STUDENT SENATE CAMPAIGN GUIDE

Wondering how to run for election to the URI Student Senate? This guide will outline some basic tips on how to conduct your campaign. If you have questions that aren’t answered by this guide, or would like some advice, contact the Elections Committee to set up a meeting with a current member of Senate.

Step 1: Decide which position to run for. There are 45 seats on the Senate; each represents a specific demographic at URI. You must belong to the demographic that the seat represents in order to qualify for election. You will qualify to run for more than one representative seat, but you can only run for one. To determine which seats you qualify for, use the following formula:

    Housing Constituency + College Constituency + At-Large Constituency = 3 qualified seats
    (Freshmen also qualify for an additional seat through the Freshmen Constituency).

In the fall election there are always 5 Freshmen Rep. seats open to the incoming class. In addition to those five seats there are usually a number of open seats from the other constituencies. The annual elections are held during the spring semester, and all the representative seats become open at that time. Current Senators who wish to remain members must run again, and any student interested in joining Senate will have the opportunity to run for election.

Below is a short description of the different representative seats on the Student Senate. To find out what seats are currently open, check the Student Senate’s website under the Elections page or call the office for the most up-to-date list at 401-874-2261.

**On-Campus Housing Representatives** - represent the interests of students living on the physical campus of URI (i.e. dorms, apartments, suites, Fraternity Circle, transfer houses, the Diversity House, IEP houses, etc). The representatives make up the On-Campus Housing Caucus and meet with Housing & Residential Life to work on issues relating to on-campus living.

**Off-Campus Housing Representatives** - represent the interests of students living in the near by off-campus neighborhoods (i.e. Narragansett, Bonnet Shores, Pt. Judith, Eastward Look, etc). The representatives make up the Off-Campus Housing Caucus and meet with the Commuter Housing Office to work on issues relating to off-campus living and commuting.

**At-Large Representatives** - represent the general interests of the student body as a whole. These positions are open to any student, and all students can vote for them. The representatives work on the issues that affect the student community as a whole.

**Academic College Representatives** - represent the interests of students within the eight academic colleges. Each college elects one representative, who also serves as the Liaison to the college. These representatives work with Deans and departments of their college to enhance student life and address college-specific problems.

**Freshmen Representatives** - represent the interests of URI Freshmen. A new set of freshmen representatives are elected by the incoming class each fall semester. Some of the issues and programs addressed by the Freshmen Reps. are orientation, URI 101, and University College.
**Step 2: Declare your candidacy.** Sign up for elections in the Student Senate office during the declaration period. Check the Elections Schedule for the dates of the declaration period, or visit the website under the Elections page. Be sure to bring your student ID to the Senate office when you sign up. You will have to read and sign a copy of the election rules and fill out your declaration form to be officially on the ballot.

**Step 3: Create a platform.** All candidates should write a platform to introduce themselves and talk about why they are running for election. The platform will be published for free in the URI student newspaper *The Good 5 Cent Cigar* and posted on the Student Senate webpage for voters to read. There are format/length restrictions for platforms outlined in the Candidate’s Letter and at the Senate office.

**Step 4: Talk to the voters in your constituency.** The students who can vote for you are the students who make up the constituency groups represented by the seats on Senate. For example, all students living on campus can vote for the On-Campus Housing Representatives. There are many ways to advertise your candidacy to potential voters, such as:

- Talk to your friends, classmates, & roommates / others in your dorm
- Put up flyers in your dorm, academic buildings, & the Memorial Union
- Put up flyers at the shuttle stops, in the organization’s mailboxes, & around campus
- Ask your friends to spread the word
- Write a letter to the editor in the Cigar

When putting up flyers, be sure to check with and RA in the dorms, a building manager, or a staff person from offices in the academic buildings. Do not

**Step 5: Go to Student Senate meetings & introduce yourself.** The Senate is made up of people from every constituency and they vote in elections too! They’re also a great resource because they know people in the dorms, various colleges, and other student groups. Introducing yourself at a Senate meeting is a good way to make a great first impression and helps current Senators get to know you as a potential new member.

**Step 6: Remind people about Election Day!** Don’t forget to remind everyone when and where the elections are occurring. Encourage prospective voters to visit the Senate website to find learn about the Senate’s role at the University, read candidate platforms, and learn how to vote. Students do NOT need to register to vote! Just come up to the Memorial Union on Election Day and show your student ID to receive ballots!

**Step 7: VOTE!** Remember to vote for yourself, as well as others on the ballot.