

THE SUPREME STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTION CODE

(Amended and approved by the 2024 COMELEC Members on April 24, 2024)

ARTICLE I General Rules

Section 1 of Article I establishes the official title of this code as the 'Election Code of the JOSE MARIA COLLEGE FOUNDATION, INC. - COLLEGE DEPARTMENT,' commonly referred to as the SSC Election Code.

Section 2 outlines the scope of this code, indicating its authority over all aspects of elections for the JMCFI Supreme Student Council, as well as any relevant referenda and plebiscites.

Section 3 Definitions - In this Code, the following terms mean:

- a. 'JMCFI' means Jose Maria College Foundation, Inc.;
- b. 'Jose Maria College Foundation, Inc.' or 'JMCFI' means all parts of the JMCFI that offer classes and degrees;
- c. 'Student Government' means the Supreme Student Council and the student body;
- d. 'Supreme Student Council' or 'SSC' means the group of student leaders elected by students in JMCFI;
- e. 'Committee on Elections' or 'CoE' means the group responsible for making sure this code is followed during SSC elections;
- f. 'Student Officers' or 'SOs' means the student leaders elected to the SSC;
- g. 'General Assembly' means all students in all programs of JMCFI;
- k. 'Student Body' means all students enrolled in the programs offered by JMCFI;
- l. 'Constitution' means the rules for the student body promulgated by the SSC.

Section 4. Election and Campaign Times - Unless the Committee on Elections decides differently for special situations, the election period begins when students start filing their Certificate of Candidacy and ends when the winners are announced. Campaigning starts one day after filing your Candidacy and lasts as long as the Committee on Elections says is needed. General elections happen at least thirty-five days before the second semester of the academic year ends.

Section 5. Delaying Elections - If something serious happens, like losing election materials or records, or if there's a major event like a natural disaster that stops us from having a fair election, the Committee on Elections can delay the election. They'll do this if someone asks for it and after listening to everyone involved. The new election date will be close to the original date but not more than thirty days later than when the problem happened.

Section 6. Special Elections - If there's a vacancy, the SSC will organize a special election to find a new member. But if all the positions in the SSC are vacant, the Committee on Elections will hold a special election to fill them. They'll make sure all SSC posts are filled, unless the vacancy happens within thirty days of the next general election.

Section 7. Failure to assume office - If an elected official doesn't take their oath within thirty days of being announced as the winner, their position will be considered vacant.

ARTICLE II

The Committee on Elections

Section 8. Responsibilities of the Committee on Elections - Apart from what is given in the Constitution, the Committee on Elections is solely responsible for making sure elections are fair and honest. They have these duties:

- a. Make rules and regulations for following this Code and other resolutions they need to enforce.
- b. Make sure their decisions are followed, which are more important than decisions from other groups.
- c. Decide on the tools and forms used in the election. They may suggest using new technology, considering voters' needs and available funds.
- d. Keep informing people through social media, campus publications, and other channels about election rules, procedures, and decisions. They'll also talk about their work and why it's important to have clean, fair, and honest elections.

Section 9. The Committee on Elections is made up of a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary, and three (3) members. They are chosen by the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of the SSC.

Section 10. The members and staff of the Committee on Elections must be impartial, without favoring any party or candidates.

- a. If any member or staff of the Committee takes part in campaigning for or against any candidates or party in the JMCFI Supreme Student Council elections, they will face disciplinary action. The Committee on Elections will investigate the incident, and if found guilty, the member will be removed from the committee.
- b. If there is enough evidence against any member or staff of the Committee on Elections for the mentioned actions, they will be removed from their position and cannot be reappointed.
- c. Any member or staff of the Committee on Elections who runs for a Supreme Student Council position will automatically lose their position and cannot be reappointed until the next election season.
- d. Any JMCFI student can submit a written objection to the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of the SSC to request the removal of any member or staff of the Committee on Elections, citing reasons for the objection. The accused member or staff has the right to challenge objections and can appeal to the Office of Student Affairs and the SSC Office. The decision made by these offices is final.

Section 11. Calling for Nominations for Vacant Positions - If someone leaves their position, either by resigning or being removed for cause, the Committee on Elections will quickly meet

and inform the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of the Supreme Student Council to fill the vacant post.

ARTICLE III Political Parties

Section 12. Definition - In this Code, a "political party" or simply a "party" refers to a group of JMCFI tertiary students who share the same beliefs, political ideas, or goals for student government. This includes any parts of the party like committees, commissions, or task forces.

