



# ELECTIONS 2025

## Candidate Information & Campaign Rules Handbook

### IMPORTANT DATES:

<b>Nominations for President</b>	<b>January 6<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (by 4:00 p.m.)</b>
<b>Regular Nominations</b>	<b>January 20<sup>th</sup> – January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 (by 4:00 p.m.)</b>
<b>Nomination Committee Panel</b>	<b>January 20<sup>th</sup> – February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (various)</b>
<b>All Candidates Meeting (ACM)</b>	<b>Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 6:00 p.m.</b>
<i>Alternate ACM Dates</i>	<i>February 15<sup>th</sup> and February 17<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m.</i>
<b>Campaign Materials Due</b>	<b>Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025 (by 12:00 p.m.)</b>
<b>Campaign Begins</b>	<b>Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (at 8:30 a.m.)</b>
<b>Campaign Ends</b>	<b>Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (at 4:00 p.m.)</b>
<b>Voting</b>	<b>Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b>
<b>Results</b>	<b>Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (<i>pending disputes</i>)</b>

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

Chief Returning Officer (CRO): Santosh Mohan Cherukula  
[msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca)

Returning Officer (RO): Melanie Extance, Governance & Advocacy Specialist  
Room G108j, [msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca)

Position descriptions and relevant policies and documents are available, on the MSA website:  
<https://mohawkstudents.ca/student-voice/elections/>

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS POSITIONS AVAILABLE:** President (1)\*  
Secretary (1)  
Treasurer (1)  
Director of College Affairs (1)  
Director of External Affairs (1)  
Director at Large (4)

*\*Note: The position of President will **only** be open to members of the current Board of Directors and past Board Members. If no current Board Members run, it will be opened to the general student population as per the Governance Policy, Elections, Appointments and Referenda Policy.*

**NOMINATIONS FOR PRESIDENT:** Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup> – Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
( by 4 p.m.)

**ALL OTHER NOMINATIONS OPEN:** Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**INFORMATION:** Students who may be interested in running for a position but would like more information about positions, time commitment, election process, etc. are encouraged to set up a time to meet with the **Returning Officer (RO)**. Please send an email to [msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca) to book a meeting.

**NOMINATIONS CLOSE:** Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.  
Nomination forms must be received by the MSA via email ([msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca)).

**Nomination forms that are late will not be accepted.**

<b>REQUIRED STUDENT SUPPORT:</b>	All potential candidates are required to go through a Vetting process as identified by the MSA prior to candidacy being confirmed. Potential candidates may be disqualified through this Vetting process. Eligibility criteria is outlined in position descriptions, Bylaws and Elections Policy.
<b>CAMPAIGNING BEGINS:</b>	<b>Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 8:30 a.m.</b>
<b>CAMPAIGNING ENDS:</b>	<b>Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.</b>
<b>CANDIDATES VIDEOS:</b>	Candidates are expected to attend a campaign video shoot with the MSA and prepare a speech, no longer than 2 minutes in length. These videos will be branded, given closed-captioned, and posted on MSA platforms. Final versions of the video will be provided back to the candidates to use as part of their campaign.
<b>VOTING PERIOD:</b>	<b>Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 12:01 a.m. – Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.</b> through electronic means ( <i>Simply Voting</i> ). Students who do not receive an email with voting instructions must contact the RO to have their status reviewed.
<b>VOTERS PRIVACY RIGHT:</b>	Every eligible voter has the right to vote in privacy. All candidates or any others on behalf of a candidate must respect that right. Failure to respect that right by a candidate or any other on behalf of a candidate can result in disqualification from the election of that candidate.
<b>ELECTION RESULTS:</b>	The CRO will retrieve and print out the election results for official filing. The official results will be posted by <b>4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, on MSA platforms and Mohawk College email</b> ( <i>pending disputes</i> ).
<b>TERM OF OFFICE:</b>	<b>May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2026.</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP RETREAT:</b>	Leadership and orientation training is coordinated for all elected, appointed or acclaimed Board Members. <b>Attendance is mandatory.</b> The training dates are: <b>April 28 – May 2, 2025 (overnight)</b> <b>August 27 – August 29, 2025</b> <b>December 17 – 19, 2025 OR January 2-4, 2026 (TENT overnight)</b>

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** A candidate confidentiality clause will be in effect throughout nominations and elections. The RO or CRO cannot release any information regarding candidates, positions, acclamations, etc.

