Electoral Policy

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PART 1: PURPOSE AND APPLICATION

1.1 This policy sets out the responsibilities and obligations for conducting Electoral Events, in accordance with the UVSS Constitution and Bylaws, including:
   a. The democratic election of Lead Directors, Directors-at-Large, and the Director of International Student Relations to the Board,
   b. Referenda among the UVSS membership, and
   c. By-elections.

1.2 It is based on the principles of:
   a. Respect for the democratic process and persons involved in that process,
   b. The right of voters and candidates to participate in fair and just Electoral Events,
   c. Fair and open processes for resolving issues, arising from Electoral Events, and
   d. Accessibility and inclusivity.

1.3 Any amendment to this policy made between:
   a. January 15th and August 31st will take effect immediately following, on September 1st.
   b. September 1st and January 15th will take effect immediately following, on January 16th.

PART 2: DEFINITIONS

2.1 **Board** means the UVSS Board of Directors as outlined by the Bylaws.

2.2 **Bylaws** are the current and officially accepted UVSS Constitution and Bylaws.

2.3 **Campaign** is a group engaging in campaign activities in support or opposition to a candidate or referendum question, or the set of organized actions undertaken by that group to achieve their goal.

2.4 **Campaign material** is anything verbal (e.g., speeches, classroom talks, videos), digital (e.g., emails, websites, social media) or physical (e.g., paper, chalking, advertising) produced by or on behalf of a candidate, proponent or opponent to promote their campaign or to engage in an Electoral Event.

2.5 **Campaign manager** is an individual who is the designated contact and campaign representative for campaigns. A campaign manager cannot be a candidate, proponent, or opponent.

2.6 **Campaign Period** is the time frame in which campaign material may be posted.

2.7 **Candidate** is a person whose Nomination Form has been accepted by Electoral Officers as complying with this policy to stand for election to the Board.

2.8 **Complainant** is an individual who makes a complaint under this policy.

2.9 **Election** refers specifically to the election of candidates and is distinct from referenda.

2.10 **Elections Adjudicator** is the person appointed by the Electoral Committee to hear the first level of appeals, as outlined in the Bylaws.

2.11 **Electoral Committee** is the Electoral Committee of the UVSS as outlined in the Bylaws and UVSS Board of Directors Policy.

2.13 **Electoral Event** refers collectively to any general election, by-election and/or referendum.

2.14 **Electoral Office** refers to the administrative body led by the CEO.

2.15 **Electoral Officers** are all persons hired to staff the Electoral Office, including the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Senior Electoral Officer (SEO) and Deputy Electoral Officer (DEO).

2.16 **Electronic voting** is voting using a secure, internet-based interface that will ensure each member

will have only one vote and will uphold the secrecy and integrity of the ballot.

2.17 **In writing** includes print (hard copy) and electronic text.

2.18 **Member** is an active member of the UVSS as outlined in the Bylaws.

2.19 **Nomination period** refers to the time frame for nomination applications to be received by the Electoral Office.

2.20 **Nominee** is a member who has been nominated for election to the Board.

2.21 **Opponent** is a member who is representing the no side of a referendum question.

2.22 **Petition** is the complete package of documents required to call a referendum question.

2.23 **Proponent** is a member who is representing the yes side of a referendum question.

2.24 **Referendum** is a vote, binding on the Board, on resolutions concerning the business of the Students' Society as outlined in the Bylaws.

2.25 **Referendum question** is the yes/no question posed to members during a referendum.

2.26 **Respondent** is a candidate, proponent, opponent or campaign manager against whom a complaint has been filed under this policy.

2.27 **SIFLG** is a Separately Incorporated Fee-Levied Group as defined by the UVSS Board of Directors policy.

2.28 **Signatory** is a member who nominates another member to stand as a candidate for the Board, or a member who signs a petition to call a referendum question as outlined in the Bylaws

2.29 **Slate** is a group of candidates running in an election under a similar platform or branding for mutual advantage.

2.30 **Social Media** is information technology service, software and accounts used to campaign in an Electoral Event, including but not limited to Facebook accounts, pages, and public groups; Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat accounts; and blogs/websites.

2.31 **University Secretary** (USEC) is the University of Victoria's University Secretary, whose Office is responsible for coordinating the electronic voting system for Board of Directors elections and referenda.

2.32 **Third Party Groups** are groups or organizations that are not candidates, proponents, opponents, or the Electoral Office, including but not limited to:

a. Businesses or corporations;
b. Labour unions;
c. Political parties at any level of government;
d. Separately Incorporated Fee-Levied Groups;
e. Student groups such as clubs, faculty student societies, course unions, and advocacy or affiliated groups; and
f. Student unions or their umbrella organizations.

2.33 **UVSS** is the University of Victoria Students' Society.

2.34 **Voting Period** is the time frame in which members cast a ballot.

PART 3: ELECTORAL EVENT PLANNING

3.1 General Elections and By-Elections

a. A general election of Lead Directors, Directors-at-Large, and the Director of International Student Relations must be held annually in March as per Bylaw 5.2.a. The Voting Period may begin in February as long as it concludes in March.
b. By-elections may be held in the Fall term to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors which have occurred between the general election and November 15.
c. The UVSS must pay the costs of the Electoral Events required or authorized by this policy.

