

**REPORT ON THE 2007 GENERAL ELECTION  
OF  
THE SIMON FRASER STUDENT SOCIETY**

**By J. J. McCullough**

Chief Commissioner and Chief Electoral Officer of the Independent  
Electoral Commission of the Simon Fraser Student Society

April 25, 2007

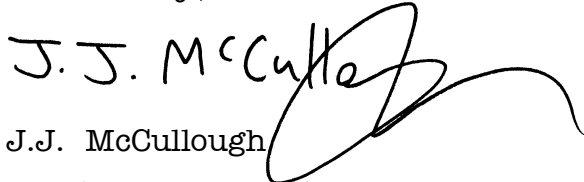
The Hon. Derrick Harder  
President,  
Simon Fraser Student Society  
Maggie Benston Centre Room 2250  
Simon Fraser University, 8888 University Drive  
Burnaby, BC  
V5A 1S6

Mr. President,

Since the conclusion of the 2007 General Election of the Simon Fraser Student Society I have worked diligently to produce a comprehensive report on the events of the past few weeks. I hope that the information contained within will be of use to you, the Board, and the Society in general.

I submit to you, as a representative of the Board of Directors, my final report on the 2007 General Election of the Simon Fraser Student Society.

Yours truly,



J.J. McCullough  
Chief Electoral Officer,  
Independent Electoral Commission

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Preface</b> .....	5
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	8
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction</b> .....	9
Policy Changes.....	9
Election Handbook.....	12
Website.....	13
Fines.....	14
Election Calendar.....	15
Emails.....	15
<b>Chapter 2 Candidates</b> .....	16
Nominations and Notice.....	16
Applications and Acclamations.....	16
The 20 Candidates.....	18
<b>Chapter 3 Referendums</b> .....	19
Referendum Questions 1, 2, and 3.....	19
Referendum Question 4.....	21
<b>Chapter 4 Campaigning</b> .....	25
Posters.....	25
Internet.....	26
Campaign Expenses.....	27
Debates.....	28
<b>Chapter 5 Voting</b> .....	30
Ballots.....	30
Poll Clerks.....	30
Voting Days.....	31
Voting Trends.....	32
Absentee Voting.....	32
<b>Chapter 6 Results</b> .....	34
Turnout.....	35
Analysis of Results- Candidates.....	36
Analysis of Results- Referendums .....	37
Analysis of Slate Ban.....	37

Punishments.....	38
<b>Chapter 7 Cost Summary.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Chapter 8 Recommendations.....</b>	<b>40</b>
Observations of the Outgoing IEC.....	41
Additional Recommendations of the Chief Commissioner.....	43
<b>Chapter 9 Closing Comments and Final Recommendations.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>53</b>

## Preface

---

The week of March 20th saw SFU students go to the polls for the second time in three months. In many respects the 2007 General Election of the Simon Fraser Student Society represented a return to normal after a preceding semester of political turmoil, dominated by a contentious special general meeting, mass impeachments, and a last-minute emergency by-election.

As Chief Commissioner and Chief Electoral Officer of the Student Society's Independent Electoral Commission, it was my duty and privilege to preside over this spring's general election. It was not always an easy job to be sure, but it was a consistently valuable and rewarding experience just the same. It is always inspiring to see students participate in the democratic process, be they candidates, voters, or volunteers.

In writing this thorough post-election report my motivations were primarily to create a readable and factual document that could help articulate, clarify, and demystify the process through which the IEC conducts itself and the electoral process in general. I also aimed to create a useful narrative chronology that will hopefully allow future IECs, boards, committees, and students to review the history of this election, and understand the contexts of any decisions or developments that occurred during its course. For many years it has been a tradition for the Society's Chief Electoral Officer to produce such reports, though sadly the custom seems to have fallen out of practice in recent years. As I strongly believe that clear documentation and analysis is vital for any publicly-accountable organization such as the SFSS, I am happy to revive the practice.

On February 28 the board specifically assigned me with the mandate to document the voting patterns of graduate and undergraduate students as relating to the three main referendum questions on the ballot of this election. This data, along with other statistical content, is included in the appendix of this report.

In closing I would like to offer my considerable gratitude to all those who assisted with the operation of these elections. I owe a heavy debt to my fellow electoral commissioners Stevan Anas, Karl Bergeron, Michael Letourneau, and Rowan Sawyer, without whom the 2007 general election would have never been able to occur, let alone operate as smoothly as it did. I would also like to offer thanks to Anthony Maragna, the Society's Communications Coordinator, for his valuable insights and contributions in the formulation of IEC policy. The numerous poll clerks who worked long hours at the voting stations at all three campuses of SFU also deserve praise for their commitment, as do the employees of Quad Books for their assistance in producing candidate materials. In assembling the statistical data contained in this report I relied heavily on the assistance of commissioners Karl Bergeron and Mike Letourneau, individuals who are considerably more computer-savvy than myself. The assistance given by Adam Hunter, an employee at UBC's Applied Research and Evaluation Services, cannot be overstated as well, for it was only through his efforts that we were able to convert vast swatches of incomprehensible raw scan-tron data into useful, readable information. Most of all I would like to thank the voters and candidates themselves, for at the end of the day it is only through their involvement that we are even able to have elections in the first place.

J.J. McCullough  
Chief Electoral Officer

### **Note**

Though this report was written in its entirety by me, J.J. McCullough, for the purposes of professionalism and neutrality I have avoided referring to myself in the first person whenever possible.

## Executive Summary

---

The 2007 general election was a smooth, efficient, and generally cordial affair. The IEC members functioned well together, and largely conducted the election process in a timely, conciliatory, and predictable manner. Candidates were respectful of the electoral rules and each other, and there were no major instances of rule violations, or even allegations thereof. Though this was the first SFSS election to feature a ban on the practice of “slate” based campaigning, the new policy was embraced without controversy.

The election featured four referendum questions, three relating to the establishment of an independent graduate student society and one “non binding” question asking whether the SFSS should separate from the Canadian Federation of Students. All three questions passed, though debate was somewhat lackluster.

The three voting days were similarly uneventful, and the election results were decisive and uncontroversial.

Turnout remained low and costs remained high, however. Those joint concerns, coupled with some general observations about election practices that may be in need of renewal are the only major issues arising from an otherwise rather mundane election.

## **1. Introduction**

---

The 2007 General Election of the Simon Fraser Student Society was formally called by the SFSS Board of Directors on Wednesday, January 31, 2007. Per tradition, it was decided that there would be three days of voting in late March, with March 20, 21, and 22 being selected as polling dates. Two weeks later, at their February 7 meeting, the Board interviewed numerous candidates and then appointed a new Independent Electoral Commission. The five-member commission consisted of J.J. McCullough as chief commissioner plus Stevan Anas, Karl-Frederik Bergeron, Michael Letourneau, and Rowan Sawyer as associate commissioners. Letourneau and Sawyer were both incumbent commissioners who had worked on the previous IEC that had presided over the 2006 by-election. Bergeron was a former biology rep on the SFSS student forum while Anas and McCullough were both former candidates who had run unsuccessfully in previous SFSS elections. In addition, Bergeron and Letourneau were both incumbent members of the Graduate Issues Committee. The individuals enjoyed widespread support from the board and were easily confirmed.

