



**University of British Columbia Students' Union Okanagan  
General Election  
2019-2020**

March 20, 2019

Prepared by the Chief Returning Officer

UBC Students' Union Okanagan

UNC 133-3272 University Way

Kelowna, BC V1V 1V7

March 20, 2019

Dear Chairman of the UBCSUO Board of Directors,

Every year the Board is responsible for ratifying the elections report. Approval of this report makes the election results final. I submit this report as the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) with the following motions that I ask the Board to approve:

1. **Be it resolved that** the UBCSUO Board of Directors approve the 2019 General Election report as submitted by the Chief Returning Officer.
2. **Be it further resolved that** the UBCSUO Board of Directors approve the destruction of the nomination forms used in the 2019 General Election.

This report is to be accepted as an all or nothing package and without amendments. If the Board sees that changes should be made, the report will need to be taken off the table for changes and further consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyrel Lamoureux  
Chief Returning Officer

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## **Introduction**

This report serves as official documentation for the 2019 UBCSUO General elections. It shall contain details of the procedures followed before the elections; the announcement of the elections, the call for nominations and ensuing nomination period; the campaign period, the voting period and thereafter the announcement of results.

This report provides a clear report of how the elections were carried out and outlines how due process was followed to provide a free, fair and transparent election. This document may serve as a template for future CROs when preparing to carry out an election.

Regards,  
Tyrel Lamoureux  
Chief Returning Officer

Casey Stein  
Deputy Returning Officer

Shola Fashanu  
Deputy Returning Officer

## **Candidate Positions**

The following positions were included in the UBCSUO 2019 General Elections:

President

Vice-President Finance and Administration

Vice-President Campus Life

Vice President External

Vice-President Internal

Director at Large (x4)

Graduate Student Representative

Faculty of Applied Science Representative

Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies Representative

Faculty of Education Representative

Faculty of Health and Social Development Representative

Faculty of Management Representative

Faculty of Arts and Sciences Representative (Arts)

Faculty of Arts and Sciences Representative (Sciences)

## **Election Officials**

Chief Returning Officer

Tyrel Lamoureux

Deputy Returning Officers

Casey Stein

Shola Fashanu

## **Timeline**

### *February 25th - March 1st - Nomination Period*

Nomination period opened at 8:00 AM on February 25th and closed at 3:00 PM on March 1st. Nomination forms were available from the UBCSUO front desk or via email request to the CRO. Candidates were required to submit their nomination form the CRO prior to the close of the nomination period.

### *March 1st - All Candidates Meeting*

The all candidates meeting took place at 4:00 PM on March 1<sup>st</sup> in UNC 106. The CRO outlined campaign expectations, and the UBCSUO Advocacy and Governance Coordinator outlined the roles and what was required in each position. This was followed by individual group sessions based on the executive and board positions. In the interest of time, the President and VP Campus life groups met from 3:30 – 4:00 PM. The individual group sessions were led as follows:

President - Amal Alhuwayshil/Lori Stevenson

VP Campus Life - Taylor Dotto/Mike Oullet

VP Finance - An-Noura Compaore/Lori Stevenson

VP External - Paula Tran/Sarah Furgason

VP Internal - Shad Shaker/Izzy Rusch

Faculty Representatives and Directors at Large - Casey Stein/Gabby Lees

### *February 25th - March 6th*

Campaign period opened at 9:00 PM on February 25th and closed at 11:59 PM on March 6th. The election debates were held on March 2nd and 5th in ASC 140.

### *March 11th - March 13th*

Voting was scheduled to open at 8:00 am on March 11th but technical difficulties on the SSC voting platform caused a short delay. This was resolved and voting resumed as per normal by 12:00 pm. Voting closed at 11:59 PM on March 13th.

## **Marketing Efforts**

The Facebook page “UBCSUO Elections” was created as a platform to release all official election material and news. An initial announcement of the election was made on February 15<sup>th</sup> and shared via the UBCSUO facebook page. This provided the official timeline for the elections so students knew that the UBCSUO elections were coming up and allow those interested to think about running/prepare to run during Reading Break. A full list of candidate positions was made available.

By February 26<sup>th</sup>, another post was published declaring the nomination period open and informed students that nomination forms were available at the UBCSUO front desk. Posters promoting the upcoming debate/all candidate forum, as well as promoting and outlining the voting period, were put up in the UNC, Fipke, Library, ADM, Arts, EME, and Arts and Sciences buildings.

For the voting period, members received an email that informing them voting was open and how to vote. Many of the candidates also included the dates of the debates and voting on their promotional material. This was very effective, with 1412 members submitting at least one ballot. It is possible this number could be increased if an email is sent out on the last day of voting, reminding students to vote. An increase in the CRO promotion budget, as well as increasing the budget for candidates, may result in an improved voter turnout.

