CSU By-Election 2020

Electoral Officers Final Report

The 2020 CSU by-election was another unique electoral process with clear outcomes and a number of concerns that should be addressed. Thankfully, the CSU is well rooted in internet-based voting at this time. While the 2020 general election was partially conducted during COVDID19 closures, for this election, the bulk of the process, including the campaign was also conducted. This required a major rethink of how to provide and receive the numerous forms involved in these elections, including how candidates should collect nomination electronically and how I as an administrator could verify these nominations. Turnout remained approximately the same as the 2020 general election, with a total of 701 voters (9.1%), while the general election saw 9.3%. The lack of activity on campus and major referendum questions surely lowers interest in such an election. A number of the positions were contested with a good number of candidates. There were no official complaints made during this election process. The following pages provide a general overview of the electoral process and include some recommendations moving forward.

It was again a pleasure and honour to work with 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 701 students voted, made up of 221 Arts and Science students, 245 Business and Professional Studies students, 62 Education, Health and Human Development Students, 112 Fine and Applied Arts Students and 43 Global and Community Studies students. The total membership is 7,709, making turnout 9.1%.

Rules and procedures

The rules and procedures governing the CSU elections are generally conducive to the conduct of fair elections. As usual the CSU has done a good job of updating the bylaws and procedures with incremental changes to adapt to new issues, though further improvements should always be considered and some are included below.

The rules require the CRO to review the vast majority of campaign material prior to the candidates posting said material. While this likely ensures candidates are meeting the rules of the campaign to a greater degree than otherwise, I also feel this is overly paternalistic for a university setting. The candidates should be provided the rules of the process and if the rules aren't met, they should be sanctioned accordingly.

Nominations

The nominations portion of this election process required a huge overhaul to meet the needs of operating during the current pandemic. CSU staff initiated a number of changes to address the needs and the process was reasonably successful. In some cases, Capilano Universities IT department aided in implementing these processes which was very much appreciated. Nevertheless, further adjustments should be made to automate, simplify and provide greater transparency overall.

Each and every form the candidates would normally complete by hand was adjusted to be completed online. The nomination package that requires members to collect support signatures was the most difficult of the forms to address for the situation and was also difficult for candidates to manage and understand. IT limitations did not allow for a number of solutions that were more desirable and the form created by Capilano IT was workable, but failed at providing a number of security features that were intended, much to the dismay of the developer as well as the election administrator. Nevertheless, I am confident there were no red flags of fraudulent nominations and took the further step of confirming a sample of entries.

As it was, supporting members were required to complete a form to support a candidate, but the candidates could not see a tally of how many support signatures they had attained at any one time. As Election Administrator I did my best to keep candidates up to date when needed. Overall, the process was very cumbersome and required me to spend many hours confirming nematisations and provide information to candidates. This element of the process should be looked at further to simplify for all involved and eventually a total replacement of the written process will reduce difficulty in reading and "interpreting" written packages and adjudicating issues of timeliness as well.

Unfortunately, there were a few members that sought to be nominated for various positions but could not attain 25 supporting signatures. I believe the current context created a barrier to these students and presume they would have been able to meet these requirements if in-person schooling was taking place and they could canvass signatures in person.

Each of the candidates on the ballot fulfilled their nomination requirements. The pre-check deadline was used again and was an effective way of getting candidates to submit nomination packages early to ensure their packages met the required criteria to be nominated allowing time for any corrections. Several packages were submitted prior to the pre-check deadline, so it did have added value.

The creation of online forms for the submission of the Candidate Statement and Expense Report were extremely helpful to reduce burden on administrating the election. While a complaints form was also made and available online, it was not used in this particular election cycle. These forms were made using either google forms or jotforms and both had benefits and weaknesses that should be explored further. The Candidate Statement currently requires submissions to be less than 100 words, however altering the procedures to a character count would greatly simplify the submission process so the online form can easily and automatically limit the statements. It is suggested that a 500 character limit should be implemented as it is approximately 100 words.

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. Perhaps because of the pandemic, this was the first time the vast majority of candidates were able to attend the initial meeting. This made my job in this regard much more pleasant as I only had to create one more meeting to accommodate 2 candidate that could not attend that first meeting.

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. Certainly, a massive driver

of turnout for internet voting are the bulk emails that are sent out via Simply Voting providing information on how to cast a ballot.

All Candidates Forum

The all candidates' forums were a great opportunity for candidates to speak to members, but also for members to learn about the candidates. For this by-election, greater participation was seen at the forums. This is not always the case and further efforts to advertise this opportunity may be effective in drawing more people to such events. Again, the Capilano Courier carried out the process, which has been a positive development.

Polling

The polling process was held over 3 days, starting at 9 am on October 6th and ending at 5 pm on October 8th. Given the concerns with Covid19, the decision was taken to cancel the information booths that would normally be set up at both the main and Sunshine Coast campuses. This is an element that needs to be considered for the future as the procedures require a booth on all campuses and there is now a campus in Lonsdale. If the regulations remain the same, another information booth will be required at that campus as well.

Ideally, the internet voting vendor would allow for members to cast ballots as many times as they wanted, with each subsequent ballot cast cancelling their previous ballot. This would go to some lengths in addressing concerns with candidates or other students putting pressure on individual members to vote for them while hovering over their computer.
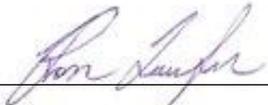
Ballot

The ballot was created on the Simply Voting template for ballot production and suited our purposes nicely. This is the second time the CSU has used the STV voting process and a minor change was made this time around. For any race where only two candidates are running, the race was not held using a ranked ballot. This was done in order to avoid any tie votes where the number of 2nd preferences that went to the other candidate is how the tie is broken as there is limited added value for a ranked ballot in this case and a high degree of voter education would be needed for voters to understand the implications of a second preference being provided in such a situation.