### **Policy Changes**

The SFSS' Constitutional and Policy Review Committee (CPR) drafted considerable revisions to the society's Administrative Policy 19 prior to the beginning of the campaign period. AP-19 consists of a set of rules that formally regulate SFSS elections, clarifying language and terms left ambiguous by the Society's constitution. IEC commissioners Rowan Sawyer and Michael Letourneau both sit on the CPR committee, while J.J. McCullough attended the committee's final February 12 meeting which reviewed the group's draft revisions to AP-19. While many of the changes made simply enshrined longstanding IEC practices and conventions into the status of SFSS policy, there were also several significant new additions made to the document. Many of these revisions, in turn,

were born from frustrations that had arisen in the wake of the two previous elections of 2006.

### ***Curbing outside influences***

The new AP-19 introduced several new regulations designed to curb the influence of outside parties in the production of candidates' campaign materials. In doing so, the intent was to further entrench one of the dominant values underlining SFSS election rules, namely that all candidates should have equal access to campaign materials of similar cost and quality.

The new rules were thus modified to declare that “no outside business, organization, or individual may play a significant role in the production of a candidate's campaign materials without receiving payment to do so.” The rules were also modified to give the IEC the power to ascribe a “market value” cost to any campaign materials donated to a candidate by an outside party, ensuring that from now on even “gifts” would be considered full campaign expenses.

Additionally, utilizing resources belonging to the Canadian Federation of Students to produce campaign materials was banned. Nominally this was done to eliminate a potential advantage for incumbent candidates, as presumably only incumbent candidates would be in a position to access the resources of the CFS, by simple nature of the fact that the CFS will always hold a unique, institutional relationship with the incumbent SFSS board. However, in practice this rule was clearly intended to help curb the influence of "CFS-backed" candidates. As will be discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this report, the early 2007 SFSS political climate was heavily anti-CFS, with most members of the Board seeking to withdrawal SFU's participation from the organization altogether. The Federation was severely distrusted and as a result board members sought to limit its political influence on campus as much as possible. There was a widespread perception that the Canadian Federation of Students had covertly sponsored SFSS slates and candidates in past elections, producing posters and

offering other forms of material support. The ban thus sought to formally curb CFS influence over future SFSS elections.

### ***Closing the loopholes of “double campaigning”***

Another concern that had arisen in past elections was the ambiguous situation presented by the practice of “double campaigning,” or running for two distinct offices at the University simultaneously. Along with the SFSS Board, students at SFU can also run for seats in University Senate or Board of Governors. These University-run elections often occur simultaneously with SFSS elections, but unlike SFSS elections candidates who participate in BoG/Senate races are not bound to the campaign rules of the IEC, but rather the considerably more liberal campaign rules of the University secretariat. This situation can be easy to exploit. A candidate who is simultaneously running for both the SFSS and the University Senate, for example, can purchase expensive, professional-quality campaign posters for the nominal purpose of promoting himself in the context of his Senate campaign, knowing full well that such materials will inevitably help his SFSS race as well. Such loopholes allowed candidates to subvert the rules and budgetary restraints imposed by the IEC, thus making it very difficult to ensure a fair race.

The revised AP-19 ended the ambiguity by declaring that SFSS campaign expenses will henceforth cover any materials used by candidates “to promote their election to *any* position for which they are running” (emphasis added), including Board of Governors and Senate.

### ***An end to slates***

The most significant reform made to AP-19 was the abolishment of slates. For most of SFSS history slates (ie; small political parties or other formal, partisan alliances) have been a key component of the Student Society's elections. Slates had repeatedly earned criticism for fostering a culture of needless polarization

and politicization within the context of the SFSS, however. Directors elected on slates frequently continued to view themselves and others on partisan terms long after assuming office. This was deemed to be a significant factor contributing to the distrust and disunity that had characterized recent boards of the past.

Adopting language from the UBC student society's by-laws, which had recently banned slates, the new AP-19 defined slates as the use of "shared slogans/common group names/campaign colours or common visual identities," noting that the use of any these tactics was henceforth banned. Pooling campaign expenses for the "mutual benefit" of multiple candidates was similarly outlawed. Candidates were still allowed to "endorse each other verbally," however. As this left some ambiguity, an important new component of the IEC's mandate became identifying "slate-like behavior" from candidates, and thus supervising their compliance with the new rules.

The revised AP-19 was presented to the Board of Directors on February 14 and subsequently ratified.

### **The IEC Election Handbook**

In addition to AP-19 some of the most important election rules are contained in the Independent Electoral Commission's Election Handbook, which is a document drafted by the IEC Chief Commissioner and then approved by the rest of the Commission. The handbook seeks to clarify any outstanding ambiguities of election law for candidates, and generally define the rules of day-to-day campaigning in simple language.

J.J. McCullough had run as an independent presidential candidate in the 2006 by-election. Frustrated by the experience, part of the reason he applied for the Chief Commissioner's job was to liberalize many of the existing IEC regulations he felt were unduly restrictive on the freedom of candidates. In the first few weeks after being appointed, the existing IEC campaign handbook was

thoroughly re-written by McCullough, and after some edits, was approved by the IEC in their first official meeting on February 18. There were several significant changes made.

First, there was a general relaxing of the rules regarding the practice of "negative campaigning." Language which had previously forbidden candidates to directly "attack the positions" of other candidates was removed, allowing candidates to engage in more spirited criticisms of the platforms of their opponents. The very strict ban on electronic campaigning, was also loosened, allowing candidates to engage in moderate email campaigning and largely unrestricted blogging and forum posting. A rule that had previously allowed candidates to campaign during voting periods was also dropped, however. Campaigning during polling hours was technically in violation of the SFSS constitution, but this had been purposely ignored by the IEC for reasons of convenience and efficiency in the 2006 by-election.

## **Website**

The IEC website was thoroughly revised and modernized for the 2007 election. Unlike previous elections, where the IEC site merely served as a small subsection of the larger SFSS website, in February 2007 an entirely new, separate IEC website was created. Though no longer directly "part" of the SFSS site, a prominent link to the new IEC site was still provided on the sfss.ca main page.

The new website contained the following sections:

- **"About"**- Information describing the basic nature of the IEC, with profiles of the five commissioners
- **"Contact"**- Information on how to reach the IEC, including office hours, phone numbers, and email.
- **"Rules"**- Online copies of the Election Handbook, AP-19, and the SFSS constitution.

- **“Candidates”**- Profiles of all candidates running for office. After nominations closed all candidates were asked to submit a photo and a statement of around 400 words for publication on the site.
- **“Referendums”**- Profiles of all referendum questions and campaigns, submitted in similar fashion to the candidate profiles.
- **“Data”**- Information on past elections, including summaries of results.
- **“Links”**- Links to various SFSS and student union-related websites.

## **Fines**

The February 18 meeting also saw the IEC levy its first, and only major fine of the election period. Since the SFSS Board had called the 2007 election without an IEC in place, some of the new commissioners were concerned that inadequate "notice of elections" had been displayed around campus. According to by-law 14.9(a) of the Society constitution, the Society is required to put up at least 25 posters advertising the upcoming election "at least two weeks before the opening of the nomination period," a time period which, in this case, preceded the appointment of a new IEC. 25 posters were eventually put up by SFSS staff, but the notice still came a few days late. The IEC voted to fine the Board a symbolic \$20 for the infraction. At the time there was some fear that failing to strictly comply with even the most trivial of election procedures could possibly leave the IEC open to legal challenges, should the election results prove contentious.