**ALL CANDIDATES MEETING:** **Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.** via Microsoft Teams  
**Attendance at *All Candidates Meeting* is mandatory. Failure to attend one (1) session may result in disqualification.**

**ALTERNATIVE ALL CANDIDATES MEETING DATES:** **Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.** via Microsoft Teams  
**Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.** via Microsoft Teams

**CAMPAIGN MATERIAL DEADLINE:** **Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, by 12:00 p.m.**  
Posters (8.5 x 11)  
Candidate Profile

**All material must be submitted to:**  
[msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca)

**CANDIDATE FORUM:** **Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**  
A “Candidates in the Cellar” campaigning event and a live-streamed candidate forum will be arranged. While participation by all candidates is encouraged, it is mandatory for the candidates running for President.

## **CAMPAIGN RULES**

All candidates will familiarize themselves with and abide by the election procedures and rules. Failure to follow these procedures or rules may result in disqualification from the election.

1. Candidates will be required to attend the **All Candidates Meeting** to review election procedures. The time, location and rules are noted in the “Important Information for Candidates” portion of this package. **Failure to attend this meeting may result in disqualification**
  - a. If a candidate cannot attend the meeting, arrangements must be made with the Returning and Chief Returning Officer (RO and CRO) to schedule attendance at one of the alternative dates via email ([msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca))
2. Candidates are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all material relevant to the electoral process, including but not limited to, relevant policies, Bylaws, MSA political and administrative policies and any other material distributed by the MSA.
3. Campaigning may not start earlier than **8:30 a.m. Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**, and social posts **must be taken down** by **Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 8:00 a.m.** This rule will be strictly enforced. Failure to comply may result in the candidate being sanctioned, as determined by the CRO, or disqualification from the election.
4. Candidates may only run for one (1) position per election.
5. No candidate will be allowed to promise to donate any portion of their salary.
6. Campaigning will be done in majority across Mohawk College campuses or virtually. The MSA can assist with campaigning in the following ways:
  - Each candidate will have their photo, campaign poster, profile, and video posted to the MSA website and on digital screens.
  - Each candidate will have campaign posters posted across the various satellite campuses in assistance with RO and other MSA staff.
    - Each poster will be equipped with QR codes for further online engagement back to MSA website or socials.
  - The MSA will promote the elections, as a whole, and direct students to the website to view candidate information.
  - The MSA will provide information to candidates which will include tips to promote themselves online, how to engage in person, etc. via the *All Candidates Meeting*
7. Candidates are asked to submit the following, by **Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, 12:00 p.m.** to the RO ([msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca)):

- Candidate Profile (max 250 words)
  - Campaign Poster (8.5 x 11)
8. Candidates will be required to create their own campaign poster(s). The MSA display posters digitally and will print a few copies of each candidate's poster which will be posted in a location at IAHS, Stoney Creek, Fennell and other satellite campuses. **Individual candidates may not put up or distribute any posters and printed campaign material.**
  9. Candidates who have questions or need guidance in the creation of campaign materials can connect with the MSA Communications & Engagement Team, along with the RO.
  10. Candidates must campaign as individuals and will not be allowed to campaign with other candidates.
  11. Candidates may not use the same campaign used by the MSA to promote the elections as a whole. The CRO will determine whether or not a candidate's campaign is significantly similar to the overall elections marketing.
  12. Individual candidate's use of Mohawk College and MSA logos will not be allowed on any promotional material. Candidates may wear clothing that already contains logos on it (i.e., shirts with MSA or Mohawk College on them), but may not put logos on any new clothing items they create for the purpose of campaigning.
  13. Student media may choose to interview candidates and while doing so, shall provide equal opportunity/coverage for candidates of certain positions.
  12. Candidates will use social media to campaign. Any candidates who use social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, X(Twitter), etc.) must have open accounts for viewing or they must add the RO and CRO as a "friend" and provide their handles in order that the RO, CRO and supporting elections staff may follow and monitor posts.
  13. Candidates are encouraged to be creative when campaigning. All campaign material must be approved by the RO. The RO and/or CRO may at any time ask that any campaign material be removed that violates election policies or procedures. **All social media campaign materials need RO approval prior to posting across social media platforms with minimum 24-hour turn-around for approval or denial.**
  14. Any in-person campaigning outside of an approved academic setting is restricted to MSA endorsed events only such as *Candidates in the Cellar*.
  15. Slander, libel, assault in any form, bullying, harassment and/or unethical campaigning are forbidden and are grounds for disqualification and subject to further disciplinary review under Mohawk College Student Behaviour Policy or legal action.

