

# CSU General Election and Referenda 2017

## Official Results

Pending their presentation to the Board

No pending appeals

(Winners Marked in Bold)

### Executive Committee

#### VP of Academic

<b>Andrew Willis</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>567</b>
	NO	94
	REJECTED	115

#### VP of Finance and Services

Nesrin Bantan		275
<b>Perry Safari</b>		<b>422</b>
REJECTED		79

#### VP of Equity and Sustainability

<b>Owen Sigurdsson</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>586</b>
Owen Sigurdsson	NO	86
	REJECTED	104

#### VP of Student Life

<b>Yats Palat -</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>592</b>
Yats Palat -	NO	78
	REJECTED	106

#### VP of External Relations

<b>Noah Berson -</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>563</b>
Noah Berson -	NO	89
	REJECTED	124

## Collectives

### Accessibility Justice Coordinator

<b>Andrew Dillman -</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>468</b>
Andrew Dillman -	NO	29
	REJECTED	214

### First Nations Students Liaison

<b>Geronimo Alec -</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>453</b>
Geronimo Alec -	NO	96
	REJECTED	162

### International Students Liaison

<b>Feras Bingursain -</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>140</b>
Feras Bingursain -	NO	15
	REJECTED	9

### Queer Students Liaison

<b>Kaschelle Thiessen -</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>486</b>
Kaschelle Thiessen -	NO	82
	REJECTED	143

### Students of Colour Liaison

Ramneet Kang -		134
<b>Divya Nanray -</b>		<b>269</b>
Alykhan -		149
REJECTED -		159

### Women Students Liaison

Brigit Forssman -		169
Anahita Hooman -		178
<b>Katie Japaridze -</b>		<b>228</b>
REJECTED -		136

## Faculty Representatives

### Arts and Sciences

Johnston Chan - 64

**Madeleine Fyffe - 80**

**Christina Schulz - 110**

REJECTED - 0

### Business and Professional Studies

Felix Cheung - 121

**Nicole Cousin - 148**

Adam Daher - 51

Thomas Leung - 40

Karim Moodad - 97

**Camila Stankevicius - 129**

Adrian Vlastic - 36

REJECTED - 0

### Education, Health and Human Development

No Candidate Nominated

### Fine and Applied Arts

**Sofia Avelino - 75**

**Abbey Doucet - 96**

Megan MacAulay - 63

REJECTED - 1

### Global and Community Studies

Jennifer Frizzley - 44

**Anna Rempel - 70**

**Carmina Tioseco - 50**

REJECTED - 4

## Regional Campus Representatives

### Squamish

No Candidate Nominated

### Sunshine Coast

No Candidate Nominated

## Referenda

### Student Union Building Fee

**YES**            **538**

NO                240

REJECTED      79

### External Advocacy Fee

**YES**            **450**

NO                350

REJECTED      57

### Clubs and Events Fee

**YES**            **570**

NO                246

REJECTED      41

### Recreation and Intramurals Fee

**YES**            **536**

NO                273

REJECTED      48

### Consumer Price Index

**YES**            **446**

NO                373

REJECTED      38

### Capilano Courier Publishing Society Fee

YES              400

**NO**              **421**

REJECTED      47

\*\*\* NOTE\*\*\* Rejected ballots include blank ballots cast.

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# Chief Returning Officers Final Report

## 2017 CSU General Election and Referenda

The 2017 CSU elections and referenda were a general success. The elections and referenda can be highlighted by a turnout not seen in years with a total of 886 voters registered. As well, nearly all positions open had candidates that were nominated to run for them and a number of positions were contested, most notably the seven candidates that sought the two positions available for the Business and Professional Studies Representative 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. Furthermore, the referenda that the CSU and Capilano Courier put forward were likely also a draw for students to vote and campaigning with regard to the referenda certainly increased turnout. The following pages provide a general overview of the electoral process and include some recommendations moving forward, many of which remain from the 2016 election cycle.

It was again 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.

A total of 886 students voted, made up of 383 Business and Professional Studies students, 184 Arts and Science students, 180, Fine and Applied Arts Students, 116 Global and Community Studies students and 23 Education, Health and Human Development Students

### Rules and procedures

While the rules and procedures governing the CSU elections are generally conducive to the conduct of fair elections, a number of clarifications and amendments are in order to further smooth the process, 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."