## **Election Calendar**

The election calendar posted on the website highlighted the following key dates:

Monday, February 19	Nomination period opens
Monday, March 5	Nomination period closes, 12:00 noon
Wednesday, March 7	Campaign period begins, 10:00 AM
Monday, March 19	Campaign period ends, 11:00 PM
Tuesday, March 20	First day of voting, 9:30 AM to 7:30 PM
Wednesday, March 21	Second day of voting, 9:30 AM to 7:30 PM
Thursday, March 22	Final day of voting, 9:30 AM to 7:30 PM

## **Emails**

Two emails were sent to all SFU students during the course of the election cycle. The first, sent on February 17 informed students of the opening of nominations, and explained how to run for office. The second, sent on March 13, informed students of voting procedures.

Both emails were sent with the assistance of Bobbie Grant, an official working in the University's Student Services department.

## 2. Candidates

---

### **Nominations and Notice**

The nomination period opened on the morning of February 19<sup>th</sup>. Any candidate who wished to run for office was able to pick up a nomination package containing both the enrollment form and the IEC handbook at the SFSS general office.

In order to further raise awareness of the opening of nominations, during the nomination period the IEC placed many colorful posters around campus encouraging students to "run for office." For the February 26 edition of *The Peak* J.J. McCullough similarly wrote and illustrated a colorful two-page spread entitled "So You Want to Run for Office?" which sought to answer various frequently asked questions about running in SFSS elections and the SFSS in general.

Though some completed packages would trickle in to the IEC in the days immediately following the 19<sup>th</sup>, the majority of nominations were received on the final day of the nomination period (March 5). Indeed, in many cases the nominations were turned in by candidates less than an hour before the noon deadline. It is commonly argued that candidates engage in this last-minute approach for strategic reasons, in order to keep their intentions to run ambiguous for as long as possible.

### **Approvals and Acclamations**

Despite the attempts to raise awareness of the election within the general student body, there was no above-average increase in candidate applications. 34 students in all applied. Only one nomination form was completed insufficiently, and when confronted the student in question decided to withdraw. Two other candidates would later drop out of the race after being ratified. Of the 31 remaining nominees, 11 candidates ended up being automatically acclaimed to office as their positions were not contested by any other applicants.

It is fairly common for several faculty Board and Forum representative positions to go uncontested during SFSS elections, and the 2007 race was no exception. On the Board, the Education, Business, Applied Science, and Grad Member-at-Large positions were all acclaimed to uncontested candidates, while on Forum the acclaimed spots went to the sole candidates for undergraduate Political Sci rep, Earth Science rep, Business Administration rep, and Economics rep.

Significantly, three of the SFSS' most important executive positions also went uncontested. The positions of Treasurer, Internal Relations Officer, and Graduate Issues Officer were all acclaimed, and in all three cases the incumbent directors were re-instated for a second term.

For at least the fifth consecutive year, no one ran for the Board's position of Health Sciences representative, and the office will remain vacant during the inauguration of the 2007-2008 Board. The vast majority of Forum rep. Seats also went ignored, though noting this is a bit of a formality, as the SFSS political system has evolved in such a way that campus-wide Forum elections are now considered something of an aberration. In normal circumstances candidates are nominated by departmental student unions and ratified by Forum itself during regular meetings.

In total, the 2007 election featured 20 competitive candidates running for seven positions. The tally was as follows:

- President- four candidates
- External Relations Officer- two candidates
- Member Services Officer- three candidates
- University Relations Officer- three candidates
- Faculty of Arts Board Rep.- two candidates
- Faculty of Science Board Rep.- two candidates
- Board Member-at-Large- four candidates

A poster containing an unofficial list of candidates was produced by the IEC less than an hour after nominations closed and all submitted forms were approved. Copies of the poster were then placed in a few high-traffic areas of the campus, in order to publicize the names of candidates as quickly as possible. A formal, official list of candidates (updated to remove those individuals had since dropped out of the race) was produced by SFSS staff a few days later and posted more widely around campus in accordance with constitutional by-law 14.12(a).

### **The 20 Candidates**

Incumbents rarely run for direct re-election in the SFSS. Being a member of the board requires a large time commitment and can be very fatiguing work- both factors which make such a job difficult to reconcile with an active academic career. Prior to 2007 it had been over a decade since any president had chosen to seek re-election, for example. The significant difference in this election, in which nine out of 16 members of the incumbent board chose to run for re-election, was undoubtedly due to fact that most of the incumbent directors had assumed office under unusual circumstances. The 2006 by-election was only held less than three months prior, and as such the new directors had been in power for a very brief period of time.

Among the non-incumbent candidates, the majority of students who chose to run were experienced members of the SFSS political subculture in some form. Four candidates- Lori MacDonald, Xenia Menzies, Amanda Van Baarsen, and Joel Warren were former members of the board seeking a non-consecutive return. Several other candidates had either served on Forum or in their departmental student unions. Of the 20 competitive candidates only a very small minority were completely inexperienced.

### 3. Referendums

---

Four referendum questions were placed on the ballot of the 2007 general election, to be voted on concurrently with the election of candidates. The four questions dealt with two themes, the first being the issue of grad autonomy while the second concerned the matter of separation from the Canadian Federation of Students,

#### Referendum Questions 1, 2, and 3

##### *Background*

Simon Fraser University does not have an independent student union for its graduate students, a fact which makes it distinct from most other post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. As grad students' academic lives tend to be dominated by many unique concerns such as research grants, office space, and teaching support duties which are not shared by SFU's undergraduate majority, it has often been argued that such students require an independent organization to govern and lobby on their exclusive behalf.

Previous attempts to establish an independent grad student union have generally proved unsuccessful, though over the years graduate students have still earned significant amounts of autonomy through other means. Since 2005 they have had access to an exclusive SFSS health plan, offering considerable benefits to grads and their families. Many graduate students likewise provide teaching support to SFU professors and departments, which in turn gives them access to various benefits offered by SFU's Teaching Support Staff Union. Lastly, within the SFSS political system graduate students also manage the Graduate Issues Committee, a vast and largely autonomous "super committee" of the Society charged with representing graduate interests. Following the passage of a constitutional amendment in 2006, GIC now holds exclusive authority over a quarter of all Society fees levied from grad students.

Ill will between graduate students and the Simon Fraser Student Society has been steadily building at SFU over the last few years. Many of the recent political developments within the Society have been heavily grad-driven and grad-focused. Such developments have furthered a perception within the grad community that the SFSS, as it exists at present, gives too much power to the university's undergraduate majority, a community deemed indifferent- if not outright hostile- to the distinct needs and interests of graduate students. It was largely grad opposition that led to the impeachment of most the original 2006-2007 Board, and the subsequent election of a more favorable board in December 2006 by-election.

By their own account, the Graduate Issues Committee formally began preparing for succession from the SFSS in October of 2006. As the months progressed, an independent constitution was drafted, as were three referendum questions that if approved, would initiate the establishment of a new, grads-only student society. On February 21, 2007 GIC voted unanimously to recommend their three referendum questions be placed on the upcoming SFSS election ballot. The SFSS board ratified the recommendation and formally placed the three questions on the ballot later that afternoon. The IEC subsequently numbered these questions as referendum questions 1, 2, and 3.

