

Official Results

Pending their presentation to the Board
No pending appeals

CSU General Election 2016

(Winners Marked in Bold)

Total Number of Voters: **618**

Executive Committee

VP of External Relations

Sacha Fabry: 401

Kevin Khamseh: 108

VP of Student Life

Beatriz Miralles - YES 401

Beatriz Miralles - NO 34

VP of University Relations and Services

Jullian Kolstee - YES 387

Jullian Kolstee - NO 37

VP of Internal Development

Amina El Mantari: 280

Farhood Fadaghi: 147

Collectives

Accessibility Justice Coordinator

Alysa Huppler-Poliak - YES 356

Alysa Huppler-Poliak - NO 38

Women Students Liaison

Emily Solomon 243

Nataliia Golovaova 168

First Nations Students Liaison

Geronimo Alec - YES 224

Geronimo Alec - NO 15

Environmental Justice Coordinator

Haley Kuzek - YES 396

Haley Kuzek - NO 23

International Students Liaison

Darya Kostromitina - YES 207

Darya Kostromitina - NO 20

Social Justice Coordinator

Divya Nanray - YES 359

Divya Nanray - NO 21

Queer Students Liaison

Clarice Scop 139

Sahara Bridges 119

Students of Colour Liaison

No Candidate Nominated

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Faculty Representatives

Arts and Sciences

Sarah Rose Klassen 90

Kalen Tara 52

Ashley Kenney 75

Gur Jassar 40

Global and Community Studies

Carmina Tioseco - YES 41

Carmina Tioseco - NO 17

Kyle LeGrow- YES 45

Kyle LeGrow - NO 9

Business and Professional Studies

Marissa LeSire - YES 184

Marissa LeSire - NO 13

Fine and Applied Arts

No Candidate Nominated

Education, Health and Human Development

No Candidate Nominated

Regional Campus Representatives

Squamish

No Candidate Nominated

Sunshine Coast

No Candidate Nominated

Chief Returning Officers Final Report

2016 CSU General Election

The 2016 CSU elections can be deemed a general success given the relative high turnout of voters (618), with nearly a full slate of candidates and a number of contested positions. Much of the success of the election is a result of the efforts of the candidates themselves, incumbent board members, as well as the CSU staff members. The following pages provide a general overview of the electoral process and include some recommendations moving forward.

It was indeed a real pleasure and honour to work with the Capilano University community, the CSU and all of its staff and members. Should you have any questions regarding the following commentary, please don't hesitate to contact me at anytime for further discussion.

Rules and procedures

The rules and procedures governing the CSU elections have been amended drastically over the past several years and the current rules and procedures are generally conducive to the conduct of fair elections. Nevertheless, some areas could be amended to improve clarity and minimize potential disputes. It would be advisable to expand on the rule prohibiting "the distribution of food and drink" to encompass a wider array of "gifts". Amending the rule to prohibit "treating" would remove any doubt and alleviate any concern about all "gifts" a candidate may wish to provide prospective voters during the campaign, not just food and drink.

Treating: "A person is guilty of treating if either before, during or after an election they directly or indirectly give or provide any food, drink, entertainment or provision to corruptly influence any voter to vote or refrain from voting. Treating requires a corrupt intent – it does not apply to ordinary hospitality."

Consideration should be given to adding a regulation on how candidates may withdraw from the elections. A potential recommendation could allow candidate withdrawals at any time prior to election day. If ballots are not already printed, the candidates name would simply be removed from the ballot, while if the ballots are already printed, the rule could state that all votes cast for that candidate would simply not be counted.

Voter Register (Member List)

It must be noted that the cooperation with the Capilano Registrars office was outstanding and member lists were provided in a timely manner. Furthermore, the Registrar's office made the extra effort of linking each student to their faculty, something not provided in the past and allowed for processing students on election days in a much more efficient manner.

Nominations

The nominations process ran smoothly, with all candidates fulfilling their nomination requirements. In order to simplify the process for prospective candidates and the CRO, the nomination forms should be simplified so errors commonly made by prospective candidates are minimized. Such changes would be easy to implement, including altering the areas required to

be filled in so it is immensely clear what must be completed, rather than the current slightly confusing table format. This is especially required for the “Personal Information Release Form” at the back of the package. I would further recommend requiring the optional “Candidate Statement” be submitted at the same time, with the same deadline as the rest of the nomination package.

