



# **UVSS Elections Office**

Electoral Report

March 2017

Submitted by: Lori Roter, Chief Electoral Officer

## **INTRODUCTIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Elections Office would like to thank the UVSS Board of Directors, the Electoral Committee, and all UVSS staff, most notably Erin Ewart and Carmen Barrett for their overall support.

We would also like to extend our thanks to Max Collins, Katie Sage, Laura Steele, Johnnie Regalado and staff at CFUV 101.9 FM and Myles Sauer and Alex Coates from the Martlet for supporting the needs of students by publicizing elections information, recording the forums and hosting the Lead Director Debate.

A special thank you goes to Brydon Sudds, the Manager at Zap! who went over and beyond to help both streamline the candidates' purchasing process and to keep our office informed of expenditures to help with budget monitoring.

The Elections Office also acknowledges Cassbreea Dewis, Kathy MacDonald, Carrie Anderson and Blake Rose of the University Secretary's Office for their assistance with the concurrent Senate and Board of Governors elections, and for the administration of the broadcast emails and the WebVote system.

The Elections Office would also like to acknowledge the hard work of all the election candidates and their campaign managers, for without them, there would be no elections.

## **SUMMARY**

The 2017 Election to the Board of Directors was concluded on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. Five Lead Directors, eleven Directors at Large and one International Student Relations Director were elected from a single slate, and the results were uncontested.

The Electoral Policy Manual (EPM) generally acted as an effective guiding framework from which to conduct the election and make decisions, although there were some areas which required further clarification to ensure that the election process ran smoothly. Clarifications were communicated to candidates/campaign managers and posted to the [uvssselections.com](http://uvssselections.com) website on a specific page for Interpretations and Advanced Rulings.

### **Nominations**

There was a total of thirty-seven forms filed at the Election Office; all were approved.

Two individuals from two separate slates ran for each of the five Lead Director positions: Director of Outreach and University Relations; Director of Finance and Operations; Director of Campaigns and Community Relations; Director of Student Affairs; and Director of Events.

Twenty-four individuals filed nomination papers for the eleven Director-at-Large positions and one individual was nominated for the position of Director of International Student Relations.

The Elections Office received two Referendum Questions; both were approved. There was only single proponent for one of the two questions and there were no official opponents for either of the two approved Referendum Questions.

### **Elections Office**

Lori Roter assumed the role of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for the 2017 General UVSS Elections. Lori brought her experience as a director and policy advisor for the Province of British Columbia to the role of CEO, and her status as non-student fulfilled the mandate of providing a CEO who could be independent in appearance and in fact. Arianna Rumenuvich, Kelly Clark<sup>1</sup> and Kaitlin Schell returned as Senior Deputy Electoral Officer (SDEO) and Deputy Electoral Officers (DEOs) respectively.

The SDEO and DEOs were responsible for carrying out the day-to-day operations for the Election Office including accepting nominations, complaint and expenses forms;

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<sup>1</sup> Kelly Clark was in the role SDEO in 2015 and was not employed as an electoral officer in 2016.

fielding questions from candidates and other students; and organizing forums and polling stations.

The CEO provided oversight to operations; liaised with the University Secretary's Office, the Martlet, Graphics, CFUV and the printing press to ensure advertising and promotions of election-related activities were undertaken; provided policy interpretations; ensured budget monitoring; addressed both questions on the electoral process; and informal and formal complaints from students and candidates.

### **Complaints**

The Elections Office received and ruled on two formal complaints. Rulings were made on each complaint, with information forwarded to both complainant and respondent and posted to the [uvsselection.com](http://uvsselection.com) website.

### **Appeals**

There were no appeals made to any of the decisions made to the CEO.

### **Online Voting**

Voting was primarily conducted using UVic's WebVote System, administered through the University Secretary's Office (USEC). This was the sixth year WebVote was used for general elections.

There was a system issue with regards to the main UVSS Board of Directors ballot, which included ballots for all the UVSS positions and the Referendum questions. This issue is discussed in further detail in Section 3.2. The International Student Relations Director's ballot, was not impacted by this system issue.

### **Polling Period**

The polling period was extended to 48 hours from the prior year's twenty-four-hour period. WebVote Polls opened at 9:00 a.m. March 1st, 2017 and closed 10:15 a.m. March 3rd, 2017. The extended voting period was provided given the system glitch mentioned in the previous section.

Seven pollsitters used seven Netbook laptops to staff polling stations at various locations on campus, as required by policy. In addition, significant time and energy was dedicated to handbilling and promotional work, to increase student awareness and promote the use of online voting.

## Election Results

There was a total of 17,361 eligible voters with a voter turnout of 2,604 representing 14.99 percent of the eligible electorate. A more detailed breakdown of voter turnout, ballots casts and candidate information can be found in Appendix A.

