

Boston University | Student Elections Commission

Official Statement



April 5, 2014

Question at hand

On April 5, 2014 at 11:47 AM, the Student Elections Commission (SEC) received the following complaint:

Members of the True BU campaign team were set up at Marsh Plaza with a laptop, offering it to passerby to vote on. All candidates were told at the mandatory Candidate Information Sessions that this is not allowed. We have video evidence of them with a computer and we have more than one witness who was offered the computer to vote.

* We cannot upload the video through this form. Please let us know if you want it by email.

Section 3.4.10(c) of the Elections Code states the following:

“(c) Voting Booths: Active campaigning may not be conducted within twenty yards of any official SEC Voting Booth.”

Findings

Although Section 3.4.10(c) of the Elections Code forbids active campaigning at official SEC Voting Booths, the Voting Booth described in this complaint did not fit the definition of a Voting Booth. The definition of a Voting Booth is best reflected by Section 1.2.06 of the Elections Code: “SEC Polling Stations will mean any location designated for voting purposes and staffed by members of the SEC.”

Despite the wording saying “Polling Stations”, it effectively refers to the same thing. The change in wording from Polling Station to Voting Booth happened in the current SEC’s consideration of rule changes, and it was a mistake that this reference was not changed to Voting Booth.

That being said, it is quite coercive to ask students to vote on a laptop at a location staffed by campaign workers. This act is not in the interest of creating a fair, legitimate election.

Section 3.4.13 of the Elections Code states the following:

“The SEC reserves the right to issue a Cease and Desist Order to any campaign for any action that may or may not be specified in the Elections Code that is deemed to be an inappropriate or improper form of campaigning.”

The SEC met via email and considered this complaint. In 6-0 ruling, the SEC finds that TrueBU did not violate 3.4.10(c) of the Elections Code and did not violate any rules set forth in the information sessions. In a separate ruling, the SEC voted 6-0 in favor of issuing a Cease and Desist Order for this action to TrueBU and subsequently all slates up for election. Two members of the SEC were absent for these votes, and one member abstained from voting.

No violation points were added to TrueBU. This leaves TrueBU with a current total of 300 violation points.