Candidate recruitment was a relative success this year, I believe, based on the efforts of incumbent board members seeking out potential candidates. These efforts should be duplicated in the future, including specific efforts in attempting to engage candidates at the satellite campuses.

One candidate, for privacy reasons, made a request to have their name listed on the ballot without their last name. Article 7 in Democratic Events requires the candidates last name appear on the ballot, while more flexibility is provided regarding their given name/s. While it may not be necessary, this issue is flagged for the CSU to consider.

A pre-check deadline was implemented to offer those submitting their nomination packages prior to this deadline assurance that the CRO would screen their package and return the package to the candidate should any errors or omissions be found for any corrections and resubmitting the packages prior to the final deadline. Only a few students utilized this opportunity, but nevertheless, it is a valuable feature to maintain. In order to potentially increase inclusivity, the CSU could consider providing a submission deadline for all and allowing a few days for all prospective candidates to resolve any errors or omissions found by the CRO.

Finally, if the nomination process could be altered to be completed by students entirely online, it would greatly reduce difficulty in reading and “interpreting” written packages. While this is not a priority, it could be added to a wish list.

Candidate Orientation Meeting

The Candidate Orientation meeting is an excellent opportunity for candidates to meet the CRO and learn about the important process they are embarking on. It is also helpful for the CRO to meet the candidates. However, it is extremely difficult for all candidates to be available for one such meeting. The current rules state that candidates cannot begin their campaign until they complete such a meeting with the CRO. Rather than require subsequent in person meetings, I organized an online video meeting for candidates unable to meet with me at the primary Candidate Orientation meeting. This reduced inconvenience on both the CRO and students and worked relatively well.

To encourage students to make an effort to attend the actual Candidate Orientation meeting, some incentives should be noted, including the fact that their campaign cannot begin until this meeting is complete. It would also be advisable to complete the ballot lottery, determining the order of the ballots at the Candidate Orientation meeting. The spelling of candidate names can be further confirmed at this meeting.

Advertising

On a very positive note, many of the most important preparations for the election were determined well in advance of the election. A prime example of this, includes the dates and

locations of electoral events which were both posted on the CSU website and included in the printed CSU student handbook & day planner. It would be ideal if other elements of the advertising process could be laid out well in advance as well, as in some cases staff were away for various legitimate but unforeseen reasons which limited the ability for advertising to be as effective as it could have been, including for the candidate information sessions, all candidates forums and the election days themselves.

Furthermore, to create greater awareness of the election, consideration should be made to uploading more materials online, including video of the all candidates forum. Furthermore, exploration of including the political science department and/or media department into formulating questions for the various positions at the all candidates forum may increase attention for the event.

Polling

The polling process was held over 3 days at the North Vancouver campus and travelling polls were provided for at both the Squamish and the Sunshine Coast campuses. Each campus was provided with sufficient time for voters to reasonably cast their ballots. I'd like to thank the polling staff that spent numerous hours patiently staffing the polling stations and providing instruction to the many members that came out to vote.

At several stages of the voting period, queues of members were observed waiting to complete their ballots, and in some cases members decided to complete their ballots outside of voting screens. In order to reduce wait times, it is recommended that at the North Vancouver campus, at least two voting screens be provided at all times for members to complete their ballots behind. While the CSU has two sturdy wooden voting screens, one was often in use for the travelling poll. Cardboard voting screens may be procured from Elections Canada for about \$1 each. As well, it may be wise to procure a few cardboard ballot boxes given that the wooden ballot box at the North Vancouver Campus was difficult to deposit ballots into at the end of the voting period.

The identification required to register to vote is not included in the CSU procedures manual. While this was not an issue for this election, it would be advisable to explicitly state what identification is required to receive a ballot.

Ballot

A number of the features of the ballot could be designed in a manner that would both provide greater voter secrecy and intuitiveness with simple redesigns.

Two current elements of the ballot have the potential to reduce voter secrecy. The inclusion of serial numbers on ballots for security or accounting purposes erodes voter secrecy as one may identify an individual's ballot based on the serial number. As well, a double sided ballot does not allow for members to fold their ballot in a manner that hides all their selections. While these issues may not be of major concern for the CSU community, they are not best practices and should be reconsidered. As well, attaining both poll clerk signatures to validate ballots may be counterproductive as inevitably poll clerks will miss signing a few ballots and such ballots will generally be counted anyway given the understanding that this is normally a mistake rather than fraud. As such, these practices should be discontinued and other security features, if desired

should be implemented. Such potential security features may be discussed with the CRO and not be made public.

