

# Fall 2015 Report of the Chief Returning Officer

## Capilano Students' Union

### By-Election Results:

#### Faculty Representatives

Faculty Representative- Arts & Sciences (1)

**Jazica Chan** 39  
Rebecca Watson 28

Faculty Representative- Business & Professional Studies (1)

Nicholas Martinez Catchpole 15  
**Michelle Gervais** 90  
Sheldon Slonski 19

Faculty Representative- Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts (2)

**Melissa Plisic** 47  
**Olivia Wachter** 12

#### Campus Representatives

Squamish-

**Alora Wallace**  
15 Yes  
0 No

Sunshine Coast

**Sarah Ann Villeneuve**  
2 Yes  
0 No

#### Collective Liaisons

Accessibility Justice Liaison

**Jullian Kolstee**  
162 Yes  
20 No

First Nations Students Liaison

**Geronimo Alec** 88  
Amanda Vick 70  
Isaiah Gibson 18

International Students Liaison

**Hank Chan** 88  
Erik Rojas 70

Status of Colour Liaison

Ramneet Kang 79  
**Harold Williams** 100

Women Students' Liaison

Alysa Huppler-Poliak 91  
**Stephanie Hahlen** 95  
Noor Nandha 40

### Position Vacant:

Education, Health, & Human Development Faculty Representative (2)

## Role of Chief Returning Officer

1. Pre-Nomination Period
  - preliminary approval of nomination documentation materials (Call for Nominations, Nomination Package, including review of Bylaws, Democratic Events Procedures, nomination sheets, candidate information, etc.)
  - posting and publication of promotion and information material on CSU website, notice boards, etc.
  - contact Registrar's Office for student list to verify student nominators
2. Nomination Period
  - receipt of nomination packages
  - planning and conducting Candidates' Orientation Meeting (s)
  - confirmation and acceptance of nominations
  - post candidate list to CSU website
  - compile database of candidates with demographic information and checklists
3. Campaign Period
  - plan and conduct All Candidates' Forums
  - respond to candidates' questions and concerns
  - approve candidates' campaign materials and candidate statements
  - monitor campaign activities
  - contact Registrar's Office for student list for updated student list by programme for polling
4. Polling Period
  - arrange supplies and polling assistants
  - set up polling station with adequate signage, instructions, candidate information, ballot box and privacy screen
  - train and monitor polling assistants
  - set up adequate signage and non-campaign zones in polling area
  - encourage high voter turnout
  - daily communication with candidates regarding updates and clarification of concerns
  - organize polling at satellite campuses
5. Ballot Counting
  - arrange staff and area for counting
  - monitor scrutineers
  - plan process for counting of ballots and recount totals if appropriate
  - record results and organize counted ballots for safe keeping
  - set up template for recording election results
  - forward unofficial results to CSU webmaster for posting
6. Post Election Period
  - collect and review Campaign Expense Sheets
  - monitor removal of all campaign material
  - investigate and resolve any complaints or concerns regarding election process
7. Prepare and Deliver CRO Report to Board of Directors

## Perspectives on the Role of CRO

In my second term as Chief Returning Officer, my goal was again to provide communication and direction to the candidates, CSU staff and student body in order to run a fair and equitable election and to ensure compliance with the rules. I tried as much as possible to be available and responsive to the needs of the candidates and staff as they arose. I was conscious of seeking clarification of questions that were raised and to consult the Democratic Events Procedures and Bylaws and also to share updates and clarifications with all candidates.

I felt much more comfortable this year in my role as I have become much more familiar with the culture and environment of the university and the CSU. I am now working on setting up a CSU file or manual compiling information pertinent to CSU elections including updated documents, timelines, templates, etc. I have also reviewed election procedures on the websites of other local smaller universities to compare practices.

I was very pleased to see a high number of nominations (20) compared to the Spring General Election (17) with all but one position filled and several close competitions of which two required a recount. I believe that the pre-nomination information sessions and advance work by the previously elected Board members were very successful in promoting interest in the by-election. I hope that the promotion will occur again before the next election period to continue the increase in interest. Also, I was pleased that the positions of Campus Representatives for both satellite campuses were filled as a result of the outreach by Board members.

## Issues Brought Forward and Recommendations

1. **Potential candidate declared ineligible**

A candidate for the position of International Students Liaison was declared ineligible as he is a Canadian citizen having one Canadian born parent while being raised in another country. The language in both the Bylaws and Democratic Events and Procedures is not clear in defining eligibility as being an International Student as defined by the university as opposed to identifying with the collective.

2. **Candidate Information Meeting**

As I have had to hold several meetings when candidates were unable to attend a Friday Candidate Information Meeting, I feel that the date and time of the meeting should be changed to the Thursday common lunch hour and all candidates should be expected to attend unless receiving prior authorization by the CRO. It is important that all candidates receive the information together and are able to benefit both from meeting each other and hearing responses from questions raised at the meeting.

3. **Candidate Statements**

As several candidates did not submit candidate statements, I feel that they should be strongly encouraged to submit them early in the campaign process. Also, as they were sometimes not posted on the website right away, it may be more efficient to state when they will be posted (e.g. Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.).

4. **Candidate Expense Statements**

I find that many candidates do not submit expense statements despite several reminders so the due date should be before the close of polls. They can be submitted by hard copy to the CSU office or electronically to the CRO.

5. **Low Voter Turnout**

It was disappointing to see a low turnout of voters especially when taking into consideration the increased number of candidates. Many of the candidates did not actively campaign despite competitions for most positions and several reminders from me to encourage friends and colleagues to attend the forums and to come out and vote. What about ordering some "I Voted" stickers to give to voters?

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Smeal  
Chief Returning Officer  
October, 2015