Council Elections Commission

Heidi Dong MC ‘20, Chair
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Election Timeline:

Wednesday, March 27, 8:00pm: Mandatory campaign information session in LC 102. Any student who cannot attend should email heidi.dong@yale.edu and cc ycc.elections@yale.edu.

Friday, March 29, 6:00pm: Campaign mentorship event in LC 211.

Tuesday, April 2, 8:00pm: Mandatory orientation meeting for officer candidates in Phelps 207. Any student who cannot attend should email heidi.dong@yale.edu and cc ycc.elections@yale.edu.

Thursday, April 4, 5:00pm: Deadline to register for elections via YaleConnect and to submit a completed petition to ycc.elections@yale.edu.

Thursday, April 4, 8:00pm: Campaigning begins.

Tuesday, April 9, 7:00pm: YCC-YDN Officer Candidates Debate in GR 109 Rosenfeld for President, Vice President, and Events Director candidates. Any candidate who cannot attend should email heidi.dong@yale.edu and cc ycc.elections@yale.edu.

Thursday, April 11, 9:00am: Polls open on YaleConnect.

Friday, April 12, 9:00pm: Polls close on YaleConnect. Results will be announced following the close of voting in an email to the student body.

** Locations subject to change. Any location change will be sent to candidates via email. **
Section I: Council Elections Commission (CEC):

1. Role

   a. Purpose: The purpose of the Council Elections Commission (CEC) is to determine specific election rules, monitor campaigns, and facilitate voting. The CEC is also responsible for coordinating the publicity of all election activities with the help of the YCC.

   b. Guidelines: The CEC has complete authority over interpreting and enforcing the regulations found in this document.

      i. Clarification: It is the sole responsibility of the candidates to seek clarification on any issue not explicitly addressed in these guidelines. The chair of the CEC will answer any requests for clarification. Email ycc.elections@yale.edu with any questions. Candidates who do not adhere to these regulations may be penalized at the discretion of the CEC.

      ii. Amendments: The CEC may amend these guidelines at any time. Candidates who have registered for an election will be notified of said changes via email, which will be binding as soon as the notification is sent.

2. Commission Regulations

   a. Membership: The YCC Vice President shall chair the CEC unless running for a position in the election, in which case a new chair will be appointed by the President and Senate, and four members-at-large comprise the remainder of the CEC. The Chair of the CEC shall facilitate the appointment of the at-large members of the CEC through outreach to student group leaders, residential college council presidents, and other campus leaders.

      i. Removal: The CEC has the authority to dismiss any of its members who campaigns for, publicly supports, derogates, or demonstrably aids any candidates. The CEC can also dismiss any member who is frequently unavailable for meetings or is otherwise delinquent in his/her/their duties.

      ii. Replacement: In the event that a member-at-large is dismissed, the chair of the CEC will choose a replacement.

   b. Voting: A quorum of at least 3 members-at-large is required for votes. All CEC decisions will be decided by a majority vote of the members-at-large.
In the event of a tie, the chair of the CEC must vote to break the tie. Abstentions are not permitted.

c. Addressing Complaints: Any student may report a violation or complaint to the CEC by emailing ycc.elections@yale.edu. The complaint/violation will be investigated by the chair of the CEC and referred to the members of the CEC. The CEC will vote to determine if a violation has occurred and, if so, what penalty shall be imposed.
   i. Penalty Review: In the case that a candidate wishes to dispute a penalty, they must email the CEC with their disagreement and the reason for their disagreement.

Section II: Guidelines:

1. Candidates
   a. Guideline Limitations: These guidelines apply to candidates running for YCC President, YCC Vice President, YCC Events Director, Sophomore Class Council (SoCo) President, and Junior Class Council (JCC) President. These guidelines DO NOT apply to YCC Senate positions.
   
   b. Eligibility: Any undergraduate who will be enrolled at Yale College and in New Haven for the next two semesters and free of disciplinary action by a university disciplinary body that would otherwise preclude them from holding a student leadership position is eligible to run for office. Any candidate running for the office of YCC President or Vice President must have attended at least three Yale College Council Senate meetings and one Council of Representatives meeting prior to the submission of candidacy declarations and petitions in order to be eligible to participate in the elections.
   