Referendum question 3 related to the redistribution of grad fees from the SFSS to the new independent graduate student society, in the event such an institution was created. The question was designed to be voted on by graduate students exclusively. This was done by evoking SFSS by-law 17.1(a) , which states that any referendum "regarding fees to be levied only upon graduate students" shall only "be voted on by graduate students." By-law 17.1(a) was passed during the impeachment SGM of 2006. This was the first time the amendment was evoked, and considering the successful outcome of the autonomy vote, it will also likely be the last time.

## ***Campaigns***

Bhuvinder Vaid, the Board's outgoing Education Representative and member of the Graduate Issues Committee was approved by the IEC as head of the official "Yes" campaign of all three grad questions on February 26. GIC had explicitly designated him as their preferred choice to run such a campaign.

No students ever came forward to register to lead an official "No" campaign in opposition to the three grad-related referendum questions. It was evident that the idea of separation was a matter of strong consensus among the graduate student body; predictions that would be later affirmed by the 87% margin by which question 1 was approved by grad voters. As such, the Chief Commissioner did not make any serious attempts to rally a "No" campaign in the method that was done with the CFS question (see below).

## **Referendum Question 4**

### ***Background***

The Simon Fraser Student Society has had a long and tumultuous relationship with the Canadian Federation of Students. Founded in 1981, the CFS is a national umbrella organization to which many individual student unions across Canada belong. The SFSS was one of the group's founding members and joined in 1981 as "local 23." Legally the Federation now exists as three separate entities, the CFS, CFS-British Columbia, and CFS-Services. In practice, the three institutions function together in close harmony for common goals.

The CFS engages in a number of lobbying and activist initiatives on behalf of Canadian university students, and provides certain services to all member schools such as day planners, a discount travel agency, and a discount cell phone provider. In exchange, member unions redirect a portion of all collected

student fees to the various CFS institutions every year. Critics have consistently argued that the CFS takes in too much money and offers little too in return, while others have accused the organization of being internally corrupt or structurally unaccountable. Throughout the history of SFU dozens of SFSS elections have been fought over CFS membership, stretching back for decades. Several referendums have likewise been held on formal separation from the organization, but all have failed. A report commissioned by a special SFSS working group on the CFS relationship recognized six distinct attempts at "de-federation" from the CFS during the 1986-2005 period.

In March of 2006 a slate known as "Common Sense" achieved a landslide victory in the annual SFSS elections, obtaining control of every executive position and the majority of other board seats. The slate, which was led by former External Relations Officer Shawn Hunsdale, was widely considered to be enthusiastically "pro-CFS." Mr. Hunsdale served as president of the SFSS from May to November of 2006, but his administration was not popular and a grassroots impeachment drive was started in opposition. Led mostly by graduate students offended over the SFSS' firing of a popular Society employee associated with the maintenance of the graduate health plan, the impeachment drive was ultimately successful, and removed Mr. Hunsdale and six other executives from office in a special general meeting of the society.

Though the scandal associated with the downfall of the Hunsdale administration was not directly related to the CFS, the strong association between the unpopular "Common Sense" members and the CFS seems to have further hurt the organization's reputation at SFU. An emergency by-election was called in the winter of 2006, in accordance with the constitution of the SFSS. The results saw "anti-CFS" candidates of various stripes assume all executive and board positions available to be contested.

Shortly after being elected, the new multi-slate SFSS Board of Directors established a working group, headed by new External Relations Officer Sasha

Fox, to investigate the relationship between the CFS and the SFSS. The mandate was to determine whether the interests of the SFSS were best served by staying, leaving, or attempting to internally reform the CFS. On February 21 Ms. Fox presented her committee's findings to a meeting of the SFSS Student Forum. She reported that her group had concluded that the SFSS was a largely ineffective and corrupt organization, and that it would thus be most advisable for the SFSS to leave the CFS altogether, diverting funds that had previously gone to the Federation's three branches to the SFSS budget. A fully-worded referendum question drafted by Ms. Fox was put forth to Forum, and after debate was approved by a 30 to 5 vote. It became referendum question 4 on the ballot.

The Canadian Federation of Students holds complex rules that establish the legal means through which a member school can leave, or "de-federate" from the CFS. A single referendum on the matter is not deemed sufficient. Partially in recognition of this fact, Ms. Fox's referendum question described itself as "non-binding" though the specific relevance of this phrase remained somewhat ambiguous. The incumbent Board members stated it was their intention to receive a "yes" vote as a *mandate* for separation, which would then be pursued according to a strategy to be determined later. It was also acknowledged that the eventual post-CFS arrangement might end up being different from the plan explicitly described in the referendum question itself.

## **Campaign**

On February 26 Sasha Fox was formally registered by the IEC as head of the "Yes" campaign. Two days later, at the February 28 SFSS Board meeting, the Board voted to officially endorse Ms. Fox's campaign, but stopped shy of establishing an official board-sanctioned "yes" campaign of its own, as presently allowed by election rules.

No student or group ever approached the IEC to lead or organize an official "No" campaign of opposition to the CFS question. Significant efforts were made by the Chief Commissioner to raise awareness of the matter among students and groups on campus known to be supportive of the CFS, but none expressed an interest in formally establishing or leading the "No" side.

## 4. Campaigning

---

The campaign period of the 2007 general election began on March 7, at 10 AM and concluded at midnight of March 19, 13 days later. As is often the case, candidates did not begin campaigning immediately, but rather began to gradually produce campaign material for the first few days before finally making their strongest presence felt during the second week.

### Posters

Posters remain the most common form of campaigning during SFSS elections. Some notable changes to poster policy were made during the 2007 election.

Under the previous slate-centric elections regime, candidates were permitted to only use one color of paper for their posters, with colors being determined by slate. Much in the same way that federal political parties brand themselves with specific colors, SFSS slates were similarly associated with whatever paper color they ended up choosing for their poster campaign. With slates being abolished, the IEC decided to institute a new policy whereby colored paper would be distributed randomly. This ensured that all candidates were forced to campaign with many different colors of posters, and thus not brand themselves with any one particular color in a slate-like fashion.

On a more practical level it should be observed that there were simply not enough distinct colors of paper available to allow all 20 candidates to choose an exclusive color of their own. Inevitably some candidates would have wound up with very dark or unattractive colors. In a slate election even the slowest slate to register will generally be able to obtain a fairly bright color by the simple fact that the overall competition for colors will be small, but with 20 independents the choices would get increasingly depressing after the five neon colors were snatched up.

AP-19 stipulates that the IEC must approve all campaign literature prior to their production. This year all IEC approvals were done electronically, with candidates emailing PDF files to the IEC, and then the IEC in turn forwarding approved PDFs to the printing store. The only exceptions were hand-made campaign materials, which for obvious reasons had to be physically approved in person by a member of the IEC.

Per AP-19, all posters for the 2007 election were printed at Quad Books, an on-campus photocopying/stationary store owned by the SFSS. Quad employees kept a copy of all receipts from candidates and returned them to the IEC after the election concluded. The receipts were in turn used to make sure all candidates had accurately stated their campaign expenses.