The 2017-18 Board of Directors voting results are as follows:

<b>Director of Outreach &amp; University Relations</b>	Kate Fairley
<b>Director of Finance &amp; Operations</b>	Mackenzie Cumberland
<b>Director of Events</b>	Noor Chasib
<b>Director of Student Affairs</b>	Kaitlin Fortier
<b>Director of Campaigns &amp; Community Relations</b>	Anmol Swaich
<b>Directors at Large</b>	Pierre-Paul Angelblazer
	Nicholas Chen
	Karina Dhillon
	Christopher Dickey
	Cameron Fox
	Griffen Hohl
	Rachel Kelly
	Tanner Lorenson
	Cameron McLeod
	David Stevanovic
Ramunas Wierzbicki	
<b>Director of International Student Relations</b>	Dheeraj (Raj) Alamchandani

## Referendum Results

There were two referendum questions which were voted on during the elections. The UVSS Bylaw 5.7(d) establishes a quorum threshold of fifteen percent of the voting membership and a 50 percent plus one support to pass.

The referendum questions and results were as follows:

- 1) *Do you support an increase to the UVSS Food Bank Fund of 75 cents per full-time student and 37 cents per part-time student, per semester, for the purpose of addressing food insecurity?*

This referendum question, while receiving support from 73.2 percent of those voting, **did not pass due to quorum not being attained**. Voter participation for this referendum question was 14.3 percent.

- 2) *Are you in favour of adjusting students' society fees annually to match Canada's inflation target, to a maximum of 2% per year, beginning in January 2019?*

The question **did not pass due to the failure in meeting quorum**. Voter participation for this referendum question was 13.8 percent. The question would not have passed even if quorum was met given that it received support from a mere 42.5 percent of those voting,

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## **1. ELECTION PLANNING**

The Elections Office worked with the Electoral Committee to ensure that any updates to policy were correctly reflected in the planning of elections and voting.

### **1.1. Forms and Communication**

The election forms were updated to reflect changes in email addresses for the Elections Office and adjudicators, and to provide supplemental information and links to facilitate the submission process. An additional form, created by the Board of Directors, was added this year -- the "Election Allowance Expense Form" -- to streamline and verify candidate expenditures and reimbursements.

Two separate email addresses were created: one, which was used primarily by the SDEO and DEOs jointly, to communicate basic logistics to candidates and students; the second was used exclusively by the CEO. This split provided a supplemental level of confidentiality and independence to those seeking guidance and decision-making from the CEO.

All necessary forms pertaining to the election process were available on the [uvsselections.com](http://uvsselections.com) website, including an extensively revised Candidate's Handbook, all election forms, and other essential documentation.

Comprehensive work was undertaken to revamp the elections website, with the aim of providing a more complete suite of information and resources pertinent to the election process. Most notably, a page to outline advanced ruling and policy interpretations and a series of sub-pages were created specifically for election candidates, to help guide them through the nomination and campaign process. These pages also included overviews of each of the Lead Director positions along with a personalized, "In their Own Words" precis of the current board members' views and experiences in their respective lead director roles. It was felt that this would not only help inform potential candidates about the roles they were seeking to fill but entice them to consider running for election.

### **1.2. Date, Timeline, And Events**

The election timeline was set by the Board in October/November 2016, in consultation with the University Secretary's Office (USEC).

## **2. CAMPAIGNING**

Candidates campaigned in accordance with the guidelines established in the Electoral Policy Manual (EPM). An overview of the role the Elections Office played in facilitating and guiding candidates' campaigns is presented below.

### **2.1. Candidate Handbook**

The Candidate's Handbook is a comprehensive guide to the elections process. The Candidate's Handbook highlights policy, provides guidance on policy interpretation, campaign material information, and the process/procedure for complaints and appeals. The Candidate's Handbook was substantially revised and updated this year, to enhance clarity, provide active hyperlinks and references to other relevant material, and reduce confusion which can arise between the various relevant guiding documents (the UVic Signage Policy, UVSS Bylaws and the Electoral Policy). The handbook was posted on the website, prior to the call for nominations.

### **2.2. All-Candidates Orientation**

The Elections Office hosted an All-Candidates Orientation prior to the start of campaigning. The purpose of this event was to review policy, outline candidates' responsibilities and obligations, ensure a fair election process, and help candidates avoid any potential for campaign infractions. It also gave the candidates an opportunity to ask questions and meet the Elections Office.

The meeting was led by the CEO with participation from University Secretary's Office (USEC). The USEC representative's focus was to review and differentiate the electoral process for Senate and Board of Governors (BoG) elections, and more specifically, to emphasize that posters and banners which included reference to both Senate/BoG and UVSS Board of Directors elections would be put towards the allowable count for both elections.

In spite of inclement weather, all candidates were present at the orientation meeting.

### **2.3. Martlet Supplement**

The Election Office once again published an elections supplement to The Martlet, the UVic campus newspaper, in the February 23<sup>rd</sup> edition. This supplement included candidates' platforms for both the UVSS Board of Directors, UVic Board of Governors (BoG), the UVic Senate, and provided additional information about the referendum questions, the various elections forums and where and how to vote.

Two thousand copies were printed in 2017; fifteen hundred being included as a supplement to the on-campus copies of the Martlet, with the remainder kept as a stand-alone information source for promotion of the elections. The number of printed copies was reduced by 500 from the prior year, as The Martlet reduced the number

of copies circulated on-campus by the same amount in 2017. A copy of the supplement was also posted on the Elections Office website at the start of the campaigning period.

