

UVSS ELECTIONS OFFICE  
ELECTORAL REPORT  
MARCH 2014

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## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introductions and Acknowledgments</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Election Planning</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Necessary Forms</b>	
<b>The Voters List and Eligibility</b>	
<b>Nominations</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Campaigning</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>The Election</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Budget</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix 1: General Elections Results</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Voter Turnout - 1976 to 2013</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>General Elections</b>	
<b>By-Elections</b>	
<b>Referendum</b>	
<b>Appendix 3: Electoral Structure and Responsibilities</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Issues and Recommendations for the Board from the Elections Office</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Recommendations and Suggestions for the Elections Office</b>	<b>25</b>

## **Introductions and Acknowledgments**

The 2014 Electoral Report is submitted by the Elections Office as required by the UVSS Electoral Policy. The Elections Office is comprised of:

Diane Flood (Chief Electoral Officer)

Hilary Arias-Carrasco (Senior Deputy Electoral Officer)

Emma Hamill (Deputy Electoral Officer)

Owen Pachal (Deputy Electoral Officer)

The Elections Office would like to thank the UVSS Board of Directors, the Electoral Committee, and all UVSS staff, especially Dale Robertson, Ben Johnson, Carmen Barrett, and Terri Tan for their tireless support. Thank you to CFUV and the Martlet for supporting the needs of students by publicizing elections information and events, as well as hosting the Chairperson Debate. The Office also acknowledges Morag McNeil, Kathy MacDonald, Carrie Anderson, and Sivonne McFall 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 2014 UVSS Election to the Board of Directors was concluded successfully. While the Election was 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

Two individuals ran for Chairperson, with two persons running for each of the Executive Director positions, except for the Director of Finance and Operations, for which one individual ran uncontested, and the Director of Events, for which three individuals ran.

Initially, sixteen individuals filed nomination papers for the eleven Director-at-Large positions. One person withdrew their nomination, so fifteen individuals ran for these positions.

No referendum questions were asked.

### 5. Major Changes

On February 10, 2014, the Board amended the EPM as suggested by the Electoral Committee and as recommended by the Elections Office.

Section 3.2.a.1 was amended to reflect Bylaw 5.2.a which previously was not stated directly into the EPM. Section 5.4.a. was amended from “the sixteenth day after the close of nomination” to “*the first day on which printed and digital campaign materials may be posted, as scheduled by the Board of Directors.*” Section 5.8.6.a.1 was amended to reflect the change in the campaign start date in the same way as 5.4.a.

### 2. Elections Office

Dianne Flood returned to the Elections Office as Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for a third year. Hilary Arias-Carrasco was appointed as Senior Deputy Electoral Officer (SDEO), and Emma Hamill and Owen Pachal were appointed as the Deputy Electoral Officers (DEOs).

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

### 3. Complaints

The Elections Office received three complaints. The CEO issued decisions on two complaints. Further information was requested on the third complaint, but was not provided so the complaint was treated as if withdrawn. There were no appeals of the CEO's decisions.

### 4. Appeals

Elections Adjudicator, Randy Parker, and the Arbitration Panel, comprised of Karen Potts, Matt Watters, and Ron Yee, returned for a fourth year. The Elections Office met with the Adjudicator and the Arbitration to review the electoral timeline and the complaints process. The review focused on complaint preparation and informal conflict resolution as key goals.

### 5. Online Voting

Voting was conducted using UVic's WebVote System, administered through the University Secretary's Office. This was the third year WebVote was employed in a general election, having also been used in three fall referenda. There were no issues using WebVote.

### 6. The Polling Period

Polls opened at 9:00 am PST March 5, 2014 and closed at 9:00 am PST March 6, 2014. Nine pollsitters used eight Netbook laptops to staff polling stations at various locations on campus. In addition, significant time and energy was dedicated to hand-billing and promotional work in order to increase student awareness and promote the use of online voting.

The Elections Office also organized two promotional events. Electoral Officers and Promotional Pollsitters made themselves readily available to students at the Petch Fountain and engaged with students in conversations about Voting Day and WebVote UVic.

The Elections Office offered students complimentary coffee and hot chocolate on Voting Day, at a promotional tent. The tent was considered as an active polling station and all candidates were made aware to treat it as such for campaigning activities.