## **Internet**

This election saw a great deal of online campaigning. The IEC had relaxed its previous strict rules regarding campaigning through electronic mediums, and instead encouraged candidates to utilize publicly-accessible websites and forums to promote their campaigns.

The popular networking site "Facebook" proved to be the most common forum for online campaigning by far. Almost every single candidate created a Facebook "group" to promote their candidacy, while other students created groups to simply discuss the elections in general. Candidates joined and cross-posted on each others' groups, promoting good dialogue between friends and competitors alike.

A few candidates made specialized websites for their campaigns, but this was not a common practice. As the campaign period is quite short overall, many candidates evidently found it easier to simply rely on an easy-to-make Facebook page than create a unique website of their own.

The IEC monitored candidates' online campaigning to some degree, though it is obviously quite difficult to monitor everything that a person writes or posts online. As a result, the IEC only officially “approved” static websites, while allowing blogs or Facebook pages to operate freely, so long as the IEC was informed of their presence. A strict “no spam” policy remained in effect in regard to email campaigning, however. This rule was respected by all candidates and there were no controversies resulting from it.

### **Campaign Expenses**

All candidates are given a \$50 spending limit for campaign materials, with the understanding that 50% of their total expenditures will be reimbursed by the SFSS. According to the financial statements received from the candidates, most chose to exploit the offer, with \$41.80 being the average amount spent per candidate.<sup>1</sup> There was no real correlation between spending and winning, some candidates who outspent their opponents won, while others didn't.

A common dilemma for the IEC is having to use a high degree of subjective discretion in determining what "counts" as a campaign expense and what does not. As candidates are only given a \$50 budget to spend, they must make their purchases carefully, as the money does not go particularly far. For the the 2007 race the IEC ruled that “hand-made” posters and promotional materials could be produced expense-free, as “tools used to make campaign materials” such as pens, paper, glue, and tape would not be counted as expenses. Several candidates embraced this new rule and produced interesting hand-made posters and advertisements out of cloth, paint, and other craft materials.

---

<sup>1</sup> One candidate did not spend any money on his campaign at all. In order to provide a more useful number I did not include his \$0 expenses when calculating the average.

## Debates

The IEC organized three debates which were held on Tuesday, March 13, Wednesday, March 14, and Thursday, March 15, respectively. Held in the alternating lecture halls of AQ 3181 and 3182, the debates began at 4:30 and usually ran for at least two hours each. The first (Tuesday) debate was labeled an “executives debate” and featured the candidates for President, ERO, MSO, and URO. The second was a “board reps debate” and featured the candidates for Arts rep, Science rep, and Members-at-Large. A third debate was held for the purpose of debating referendum question 4, the matter of separation from the Canadian Federation of Students. A debate on referendum questions 1-3 was outsourced to the Graduate Issues Committee and was organized independently of the IEC during the same week.

The Thursday debate on referendum question 4- separation from the Canadian Federation of Students- presented some unique concerns. The head of the "Yes" side, Sasha Fox, was present, as was Jeff Schemilt, a fellow candidate and member of Ms. Fox's official "Yes" campaign. Because there was no recognized "No" campaign, however, the debate was in danger of becoming one-sided, and thus not a proper debate at all. Until the day of the debate itself, the Chief Commissioner continued to actively attempt to solicit students at SFU who were believed to have pro-CFS attitudes to head the "No" campaign, or at the very least publicly voice their criticisms at the debate. In the end Alexander Hemingway, a candidate for Board Member-at-Large and critic of the referendum question agreed to participate in the debate. Neither pro nor anti CFS, he argued against the question on largely procedural grounds, claiming the vote was being “rushed through” without adequate time to discuss the matter.

All three debates were very unpopular. Audience membership hovered around 10-20, with the majority in attendance being either incumbent members of the board, candidates who were not debating on that particular day, or a small

handful of other individuals closely associated with the SFSS subculture in some form.

The debates were moderated by the Chief Commissioner and were recorded by an audio-visual crew from the University's Learning and Instructional Development Centre (LIDC). The recording was in turn broadcast live over the internet via the LIDC website. The hope was that this would allow the debate to be seen live by students on other campuses, as well as students who were off-campus in general. There is no evidence that this opportunity was actively utilized, however. During the Wednesday debate the moderator was given a live email feed with the hope that students watching the debate off-campus would submit candidate questions through their computers. No students proved interested.

For the Wednesday and Thursday debates the IEC organized a viewing area on the Surrey campus allowing students to watch the event in real time via the internet feed. With the help of the campus' Academic Computing Services staff, a large projection screen was set up in the main mezzanine, so the debate would be visible to all students passing through the high-traffic area. Though there was some interest generated by the spectacle, no one ultimately stayed to watch for any significant period of time.

On March 16 the videos of the debates were uploaded by audio-visual staff to the "video archive" section of the LIDC website, where they presumably remain to this day. A link was provided on the IEC's own website, in turn, and several candidates linked to it on their respective Facebook pages. This made the content of the debates accessible to students for several days prior to voting, but we lack statistics on how much the uploaded videos were actually viewed.

## 5. Voting

---

### Ballots

It was decided that voting would once again be conducted through “scan-tron” ballots. 12 crates of ballot papers were ordered from Pearson Canada Solutions, a firm specializing in scannable documents. The order amounted to over 30,000 ballot sheets, though the majority of these were not actually used.

The exact sheets ordered were known as “Candidate Ballot” forms, no. NN16427-3, for use in Trans-Optic scanning machines. “Scan-tron” is actually a distinct brand-name, though Trans-Optic machines operate in the same manner, scanning pencil marks.

With the help of Quad Books, over 3,000 ballots sheets were printed to meet the needs of an overly-ambitious prediction of 3,000 voters.

### Poll Clerks

28 poll clerks were hired through an internal process conducted entirely by the SFSS' Internal Relations Officer and relevant staff. The IEC did not play a role in the application, interview, or hiring process.

On Monday, March 19, the IEC conducted an informational seminar for all newly-hired poll clerks, informing them how to use the relevant voting software as well as explaining how to supervise the polling process in general. Additionally, an informational document was created and distributed.

## Voting Days

A grand total of five polling stations were set up at all three campuses<sup>1</sup> for the duration of the voting period, which occurred from 9:30 am to 7:30 PM on Tuesday, March 20, Wednesday March 22, and Thursday, March 23.

The precise locations of the voting stations were as follows:

- W.A.C. Bennett library, first floor near the library entrance, Burnaby campus.
- Academic Quadrangle, south east side, near the IT office, Burnaby campus.
- West Mall Complex, second floor, across from Raven's Cafe, Burnaby campus.
- Mezzanine, near escalators, Surrey campus.
- Main floor lobby area, near computer rooms, Harbour Centre campus.

Each of the five voting stations were manned by two clerks, who held their posts for half the day before being replaced by two others. Each pair of clerks were given a specially-booked computer, either from the Society or the campus IT department, with an internet connection which allowed them access to “SFSS Administration - V 1.1.0,” a special program created for SFSS elections that allows clerks to verify and record the names, identities, and student numbers of all students who show up to vote.