3.2 Referenda

a. Referenda may be held in conjunction with a general election or by-election, or as their own Electoral Event:
    i. Referendum questions must be called at least 14 days before the Nomination Period of a scheduled general election or by-election in order to run concurrently.
    ii. The Board shall ensure that when referenda are called, the referenda shall be held during that board's term. As per the Bylaws, the Board shall not schedule referenda when classes are not in session.
b. Referendum questions must set out the exact words of the question which are to appear on the ballot and must be phrased in a way that the question can be answered "yes" or "no".
c. If the CEO is of the opinion that a question violates this policy and/or the Bylaws, they may refuse to accept the question as valid.
d. Referendum questions may only be called as provided by Bylaw 4.7.b:
    i. Should the Board call a referendum question as per Bylaw 4.7.b.i, they shall:
        A. Schedule the date on which the referendum question will be posed to the membership,
        B. Vote on whether the Board is in favour, neutral, or opposed to the question,
        C. Select a proponent, and
        D. Direct the Electoral Committee to submit the referendum question and the name, email address, student number, and phone number of the proponent to the CEO within two business days.
    ii. Should a member call a referendum question as per Bylaw 4.7.b.ii:
        A. The student petition must include the referendum question, the name of the referendum proponent, and the name and student number for each signatory,
        B. The petition shall be submitted to the Electoral Committee,
        C. The Electoral Committee shall liaise with the University to verify the petition signatories within a reasonable time frame,
        D. Within one-business day of receiving confirmation from the University, the Electoral Committee shall inform the member if the petition contains enough valid signatures for the referendum question to proceed.
        E. If the number of valid signatories is enough to call the referendum question, within 10 business days the Board must:
            I. Schedule the date on which the referendum question will be posed to the membership,
            II. Vote on whether it is in favour, neutral or opposed to the question,
            III. Approve the proponent, and
            IV. Direct the Chair of the Electoral Committee to submit the referendum question and the name, email address and phone number of the proponent to the CEO within one business day.

3.3 Responsibilities of the Board

a. The Board is responsible for establishing the Electoral Office, including making administrative arrangements for communication and expense related accounts.
b. The Board is responsible for ensuring adequate funding to facilitate a secure and fair election.
    i. During an Electoral Event, the Electoral Committee may allocate up to $5000 in excess of the amount within the Elections budget to the Elections Office without approval of the Board of Directors if an immediate need means that there is no opportunity for the Board of Directors to approve the allocation in a timely manner.

ii. This decision should be made in consultation with the Director of Finance and Operations.

c. The Board is responsible for scheduling Electoral Events, including:
    i. A Nomination Period of at least ten days that specifies the dates and times at which nominations open and close. The period should be scheduled so:
        a. There is enough time between the Nomination and Campaign Periods in case nominations have to be extended, as well as enough time for candidates to prepare their social media accounts and campaign materials; and,
        b. Weekdays falling within Reading Break are excluded from the ten-day duration.
    ii. A Campaign Period of at least 14 days, inclusive of the voting period. This period should be scheduled so:
        a. The USEC has enough notice to prepare the ballot and/or remove any candidates who may resign (if the Electoral Committee has elected to use the University voting system); and,
        b. Candidates have time to prepare campaign materials and social media accounts.
        c. The end of the campaign period should be scheduled so that campaigns have access to buildings so as to remove campaign materials.
    iii. A Voting Period of at least three days and coinciding with the end of the Campaign Period.
        a. General elections must be scheduled to allow the ratification of results by the existing Board.
d. The Board is responsible for ensuring a rules-based, fair, and independent campaign.
    i. Within one week of an Electoral Event being scheduled, the Board must post a copy of this policy, the schedule for the Electoral Event, and the email addresses of the Electoral Officers on the UVSS website and maintain that posting until the Electoral Event results are made official.
    ii. The Board is responsible for publishing and updating the Electoral Handbook, this policy, and electoral forms, to be published together.
    iii. To protect the integrity and independence of the election, members of the Electoral Committee may not endorse candidates, and campaigns may not accept endorsements from members of the Electoral Committee.
    iv. The Board of Directors itself must not interfere with conduct of the Election and must not endorse candidates.
e. The Electoral Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, alter the in-person components of an electoral event. This includes but is not limited to:
    i. Eliminating Voting Information Stations,
    ii. Establishing a virtual-only Electoral Office

3.4 Staffing

a. At least six weeks before the Nomination Period the Electoral Committee must recommend to the Board for approval:
    i. One CEO;
    ii. One Elections Adjudicator; and
    iii. One Elections Arbitrator.
b. At least four weeks before the Nomination Period, the Electoral Committee must hire an SEO or at least one DEO.
c. Hiring and orientation procedures for the CEO, SEO and DEO must comply with the UVSS Employee Handbook (unionized and excluded positions) and the Collective Agreement (unionized positions).
d. The Administration and Services Manager must immediately provide to Electoral Officers:
    i. Electoral Office emails, social media, and website login information; and
    ii. The Electoral Handbook

3.5 Autonomy of the Electoral Officers

a. The Electoral Officers have the responsibility and authority to conduct Electoral Events under this policy, independently from the Board and the Electoral Committee and impartially between candidates.
b. The Electoral Officers must take the Electoral Handbook as a best-practices guide for conducting Electoral Events.
c. The CEO has the authority to expense and staff the Electoral Office as required for each

Electoral Event, in accordance with UVSS policy, as outlined by the official CEO job description.

d. The CEO must consult with the Electoral Committee about any issues that arise that may have budget impacts.

PART 4: NOMINATIONS

4.1 Call for Nominations

a. Between seven and fourteen days before the Nomination Period the Electoral Officers must issue an official Call for Nominations distributed widely including CFUV 101.9.
b. The official Call for Nominations must include:
    i. A list of all accepted referendum questions,
    ii. The website address where this policy may be viewed,
    ill. The date and time of the Open House,
    iv. The dates and times of the Nomination Period,
    v. The dates and times of the Voting Period,
    vi. The contact information of the Electoral Officers, and
    vii. The location of the Electoral Office.
c. Between seven and fourteen days before the Nomination Period, the Electoral Officers must contact any proponents and provide them with any relevant information and timelines.
d. Between two and three days before the close of the Nomination Period, Electoral Officers must request from USEC a broadcast email to all members reminding them of the deadline to submit nomination forms.

