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Mizzou student elections scrapped after offensive tweets

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University of Missouri-Columbia campus

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The Missouri Students Association presidential election has been canceled after the discovery of offensive tweets by three candidates who have since dropped out.

Presidential candidates Blaine Thomas and Claire Jacobs dropped out of the race Tuesday and vice-presidential candidate Caius Gillen quit Wednesday after a student journalist publicized racist, sexist and homophobic tweets from their Twitter accounts, the Columbia Missourian reported .

KCOU anchor Brett Stover shared on Monday the tweets posted between 2012 and 2016. The junior said this is the fourth student election where he has sifted through candidates' profiles as part of his election coverage, but the first time he's found "anything to this extent."

The former candidates have each released apologies after the tweets were shared this week.

Running mates Chad Johnson, Thomas Cater and Julia Wopata originally intended to continue seeking the presidency until the MSA Board of Elections Commissioners disqualified their slates. In order to run for student president and vice president, each pair need to collect 500 student signatures for their slate. The MSA Student Court said that students who signed the original slates were supporting the pair and not just one member.

"By changing the names on the ballot, they have nullified this support as these students did not sign on to an individual candidate," according to a statement from the student court.

A special election will be held before the end of the semester, but a date hasn't been set. Johnson, Cater and Wopata will be allowed to run in the special election, however the candidates have not formally announced such plans yet.

Information from: Columbia Missourian, <http://www.columbiamissourian.com>