Over the course of three days of voting there were no major irregularities or

---

<sup>1</sup> In past elections there had been efforts to expand voting to SFU's tiny Kamloops campus, which is located on an Indian reserve nearly 250 miles north of the Burnaby campus. For the 2007 election, however, the campus was ignored. SFU Kamloops has less than a thousand students and operates more as a educational co-op program for First Nations students than a functional “campus” akin to Surrey or Harbour Centre. Though Kamloops students pay fees to the SFSS, over 80% of these fees are redistributed back to the local Kamloops student organization. It is extremely unlikely Kamloops students follow SFSS politics as the powers the SFSS holds over the affairs of the Kamloops campus are practically non-existent.

problems with the the voting process. The clerks conducted their work with great competence and efficiency.

### **Voting Trends**

The most popular polling station was the Bennett Library while the least popular location was the Surrey campus. On any given day the Library received the votes of over 150 voters, while the Surrey campus never secured more than 30. The Harbour Centre campus was only marginally more successful, with turnout hovering around 20-40 during the three day period.

Voter turnout generally occurred in a slope pattern. Students did not vote very heavily in the early morning, but then gradually began to vote in higher numbers as the day progressed. Turnout peaked from noon until about 3 o' clock, at which point it then generally declined until the 7:30 close time. The biggest exception to this trend was at the Vancouver campus, where students voted most heavily in the evening.

Overall voter turnout remained steady over the course of the three days, though there was a slight peak on the final day. Roughly 400 students voted on the first two days, with almost 450 voting on the third.

### **Absentee voting**

Early in the election cycle the Chief Commissioner, working closely with Bobbie Grant in Student Services, sent an email to all students registered as “off-campus.” Off-campus students are those who are formally registered at Simon Fraser University, but do not actually take courses at any of its three physical campuses, instead participating solely through correspondence or online programs.

12 off-campus students requested ballots. Most were located in British Columbia, but a few were located in other provinces and two were located in foreign countries. The Chief Commissioner mailed ballots to all students, along with a note outlining the dates in which such ballots had to be postmarked and mailed back to Burnaby by April 5, in accordance with AP-19.22(d).

Only four absentee ballots were ultimately mailed back in time. Of these, two were not properly double-enveloped and return-addressed, and had to be discarded. The other two were duly counted and recorded.

## 6. Results

---

The final ballot of the election was cast at 7:21 PM at Harbour Centre. Later that night all ballots were sorted and organized by the IEC in preparation for counting. During this period about ten ballots from Surrey had to be destroyed because they were not correctly double-enveloped (there had been some brief technical problems with Surrey's voting software, and as a result some voters had to submit their votes in double-envelopes marked with the voter's name, so their identities could be verified later. If candidates failed to record their names, however, there was no way of verifying their student identity and thus legal fitness to vote).

On the morning of Friday, March 23, a group of IEC members went to UBC campus to get the ballots counted. As SFU does not own a "scan-tron" style machine of its own, the task of reading ballots must be outsourced. Scan-tron style machines are very expensive; the device the IEC used at UBC was estimated by office staff to have cost around \$100,000 to purchase. Additionally, the device requires an annual \$10,000 maintenance procedure in order to function properly. Though traveling to UBC is inconvenient, until SFU decides to purchase such a scan-tron machine of its own, or the IEC decides to use a different form of ballot, the trip is simply unavoidable.

The ballots were counted by an NCS brand OpScan 21 machine owned by the Applied Research and Evaluation Services (ARES) facility of UBC, which is located in the Neville Scarfe building. The IEC was assisted by Adam Hunter, who works as a full-time consultant at ARES. Mr. Hunter transferred the raw data produced by the OpScan machine into Excel spread sheets, which allowed him to easily tabulate the ballot totals and determine the election results. The IEC was given CD ROMS containing copies of the Excel sheets for future reference.

Shortly after the totals were determined, and while still at UBC, the Chief Commissioner updated the IEC website with the "unofficial results." These results were also leaked to *The Peak* and published in their March 26 issue.

A declaration of "Official Results" were created by the IEC several weeks later once the absentee ballots were received and the preliminary results were "cleaned up." The numbers produced by ARES on March 23 were not entirely correct, as in some cases the scan-tron machine had counted invalid ballots as valid and vice versa. Using the Excel spreadsheet data, the results were reviewed by the IEC and corrected when necessary.

The statement of official results was presented to the Board by the Chief Commissioner on Wednesday, April 11. The Board unanimously voted to accept the results, formally concluding the SFSS general election of 2007.

## **Turnout**

Turnout at the 2007 SFSS general election was lower than expected. Total turnout was 1,325 or around 5.6% of SFU's current student population, which, according to the official university data the IEC was given access to, is estimated at 23,650.

There had been hopes that the four referendum questions would mobilize voters to the polls, but this never actually occurred. Though campaigning was not permitted during polling days, candidates *were* encouraged to raise general voting awareness among students. The IEC likewise placed a large number of posters around campus during the voting period, which either clearly pointed out the location of polling places to students, or emboldened them to cast ballots with direct slogans such as "Go Vote Right Now!"

Despite such initiatives, some have attributed the low turnout to the lack of slates. Slates traditionally campaign by building a strong voter base, and then

mobilize that base to the polls on voting day to support all slate candidates on the ballot. Without slates, the argument goes, there is no across-the-board base of this sort. Voters must instead make independent decisions about every individual candidate, which is far more time consuming than simply supporting a single slate through support of a shared slate message, agenda, or ideology. The fact that there were a high number of ballots in which only a single candidate was voted, adds credence to this belief.

### **Analysis of Results- Candidates**

Every incumbent candidate was solidly re-elected, including Derrick Harder who became the first incumbent SFSS president to win re-election in 12 years. Sasha Fox was re-elected as External Relations Officer while Joseph Paling successfully switched positions from Member-at-Large to Member Services Officer. Amanda van Baarsen, former Member-at-Large from 2004-2005, rejoined the board as University Relations Officer. As a direct result, the 2007-2008 SFSS executive is composed entirely of men and women who have served on the Board for at least one prior term (albeit, in many cases, a very short one). As no incumbents ran for the faculty rep and at-large positions, the Arts Rep, Science Rep, and two Members-at-Large are all new faces.

In terms of sheer popularity, the most successful candidate Derrick Harder, who received 647 votes. The closest race was the contest for the two Member-at-Large spots. The two winners were both elected with only 28% of the popular vote and beat their next closest opponent by only 3%. The highest number of blank ballots were received in the Member Services Officer race (22.7%).

The results of this election were perfectly gender-balanced, with four of the new directors being female and four being male. Compared to the board elected in 2006, however, the 2007-2008 Board will contain considerably less women overall, with only five female members compared to ten males. No visible minorities were elected, though one was acclaimed to office.

As a trivial side note, the successful candidate for the position Science Rep, Anna Belkine, is the wife of incumbent Treasurer Adam Lein. The 2007-2008 board will thus feature a married couple.

### **Analysis of Results- Referendums**

All four referendum questions passed by considerable margins. The proposal for grad autonomy was approved by 82% of voters, including 96% of grad voters. The other three questions were all approved by over 55% as well.

Compared to the Board election, the referendum question tallies contain generally fewer blank ballots. The highest rate of blank ballots for a referendum question was 13.3%, for Question 4, the CFS separation question. This compares favorably to 12.5%, which was the *lowest* amount of blank ballots cast in a board director election (Science Rep).