## **Campaign Period**

The campaign period opened on February 25th and closed on March 6th. This was sufficient time to give each candidate an opportunity to present their platform to students; nearly every candidate posted an online resource where a platform could be found.

Candidates were guided by the UBCSUO by-laws and regulations during the campaign period and the guidelines set out by the CRO and DRO. These provided a fair opportunity for all to campaign sufficiently. One rule was amended during the campaign period: we removed the restriction on promoting inside or in front of SUO businesses on the approval of the CRO. This was due to the fact that last year Snapchat filters were permitted inside The Well, as well as to give more campaign freedom to the candidates. Restrictions were made such as the need for advance approval from the CRO, as well as not permitting posters or tabling. Elections could be discussed and platforms talked about.

We provided a platform for all the candidates to campaign in the All-Candidates debates, where candidates could present their positions, and by giving each candidate the opportunity to provide a candidate biography. These were live-streamed by The Phoenix newspaper and placed on the Phoenix's website.

Official complaints had to be submitted by email to the CRO. All complainants were kept anonymous and their names shall not appear in this report.

In investigating complaints the CRO and DRO followed the following procedure outlined in the regulations:

59. The CRO shall investigate and decide a complaint along with the Executive General Manager within twenty-four (24) hours of its receipt and twelve (12) hours on the last two days of the election. The CRO must bring the complaint to the Election Committee.

60. The CRO must give fair consideration to all evidence relevant to a complaint.

61. Upon the conclusion of an investigation of a complaint involving the alleged actions of a Candidate, the CRO must decide whether an offence has occurred and, if so, whether the offence is minor or major.

62. Upon the conclusion of an investigation of a complaint relating to the administration of an Election or Referendum or the conduct of a candidate, if the CRO along with Executive General Manager decides that the complaint is valid, the CRO must also determine whether the integrity or result of the Election or Referendum has been materially affected. If the CRO decides that the integrity or result of the Election or Referendum has been materially affected, the CRO must determine whether all or part of the Election or Referendum is invalid.

63. The CRO and Executive General Manager must publish the reasons for his or her decisions in writing.

## **Voting Procedure**

Voting occurred through the UBC WebVote system. The WebVote system was utilized because it is easy to use, highly secure by design (it is based on the SSC Platform), and administered by the university. Any attempt to interfere with the system and influence the results would be met with serious repercussions such as expulsion from the university for non-academic misconduct (Student Code of Conduct 4.1).

The Academic Governance Officer is the system administrator and is based in Vancouver. They assisted in setting up the system and, as no system is perfect, there were challenges. This outlines how they were mitigated and the effect of them, if any, on the elections.

- 1) Late start – A typo had been made in a key field for one of the times of one of the elections that ended up hanging up the entire system. It took an hour and a half to identify and fix the error.
- 2) A restart at to be implemented in the constituency based elections as they had not been limited for voting from students only in those

constituencies. This took another hour and a half to address but fortunately we were able to identify and fix the issue before sending the email to students announcing that the voting was open. This email was sent at 1:09, and it requested for those who voted for these constituency based elections to re-cast their ballot.

- 3) There was a small number of spoiled ballots in some elections; however, these were at a rate that can be expected, particularly in the case of candidates running uncontested.
- 4) The typo and the required corrections on the constituencies would have been less likely to occur if all of the required and final information had been sent a few days prior to the election opening.
- 5) Developing a form for elections requests to use in the future would be beneficial so that we can ensure that all the required information is in time to be set up for the elections – this should help us to avoid any issues in the future along the lines of the above.

Spoiled ballots appeared when members clicked “vote” without selecting a candidate. They were presented with a pop-up asking if they would like to submit their vote and to confirm their choice. This was an option because the WebVote system is designed to represent a physical ballot as much as possible and a ‘spoiled ballot’ may be viewed as an opportunity for members to protest an election or disagree with the candidates running.

## **Suggestions and Recommendations**

### *Regulation Changes*

As this is the first year that the new regulations, it is of the opinion of the electoral committee that the regulations be adjusted and minor changes to be made. These changes have been considered by the electoral committee and a proposed plan will be taken to the policy committee for changes. These changes that will be proposed have been attached as an appendix to this report.

### *Faculty of Education Representative*

Consideration must be made to allow for the Education faculty representative in regards to the time period of the election. The education program runs for 2 consecutive years, and potential candidates have to already be in the program in order to be eligible to run in the election. These students are not approved for the program until April, after the election is over. This results in the only students who are eligible to run are nearing their practicum and therefore have limited to no time to devote to the position.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, we feel that this was a successful election. We reiterate that we ask the Board of Directors to pass the following motions:

1. **Be it resolved that** the UBCSUO Board of Directors approve the 2019 General Election report as submitted by the Chief Returning Officer.
2. **Be it further resolved that** the UBCSUO Board of Directors approve the destruction of the nomination forms used in the 2019 General Election.

