

FINAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER

University of Toronto Students' Union Fall 2014 Elections

Submitted by: Tony Vuong, Chief Returning Officer

Monday, October 27, 2014

Introduction

This report accounts the events of the UTSU Fall 2014 Elections period. It also provides recommendations for consideration by the Board of Directors and the Elections and Referenda Committee for improving processes and policies in order to facilitate future elections.

The Fall 2014 Election period held elections for the UTSU Board of Director candidates for the following seats: Transitional Year Program (TYP), Toronto School of Theology and OISE. No referenda were held during this period.

Activities before Voting Period

In preparation for the nomination and campaign period, and in accordance with the UTSU Elections Procedures Code, a number of tasks were completed prior to the start of the nomination and campaign periods:

1. Reviewing all relevant UTSU governing documents.
2. Preparation of nomination and election-related publicity materials for campus newspapers, and the UTSU website.
3. Preparation of the nomination packages for Board of Director candidates.
4. Hiring of two Deputy Returning Officers (DRO) for the St. George campus.
5. Site inspections, selection and booking of potential polling locations.
6. Obtaining an up-to-date voters list.
7. Testing the online system, and insuring that the system works fine.
8. Scheduling and logistics for the All-Candidates' Meeting.
9. Arranging for the secure storage of ballot boxes between voting days.
10. Ordering ballot boxes, voting screens and seals from Elections Canada.
11. Organizing poll clerk hiring, scheduling and logistics for poll-clerk training sessions.
12. Preparation of polling station kits.
13. Ensuring the UTSU website was updated with relevant election material.

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14. Designing ballots and determining ballot quantities and distribution.
15. Preparing laptops for use at the voting stations

Nominations

Nominations for the UTSU elections opened Monday September 29, 2014 at 10:00 and closed Friday, October 3, 2014 at 17:00. Four (4) Director nomination packages were signed out and three (3) were returned before the end of the nomination period. All of the submitted nomination packages were ultimately approved except for one (1) for a student seeking nomination for the Toronto School of Theology Representative, who was found to have an insufficient number of nominators.

The Fall 2014 election was for a total of two candidates both from the Transitional Year Program (TYP).

All-Candidates' Meeting

The all-candidates' meeting was held on Sunday October 5, 2014 at 14:00 in UTSU building in a meeting room. Attendance was limited to the candidates only and as they were all present there was no candidates' authorized representatives attending the meeting. All-candidates packages were distributed to all candidates. The meeting lasted approximately 1.5 hours, as the CRO reviewed the relevant sections of the Elections Procedure Code, University of Toronto and discussed the role of the elections staff.

Campaigning

The campaign period opened on Monday October 6, 2014 at 09:00 and closed on the last day of voting on Wednesday October 15, 2014 at 18:30. Campaign materials, including posters, flyers, rave cards, and Facebook content were submitted and approved by the CRO throughout the campaign period. It was

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ensured that at least one DRO/CRO was present at the UTSU office to approve the campaigning material at all times.

No complaint was submitted during the campaigning period to the CRO.

UTSU Elections at St. George Campus

Poll Locations

There were some last minute changes made to the polling stations and only one poll location was used to collect the voting for the Fall 2014 election. That station was in the TYP building as the election was only between the two TYP candidates at the 123 St. George St. Voting was also available online.

Poll Clerk Training

Poll Clerk training sessions were held at the University College room UC 244 on Thursday October 9 at two times from 17:30-19:00 and again 19:00-20:30. The training sessions were one and a half hour long and consisted of a brief introduction to the roles and responsibilities of the CRO and DROs, poll clerk duties and responsibilities, polling station setup and closing, trouble-shooting and scenario role-play. During the training sessions, poll clerks were given the opportunity to complete any missing paperwork (tax forms, confidentiality agreement, etc.).

