

Parties:

- Complainant - Ajibola Adigun (Jibs) - A candidate for the position of VP Student Life in the GSA General Election 2024
- Respondent - Khaleeq Ahmed - A candidate for the position of VP Student Life in the GSA General Election 2024
- CRO - Sophie Shi

Original CRO Decision:

“Firstly, the CRO/DRO and ERC want to acknowledge that the Respondent’s comment regarding the nationality of the newly elected DEOs is uncomfortable for some who read it and are affected by it, and that the GSA does not tolerate any form of discrimination. It is a potentially harmful statement, especially to those in the communities affected by it. Comments regarding others’ nationality or any other personal factors are unacceptable in a just and fair electoral process. We also want to acknowledge that the Respondent immediately realized the potential impact of their actions and rectified them in a timely manner. Although ERC decided previously that discrimination would result in disqualification, they did not consider this case to be explicitly discriminatory. The CRO and DRO are issuing a 10% vote deduction regarding this statement that is personal to the other candidates involved, violating I.POL.10.2. This decision also serves as a written warning, in addition to the vote deduction. Regarding the early campaigning, the announcement of candidacy is not perceived as an issue. However, the screenshot of the quote with the candidate’s name and position they are running for would have been considered campaign material during the campaign period, therefore it can be considered as such now. For this, the Respondent is being issued a \$10 spending limit deduction (i.e., they can only spend \$140 maximum out of the \$150 allowed).”

Relevant Bylaw and Policy:

I.POL.8.6). I.POL.10.2 No form of campaigning (verbal, electronic, and visual) will contain slander, discriminatory content, or ad hominem attacks on individuals.

I.POL.10.1 “The campaign period will last at least seven (7) calendar days and will begin no earlier than the day following the All-Candidates Meeting” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section

H.POL.15.7.b - GSA ACB Hearing Committee decisions are final and binding.

Decision:

Given the racially charged nature of the statement and its dissemination in a widely-accessible group forum, the ERC's decision to extend the benefit of the doubt to the candidate and suggest remediation is viewed by the ACB as an unduly permissive

response that falls short of our professed policy of zero tolerance towards discrimination. In light of this, the ACB rejects the appeal concerning this matter and will uphold the warning issued in the CRO's decision, emphasizing the severity of the infraction and the strict consequences that will follow any further transgressions.

In regards to the violation of I.POL.10.1, the ACB understands that candidates were not required to take down digital campaign material, however the material was re-posted to your story outside of a campaigning period and is therefore considered new material and a violation of the bylaw. The ACB will dismiss this appeal.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Manerus." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laura Manerus
GSA ACB Hearing Committee Chair