**Conducting Student Referendums SS/PPS No. 07.09**

**Issue No. 3**

**Revised Date: 02/04/2020**

**Effective Date: 10/31/2016**

**Next Review Date: 02/01/2023 (E3Y)**

**Sr. Reviewer: Associate Vice President for Student Success and Dean of Students**

1. **POLICY STATEMENTS**

01.01 The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines for conducting and verifying student referendums.

01.02 A referendum is a student vote administered through designated university channels to recommend approval of new proposed changes related to official university business. A referendum will not serve as a petition, an opinion poll, or an attempt to influence state or federal legislation.

01.03 A student referendum may be called by:

a. the president of Texas State University;

b. the vice president for Student Success;

c. the dean of Students;

d. the Student Government president, with the concurrence of the Student Senate; or

e. the students through a petition of at least 10 percent of the currently enrolled student body as verified by the dean of Students.

1. **PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING STUDENT REFERENDUMS**

02.01 For president, vice president for Student Success, or dean of Students-initiated referendums:

1. The president, vice president for Student Success, or dean of Students may issue a call for a referendum vote at least 20 class days prior to the time when the referendum will occur.
2. Faculty or staff members may recommend a student referendum be held by submitting a request through the established administrative chain in each respective division. If approval is obtained through the respective vice president, the president may call a student referendum if such a referendum is warranted. The dean of Students, or designee, and the student body president will schedule the dates for the referendum vote.

02.02 For Student Government-initiated referendums:

1. The Student Government president, with two-thirds Student Senate approval, may issue a call for a referendum vote at least 20 class days prior to the time when the referendum will occur.
2. A Student Senate resolution must be adopted for a vote in order to achieve the two-thirds Student Senate approval and to provide suggested language for the referendum.
3. The Student Government president’s signature and approval of the Student Senate resolution constitutes the official call for the referendum.

b. Department directors and divisional vice presidents may request the Student Government president call for a student referendum by submitting a written request that details the nature of the referendum. The request must be submitted to the Student Government president 60 class days prior to the requested referendum.

1. The dean of Students, or designee, and the Student Government president will schedule the dates for the referendum vote.

02.03 For student-initiated referendums:

1. Students must begin coordination with the dean of Students, or designee, at least 60 class days prior to the proposed referendum.
2. The dean of Students, or designee, will meet with the students to explain the regulations and procedures for initiating and conducting the proposed referendum.
3. The dean of Students, or designee, and the Student Government president will determine an appropriate time to hold the referendum, allowing sufficient time to satisfactorily inform students of the issues at hand.

b. A maximum of 10 class days will be allocated for the student initiating the referendum to obtain signatures from at least 10 percent of the currently enrolled student body on the [Student Referendum Request form](https://sa.txstate.edu/pps/sapps0709StuReferendumReq.pdf).

c. The student initiating the referendum must submit the forms with the signatures from at least 10 percent of the currently enrolled student body to the Dean of Students Office at least 20 class days prior to the proposed referendum.

1. Upon receipt of the forms, the dean of Students, or designee, and the Student Government president will verify signatures. This verification process will be completed within10 class days of the dean's receipt of the forms.

  02.04 Referendum Voting Procedures:

* 1. The dean of Students, or designee, and the Student Government president will coordinate efforts to complete the appropriate arrangements prior to conducting the referendum.
     + 1. A request to create an online referendum vote will be submitted to the vice president for Student Success’ technology staff 15 days in advance of the first voting date.
       2. The phrasing of the referendum statement may be in any format but will be limited to one specific area or issue and only two answer options (choices) per question. More than one statement may appear on the ballot or more than one call for a referendum may be made if exigencies so dictate. The dean of Students, or designee, and the vice president for Student Success will approve the language of the referendum statement before the online referendum vote is programmed.
       3. Student workers will be assigned by the Student Government Election Board to maintain the polls. Student wages for poll attendants are not required; however, if wages are paid, the source of such student wages will be the Student Government operating budget.

1. Publicity concerning the referendum will be made by the Student Government through both print and electronic media. The publicity should appear on university property a minimum of 10 class days before the referendum is conducted.

1. Polling stations with computer access will be established in at least one major student traffic area on the San Marcos and Round Rock campuses to ensure that students have an opportunity to vote. Polling locations will be open a minimum of two class days (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) during the referendum voting period unless the location is enduring inclement weather conditions.
   * + 1. Polling stations established outside should have alternate locations in case of inclement weather. The alternate locations should be in near proximity to the outside polling stations.
       2. In case of inclement weather, the Student Government Election Board chair must contact the dean of Students, or designee, who will make the decision to close the affected polling stations.

d. Students may vote from any computer on or off campus during the referendum voting period no less than between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. each day. The hours of online voting may be extended to match the Student Government election online voting if a referendum coincides with the election voting period. Online voting will be available but voting from a mobile device is discouraged because the voting site is designed to open on a networked workstation running a university-supported internet browser.

1. Campaigning or electioneering will not be allowed within 50 feet of the polling places. Students will be expected to abide by all university rules and regulations involving the dissemination of information in any and all media formats. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office, who will refer all complaints to the Student Government Election Board for review.

1. The Student Government Election Board, in conjunction with the dean of Students and vice president for Student Success’ technology staff, verify all voting data.

1. It will be the responsibility of the Dean of Students Office, in consultation with the Student Government president, to ensure that written notification of the results shall be made public via the University Star and the University News Service within three class days of the last day of voting on the referendum.

1. A simple majority of those students voting will determine the outcome of the referendum. In the event of a tie vote, a re-vote will be scheduled within 15 class days of the original vote.

1. Ballot data will be maintained by the Dean of Students Office for a minimum of three years.

02.05 Complaints and Protests

1. If online balloting is restricted because of an electronic malfunction, any protests or complaints must be submitted on the [Referendum Complaint form](https://sa.txstate.edu/pps/sapps0709ReferendumComplaint.pdf) to the Dean of Students Office within three business days following the referendum vote.

1. Complaints or formal protests of a non-electronic matter must be submitted on the [Referendum Complaint form](https://sa.txstate.edu/pps/sapps0709ReferendumComplaint.pdf) to the Dean of Students Office within three business days following the referendum vote.

1. A Referendum Review Board consisting of the Student Government Election Board, the Student Government staff advisor, and the dean of Students, who will serve as the chair, will determine the validity of the complaint or protest.

1. The Referendum Review Board may request an opportunity to review any or all of the contested ballots, including, but not limited to, database information or other electronically available materials pertinent to the issues at hand.

1. The Referendum Review Board may interview any individuals who may be aware of any violations of this policy that can be documented.

f. Students who wish to appeal the Referendum Review Board’s decision must submit the appeal in writing within three business days to the vice president for Student Success, whose decision is final.

1. **REVIEWERS OF THIS PPS**

03.01 Reviewers of this PPS include the following:

Position Date

Associate Vice President for Student February 1 E3Y

Success and Dean of Students

Student Government Staff Advisor February 1 E3Y

Student Government President February 1 E3Y

1. **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This PPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities and represents Texas State Student Success policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Associate Vice President and Dean of Students; senior reviewer of this PPS

Vice President for Student Success