It is not part of the IEC's mandate to act upon referendum results in any way. The results have been tallied, and it will remain the prerogative of the 2007-2008 Board of Directors to decide how to best proceed.

### **Analysis of Slate Ban**

In an otherwise routine SFSS election, the ban on slates was the most unprecedented variable. In practice, however, the ban on slates was embraced smoothly with no significant problems arising from its implementation. Candidates obeyed the new policy diligently, and neither the IEC nor the candidates themselves observed instances of the rule being broken during the election cycle.

Several observers blamed the high number of acclamations and below average number of candidates on the slate ban. Slate-based campaigns traditionally field

a "full roster" of candidates to contest every position in order to pursue a "clean sweep" victory of the entire Board, or simply better the slates' statistical chances for some form of electoral success. Such strategic desires often take precedence over genuine interest, however, with the candidacies for specific positions being assigned in a somewhat ad-hoc manner by the slate leadership. With no slates, candidates will only arise to pursue jobs they are genuinely interested in, rather than to simply "fill a hole" in a slate ticket.

The fact that so many incumbents chose to run in the 2007 election ultimately warps our first-year analysis of the slate ban, however. During the course of the election it quickly became obvious that all incumbent candidates favored the re-election of each other, which, in practice, amounted to the existence of a *de facto* incumbents state.

## **Punishments**

As noted, there were no serious instances of rule-breaking in this election, and no candidates were disqualified or fined during the course of the campaign as a result.

After the campaign period concluded, the IEC observed that three candidates had left some campaign materials up on campus. The instances appeared to be largely accidental, but since leaving campaign materials on campus after the campaign period ends still represents a violation of election rules, the IEC decided to issue fines as a matter of procedure. The three offenders were asked to submit non-perishable food items to the SFSS food bank as punishment.

## 7. Cost summary

---

Comparatively speaking, the 2007 General Election costs were not unusual, though still considerable. Over \$15,000 was spent on the following expenses:

Pay of IEC Commissioners	\$ 3,500.00
Pay of Poll Clerks	\$ 4,532.74
CPP/EI costs for Poll Clerks	\$ 243.66
Advertisements in <i>The Peak</i>	\$ 1,844.40
Awareness posters	\$ 136.65
Ballot Paper	\$ 1,831.10
Ballot printing at Quad Books	\$ 466.64
ARES vote-counting services	\$ 1914.00 <sup>1</sup>
Filming and Recording Debates	\$ 600.00 <sup>2</sup>
Reimbursements of candidate costs	\$ 577.12
Telephone	\$ 97.00
Travel / gas	\$ 51.25
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$ 15,794.56</b>
Number of voters in the 2007 election	1,325
Cost per voter	\$ 11.92

---

1 Precise cost currently unknown, \$1,914 was the amount charges by ARES for the 2006 by-election.

2 Budget for debates was set at maximum of \$600. Precise cost currently unknown, though likely close to this number.

## 8. Recommendations

---

Though very few serious problems, dilemmas, or controversies arose during the course of the 2007 general election, there remain some outstanding matters which could use further clarification.

### Observations of the Outgoing IEC

At the final, April 10 meeting of the 2007 election's Independent Electoral Commission, the commissioners brainstormed a number of thoughts and reflections on the election that had just concluded. Analyzing their past conduct, as well as looking towards the future, the group created a list of the following observations and recommendations for consideration by the Board, future IEC's, and SFU students in general:

- **The SFSS must work to implement an electronic voting system as soon as possible.** Allowing students to vote online will save literally thousands of dollars in ballot paper, ballot printing, ballot-counting, and poll clerks. It will also make voting easier and more convenient for many students, which will hopefully serve to improve turnout.

This being said, any electronic voting system must be sophisticated and well-programmed in order to ensure that all of the complexities of SFSS elections (such as only allowing students in particular faculties to vote for that faculty's representatives) are addressed. For this reason it is vital that the SFSS begin exploring online voting options immediately. It is worth noting that in the case an electronic voting system is adopted, many of the concerns listed below will no longer be an issue.

The UBC *Alma Mater* Society has recently begun using electronic balloting for their student union elections, as has the SFU Senate and Board of Governors secretariat. We should consult with both groups and learn from their

experiences to create an effective model for the SFSS.

- As SFSS general elections have come to occur on a predictable, regular schedule, the Board has a responsibility to ensure that a full IEC is appointed well in advance of the election, particularly before the nomination, campaign, and polling dates are formally determined. By ensuring that a full IEC is appointed sooner, rather than later, the Board guarantees that the new commissioners will be able to meet each other early on, and begin strategizing for the election well in advance. This did not occur with the 2007 IEC, which was appointed late. Some commissioners felt rushed and disorganized in the early days of the election cycle as a result of this poor planning on the Board's part.
- One of the first acts of any new IEC should be the creation of a thorough timeline which explicitly sets out the key dates of the election cycle. Items and services relating to debates, polling, and vote counting must be booked as soon as possible.
- As all IEC meetings are required to feature the presence of an SFSS staff member, it is likewise important to co-ordinate meetings with the staff member's schedule early on.
- The 2007 IEC worked most efficiently and effectively when specific jurisdictions of election planning were individually delegated among the various members of the commission. It's highly advisable that future IEC's follow suit and delegate responsibility for the following tasks early on:
  - Raising public awareness of the election (ie: creating and maintaining promotional posters, the IEC website, other advertisements, etc)
  - Liaising with the Surrey/Vancouver campuses, specifically in terms of ensuring that initiatives done at Burnaby are also spread to, or accessible by, the other campuses.

- Setting up the candidate/referendum debates, especially ensuring an audio-visual team is able to record, stream, and archive the debates on the internet.
- Ordering, designing, and printing ballot papers, as well as organizing polling station materials (including ballot boxes and screens).
- This was the first time the IEC exclusively approved candidate materials through email, rather than in person. The process worked well, and is worth continuing.
- Throughout the course of the election cycle IEC commissioners face constant questions from all manner of interested individuals concerning matters such as “who is running for position X” or “has anyone levied a complaint against the campaign of candidate Y.” At present it is not entirely clear what sort of information IEC members can and cannot make public. To prevent confusion in the future, parameters for acceptable information disclosures should be clarified, either by the IEC itself or by AP-19.
- Voter turnout at the Surrey and Harbour Centre campuses continues to be extremely low. The investment of time and money required to conduct balloting at these campuses is thus very disproportionate to the amount of interest shown by their students. It may be worthwhile to reexamine the decision to conduct polling at Vancouver and Surrey.
- Despite the low attendance, the three debates of the election were considered worthwhile. The scheduled times of 4:30-6:30 may have contributed to the low turnout, but it has been noted that there simply may not be an “ideal time” for debates. As students have widely divergent schedules *any* hour of the day will inevitably be problematic for some. Filming the debates, and then posting the video/audio online was deemed to be a good policy and a good precedent for the future. Filming and archiving allows the maximum number of students to watch the proceedings, as well as review the

statements of candidates in the future.

- There were no problems with the poll clerks, all of whom conducted themselves in a productive and competent manner. To ensure this continues to be the case in the future, it is very important that the IEC give poll clerks clear instructions and procedures to follow, as well as a thorough, structured orientation session. Though poll clerks must be trusted to work independently, some IEC supervision of the clerks, especially in the early hours of polling, will always be necessary to ensure they are following procedures correctly. It is similarly important that at least one Commissioner be available to the clerks (either in person or by phone) during all times the polls are open, in case problems arise.