4.2 Nomination of Board Candidates

a. The Electoral Officers must prepare and post a Nomination Form on the Electoral Office website.
b. Before the close of the Nomination Period, a nominee must electronically submit, to the Electoral Officers, one completed Nomination Form.
c. Electoral Officers may only complete or revise Nomination Forms with the written permission of the candidate.
d. Nominees may revise their personal information and/or platform up to 24 hours before the publication of the Voter Information Guide. Platforms must not include endorsements made by other candidates.
e. Within 24 hours after the close of the Nomination Period, the CEO must:
    i. Review the Nominations Forms and follow up with all nominees whose form is missing required information;
    ii. Email all nominees whose form is complete and meets the eligibility criteria; and
    ill. Post a list of all conditionally accepted candidates and all rejected nominees on the Electoral Office website, marking the list as “conditional, pending Registrar verification.”
b. Within 48 hours, the CEO must:
    i. Verify the eligibility of the nominee with the UVic Registrar, and reject all nominees whose Nomination Form does not meet eligibility criteria (Bylaw 6.6); and,
    ii. Post a list of all officially accepted candidates and all rejected nominees on the Electoral Office website, and notify all candidates and nominees via email.
c. Within 24 hours of the list being posted, the decision of the CEO to reject a Nomination Form may be appealed, in writing, by the nominee:
    i. The CEO has discretion whether to meet with the nominee and/or review and re-verify the information on the Nomination Form;
    ii. The CEO must issue a written decision within 48-hours of the nominee submitting their appeal;
    iii. The written decision of the CEO cannot be appealed;
    iv. Depending on the outcome of the appeal, the Electoral Office must, as soon as is reasonably possible, revise the list of the candidates and all rejected nominees; and
    v. If the Electoral Committee has elected to use the University voting system, at least 10 business days before the start of the voting period, the Electoral Officers must submit ballot information to USEC for both general election and referenda, and for the

Director of International Student Relations.

4.3 Nomination of Referendum Opponents

a. The Electoral Officers must post a Referendum Opponent Form on the Electoral Office website.
b. Before the close of the Nomination Period, a member may apply to be the opponent of any referendum question by submitting, by email, a Referendum Opponent Form to the Electoral Officers.
c. In cases where the Board of Directors has not appointed an official proponent or opponent, and ~~If~~ two or more members apply to be the proponent or opponent, the CEO must:
    i. Within one business day following the close of the Nomination Period, decide which member shall be the opponent, and notify any unsuccessful opponents that they may appeal this decision through the Electoral Committee; and
    ii. Give reasons for the decision, in writing, to each member who applied to be the opponent.

4.4 Nomination Period Extension

a. The nomination period for all positions shall automatically be extended once by at least three days, with the exact length at the discretion of the CEO, if any position has fewer nominees than the number of positions in that race plus one.
b. Further Nomination Period extensions may be made at the discretion of the CEO
c. Nomination period extension should be advertised as per the best practices outlined in the Electoral Handbook.
d. If upon closing of the nomination period with no further extension, one or fewer nominations are received for each Director-at-Large position, ~~-~~those positions will be split into multiple yes/no votes.

PART 5: SUPPORTS

5.1 Principles

a. The Electoral Officers must provide information and resources to support candidates through the electoral process, and members in making informed decisions.
b. All supports produced and/or activities organized by the Electoral Officers must be non-partisan.
c. All electronic supports produced by the Electoral Officers must be made available in an accessible PDF format.

5.2 Member Supports

a. The Electoral Officers must hold and post office hours during which they are available in-person or virtually (e.g., via telephone, email, social media) for members.
b. The Electoral Officers will create a Voter Information Guide containing information on how to vote, the open positions and their responsibilities, the role and purpose of the UVSS, the candidates, and the candidate's platforms.
c. The Electoral Office will operate Voting Information Stations during the Voting Period:
    i. For general elections, Voting Information Stations must be established in high-traffic areas throughout the campus to reach broad spectrum of faculties and demographics, for a minimum of total 40 hours of operation.
    ii. The Electoral Office must seek to collect faculty and demographic data, such as turnout statistics identify voters areas with low turnout and strategically assign fixed and mobile stations to boost engagement.
    iii. Voting Information Stations may provide a device for voting, such as a tablet or laptop or low-barrier access to the electronic ballot (such as a printed QR code)..
    iv. The Electoral Officers will ensure that at least one Voting Information Station:
        1. Is clearly identified as a station where access accommodation requests are welcome;
        2. Is wheelchair friendly and accessible for members with any mobility or physical issues,
        3. Is open for at least twelve hours during the Voting Period,
        4. Permits a member with a disability to vote with the assistance of another person, if that member requests, and
        5. Is consistently advertised in all promotions for the Voting Information Stations.
d. The Electoral Officers must hold and post office hours during which they are available in-person or virtually to members.

PART 6: CAMPAIGNING

6.1 Fair and Safe Campaigns

a. Candidates, proponents, and opponents shall campaign with dignity, honesty, and integrity, and must uphold the spirit of a fair campaign. As the campaign is a UVSS space, candidates are expected to abide by the Safer Spaces Policy.
b. For the purposes of electoral investigations and rulings, such infractions are limited to those exclusively defined in Part 8 of the Electoral Policy.
c. Endorsements and campaign activities should be positive and focused on support for a candidate or referendum side. Negative endorsements—defined as campaigning or using materials specifically to oppose or disparage a candidate or referendum side—shall be prohibited.

6.2 Slates

a. Candidates must campaign as individuals, not in slates.
b. Slate-like behaviours such as the use of common slogans, identical campaign materials, near-identical or identical platforms, and a name used by a group of candidates are prohibited

6.3 Campaign Material

a. Campaign material, including digital material, must not be posted or published prior to the start of the Campaign Period.
b. All campaign material must be attributed to a candidate, proponent or opponent.
c. Campaign material published by a campaign must not contain images or likenesses of other candidates without written permission submitted to the Electoral Office from the pictured candidate.
d. Campaign materials must not contain messaging that discriminates on the basis of a protected category, or age, and must not engage in hate speech or Holocaust denial.
e. Candidates, proponents and opponents are responsible for all their campaign materials and compliance with UVSS and University posting regulations.