Additions to the rules stating that candidates may campaign by posting messages within CSU email groups or Facebook or other social media pages would provide greater clarity to candidates. Furthermore, should there be any desired limitations on this of any kind, such consideration would be welcome as well.

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 and posters advising voters that a candidate had withdrawn could be made available.

A number of bylaws to procedures reference one another, however many references don't connect between the two, diminishing clarity and requiring some guessing on the part of the election administrator. An example includes Section XVI of the Procedures, Article 3, Para 7(viii) on page 67 “Qualifications for Office and Limits on Use of Society Resources” which refers to bylaw article 7(11), but likely should be 7(14).

As well, any reference to appeals in the procedures should reference that appeals are made to the appeals committee, as per the bylaws, not the CRO.

Bylaw VII(2) states that a candidate elected into a vacant position shall take office upon ratification at the next board meeting. In some cases, such as business and professional studies, we have one vacancy – but two successful candidates were elected. If there are two successful candidates and one vacant position, a formula for allotting that position should be codified, such as allocating such a position by lottery between the two successful candidates.

### Referenda

A series of referenda questions were posed to the CSU membership this year and as such, my first experience with referenda at the CSU. Carrying this out was entirely manageable, however, some thought should go into refining the rules to distinguish differences in conducting referenda versus an election, as they are distinct. This would allow for more practical implementation of referendum rules that naturally differ, especially from a campaign perspective.

It would be wise to explicitly add to the procedures that when the CSU is authorized to take a position in a referendum, they may use CSU logos and slogans, as distinct from candidates.

### Voter Register (Member List)

It must be noted that the cooperation with the Capilano Registrars office was very good and member lists were provided in a timely manner. Unfortunately, the Registrar's office was not able to link each student to their faculty this round, as they had done last year. We will endeavour to have them do so in the future. Nevertheless, they did note students registered as international students so we could comply with the amended bylaw providing that only international students could vote for the International Student Liaison.

### Nominations

The nominations process ran reasonably smoothly, with all candidates fulfilling their nomination requirements. As suggested previously, 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. For the first time, the optional “Candidate Statement” submission deadline was the same as the rest of the nomination package. Many candidates did not

realize this deadline and as such, only a few candidates submitted candidate statements. Efforts should be made to highlight the candidate statement submission process to increase submissions.

Candidate recruitment was again a relative success. I remain a believer that incumbent board members are in the best position to seek out potential new candidates and these efforts should continue in the future, including specific efforts in attempting to engage students at the Sunshine Coast Campus and the Faculty of Education, Health and Human Development. The board should be attracting potential new board members, not just before an election, but also throughout the year, simply planting the idea with other members and following up with them just prior to nominations opening.

This year, two candidates, for security reasons, made requests 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. This should be resolved as soon as possible and some flexibility should be sought. Other students also requested basic use of a shortened form of their first names which I too consider reasonable. If a requested name has a connection to the member's real name, it should be sufficient. However, safeguards to ensure a candidate doesn't use an offensive name or other oddities may be sought.

A pre-check deadline has been used in the past and is an effective way of getting candidates to submit nomination packages early to ensure their packages meet the required criteria to be nominated allowing time for any corrections. Due to staffing issues, the pre-check deadline was not really implementable this year. Pre-checks should be used in the future, or to capture more students and allow for more flexibility, 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.

Again, 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, as noted previously, 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 several online video meetings for candidates unable to meet with me at the initial 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 and that the ballot lottery, determining the order of the ballots, takes place at the Candidate Orientation meeting.

Consideration could be made to making the candidate orientation meeting non-mandatory and allowing the candidates to choose whether this is something they require or not. They would still be responsible to follow all stated rules.

### Advertising

A good amount of advertising was provided regarding this electoral process and certainly election days were further highlighted by the effective campaign of candidates and referendum campaigners. For the 2016 election, many of the most important preparations for the election were determined well in advance of the election, providing the ability to include the dates and locations of electoral events which were noted in the printed CSU student handbook & day planner. It would be ideal if such planning could take place in the future and other elements of the advertising process could be laid out well in advance as well.

