

UVSS Elections Office  
Electoral Report  
April 2016

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**Introductions and Acknowledgements**

The 2016 Electoral Report is submitted by the Elections office as required by the UVSS Electoral Policy. The Election Office is comprised of:

Emma Hamill (Chief Electoral Officer)

Arianna Rumenovich (Senior Deputy Electoral Officer)

Natalia Karpovskaia (Deputy Electoral Officer)

Kaitlin Schell (Deputy Electoral Officer)

The Elections Office would like to thank the Elections Adjudicator, the Arbitration Panel members, the UVSS Board of Directors, the Electoral Committee, and all UVSS staff, especially Erin Ewart, Dale Robertson, Ben Johnson and Carmen Barrett for their tireless support. Thank you to CFUV and the Martlet for supporting the needs of students by publicizing elections information and recording the events, as well as hosting the Lead Director Debate. 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 WebVote system.

The Elections Office would also like to acknowledge the hard work of all the candidates for election to the UVSS Board of Directors and their campaign managers, for promoting and embodying fair and transparent student politics.

## **SUMMARY**

The 2016 Election to the Board of Directors was concluded successfully. While the Election was a tumultuous one, not without incident, all issues were resolved.

The Electoral Policy Manual (EPM) generally acted as an effective guiding framework from which to conduct the election, adjudicate policy, and make decisions.

### 1. Nominations

Three individuals ran for Director of Outreach and University Relations; three individuals ran for Director of Finance and Operations; three individuals ran for Director of Campaigns and Community Relations; three individuals ran for Director of Student Affairs; and three individuals ran for Director of Events.

Initially, twenty-seven individuals filed nomination papers for the eleven Director-at-Large positions. Near the end of campaigning four candidates withdrew their nomination, bringing the total down to twenty-three individuals running for Director at Large.

Initially, three individuals filed nomination papers for the Director of International Student Relations. By the end of the campaign period one candidate withdrew, bringing the total down to two individuals running for Director of International Student Relations.

Two referendum questions were posed to the membership.

### 2. Major Policy Changes

At the Fall 2015 Annual General Meeting, the membership voted to amend Constitution and Bylaws and change the following titles; Chairperson became Director of Outreach and University Relations; Director of External Affairs became Director of Campaigns and Community Relations; International Student Representative became Director of International Student Relations. The term Executive Director was also changed to Lead Director. These changes to the Constitution and Bylaws required moderate changes to the EPM.

The second major change that was made is the division of the Forums. Instead of having an All Candidates Forum, which includes all UVSS, Senate and Board of Governors candidates, policy changes were made to divide the UVSS candidates from the Senate and Board of Governors. This change made it so there were three events; an All Candidates Forum (UVSS candidates for Lead Directors, Directors at Large and Referenda); and a Board of Governors and Senate Forum. In addition, the Chairperson debate was changed to a Lead Director debate. This new debate format includes all five lead director positions.

Policy was also changed that restricts campaign material to the following items; buttons, pins, stickers, handbills, patches, badges, condoms, lube, seeds, tea bags, temporary tattoos, pens, and bookmarks.

Another major change was the inclusion of vote buying as a disqualifiable offence. Additionally, policy was changed to penalize disqualified candidates by prohibiting disqualified candidates for one board term.

### 3. Elections Office

Emma Hamill returned to the Elections Office as Chief Electoral Officer (CEO). Arianna Rumenovich was hired as Senior Deputy Electoral Officer (SDEO), and Natalia Karpovskaia and Kaitlin Schell were hired as the Deputy Electoral Officers (DEOs).

The SDEO and DEOs were responsible for carrying out the day-to-day operations, preparing the vote and resolving disputes informally as directed by the CEO. The CEO's main responsibilities included supervising the office's day-to-day operations, resolution of formal complaints and providing advice on policy interpretation.

Please see Appendix 2 for Electoral Structure and Responsibilities.

#### 4. Formal Complaints

The Elections Office received ten formal complaints, and comprehensive rulings were provided by the CEO on all ten submissions.

#### 5. Appeals

Elections Adjudicator, Randy Parker, and the Arbitration Panel, comprised of Karen Potts, Matt Watters and Ron Yee, returned for a sixth year. The Elections Office met virtually with the Elections Adjudicator and Arbitration Panel to review the electoral timeline and the complaints process. A document was given to the members highlighting complaint preparation and informal conflict resolution as key goals. Three decisions of the CEO were appealed to the Elections Adjudicator; no decisions were overturned. Two decisions of the Elections Adjudicator were appealed to the Arbitration Panel; one was overturned.

Please see Appendix 3 for more information on the Arbitration Panel Process.

#### 6. Online Voting

Voting was conducted using UVic's WebVote System, administered through the University Secretary's Office. This was the fifth year WebVote was employed in general elections, having also been used in four fall referenda.

One issue arose in regards to the Director of International Student Relations. The position was initially included in the general election ballot open to all UVSS members, however this position is to be voted on exclusively by UVSS members who are international students. This mistake was found at 10:00am on voting day. The resolution was to open a new ballot that was open from 11:00am PST on March 3, 2016 to 11:00am PST on March 4, 2016.

#### 7. Polling Period

Polls opened at 9:00am PST March 3, 2016 and closed 9:00am PST March 4, 2016 (except for the alternate ballot discussed above). Eight pollsitters used eight Netbook laptops to staff polling stations at various locations on campus. In addition, significant time and energy was dedicated to handbilling and promotional work in order to increase student awareness and promote the use of online voting.

#### 8. Voter Turnout

3542 out of a possible 17,620 eligible voters, for a turnout rate of 20.1%.