6.4 Endorsements

a. Candidates may accept endorsements from third-party groups and refer to those endorsements, but must provide written proof of an endorsement to the Electoral Office before referring to the endorsement in any campaign materials or public comment.
b. Endorsements are permitted from groups except the following:
    i. The Canadian Federation of Students or any other umbrella student union organization,
    ii. Greek letter organizations,
    iii. The UVSS Board of Directors (for candidates only) ,
    iv. Organizations banned from campus or the SUB,
    v. Organizations recognized as terrorist groups by the Canadian government, and
    vi. For-profit organizations.
d. Candidates are prohibited from asking any of the groups listed in 6.4.b to share their campaign materials.
e. Third-party endorsers are obligated to comply with the responsibilities and obligations of candidates under this policy.
f. Candidates are responsible for any campaign activities carried out by or campaign materials produced by a third party endorser on behalf of the candidate.
g. All posters and banners must be stamped by the Electoral Office, and abide by this policy. Posters and banners will be counted as if produced by the candidate when determining the candidate's maximum permissible numbers of posters and banners, as well as the candidate's campaign spending limit.
h. If a group spends money to promote the election of a candidate, those funds count towards maximum spending limits, and receipts must be provided to the Electoral Office.
i. Candidates may not use their privilege or access as leaders of campus groups or page administrators to post or email about their own or others' candidacies, or instruct others to advertise on their behalf.
j. Candidates and members may express support for candidates or referendum sides, such as social media posts, stories, likes, and shares and verbal endorsements. Such

expressions of support do not require registration or prior approval from the Electoral Office, provided they do not involve coordinated behaviour as defined in Section 6.2.b.

6.5 Digital Campaigning

a. Campaigns must not operate social media accounts or websites that purport to be independent of their campaign.
b. Candidates, proponents and opponents are encouraged to post, distribute, react to, and/or share Electoral Event-related content produced by UVSS staff or ~~the~~ Electoral Officers.

6.6 Physical Campaign Materials

a. Candidates, proponents and opponents are encouraged to produce environmentally responsible campaign materials.
b. Except for posters, banners, and chalking on classroom blackboards, physical campaign materials must be handed directly to members and not left in physical locations.
c. Candidates are responsible for reviewing and adhering to University, Graduate Student Society, and UVSS poster and banner policies and print material regulations.In cases where policies differ, the most restrictive policy must be followed.

d. Candidates are limited to 50 posters and two banners at any time, while proponents and opponents are limited to 100 posters and six banners.
e. All posters and banners must be stamped, signed, and numbered by the Electoral Officers before being posted.
f. Posters and banners must be taken down within ~~24 hours~~ one business day of the end of the campaign period.Campaign expense reimbursements may be delayed until posters have been removed.
g. The following physical campaign materials are prohibited:
    i. Gift cards or items of monetary value,
    ii. Stickers,
    iii. Styrofoam cups,
    iv. Substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, or illegal substances.
    v. Chalking, except on classroom chalkboards.

6.7 Referenda and Election Relations

a. Candidates may publicly support proponents or opponents.
b. Candidates running for election to the Board may also be proponents or opponents for a referendum question.
    i. Branding for proponent or opponent campaign materials must be distinct from the candidates' campaign materials in a concurrent election to the Board.
    ii. Campaign materials for a referendum must be solely in reference to the referendum.
c. Referendum proponents and opponents are not permitted to reference candidates in campaign materials if a general election or by-election is being held concurrently.

6.8 Board support for Proponents and Opponents

a. If the Board votes to endorse or oppose a referendum question, UVSS resources will be made available to the proponent or opponent who aligns with the endorsement of the Board.
b. The following UVSS resources shall not count towards the allowable expenses of the proponent or opponent endorsed by the Board:
    i. UVSS staff time and their work product,
    ii. UVSS website and social media hosting fees,
    iii. Tabling equipment, and
    iv. SUB space bookings.

6.9 SIFLG Support for Proponents and Opponents

a. If a referendum is called that concerns the fee of a SIFLG, that SIFLG may choose to endorse and provide resources to the proponent or opponent.
b. Before the date on which campaign materials may be posted, the CEO must confirm with the SIFLG whether they support the proponent or opponent.
c. The following SIFLG resources shall not count towards the allowable expenses of their campaign:
    i. SIFLG staff time and their work product,

ii. Advertising within their own media,
iii. Tabling equipment, and

iv. SUB space bookings.

6.10 Voting Information Stations

a. Candidates, proponents and opponents must not approach, visit, or campaign within auditory range or 25 meters of a Voting Information Station, whichever is farther.
b. Candidates, proponents and opponents must not speak or engage with any persons having business with the Voting Information Station until that person has moved out of auditory range or 25 meters from the Voting Information Station, regardless of the intent.
c. Candidates, proponents and opponents must immediately leave an area of a Voting Information Station if asked to do so by a Voting Information Officer. Disagreement over such a request may be brought to the CEO.

6.11 Financial Limits

a. Candidates may spend a maximum of $150.00 on their campaign.
b. Proponents or opponents of referenda questions may spend a maximum of $300.00 on their campaign.
c. The UVSS shall reimburse up to $75.00 of campaign expenses for candidates, and $200.00 of campaign expenses for those opponents and proponents who are not disqualified, via cheque after the conclusion of the Electoral Event.
d. The amounts from 6.8.b and c shall be adjusted yearly by the Bank of Canada inflation rate, calculated from January 2023.
e. In order to reduce financial barriers,and administrative paperwork, candidates and proponents will be provided a Zap Copy credit for up to the amounts listed in 6.11(d).
f. The following must be reported and included when determining campaign spending and whether the campaign spending limit has been exceeded:
    i. The fair market value of any donated goods or materials,
    ii. The fair market value of any goods or materials that are obtained at a discounted price that would not be available to all other candidates, proponents or opponents, and
    iii. Any provincial, federal, or harmonized sales, goods or services taxes.
g. The Electoral Officers must prepare and post an Expense Allowance Form on the Electoral Office website.
h. Candidates, proponents and opponents must submit the Expense Allowance Form and copies of all itemized receipts, including their transaction records when using Zap credits, to the Electoral Officers before the end of the Voting Period. Debit transaction and credit card slips are not accepted, and will not be processed for reimbursement.
i. A candidate, proponent or opponent who submits the Expense Allowance Form but fails to submit all itemized receipts or incorrectly fills out the form shall be granted a grace period of 24 hours to submit the necessary receipts or correct the form. If after 24 hours, they still have not submitted receipts or corrected the form, they shall be disqualified, and their eligible expense reimbursement is forfeited.