#### 7. Voter Turnout

2853 students out of a possible 16,707 eligible voters, for a turnout rate of 17.08%

#### 8. Election Results:

Chairperson	Kayleigh Erickson
Director of Student Affairs	Kaylee Szakacs
Director of Events	Ian Kopp
Director of Finance and Operations	Anas Cheema
Director of External Relations	Greg Atkinson
Directors at Large	Eric Cameron
	Jamie Cook
	Jordan Crocker
	Annie Do
	Karthik Gopalakrishnan
	Valery Heckel
	Katerina Perlova
	Kenya Rogers
	Nick Tang
	Lindsey Willis
	Makenzie Zouboules

#### 9. Post Election

On review of the statements of campaign spending, questions arose about the statements submitted by the two slates, which involved all but one candidate. The Elections Office issued to letters of request for information to each slate.

Both slates submitted responses. The CEO accepted both responses, determining no further investigation was required. Election results were considered official and posting of elections results as required by the EPM was completed.

## **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 Elections Office 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' 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.

### **DATES, TIMELINE, AND EVENTS**

The election timeline was set by the Board, in discussion with the University Secretary's Office.

A discrepancy was noted between the campaign period start date as set and the campaign period start date set by the EPM. The EPM was amended to support the campaign start date of February 24, 2014 set by the Board.

Voting Day commenced Wednesday, March 5, 2014 at 9:00 am PST. This was also the first day for elections to Senate and the BOG. Voting Day for UVSS Elections closed on Thursday, March 6, 2014 at 9:00 am PST. Voting for elections to Senate and the Board of Governors closed on Friday, March 7, 2014 at 4:30 pm PST.

### **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 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.

## **Nominations**

The Elections Office received twenty-five nomination forms by the close of the nomination period on February 3, 2014 at 4:00 pm, all of which were accepted as valid. Nominations list was posted on February 3, 2014.

One candidate withdrew his nomination for the position of Director-At-Large, which was accepted by the Elections Office.

## **REFERENDUM**

The Elections Office received no referendum questions.

## **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 Handbook highlights important policy parameters, provides guidance on policy interpretation, campaign material information, and the process/procedure for complaints and appeals. The 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 Building Policy BP 3150 were handed out. Carrie Anderson also represented the University Secretary's Office and reviewed policy specific to 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. 3,000 copies were printed - 2,000 were distributed to students in conjunction with all on-campus copies of the February 27 edition, 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.

The addition of further instruction and helpful screenshots of ‘How to Spoil Your Ballot’ was provided in the supplement, to provide further assistance for students who wanted to participate on Voting Day and avoid spoiling their ballot, or how to spoil their ballot if that is their election intention.

#### 4. All-Candidates Forum

The All Candidates Forum was held on March 3, 2014. Audience turnout was mainly made up of candidates and their supporters. The SDEO moderated the forum while DEOs organized the Question and Answer sessions.

Despite several invitations to former moderators and others, we were unsuccessful in attaining anyone else to undertake this role.

Attendance for the All-Candidates Forum was not sustained throughout the entire event. Attendance substantially decreased after the UVSS Board Member Candidates speeches, from both audience and candidates combined. It would be worthwhile to look into more informal events between Candidates (i.e.: an open house, a candidate “Meet-and-Greet”, separate electoral forums for each election) as opposed to the traditional formal speech-style event. This was a suggestion made by the previous Elections Office and should be put forth for further consideration in further Electoral endeavors.

#### 5. Chairperson Debate

The Elections Office worked with CFUV and The Martlet to organize a Chairperson Debate for all Chairperson Candidates. Liz McArthur from CFUV and Taryn Brownell from the Martlet provided questions and moderation, as well as provided on camera recording and live-streaming on the CFUV website.

Attendance for the Debate consisted of a full audience of both UVSS candidate and non-candidate members. This should be noted as a positive change as previous years have seen a very low turnout at this particular event.

#### 6. 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, emails sent to every eligible voter through the University Secretary's office, the Martlet Supplement, and through the Elections Office's social media outlets. These included a WordPress website, an official Facebook page, an official Twitter account, and an Instagram account. The purpose of using different social media platforms was to connect with the student body in as many ways as possible.

