

# Boston University | Student Elections Commission

## Official Statement



April 7, 2014

### Question at hand

On April 7, 2014 at 11:27 AM, the Student Elections Commission (SEC) received the following complaint:

The comment below from a formerly-registered member of TrueBU's campaign team\*, and at least presently an actively-supportive student\*\*, Luke Rebecchi, violates Section 3.4.03 of the Elections code. The quote "... they [BU's Push To Start] have no ideas and no leadership." is a defamatory statement made against a campaign.

\*- We are confident that he was previously registered and while we cannot prove it right now, I assume that you have the records.

\*\* - As shown by his Facebook as well as this comment.

Section 3.4.05 of the Elections Code states the following:

"Defamatory statements made by candidates or campaigns with regard to any individual in the following list are expressly prohibited: other candidates and/or campaigns; faculty, staff, trustees, employees and/or students of Boston University; members of the Student Government and/or members of college governments; members of the SEC."

### Findings

Criticism is an expected part of any campaign for election. Being critical and disagreeing with others' opinions on different issues does not reflect defamatory statements. In fact, criticism is often a healthy part of any debate and serves to open dialogue about what could be improved in either slates' platforms. Likewise, individuals are free to express their opinions, especially when they are no longer officially registered campaign staff members. We are very careful in regulating Facebook interactions because they often reflect personal views rather than entire campaigns' views just as a blog or Twitter account would.

The SEC met in person to consider this complaint. In a 9-0 ruling, the SEC found that no rules were violated in this instance. All members of the SEC were present for this vote.