



Candidate's Handbook

Spring 2012 Elections to the Board of Directors and Referendum

Thank you for expressing interest in running for a position on the 2012/2013 UVSS Board of Directors! For those of you that are new to the Elections experience, and for those of you that have run for a position on the UVSS Board of Directors in the past, it is extremely important that you read through this Handbook and the UVSS Elections Policy Manual carefully. The UVSS Elections Policy Manual has been substantially revised, and we will try and highlight the most important and relevant pieces of information but we cannot outline every single change.

The Candidate's Handbook contains much of the necessary information to get you on your way being a candidate in the UVSS elections process, and to help facilitate a smooth, fun and rewarding experience. This Handbook will assist you to know and understand what you can and cannot do while campaigning, so that the campaign and election processes will be fair and effective for all involved. We have identified below some of the more commonly contentious aspects of the Policy Manual, to help you to comply with them and avoid complaints being made against you. Our goal is that with a better understanding of the policy and rules, how we may make advance rulings or decide complaints about these matters, candidates will be able to focus their campaigns on the election issues, and avoid potential complaints about prohibited campaign activities, which can result in disqualification. And you will need to know, you are also responsible for all activities by your slate or other persons acting on your behalf, including any posting of election materials by them.

Please also be aware that all of the dates and times are taken extremely seriously and deadlines cannot be extended for late nomination packages, changes to the Martlet supplement, or campaigning. The Elections Office is here to assist you with this process – if you are uncertain or unclear about something, it is better to run something by us than having to deal with the complaints process afterwards. We hope that this is an enjoyable experience for you!

General Information:

All 17,000 undergraduate students at the University of Victoria will have the opportunity to vote on February 29th, 2012 for Elections to the UVSS Board of Directors and on multiple UVSS referendum questions. In addition to the UVSS Elections, concurrently, Senate, the Board of Governors, and the Graduate Students' Society will be conducting their elections. The UVSS Elections will be conducted online for the first time, using UVic's WebVote system. This will certainly be an exciting experience, as we hope online voting will engage more students in the voting process. In addition, the number of voting days has been reduced from three days to one 24 hour period. The Elections Office is working hard to promote this transition and we encourage all students to bring forward any ideas that they may have to help in this process.

The UVSS Board of Directors is composed of twenty-one (21) members of the UVSS: sixteen (16) of the twenty-one (21) positions are elected by all UVSS members; the other five seats are filled by Constituency Groups, elected by individuals who hold membership within those particular organizations. Students wishing to run for a position on the UVSS Board of Directors can run to fill anyone of the following positions:

- Chairperson
- Director of Finance and Operations
- Director of Events
- Director of Student Services
- Director of External Relations
- Director at Large (eleven positions)

To find out information about the roles and responsibilities of each of the above positions, check out the UVSS Website, under Board of Directors → Student Elections → Run for Board.

Students wishing to run as a proponent or an opponent for a referendum question must adhere to the same deadlines and rules as candidates seeking election to the Board. The referendum questions can be found on the UVSS Elections website.

The Elections Office:

For the 2012/2013 elections process, the Elections Office is overseen and run by Dianne Flood (CEO) and Shawn Slavin (SDEO). Both of us have managed and run the UVSS Elections in the past, and we are here to help you through this process.

Our role is to administer the election process, including oversight of the campaign activities, with the goal of ensuring the election is fair and democratic in accordance with the UVSS Electoral Policy Manual. To do that we will provide guidance to candidates and others on fair campaigning, by:

- Providing the information in this handbook
- Approving and monitoring campaign material and activities
- Giving informal advice directly to individual candidates and advance rulings to all candidates
- Undertaking informal resolution of possible infractions where possible, and
- If necessary, ruling on complaints.