Section 13. The Committee on Elections must approve all political parties at the JMCFI tertiary level. These parties will work together as partners to create a successful, fair, trustworthy, and accountable student political system within the JMCFI tertiary level.

- a. Any student group at JMCFI college can create a political party to join the election for college officers.
- b. There's no limit to how many student political parties can be recognized at JMCFI College.
- c. Before being recognized, political parties at JMCFI college must develop a platform for student government that follows the rules and regulations of the college. The Committee on Elections will approve parties based on their alignment with these rules.
- d. Political parties will pick their officers from their members. They'll also submit their list of nominees for each position in the Supreme Student Council to the Committee on Elections. Once accepted, these nominations are final.
- e. Any enrolled student at JMCFI college can join a political party in the Student Council, following the rules of the JMCFI Supreme Student Council Constitution. Transfer students can join after studying at JMCFI for at least a year.

ARTICLE IV Candidacy

Section 14. Who Can Run for Office - Before running for membership in the Supreme Student Council (SSC), candidates must:

- a. Have been at JMCFI College department for at least one year;
- b. Be a genuine student of the JMCFI College department;
- c. Have good grades;
- d. Not have been found guilty of any serious misconduct or wrongdoing at the JMCFI College department.

Section 15. Candidates with Officer Roles - Anyone with an officer role in SSC departments or committees must pause their duties during elections to prevent unfair influence.

- a. They can't use their official social media accounts for campaigning.
- b. They can't be promoted by a current officer who's not running for re-election.
- c. They can't use student organization funds to support their campaign.

Section 16. Disqualifications - Any candidate who, after a final decision from the Committee on Elections, voted on by all members, is found to have:

- a. Spread lies or false information (called black propaganda) to the Committee on Elections, other candidates, or JMCFI officials, employees, and faculty members.
- b. Previously been disqualified by the Committee on Elections from running for future positions in the SSC.
- c. Violated other parts of this election code after being warned by the Committee on Elections.
- d. Taken a leave of absence during the campaign.
- e. Been involved in a case related to serious wrongdoing at JMCFI, including academic dishonesty, that's still ongoing.

Section 17. Consequences of Disqualification and Priority

- a. The Committee will handle disqualification cases quickly so a decision is made at least three days before the election.
- b. If a candidate is disqualified before the election by a final decision, they won't be allowed to run and will be taken off the candidate list. Even if they get enough votes to win, they won't be declared the winner, won't take office, and can't run in future SSC elections.
- c. If a losing candidate is disqualified after the election by a final decision, they won't be allowed to run in future SSC elections.
- d. If the disqualification is for lying, cheating with official documents, or similar actions, it will be permanent.

Section 18. Filing for Candidacy

- a. To run for office, a person must submit their Certificate of Candidacy (COC) along with their Certificate of Registration or COR and General Plan of Action (GPOA) within the set timeframe decided by the Committee on Elections.
- b. Only the Committee on Elections can decide if someone's Candidacy Certificate is accepted or rejected.
- c. A person can't run for more than one office in the same election. If they file for multiple positions, only the last one they file for will be considered valid.

Section 19. Extending the Filing Period

If a candidate needs more time to submit their Certificate of Candidacy, they must send a written request to the Committee on Elections at least two days before the original deadline. Only the

Committee on Elections will handle these requests, and no other office will accept communication regarding extensions.

Section 20. Substituting Candidates in the Certificate of Candidacy - If, after the deadline for filing Certificates of Candidacy, an official candidate from a registered or accredited political party dies, withdraws, or is disqualified, only someone authorized by that same party can file a new Certificate of Candidacy to replace them. The replacement candidate must file their Certificate of Candidacy for the affected position no later than three days before the election, following the rules in earlier sections. If they don't, the position will be considered empty. Independent candidates don't have the right to be replaced.

Section 21. Withdrawal of Candidacy- If someone who applied to run wants to withdraw, they can do so at any time by telling the Committee on Elections through email or writing before the last day of the campaign.

Section 22. Publishing Candidacy Information - The list of who applied to run and who decided not to run will be shared on the SSC Committee on Elections' official page and on JMCFI Supreme Student Council's official pages.