#### 9. Election Results

Director of Outreach and University Relations	Ben Lukenchuk
Director of Finance and Operations	Kevin Tupper
Director of Campaigns and Community Relations	Maxwell Nicholson
Director of Student Affairs	Emma Kinakin
Director of Events	Jordan Quitzau
Directors at Large	Alicia Armstrong Michelle Brown Alec Dawydiak

Kate Fairley  
 Avasta Farboud  
 Alysha Flipse  
 Carl Haynes  
 Isaac Hordiyuk  
 Catherine Musgrave  
 Elora Sheres  
 Jiayi (Grace) Wang

Director of International Student Relations

Tianyang Zhang

#### 10. Referendum Results

- a. *Do you support establishing a dedicated fee of \$0.75 per semester for full-time students and \$0.37 per semester for part-time students to be allocated to the University 101 program for the purpose of providing free non-credit courses, meals, childcare subsidies and transportation costs to community members who face barriers to accessing education?* **PASSED**
- b. *Do you support an increase to the student fee for the Travel Pool Fund (available to all undergraduate students) in the amount of \$0.36 per semester for full-time students, and \$0.18 per semester for part-time students for the purpose of allocating more funds to support students in their extracurricular academic travel costs?* **FAILED**

#### 11. Post Election

Section 5.5c in the Electoral Policy Manual states "Candidates must submit copies for all of their campaign expenditures to the Senior Deputy Electoral Officer by no later than 7:00 pm on election date, and certify in writing that they have not exceeded the campaign spending limit. A candidate who exceeds the campaign spending limit or fails to submit copies of their receipts or to certify in writing that the limit has not been exceeded must be disqualified by the Chief Electoral Officer." Unfortunately this policy was not followed by the Woke slate.

Ten candidates who participated in the Spring 2016 election failed to submit their certification in writing to the Elections Office before the deadline in policy. However, their campaign manager did certify on the slate candidate's behalf. With the policy clear that the candidates are the ones responsible for the certification, the CEO was required to disqualify all ten of the individuals. This decision was appealed to the Election Adjudicator who upheld the CEO's decision. The Adjudicator's decision was appealed to the Arbitration panel who overturned the decision, concluding that the ten individuals were not to be disqualified.

Upon review of all campaign expenses by the Elections Office, no concerns were raised. However, a formal complaint was made accusing Encompass UVic of overspending during the campaign period concluding that they should be disqualified. After a thorough review the CEO concluded that there was lack of substantial evidence and she dismissed the complaint. Upon appeal to the Election Adjudicator, the CEO's decision was upheld. The Adjudicator's decision was appealed to the arbitration panel. They upheld the Adjudicator's decision.

## **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. The Elections Office created an open avenue of communication with both the Electoral Committee and the Appeals Members, which consisted of the Elections Adjudicator and Arbitration Panel. This provided a transparent and safe environment for continued improvement of Elections Office operations.

The CEO updated the Appeals Members and the Electoral Committee on a regular basis after the close of nominations and the start of the campaign period, to ensure prompt planning of electoral events and deadlines.

## **NECESSARY FORMS**

Providing all necessary elections forms online, including the Candidate's Handbook, nomination forms, and other essential documentation, streamlined the activities of both the candidates and Electoral Officers.

The online submissions contributed to the efficiency in communication between the candidates and the Elections Office. As well, this provided an electronic record of complaints or concerns as they occurred.

## **DATE, TIMELINE, AND EVENTS**

The election timeline was set by the Board, in discussion with the University Secretary's Office as per appendix 3.2,1. As outlined in the recommendations section, the Elections Office continues to have concerns about the fairness of running the UVSS Elections concurrent with elections to the Senate and Board of Governors.

Due to the changes in the events section, by creating three events, there was increased turnout at all, specifically the Senate and Board of Governors events. The change in events was an improvement and allowed the question period to be more productive and the questions could be more direct and relevant to specific positions (especially at the Lead Director Debate).

## **THE VOTERS LIST AND ELIGIBILITY**

Eligibility to vote is set by the UVSS by-laws as "all currently registered undergraduate students and student enrolled in certificate and diploma programs at the University of Victoria." The student must also be in good standing with the students' society, as per the Constitution and Bylaws 2.1.a and 2.1.d.

Parameters are now in place for the University database system, to adequately create an updated voters list. Some individuals who pay UVSS fees are not recognized within the Banner System: first-year Island Medical Program (IMP) students in their second or third semester of studies, second-year IMP students, third- and fourth-year IMP students who have opted into the UVSS, and all STEPS Forward program participants. This required substantial collaboration with the University Secretary's Office, the STEPS Forward program, and IMP.

As a precautionary measure to ensure an accurate and up-to-date voters list, collaboration with the UVSS Info Booth was required to add students who opted-in to the second semester. The deadline set was January 31. This updated list was sent to the University Secretary's Office. In the future, it is recommended that the UVSS collect NetLink ID information from all students who opt in to the UVSS, for the purposes of being able to quickly add them to the voters list.

**NOMINATIONS**

42 Nomination Forms and 3 Referendum Forms were submitted to the Elections Office by the close of the nomination period.

All were accepted as valid on the closing date, with the exception of candidates on one slate who failed to submit hard copies of their platforms as per the EPM. They did however submit digital copies on time. The slates candidacy was filed as incomplete and they were given 24 hours to submit hard copies. They complied with these requests and the forms submitted were accepted as valid.

Of the 42 nomination forms received, 27 were individuals running for Director-at-Large. By the end of the election process, four candidates withdrew their nomination for Director-at-Large, bringing the total candidates down to 23 for D-a-L.

Three individuals ran for Director of Outreach and University Relations; three individuals ran for Director of Finance and Operations; three individuals ran for Director of Campaigns and Community Relations; three individuals ran for Director of Student Affairs; and three individuals ran for Director of Events.