There were approximately 250 copies of the supplement remaining at the culmination of the election process. Accordingly, *consideration should be given to reducing the order quantity by a minimum of 150 copies in subsequent years in the interest of cost savings and environmental prudence.*

#### **2.4. All-Candidates Forum**

The All Candidates Forum was held on February 27, 2017. The audience was mainly comprised of candidates and their supporters. The CEO moderated the event with the SDEO and DEOs assisting as time keepers, to ensure that both candidates stayed within their allotted time limit, and audience members kept their questions brief and on-point. The event was also broadcast live on CFUV 101.9 FM.

Due to time constraints (given the Senate and Board of Directors Forum had to follow directly afterwards), the question and answer period was kept brief and the audience was asked if they could hold their questions for the Lead Directors until the following day and focus their questions on the Referendum Proponent, Director of International Student Relations, and Directors at Large, as there was more time allotted to questions and answers during the Lead Directors debate.

#### **2.5. Senate and Board of Governors Forum**

The Senate and Board of Governors Forum was also held on February 27, 2017. The forum was attended mainly by the candidates. This event was also moderated and facilitated by UVSS Elections Staff and broadcast live on CFUV 101.9 FM, as noted in the section above.

Just prior to the event, the Elections Office was notified that a few candidates would not be participating in the event.

There was poor audience turnout which was most likely due to the inclement weather and the All Candidates Forum which preceded it.

## **2.6. Lead Director Debate**

The Elections Office worked with CFUV 101.9 FM and The Martlet to organize a Lead Director Debate for all Lead Director candidates. This event was hosted on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Max Collins from CFUV and Myles Sauer from the Martlet provided questions and moderated the event, with UVSS Staff ensuring that candidates and the audience kept to their time limits. The CEO outlined ground rules for the question and answer period to ensure that everyone was aware of how the event would be run.

There were a few emotionally filled questions, however, the audience and candidates remained respectful of one another despite heated tension. The CEO did need to intercede when one candidate expressly voiced that she was going to disrespect the process, disregard the time limits and ground rules, and orate a speech on her view on a specific issue.

Attendance for the Debate consisted of a full audience of both UVSS candidates and regular student members. All candidates were in attendance.

The event was broadcast live on CFUV 101.9 FM and was also recorded as a podcast for later listening.

## **2.7. Advertising**

The Elections Office employed the traditional methods of advertising (posters, banners, and handbills) to raise awareness of the various stages of the elections process, took advantage of the opportunity to post digital ads in the Student Union Building and publicized the events and other election-related issues on the [uvselections.com](http://uvselections.com) website and Facebook page.

Promotion was further enhanced through advertising and promotion in the Martlet and the Martlet Supplement. The purpose of using different social media platforms was to connect with the student body in as many ways as possible.

### **3. THE ELECTION**

#### **3.1. Voter Eligibility**

Our office had one inquiry regarding whether an individual paying student fees but who was not a registered student would be eligible to vote in the UVSS Board of Director elections. The CEO decided to concur with the University, that the individual was not authorized to vote as they did not meet the criteria for being an active member of the Student's Society per UVSS Bylaw 2.1, which requires individuals to be registered as either a registered undergraduate student, certificate, or diploma program student to qualify.

#### **3.2. Voting**

The WebVote System, administered by the University Secretary's Office (USEC), was used for the sixth year as a highly effective voting platform.

The WebVote system opened at 9:00 a.m. on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 as planned, however, shortly after voting commenced, there were inquiries into why the WebVote system was only allowing students to select a single candidate, rather than up to eleven candidates for the Director at Large positions, as permitted.

Election office staff notified the USEC of the issue, and the balloting system for the combined UVSS Board of Directors and Referendum question voting was taken offline at 9:20 a.m. to rectify the problem (the separate ballot for the International Student Relations Director position was unaffected).

Students who had voted between 9:00 a.m. and 9:20 a.m. were notified by USEC directly via email of the issue, and were informed that their votes would be invalidated and they would be required to recast their vote. The system outage was communicated directly to those who submitted email questions to the office, and the Elections Office kept the student population updated on the issue through the UVSS Elections Facebook page. The UVSS also updated the polling times on their Facebook page.

The system was brought back online at 10:15 a.m. on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and the voting period was extended to 10:15 a.m. on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 to ensure that a full 48 congruent hours were available for voting. While the International Student Relations Director ballot was unaffected, the voting period was also extended to this position for consistency.

### **3.3. Polling Stations**

A total of nine polling stations were set up on campus, with seven being open March 1<sup>st</sup> and two being open on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The polling stations were open for a total of 40 hours, as required by Electoral Policy. The hours of operation varied between station, however, there were polling stations open between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on March 1<sup>st</sup> and between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Polling stations were set up with netbook computers behind a privacy screen and voting was administered by authorized and trained pollsitters (See section 3.4). The netbooks are dated and were very slow to update, boot-up, and connect to wi-fi which resulted in some students abandoning the stations and finding other means to vote.