## 7. Online Content

Regular updates on the Elections Office website's main page, Facebook page, Twitter account, and Instagram; responses to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram comments and messages; and providing a live feed of our updates were several ways the Elections Office continued to use social media. The Elections Supplement and other pertinent information were placed on both the UVSS Elections Website and the Facebook page. Also, engagement with Facebook and Instagram by regular status updates and photos to the audience created a more powerful presence of the Elections Office. We encourage the Elections Office to continue to use social media to increase student engagement in future elections.

Candidates and slates have continued to use websites and Facebook as a platform for campaigning. For this election, both slates were able to reach to more than 300 followers on their social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube). This created a significant reach and would support the idea of digital campaigning and its popularity with candidates. It's easy to use, captures a majority of the student population, and in turn, creates a higher degree of awareness than traditional methods of promotion. 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. With this change, it would be highly beneficial to investigate how this type of campaign activity could be guided by the EPM, and whether amendments should be made to the EPM to accommodate for these new ways of campaigning to ensure fair campaigning practices.

The Martlet created an 'Elections' section on their website, providing all candidates with the opportunity to be interviewed, either on camera or in print. 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.

## 8. Methods of Campaigning

This electoral period saw the use of mass-text advertising through a third party endorsement, on Voting Day. A slate's third party endorser provided the slate with use of their text server list, which included all the phone numbers of the organization's member list. These numbers were provided to the organization in full consent and therefore used by sending the mobile user a text with an attached link. The link forwarded the user to the organization's site where endorsement of a full slate was provided as well as the WebVote web address.

The Electoral Office believes that this may become a popular method of campaigning due to its effectiveness, ease of use, and inexpensive cost. It may also be true that future Office teams will encounter other methods that will deviate from the traditional paper campaigns. The Board should consider revising the EPM to ensure that any type of campaigning beyond traditional means (i.e. posters, banners, and handbills) can still be enforced under current policy guidelines.

## THE ELECTION

### 1. Online Voting

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

No significant voting concerns arose this year. A reported case of alumni being able to vote was submitted to the Elections Office on March 5, 2014. After investigation by the Elections Office and the University Secretary's office, it was determined that no alumni had or could vote online during Voting Day and no corruption of the vote occurred. This investigation should be seen as a positive inspection of the security and integrity of the online voting system.

### 2. Polling Stations

Nine polling stations were set up on March 5, 2014, open for a total of 40 hours between the hours of 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM. The eight Netbook computers are in great condition, needing only minor updating and initial battery charges.

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 technologies were provided for students when requested on Voting Day.

### 3. Pollsitters

A team of nine pollsitters was 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 during the two promotional events during the campaign period and on Voting Day. Promotional tasks included: hand-billing, chalking in classrooms, handing out supplements, and talking with students about ways to access the WebVote system.

The Elections Office suggests that an allocation of the Elections Budget and Pollsitter responsibility should be given to promote the Office and Voting Day by organizing similar promotional events. Even though this influence of awareness is not reflected in this year's voter turnout, our mandate should continue to be promoted throughout the student population by this "Feet On The Street" method, long-term. This Office also suggests that the purchase of coffee and hot chocolate will be beneficial in attracting the student body and producing a high traffic area to promote our Office and Voting Day.

### 4. Voter Turnout

Voter turnout was below the expected amount, with 17.08% of eligible students casting their vote.

### 5. Informal Dispute Resolution

The EPM provides for Informal Dispute Resolution. The Electoral Office received three issues from individuals on Voting Day that were dealt with through this process.

1. Concern from candidates about banner and poster regulation: a candidate was approached by Maintenance about prohibited poster space on campus. EOs took this issue to Al Bishop (UVSS Administration) who forwarded further building policy to Maintenance. The Elections Office also made it clear to candidates to approach the Office if any posters were removed by UVic Staff.
2. Concern from candidate about use of mass-text campaigning: a candidate brought forward an informal complaint about the use of mass text servers to promote the opposing slate. A text from a third party endorser was sent to all active members of the third party. An approved Third Party Endorsement Form submitted prior to Voting Day confirmed the use of this service met with the EPM. Complainant and their slate manager were notified.
3. Both candidates and non-candidates approached the Elections Office about campaigners loitering near the promotions tent on Voting Day. All candidates were notified to treat the tent as if it was a polling station even though voting did not take place at this tent. All candidates respected this request and no further complaints were met.

All of these matters were resolved quickly, to the satisfaction of the individuals who brought forwards these issues.

