

## AMS Council Committee Selection Procedure

May 13th, 2020

### Introduction

Traditionally, AMS Council has relied on a familiar method of voting to most: first-past-the-post. This system is one where a candidate must only achieve a plurality of votes to win a seat, and has worked in the past for committee appointments.

However, due to a high volume of candidates this year for many positions in AMS committees of Council, the AMS has elected to utilize a ‘run-off’ style election to ensure candidates are elected in a fair and democratic manner.

### The Issue

With first-past-the-post, the issue that arises is that candidates may be elected in a manner that does not reflect the representative nature of Council. In situations where there are a high number of people contesting for positions, it is possible to win with only a small margin over other candidates. Furthermore, votes for unsuccessful candidates are essentially ‘lost,’ resulting in a potentially unrepresentative election.

### The Solution

The run-off style election that the AMS has chosen for this session will mitigate the issue presented above. **The Chair will switch to this method in the event that the number of candidates is double the number of available seats on that committee, as defined by the AMS Code of Procedures.**

In this system, there will be two rounds of voting:

In the first round, candidates who have nominated themselves for the position will be placed in a field together with all other candidates who have also done so. Councillors will then vote for their preferred candidate, leading to a board of candidates ranked from highest to lowest number of votes.

At this point, the number of candidates moving to round two of voting shall be the number of available seats, plus one. This number shall be known as the “run-off candidates.” Councillors will then have the opportunity to vote for their preferred candidate in the new field.

Once this has been completed, the Chair shall declare that those with the highest number of votes shall be placed onto the committee in accordance with the number of seats stipulated by the *AMS Code of Procedures* for that committee.

### What Happens In the Event of a Tie in Round 1?

There is inherently the possibility of a tie taking place in round one. In round one, if the tie between candidates occurs within the number of run-off candidates, the Chair will simply discard the candidates who did not make the cut-off line.

However, if the tie occurs at the end of the list of run-off candidates, such that the inclusion of all the tied candidates will result in the candidate list exceeding the number of run-off candidates (number of seats +1), that number shall be increased to include the tied candidates and nobody thereafter.

### Exclusion

As stated earlier, the run-off style of voting will only take place in the event that the number of nominated candidates *doubles* the number of available seats.

In the case of the number of nominated candidates being **less** than the number of available seats, the Chair will retain the original first-past-the-post method.

### Conclusion

Although new, the run-off style of voting will ensure that the AMS conducts committee appointments in a fair manner. Despite this change, run-off voting is not a novel style of voting in elections. For instance, France uses this form of voting in its Presidential and Legislative elections, and the United States uses a similar form in principle in party Primaries.

For the AMS, this new system will allow Council to retain its representative responsibilities and appoint candidates to committee seats according to its preferences which in turn will amplify the voices of councillors.