### All Candidates Forum

An all candidates forum is a great opportunity for candidates to speak to members, but also for members to learn about the candidates. For such forums to be effective, getting greater participation from both candidates and members is essential. Greater advertising may be effective in drawing more people to such events. However, 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. Other consideration could include participation from the Capilano Courier. Greater awareness of the election overall is always positive and uploading video of the all candidates forum would be positive. The candidate forum should be scheduled to being at 11:30 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays to ensure maximum participation of students during the mandated lunch break.

### Polling

The polling process was held over 3 days at the North Vancouver campus and a travelling poll was provided for the Sunshine Coast campus. Each campus was provided with sufficient time for voters to reasonably cast their ballots. Staff for the polling stations were hired independently, providing a much-needed separation between the CSU and the administration of the polls. This further insulated the CSU from any conflict of interest. This should be replicated in the future.

We increased polling staff significantly from 2016, which suited the level of participation quite well. Given the number of ballots provided to members, we also added 5 more voting screens (previously only used one) at the North Vancouver campus in attempt to eliminate any waiting time to voting in secrecy. Even more screens may be used in the future. However, to provide greater flexibility, cardboard supplies should be sought from Elections Canada, as these can be set up as needed and kept between elections for repeat use. Ballot boxes should also be sourced from Elections Canada as they are far less cumbersome than heavy wooden boxes with locks and keys.

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.

A request was made for voting from overseas. While it is likely a very small number of students would find themselves in such a situation, adding such a service is something the CSU could consider if it were interested.

### Ballot

This years set of ballots removed elements that potentially compromised the secrecy of the vote in previous elections and I believe made selection this year more intuitive. The removed features were the serial numbers on ballots as well as having been double sided in the past. In future election, consideration to the type of paper used should be made in order to facilitate the ease of providing single ballots to members upon registration, as well as for counting purposes (eg. A rougher stock).

Printing of the ballot was completed by CSU staff, as has been traditionally done. I would recommend, again to remove any potential concerns regarding conflict of interest or improprieties, that the design and printing of ballots be given entirely to the CRO to handle.

### 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. This message was passed on to the candidates at various stages and the candidate efforts, along with campaigning for the referendum were a substantial reason for the relatively high turnout.

While voter turnout was positive on the North Vancouver campus, more attention should be paid to when voting shall take place at the Sunshine Coast Campus to ensure easier participation for students at that campus. No ballots were cast at the Sunshine Coast campus this year.

### Complaints and Appeals

One official complaint was filed during the 2017 electoral process and an official decision was written up and posted on the CSU website, as per requirements. Given the time sensitive nature of the complaint, I tried to process the complaint as quickly as possible and provided a decision the same day the complaint was file. Part of the consideration was to allow for the complainant to file an appeal as quickly as possible as well, should they have been unhappy with the decision. Nevertheless, no appeal was made.

A tremendous number of questions were raised with the CRO directly, some of which could have ultimately turned into complaints should the member have chosen, but for the most part I believe the contestants and others involved in the process were happy with this election cycle.

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 Involvement

The CSU elections are consistently held at the same time of year, allowing for a great deal of lead time to prepare for the elections. As such, providing the CRO with large amounts of lead time with regard to the initiation of the process would be helpful for both the CRO and I believe the CSU. Completing the planning process well in advance allows for all involved to carry out the administration of the elections properly and allow for the mitigation of any unforeseen staffing issues.

As previously suggested, in order to reduce pressure on staff and transfer institutional knowledge from staff and the CRO to a hard document, 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 reduce the learning curve for new CROs dealing with an unfamiliar 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

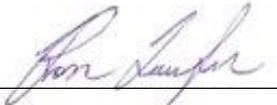
Obviously, should the CSU move to elections held online, much of the process would change, though at the core, many of the meetings and procedures would remain the same. In fact, many of the recommendations made above would not need to be implemented if the elections were held entirely online.

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.

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Ron Laufer  
Chief Returning Officer  
Capilano Students' Union

Signature: 

Date: March 31, 2017