## 6. Complaints and Appeals

Three formal complaints were submitted and filed on February 28, 2014 by a non-candidate UVSS member. The CEO ruled on two complaints, dismissing one outright, the other was sent to the candidate and, after considering his response, was also dismissed. Further information was requested for the third complaint but not received, so it was treated as if withdrawn. None of the three outcomes were appealed.

## 7. Post Elections concerning Campaigning Expenditures

The Elections Office had concerns about the financial statements filed by the two slates for campaign spending. These concerns were treated as if complaints. Each slate was requested to provide further information as a

response to the issues identified. On receipt and consideration of the responses, the CEO determined the issues were resolved.

The Elections Office raises the concern that the EPM does not have a clear direction on how to treat these kinds of issues, should they arise in the future. The Office also has concerns about how the EPM has been interpreted in the past in terms of applying the spending limits to ensure a level playing field.

## 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 the 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; however, she requested that budget management and oversight be reserved to the UVSS General Manager. Budget details may be obtained from the UVSS General Manager.

## Conclusion

The 2014 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 Results (March 2014)

Number of Eligible Voters	# Who Voted	%Voted
16707	2853	17.08%

#### CHAIRPERSON

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Kayleigh Erickson	1400	ELECTED
Matt Hammer	1219	

Number of Ballots Cast	Spoiled Ballots
2622	3

#### DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS- Anas Cheema

Total Ballots	Spoiled Ballots	Valid Ballots	In Favour	Opposed	Percent in Favour	Result
2611	9	2602	1967	635	75.60%	Passed

#### DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Greg Atkinson	1455	ELECTED
Roy Nam	1113	

Number of Ballots Cast	Spoiled Ballots
2579	11

#### DIRECTOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Alison Root	1228	
Kaylee Szakacs	1306	ELECTED

Number of Ballots Cast	Spoiled Ballots
2542	8

DIRECTOR OF EVENTS

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Ian Kopp	936	ELECTED
Ian Lackie	836	
Casey Lazar	929	

Number of Ballots Cast	Spoiled Ballots
2709	8

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Name	Number of Votes Received	Result
Eric Cameron	1270	ELECTED
Brigette Cheong	1170	
Jamie Cook	1340	ELECTED
Jordan Crocker	1236	ELECTED
Annie Do	1366	ELECTED
Karthik Gopalakrishnan	1308	ELECTED
Valery Heckel	1220	ELECTED
Jade Hoang	1208	
Moiz Karim	1218	
Dakota Mellin	1192	
Katerina Perlova	1434	ELECTED
Kenya Rogers	1310	ELECTED
Nick Tang	1272	ELECTED
Lindsey Willis	1263	ELECTED
Makenzie Zouboules	1394	ELECTED

Number of Ballots Cast	Spoiled Ballots
19227	26

## Appendix 2: Voter Turnout - 1976 to 2014

### General Elections

YEAR	NO. OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS*	NO. OF VOTES CAST	VOTER TURNOUT
1976	6,875	1492	21.70%
1977	6,894	1280	18.57%
1982	9925	1059	10.67%
1983	10230	1171	11.45%
1984	9789	1471	15.01%
1985	9709	2122	21.86%
1986	9832	1376	14.00%
1987	10839	2132	19.67%
1988	11182	1405	12.56%
1989	11918	1059	8.89%
1990	12628	1900	15.05%
1992	13514	1397	10.34%
1993	13284	1788	13.46%
1994	13246	1666	12.58%
1995	14715	1643	11.17%
1996	15077	2022	13.41%
1997	15327	1897	12.38%
1998	15098	1166	7.72%
1999	14984	4757	31.75%
2001	15504	3900	25.15%
2002	16052	1760	10.96%
2003	15731	1989	12.64%
2004	16056	2211	13.77%
2005	15920	2575	16.17%
2006	15826	2978	18.82%
2007	15641	1670	10.68%
2008	15519	2612	16.83%
2009	15955	2964	18.58%
2010	16465	3402	20.66%
2011	16420	2922	17.80%
2012	16317	3410	20.90%
2013	16796	3050	18.83%
2014	16707	2853	17.08%

\*Undergraduate population provided by UVic's Department of Institutional Planning and Development

## By-Elections

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NO. OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS*</b>	<b>NO. OF VOTES CAST</b>	<b>VOTER TURNOUT</b>
1977	7,151	422	5.90%
1985	9,832	1,547	15.73%
1986	10,839	1,209	11.15%
1987	11,182	1,390	12.43%
1988	11,918	1,160	9.73%
1996	15,327	1,636	10.67%