Initially, three individuals filed nomination papers for the Director of International Student Relations. By the end of the campaign period one candidate withdrew, bringing the total down to two individuals running for Director of International Student Relations.

Three slates were filed through the above nominations.

Two referendum questions were posed to the membership, with a proponent for each and an opponent for the Travel Pool Fund Referendum.

## **CAMPAIGNING**

Candidates campaigned according to the guidelines set in EPM.

### 1. Candidate Handbook

The Candidate's Handbook, available on the Election Office's website to all candidates, contains a brief summary of pertinent information concerning the UVSS Elections. The Candidate's Handbook highlights important policy parameters, provides guidance on policy interpretation, campaign material information, and the process/procedure for complaints and appeals. The Candidate's Handbook was updated and posted in early January on the website, prior to the open of nominations.

### 2. All-Candidates Orientation

The Elections Office hosted an All-Candidates Orientation, to meet with candidates 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 further participation by the SDEO and DEOs. Copies of the Candidates' Handbook and University Poster Regulations were handed out. The University Secretary's Office also reviewed policy specific to the Senate and BOG Elections.

### 3. Martlet Supplement

The elections supplement, which the Elections Office compiles for publication in The Martlet, continues to be an extremely useful communication tool. 2500 copies were printed to be distributed to students in conjunction with all on-campus copies of the February 18 issue, and the remaining copies were used at polling stations and for promotional work as a resource for students in preparation for voting. The supplement was also posted on the Elections Office website at the start of the campaigning period.

### 4. Senate and Board of Governors Forum

The Senate and Board of Governors Forum were held on February 25, 2016 where the audience consisted of candidates, their supporters, and an increased amount of students. The CEO, SDEO and DEOs moderated the forum and the Question Periods.

We chose to moderate the forum ourselves. This was very successful.

Attendance was successful in comparison to past years where much of the audience would leave the lengthy All Candidates Forum before Senate and BOG candidates presented. CFUV was present and did a great job broadcasting the event. The bell purchased last year helped ensure the speeches were delivered in a timely manner.

### 5. All-Candidates Forum

The All Candidates Forum was held on February 25, 2016 where the audience turnout was mainly made up of candidates and their supporters. The CEO, SDEO and DEOs moderated the forum and the Question and Answer sessions.

We choose to moderate the forum ourselves. This was successful, however we encourage Elections staff to delegate this job to someone with more experience to ensure that candidates and those posing questions remain within time limits and remain respectful.

Attendance for the All-Candidates Forum was relatively successful. CFUV was present and did a great job at broadcasting the event. The bell purchased last year helped ensure the speeches were delivered in a timely manner.

## 6. Lead Director Debate

The Elections Office worked with CFUV and The Martlet to organize a Lead Director Debate for all Lead Director candidates including; 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. Pascale Mendes from CFUV and Myles Sauer from the Martlet provided questions and moderation. CFUV live-streamed on their station and website.

Breaching away from the Chairperson only debate allowed for direct questions to be asked to their relevant position and gave all Lead Director candidates to debate with their competitors demonstrating their different platform points.

Attendance for the Debate consisted of a full audience of both UVSS candidate and non-candidate members. All candidates were in attendance.

## 7. Advertising

The Elections Office took advantage of the traditional methods of advertising (posters, banners, and handbills) to raise awareness of the elections. In addition, advertising and promotion of the Elections Office was done through pollsitter engagement, broadcast emails, the Martlet Supplement, and through the Elections Office's social media outlets; these included our WordPress website, our official Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram. The purpose of using different social media platforms was to connect with the student body in as many ways as possible.

## 8. Online Content

Candidates and slates have continued to use websites and Facebook as a platform for campaigning. For this election, candidates and referendum proponents were able to reach to hundreds of followers on their social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube). This created a significant reach and would support the idea of digital campaigning and its popularity with candidates. With this, we are also recognizing non-candidates becoming active online to support campaigns of either the election process, slates as a whole, or individual candidates.

The Elections Office supports increased campaigning using the digital world. This may help reduce the amount of paper waste from traditional campaign activities, as well as help reach more students through connections with faculty, department, club, and course union groups. The Martlet had an 'Elections' section on their website, providing up to date elections coverage. The Elections Office is highly supportive of other organizations providing an additional balanced, accessible forum through which all candidates can engage with voters, and through which voters can obtain additional elections information.

## 9. Methods of Campaigning

This electoral period saw a lot of support between the slates and the referendum proponents and opponents. The opponent for the Travel Pool referendum was a part of one slate, and the proponents for both referendums worked together with the other two slates to promote the referenda. Visual campaigning was main source of advertising. Since many candidates had third party endorsements, they were able to table across campus. Classic campaigning methods were very popular this election period, including chalking, hand billing, classroom talks, postering, and videos.

Section 5.5.j of the EPM was updated as of January 4<sup>th</sup> 2016 that limited the supplies candidates were allowed to use as campaign material. No formal complaints came from the types of campaign material that was used in the election.

## THE ELECTION

### 1. Online Voting

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

Our office had a couple inquiries regarding who was eligible to vote for Director of International Student Relations. Concerns were emphasized when for the first hour of voting; this position was included in the general UVSS ballot.

Once the mistake was found, the position was removed from the general UVSS ballot and a separate ballot was made which included the correct parameters of voting eligibility for this position; all active UVSS members who are international students. The ballots cast during the first hour were disregarded, as there was no way in the system to differentiate domestic and international members votes. The Director of International Student Relations ballot was made promptly in cooperation with the University Secretary Office and was open from 11:00am PST on March 3, 2016 to 11:00am PST on March 4, 2016. Our office sent out a mass email to all voters to inform them of the mistake and the actions being taken to correct it.