We hope that this report provides a thorough understanding of the process of the 2019 General Elections.

Respectfully,

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Tyrel Lamoureux  
Chief Returning Officer

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Casey Stein  
Deputy Returning Officer

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Shola Fashanu  
Deputy Returning Officer

## Appendix I: Unofficial Election Results

### President

**Romil Jain 727**

Jessica Moffatt 685

Total votes 1412 (14.3% of voters)

### Vice President Internal

**Holly Denby 498**

Johan Yao 143

Duhan Yendi 141

Total votes 782 (7.9% of voters)

### Vice President External

**Taylor Dotto 586**

Simran Sandhu 240

Total votes 826 (8.4% of voters)

### Vice President Finance and Administration

**Nimrah Pannu 276**

Abid Wahab 272

Daniel Elizondo 256

William Kobby Laast 136

Shaheer Khan 123

Spoiled 1

Total votes 1064 (10.7% of voters)

Vice President Campus Life**Ali Poostizadeh 593**

Ahmed Fayed (Doudy) 488

Spoiled 4

Total votes 1081(10.9% of voters)

Director at Large**Michael Gauld Yes 451**

Michael Gauld No 113

Spoiled 2

Total 566 (5.7%)

**Luis Emilio Freire Yes 407**

Luis Emilio Freire No 87

Spoiled 2

Total 494 (5%)

**Kyle Lee Yes 445**

Kyle Lee No 66

Spoiled 1

Total 512 (5.2%)

**Tashia Kootenayoo Yes 408**

Tashia Kootenayoo No 97

Spoiled 4

Total 509 (5.1%)

Faculty of Applied Science Representative**Kaila Spencer Yes 118**

Kaila Spencer No 28

Total votes 146 (8.5% of voters)

Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies Representative**Sage Cannon Yes 25**

Sage Cannon No 0

Total votes 25 (7.3% of voters)

Arts and Science Representative (Arts)**Cody Isaac Yes 224**

Cody Isaac No 28

Spoiled 1

Total votes 253 (5.2% of voters)

Arts and Science Representative (Science)**Kebbie Brown Yes 334**

Kebbie Brown No 37

Spoiled 2

Total votes 373 (7.7% of voters)

Faculty of Management Representative**Kyle Kliss Yes 108**

Kyle Kliss No 10

Total votes 118 (12.3% of voters)

## Appendix II: Complaints and CRO Determinations

### Complaint No: 01

**Filed against:** Mohamed Azzam

### **Allegations & relevant bylaws/regulations:**

Allegations against Mr. Azzam were filed on the basis of pre-campaigning. Evidence was provided in the form of a screenshot of a Snapchat conversation where Mr. Azzam was telling the recipient that he was going to “bring back recess” as well as asking the recipient to get their friends to vote for him. This screenshot was dated eleven days before the start of the campaign period.

71. A Candidate is guilty of a Major Offence if they willingly commit, or attempt to commit, any act which a reasonable person exercising an ordinary standard of care would have known was likely to:

- (a) Materially compromise the integrity of the Election;
- (b) Result in serious harm or undue disadvantage to another Candidate; or
- (c) Constitute two minor violations that occur within the last twenty-four (24) hours of the campaign period.

Throughout the investigation process, it was determined that this message was sent to a confirmed number of more than 10 people, but the real number is not known. At no point was Mr. Azzam asking these people to help with his campaign, nor to be a volunteer of any kind.

### **Determination of the Electoral Committee:**

As quoted from the released statement: Mr. Azzam is responsible for the conduct of those individuals he instructed as stated by section 21, and by campaigning 11 days in advance, Mr. Azzam has violated section 71 (b) by creating an undue disadvantage for all other candidates who did not begin campaigning until the official start of the campaign period, Monday March 4.

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**Appeal on Complaint No: 01**

Mohamed Azzam appealed the decision by the electoral committee within the required 24 hour period. This appeal was based on the argument that Mr. Azzam was not considered a “candidate” when he made this Snapchat message, and therefore the rules did not apply to him. This was considered by the electoral committee over the course of the required 24 hours through 2 meetings. The electoral did not find this evidence compelling enough to overturn the initial decision, and as such the Appeal was denied and the disqualification carried forward.

