responsible for any of their agent’s actions.

6. This list must be submitted to the Election Commissioner or the Student Government Advisors at the Nebraskan Student Union. The list may be updated but still needs the approval of either the Election Commissioner or the Student Government Advisors at the Nebraskan Student Union. Please be aware that all agent lists can be updated at any time during the campaign.
7. Candidates may be disqualified if one of the campaign agents violates any existing election and campaign regulations.
8. Violations made by campaign agents will be subjected to disciplinary action as described in the University of Nebraska – Kearney 2025 Election Guidelines Act.
9. Members of the student press (Antelope Newspaper) may not run for Student Government. Those wishing to run student government or serve as an agent for a candidate must first relinquish their position as a student press member before campaigning starts.
10. Candidates may run on both the Presidential and Senatorial tickets; however, they can only run under the rules of the presidential position while keeping their name on both ballots.
11. All Student Body President/Regent and Student Body Vice President Applicant(s) must attend a mandatory Student Government Informational Session held by the Election Commissioner. Virtual attendance must be arranged between the Applicant(s) and the Election Commissioner.
 - a. If a Student Body President/Regent or Student Body Vice President Applicant(s) is unable to attend the Informational Sessions, he/she must make an appointment with the Election Commissioner to discuss the election process and rules prior to the application deadline.
 - b. Student Body President/Regent of Student Body Vice President Applicants must attend an appointment with the current Student Body/Regent or Student Government Advisors prior to the application deadline.
12. All Senator Applicant(s) must attend a mandatory Student Government Informational Session held by the Election Commissioner. Virtual attendance must be arranged between the Applicant(s) and the Election Commissioner.
 - a. If a Senator Applicant(s) is unable to attend the Informational Sessions, he/she must make an appointment with the Election Commissioner to discuss the election process and rules prior to the application deadline.
13. If a break (such as Spring Break) follows the election, the runoff will be held the week students return from said break.
14. All candidates will behave in a cordial manner, showing respect for other candidates and campaign agents while campaigning. The election commissioner in collaboration with the Rules and Ethics Committee will have the power to decide what is considered unethical behavior.

SECTION TWO

Creation and Dispersing of Campaign Materials on Campus

1. Only candidates and registered agents will be allowed to independently create and distribute any campaign materials. Please review UNK's Policy on Posting Materials, Display of Signage of University Property. [posting-signage-policy-draft.pdf \(unk.edu\)](#)
2. All campaign materials must be approved and signed by the Election Commissioner or Student Government Advisors at the Nebraskan Student Union before the distribution of campaign materials. Any material found that is not approved by the people mentioned above will result in the taking down of material and a written warning by the Election Commissioner.
 - a. Unlike physical materials, each individual social media post does not need to be approved by the election commissioner so long as they can see the account.
3. Candidates wishing to post campaign materials in the residence halls must comply with the procedure set by the Office of Residential Life.
4. All candidates wishing to advertise in the academic halls must take their signed and approved campaign material to the Dean of the Department or the building supervisor of the respective colleges for signatures of approval. All candidates will be responsible for distributing their own material in the academic halls, unless otherwise stated by the Dean's office/Building supervisor.
5. No candidate, agent, or staff may feature campaign materials, campaign ideas or slogans in classrooms.
6. Candidates and agents may post campaign material on university resident doors so long as permission is granted by the occupant(s).
7. Candidates may utilize lawn advertisements but must receive written permission from all occupants living at that place of residence. The advertisement cannot exceed sixteen (16) square feet.
8. Candidates may not put campaign ideas or slogans on university-owned sidewalks or road surfaces.
9. If a candidate or a candidate agent is caught taking campaign material from another camp, the candidate's name will be taken off the ballot.

SECTION THREE

Campaign Guidelines

1. Candidates, campaign agents, or others cannot place a vote for another student even if they give their consent. A violation of this rule will result in the loss of his or her vote.

2. Election Day campaigning by candidates or agents must be contained to a fifty (50) feet radius of Cope Memorial Fountain area with no campaigning to take place in residential, academic, or campus buildings, amphitheater, and the intramural soccer fields. The Election Commissioner holds the power to move election-day campaigning to an alternative site due to inclement weather.

3. All candidates may start campaigning at noon **(12:00 p.m.) on February 19, 2026**. Before campaigning, candidates must have all necessary forms filed and approved by the Election Commissioner or the Student Government Advisors at the Nebraskan Student Union.

4. All campaign materials may remain throughout the election but must be removed twenty-four (24) hours after the final day of the election.

SECTION FOUR

Purpose:

Clarify social media guidelines to promote a fair and civil election environment.

1. The Election Commissioner must be notified of all social accounts and websites created specifically for the campaign.
 - a. Unlike physical materials, each individual social media post does not need to be approved by the election commissioner so long as they can see the account.
2. All groups and events designed for the use of campaigning must invite the Election Commissioner to the group to ensure that all rules and guidelines are followed. Upon accepting the invitation to the group and events, the Election Commissioner should be named as an administrator to the groups and events, if possible.
3. Any candidate or candidate agent found in violation of these guidelines will have their name taken off the ballot.

In addition: Common Social Media Guidelines and Potential Violations:

1. Campaign Timing: Campaigning includes distributing physical materials e.g. buttons, banners, flyers, etc. restricted to designated periods. Engaging in social media campaigning before the official start date is prohibited.
2. Content Approval: Again, all physical campaign materials must be approved by the Election Commissioner before dissemination. Failure to obtain such approval can be a violation.
3. Use of University Resources: Utilizing official university platforms or resources for campaigning without authorization is generally against election regulations. This includes posting on university-managed social media accounts or electronic media boards. Unauthorized use can lead to penalties.