6.12 Campaign Managers

a. Candidates may appoint one person to act as their campaign manager. Campaign managers are optional.
b. If a candidate chooses to have a campaign manager, they must provide contact information for that person, on their nomination form or via email, to the Electoral Office at least 24-hours before the start of the Campaign Period.
c. Campaign managers shall not receive compensation for their duties.
d. An Electoral Officer, the Elections Adjudicator or the Elections Arbitrator may deal directly with a campaign manager about any issues related to, or complaints made against, their candidate. The campaign manager will be responsible for representing the candidate with respect to any such issues or complaints, and for informing the candidate about any such campaign issues or complaints and the outcomes.
e. Campaign managers may be responsible for a campaign’s finances, including but not limited to: online promotion, signing and submitting the expense allowance form to the Electoral Office, and otherwise making purchases on behalf of the campaign.

PART 7: VOTING

7.1 General

a. All persons must preserve the secrecy of the ballot and integrity of voting.
b. No person may vote more than once.
c. Voting Days may include weekends, but must start and end on business days.

7.2 The Ballot

a. Ballot information submitted to USEC must include candidates' platforms and photos. These platforms must not include endorsements made by other candidates.
b. Voting will take place using first past the post or a ranked choice voting system at the discretion of the Electoral Committee, to be decided in advance of the Campaign Period.
c. Whether or not slates are permitted under this policy, slate names shall not be placed on the ballot.

7.3 Electronic Voting

a. Electoral Events are to be conducted using electronic voting.
b. In the event that electronic voting is compromised, the CEO will determine if the issue is quickly resolvable and if so, will notify all members by email, and adjust voting times accordingly. If the issue is not quickly resolvable, the CEO will delay online voting until such time as a secure and legitimate electronic vote may take place.
c. The Electoral Committee is responsible for annually contracting a service provider to host electronic voting, The contract agreement with the electronic vote provider must include:
    i. Direction to uphold the parameters for voter eligibility as defined in the Bylaws including that:
        1. Eligible voters for Lead Director, and Director-at-Large positions are to include all active UVSS members; and
        2. Eligible voters for the Director of International Student Relations are to include all active UVSS members who are international students.
    ii. Direction regarding the form of the ballot including to:
        1. Use one ballot for each Lead Director position, the Director of International Relations position, and one ballot for all Director-at-Large positions,
        2. List candidates' names on each ballot alphabetically, unless the voting system can sort names randomly for each voter.
    iii. Direction regarding Electoral Event data including:
        1. How to report Electoral Event results to both the Electoral Committee and the CEO, and
        2. The parameters for the storage and destruction of data.

7.4 Accessibility

a. The Board and the Electoral Officers are committed to ensuring access for all members to fully participate in Electoral Events as candidates, proponents, opponents and as voters. Members who require accommodations for full participation are strongly encouraged to make these known to the Electoral Officers as early as possible.
b. Before each Electoral Event, Electoral Officers will consult with the Society for Students with a Disability and the Centre for Accessible Learning representatives to better understand current issues and plan for potential accommodations that could be requested by members with disabilities.
c. The Electoral Officers must make every effort to meet the accommodation requests of members with disabilities in keeping with Human Rights legislation and UVSS policies on access and accommodation.

PART 8: POLICY INFRACTIONS

8.1 Policy Infractions

a. If a candidate, proponent or opponent allegedly violates this policy, the CEO may conduct an investigation to determine if the allegations are true, and whether the behaviour constitutes a minor or major infraction.

b. The CEO may apply a warning or a sanction to any candidate, proponent, opponent or campaign manager.
c. In the instance where a campaign manager commits an infraction, a sanction may be applied equally to their candidate, proponent or opponent.
d. An investigation must be initiated through a formal complaint or at the discretion of the CEO.

8.2 Informal Dispute Resolution

a. A member or campaign manager may request that the CEO meet informally with a candidate to discuss whether the candidate may be failing to comply with this policy.
b. The CEO may request further information from the person prior to undertaking informal discussions.
c. The CEO must advise the person of the outcome of the discussions.
d. The CEO is not obligated to pursue informal dispute resolution with a candidate.

8.3 Major Infractions and Sanctions

a. The following are considered major infractions:
    i. **Harassment** - Any verbal or physical action that a reasonable person would consider dangerous, offensive, harmful, or humiliating to an individual or individuals, and which may cause physical, mental, or emotional suffering. Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. Serious one-time incidents are also considered harassment.
    ii. **Defamation -** Any intentional false communication that is written (libel), spoken (slander), or otherwise transmitted, including via social media, that harms a person's or organization's reputation; decreases the respect, regard, or confidence in which that person or organization is held; or induces disparaging, hostile, or disagreeable opinions or feelings against a person.
    iii. **Vote buying -** Any incentive offered to a member on the condition that they vote or do not vote in a particular way.
    iv. **Interference -** Any overt attempt to interfere with the administration of a free and fair Electoral Event which includes but is not limited to impersonating UVSS or UVic staff, cyberattacks on the electronic voting portal or Electoral Office website and communications, intentional voter suppression, loitering at, or approaching members at Voting Information Stations during the Voting Period.
    v. **Financial non-compliance -** Includes failure to submit a completed Expense Allowance Form, exceeding spending limits, failure to disclose all expenses and donations, and failure to properly submit receipts after the grace period has elapsed.
    vi. **Repeated and willful infractions -** Includes but is not limited to a significant number of instances of the same minor infraction, repeated and wilful minor infractions, or failure to comply with the decisions of the Electoral Office. The number of minor infractions that will constitute a disqualifiable offense is at the discretion of the CEO and will be considered on an individual basis.
b. Major infractions shall result in immediate disqualification.
c. If a major infraction is committed by a proponent or opponent, the referendum may be considered invalid. The CEO must make all reasonable attempts to investigate, rectify, and/or resolve any issues before invalidating the result of a referendum question.