16. All campaigning must be done in such a manner that will not harm others, Mohawk College's or MSA's reputation. All posters must be in good taste and all campaign materials must be pre-approved by the RO.
17. MSA members may not campaign at any event or activity where they are acting in an official capacity by virtue of their position.
18. No candidate will be allowed to show students how to vote, bribe them to vote or coerce anyone into voting for them as it may conflict with a voter's right to privacy. Doing so may result in penalties and/or disqualification as determined by the CRO.
18. All deadlines are final. No extensions will be given.
19. If a candidate, MSA staff or Mohawk College community member wishes to file a complaint against another candidate or individual(s) acting on behalf of a candidate, the following process will be used:
  1. Complaints will be submitted electronically (and signed) to the CRO using the **MSA Elections Complaint Form**, sent to [msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca). The CRO will then meet with both parties and any other relevant parties to determine the facts. The CRO will then determine what, if any, penalty will be imposed.
  2. Penalties will be determined at the discretion of the CRO based on the offence and the disciplinary policies and procedures of the MSA regarding elections. The penalties may include (but are not limited to):
    - Verbal Warnings;
    - Written Warnings, and/or;
    - Disqualification;
    - Revocation of MSA membership;
    - Reporting to *Student Rights & Responsibilities* for further investigation and possible disciplinary action
  3. The outcome will be communicated to both parties within two (2) business days.
  4. If a candidate wishes to appeal a decision, a letter of appeal will be submitted to the *Elections Appeals Committee* ([msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca), Subject Line: CRO Class A/B/C Infraction Appeal). The committee will review the complaint(s) and the outcome and determine whether to uphold the sanction. The appeal results will be communicated to both parties in writing via electronic communication within two (2) business days. **The decision of the committee is final.**
20. Current MSA Board members must stay neutral throughout the nomination and campaign period and may not publicly endorse a candidate or participate on a candidate's campaign

team. The only exception is, if a current Board member is running themselves, they may participate in their own campaign but may not use any MSA systems (MSA socials, website, etc.) or promote themselves while performing any official MSA duties.

21. If a candidate fails to adhere to any of the policies and procedures with regards to the campaign and election process, they may receive warnings, sanctions or may be subject to disqualification.

## **PROHIBITIONS AND ENFORCEMENTS**

### **General Prohibitions**

1. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, during an election period, no candidate shall:
  - a. Interfere with or disrupt the normal operations of the College including, but not limited to, any business or departments which normally operate on the College campus(es);
  - b. Disrupt any academic settings on campus or the academic pursuits of the student body without written and approved consent of the academic body and RO (e.g., receiving approval from Faculty to present/campaign to a classroom and informing the RO of the date, time, and class)
  - c. Actively campaign in spaces across any Mohawk College space that is not an MSA approved in-person campaign event;
  - d. Remove, reposition, cover, overlap or deface another candidate's campaign material;
  - e. Use campaign material that has not been approved by the RO;
  - f. Campaign on or off campus outside of the predetermined campaigning hours by the RO;
  - g. Campaign prior to the commencement of the campaign period;
  - h. Offer a student means by which to vote electronically (as outlined in *Campaign Rules*);
  - i. Campaign in conjunction (including but not limited to, coalescing or sharing content) with a candidate in a race other than their own held during the same election period;
  - j. Engage in any forms of assault or unethical behaviour or campaigning, including those campaigning on behalf of candidates;
  - k. Fail to abide by any provisions specified in this policy.