   c. Multiple Candidacies: A student may run for two elected positions but cannot serve in said offices concurrently.
   
   d. Registration: Each prospective candidate must register online via YaleConnect by submitting a non-amenable candidacy statement and agreeing to follow the Officer Election Guidelines. The form can be found in the YCC portal on YaleConnect. In addition, the candidate must also submit a completed petition by email to the Council Elections Commission (ycc.elections@yale.edu) by Thursday, April 4 at 5:00pm. The YCC will not publish a list of candidates until the campaign period begins.
i. Statements: Candidacy statements must be no more than 500 words (text only) and will be available to voters during polling. Candidates cannot change their statement once it is submitted. Candidates will also submit an abbreviated statement that is no more than 100 words (text only). The abbreviated statement will be available on the ballot, and the full statement will be linked.

ii. Petitions: Candidates for officer positions must submit a petition signed by 100 Yale undergraduates prior to the registration deadline. The candidate’s name, as it will appear on the ballot, must appear at the top of each petition sheet. EXACTLY one hundred Yale undergraduates must sign the petition. The petition must also include the name, college, and year of each undergraduate. An undergraduate may sign petitions for multiple candidates. If more than one hundred names are submitted, the candidate will be subject to penalties. No additional campaigning may take place at this time beyond this verbal communication. To submit the petition, send a photograph or scan by email to ycc.elections@yale.edu.

e. Orientation: Each officer candidate is required to attend an orientation meeting held by the CEC. This orientation meeting for all candidates will take place on Tuesday, April 2 at 8:00pm.

f. Availability: Candidates must make themselves available to the CEC at all times and must respond honestly, thoroughly, and promptly when asked for information.

g. Campaign Teams: Candidates may contact close personal friends to ask for help in executing their campaign. A candidate should have no more than thirty such individuals.

i. Communication: Each prospective candidate may have one and only one mailing list for his/her/their campaign to use throughout the campaign period in order to facilitate organization and planning. This list must be an EliList set up through the Yale servers. If you need assistance with this process, please contact the chair of the CEC. The list shall contain no more than 30 persons (excluding the candidate and the CEC) and must also include the CEC (ycc.elections@yale.edu) to monitor its proper use. This mailing list is EXCLUDED from the CC, disclaimer, and “mass email” requirements for email. If you have questions about this regulation, please consult the chair of the CEC.
h. Joint Campaigns: Each individual candidate must adhere to Officer Election Guidelines. Like any other campaign, candidates who do not adhere to these regulations may be penalized at the discretion of the CEC.

i. Campaign Teams: A joint campaign team is permitted up to 60 individuals, equivalent to twice the number of a candidate running alone, on their campaign team. The campaign team must follow the same guidelines as the campaign team of an individual, laid out in the previous section. Candidates running on a ticket have the option to utilize two campaign teams, each with no more than 30 individuals and with its own mailing list, or to utilize a single campaign team with no more than 60 individuals and its own mailing list.

ii. Spending: Each individual candidate is permitted to spend up to $100, as spelled out in Section II, Part 2c. However, any materials that advertise for both candidates on the ticket count towards the budgets of both individuals.

b. Campaigning: Active, public campaigning before Thursday, April 4 at 8:00pm is strictly prohibited. Candidates and supporters are not allowed to discuss a student’s decision to seek YCC office in public. No communications that can be construed as asking for votes can be made. Candidates may not discuss platforms or strategy outside those students that form the individual's campaign team.

2. Campaign Period

a. Start: Public campaigning may begin on Thursday, April 4 at 8:00pm. No public campaigning is allowed before this time. Any question of what determines public campaigning should be directed to the CEC.

b. University Oversight: All campaigning and publicity must be in accordance with the Undergraduate Regulations (http://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/).

c. Spending:

i. Each candidate for the YCC Executive Board or Class Council President is allowed to spend $100 on their campaign. This $100 encompasses both traditional and innovative (i.e. anything other than posters, table tents, business cards, etc.) publicity techniques. Candidates should retain receipts for proof of purchase should there be allegations of exceeding the spending limit. Candidates in
need of financial assistance may contact the Chair of the CEC, who will make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

ii. Rule of Access: In general, a “rule of access” determining whether other candidates have access to the same form of publicity will be applied.