We want to be fair and transparent, so we will strive to make information about all advance rulings and complaint outcomes available to all candidates. How to request an advance ruling, or make or respond to a complaint, is set out in “**Complaints and Appeals**” below. You are encouraged to seek informal advice where any part of the Policy or any other matter is unclear to you, and we also encourage you to seek informal resolution of any issue respecting possible contraventions by any other candidate’s activities.

We also have some approval and monitoring duties for the Senate and Board of Governors elections, and will try to highlight those in this handbook. The Senate and Board of Governors election rules are different from the UVSS rules, so candidates running in both UVSS and Senate/BoG elections will have the responsibility to make sure they comply with the different limits and restrictions for each campaign.

The Elections Office is located in SUB B211 (take the stairs adjacent to the Cinecenta box office) and will be open:

Reading Week: 10am-2pm (minimum)

Postering Period: 9am-4pm (minimum)

We will also try and be available at alternate times, if requested.

Email: election@uvss.ca

Phone: 250-472-4305

We will try to return all telephone and email messages the same day if received during office hours, and during the next office day for those received after office hours.

Web: uvss.ca/bod/student-elections

Important Forms:

The nomination form is the critical document to get you started in this process. A copy of the nomination form can be found on the Student Elections page of the UVSS website. To help minimize our paper waste, the UVSS Elections Office will no longer be providing hard copies of any forms for candidates. . These forms, plus complaint and other related forms if needed, must be submitted electronically as well as in hard copy. As such the documents are all prepared with fields which permit you fill in your information on the computer before printing it out. Download the files to your computer BEFORE you fill them out, and then you will be able to save the file with your information typed into it. If you do need to print out a form, **please print only the pages that you need.**

Electoral Policy Manual and Constitution and Bylaws:

YOU MUST READ THE ELECTORAL POLICY. Copies of the Electoral Policy Manual (EPM) and Constitution and Bylaws are available on the Student Elections page of the UVSS website.

Though the content of the Candidate's Handbook is taken directly from the EPM, we cannot mention everything in this document, and it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with its contents. The UVSS Constitution and Bylaws dictates the direction of the Electoral Policy Manual (you may want to read Bylaw 6: Election of Members to the Board of Directors).

Ensure you read these documents carefully because they will apply when we make advance rulings and determine complaint processes and outcomes, which can be significant and may include disqualification.

Individuals running as proponents or opponents of a referendum question will be treated like a candidate.

Interpretation:

The EPM will, where possible, be interpreted broadly and positively, to encourage candidates and students to participate in the UVSS electoral process.

Where necessary for that interpretation, past practices and past rulings by Chief Electoral Officers may be looked to for guidance; however, the past rulings are not binding on the Election Office. Any changes in the policy and in practices will also be considered.

In some circumstances the EPM may leave little or no room for discretion or for alternative interpretations. In these circumstances, the result may be the imposition of disciplinary penalties that have significant negative consequences, including being disqualified as a candidate. We would like all candidates to avoid being the subject of any such consequences, through a thorough understanding of the Policy.

Each situation will be considered on its own facts and merits, but our objective will be to provide consistent interpretations in similar circumstances. This means that like cases will be decided alike, so that candidates can expect to be treated similarly. It also means that different facts and circumstances may be treated differently, so keeping informed of advance rulings will be important to you.

We will be guided by the EPM's expressed primary purpose and the principles:

- 1. Respect for the democratic process and persons involved in the process,*
- 2. The right of voters and candidates to participate in a fair and just election, and*
- 3. Fair and open processes for resolving election issues, including adjudications*

Important Dates:

Check the UVSS Elections website for a detailed list of dates and times that are important to the campaign (i.e.: All Candidates Forum, deadlines, tabling etc.).

Campaign Content:

CAMPAIGN MATERIAL CANNOT BE POSTED OR DISTRIBUTED UNTIL THE DATE SET FOR THAT UNDER THE POLICY – POSTING PRIOR TO THAT TIME CAN HAVE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR YOU.