**Complaint No: 02**

**Filed against:** Ammar Riyadh

**Allegations & relevant bylaws/regulations:**

Mr. Riyadh was accused of using another candidate’s name, in this case Mohamed Amr who was running, in his campaign materials. The post was a text image that said “Vote for Moe”

**Determination of the CRO:**

The Electoral Committee determined that he was guilty, and as per section 72 of the regulations, Mr. Riyadh was suspended from campaigning for 24 hours, and had to make a public apology. This apology was posted to the UBCSUO elections facebook page.

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## Appendix III: Proposed Changes to the Regulations

The following is the proposed changes to the regulations which will be made to the Policy Committee.



PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ELECTION RULES AND REGULATIONS

Presented to Members of the Policy Committee

Tyrel Lamoureux  
CRO 2019

What follows is the proposed changes to the regulations. Any point where H.C. is found is considered a housekeeping change to fix grammar, ordering, or minor changes.

### **Article 2. (j)**

Rewrite as follows:

“Determine complaints and take appropriate disciplinary action against a candidate within a 24 hour period, and a 12 hour period of the last two days of the elections unless circumstances dictate an extension is necessary by the Electoral Committee.”

### **Article 22. a (re: vii, xi, xii, xv) / articles regarding endorsement and sponsorship.**

Strike xi, as provision vii prohibits sponsorship from outside bodies. Provision xi would seemingly allow sponsorship or donations so long as they are under the spending limit. By striking xi, it keeps the issue of sponsorship to a non-permissible act.

H.C.

Re-organize so that all articles are all grouped in succeeding order under article 22.

### **Article 21 and 23**

H.C.

Both articles refer to conduct and responsibility and liability. Merge both articles into article 23, as it has more detail. The rewrite will be as follows:

Candidates shall be responsible for their actions or violations, as well as any action or violations stemming from any volunteer(s), party, unless the Electoral Committee determines that they did not direct the action, and could not have reasonably foreseen that such action would occur.

### **Article 23 (c)**

Shortening the time frame on when to provide the CRO with a contact list of campaign volunteers, from 24 hours to 8 hours.

### **Article Creation under “Campaign Materials”**

“Posters must be taken down 12 hours before voting begins”

### **Article 26**

Consider increasing the campaign spending limits from \$75. Consider a set amount of money for election promotion only in order to increase the voter turnout.

### **Article 50**

Strike completely as being required to file within 24 hours creates undue pressure on SUO members who hold evidence and may result in valued complaints never being filed.

**Article 51 (a)**

Add sub clause to ensure the anonymity of complainants to read as follows:

“The name and contact information of complainant may remain anonymous upon request, to everyone except the electoral committee.”

**Article 52**

Rewrite as follows:

“The onus to prove the complaint is on the CRO and electoral committee.

The burden of proof should be on the CRO and not the complainant. The complainant should just be required to provide all relevant evidence to a complaint. This is already outlined in article 51 (c)

**Article 55 (a)**

Rewrite as follows:

“Provided with a copy of the initial complaint and initial evidence”

**Article 56**

Add two (2) sub clauses requiring a witness to investigation meetings as well as a requirement for them to be recorded. Reads as follows:

55 (a) “This meeting must be attended by at least one (1) witness of the electoral committee

55(b) These meetings must be recorded where audio is clearly audible.

**Article 57**

H.C.

Rewrite as follows:

“ The CRO shall provide the candidate and the complainant with a clearly articulated copy of the decision on the complaint prior to it being released publicly.

**Article 59**

Rewrite as follows

“The CRO will investigate a complaint and the electoral committee will render a verdict on that complaint within twenty-four (24) hours and twelve (12) hours in the last two (2) days of the election unless an extension is deemed necessary by a vote from the electoral committee. Extensions will be an additional (24) hours and (12) hours in the last two days of the election.”

**Article 61**

Strike altogether as it is what the Electoral Committee will be rendering a verdict on in article 59

**Article 62**

Rewrite as follows:

“Upon the conclusion of an investigation of a complaint relating to the administration of an election or referendum or the conduct of a candidate, the Electoral Committee must also determine whether the integrity or result of the Election or Referendum has been materially affected. If the Electoral Committee decides that the integrity or result of the Election or Referendum has been materially affected, the Electoral Committee must determine whether all or part of the Election or Referendum is invalid.”

**Article 63**

H.C.

The “Electoral Committee” instead of “CRO and Executive General Manager”

**Additions to the Rules and Regulations**

Sub clause under article 22 regarding campaigning outside of the campaign period written as follows:

22.

- (a) No campaigning outside of the campaign period.
- (b) Candidates/volunteers/pages may leave up online platforms to be found by members of the SUO.
- (c) Candidates/volunteers/pages may encourage voter turnout, but online only.
- (d) Candidates/volunteers/pages cannot encourage voting for a specific candidate in any way, shape, or form.