

## **National Student Nurses' Association**

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### **FORMING A NOMINATING & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE Guidelines for State and School Chapters**

The NSNA Nominating and Elections Committee (NEC) has compiled some suggestions on how to form an NEC at your chapter, as well as some ideas concerning candidate recruitment. We hope that this information is useful to you as you meet the needs of your organization.

#### **Purpose of a Nominating and Elections Committee (NEC)**

At the national level, the purpose of the nominating and elections committee is to recruit qualified candidates for office, prepare the slate of candidates, and oversee campaigning. A state or school NEC can perform these same functions. The benefit of having a nominating and elections committee is that the committee members can concentrate solely on this responsibility. Having a NEC may also increase visibility of and participation in your elections. By actively recruiting and screening candidates, your association has a better probability of filling all available positions on the board with students who are prepared to make a difference in your chapter.

#### **How to Form a Nominating and Elections Committee**

Each state and school chapter has a different way of selecting individuals to serve on the NEC. We suggest that, if possible, the NEC be separate from the Board of Directors. We also strongly suggest that members of the NEC not be eligible to be nominated as a candidate or apply for nomination for any elected position during that term. Both of these measures minimize a conflict of interest as the NEC prepares a slate of candidates.

At the national level, the House of Delegates at the annual convention elect members of the NEC at the same time that the Board of Directors is elected. Through this process, candidates become familiar with the campaign and election procedure. This prepares future committee members to be helpful to the candidates when it is their turn to oversee campaigning. Many chapters elect their NEC. If you feel that electing a NEC would not be feasible, consider appointing one or more students to serve on the committee.

When forming a nominating and elections committee, consult your own school and state bylaws. If your bylaws do not provide for a NEC, consider a bylaws amendment to allow for one.

## **Candidate Recruitment**

Whether or not you have a formal NEC, active recruitment of candidates is essential to an effective election. Here are some suggestions:

- Start early! Notify students early in the year so that they can prepare themselves for the responsibilities of holding office.
- Advertise! Write articles in your newsletter; prepare posters and flyers; make announcements in classes and at your chapter functions.
- Enlist the support of your faculty. Ask them to encourage involvement in your association. Often, faculty members will count some of the time spent in student association activities toward clinical or professional hours.
- Take advantage of your school curriculum. Some schools require courses in professional nursing. Arrange to make a presentation regarding the professional opportunities available to students through their own association.
- Identify students who have leadership skills and mentor them so that they will be prepared to serve your chapter.
- Encourage current board members to talk about the positive aspects of their positions. As they verbalize the benefits of being an officer, other students are more likely to realize that holding office can be a tremendously rewarding experience.
- Make your activities exciting and worthwhile. Well-organized, successful activities and programs are one of the best ways to generate interest among students.
- Love your job! Nobody wants to apply for a position that is discouraging and unrewarding. Of course you need to be realistic, but don't diminish the importance of what you do as a chapter officer.
- Make one-to-one contact with potential candidates to answer their questions and encourage them.

## **Elections**

- Prepare an application form for candidates to fill out. This will help you know them better and will help them to solidify their commitment to run for office. It also helps you to verify the candidate's credentials prior to the election.
- Make a deadline for the applications. Prepare a slate with those candidates who meet the deadline. This encourages students to commit to running and gives you time to organize the elections.
- At the national level, candidates who are not on the slate can't campaign until they are nominated from the floor at the convention. You may consider doing this to encourage candidates to return their applications on time.
- Remind candidates that they don't have to spend a great deal of money campaigning. Being informed and willing to serve will impress voters far more than the elaborate campaigning.

We hope these suggestions are helpful to you. If you have any questions, please contact us through the national office. We wish you the best in all you do and hope that your elections will be exciting and successful!

## ELECTION PROCEDURES

Elections in your chapter should be done according to the procedures established in your bylaws. If there is no rule or custom established in your school chapter, a motion to establish a method of voting is in order. If desired, this motion can contain a blank so that different methods of votes can be voted on in succession.

### Nominations

A nomination is a proposal to fill the blank in an assumed motion. For example "that (name of candidate) be nominated" to the specific position.

### Easy methods of voting

- A. By voice
  - 1. Normal method used for voting on a motion.
  - 2. Used when you do not require more than a majority for its adoption.
- B. By rising
  - 1. Used in verifying an inconclusive voice vote.
  - 2. Used in voting on motions that require a 2/3 vote for adoption.
- C. By show of hands
  - 1. An alternate method used in place of a rising vote.
  - 2. Used in small assemblies if no member objects.
  - 3. Can also be used as in place of the voice vote as the normal method of voting.
- D. No matter which method is used, call for the affirmative vote first , then call for negative vote
- E. Chair immediately announces result of vote after question

### Other methods of voting

- A. By ballot
  - 1. Used when secrecy of the members' votes is desired.
  - 2. If bylaws require a vote by ballot, this requirement cannot be suspended, even by a unanimous vote.
  - 3. Form of ballot:
    - a. Slip of paper in which member writes his choice in a manner directed by the chair.
    - b. If it is known ahead of time that a vote will be on the ballot, prepare ballots in advance and distribute them at the proper time.

4. Types of ballot election:
  - a. All nominations are completed before any balloting takes place - voting for all offices is done by a single ballot.
  - b. Balloting for each office immediately follows nominations from the floor for that office - ballots are counted for one office and the result is announced before nominations for next office are opened.
5. If an office for which no candidate has a majority, the chair announces, "No election," and new ballots are distributed for those offices.
6. When balloting is complete, tellers collect the ballots and record the results.
7. Next, the chairman of tellers reads the tellers' report and the chair declares the results.

B. By roll call

1. Record how each member votes.
2. Secretary records votes and then repeats them to be sure they are accurate.
3. Not usually used for an election.

C. By cumulative voting

1. Used for positions held by more than one individual.
2. Each member is entitled to cast one vote for each position:
  - a. Example: if three directors are to be elected, each member may cast three votes.
  - b. These votes may all be cast for 1, 2, 3 candidates; that is, you can write one nominee's name three times or write down three different names.

**Time at which an election takes effect**

- A. An election becomes final immediately if the candidate is presented and does not decline, or if they are absent but consent to candidacy.
- B. If they are absent and do not consent to candidacy, it becomes final when they are notified of the election and do not decline.
- C. If they decline, election to fill the vacancy takes place immediately, unless notice is required or other provisions for filling vacancies has been made in the bylaws.
- D. An officer-elect takes possession of their office immediately upon their election becoming final, unless the bylaws or other rules specify a later time.

Refer to "[Roberts' Rules of Order Newly Revised](#)" for additional information.