

# Boston University | Student Elections Commission Official Statement



April 7, 2014

## Question at hand

On April 7, 2014 at 4:21 PM, the Student Elections Commission (SEC) received the following complaint:

Dear SEC,

According to Article III, Section 2 of the Boston University Student Election Commission Election Code, students may not actively campaign for a candidate if not registered by the SEC. Article I, Section 2 clearly defines campaigning as "any intentional promotion of the campaign by any candidate and/or campaign staff member." On April 2, 2014, BU's Push to Start posted a list on their public Facebook page of 7 individual students who actively endorsed the Push to Start slate. With one exception, all of these students are not registered staffers, according to the list on the SEC website. These students are:

Syed Amir Ali  
Danny Hochberg  
Zach Mueller  
Mara Mellstrom  
Austin Kruger  
Matthew Farmer

Without being registered staffers, these students are violating SEC code by actively endorsing and therefore, openly campaigning, for BU's Push to Start.

Section 3.2.01(b) of the Elections Code states the following:

"Campaign staff may not actively campaign for a candidate if not registered with the SEC."

## Findings

Individuals are able to speak their minds and endorse candidates and slates at their own accord. It would be too restricting to demand endorsers to be registered campaign staff members for endorsees if their only intention was to endorse the candidates and not actively campaign for the endorsees.

Likewise, the SEC is hesitant to get too involved in personal Facebook activity. Activity posted on a personal Facebook page is reflective of personal feelings just like a blog or Twitter account; this does not reflect active campaigning for a candidate.

The SEC met in person to consider these complaints. In a 9-0 ruling, the SEC finds personal endorsements to not reflect active campaigning and thus do not need to be from registered campaign staff members. All members of the SEC were present for this vote.