

March 31, 2022

To: The URSU Board of Directors

From: Ebenezer Fordjour, Chief Returning Officer

RE: 2022 URSU General Election Final Report

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## **BACKGROUND**

The URSU engaged the services of a Chief Returning Officer at the end of January 2022 to oversee the 2022 General Election that was held on March 29 and 30, 2022.

URSU jointly completed a Candidates Information and Nomination package along with the required public notices of the nomination period and available positions. The nomination period was February 14-March 8th, 2022 (deadline for candidates applications was March 7th at 4pm - for processing).

Candidates were given until March 10, 2022 (at 4pm) to withdraw from the Election. Three individuals withdrew and 3 were determined to be ineligible and their nominations were not accepted, leaving 30 candidates in this General Election. Additionally, this election included candidates for the RPIRG Board of Directors and two referendums.

The CRO held an all candidates meeting on March 9th, 2022 which provided instruction to all candidates on their roles and responsibilities as candidates and what was/wasn't allowed during the campaigning period. This was an overview of the Election and Referendum Bylaw along with the Candidates Information and Nomination package. An all candidates' forum was held for all candidates running for Executive and Board of Director Positions on March 22, 2022. This provided the candidates with an opportunity to present their platforms and answer any questions from over 30+ students who were present.

The campaign period ran from March 15-28, 2022. Candidates were provided with clear instructions by the CRO about what they could/couldn't do during the no campaigning period and on Election Days.

The list of available positions and candidates who ran for each is attached as Appendix A.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Election Results and Complaints

There were a total of 14,166 students eligible to vote. Based on the Executive positions where all students are eligible to vote, a total of 1,046 voted which is a 7.4% voter turnout which is up from previous elections by 0.7%, despite less votes being cast.

The official results were announced on March 31st, 2022. (Unofficially announced at the Rock The Vote - Elections wrap-up celebration inside the Lazy Owl.)

The Chief Returning Officer received a total of 4 complaints related to possible Election violations. The complaints fell into the following categories:

- Inappropriate use of position and resources
- Intentional misrepresentation of facts
- Slander against other candidates
- Privacy breaches

All complaints were received in writing, via e-mail to the CRO. Complainants identified the individuals involved, had witnesses or provided video and photos of individuals and incidents.

The Elections Committee, made up of the CRO, Public Elections Officer, Dev Chauhan and the Student Elections Officer, Jagroop Singh met throughout March March 25, 2022 to review the complaints and to determine appropriate disciplinary actions. The Elections Committee has determined that these complaints were not of merit.

Attached as Appendix B is the official results of online voting. Provided separately is the results received from the Simply Voting System which includes the outcome of each round for ranked ballots.

The Elections Committee will not be releasing the names of complainants or evidence provided as it may identify the complainant and this would breach the privacy between the CRO and the complainant and may cause people not to report known violations in the future.

#### Online Voting

The General Election was held via online voting using the software, Simply Voting. This software allowed the URSU to carry through on previously passed motions from the membership to conduct ranked voting moving forward. The system worked well and showed no indication that the ranking was done improperly. Members receive an e-mail with the direct link to voting. Additionally, the system allowed the URSU to only display races that applied to the voters. For example, faculty members only saw the races for the Executive positions and their faculty, rather than seeing every race. This provides greater accuracy on the results than previously when it couldn't be prevented and there was no way of knowing if only the faculty members voted or not.

Given the Provincial and University directives around the COVID-19 virus there were no polling stations on campus. However, this still allowed the CRO to carry out the online voting as with previous elections.

#### Election and Referendum Bylaw Improvements

The CRO noted a few things that could be improved in future elections and to enable a more modern approach to Elections. In addition to a contracted administrative assistant/Elections Clerk; the proposed changes are outlined below.

**Section 3.3.3 Referenda:** This By-law caused some issues. Recommendation is to approve budgets before the beginning of the election. In addition, the Electoral Officers should be hired well in advance of the election to ensure compliance can be maintained. Also, default amounts should be set to avoid any problems in the event that board members cannot approve budgets in time.

**Section 3.1.4 Constituencies and Positions:** It's important that the meeting with the URSU General Manager for executive roles occur prior to Nomination day. This is a requirement that candidates wishing to run for an Executive Position must sign off on. Having the nomination day prior to the meeting deadline encourages candidates to falsify their nomination papers.