Voting

Voting took place on Tuesday October 14 and Wednesday October 15, 2014. Poll stations were open from 09:00 to 18:30. Three (3) poll clerks worked in shifts from 08:00 to 13:00 and three (3) from 13:00 to 18:30. Poll clerks started by using the online voting system (utsu.simplyvoting.com) to confirm voters' eligibility by typing the student's UTORid. The system was not operable for

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checking eligibility. There were a total of 65 eligible electors in the TYP program. The poll clerks checked eligibility manually. Voters were asked to sign in and provide their name, student number, faculty/college and signature. Poll clerks were instructed to each initial each ballot as they were given out to students upon confirmation of their eligibility as voters. Poll clerks were provided with a sheet of instructions for the voting procedure.

If prospective voters did not have their T-Card (but knew their student number and had other photo ID) or if the prospective voter's name was not provided in the list of eligible students for the TYP program but the prospective voter believed that they were a full-time undergraduate student and a UTSU member, poll clerks were instructed to use the double envelope system.

The poll clerks met each morning at 08:00 at the UTSU office to collect the necessary equipment and materials from the CRO and DRO. Ballot boxes were assembled at the polling locations using Elections Canada seals, clearly marked. Poll stations were closed each day at 18:30 and ballot boxes were sealed and signed by poll clerks. On October 15, poll clerks transported ballot boxes, accompanied by the CRO and DROs, from the Ombudsperson office to the UTSU office. Ballot boxes from October 15 were brought directly to the UTSU office for the count.

All the ballots were designed in house and ballots were printed at Copyrite. The ballots were delivered on Friday, October 10 where they were locked and stored in the Elections Office. The ballots were then sorted to the appropriate designated polling location box along with all the other election items.

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Storage and Transportation of Ballot Boxes

At the close of each voting day, poll clerks transported the sealed ballot boxes to the University of Toronto Ombudsperson Office, where it was to be kept for safekeeping. The Ombudsperson along with another staff facilitated access to the room through a secured key process. Only the Ombudsperson, CRO and DROs had access to the office.

No election was coordinated at the UTM campus due to the limitation of voting to only TYP program students at the St. George campus.

Ballot Counting

At 18:45 after the close of voting on Wednesday October 15, 2014, the CRO oversaw the vote count at the UTSU office. The count was concluded at 19:00. No scrutineers appointed by the candidates. Present for the vote count was the CRO as supervisor, the DROs, and the Executive Director. Ballot boxes were opened. With the supervision of the DROs, CRO and the Executive Director one of the poll clerks opened and read the ballots while the Executive Director recorded the result.

Online Ballots

No electors voted online.

Spoiled Ballots

Ballots were considered spoiled if:

- No voter intent was indicated on the ballot;
- Only one poll clerk initialed the ballot;
- No poll clerks initialed the ballot;
- Too many candidates were selected on the ballot

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Double Envelope Ballots

Elections staff verified the eligibility of voters who had used the double envelope system. Double envelopes were checked against the master voters list to determine if (a) the voter was eligible; and (b) the student had not already voted using their T-Card. Eligible voters' ballots remained in the second, interior unmarked envelope and were sorted and counted normally in order to maintain the anonymity of the voters' choices. All ineligible ballots were separated and not counted.

Announcement of Results and Recount

At the conclusion of ballot counting on October 15, 2014, unofficial election results were posted on the UTSU website on October 15, 2014.

No appeals or complaints regarding the online system was made.

Results:

Voter Turnout for the TYP program (60%)

Anastasiya Harovska: 21 votes (58.3%) THE ELECTED CANDIDATE

Saad Shafiq: 8 votes (22.2%)

Spoiled: 7 votes (19.4%)

Acknowledgements

The CRO would like to thank the DRO, poll clerks, UTSU staff who provided logistical support for the elections.

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UTSU Fall 2014 Election

Elections and Referenda Committee

ERC Ruling 001

Date: October 14, 2014

Time: 15:30

On October 14, 2014 Anastasiya Harovska, one of the TYP candidates requested that her candidate's statement be posted on the UTSU website as well as the poll station for the remainder of the voting period. Upon investigation, the Chief Returning Officer notified Ms. Harovska that although she did not submit her Candidate's statement before the end of the nomination period for the Fall 2014 elections, she can still submit one for approval.