### **Enforcement Procedures**

1. The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) is responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules and regulations stipulated by this or any other applicable MSA document. The CRO is empowered to sanction, penalize, and disqualify candidates for contraventions of this



document in accordance with the Mission, Vision, and Values of the MSA.

2. Infractions of the MSA Elections shall be classified as “**Class A,**” “**Class B,**” and “**Class C.**”
  - a. **Class A Infractions** – shall be considered a contravention of the provisions of the elections policy or campaign rules that are deemed seriously detrimental to either the elections process or perception thereof and cannot be corrected through the application of a Class B or C Infraction. These infractions will also be subject to further investigation under Mohawk College Student Behaviour Policy and/or further legal action.
    - i. Disqualification
    - ii. Revocation of MSA membership
    - iii. Reporting to *Student Rights & Responsibilities* and/or other legal entities
  - b. **Class B Infractions** – shall be considered a contravention of the provisions of this policy that are deemed detrimental to either the elections process or the public perception thereof and can be corrected through the application of sanction. A “Class B Infraction” shall include any action performed by a candidate that confers upon them an unfair or irreparable advantage over their competitors.
    - i. Written warning
  - c. **Class C Infractions** – shall be considered a contravention to the provisions of this policy that are deemed not detrimental to either the elections process or the public perception thereof and can be corrected through the application of a sanction. A “Class C Infraction” shall include any action performed by a candidate that confers upon them an unfair advantage over other competitors.
    - i. Verbal Warning
3. **Candidates who receive three (3) Class C Infractions OR two (2) Class B Infractions OR a combination of one (1) Class B and one (1) C infractions will be subjected to a Class A Infraction imposed on them by the CRO.**

## Appendix A

All sanctions can be given to candidates, whether through complaints, observations of candidate behaviour, or individuals acting on behalf of a candidate. The below outlines an approximate determination of the infraction type (not exhaustive), potential rule breach, and sanction. As per the Elections, Appeals, and Referenda Policy, the CRO has the discretion to impose infractions; however, each candidate retains the right to appeal any sanctions.

Infraction Type	Rule Breach	Sanction
Class A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slander or libel against another candidate (e.g., defamation, spreading rumours, posting misleading information to damage an opponent's reputation)</li> <li>• Slander or libel against the MSA or Mohawk College</li> <li>• Bullying, harassment, discrimination, racism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, sexualized violence, intimidation, or any forms of violence against a candidate, individuals campaigning on behalf of candidates, general student body, MSA staff, and/or Mohawk College staff</li> <li>• Engaging in any form of physical sabotage</li> <li>• Intentionally disrupting election events or candidate meetings (e.g., voting, social media, etc.)</li> <li>• Fraud</li> <li>• Voter manipulation and/or bribery</li> <li>• Campaigning in an academic setting without permission by RO</li> <li>• Campaigning outside of designated times or locations (major time lapses)</li> <li>• Interfering with another candidate's campaign materials (e.g., in person or online)</li> <li>• Failure to attend the All Candidates Meeting without prior arrangement</li> <li>• Substance abuse or intoxication during campaigning or the promotion of</li> <li>• Current MSA Board Members not staying neutral throughout the elections</li> </ul>	<p>Disqualification, Report to Student Rights &amp; Responsibilities and/or Legal Action</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Class B</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Not abiding by social media transparency rules (failure to add RO and CRO as “friends”)</b></li> <li>• <b>Posting on social platforms without RO approval and not correcting errors</b></li> <li>• <b>Campaigning outside of designated times or locations (minor time lapses)</b></li> <li>• <b>Failure to submit campaign materials by the deadline</b></li> <li>• <b>Campaigning with another candidate (coalescing or sharing content)</b></li> <li>• <b>Using unfair campaign strategies that give significant advantage over others (e.g., use of MSA or Mohawk logos) without correction</b></li> <li>• <b>Failure to remove campaign materials by given deadline post-campaign period</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Written Warning</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Class C</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Posting on social platforms without RO approval but immediately correcting it</b></li> <li>• <b>Posting on social platforms outside of approved times but correcting errors immediately</b></li> <li>• <b>Using campaign methods outside of approved channels</b></li> <li>• <b>Requesting permissions or approvals under the minimum 24-hour turnaround time</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Verbal Warning (documented)</b></p>