Finally, to reduce voter confusion regarding which positions on the ballot may be voted for by all versus those one may vote for if they self-identify with that group, it is recommended to order the positions that all may vote for at the top of the general ballot, while positions requiring self-identification be located separately lower on the ballot.

Voter Turnout

While the election administration can do its utmost to provide various advertising for the elections, the primary vehicle to greater turnout is the candidates making an effort to create excitement and encourage students to come out and vote. I tried to pass on this message to the candidates at various stages and believe the candidate efforts were a substantial reason for the relatively high turnout.

Complaints and Appeals

No complaints or appeals were made during the 2016 electoral process. However, three or four questions were raised with the CRO that may have ultimately turned into complaints should the member have chosen. On this point, one question raised by a student has been included as a recommended rule change for future elections.

As CRO, I had intended to make any complaints coming forward official to ensure they were handled in a transparent manner, however, given no complaints were put forward, I was not able to implement this.

In order to simplify the election complaints process, the creation of a simple complaints form, which could be available online and/or at the CSU service desk, outlining any required information would make the complaints process more official and easier for complainants. This would also provide an outline of necessary details for the CRO and appeals committee to handle complaints and appeals more efficiently.

CRO Orientation

When the CRO was hired to carry out the election, a helpful overview and orientation of the election was provided by CSU staff. The CSU staff are currently the institutional memory of the process and aid in providing consistency between elections. This orientation is somewhat limited by the busy schedule of the CSU staff. In order to reduce pressure on staff, a Chief Returning Officer Manual, as envisaged in the CSU Procedures Manual should be created to provide a document which is standardized, comprehensive and one the CRO can refer back to over the course of the process. This would also likely reduce the learning curve for new CROs dealing with an unfamiliar process; usually the most difficult portion of any electoral process. Once this document is created, future CROs should take the time to update this living document and reduces reliance on CSU staff to carry forward the institutional memory.

Potential Future Online Elections

Obviously, should the CSU move to elections held online, much of the process would change, though at the core, many of the meetings and procedures would remain the same. In fact, many of the recommendations made above would not need to be implemented if the elections were held entirely online.

However, it is advisable to prepare many elements of an online election well in advance to work out any unforeseen bugs or procedural hiccups. Furthermore, while members would be able to cast their ballots from the comfort of their own homes, it would be recommended to continue on campus advertising, including having visible voting stations in various locations around campus to advertise the election process and allow students log into CSU laptops to vote on the spot as well.

Furthermore, consideration and negotiations would be required in terms of the number of electronic blasts to be sent out advertising the elections, including notice of the election, notice of the candidates, and notice of results. Obviously a few messages sent out during the voting period would likely increase voter turnout, but it is likely the university would want to limit the number of messages sent out on behalf of the CSU.

Ron Laufer
Chief Returning Officer
Capilano Students' Union

Signature: _____



Date: April 5, 2016

Recommendations

- Expand on the rule prohibiting “the distribution of food and drink” to encompass a wider array of “gifts” by prohibiting “treating”.
- Consideration should be given to adding a regulation on how candidates may withdraw their candidacy from the elections.
- Nomination forms should be simplified by clarifying the areas candidates must complete.
- The optional “Candidate Statement” should be submitted with the nomination package.
- Specific efforts should be made to engage potential candidates at the satellite campuses.
- Transparently complete the ballot lottery, determining the order on the ballots, at the Candidate Orientation meeting.
- Consideration should be made to upload more materials online, including video of the all candidates forum.
- At least two voting screens for members to complete their ballots behind should be available at the North Vancouver campus at all times.
- Polling procedures should explicitly state what identification is required to receive a ballot.
- Consider removing serial numbers and poll clerk signatures from ballots. As well, consider single sided ballots only.
- Order the positions that all may vote for at the top of the general ballot, with positions that require self-identification located separately, lower on the ballot.
- Create a simple complaints form outlining any required information, making the complaints process more official and easier for complainants.
- A Chief Returning Officer Manual should be created to provide a standard and comprehensive document the CRO can refer back to over the course of the election.
- Prepare many elements of an online election well in advance to work out any unforeseen bugs or procedural hiccups.