The Elections Office feared that the turnout of voters for this position would decrease due to the mistake, however voter turnout for the Director of International Student Relations increased. In Spring 2015, 134 out of a possible 1810 voters participated, with 7.40% voter turnout. 226 out of a possible 1999 voters participated in 2016, with 11.31% voter turnout. Therefore, voter turnout actually increased by 3.91%.

No other significant voting concerns arose this year.

### 2. Polling Stations

Nine polling stations were set up on March 3, 2016, open for a total of 40 hours between the hours of 9:00am and 9:00pm. The eight Netbook computers are in good condition, needing minor updating and battery charges. Our office anticipated that they may need to be replaced in the next few years.

Measures were taken to ensure accessibility for students with a disability, with the support of the Society for Students with a Disability (SSD), so that accessible polling stations were clearly marked and advertised on voting Day.

Out of the 3542 members who voted, only 145 used our physical polling stations (Appendix 3). That is approximately 4.09% of voters, and 0.82% of the voting membership.

### 3. Pollsitters

Eight 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 while making voters aware of use of WebVote on Voting Day, the Elections Office also employed pollsitters as promotional assistants the day before the forums began, the day before Voting Day, and on Voting Day. Promotional tasks included: hand billing, chalking in classrooms, handing out Martlet supplements and talking with students about ways to access the WebVote system.

The Elections Office suggests that an allocation of the budget should be used to promote the Election Office by organizing similar promotional events.

#### 4. Voter Turnout

Voter turnout increased by 1.09% from last year, which was about the expected amount, 20.1% of eligible students casting their vote.

#### 5. Informal Dispute Resolution

The EPM provides for Informal Dispute Resolution. This process has, in the past, helped to elevate the workload that formal complaints create. The electoral office received multiple issues during the campaign period. Many of these issues were serious allegations and as such complainants were advised to follow the Formal Complaints process. Please see a detailed list of the issues that required Informal Dispute Resolution;

1. Posters in prohibited areas: At various times during the campaign period, members brought to the attention of the Elections Office that posters and banners were put in prohibited areas as per the University of Victoria Poster Policy. In most cases, posters or banners were found on painted surfaces. The Elections Office would view the poster or banner in question, and if it was in fact in a prohibited area, would notify the candidate to remove their poster or banner. Since there were multiple posters that were in prohibited areas, the Elections Office sent an email to all slates, opponents and proponents to bring the issue to their attention. No further actions were necessary. These issues were resolved quickly, to the satisfaction of the individuals who brought forward these issues.
2. All Candidates Forum: Following the All Candidates Forum some candidates came forward with concerns about the question period. During the Director at Large question period, members posing questions went over the allotted time limits, used profanity, and in the complainants opinion attacked a specific slate. Questions asked were not directly relevant to the Director at Large Position, and may have been more relevant during the Lead Director's question period. The Elections Office informed the audience of time restrictions, attempted to cut off such questions by raising signs noting that the allotted time for the question was complete, and verbally interrupted such questions. Since those posing questions were not candidates, the Elections Office could not do much more than was already done at the All Candidates Forum. However, for the following event (Lead Director Debate) the office was active in informing the hosts (Martlet and CFUV) to prohibit such questions and interrupt when necessary. A bell was also used at this event to inform speakers of time limits.
3. Classroom talks: During the campaign period, a professor came to our office with concerns about candidates' classroom talks. They argued that with so many candidates speaking, these talks were wasting class time. This was reiterated by multiple members emailing us complaining about the length and amount of talks occurring. We emailed candidates with these concerns and advised them to check in with professors ahead of time (i.e. email them a day before) to ask permission to speak and keep classroom talks under five minutes. No further actions were necessary. These issues were resolved and no complaints were brought following this discussion.
4. Classroom talks: During the campaign period, candidates came to our office with concerns about classroom talks. An incident occurred where a candidate had asked and received permission from a professor to speak in their class. Moments later a candidate from an opposing slate came in asking to speak in the same classroom. The professor concluded that there was only time for one speech. The first candidate suggested that since they were there first they should speak, however the second candidate got defensive. In conclusion, neither candidate was allowed to speak. Following this event, at a roundtable with representation from all slates was held. In discussion of this matter we concluded that classroom talks were to be given at a first come first serve basis and if there is time for multiples, that speech times would be reduced. All candidates agreed and were happy with this outcome. No further actions were taken. These issues were resolved and no complaints were brought following this discussion.
5. Elections Office Social Media: Likes viewed as inappropriate were made by the UVSS Elections Office on Facebook. These likes were brought to our attention informally through our Facebook messenger. The complainant brought forward a status and shared links concerning UVic policy on gender-neutral bathrooms that our office liked. Some of these statuses/links were shared by current UVSS Election candidates, and therefore the complainant found that this showed partiality within our office. The Elections Office investigated this activity on our Facebook page. It appeared that one of our officer had accidentally liked these statuses/links using their phone thinking it was being done from their personal Facebook account. We un-liked all of the statuses/links in question and apologized for the mistake. The officers were instructed to remain

impartial on social media, including their own. No further actions were taken. These issues were resolved and no complaints were brought following these actions.

6. Slate Polling Stations: On voting day a slate had computers at a promotional table. Concerns were brought forward by the membership that the slate was using this as a “slate specific” polling station. The concern was that these stations would affect the integrity of student elections. The Elections Office agrees, however, there is nothing in policy that explicitly prohibits polling stations that are managed by a specific slate. So to stick within policy, while remaining impartial, we contacted each slate encouraging them that if they were having a polling station to encourage voters to use impartial Elections office stations. Please see policy recommendations for further information.

## 6. Complaints and Appeals

Eleven formal issues were submitted to the Elections Office. This is a drastic increase in formal complaints from previous years. The CEO worked tirelessly on each of her rulings following the EPM processes and posting the rulings online as has been done historically. Below are brief descriptions of the complaints and their outcomes.