iii. Non-Purchased Items: Items used in campaigning that are not purchased because they are previously owned by candidates or are given or loaned from another individual will be counted toward the $100 spending limit. The approximate value of all non-purchased campaign items must be reported to the chair of the CEC upon request.

iv. Donated Funds and Goods: Individuals may donate funds to or spend money on behalf of any candidate or candidates, up to, but not in addition to, the $100 spending limit. Undergraduate organizations are strictly prohibited from benefiting a candidate through donated funds or goods.

v. Multiple Candidates: Any materials with multiple candidates’ names on them count separately toward the spending limit for each of the named candidates, as previously mentioned.

d. Postering:

i. When possible, all posters and publicity must be on recyclable paper.

ii. Size: No posters may exceed a size of 8.5 by 11 inches or be adjoined together to make a poster larger than the aforementioned size.

iii. Only one of each poster may be placed on the same bulletin board.

iv. All posters must be hung in a way that is consistent with the postering regulations of Yale College and of the specific residential college in which they are hung. Any posters in violation of regulations will be removed and may not be replaced. You can find the regulations in the Undergraduate Regulations, Student Activities, Section K. See: http://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/rules-governing-student-activities/student-extracurricular-activities/#k.postersandpublicity

e. Emailing:
i. Candidates and individuals working on the candidate’s behalf may not email panlists to which they do not belong.

ii. Emails to the whole campus, an entire residential college, an entire class, or entire class years within a college are strictly prohibited.

iii. Mass emails (emails sent to more than 20 recipients at a time) are strictly prohibited.

iv. All campaign emails (from the candidate or otherwise) sent during the campaign period must include the following disclaimer:

   This is a disclaimer. No emails sent by a candidate or on a candidate's behalf may be sent to any panlist that the sender is not on. No emails may be sent to the entire campus, entire class years, entire residential colleges, or entire class years within residential colleges. Candidates are urged to act with restraint in the use of all electronic messaging systems. If you feel that this or any candidate is abusing the email system, please contact the Council Elections Commission at ycc.elections@yale.edu.

v. All emails on behalf of a candidate must CC ycc.elections@yale.edu. All recipients of the email must be visible. No recipients of the email may be BCC’ed.

vi. The CEC will not tolerate abuses of the Yale College email system for the purposes of campaigning. Candidates are urged to act with restraint in the use of all electronic messaging systems and are advised that the CEC will address complaints about abusive email practices on an ad hoc basis. It will exercise discretion in individual cases to define unethical emailing practices, issuing one preliminary warning to offending candidates before taking disciplinary action, including the possible disqualification of any candidate who repeatedly abuses the email systems of Yale College.

f. Social Media

i. While there are no specific regulations governing social media use, candidates are asked to use social media with care and restraint.

g. Unacceptable Publicity:
i. Neither a candidate nor a member of the candidate’s campaign team may inappropriately harass or detain a student, either for purposes of campaigning or to get them to vote directly.

ii. No notice of candidacy may be written with chalk.

iii. Any publicity that is deemed fraudulent, or deemed primarily to intimidate or derogate another candidate, is not permitted.

iv. Candidates are not allowed to enter suites and bedrooms while residents are not present. Even when residents are present, candidates may not enter those spaces without residents’ verbal permission.

v. No administrators, faculty, staff, or pets may be included in campaign publicity materials.

vi. Candidates may not actively campaign at or in the vicinity of any Yale College Council event.

h. Supporters: Individuals aiding candidates must follow these guidelines. Any violation committed by an individual aiding a candidate may be considered as committed under the auspices of the candidate. Candidates will be held accountable for any infractions of these guidelines by friends campaigning for them.

i. Endorsements: Candidates may not receive organizational endorsements before the YCC-YDN Debate on Tuesday, April 9. The CEC will only consider endorsements valid (and publish them on the ballot) if at least one member of a given organization attends the debate on Tuesday, April 9 and has its organization’s president (or equivalent leader) confirm the attending member’s selected endorsements.