Measures were taken to ensure accessibility for students with a disability, with the support of the Society for Students with a Disability (SSD). Persons requiring special equipment to assist with voting were asked to contact the Elections Office one day prior to the elections so that accommodation could be made with the necessary equipment. Our office received no special requests for assistance. Accessible polling stations were clearly marked and advertised prior to and on voting Day.

Out of the 2,604 members who voted, only 64 used our physical polling stations which represents 2 percent of voters, and 0.37% of the voting membership.

### **3.4. Pollsitters**

Seven pollsitters were hired to operate the polling stations and assist in additional promotional events for the Elections Office. While the majority had not worked previously with the UVSS Elections, only one orientation session was needed to train individuals.

While the core responsibility of the pollsitter is to manage the polling station and inform voters of WebVote on Voting Day, the pollsitters provided further assistance in promoting voting prior to voting day. Promotional tasks included: hand billing, handing out Martlet supplements and talking with students about ways to access the WebVote system.

### **3.5. Voter Turnout**

The Election Office promoted the elections through a variety of means including: Facebook event posts (on both UVSS and UVSS Elections pages); numerous supplemental Facebook posts to remind and encourage students to vote; website information pages; posters, digital and CFUV radio advertisements; the distribution of Martlet supplements; and, voting information handbills on voting days and days immediately preceding voting.

Despite these attempts to promote the elections and to encourage voter participation, there was a five percent reduction in voter turnout from the prior year with 14.99% of eligible students casting their vote.

### **3.6. Informal Dispute Resolution**

The Electoral Policy provides for a means for Informal Dispute Resolution. This process has, in the past, helped to alleviate the workload created from formal complaints. Three informal complaints/inquiries received by our office:

- 1) The first query/complaint was regarding a group Facebook chat which was questioned as potentially being a pre-campaigning offence. The inquiry was forwarded to the office on the weekend prior to the beginning of campaign period. The respondent was asked to cease discussing campaign issues in forums whereby other persons outside of the slate proper, may be able to access campaign promotions.
- 2) The second query/complaint was to clarify where posters and banners were permitted. The complainant believed that the respondent was inappropriately posting campaign materials by posting materials on building walls. The CEO clarified the issue by explaining what was and was not permitted per UVic Signage policy and more specifically, that the UVic Signage policy permits posting on concrete and unfinished walls. All candidates were subsequently notified that posting on concrete/unfinished walls was permissible, however, posting on doors and windows was prohibited.
- 3) The third and fourth notifications were in regards to the destruction of posters and banners. It was very disheartening to see that this had occurred. The persons bringing these issues to our attention were aware that it would not be possible to sanction anyone for the offences as the perpetrators could not be verified. The Elections Office posted a notice on the UVSS Elections Facebook page to express their dismay and to encourage the student population to be alert to this behavior and to intervene if it was safe to do so, and to notify the Elections Office. The Elections Office also made a request to the UVSS Board to repost this Facebook message to their Facebook page to help reach a broader audience.

### 3.7. Complaints and Appeals

Two formal issues were submitted to the Elections Office:

1) Excessive Banners

The first complaint pertained to the posting of banners in excess of allowable amounts. Photographic evidence was provided in support of the complaint.

The respondent and the complainant were advised that the candidate committing the offence would be required to remove the extra banner within 24 hrs. of notice, otherwise, the stiffer penalty would apply, and should overages be found by other slate members, the extra banner plus an additional banner removal penalty would apply.

2) Campaigning by a Polling Station

The second complaint was concerning an allegation of active campaigning within six meters of a polling station. Photographic evidence was provided in support of the complaint, however, the Election Office staff visited the location of the alleged offence and measured the actual distance between the campaigning (per photograph provided by the complainant) and the polling station, and it was found that the distance was greater than six meters.

The complainant was advised of the outcome and the ruling was posted to the [uvselections.com](http://uvselections.com) website.

There was a third issue that came to the attention of the CEO regarding an instance of misrepresentation of facts by one slate against the other. Photographic evidence was briefly shown to the CEO, and third-party verbal confirmation from Martlet staff that the alleged offending slate admitted to chalking the offending statements was obtained. The complainant, however, failed to submit a formal complaint and provide a copy of the photographic evidence and therefore, no further investigation took place.

***Addendum:*** A fourth complaint was brought forth to the Elections Office over one week after the election, after the initial report was drafted. The complaint was in regards to one slate's alleged third-party endorsement by a political party, which would be in contravention to the Electoral Policy s. 5.8 (c). The complainant was informed that no further action would be taken given the timing of the issue being brought to the attention of the CEO.

## 4. BUDGET & EXPENDITURES

The cost of running an election can be significant, and many factors external to the Elections Office can impact the budget. These factors include: the number of referenda asked, the number of candidates running; the conduct of the candidates in terms of time and effort needed to resolve complaints; appeals from any complaints and decisions; and the ease of hiring and training both pollsitters and electoral officers.

The CEO was given sufficient autonomy in operations and provided with a budget to help guide expenditures. The CEO ensured ongoing and regular tracking of elections expenses, and advised the Elections Committee and/or the UVSS Executive Director, of possible overages to any budget category at intervals throughout the process.