Five complaints concerned allegations of disqualifiable offences including malicious campaigning, substantial prejudice, harassment, defamation, libel and slander by one slate. One of the complaints was dismissed because complainant did not comply with a request for additional information in the given time frame. After reviewing the information on the remaining four complaints submitted on these issues (all of which dealt with campaign materials such as platforms, a podcast, and a website page) connecting with the complainants, respondents, and witnesses, the CEO ruled that there was no evidence of these offences as described in the policy.

One complaint concerned allegations of pre-campaigning by one slate, a direct violation of 5.4.a. After reviewing the information submitted and connecting with the complainant, respondent and witnesses, the CEO ruled that there was evidence of pre campaigning and limited the respondent slate to remove their website 24 hours earlier than the timeline allotted because the site had been live 24 hours before the campaigning period began. This decision was appealed to the Election Adjudicator. The Elections Adjudicator also reviewed the information and determined that there was evidence of pre-campaigning and upheld the CEO’s decision.

One complaint was in regards to third party endorsements. The concern was that a slate had used a SUB room booked by an external party without a third party endorsement. After reviewing the information submitted and connecting with the complainant, respondent and witnesses, the CEO ruled that the room was not being used for slate campaigning purposes and therefore did not require a third party endorsement.

One complaint was submitted regarding classroom talks. In the emailed copy of the complaint, no text was made visible. The CEO requested that the complainant resend the information. This information was never received and the complaint was dismissed.

One complaint was submitted concerning the disqualifiable offence of campaigning off campus. The concern was that in an interview with CTV a candidate was campaigning off campus. After reviewing the information submitted and connecting with the complainant, the CEO dismissed the complaint as frivolous as there was no finding that the video interview contained any form of campaigning.

Following the close of polls, upon the review of finances submitted by slates and candidates, the CEO ruled that one slate was to be disqualified because each of the slates candidates did not certify in writing that they have not exceeded that spending limit, however their campaign manager did. As the EPM says that without this certification a candidate must be disqualified, the CEO did her due diligence and disqualified ten candidates. This decision was appealed to the Elections Adjudicator. The Elections Adjudicator reviewed the information and upheld the CEO’s decision. The Elections Adjudicator’s ruling was appealed to the Arbitration panel. The Arbitration panel reviewed the information and conducted a hearing in which they interviewed those involved. The Arbitration Panel

ruled that there was insufficient grounds for disqualification, and therefore the previous decisions by the CEO and Adjudicator were overturned and the slate was found to be in good standing in the 2016 UVSS elections.

Again after the close of polls, a complaint was submitted alleging one slate of exceeding the spending limit as designated by the EPM. This complaint was thoroughly investigated by the CEO after already reviewing the slates expenditures in detail (as it is the Elections Office's responsibility to review financial reports for overspending as per the EPM). After reviewing the information submitted and connecting with the complainant and witnesses, the CEO ruled that there was no evidence of overspending. This decision was appealed to the Elections Adjudicator. The Elections Adjudicator also reviewed the information and determined that there was no evidence of overspending. This decision was appealed to the Arbitration Panel. They reviewed the information and held a hearing interviewing all of those involved. They concluded to uphold the CEO's and Adjudicator's decision determining that there was no evidence of overspending.

In conclusion of the eleven formal issues brought to the office; three were brought to appeals and one decision by the CEO was overturned. Please see Appendix 4 for more information on the Arbitration Panel Appeal Process.

**Budget**

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 decisions; and the ease of hiring and training both pollsitters and electoral officers.

Staff hours comprise the largest part of the budget. Election policy and processes require substantial staff hours in attending to details, without which the integrity of the election could be compromised. The CEO was given sufficient autonomy in operations keeping the budget in mind; however budget management and oversight is reserved by the UVSS General Manager and Executive Director. Budget details may be obtained from them.

## Recommendations

### Issues and Recommendations for the Board from the Elections Office

#### 1. Senate and Board of Governors

This was the first year that Senate and Board of Governors elections implemented a spending limit. Senate and Board of Governors candidates were given \$25 credit at Zap! and were allotted \$75 of their own spending money. They implemented a similar process to our in requesting financial receipts and certification to ensure candidates did not exceed this spending limit. With issues that arose in 2015 the Elections Office requested that “candidates who are seeking election to UVic Senate and/or Board of Governors are permitted to create campaign material and organize campaign events and activities that publicize their UVSS, Senate and BOG candidacy. All costs with these materials events and activities must wholly be attributed to their UVSS campaign.” With the newly implemented budgets for Senate and Board of Governors we propose adding the following policy to EPM 5.5.d:

**“Candidates for the UVSS Board of Directors who are also seeking election to the UVic Senate and/or Board of Governors are permitted to create campaign material and organize campaign events and activities that publicize their UVSS Board of Directors candidacy (which may include a slate name), as well as their Senate and/or Board of Governors candidacy. All costs associated with these materials, events and activities may be divided amongst their UVSS, Senate and Board of Governors campaigns.**

#### 2. Senate and Board of Governors Timelines

Candidates who are running in multiple elections have a clear and unfair advantage over other candidates who are only running in one election. As the office on campus that seeks to ensure democratic fairness, the Elections Office suggests that the timeline for the UVSS elections are adjusted such that they do not align at all with Senate or Board of Governors elections.

#### 3. Polling Stations

- a. One of the issues that arose this year was a slate managed polling station. Informal complaints were submitted and the integrity of the elections was questioned. This issue is extremely serious as it jeopardizes voters privacy, creates a partial voting environment. For these reasons the EPM makes it clear that candidates must remove all campaigning materials from sight of a polling station and are prohibited to campaign within sound or 6 metres of a polling station during polling hours or loiter at a polling station (EPM 7.2) and in doing so is a disqualifiable offence (EPM 5.8.a.2.c and 5.8.a. 3). With the purpose and application of the EPM in mind it is important to define a polling station and prohibit polling to take place in slate or candidate campaigns.