1. Each organization seeking to endorse a single candidate for any position must meet the following requirements:

   a. The organization has offered all candidates for the position in question an individual and in-person endorsement interview of equal length and nature. These interviews should be hosted by the relevant decision-making body in advance of an endorsement decision.

   b. The organization has disclosed affiliations (including past membership with any candidates for the position
which they seek to endorse) to the CEC prior to filing a petition to endorse said candidate. Organizations with strong affiliations to a particular candidate are urged to consider abstaining from the endorsement process. These affiliations will be disclosed, jointly with organizational endorsement, on the public online voting portal.

c. As previously mentioned, at least one member of the organization must attend the YCC-YDN Debate, and the organization’s president (or equivalent leader) must confirm the attending member’s selected endorsements.

i. The Yale College Council Executive Board is not permitted to publicly endorse or serve on the campaign team of any individual candidates. Each board member should answer questions from any candidate for the position that the board member currently holds.

j. Tampering: Damaging, removing, or defacing another candidates’ publicity is strictly prohibited.

3. Voting Period

a. Voters may rank in order of preference up to two candidates (in races with three or fewer candidates) or up to three candidates (in races with four or more candidates) for the positions of YCC President, Vice President, and Events Director, as well as Sophomore Class Council or Junior Class Council President when applicable. Although candidates can conduct a joint publicity effort, they may not be voted on together. In each round of vote tabulation, only the most preferred candidate on each ballot (who has not been eliminated) will be counted, as detailed in Section II, Part 4bii.

b. Voter Access: Voting will take place online from 9:00am on Thursday, April 11 until 9:00pm on Friday, April 12. Students will get an email with a link to vote on the morning of April 11. Ballots are housed in the YC Voting Booth on YaleConnect.

   i. Absentee Ballots: No absentee ballots will be accepted.

   ii. Students not enrolled in Yale College are unable to vote.

c. Voting System: Voting will take place through Yale University’s YaleConnect Account in the YC Voting Booth portal.
i. Layout: The electronic ballots will present each candidate's full name as it appeared in registration along with the candidate's college and year, as well as any approved endorsements from campus organizations.

ii. Statements: The abbreviated candidacy statement referred to in Section II, Part 1di of these regulations will be available on the ballot as students vote. An external page will be linked with the full candidacy statements.

d. Access: The chair of the CEC will have sole access to the voting system.

e. Candidates and their supporters may ask students to vote during this period and provide them with a device on which to vote. However, they are prohibited from coercing students to vote for a certain candidate.

4. Determination of Winners

a. Tabulation: All ballots will be collected and tabulated via YaleConnect. Results will not be announced until all voting is completed.

b. A candidate shall be declared the winner of their election if that individual:

i. Receives more than 50% of first-choice votes cast for their office.

ii. Receives more than 50% of votes cast for their office as calculated by rank choice voting (RCV). Rank choice voting will be employed if no candidate receives a majority of first-choice votes. If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be eliminated, and the ballots supporting that candidate will be redistributed to the next most preferable candidate (that has not yet been eliminated) prescribed by that ballot. The process will be repeated until one candidate has more than 50% of votes cast for their office, or only one candidate remains.

a. The chair of the CEC and an additional CEC member shall certify the election results and send results via email to the student body. The YDN will be notified prior to the release of the email with results under embargo.

5. Penalties

a. It is the sole responsibility of the candidate to seek clarification on any issue not explicitly addressed in these guidelines. Candidates who do not adhere to these regulations may be penalized at the discretion of the CEC.
b. Any student may report a violation or complaint to the CEC by emailing ycc.elections@yale.edu. The complaint/violation will be investigated by the chair of the CEC and referred to the members of the CEC.

c. Upon receiving any complaint beyond the scope of the CEC, such as a complaint of sexual misconduct, the chair of the CEC will report the complaint to the proper university committee or administrator best suited to address such complaint.

d. The CEC shall have the power to review infringements on these guidelines and the discretion to penalize candidates, depending on the severity of the infringement. Potential penalties include (but are not limited to) decreasing the $100 spending limit, revoking campaign emailing privileges, confiscating a campaign's posters, publicizing a candidate's infractions, and/or removing a candidate from the ballot. Any infractions that violate the Undergraduate Regulations will be referred to the Yale College Executive Committee for disciplinary action.

Please direct any questions about the guidelines or the elections to the Council Elections Commission at ycc.elections@yale.edu.