ARTICLE V

Campaign and Election Propaganda

Section 23. DEFINITIONS - In this Code:

- a. A "candidate" means anyone who wants to run for a public office, and they've officially applied by themselves or through a political party.
- b. "Election campaign" or "partisan political activity" means any action aimed at supporting or opposing a candidate running for public office, including:
 1. Forming groups to ask for votes or campaign for or against a candidate.
 2. Holding meetings or gatherings to ask for votes or campaign for or against a candidate.
 3. Giving speeches, making announcements, or doing interviews for or against a candidate.
 4. Publishing or sharing materials supporting or opposing a candidate.
 5. Asking directly or indirectly for votes or support for or against a candidate.
- c. If students encourage someone to run for office, it's not seen as an election campaign or partisan activity. Also, discussing possible issues or criticizing potential candidates in public won't be seen as election campaigning or partisan activity.

Section 24. CAMPAIGNING OUTSIDE CAMPAIGN TIME. Anyone, whether they're a voter or a candidate, who campaigns outside the approved campaign time will face punishment from the Committee on Elections after a final decision is made.

Section 25. LEGAL CAMPAIGNING

- a. Candidates can use social media like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter to share their campaign messages. They're encouraged to focus on their goals and ideas to earn votes, but they should avoid spamming. The Committee on Elections will watch for spam and repeat messages on the platform.
- b. Campaigning starts on the first day of the campaign period. No campaigning is allowed outside of this time. Breaking this rule can lead to disqualification.
- c. It's encouraged for candidates to discuss their plans or programs.

Section 26. ILLEGAL CAMPAIGNING

- a. Making or sharing posters, pamphlets, online posts, or any printed materials that tell people not to vote for a candidate.
- b. Creating and sharing images, publications, or videos that tell people not to vote for a candidate.
- c. Saying things that could harm a candidate's reputation on topics unrelated to the election.
- d. Giving out T-shirts, buttons, food, gifts, money, or any other political gimmicks is not allowed.

ARTICLE VI Voters

Section 27: Voter List

- a. Any student enrolled at JMCFI can vote.
- b. All JMCFI students are automatically registered to vote, and the Registrar will give a list of voters to the Committee on Elections.

Section 28:

- a. Students can vote for positions listed in the SSC Constitution.
- b. Students can only vote for representatives from their own program. Votes from other programs won't count.

Section 29: No Proxy Voting - Proxy voting isn't allowed.

Section 30: Cheating and Hacking - Any voter or candidate caught cheating or hacking the voting site will be banned from holding office forever.

ARTICLE VII: Casting Votes

Section 31: Voting Platform

The Committee on Elections will decide which platform students will use to vote.

Section 32: Email Use

Students can use any email connected to their JMCFI account for online voting.

Section 33: Voting Instructions

Instructions on how to vote will be shared at least five days before the election.

Section 34: Voting Period

Voting will only be open for one day. Any extension must be decided by the COE at least four hours before the original voting period ends.

Section 35: Late Votes

Any vote made after the voting period ends won't count.

Section 36: Public Vote Counting

After voting ends, the Committee on Elections will count the votes publicly. They'll make sure candidates and political parties are there to watch. Independent candidates can have up to two representatives, while political parties can have up to five. The JMarian, JMCFI's official student publication, will also be invited. Candidates and parties can choose not to send reps, but that means they're trusting the Committee completely for transparency.

Section 37: Vote Count Method

Students will vote for Student Council positions by choosing their top pick.

Section 38: Determining Winners

The candidates with the most votes for the number of open Student Council positions will win. If there's a tie, the CoE will tell the candidates and set rules for a tiebreaker vote.

Section 39: Publishing Results

The Committee on Elections will share the election results within 36 hours after voting ends. They'll certify the results and give them to the Office of Student Affairs and Services (OSAS) within seven days. Once the OSAS gets the results, they're final.

ARTICLE IX Election Disputes

Section 40: Committee's Authority

The Committee on Elections, authorized by the Office of Student Affairs, is the only group that can settle disputes about the elections.

Section 41: Rules for Disputes

The Committee on Elections will make rules for how election disputes are handled.

Section 42: Committee's Decision

The Committee on Elections will resolve all election disputes within seven days of getting them. Their decision is final and everyone has to follow it.

ARTICLE XI
Transitional Rules

Section 43: Election Matters

The Committee on Elections, mentioned in the SSC Constitution and authorized by the Office of Student Affairs, is the only group that can handle election issues.

ARTICLE XII
Final Rules

Section 44: Making Changes

If any part of this Code needs to be changed, the CoE will vote together to make those changes.

Section 45: Separation Clause

If any part of this Code is found to be invalid, the rest of the Code will still be valid. It won't be affected by the invalid part.

Section 46: Effectivity

This code will be shared through official school channels of communication after which it shall be effective.