The provision of a detailed income statement for the months in which the Elections Office was in operation (December 2016 – March 2017) is not included in this report as such reporting is derived through the accounting department, however a representative overview of the expenditures can be found in the table below:

### Summary Comparative Election (540) Expenditures December to March 2017 - Actual to Budget

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<b>Total Revenue Allotment/Budget</b>	\$ 20,237.00	
<b>Salaries, Wages &amp; Other Employment Expenses*</b>	\$ 15,564.52	\$ 13,655.21
<b>General Office Expenses**</b>	\$ 171.60	\$ 1,200.00
<b>Advertising, promotions &amp; Candidates charges</b>	\$ 4,591.50	\$ 5,381.79
	<u>\$ 20,327.62</u>	<u>\$ 20,237.00</u>
<b>Net Under/(Over) Budget</b>	<u>\$ (90.62)</u>	

\* Includes standby/retainer costs for independent adjudicator and adjudication panel (\$840).

\*\* Excludes new office computer in December (\$1,117) charged to another budget category

132%	Actual amount of wages and employment budget spent on wages and employment expenses (per budget categorization)
114%	Actual amount of wages and employment budget spent on wages and employment expenses (including adj. expenses)
72%	General/advertising expenses/total budgeted general expenses (excl. adjudicator amounts)

Given the operational structure and make-up of the Election Office, keeping wages on track with budget is seldom simple or straightforward. Employment/contract expenditure may vary depending on the number of complaints, queries and appeals received, staff experience in electoral roles and as such, accurate predictions are not possible.

There was also a minimum stand-by charge for the adjudicator and adjudication panel; the services of the adjudicators were not used in this year's elections. Furthermore, it was determined at the end of the elections that a charge for new equipment purchased prior to the elections had not been budgeted. This expenditure was determined to have been charged to another budget category and therefore did not impact the Elections budget. The computer should have a useful life of many years beyond this budget year.

It is also worthwhile to note that a great deal of time was spent this year, to ensure resource material was amended and clarified, and that a fuller repertoire of resource material would be immediately available to future CEOs. This financial expenditure should reduce the time and expense to get CEOs up and running in the position in the future and as such, the expenditure should not be required in future years<sup>2</sup>. The information now included in the Elections Netdrive folder include:

- Planning Gantt charts with lead/lag times;
- Copies of invoices;
- Copies of graphics productions (to enable them to be used as a template);
- Templates for broadcast emails and voting criteria submissions;
- Editable complaint form, agenda templates and more.

In addition, the information and number of pages on the [uvsselections.com](http://uvsselections.com) webpage has been substantially expanded with multiple hyperlinks added to help ensure that students and candidates would be able to find the information they needed more easily.

Based on further analysis, there are some opportunities for improved budget utilization as noted in the recommendations section which follows.

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<sup>2</sup> There was an estimated 10 to 15 hours of "in-kind contributions" provided by the CEO which was not charged to elections.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Election Office posted a request for students to submit recommendations to the electoral process within a week following the elections for the Board of Directors' consideration through a Facebook post and on the uvselections website. No comments were received.

The following is a summary of Bylaw, Policy, and Procedural Recommendations for consideration by the Board, based on current year observations and experience.

*The Board has also been provided an annotated copy of the existing Electoral Policy and UVSS Bylaws which identifies specific sections that warrant being amended.*

### **5.1. Incorporation of Advanced Rulings and Interpretations into Policy**

It is recommended that where appropriate, the advanced rulings and interpretations communicated to candidates in 2017 and posted on the uvselections.com website be either incorporated into policy or brought forward and applied in future electoral administration. The content from Advanced Rulings and Interpretations page from the website is found in Appendix B. Two of the provisions warrant specific attention and are duplicated in points 2 and 3 below.

### **5.2. Enhancement of Policy Violation Sanctions**

It was felt that the limited sanctions for minor infractions offered through the Electoral Policy (s. 5.9.5) restrict the CEO from furthering a fair electoral process. Sanctions such as removal of posters/banners, and restrictions of allowable numbers of such posted material, do not provide an adequate disincentive for candidates to abide by policy, especially when such an offence occurs during, or just prior to the voting period.

It is recommended that s. 5.9.5 of the policy be amended to allow for the imposition of a financial disincentive for policy infractions committed during the election process.

*Forfeiture of all or part of the personal expenditure reimbursement outlined in s. 6.6 (b).*

It is also recommended that the sanction noted in s. 5.9.5 (f):

*Temporary removal of website or social media for not less than 24 hours.*

be extended to 5.9.5 (b), (c) and (d)

### **5.3. Alignment of the Electoral Policy with the UVic Signage Policy**

The Electoral Policy s. 5.5(h) states that two banners and 30 posters are permitted per position (i.e., UVSS Board of Director, Board of Governors, or Senate). This could be misconstrued as being allowed 6 banners and 90 posters for persons running for a position in all three categories. The UVic Signage policy, which overrides the UVSS policy allows for a maximum of 60 posters and 4 banners *per person*, regardless of the number of positions the candidate is running for.