In addition, The timeline as approved by the Board caused some confusion. The deadline for the submission of Nomination Package was March 7th at 4pm, which was clearly noted in the nomination package, which candidates are required to fully read and complete by the deadline. The Nomination Period was listed as being until March 8th, which is what the Board approved. From the view of the Elections Office this includes time for administrative tasks that are required in the verification of nominations. URSU's operations should better communicate these deadlines and ensure there are no issues in the future by using the deadline for the submission of nomination packages in graphics rather than the end of the nomination period.

**Constitution Article 5 (6):** Article 12 references that executives have an executive employment contract. Article 6 14.3 - notes that executives should recognize their duties as officers and employees of the organization. Further, continued employment during and after an elections process is in conflict with the Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy.

There were some serious matters in regards to this. URSU must clarify who is and who is not an employee of URSU. I would suggest the structure be revisited and it clearly be outlined who is considered an employee of URSU, and what will result in a disqualification or non-compliant nomination, so there is no room for doubt by candidates.

In addition, URSU Executive Employment contracts do not offer exemptions from the Constitutional requirement. The URSU Executive Employment contracts reference the Government of Saskatchewan's protected leaves, which includes service leave for specifically "municipal, provincial, federal, school board and band council nominations, elections and offices"<sup>1</sup>, but does not cover URSU's elections. This protected leave requirement also requires four weeks of written leave.

**Section 3.1.18 Resolution of Campaigning Complaints:** In this section, demerit points on their own should not disqualify a candidate. The consideration needs to be given to the nature of the offence, the intent, knowledge and actions of the offender before and after the complaint is known and the CRO's ability to maintain the integrity of the Election itself as a result. Without that type of wording, it makes it very easy for candidates and others to simply report matters to try and get others disqualified.

**Section 4 Consequences for Non-Compliance:** This section requires further discussion and review, future URSU Boards should more specifically address paid leave for elected members, more strictly provide notice and registration information for referenda, and develop more policies on how URSU, members of URSU and those involved with URSU are addressed within the organization. Furthermore, a clear Chain of Command pertaining to Election and Referendum determining who has the authority and final say in matters, must be adhered to.

Respectfully Submitted,

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<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/employment-standards/job-protected-leaves/service-leaves#nomination-election-and-candidate-public-office-leave>