Candidates **must** get campaign material stamped by the Elections Office prior to being posted. .Online content does not need to be approved by the Elections Office prior to being posted. Candidates running for Senate and BOG must also get their campaign material stamped by the Elections Office prior to being posted.

We expect all candidates to act fairly, with respect and to accord each other and the election process with dignity. To be clear, candidates are prohibited from making public statements or undertaking activities in relation to another candidate, slate or referendum side that is discriminatory, defamatory or malicious or threatening or intimidating. REVIEW THE POLICY FOR THHE CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THESE MAY BE.

Campaign Material:

Each candidate can spend up to \$100 to campaign for the UVSS Elections. \$70 is in the form of a credit at Zap! Copy (paid by the UVSS), and an additional \$30 of your own money can be spent on additional supplies or materials. Spending limits **cannot** be exceeded and you must keep all receipts. Along with a written

statement certifying that you did not exceed the spending limit, all receipts must be submitted to the Elections Office by **7:00pm on March 1, 2012**. Please be advised that the EPM Part 5.5.c clearly states that “a candidate who exceeds the campaign spending limit or fails to submit copies of their receipts or to certify in writing that the limit has not been exceeded **must be disqualified**”. READ THE POLICY CAREFULLY.

Paper and paint to make banners is also provided by the UVSS – the Banner Room (SUB B035) contains all of those supplies, and the key can be signed out on a first-come first-serve from the SUB General Office (SUB B128).

To access your Zap! Account, you must present your Student ID. You cannot give anyone else permission to use your credit, nor can you transfer any of your funds to another candidate. You are responsible for picking up your own materials from Zap!.

The limits on campaign materials must be adhered to. Each candidate can distribute or post:

- Up to fifty [50] 8.5" x 11" posters
 - o Referendum proponents/opponents can post up to one hundred [100] 8.5" x 11" posters
 - o Individuals running for Senate and BOG may post up to sixty [60] 8.5" x 11" posters
 - o Please be advised that the University of Victoria Policy No.: BP3105 (Building Usage: Appendix A, Section 3 – Posters and Banners for Student Elections) states that “Each candidate may post up to 60 posters...this is "per person" regardless of the number of positions a candidate is running for.”
 - o **The posters may make reference to your nomination for multiple positions but be advised that the postering period ends at different times for Senate/BOG and UVSS - campaign material that makes reference to your candidacy for the UVSS Board of Directors must be considered an expense for your UVSS campaign.**
- Up to four [4] banners (they cannot exceed 15 square feet each)
 - o Referendum proponents/opponents can post up to six [6] banners (they cannot exceed 15 square feet each)
 - o Individuals running for Senate and BOG may post up to four [4] banners (they cannot exceed 15 square feet each)
 - o Please be advised at the University of Victoria Policy No.: BP3105 (Building Usage: Appendix A, Section 3 – Posters and Banners for Student Elections) states that “Each candidate may post up to 4 banners...this is "per person" regardless of the number of positions a candidate is running for.”
 - o **The banners may make reference to your nomination for multiple positions but be advised that the postering period ends at different times for Senate/BOG and UVSS - campaign material that makes reference to your candidacy for the UVSS Board of Directors must be considered an expense for your UVSS campaign.**

You need to be aware of where and how posters can be posted – there are university restrictions. Please check at the Elections Office.

If you are running for multiple positions, all costs and receipts for Senate and BoG material must be kept clearly separate and you are not permitted to use any volume or other discounts as a result of running two simultaneous campaigns to reduce your UVSS election costs.

Martlet Supplement:

The Electoral Office pays to print a supplement in the Martlet as a means for the candidates to campaign to students. The supplement will be in the February 23rd, 2012 issue of the Martlet. Platforms **must** be submitted to the Electoral Office along with the Nomination Form by 4:00pm on February 10th, 2012 in hard copy, and digitally by email (election@uvic.ca). Platforms shall not exceed 300 words for Executive Director positions, 200 words for Director at Large positions, and 400 words for Referendum proponents and opponents. If the word limit is exceeded, the candidate shall be notified. The Elections Office will try to keep your formatting as close to what you have submitted, however we reserve the right to change the formatting (i.e.: bullets, arrows etc.) to address space issues.