Even though the Electoral s. 5.5 (e) requires that candidates also adhere to the UVic Signage Policy BP3140 (Appendix A sections 3.4-3.6),

*It is recommended that s. 5.5 (h) of the Electoral Policy be updated to reflect this banner and poster limitation, to avoid unnecessary confusion and complaints.*

### **5.4. Voting Assistance**

Near the outset of the campaign period, supplemental CEO rules were established. It was felt that establishing rules in advance may prevent some issues and potential skirting of policy.

There were no incidents of any candidate aiding voters during the current elections, however, it is recommended that consideration be given to amending the Electoral Policy Section 5.9.4 (d) to reflect the intent of the rule below:

*Any campaigning undertaken by candidates, campaign managers and/or third-party endorsers, which involves providing prospective voters with access to a computer or hand-held device to vote, or assisting prospective voters with locating the website on voters' devices in any fashion, will be deemed as "election interference" which is a **disqualifiable offence** under Section 5.9.4 (d) of the Electoral Policy. Candidates, campaign managers and/or third-party endorsers may, however, direct candidates to polling stations or to webvote through the provision of the URL.*

## **5.5. UVSS Bylaws**

There are areas in the UVSS Bylaws where amendments are recommended. Specific commentary and rationale are included in an annotated copy of the UVSS Bylaws which has been provided to the Board of Directors. A summary of the sections and subject matter surrounding these recommendations are listed below:

**Bylaw 4.7:** Amend to remove requirements for mail-in balloting for co-op students.

**Bylaw 6.6:** Amend to explicitly restrict Board Members who sat on the Electoral Committee any time in the prior year subsequent from elections planning being undertaken, from being eligible as a candidate for a Board of Directors position.

**Bylaw 6.8:** Add a section outlining how to proceed if only one candidate runs for the International Student Relations Director position.

## **5.6. Senate and Board of Governors Timelines**

As part of a candidate's nomination package, he/she must include a copy of his/her platform, for publication in the Martlet supplement. During the planning for the Martlet Supplement, the Elections Office became aware that the University Secretary's Office (USEC), set a nomination closing period one week after the UVSS Board of Directors nomination closing date. This timing proved to be unworkable with regards to the tight time constraints for producing the supplement, and the USEC subsequently needed to revise their nominations closing date and reprint materials.

*It is recommended that the Board of Directors (more specifically the Electoral Committee) ensure that the University Secretary Office (USEC) sets the Senate/Board of Governors nomination closing date that matches the nomination closing date for UVSS Board of Directors.*

### **5.7. Expanding the Election Office Mandate to a Broader Monitoring Role**

One of the informal recommendations received, was for the,

*Elections Office to extend their role into the realm of monitoring and patrolling social media and campus buildings for election policy violations.*

Candidates felt that being the sole persons responsible for ensuring that opposing slates/candidates followed Electoral Policy provided opposing slates with a potential unfair advantage, limiting fairness in the election process.

It is recommended that a portion of the Election Budget allotted to poll sitting be diverted to these monitoring activities (see section 5.7 below).

### **5.8. Elimination/Reduction of Physical Polling Stations**

*Given the pervasiveness of mobile electronic devices, it is recommended that:*

- 1. Polling stations be phased out completely; or,*
- 2. That only one or two polling stations be maintained.*

Should the choice be to maintain limited polling stations per 2 above, it is recommended that *the McPherson Library location* be maintained and remain open for a period of 6 hours and a location in the *Student Union Building* be maintained for a period of 6 hours and that the time slots not be concurrent with each other.

The cost breakdown structure for expenditures related to polling are presented below:

#### **Polling Station (Estimated Expenditures)**

Pollsitter wages (reg)*	\$	580.00
Pollsitter wages (training)*	\$	150.00
Election staff wages* **	\$	1,724.00
Table rentals	\$	<u>104.00</u>
	\$	<u>\$ 2,559.00</u>

\* Including statutory payment requirements; includes some promotional hours

\*\* Conservative estimate of 100 straight time hours

### **Polling Station (Other Statistics)**

Approximate Usage (voting)	64 persons
Total Polling Station hours	40

The wage-related expenditures devoted to running the polling stations used 17 percent of the entire wage budget. This can be translated further to an expenditure of approximately \$40 per voter.

I believe it would be a more prudent and efficient use of both time and financial resources to reduce or eliminate polling stations completely and divert the resources saved toward enhancing election promotions and/or monitoring and patrolling social media and campus buildings for election policy violations.

Should the decision of the Board be to continue with reduced polling stations, the *purchase of three small tablets will be required to update the notebooks currently used. It is estimated that this will cost approximately \$300.*

#### **5.9. Forum Question Periods**

As recommended in prior years, standard procedures should be established which limit the time student audience members must ask a question and the time allotted to candidates to respond to the question.

The current year's protocol was to limit the time an audience member has to pose a *question* to 30 seconds, with 60 seconds given to each candidate directed to respond to a given a question (or 90 second if a question is directed to a single candidate).

The purpose of this protocol is both to increase opportunities for students to engage in the events and to keep forums on track and on time, especially if two forums must be held back to back due to timing constraints outlined in policy.