The Elections Office proposes adding the following definition to the EPM under 2.21

**“Polling station means the official polling stations where voting takes place as organized by the Elections Office located in the areas described in 7.1.d of this policy.”**

The Elections Office also proposes that like campaigning or loitering by a polling station the following be a disqualifiable offence added under 5.8.a.10 **“create an unofficial polling station during polling hours.”**

- b. One of the issues that arose during the election is the lack of members using our physical polling stations. It is important to note that with online voting, voter turnout is increasing, however this means that more people can vote from their own personal devices. As noted in Appendix 3 of our polling stations received less than ten voters. It is important to note that these stations are only open for two hours, while the more popular and accessible ones are open for eight (with the exception of MacPherson which is open for twelve hours). That being said, we believe polling stations are beginning to be more of a promotional hub. We could decrease costs by decreasing the amount of polling stations we have and the amount

of people we need to manage them. Therefore we recommend that the following policy be added to 7.1.d and e in order to decrease the number of polling stations and increase promotions:

**“D. Polling stations must be located in**

- 1. each of the Student Union Building, Clearihue, and the McPherson Library, and open for at least eight hours,**
- 2. each of MacLaurin, Commons Block, Engineering and Computer Science, and open for at least two hours.**

**E. On voting day, the Elections Office must promote the election in each of Engineering Lab Wing, Fine Arts, Fraser, Elliot, Cornett, University Centre, Social Sciences and Mathematics, David Strong Building, Human and Social Development, and McKinnon.”**

5. Forum Question Periods

With the change from two to three events this year we saw a greater turnout for the Senate and Board of Governors Candidates Forum as well as the All Candidates Forum and Lead Director Debate. The events increased interest and outreach and broadened topics that the voting membership could discuss with them. That being said, to increase opportunities for students to engage in the events, it is suggested that candidates and those posing questions are limited in the amount of time they have to respond or ask questions. This is to ensure more students can ask questions, and that more candidates can provide responses in the limited time frame. The Elections Office proposes adding in policy to EPM 5.2.a, b, and c: **“Candidates are given up to 30 seconds to respond to a question. Those posing questions are given 15 seconds to ask.”**

6. Campaign Managers

With issues that arose during this elections we recommend that the role of the Campaign be more clearly defined including their accountability. The Elections Office proposes adding in policy to EPM 2.22 **“Campaign Manager means the direct contact for candidates within a slate. They are responsible for representing the candidates and the slate with respect to any such issues or complaints and informing all candidates and the slate about campaign issues or complaints and outcomes. They cannot sign official elections forms on behalf of a candidate.”**

7. Appeals

By the request of our appeals personnel we recommend that policies 5.13.c and 5.14.c be amended to allow for the Adjudicator and Arbitration Panel to conduct interviews, as they deem necessary. Further, that in the absence of new evidence the Panel may choose to not conduct a hearing.

They have also requested that policy 5.14.a of the EPM should clarify who can make appeals rather than simply stating “candidate.”

8. Complaints

The Elections Office recommends that the anonymity of individuals involved extend beyond that of the complainant to the respondent. We also suggest that policy is implemented that clearly defines what should and should not be published publically. Historically, complaint rulings have been published online to ensure that candidates knew about complaints and how our office was ruling on them. The Elections Office proposes adding in policy 5.11 **“A complainant and/or a respondent may request that their identity be kept confidential and the Electoral Officers, Election Adjudicator, and the Arbitration Panel must take all possible steps to comply with that request.”**

Additionally we propose adding in policy 5.11. K **“The CEO may publish rulings on the Elections Office website (uvsselections.com). As such, complaints, responses and rulings are property of the elections office and cannot be published outside the Elections office website.”**

### 9. Campaign Expenditures

In light of post-election events the Elections office proposes that the procedure of submitting campaign expenses information be similar to that of nominations to allow incomplete submissions to be completed after submission. The Elections Office proposes adding in policy 5.5.c. **“Candidates must submit copies of receipts for all of their campaign expenditures to the Senior Deputy Electoral Officer by no later than the time that polls close, and certify in writing that they have not exceeded the campaign spending limit. A candidate who exceeds the campaign-spending limit or fails to submit copies of their receipts or to certify in writing that the limit has not been exceeded must be disqualified by the Chief Electoral Officer. A submission that is missing any other information must be rejected if that information is not provided by 4:00 p.m. on the day following the close of polls. ”**

## **Recommendations and Suggestions for the Elections Office:**

The following suggestions are intended to help improve upon the administration and organization of the UVSS Elections. They are set out here so that in 2016/17 the Board, the Electoral Committee, and/or the Elections Office may consider their implementation.

### 1. Third Party Endorsements

The Elections Office proposes that the Third Party Endorsement form is updated to permit candidates to submit the form digitally, as opposed to being required to submit a hard copy version of the form to the office. This move will align with all other forms (except for the Nomination Form) that the Elections Office uses.

### 2. Complaint Form Expectations

The amount of work required by Elections Office staff to review, investigate, and rule on formal complaints is significant. For future years, it is recommended that a cover sheet is provided alongside the Complaint Form that outlines some of the information that is required in order to submit a Formal Complaint. The cover sheet should also outline the process and the timelines for Formal Complaint. One of the integral pieces of information is that the formal complaint process is not an opportunity for candidates or students to express their opinion in regards to a particular issue or policy. The complaint form is a document that is only to be completed when a policy infraction has occurred. It is the responsibility of the complainant to clearly explain how the actions of another candidate violate policy, and which policy is violated. It is also recommended that complainants meet or talk with the CEO in advance of submitting a formal complaint so as to ensure what is required in the formal complaint.