\*Undergraduate population provided by UVic's Department of Institutional Planning and Development

## Referendum

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NO. OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS*</b>	<b>NO. OF VOTES CAST</b>	<b>VOTER TURNOUT</b>
1978 (Fall)	7,672	1,626	21.19%
2010 (Fall)	16,863	1,162	6.89%
2011 (CFS)	16,420	4,665	28.41%
2011 (Fall)	17,448	3,425	19.63%
2012 (Fall)	16,681	3,522	21.11%
2013 (Fall)	17147	2759	16.09%

\*Undergraduate population provided by UVic's Department of Institutional Planning and Development

## Appendix 3. Electoral Structure and Responsibilities

The UVSS Constitution and Bylaws, with the Electoral Policy Manual (EPM) set out specific rules to administer the election 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. The EC was comprised of: Rachel Barr, UVSS Executive Director of External Affairs; Lisa-Jane Hayfron, UVSS Executive Director of Events; Miriam Moore, Director at Large; Dale Robertson, SUB General Manager; and Ben Johnson, Officer of Research and Communications. Mr. Robertson and Mr. Johnson were considered as non-voting members of the Committee.

### 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. Dianne Flood returned as the independent CEO, for her third year with the UVSS Elections Office, providing her invaluable experience and expertise on UVSS policy interpretation to help the Office run effectively.

Under Policy, the CEO acted principally in a supervisory capacity, providing strategic planning and general direction on policy interpretation, as well as deciding all complaints.

### 3. Senior Deputy Electoral Officer (SDEO) and Deputy Electoral Officer (DEO)

Hilary Arias-Carrasco was hired as the SDEO, Emma Hamill and Owen Pachal were hired as the DEOs, bringing significant on-campus organizational and policy interpretation experience, along with other employment experience.

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. Weekly meetings and regular updates to the CEO were enforced as office convention, which proved to be a successful model.

#### 4. Elections Adjudicator (EA)

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

#### 5. Arbitration Panel (AP)

The AP is the third and final body that deals with formal complains and appeals within the jurisdiction of the UVSS Elections. Ron Yee, Matt Watters, and Karen Potts also returned for their fourth 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 All-Candidates 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.

The rules governing election to the Senate and BOG are different from the UVSS, which causes confusion for candidates, especially those running in both elections. Beyond that, there is confusion for the general student population, in that they do not fully understand that there are three independent elections taking place concurrently, nor do they know the roles of each governing body. One of the purposes of the Elections Supplement is to differentiate among the three elections with explanations as to their roles and procedures for students.

To avoid any discrepancies that were found in policy and administration of campus elections, the timeline for Senate and BOG elections coincided with the UVSS timeline, particularly concerning the campaign start period.

## Appendix 4: Issues and Recommendations for the Board from the Elections Office

A number of issues came to light through the electoral period. The Elections Office encourages the Board of Directors to consider the Electoral Policy Manual (EPM) recommendation set out below. Additional suggestions are also made in Appendix 5.

### 1. **Poster Limit Issues (For candidates running in multiple elections)** a. **EPM Poster Limits vs. University Policy BP3150 Poster Limits**

**Issue:** For candidates who are running in the UVSS Election to the Board of Directors and the Elections to the Senate and Board of Governors, there is always confusion on how many posters this candidate is entitled to post.

The EPM postering policy of 50 posters conflicts with the University Postering Policy of 60 posters. Historical interpretations have been inconsistent. Two conventions have been used in the past:

- The candidate is entitled 110 posters
- The candidate is entitled 50 posters that can refer to UVSS and Senate/BoG candidacy and 10 additional posters that can refer to only Senate/BOG candidacies.

In either case, the larger number of posters permitted if running for both UVSS and Senate or BOG may provide an unfair advantage for candidates running only for UVSS.

**Recommendation:** The EPM Postering Policy, EPM 5.4.e should be amended to *“Candidates are limited to 60 posters and 4 banners at any time. This is intended to permit replacement of torn, missing or defaced posters,”* to provide candidates with a consistent interpretation of policy between the UVSS Elections and Senate/BOG elections. The amendment should also clarify whether Senate or BOG posters are included in this number or are in addition to it.