#### **5.10. Board of Directors Involvement**

*It is recommended that policy and/or procedures be established to emphasize that the activities and promotions related to the elections process be first vetted through the CEO and the Election Office.*

While it ended up being of minor consequence, the Board overstepped the Elections Office and requested changes to the Martlet supplement for the Board-endorsed referendum question, without the knowledge or approval of the CEO. There was no proponent registered for this referendum question.

The Elections Office requested assistance from the Board of Directors to broaden awareness on a couple of important fairness and impartiality messages to all students, by way of reposting Elections Office Facebook posts, which were not heeded. The requests were not partisan in nature and given the UVSS' broader viewer audience, it was hoped that the Board could facilitate disseminating the information.

*It is recommended that consideration be given by the Board of Directors to provide assistance to the Elections Office in disseminating non-partisan information that is in the interest of all students.*

### **5.11. Extension of Respect to Campaign Managers and Third Parties**

Section 5.9.4 (a) and (b) of the Electoral Policy are not overtly clear with regards to the extent of who these sections may apply to.

There was an incident in the current year whereby one of the campaign managers made inappropriate comments about the other campaign manager's credibility and competence. There was no follow-up action undertaken by the Elections Office given the subjective nature of the commentary, and given that the commentary did not pertain to any named candidate or the slate.

*It is recommended that in the interest of fairness and respect for others, that Section 5.9.4 (a) and (b) of the Electoral Policy be clarified and amended to include any students, staff or others involved in the election process.*

### **5.12. Appeal Process**

The Election Office was fortunate this year, in not having to contend with an inordinate amount of complaints or to have any of the CEO's rulings come under an appeal.

It is of the opinion of the Office, however, that having two sets of appeal processes is excessive and unnecessary.

*It is recommended that the Board of Directors consider removing one level of appeal and that criteria be established which outline the criteria that must be met for a decision to be considered for appeal (i.e., failure to follow policy or due process).*

*It is further recommended that the services of the adjudicator be used to decide on an issue otherwise under the purview of the CEO, in instances where the CEO may be seen to have a real or perceived conflict of interest (e.g., candidate is a friend's child and is a complainant or respondent).*

### **5.13. Expense Form submissions**

The Finance Committee initiated a great first step in trying to streamline candidate expense submissions, by creating a form and establishing requirements and guidelines for the completion of candidates' expense claims.

While candidates did submit completed forms as required, many were illegible and/or failed to include an itemized listing and understandable breakdown of election costs, requiring additional work by the Elections Office.

*It is therefore recommended that an electronic excel template be created (sample provided to the Board of Directors) to facilitate the interpretation of election expenditures submitted by candidates.*

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The 2017 UVSS Elections were conducted fairly and democratically. All the administrative and organizational responsibilities set out in the Electoral Policy were met, and carried out in accordance with the principles of fairness, transparency, accountability, and respect for all individuals involved in the process.

## APPENDIX A – UVSS ELECTIONS OFFICIAL RESULTS (March 2017)

<i>Eligible Voters</i>	<i>Voter Turnout</i>	<i>Percentage of Eligible of Voters</i>
<b>17,361</b>	2,604	14.99%

### Director of Outreach & University Relations

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Slate</b>	<b>Percent For</b>	<b>Votes Cast For</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Kate Fairley</b>	Energize	62.3	1337	Elected
<b>Taisto Witt</b>	Connect	37.7	810	

Total ballots cast: 2147 out of 17361 voters = 12.4% voter participation

### Director of Finance & Operations

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Slate</b>	<b>Percent For</b>	<b>Votes Cast For</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Mackenzie Cumberland</b>	Energize	61.0	1300	Elected
<b>Zennen Leggett</b>	Connect	39.0	832	

Total ballots cast: 2132 out of 17361 voters = 12.3% voter participation

### Director of Events

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Slate</b>	<b>Percent For</b>	<b>Votes Cast For</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Noor Chasib</b>	Energize	58.2	1268	Elected
<b>Colin Saint-Vil</b>	Connect	41.8	911	

Total ballots cast: 2132 out of 17361 voters = 12.3% voter participation

### Director of Student Affairs

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Slate</b>	<b>Percent For</b>	<b>Votes Cast For</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Kaitlin Fortier</b>	Energize	59.2	1249	Elected
<b>Natalya Rambold</b>	Connect	40.8	861	

Total ballots cast: 2110 out of 17361 voters = 12.2% voter participation

### Director of Campaigns & Community Relations

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Slate</b>	<b>Percent For</b>	<b>Votes Cast For</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Dakota McGovern</b>	Connect	43.6	918	
<b>Anmol Swaich</b>	Energize	56.4	1188	Elected

