

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

JUDICIAL PANEL
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

AMJAD ALMUTI

Plaintiff

v.

OLIVER GRIFFITH

Defendants

February 24, 2025

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

In the matter of Almuti v. Griffith, the plaintiffs allege that the defendants violated Election Bylaws, Article II, Section B(iv), Election Bylaws, Article II, Section B(viii), Article IV, Section D, Article IV, Section C, Article I, Section B, Digital Petition Guidelines, Section 16, and Digital Petition Guidelines, Section 17 of the Undergraduate Student Government Election Bylaws.

Election Bylaws (as stated in Plaintiff's Brief)

Election Bylaws, Article II, Section B(iv)

"Candidates, teams, and slates may not overtly act to gain votes, or solicit for votes before the approved campaigning season begins."

Election Bylaws, Article II, Section B(viii)

"Undergraduate Student Government resources, including its meetings, shall not be used for the purpose of campaigning."

Election Bylaws, Article IV, Section D

"Candidates may not knowingly falsify any documents submitted to the Judicial Panel at any time."

Election Bylaws, Article I, Section B

"Every page of the petition shall bear the name of the circulator, verifying that they identified the purpose of said petition and witnessed that all signatures placed upon it were made by eligible students to the best of their knowledge."

Election Bylaws, Article IV, Section C

"Candidates are responsible for the actions of those campaigning on their behalf."

Digital Petition Guidelines, Section 17

"Circulators must be registered undergraduate students at The Ohio State University."

Digital Petition Guidelines, Section 16

"Any unqualified signatures shall be rejected as invalid but shall not invalidate other valid signatures on the same petition."

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Held: The Judicial Panel finds that the Defendant is not in violation of any bylaws cited in this brief.

Opinion

In the matter of *Almuti v. Griffith* the plaintiff alleged that the defendant violated multiple sections of the Undergraduate Student Government Election Bylaws and Digital Petition Guidelines through early campaigning, improper use of USG resources, and falsification of petitioning documents. After reviewing the evidence presented, the Judicial Panel does not find the defendant guilty of any alleged violations.

The plaintiff cited Article II, Section B(iv) as stating, “Candidates, teams, and slates may not overtly act to gain votes, or solicit for votes before the approved campaigning season begins,” and Article II, Section B(viii) as stating, “Undergraduate Student Government resources, including its meetings, shall not be used for the purpose of campaigning.” However, in accordance with precedent established in *Almuti v. Cox*, the Judicial Panel cannot issue rulings on election bylaws that are improperly cited or do not exist in their stated form. Because the plaintiff misquoted or cited bylaws that do not exist as written, the Judicial Panel is unable to make a ruling on these claims.

Regarding the alleged violations of Election Bylaws, Article IV, Section D, Digital Petition Guidelines, Section 16, and Digital Petition Guidelines, Section 17, the Judicial Panel finds the defendant not guilty. The plaintiff asserted that the defendant knowingly falsified petitioning documents by listing Adam Kling, a graduate student, as a circulator. However, upon review, the Panel could not determine beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant was aware of this error. Applying the Reasonable Person Standard, the Judicial Panel believes that a student running for President would reasonably be expected to understand the Digital Petition Guidelines and therefore would not knowingly add an ineligible circulator that would invalidate their petition. This assessment is further supported by the absence of any petition signatures that listed Adam Kling as a circulator.

Furthermore, the plaintiff alleged violations of Election Bylaws, Article I, Section B and Election Bylaws, Article IV, Section C. However, the Judicial Panel finds no evidence to support these claims, as there were no signatures that listed Adam Kling as a circulator. Without evidence of such a violation, the Panel cannot make a ruling against the defendant on these charges.

For these reasons, the Judicial Panel finds the defendant not guilty on all counts. The improperly cited bylaws prevent the Panel from issuing rulings on early campaigning and misuse of USG resources, while the lack of evidence regarding petition falsification and circulator misrepresentation leads the Panel to conclude that no violation occurred.

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

It is so ordered.

Signed: The Judicial Panel

Majority:

Chief Justice Matthew Okocha

Justice Ryan Buchko

Justice Judith Vega

Justice Sean O'Brien

Justice RiverJordan Carr