

**MONITORING REPORT**  
**2.13. ELECTION PRACTICES**  
**February 2013**

**Policy:**

In order to provide wide dissemination of information about UUA elections, and to make it possible for all qualified candidates to seek national office without undue financial and time burdens, the President shall not fail to establish appropriate policies, practices and communications systems to support the election process.

With respect to election practices, the President shall not:

1. Fail to provide and publicize information for all contested and uncontested candidates for offices to be elected by General Assembly delegates, maximize access to candidate information to all member congregations, and help manage the cost of campaigning for national UUA office.
2. Permit staff to show favoritism towards or against any candidate for UUA elected office.
3. Fail to provide to any individual who has been nominated for election as President, Moderator, Financial Advisor, or Trustee any information that is being provided to current Trustees, with the exception of materials related to matters for discussion in executive sessions of the Board of Trustees.

**Operational Definition:**

The communications vehicles of the administration are made available to national candidates for elected UUA offices. This enables candidates to communicate with congregations and their members without incurring the time and financial costs associated with advertising on their own. Details of such communication regarding candidates are available on the UUA web site and available for direct inspection. It should be noted that possible communications vehicles are changing rapidly in light of changes in technology; accordingly, we have created a step in the process for the staff that allows for consideration of new methods of communication prior to each election for officers. We interpret this policy to distinguish between all candidates seeking national office and potential elected officers; accordingly, opportunities for communication are more extensive in the case of potential elected officers.

Additionally, nominees for President, Moderator, Financial Advisor and Board trustees are added to the board email distribution list when those nominations or petitions are considered public. Other documents for board meetings are posted on the web as soon as they are available. We interpret this policy to include those who are running for those offices by petition.

Concerning cost, the UUA annual budget covers costs related to printing, interviewing, video and media coverage of the elections, email lists, email and postal addresses, links to candidates' web sites, promotion of candidate events, web conferences, hosting of candidates forums at General Assembly, and coverage of election results as well as, of course, considerable staff time. The Rules of the Association provide guidelines for financial disclosure. The administration does not understand it to be within the purview of the staff to set financial limitations for candidates.

The success of such communications shall be measured by responses to a survey sent to all national candidates at the close of each election cycle and by responses from General Assembly delegates to queries included on each year's General Assembly survey. These surveys shall include feedback about access, clarity, appropriateness, and quality of information. Compliance will be determined by respondents indicating a supermajority of 75% or more showing "adequate" or higher level feedback. Additionally, beginning with the 2013 elections, the administration will be tracking online hits to uua.org coverage of candidates, hits to videos of Moderator candidates, and online ads.

Staff involvement in campaigns shall be strictly non-partisan and before each election cycle staff is reminded of this limitation.

**Rationale:**

The administration understands the surveys that will begin at the close of the current election cycle to be the best (and indeed, the only) way of measuring the success of the administration's support of the Association's elective processes.

Additionally, the administration is responsive to congregational feedback as the process unfolds and has, for example, provided new information about the nomination process.

**Supporting Data:**

The UUA web site has a links to information about campaign advertisements and the process for non-paid information (position statements and biographical sketches) being published in the UU World and uuworld.org as well as access to certain UUA mailing lists. Distinctions are made between all candidates seeking national office and potential elected officers. Information about these matters is described and explicated in the following policies posted on UUA.org.

<http://www.uua.org/aboutus/governance/elections/policies/index.shtml>

Operational policies concerning elections are regularly reviewed by appropriate staff to ensure that they are followed and that new opportunities are considered as they arise.

Feedback in the form of surveys to nominees and General Assembly delegates will be compiled beginning at the close of the 2013 General Assembly. Records will be kept of hits to election-related information on the UUA web site and on uua.org and retained going forward for comparison purposes in future election cycles.

UUA staff members are notified by the administration before each election cycle of the prohibition on their taking a public stance on those running for office in the Association. Additionally, this prohibition has been entered into the staff human resources manual and is available for direct inspection.

\*\*\*\*\*

**In the light of surveys about communications vehicles not having been done in the past, the administration report non-compliance.**