Total ballots cast: 2106 out of voters 17361 = 12.1% voter participation

## Director At Large

Candidate	Slate	Percent For	Votes Cast For	Status
<b>Pierre-Paul Angelblazer</b>	Energize	5.7	999	Elected
<b>Nicholas Chen</b>	Energize	5.1	885	Elected
<b>Sophia Crabbe</b>	Connect	3.7	651	
<b>Karina Dhillon</b>	Energize	5.4	938	Elected
<b>Christopher Dickey</b>	Energize	5.0	878	Elected
<b>Cameron Fox</b>	Energize	5.3	919	Elected
<b>Kate Fry</b>	Connect	4.2	735	
<b>Devon Goldie</b>	Independent	3.1	536	
<b>Stanley Hayward</b>	Connect	3.1	537	
<b>Griffen Hohl</b>	Energize	5.1	885	Elected
<b>Rachel Kelly</b>	Energize	5.0	877	Elected
<b>Hannah Koning</b>	Connect	3.5	612	
<b>Tanner Lorenson</b>	Energize	5.2	915	Elected
<b>Julian Levy</b>	Connect	3.2	566	
<b>Cameron McLeod</b>	Energize	4.6	815	Elected
<b>Margaret Mears</b>	Connect	3.6	637	
<b>Jules Paulson</b>	Connect	3.2	559	
<b>Jack Seaberry</b>	Independent	2.1	366	
<b>Nofel Sheleeg</b>	Connect	3.2	557	
<b>David Stevanovic</b>	Energize	4.7	819	Elected
<b>Shō Ya Voorthuyzen</b>	Connect	3.7	643	
<b>Ramunas Wierzbicki</b>	Energize	5.2	905	Elected
<b>Samantha Wood-Gaines</b>	Connect	3.9	674	
<b>Morgan Wright</b>	Connect	3.4	592	

## Director of International Student Relations

Candidate	Status
<b>Dheeraj (Raj) Alamchandani</b>	Elected

Total ballots cast: 145 out of 2074 voters = 7.0% voter participation

## APPENDIX B – Advanced Rulings and Interpretations

### Interpretations

#### **Early Campaigning**

While explicitly addressed in the Electoral Policy Manual (EPM), it is worthwhile to re-emphasize that it is only the “posting, distribution or publishing” of campaign material prior to the beginning of the campaign period which is prohibited. Candidates are permitted to prepare their materials in advance of this date without penalty.

Candidates/Slates may set up a website (i.e., establish a URL) prior to the beginning of the Campaign Period, however, the website must not include any content pertaining to the candidate(s)/slate until the beginning of the Campaign Period.

#### **Non-posted Campaign Material**

The Electoral Policy [5.9.5 (c)], notes that in order for campaign material to be considered “authorized”, that it must be stamped by Deputy Electoral Officer (DEO). For non-posted campaign material, such as handbills, buttons, t-shirts etc., it is acknowledged that it is not feasible to stamp said material and as such, this material will not be considered “unauthorized” *unless* it has not been first vetted and approved by a DEO. Accordingly, to be deemed authorized material, candidates must provide a sample of said materials to the Elections Office for review. The DEO will either keep a sample for future reference or will take a photograph of the material and keep it on file.

#### **Endorsing Candidates (Section 5.7(c) of the EPM)**

Candidates who are on the same slate will have assumed to have given explicit permission for endorsing other candidates on their slate by virtue of being on the same slate. No further written permission is required.

#### **Voting Assistance**

Any campaigning undertaken by candidates, campaign managers and/or third-party endorsers, which involves providing prospective voters with access to a computer or hand-held device for the purpose of voting, or assisting prospective voters with locating the website on voters’ devices in any fashion, will be deemed as “election interference” which is a **disqualifiable offence** under Section 5.9.4 (d) of the Electoral Policy. Candidates, campaign managers and/or third-party endorsers may, however, direct candidates to polling stations or to webvote through the provision of the URL.

### Supplemental CEO Rules

#### **Late Submissions of Materials/Missed Deadlines**

The UVSS Bylaws and the Electoral Policy set strict deadlines for various stages within the elections process. The CEO, however, does have the authority to establish supplemental rules.

In the spirit of inclusiveness and in the interest of fairness, the Electoral Office may accept late submissions of information, but only under extenuating circumstances,

such as in the event of a death or serious illness in the family or other unavoidable and/or emergency situations. Considerations in this regard will be made on an issue-by-issue basis and supporting documentation to support the extension may be required.

### ***Election Expense Submission***

Candidates on slates who are splitting the cost for production of materials may do so, however, costs must be divided equally between candidates. The submission of a single copy of each invoice that is attributable to all slate members is permissible but reference must be made in each [candidate's expense](#) form to the invoice(s) that applies to each instance of division of costs. Please indicate the number of people the costs are attributed to in the expense form (e.g., 1/9).

PLEASE NOTE that candidates may not pool their Zap! credit for this purpose – such expenditures must come from candidates supplemental \$50 expenditure allowance.

### ***Campaign materials Restrictions – Persons concurrently running in three elections (UVSS Board of Directors, Board of Governors & Senate).***

Clarification on the following misalignment between the Electoral Policy 5.5 (h) and the UVic Signage Policy BP3140 Appendix A sections 3.4-3.6 (*clarification provided to both slates via email on February 27th*).

The Electoral Policy states that posters and banner limitations are per position. This could be construed as being allowed 6 banners and 90 posters. The UVic Signage policy which overrides the UVSS policy (and also must be adhered to per EPM 5.5 (e)), allows a maximum of 60 posters and 4 banners *per person*, regardless of the number of positions the candidate is running for.