Tabling and Booking Privileges:

The Elections Office has booked tables inside of the Student Union Building for candidates to campaign at if they choose. The schedule is as follows:

- o February 20, 2012: Senate (Table 1)
- o February 21, 2012: BOG (Table 1)
- o February 22, 2012: Referendum (Table 2)

- February 23, 2012: Director at Large (Table 1)
- February 24, 2012: Executive Candidates (Table 1)

Table 1 is the first set of tables closest to the doors by the centre entrance of the SUB (leading to the Info Booth); table 2 is the second set of tables.

The schedule listed above is subject to change depending on the numbers of candidates and referendum.

All candidates will be afforded the same booking and SUB space privileges as determined by the Elections Office. No candidate, slate or referendum proponent or opponent is permitted to book tables inside of the SUB. To assist in campaigning, the Elections Office will permit, if a candidate chooses, the booking of **one [1] table on one [1] day during the postering period, at one of the approved outdoor vendor locations**. We will provide a list of all candidates to the SUB Info Booth, and your outdoor space must be booked through them (not through the SUB General Office). As non-recognized groups are not permitted to book tables elsewhere on campus (i.e.: at the Fountain) candidates, slates or referendum proponents or opponents are welcome to set up and/or book tables off SUB property, if they are booked by an approved Third Party Endorsement. To maintain fairness through the Elections period, candidates, slates or referendum proponents or opponents are only permitted to use their affiliation with a UVSS recognized group if a Third Party Endorsement form is completed and submitted to the Elections Office.

Complaints and Appeals:

To continue with our desire to minimize paper waste, all of the forms necessary for filing complaints, responses, and appeals can be found on the UVSS Elections website.

Familiarize yourself with the Elections Policy Manual and the Constitution and Bylaws – these are the rules that will govern the UVSS Elections process. This policy has seen some major changes since the elections last year, so please ensure that you are aware of the offenses.

Our hope is that with a better understanding of the policy and rules, candidates will be able to comply with all of policy requirements and restrictions and we can avoid complaints about campaign activities. The Elections Office is here to assist you – in the ideal world, we would love to run an election without a single complaint – as such, if you are unsure whether one of your own actions may be in noncompliance with the policy, you can ask for an advance ruling by us.

We encourage candidates to meet with an Electoral Officer to informally discuss with another candidate whether he or she may be failing to comply with a limitation or prohibition on campaigning, to resolve the issue informally..

Nonetheless, there is a clear process in place if complaints do arise regarding a candidate’s materials or campaign. The Electoral Office will treat all complaints seriously and we ask that all individuals do the same. **Candidates, campaign managers, slates and third party endorsers are prohibited from, and candidates will be subject to disqualification if the candidate, their campaign managers, slate or third party endorsers make complaints found to be frivolous or vexatious.**

Formal complaints must be made in writing to the Elections Office using the Complaint Form (found on the Student Elections page on the UVSS website). The forms are to be filled out on the computer, and an unsigned digital copy must be sent to **election@uvic.ca**. A signed hard copy must be dropped off at the Elections Office – the complaint will not be considered until the digital copy and the hard copy have both been received by the Elections Office. Please be aware that candidates only have one business day upon receipt of the complaint or alleged offense, to provide a response, using the electronic form for that purpose and also filing a hard copy.

Candidates who wish to appeal a decision of the Chief Electoral Officer or the Elections Adjudicator are permitted to do so by filling out and submitting an Appeal Form. These forms must also be submitted electronically and in hard copy. The respondent or complainant has one business day upon receipt of the ruling to make an appeal. Please read the Policy for further details, if needed.