Complaints and Appeals

This was the first election process in many cycles where there were no official complaints or appeals submitted. As noted previously, a simple online complaint form was created to simplify the election complaints process and provide greater clarity to anyone complaining what the process requires. The form was made available online and, in the future, a hard copy could be made available at CSU service desks as well

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Ron Laufer
Chief Returning Officer   Signature: _Ron Laufer_
Capilano Students' Union

Date: _October 13, 2020_

Oct 8, 2020

Capilano Students' Union
Maple 116 - 2055 Purcell Way
North Vancouver, BC
V7J 3H5 Canada

To Whom It May Concern:

The following election results are certified by Simply Voting to have been securely processed and accurately tabulated by our independently managed service.

Respectfully yours,

Brian Lack
President
Simply Voting Inc.

Results - CSU By-Election 2020

Start: 2020-10-06 08:47:00 America/Vancouver
End: 2020-10-08 17:00:00 America/Vancouver
Turnout: 701 (9.1%) of 7709 electors voted in this ballot.

At-Large Representative

Votes required to elect an option: 149

ROUND1		
	Yamagishi, Akira	126 votes
	Cardin, Chan	116 votes
	Mehra, Vedant	91 votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	89 votes
	Singh, Ramanpreet	71 votes
	Singh, Narinder	52 votes
	Bezeredi, Maya	50 votes
	Eliminated Bezeredi, Maya due to: lowest 1st preference	
ROUND2		
	Yamagishi, Akira	133 (+7) votes
	Cardin, Chan	124 (+8) votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	93 (+4) votes
	Mehra, Vedant	92 (+1) votes
	Singh, Ramanpreet	71 votes
	Singh, Narinder	55 (+3) votes
	Exhausted votes	27 (+27) votes
	Eliminated Singh, Narinder due to: lowest 1st preference	
ROUND3		
	Yamagishi, Akira	137 (+4) votes
	Cardin, Chan	129 (+5) votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	110 (+17) votes
	Mehra, Vedant	94 (+2) votes
	Singh, Ramanpreet	73 (+2) votes
	Exhausted votes	52 (+25) votes
	Eliminated Singh, Ramanpreet due to: lowest 1st preference	
ROUND4		
	Yamagishi, Akira	148 (+11) votes
	Cardin, Chan	141 (+12) votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	128 (+18) votes
	Mehra, Vedant	104 (+10) votes
	Exhausted votes	74 (+22) votes
	Eliminated Mehra, Vedant due to: lowest 1st preference	
ROUND5		
	Yamagishi, Akira	173 (+25) votes
	Cardin, Chan	159 (+18) votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	154 (+26) votes
	Exhausted votes	109 (+35) votes
	Elected Yamagishi, Akira due to: highest 1st preference	
ROUND6		
	Yamagishi, Akira	Elected 173 votes
	Cardin, Chan	159 votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	154 votes
	Exhausted votes	109 votes
	Elected Cardin, Chan due to: highest 1st preference	
ROUND7		
	Yamagishi, Akira	Elected 173 votes
	Cardin, Chan	Elected 159 votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	154 votes
	Exhausted votes	109 votes
	Elected Kaur, Jaspreet due to: highest 1st preference	
ROUND8		
	Yamagishi, Akira	Elected 173 votes
	Cardin, Chan	Elected 159 votes
	Kaur, Jaspreet	Elected 154 votes
	Exhausted votes	109 votes

VOTER SUMMARY

Total	701
Abstain	106 (15.1%)

Fine & Applied Arts Representative

Restricted to **FACULTY OF FINE & APPLIED ARTS**

Option	Votes
Bergen, Alex	72 (65.5%)
Mohseni, Saba	38 (34.5%)

VOTER SUMMARY

Total	112
Abstain	2 (1.8%)

Accessibility Justice Coordinator

Votes required to elect an option: 257

ROUND1		
	Reisner, June	354 votes
	Reet	89 votes
	Riya	70 votes
	Elected Reisner, June due to: highest 1st preference	
ROUND2		
	Reisner, June	Elected 354 votes
	Reet	89 votes
	Riya	70 votes
	Exhausted votes	0 votes

VOTER SUMMARY

Total	701
Abstain	188 (26.8%)

Queer Students Liaison

Option	Votes
Yes – Volpe, Michaela	428 (91.1%)
No – Volpe, Micheala	42 (8.9%)

VOTER SUMMARY

Total	701
Abstain	231 (33.0%)

Capilano Business & Professional Society Vice-President

Restricted to **FACULTY OF BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

Option	Votes
Yes — Rana, Ritika	172 (93.5%)
No — Rana, Ritika	12 (6.5%)

VOTER SUMMARY

Total	245
Abstain	61 (24.9%)

Capilano Accounting Association President

Restricted to **FACULTY OF BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

Option	Votes
Yes — Lastoria, Aidan	150 (96.2%)
No — Lastoria, Aidan	6 (3.8%)

VOTER SUMMARY

Total	245
Abstain	89 (36.3%)

Capilano Human Resources Management Association President

Restricted to **FACULTY OF BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

Option	Votes
Yes — Lam, Richard	148 (94.3%)
No — Lam, Richard	9 (5.7%)

VOTER SUMMARY

Total	245
Abstain	88 (35.9%)