### 3. Time Stamping

We advise that for future years the procedures of the Elections Office be modified to include time stamping of all submitted documents for the purpose of context when ruling on complaints and appeals.

### 4. Certification Form

Since the policy is quite vague in submission of certification of receipts and finances, we suggest that a certification form that can be signed by individual candidates or all candidates in a slate with the exact declaration statement and outline of expectations for a financial report be created.

### 5. Transparency in Expenditures

Some formal issues could have been easily resolved this year if candidates campaign expenditures were more transparent to the membership. It is our opinion that receipts from the \$30 personal limit should be kept confidential as they often include personal banking information. However, in order to create a more transparent process we propose that in future year's expenditures originating from student funds should be made available to interested parties upon request (the \$70 Zap! credit).

### 6. Personal Relationships with Elections Office Staff

As has been the case for many years, Elections Office staff often know of, or are friends with one or more candidates running for the UVSS Board of Directors. Concerns have never been raised in regards to an officer's inability to separate their personal relationships from their professional relationships; the same cannot be said for candidates. It is often the case where candidates will email, text, or call Elections Officers to their personal phone or email address. The Elections Office suggests that future staff discuss the importance of ensuring all communications go through the Elections Office as opposed to personal lines of communication. It may also be suggested that in order for the Elections Office to remain completely impartial, that officer positions be filled by non-students.

### 7. Social Media Policy

With social media a primary tool of our advertising, the Elections Office suggests that a Social Media Policy be implemented within the office. With concerns raised on our impartiality on social media, we suggest such a policy outline what is acceptable on both officers'

personal and professional profiles during the election period. Over the years we have implemented this casually, but having a direct policy to follow would be helpful.

**Conclusion**

The 2016 UVSS Elections were conducted fairly and democratically. All of the administrative and organizational responsibilities set out in the EPM were met, and carried out in accordance with the principles of fairness, transparency, accountability, and respect for all individuals involved in the process.

Online voting continues to be an ideal platform for the elections, with no issues surrounding security, voter eligibility, or accessibility.

## Appendix 1: General Election Results

### UVSS ELECTIONS OFFICIAL RESULTS (March 2016)

Number of Eligible Voters	Number of Students who Voted	% Voted
17,620	3542	20.1

#### Director of Outreach and University Relations

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Bhandar, Sara Maya	865	
Lukenchuk, Ben	1746	ELECTED
Renwick-Shields, Brontë	806	

Number of Ballots Cast
3417

#### Director of Finance and Operations

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Reuveny, Naomi	893	
Saadati, Negin	688	
Tupper, Kevin	1820	ELECTED

Number of Ballots Cast
3401

#### Director of Campaigns and Community Relations

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Nicholson, Maxwell	1658	ELECTED
Rogers, Kenya	867	
Timayo, Susan	852	

Number of Ballots Cast
3377

#### Director of Student Affairs

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Hagos, Lucy	940	
Kinakin, Emma	1705	ELECTED
Peterson, Bernadette	716	

Number of Ballots Cast
3361

#### Director of Events

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Akakpovi, Wilfried	1077	
Butz, Nathan	774	
Quitau, Jordan	1521	ELECTED

Number of Ballots Cast
3372

#### DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RELATIONS

Number of Eligible Voters	Number of Students who voted	% Voted
1999	226	11.31

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Alamchandani, Dheeraj	74	
Zhang, Tianyang	152	ELECTED

## DIRECTOR AT LARGE

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Armstrong, Alicia	1536	ELECTED
Axmann, Julian	742	
Bennett, Paige	798	
Brown, Michelle	1165	ELECTED
Coates, Zoë-Blue	853	
Dawydiak, Alec	1542	ELECTED
Devakos, Tessa	647	
Fairley, Kate	1518	ELECTED
Farboud, Avasta	1501	ELECTED
Flipse, Alysha	1471	ELECTED
Garofalo, Eva	698	
Grant, Ocean Ellen	WITHDRAWN	
Haynes, Carl	1467	ELECTED
Hordiyuk, Isaac	1508	ELECTED
Lwakila, Malaika	1007	
Lyder, Roisin	684	
Mckenna, Adam	701	
Musgrave, Catherine	1471	ELECTED
Percival-Paterson, Emily	704	
Sheres, Elora	1404	ELECTED
Shihundu, Jennipher	914	
Teuling, Greg	598	
Thomas, Ann-Bernice	993	

Wang, Jiayi (Grace)	1488	ELECTED
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Number of Ballots Cast
26065

REFERENDUM 1-University 101 Program

Total Ballots	Valid Ballots	In Favour	Opposed	Percent in Favour	Result
3540	3540	2366	1174	66.84	PASSED

REFERENDUM 2- Travel Pool Fund

Total Ballots	Valid Ballots	In Favour	Opposed	Percent in Favour	Result
3542	3542	1280	2262	36.14	FAILED

## **Appendix 2: Electoral Structure and Responsibilities**

The UVSS Constitution and Bylaws, with the Electoral Policy Manual (EPM) set out specific rules to administer the elections process and govern the conduct of the UVSS Elections.

### 1. Electoral Committee (EC)

The role of the EC is to hire the Elections Office staff and is a source of guidance and support when needed, or when issues arise beyond the authority of the Elections Office. Both Solenn Madevon who chaired the committee, and Erin Ewart the UVSS Executive Director were the points of contact for the Electoral Officers.