8.4 Minor Infractions and Sanctions

a. The CEO may apply sanctions for any campaigning infractions or actions that contravene this policy.
b. Sanctions will be determined at the discretion of the CEO, including but not limited to:
    i. A written warning.
    ii. Restrictions on the numbers and types of campaign materials.
    iii. For proponents or opponents only: Disqualification, and no other person may replace them.
c. Minor Sanctions cannot incur financial costs to or impose additional spending limits on candidates, proponents, opponents, or campaign managers.

8.5 Formal Complaints

a. The Electoral Officers must prepare and post a Complaint Form on the Electoral Office website.
b. A member may make a complaint about a candidate's failure to comply with this policy by submitting a Complaint Form to the Electoral Officers' email address. Complaints should include evidence (e.g., witness statements, photos, links, screenshots).
c. A complaint is considered under review after a completed complaint form is received by the CEO.
d. When a complaint is under review, the CEO shall:
    i. Request more information about the complaint, if needed.
    ii. Review the complaint within one business day once all necessary information has been obtained.
e. Once the CEO has reviewed a complaint, they shall do one of the following:
    i. Determine the complaint is not likely to succeed and advise the complainant that it is being dismissed without further action being taken.
    ii. Rule that the complaint was a frivolous or vexatious complaint and apply the appropriate sanction if the complainant is a candidate or campaign manager.
    iii. Send a redacted version of the complaint to the respondent with any information that identifies the complainant removed.
f. The respondent may respond in writing by filing a response to the Electoral Officers' email address within one-business day of the complaint being sent to the respondent.
g. The CEO may request the complainant or the respondent meet with the CEO prior to making a decision and set a time for that to happen. If the complainant or respondent does not take advantage of that opportunity, the CEO may make a decision without that meeting. The CEO is not required to meet with the complainant or the respondent before a decision.
h. The CEO must decide the complaint within one business day of a response being filed or a meeting being held under the preceding paragraph, whichever is the latest. The CEO must give their decision,the reasons for it and any consequences as a result of the decision, in writing, to the complainant and the respondent.
i. The CEO must post all complaint decisions online but must not post the original complaint or response. The CEO must not reveal the identity of the complainant.
j. The CEO has the discretion to extend any time limit set for the complaint process but must be mindful of the need to resolve complaints in a timely way.
k. The Electoral Office will survey the campaign process and is able to report and respond to infractions independently of an official complaint form being filed by a member, proponent/opponent or candidate.

8.6 Ban from Future Election

a. If a candidate commits repeated major infractions, they may be subject to a ban from running in the following election cycle.
b. This ban is intended to be used if a candidate:
    i. Commits two or more major infractions (or equivalent minor infractions) in consecutive election cycles.
    ii. Commits two or more major infractions (or equivalent minor infractions) during one election cycle, and is disqualified during that election cycle.
c. Candidates who are subject to the ban will be unable to run in the following election cycle.
    i. Candidates who are subject to the ban will also be unable to act as official support for other candidates during the election cycle, such as campaign managers.
d. If a candidate who is banned participates in any of the above actions, they may be subject to a further ban for future election cycles.
e. The CEO will be responsible for investigating the infractions which may result in a participant being banned from an election cycle.
    i. Investigations will be conducted by the CEO, and will only be conducted while the CEO is employed by the UVSS.
    ii. Incidents which occur outside of the election cycle will not be investigated by the CEO.
f. This ban may be appealed through the standard appeals process.
g. Three repeated bans from the following election cycle will result in a permanent ban.

8.7 Appeals to the Elections Adjudicator

a. The Electoral Officers must prepare and post an Appeal Form on the Electoral Office website.
b. Within one business day after the CEO makes a decision, an appeal may be made to the Elections Adjudicator by a complainant or respondent by sending an Appeal Form to their and the Electoral Office email addresses.
c. On receipt of an appeal, the Electoral Officers must send copies of the complaint, the response if any, and the decision of the CEO to the Elections Adjudicator.
d. When considering an appeal, the Elections Adjudicator must review written submissions as well as conduct an interview with the complainant, respondent, the Electoral Officers, and any relevant witnesses.
e. Until an appeal is concluded, a decision of the CEO to disqualify a candidate is held in abeyance, but a decision to impose restrictions on the numbers and types of campaign materials the candidate may use applies until overturned on appeal.
f. The process for a complaint applies to an appeal, and the Elections Adjudicator has, on an appeal, the same powers and is subject to the same timelines and obligations as the CEO on a complaint.

8.8 Appeals to the Elections Arbitrator

a. Within one business day after the Elections Adjudicator makes a decision, a respondent may appeal that decision to the Elections Arbitrator by sending an Appeal Form to their and the Electoral Office email addresses.
b. The requirements, obligations, time limits and authorities for an appeal to the Elections Adjudicator apply to appeals to the Elections Arbitrator. The process for a complaint applies to an appeal to the Arbitrator, and the Arbitrator has, on an appeal, the same powers and is subject to the same timelines and obligations as the CEO.
c. When considering an appeal, the Arbitrator must review written submissions as well as conduct an interview with the complainant, respondent, the Electoral Officers, the Elections Adjudicator and any relevant witnesses.
d. The decision of the Arbitrator is final.

