

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

JUDICIAL PANEL
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

DAZHON COX

Plaintiff

v.

OLIVER GRIFFITH

Defendant

February 25, 2025

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

In the matter of Cox v. Griffith, the plaintiffs allege that the defendants violated Article II.A.a.v, Article II.A.b.vi, and Article II.A.b.viii of the Undergraduate Student Government Election Bylaws.

Election Bylaws

First, it must be mentioned that the Plaintiff's brief gave an incomplete citation of the bylaws listed. The Judicial Panel Standing Rules on Plaintiff briefs state that they must include, "The specific bylaw alleged to have been violated." The Plaintiff only included only an in-text citation of these rules, not the clause, which the Judicial Panel finds, and had found previously (in *Almuti v. Cox (2025)* and *Almuti v. Griffith (2025)*), to be an incomplete citation. Here are the following in-text citations along with the proper clause citation:

Article II.A.a.v

"Any candidate seeking election to any position is required to abstain from engaging in any type of bullying or harassment of other candidates. This includes, but is not limited to, actions such as mockery, belittlement, intimidation, or any other behavior intended to harm, demean, or undermine the candidacy of others. This is a type IV bylaw."

Article II.A.b.vi

"All campaigning must follow any guidelines set by the Office of Student Life for student organizations, as well as all University health and safety regulations. This is a type IV bylaw."

Article II.A.b.viii

"No campaigning of any sort is allowed in any office in the Keith B. Key Center for Student Leadership and Service (CSLS), even if invited to speak by a student organization that meets in the CSLS. Furthermore, no person may use any Undergraduate Student Government resources including meeting spaces or Student Government Suite resources for any campaign activity. This does not mean no campaigning in the entirety of the Ohio Union. This is a type IV bylaw."

Held: [State decision (ex. The Judicial Panel finds that the Defendants are in violation of/not in violation of Article...)] The Judicial Panel cannot render an opinion as to whether the Defendant is guilty or not guilty.

Opinion

As written by Justice Matthew Okocha

In this matter, the plaintiff alleged that the defendant violated multiple sections of the Undergraduate Student Government Election Bylaws. However, after reviewing the plaintiff's brief, the Judicial Panel is unable to rule on the claims presented due to incomplete bylaw citations, in accordance with precedent established in *Almuti v. Cox (2025)* and *Almuti v. Griffith (2025)*.

The Judicial Panel has consistently ruled that it cannot issue decisions on election bylaws that are improperly cited or incomplete. In this case, the plaintiff failed to provide full citations for the specific bylaws they allege were violated. The Judicial Panel Standing Rules on Plaintiff Briefs explicitly require that all briefs include, "The specific bylaw alleged to have been violated." The plaintiff, however, only provided an in-text citation of the bylaws rather than citing the full clause, which the Panel has previously found to be insufficient in prior rulings.

This standard is in place to ensure that the Judicial Panel remains fair to both parties in all cases. Without a complete and proper citation—including both the clause and an in-text reference—the Panel would be forced to interpret the intent of the plaintiff, which risks overstepping our role. The burden is on the plaintiff to present clear and precise citations, and failing to do so not only undermines the fairness of the proceedings but also makes it impossible for the Panel to apply the bylaws as written. Allowing cases to proceed with incomplete citations would introduce subjectivity into our rulings, which is fundamentally unfair to both the plaintiff and the defendant and would set a dangerous precedent for future cases.

Due to the absence of complete and proper citations, the Judicial Panel is unable to assess the validity of the plaintiff's claims. As established in *Almuti v. Cox* and *Almuti v. Griffith*, incomplete citations prevent the Panel from conducting a full legal analysis under the Election Bylaws. Because of this, we cannot render a ruling in this case.

It is so ordered.

Signed: The Judicial Panel

Majority:

Chief Justice Matthew Okocha

Justice Ryan Buchko

Justice Sean O'Brien

Justice Abby Yallop

Justice Judith Vega