

Parties:

- Complainant - International Students' Association (ISA)
- Respondent - Ajibola Adigun (Jibs) - A candidate for the position of VP Student Life in the GSA General Re-Election 2024
- DRO - Zain Patel

Original DRO Decision:

The DRO recognizes that constituents to a particular student group may be afforded the right to question and comment on affairs of that group - this does not contravene GSA bylaw and policy. As such, this element of the initial complaint is dismissed.

On the subject of the Campaign Volunteer's comment about "No more Breakfast for Votes", the Campaign Volunteer makes an unfounded allegation concerning the ISA breakfast event. Note that this Instagram Story was uploaded and reported prior to the public release of the ACB decision to rerun the VP Student Life portion of the election. While this comment is concerning, it does not contravene GSA bylaw and policy. As such, this element of the initial complaint is dismissed. However, the DRO notes that the Campaign Volunteer made unsubstantiated, slanderous remarks against the GSA including alleging "corruption" within the GSA. This serves as a campaign post, and is contravening I.POL.6.1. The DRO finds that the Instagram story contravenes I.POL.10.2, and that the Respondent had an obligation to have any Campaign Volunteers take down such posts as per I.POL.6.2. As such, the DRO issues a 10% voter deduction penalty.

Relevant Bylaw and Policy:

I.POL.6.1 "The fundamental principle underlying GSA elections is that they are to be fair, respect the wishes of voters, and conducted in a manner that reflects the excellent, positive reputation of the GSA"

I.POL.6.2 Candidates will abide by GSA Bylaw and Policy concerning elections, and any other applicable policies or laws, and will ensure that Campaign Volunteers do the same. It is the responsibility of candidates to familiarize themselves with GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections

I.POL.10.2 No form of campaigning (verbal, electronic, and visual) will contain slander, discriminatory content, or ad hominem attacks of individuals.

H.POL.15.7.b - GSA ACB Hearing Committee decisions are final and binding.

Decision:

As a member of the GSA, you are expected to ensure that all campaign activities uphold the high standards and integrity of our organization. However, the actions of your campaign volunteer, which include making unsubstantiated and slanderous remarks

against the GSA, constitute a violation of policy I.POL.10.2. This policy strictly prohibits any form of campaigning that contains slander or discriminatory content.

Furthermore, you have also breached policy I.POL.10.4, which mandates that candidates must campaign individually and prohibits serving as campaign volunteers for other candidates or forming slates. It has been noted that there was explicit solicitation of votes for both yourself and another candidate, which is a clear violation of this policy.

Upon further review, it has been determined that the aforementioned actions occurred prior to the commencement of the new campaign period. The ACB has evaluated this decision and, after careful consideration, does not support the DRO's decision to the 10% deduction. As a result, the ACB has determined that the 10% voter deduction penalty will be retracted.

While this decision alleviates the immediate consequence, it serves as a pivotal reminder of the paramount importance of upholding the high standards and integrity synonymous with the GSA. As members, it is imperative to conduct all campaign activities in a manner that not only adheres to the established policies but also mirrors the exemplary and esteemed reputation of the GSA.

Henceforth, we expect all members to diligently observe these principles and ensure that their campaign conduct consistently reflects the GSA's commitment to excellence and positive representation.

Signed,

Christina Saed

Christina Saed
GSA ACB Hearing Committee Vice-Chair