8.9 Member Appeals

a. Members with concerns about this policy or the conduct of the Electoral Officers may provide a written submission to the Arbitrator within 72 hours after the Voting Period.
b. These submissions should reflect substantial concern about an electoral policy, practice, or process.
c. This complaint process shall be handled separately from the process described in Section 7.8.
d. The Arbitrator may choose to dismiss the complaint, forward the complaint to the Electoral Officers and/or the Electoral Committee, or make an official recommendation to the Electoral Officers, Electoral Committee, or the Board.

PART 9: POST-ELECTORAL EVENT

9.1 General

a. Referendum questions must receive a majority of votes duly cast in favour to pass, as well as meet the quorum requirements as outlined in the Bylaws.
b. Candidate elections are decided using the process outlined in 9.2
c. The CEO may withhold results until all campaign material has been removed. Once satisfied, the CEO must post the unofficial results of the Electoral Event on the Electoral Office website.
d. Members and candidates have 72 hours after polls close to submit any complaints regarding the Electoral Event.
e. The Electoral Event results must not be considered official until all decisions are made on all outstanding complaints and appeals.
f. The CEO must post the official results of the Electoral Event on the Electoral Office website.

9.2 Counting Votes

a. First Past The Post Voting
    i. First Past The Post voting is where the candidate with the most votes wins the relevant race.
    ii. For races with multiple positions and multiple candidates, positions will be allocated in order of votes received.
b. Ranked Choice Voting
    i. In Ranked Choice Voting, voters rank candidates by preference on their ballots. If a candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, they are declared the winner.
    ii. If no candidate wins a majority of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated. First-preference votes cast for the failed candidate are eliminated, and the next-preference choices indicated on those ballots are counted instead. A new tally is conducted to determine whether any candidate has won a majority of the adjusted votes. The process is repeated until a candidate wins an outright majority.
    iii. In the case of Director at Large positions, positions shall be allocated in each round with preference for the candidates with the most votes that exceed 50% of voting turnout.
c. Withdrawn and Disqualified Candidates
    i. Votes put towards disqualified or withdrawn candidates do not count.
    ii. In a Ranked Choice Voting election, votes for withdrawn or disqualified candidates shall be ignored and the next valid vote shall count.
    iii. If a candidate wishes to withdraw, they must do so within seven days of the close of voting period.

9.4 Electoral Report

a. After the official results of the Electoral Event are posted, the CEO must prepare a report setting out:
    i. The official results of the Electoral Event,
    ii. A financial statement setting out the full cost of the Electoral Event,
    iii. The quantitative and qualitative data recorded after events, and from social media and other communications, that demonstrate how effective they were,
    iv. A list of any investigations conducted, and the associated decisions and sanctions,
    v. A list of any complaints and appeals, and the associated decisions and sanctions,
    vi. Any suggestions to improve the efficiency and/or fairness of the electoral process, including suggested edits to the Electoral Handbook, and
    vii. Any other information that the CEO deems to be important to include.
b. The CEO must provide a window of one week immediately after the results are announced for members to submit recommendations on the electoral process. All submissions from members shall be submitted to the Electoral Committee.
c. The report must be signed by the CEO and the chair of the Electoral Committee.
d. The report must be submitted to the Electoral Committee who must submit it to the Board no later than two weeks after the results of the Electoral Event are official, and all information, including financial accounting for the Electoral Event is available.
e. The Electoral Committee must ensure the destruction and/or secure storage of all relevant data.
f. The Electoral Committee must close the Electoral Office, including signing off on an accounting of all materials and supplies, and the secure storage of all confidential material and equipment.

PART 10: JOB DESCRIPTIONS - EXCLUDED POSITIONS

Note: the Deputy Electoral Officer job description is stored per the procedure for other unionized roles.

10.1 CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER FUNCTION

1. Responsible for all Electoral Event logistics, campaign regulation, and balloting for the UVSS Board of Directors and referenda, with a primary aim of reducing accessibility barriers to voting.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP:

1. Is a person independent of the University and the UVSS, contracted by the UVSS.
2. Reports to the UVSS Executive Director on administrative matters.
3. Functions as a delegate of the UVSS Electoral Committee.
4. Collaborates with the University Secretary.
5. Liaises and consults with the Elections Adjudicator and Elections Arbitrator.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND:

1. Founded in 1964, the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) is an incorporated membership based non-profit that is autonomous from the University and provides advocacy, services and events to all undergraduate students at UVic.

DUTIES:

1. Plan and resource all aspects of UVSS Electoral Events.
2. Enforce and interpret UVSS Electoral Policy.
3. Follow the best practice for UVSS elections as outlined in the Electoral Handbook.
4. Make regular reports to the UVSS Electoral Committee.
5. Execute a staffing plan to carry out the activities of the Electoral Events including the recruiting, hiring, training and supervision of Senior and Deputy Electoral Officers.
6. Liaise with the Office of the University Secretary to ensure that online voting follows established protocols and troubleshoots any issues that may arise.
7. Ensure policy requirements are met for all election events and referenda.
8. Write a report on the Electoral Event co-signed by the Chair of the Electoral Committee, and present it to the Board of Directors,
9. Direct issues of harassment and/or discrimination to UVic's Office of Equity and Human Rights.
10. Ensure impartiality and non-partisanship of all Electoral Office staff and all Electoral Office platforms, including social media accounts.
11. Keep all property, files and records of the Electoral Office organized, secure, and confidential.
12. Responsibly manage the budget of the Electoral Office.
13. Authorize Election Office expenses within the Electoral Office budget, referring extraordinary expenses to the UVSS Executive Director and/or the Electoral Committee.
14. Engage and inform stakeholders of work progress and anticipated concerns brought forth by the SEO.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Experience or education in any of the following: law, policy, elections, or public administration, would be considered an asset.
2. Demonstrated experience supervising staff.
3. Demonstrated leadership abilities.
4. Demonstrated experience administering rules and regulations.
5. Demonstrated financial management skills.
6. Experience in positions of responsibility.