### 2. Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)

The role of the CEO is to ensure that the UVSS Elections are conducted fairly and transparently in accordance with the EPM. Emma Hamill returned as the independent CEO, for her third year with the UVSS Elections Office. Under Policy, she acted principally in a supervisory capacity, providing strategic planning and general direction on policy interpretation as well as investigating and ruling on all formal complaints.

### 3. Senior Deputy Electoral Officer (SDEO) and Deputy Electoral Officers (DEOs)

Arianna Rumenovich was hired as SDEO, while Natalia Karpovskaia and Kaitlin Schell were hired as the DEOs, bringing significant on-campus organizational and policy interpretation experience, along with other employment experience. Both Arianna and Natalia have worked in the Elections Office previously, and their experience and knowledge were valuable assets in the organization and conduct of the election period.

The SDEO and DEOs acted as the face of the Elections Office, and as the point of contact between candidates and the Elections Office. The role of the SDEO under the EPM is to provide for the day-to-day operations, administrative, and resolution process, with consultation from the CEO when policy interpretation was ambiguous or of concern. The CEO met regularly with the officers and was in the office frequently.

### 4. Elections Adjudicator (EA)

When a decision of the CEO is appealed, the EA hears the appeal, Randy Parker returned for his sixth year as EA.

### 5. Arbitration Panel (AP)

The AP is the third and final body that deals with appeals of formal complaints within the jurisdiction of the UVSS Elections. Ron Yee, Matt Watters, and Karen Potts also returned for their sixth year as members of the AP.

### 6. Senate and Board of Governor (BOG) Elections- University Secretary's Office

The Elections Office met with the University Secretary's Office at the beginning of January to discuss each office's respective roles in the conduct, coordination and operation of the UVSS, Senate, and BOG Elections. Although the University Secretary's Office is in charge of all matters pertaining to Senate and BOG, the Elections Office assists in their promotion and preparation. This primarily involved including their candidates in the Elections Supplement, the All Candidates Orientation, and the Senate and BOG Forum, and by acting as a point of contact for questions, policy, and campaign rules. The Elections Office also stamps all Senate and BOG campaign material for posting.

**Appendix 4: Polling Stations Statistics**

<b>Building</b>	<b>Number of Members Who Voted Here</b>	<b>Hours Open</b>
McPherson	42	12
Clearihue	36	8
Student Union Building	35	8
Cadboro Commons	11	2
MacLaurin	6	2
Fraser	5	2
Fine Arts	4	2
ECS	3	2
ELW	3	2

## Appendix 5: UVSS Arbitration Panel Appeal Hearing Guidelines

### Overview:

The UVSS Arbitration Panel consists of three individuals "arm's length" from the UVSS Electoral Process, contracted by the UVSS Elections Committee.

The Panel functions under the authority of the UVSS Electoral Policy. The UVSS Electoral Policy is based on the principles of:

1. respect for the democratic process and persons involved in that process,
2. the right of voters and candidates to participate in a fair and just election, and
3. fair and open processes for resolving election issues, including adjudications

The Arbitration Panel is the last level of appeal. Appellants, Respondents and Elections staff recognize that decisions at this level are final and binding on all parties.

The Panel adheres to Principles of Administrative Fairness and Natural Law in carrying out its duties.

Regardless if the decision of the Arbitration Panel is to uphold or overturn a previous ruling, the Arbitration Panel Process will be deemed as successful when:

- Appellants and Respondents understand the Arbitration process
- Appellants and Respondents are given the opportunity to be heard, either in writing or in person
- The Arbitration process is efficient and respectful
- The Arbitration Panel makes its ruling in a clear, written and timely manner.

1 The Arbitration Panel will attempt to provide a decision on all appeals within 48 hours of the Appeal Deliberations/Hearing. However, this time may be extended due to the volume and complexity of appeals under review.

### Arbitration Hearing Procedure:

1. Interviewees/Witnesses will be notified of the hearing with 24 hour notice, when possible.
2. Only parties invited by the Arbitration Panel will be admitted.
3. The three Arbitration Panelists will first meet in camera.
4. Interviewees/Witnesses will be called/texted when the Panel is ready for their evidence
5. One interviewee/witness will be called at a time. No other interviewees/witnesses will be in attendance.
6. With permission, interviews will be audio-recorded. The audio recordings are for in camera use of the Arbitration Panel only, to review evidence presented. No other persons shall have access to the audio recordings. The audio recordings will be erased when the Arbitration Panel submits its final decision.
7. In general, interview times will be brief, under 15 minutes, and will focus on clarifying written submissions or ask for further, new information.
8. The Arbitration Panel may recall interviewee/witnesses later in the Hearing process should issues requiring clarification arise during subsequent interviews.
9. At the close of interviews, interviewees/witnesses will be asked to leave the hearing area.
10. Panellists will deliberate in camera. Two-third majority will determine the ruling. Any dissenting opinion will be stated.
11. The official ruling will be submitted in writing to the UVSS Electoral Committee Chair for communication to the Appellant(s) and to be filed with the UVSS Election Office.

### Guidelines for Arbitration Hearing Interviewees/Witnesses:

- Interviewees/witnesses recognize the authority of the Arbitration Panel under the UVSS Electoral Policy and accept the Arbitration Panel's decision as final.
- Interviewees/witnesses will be respectful of the Arbitration Panellists and process, and answer questions directly and succinctly. The Arbitration Hearing is not a platform for presentations, nor to repeat arguments or statements made in the written appeal documents.
- The interviewees/witnesses will leave the hearing room when requested to do so.
- No abuse, swearing, harassment or any threatening speech or behaviour will be tolerated.
- Interviewees/witnesses will not instigate direct contact (in person, via telephone or electronically) any of the Arbitration Panellists outside of the Hearing. All communication subsequent to the Hearing should be directed to the UVSS Electoral Office, and copied to the Arbitration Panel email.