## Appendix 5: 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 2015, the Board, the Electoral Committee, and/or the Elections Office may consider their implementation.

### 1. **Internet campaign activity**

**Issue:** Social media involvement and reach is increasing exponentially, including the use of campaign websites. Campaign materials distributed online were included in the submitted formal complaints as use of slander and other inappropriate campaigning behaviours. There were also several concerns about the use of online campaigning and whether this domain was enforced by the constraints provided by the EPM.

**Recommendation:** Since social media is becoming quite dynamic and can be used in several ways, applying the current policy may be difficult. To mitigate any complication or issue with the use of social media for campaigning purposes, it would be beneficial to create guidelines from the basis of the EPM and present them at the All-Candidates Orientation and in the Handbook. The wording regarding campaigning has changed to reflect the use of digital media and therefore can be used to create explicit guidelines and interpretation for the candidates.

### 2. **Student engagement and voter apathy**

**Issue:** There continued to be a very poor turnout and participation rate in the UVSS Elections. Voter turnout hovers around the same percentage each year, but this year saw a lower turnout than last year's Elections and Referendum, at a turnout at 17.08%.

**Recommendation:** There should be an allocation of the Elections Budget devoted to promotional events. This year, we provided coffee and tea to students at the Petch Fountain, to further student engagement by talking to them directly about the use of online voting and providing awareness to Voting Day. Our office felt it of high value to give back to the students by providing them with a small incentive in return to discuss in person about the use of Online Voting and accessibility of our Office to the student body. Further use and participation of this Office to this purpose should be encouraged to future Office teams. We also suggest that the

Electoral Committee should be involved, in partnership, in taking steps to inform students about the importance of engaging in student politics.

### 3. **Concerns about campaign financial spending limits**

**Issue:** As previously identified in this Report, the Elections Office has concerns about how the EPM has been interpreted in prior elections in terms of calculating and applying the spending limits. The Elections Office is concerned whether these past practices are within the spirit and intent of setting the spending limits, set to ensure a level playing field for all candidates.

In the past, slates and candidates have been allowed to claim only the costs of that portion of purchased materials that the candidates or slates said were actually used. For example, ½ the cost of a can of paint might be claimed, not the full cost. The Elections Office believes this practice should be reviewed and clarified whether it is acceptable, and that determination be made clear to all candidates in subsequent elections, especially those who have campaigned under this prior interpretation.

The Elections Office thinks there should also be clarification on if candidates on slates may collectively purchase campaign materials and then allocate those expenditures among the various candidates on the slate. Slate purchasing may give an advantage that independent candidates will not have. Also, if slate purchasing is permitted, clarification should be made if each candidate on the slate must be allocated the same portion, or may different portions be allocated? If differential allocations of the shared expenses are permitted, should the whole slate be disqualified if one candidate on a slate spends over the limit?

Additionally, there needs to be clarification on how candidates who run for both UVSS and Senate/BoG may allocate their campaign purchases between the various campaigns. Neither Senate or BoG have campaign spending limits so that if a candidate is running for two or more positions, must he or she, or their slate, keep the campaign expenses absolutely separate or can they allocate expenses between campaigns? And if allocation of expenses among the campaigns is permitted, how is the Elections Office going to be able to ensure that the allocation is fair and accurate.

**Recommendation:** It is important to the Elections Office team that the Board to determine, before the Electoral Period begins, the appropriate interpretation of whether purchase costs may be proportioned as actually

used, and the allocation of expenses among slates, and between campaigns, so that information can be communicated to all candidates, prior any campaign spending being incurred.

**Issue:** Exceeding the campaign spending limit is a disqualifiable offence. The purpose of this policy was to create a level playing field for all candidates, so students did not spend excessive amounts of money on campaigning. Students with fewer available financial resources should not be at a disadvantage in participating in student elections.

The policy for disqualification enforces the limits, to encourage fairness and just elections. However, the policy does not provide clear direction on the process for enforcing the spending limits. The Elections Office treated its concerns this year as if complaints, and believes that is a fair approach.

Further, candidates and slates need to be reminded there are no exceptions to the policy, and that the application of the policy to others on the slate, if one candidate on that slate overspends.

**Recommendation:** The Board consider amending the EPM to provide that the Elections Office may treat campaign spending issues as if a complaint, and all the timelines and other processes for complaints apply, including the appeals processes.