10.2 SENIOR ELECTORAL OFFICER

FUNCTION:

1. Coordinate online and in-person communications for the UVSS Electoral Office.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP:

1. Independent from the University and the UVSS, and contracted by the UVSS.
2. Reports to the Chief Electoral Officer.
3. Liaises with the UVSS Electoral Committee, UVic University Secretary, and other SEOs,

as directed by the CEO.
4. May train and supervise Deputy Electoral Officer(s) and/or Voting Information Officers.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND:

1. Founded in 1964, the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) is an incorporated membership based non-profit that is autonomous from the University and provides advocacy, services and events to all undergraduate students at UVic.

DUTIES:

1. Create and implement communications plans for candidate recruitment and get out the vote campaigns.
2. Draft messaging and organize content for Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit.
3. Maintain a proactive external communications approach that ensures the Electoral Office is transparent and accountable to members.
4. Liaise with the Graphic Design Department and UVSS Communications staff to determine project timelines, guidelines, and deliverables.
5. Enhance member engagement with and understanding of the importance of running and voting for the UVSS Board of Directors.
6. Develop tools and methods for evaluating the success of recruitment and get out the vote initiatives, monitor their reach, and make recommendations for improvements.
7. Approve and regulate candidates' campaign materials.
8. Organize Electoral Office events, such as forums and orientations.
9. Develop and maintain forms and documents required by Electoral Policy.
10. Host office hours, provide assistance to members, and make referrals when appropriate.
11. Keep all Electoral Office files and property organized, secure, and confidential.
12. Assist the CEO in drafting the Electoral Report and make recommendations for improvements to Electoral Office policies and procedures.
13. Maintain professionalism, independence from the UVSS and UVic, candidate impartiality, and personal integrity at all times.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Required:

1. Shall not have been a member of the UVSS Board of Directors within the past three-years.
2. Demonstrated experience creating content for professional social media accounts, including Facebook, Instagram, and other related platforms.
3. Demonstrated knowledge of and experience organizing informational campaigns.
4. Demonstrated knowledge of the principles, practices, and techniques of communications planning, development, implementation, and monitoring.
5. Demonstrated ability to collaborate with graphic artists.
6. Demonstrated respect for and ability to conduct outreach for people of various abilities, genders, sexualities, and socioeconomic realities.
7. Excellent written, presentation, and oral communication skills.
8. Demonstrated ability to work independently with little supervision.

Preferred:

Experience with:

1. Electoral event administration or coordination.
2. Conducting outreach to marginalized groups.
3. Supervising or facilitating small groups.
4. Implementing social media strategies to increase audience engagement and awareness.
5. The administrator side of Wordpress, Reddit, and other diverse platforms.

10.3 ELECTIONS ADJUDICATOR FUNCTION:

1. Serves as the first level of appeal in the UVSS Elections complaints process.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP:

1. Reports to the UVSS General Manager on employment-related matters.
2. Reports to the Electoral Committee on administrative matters.
3. Serves as an independent and impartial body of appeal.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND:

1. Founded in 1964, the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) is an incorporated membership based non-profit that is autonomous from the University and provides advocacy, services and events to all undergraduate students at UVic.

DUTIES:

1. Makes rulings on appeals submitted by candidates who are unsatisfied with a ruling(s) of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).
2. Makes rulings on complaints submitted against the Electoral Office.
3. Liaises with the CEO and the Arbitration Panel in advance of the campaign period in order to reach a common understanding of campaign rules and disciplinary procedures as laid out in the Electoral Policy Manual.
4. Provides written recommendations on potential Electoral Policy revisions, and Electoral Office procedures, as requested by the Electoral Committee.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Required:

1. Shall not be a member of the UVSS as defined in Bylaw 2.1.
2. Shall not be an individual who has run for office in a UVSS election within the past five years.
3. Familiarity with the UVSS electoral process, or with other electoral processes.
4. Demonstrated ability to interpret and apply rules and regulations.
5. Experience in positions of responsibility.
6. Experience in appeal procedures.
7. Must be able to meet the critical deadlines for hearing appeals and providing rulings during the campaign period.

Preferred:

1. Experience in law, public administration or political science.

10.4 ELECTIONS ARBITRATOR FUNCTION:

1. Serves as the second and final level of appeal in the UVSS Elections complaints process.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP:

1. Reports to the UVSS General Manager on employment-related matters.
2. Reports to the Electoral Committee on administrative matters.
3. Serves as an independent and impartial body of appeal.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND:

1. Founded in 1964, the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) is an incorporated membership based non-profit that is autonomous from the University and provides advocacy, services and events to all undergraduate students at UVic.

DUTIES:

1. Makes rulings on appeals submitted by candidates who are unsatisfied with a ruling(s) of the Elections Adjudicator.
2. Makes rulings on complaints submitted against the Electoral Office which have been ruled on by the Elections Adjudicator.
3. Liaises with the Chief Electoral Officer and the Elections Adjudicator in advance of the campaign period in order to reach a common understanding of campaign rules and disciplinary procedures as laid out in the Electoral Policy Manual.
4. Provides written recommendations on potential Electoral Policy revisions, and Electoral Office procedures, as requested by the Electoral Committee.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Required:

1. Shall not be a member of the UVSS as defined in Bylaw 2.1.
2. Shall not be an individual who has run for office in a UVSS election within the past two years.
3. Familiarity with the UVSS electoral process, or with other electoral processes.
4. Demonstrated ability to interpret and apply rules and regulations.
5. Experience in positions of responsibility.
6. Experience in appeal procedures.
7. Must be able to meet the critical deadlines for hearing appeals and providing rulings during the campaign period.

Preferred:

1. Experience in law, public administration or political science.

This Policy is Referenced By

Board of Directors Policy 2.1, 2.5.c, 4.1.c
UVSS Constitution and Bylaws 6.1

This Policy References

UVSS Constitution and Bylaws 2.1, 4.7, 6.6, 6.8
Safer Spaces Policy
Board of Directors Policy 4.1

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