SECTION FIVE

Organization and Academic Support

1. An organization may support a candidate only if everyone in that organization is in favor of supporting that candidate(s). The organization must show evidence in writing to the election commissioner before any action is taken to help a candidate campaign. Organizations can support the candidate in only these ways.

- Take out an advertisement in The Antelope
- Lawn displays in (yard signs) the form of a poster must not exceed sixteen (16) square feet. The poster needs to be ten feet away from all university property and must be approved by the Election Commissioner of Student Government and Advisors at the Nebraskan Student Union. The poster also must be paid for with organization funds (Please note University Poster Policy).
- All candidate support must have in fine print at the bottom “Paid for by...” the name of the organization.
- Any donation made by a student organization will count toward the total budget allowed to a candidate.

2. Community assemblies cannot make a formal announcement in support of a candidate(s)

3. RHA and the NRHH may not make a formal announcement in the support of a candidate(s).

4. Resident Advisors may not make a formal announcement in the support of a candidate(s).

5. “Any University of Nebraska at Kearney office may **not** make a formal announcement in the support of a candidate(s). I.e. Office of Residence Life, Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Office of Student and Family Transitions, Office of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership, etc. The Election Commissioner shall have the authority to specify additional offices as they see fit.”

6. Organizations that are considered student-run must have a current and recently approved constitution. If there are questions about this matter, consult the Election Commissioner or the Student Government Advisor at the Nebraskan Student Union. Revision: Senate Bill

7. When an organization chooses to support a candidate, they must let the election commissioner know that their group has approved the endorsement prior to campaigning.

8. UNK Faculty may invite candidates to speak in their classes about their campaign so long as they provide all candidates with equal opportunity to do so.

9. Only the Director of Student Engagement/Student Government Advisor and the Election Commissioner can request early results of the campaign.

SECTION SIX

Candidate Finance

- 1 Candidates for *the* Student Body President/Student Regent and Student Body Vice President may receive donations from any student organization or individual. No candidate for Student Body President/Student Regent and Student Body Vice President may spend more than \$300 in campaign expenditures including purchased and non-purchased materials. (Non-purchased items are those items that have been donated). An expenditure report must be turned in by 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time to the Election Commissioner or Student Government Advisor at the Nebraskan Student Union the Friday after the election.

2. Candidates for the Student Senate may receive donations and cannot exceed the spending limit of \$100 including purchased and non- purchased items. An expenditure report must be turned into the Election Commissioner or Student Government Advisor at the Student Union by 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time the Friday following the election.

3. A fair market value for a donation or discount must be determined in advance by the Election Commissioner or Student Government Advisor. (For example – a student candidate that is an employee must declare full price value for an employee discount or privilege.) 6

4. Only UNK students and student groups (As defined by the UNK Student Senate) can contribute to a candidate’s campaign funds. UNK students may contribute \$15 per student. Donations from registered student organizations cannot exceed \$50.

5. Candidates shall not receive campaign donations, either monetary or material, totaling more than the spending limit for the position.

SECTION SEVEN

Debate

1. A mandatory debate will be held between candidates running for President and Vice President. If there is only one party, an open forum will be conducted.

2. If a candidate cannot attend the mandatory debate, they must communicate with the Election Commissioner before the week of the debate. The Election Commissioner and Student Government Advisors will have the final choice to determine what qualifies as an excused absence.

3. The debate will be hosted by the Judicial Branch of the UNK Student Government no later than two nights before the first day of elections. The debate moderator will be the current Election Commissioner assisted by the Election Commissioner's Staff.
4. The questions will not be released to the candidates until the debate.
5. All questions will be compiled by the Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioner's Staff. The questions will go through a screening process conducted no later than 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time two days before the debate by the Student Government Advisors.
6. All details of the debate will be organized by the Election Commissioner in partnership with the Judicial Branch of UNK Student Government.

SECTION EIGHT:

Election Day

1. The General Elections will be held on **March 4 and 5, 2026**. Voting will be done electronically.
 2. To win the office of Student Body President and Student Body Vice President in the general election, the candidate(s) on the same ticket must receive fifty (50) percent plus one (1) of the general election votes. If this number is not obtained, a runoff election will take place.
 3. Unless disqualified for some reason, the two (2) candidates whose names are on the ticket receiving the most votes for Student Body President/Student Regent and Student Body Vice President after any recount will be certified as elected provided the vote tally meets the special certification of election as described in Section Eight, Point Two.
- . All election week rules and guidelines outlined earlier must be followed, with special attention paid to the Section Four titled "online social groups."
5. Please report all discrepancies to the Election Commissioner.

SECTION NINE

Runoff Elections

1. If an executive candidate does not receive the number of votes to secure a win, a runoff election will be conducted one week after the general election. The candidates in the election will be the top two presidential candidates that received the most votes during the general election.
2. The candidates taking part in the runoff election will be allowed an extra \$100 in campaign expenditure. This money can either come from organization donations or individuals who donated to the campaign in the general election. The winner of the runoff election must receive the fifty (50) percent plus one (1) of the votes and will be awarded the position of Student Body President/Student Regent and Student Body Vice President.

4. All expenditure reports from the runoff election must be turned in by the following Friday at 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time

SECTION TEN

Punishments and Violations

1. All violations to these guidelines, rules and regulations of the Election Commission, Bylaws, or Constitution of the Associated Student of the University of Nebraska – Kearney may result in the immediate disqualification and name of the candidate being taken off the ballot.
2. The Election Commissioner has the power to take anyone's name off the ballot, but only with the advice of the Student Government Advisor at the Nebraskan Student Union; as set upon in Section 12, Article 1 in the University