Ebenezer Fordjour  
Chief Returning Officer

APPENDIX A

**2022 URSU**

**General Election Candidate List**

**EXECUTIVE**

**President:**

Navjot Kaur

Oghenerukevwe Erifeta

Subhan Syed

**VP Student Affairs:**

Harshkumar Patel

**VP Operations and Finance:**

Pedram Monfared

**VP External Relations**

Nadiya Ekhteraeetoussi

**DIRECTORS**

**Faculties**

**Campion**

**College**

No Candidates

**Centre for Continuing Education:**

No Candidates

**Arts:**

Rahima Mian

Tehzib Patel

**Business Administration:**

Harsimmerveer Plaha

**Education**

Hosna Tayebianvar

**Engineering**

Arbaz Asif

**Graduate**

**Studies and Research (FGSR)**

Aditya Pathak

Anastasiia Sheichuk

**Kinesiology**

**and Health Studies**

Prabjyot Bajwa

**Media,**

**Art, and Performance**

Amin Malakootikhah

Emanuella Nneibeife

**Nursing**

Mahima Rahman

**Science**

Birpartap Singh

Mohammad Zafar

Zakiyyah Noorally

**Social Work**

No Candidates

**First Nations University of Canada**

Danielle Nepoose

**La Cité**

No Candidates

**Luther College**

Nabeera Siddiqi

**CONSTITUENCIES**

**Equity and Campaigns**

Manindermeet

Singh

**Indigenous Students**

Delrae Whitehawk

**International Students**

Parampreet Singh

**LGBTQIA2S+ Students**

Style Stenberg

**Part Time Students**

Emily Camposano

**Students with Disabilities**

Narinder Singh

**Women Students**

Amandeep Kaur

**SENATE**

Zakiyyah Noorally

Style Stenberg

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL**

**Arts**

Carter Antoine

**Business**

No Candidates

**Education**

No Candidates

**Engineering**

No Candidates

**Graduate Studies and Research**

No Candidates

**Kinesiology and Health Studies**

No Candidates

**La Cité**

No Candidates

**Media, Arts and Performance**

Emanuella Nneibeife

**Nursing**

No Candidates

**Science**

Kartik Patel

**Social Work**



No Candidates

**Centre for Continuing Education**

No Candidates

**EXECUTIVE OF COUNCIL Faculty – 1 position per faculty**

**Arts**

Tehzib Patel

**Business**

No Candidates

**Education**

No Candidates

**Engineering**

Nisarg Patel

**Graduate**

**Studies and Research**

No Candidates

**Kinesiology**

**and Health Studies**

No Candidates

**La Cité**

No Candidates

**Media, Arts and Performance**

No Candidates

**Nursing**

No Candidates

**Science**

No Candidates

**Social Work**

No Candidates

**Centre for Continuing Education**

No Candidates

## APPENDIX "B"

**General Election Official Results****University of Regina URSU General Election****March 29 and 30 2022**

No	Position and Declared Winner	Eligible Voters	Votes
1	President (Navjot Kaur)	14166	Navjot Kaur(338) Oghenerukevwe Erifeta(270) Subhan Syed (116) Abstain (420)
2	Vice President, External Relations (Nadiya Ekhteraetoussi)		ACCLAIMED
3	Vice President, Operations and Finance (Pedram Monfared)		ACCLAIMED
4	Vice President, Student Affairs (Harshkumar Patel)		ACCLAIMED
5	Director, Campion College (Vacant)		ACCLAIMED
6	Director, Faculty of Arts (Rahima Mian)	2111	Rahima Mian(50) Tehzib Patel(42) Abstain (72)
7	Director, Business Administration (Harsimmerveer Plaha)		ACCLAIMED
8	Director, Faculty of Engineering (Arbaz Arif)		ACCLAIMED
9	Director, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (Anastasiia Sheichuk)	2104	Anastasiia Sheichuk(77) Aditya Pathak (46) Abstain (96)

10	Director, Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies (Prabhjyot Bajwa)		ACCLAIMED
11	Director, Faculty of Science (Birpartap Singh)	2022	Birpartap Singh (101) Zakiyyah Noorally (78) Mohammad Zafar (26) Abstain (116)
12	Director, Faculty of Social Work (No Candidates)		No Candidates
13	Director, La Cité (No Candidates)		ACCLAIMED
14	Director, Luther College (Nabeera Siddiqi)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, Education (Hosna Tayebianvar)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, Engineering (Arbaz Arif)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, Nursing (Mahima Rahman)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, Media, Arts and Performance (Emmanuella Nneibeife)		Emmanuella Nneibeife(21) Amin Malakootikhah(11) Abstain (21)
15	Director, Equity and Campaigns (Manindermeet Singh)		ACCLAIMED
16	Director, International Students (Parampreet Singh)		ACCLAIMED
17	Director, Students with Disabilities (Narinder Singh)		ACCLAIMED
18	Director, Part Time Students (Emily Camposano)		ACCLAIMED

19	Director, Womens Students (Amandeep Kaur)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, Indigenous Students (Delrae Whitehawk)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, First Nations University (Danielle Nepoose)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, LGBTQIA2S+ (Style Stenberg)		ACCLAIMED
	Director, Students with Disabilities (Narinder Singh)		ACCLAIMED
20	University Council, Arts (Carter Antoine)		ACCLAIMED
21	University Council, Engineering ( )		No Candidate
22	University Council, Science (Kartik Patel)		ACCLAIMED
23	Executive of Council, Arts (Tehzib Patel)		ACCLAIMED
24	Executive of Council, Business		No Candidate
25	Executive of Council, Engineering (Nisarg Patel)		ACCLAIMED
26	Executive of Council, Media, Art and Performance (Emmanuella Nneibeife)		ACCLAIMED
27	Executive of Council, Science		No Candidates

28	Senate (Style Stenberg) (Zakiyyah Noorally)		ACCLAIMED
29	SLAC Referendum	14166	In Favour (225) Opposed (604) Abstain (219)
30	SPSU Referendum	14166	In Favour (205) Opposed (613) Abstain (230)
31	Regina Public Interest Research Group Board of Directors Ziyang Zeo Li Amir Said Emily Katherine Camposano Zakiyyah Noorally Sundus Zia Anupom Das		Ziyang Zeo Li(365) Amir Said(287) Emily Katherine Camposano (277) Zakiyyah Noorally (258) Sundus Zia (245) Anupom Das(222) Kale Mclellan(214) Style Stenberg(196)

April 12th 2022

Submitted electronically

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Ebenezer Fordjour, CRO