### **Additional Recommendations of the Chief Commissioner**

In addition to those observations listed above, the Chief Commissioner offers his additional, personal suggestions:

#### ***IEC Organization***

The 2007 IEC was largely an effective and efficient body, with members who cooperated and worked well together. Their efforts earned praise from both candidates and outsider observers. When internal confusion or conflicts did occasionally arise, the problems were largely of a procedural nature. As it stands now, the IEC is not a terribly well-defined body, in terms of structure. Its duties and mandates are clear, but the organization itself is not.

**CEO Recommendation #1:** The Board and its Constitutional and Policy Review Committee should work to clarify and strengthen the legislation guiding the operations of the IEC with the following guidelines in mind:

- The exclusive duties and authorities of the IEC Chief Commissioner should be clarified, with an emphasis on making the position into a stronger, executive-type role. The election period is a short period of time, and decisions often need to be made quickly and formally. While the IEC should always strive to make the majority of its policy decisions collectively, openly, and democratically, through formal IEC meetings, it is equally important, in the interests of efficiency and clarity, that the head of the commission be explicitly given the authority to make certain executive decisions independently from the other commissions. If the Chief Commissioner's exclusive duties and powers are not made clear in legislation, then conflict over matters of authority and jurisdiction with the other commissioners will inevitably arise.
- The overall number of commissioners (presently four, plus chief) may be excessive. Depending on what other reforms to the election process are ultimately instituted, lowering the amount of IEC employees may be advisable.

### ***Recognition of Referendum support/opposition campaigns***

AP-27 currently allows a maximum of three support/opposition campaigns to be organized for every referendum question- one yes, one no, and one for the position of the SFSS Board of Directors.

Shortly after the registration of Sasha Fox as head of the "yes" campaign in support of referendum question 4, the SFSS Board debated as to whether or not Ms. Fox's campaign should receive official Board support. The eventual conclusion was that the Board would merely endorse Ms. Fox's campaign, and not recognize her as head of a distinct *Board-sanctioned* campaign of support.

This was solely the decision of the Board, however. At present, the rules make it entirely possible for someone like Ms. Fox to head two distinct "yes" campaigns

simultaneously, one on behalf of her own personal group, and one on behalf of the SFSS Board of Directors. This would grant a budget of 600 dollars in total, since each "distinct" campaign is entitled to 300 dollars of expenditures.

The rules, as presently written, give an unfair advantage to any referendum position endorsed by the Board. The situation need not be as blatant as the same individual heading both a Board and non-Board campaign, however. Even if the Board campaign and an independent campaign were operating entirely independently, the fact that the IEC is presently limited to only recognizing a maximum of three campaigns in total ensures that there will always be a two-against-one slant on any referendum question the board decides to take a position on.

**CEO Recommendation #2:** The Board should re-write AP-27 and remove the language that presently allows the Board to register a distinct, third referendum campaign on its collective behalf. Instead, Board members who wish to participate in a campaign of support/opposition to any given referendum question should do so as members of an independent campaign group, in the style of the "yes" campaign managed by Board member Sasha Fox in this election.

Additionally, AP-27 sets out rather convoluted guidelines describing how the IEC is to recognize official "yes" and "no" campaigns.

**CEO Recommendation# 3:** The board should simplify AP-27 regarding the process through which referendum campaigns are recognized.

Beginning on the day the referendum is officially publicized, the IEC should be given a two week period to accept "yes" and "no" nominations. It should be clarified that the IEC will be recognizing an individual who will formally head a campaign, and that such an individual should be selected on the basis of his or her merit, reputation, knowledge, interest, and passion for the position he or she

wishes to promote. The campaign period for referendum campaigns should begin the day after this two week nomination period ends.

### ***Campaign period***

The SFSS constitution declares that all election posters must be removed from campus prior to the commencement of polling. Similarly, the election's "campaign period" is said to end at the same time.

As student interest in SFSS elections is minimal at the best of times, many candidates have argued that this removal of posters prior to voting dramatically decreases election awareness among the student body. The bylaws do not make it clear what precisely the "campaign period" constitutes, however, and what its conclusion means for candidates. Past IEC's have often allowed candidates to campaign during the voting period, ie allowing them to speak to students and encourage voters.

There does not seem to be a persuasive case for limiting campaigning during the voting period. Especially with the advent of electronic campaigning via websites like Facebook there is simply no way the IEC can actively enforce a total "blackout" on campaigning during voting days. Likewise, the blackout rule bears no similarity to any comparable federal, provincial, or municipal electoral law.

**CEO Recommendation #4:** AP-19 should be modified to state that candidates are permitted to actively campaign during voting days. The bylaws should likewise be changed to allow posters to remain up during the same period. To respect the sanctity of the voting areas, candidates should be explicitly forbidden from campaigning within a 30 or so foot radius of any polling station.

## ***Acclamations***

The old saying goes that "when there is only one candidate, there is only one choice." However when it comes to acclaimed candidates this need not be the case. The current SFSS practice of automatically installing sole candidates in office by virtue of acclimation is a fairly undemocratic system as it denies voters the chance to voice opposition. Being a sole candidate for office does not *ipso facto* confer public legitimacy or consensus on your subsequent assumption of office. A candidate who is not forced to undergo any sort of campaign will likewise be anonymous and unknown to the general student body. The higher than usual amount of acclamations in the 2007 election brought many of these complaints to the forefront.

**CEO Recommendation #5:** The SFSS should resume its tradition from years past in which acclaimed candidates were subjected to a "yes or no" vote before being allowed to assume office. Such candidates should be allowed to campaign like any other.

## 9. Closing Comments and Final Recommendations

---

The low voter turnout, low candidate participation, and overall low student interest in the 2007 SFSS election once again proved that the majority of students at Simon Fraser remain profoundly disinterested in the politics of the Society. Strong efforts were made by the Chief Commissioner and other IEC members to raise awareness of the elections and make events like debates accessible and convenient for all students. The fact that such initiatives had no noticeable effect suggests that student apathy towards student politics may simply be an unavoidable and permanent part of SFU culture.

In the above sections a number of constructive proposals have been suggested with the intent of reforming the present SFSS election system. However such reforms remain minor and bureaucratic in nature. While they may help streamline the election process, they do little to address some of the deeper, more profound problems plaguing the Society.

Public apathy towards the SFSS has long been viewed by countless candidates in successive elections as a problem to be solved, however it may be time to concede that the problem is simply unsolvable. If unprecedented efforts to raise voter awareness and participation are unsuccessful, we must discern that the problem of apathy is actually one of conscious disengagement with the system, rather than some combination of ignorance and confusion as is often assumed.

Many of the general themes of the 2007 election dramatically highlight the degree in which SFSS elections have ceased to be an inclusive, genuinely university-wide democratic exercise and have instead become a rather closed, isolated affair existing solely within the parameters of a small, isolated campus subculture.

The 2007 election saw incumbents sweep back into office and the Society now has an executive entirely composed of returning board alumni. Many of these returning incumbents, in turn were simply acclaimed back to office as no one bothered to run against them. None of these occurrences reflect particularly well on SFSS political atmosphere, and suggest the Society is quite disinteresting, alienating, or intimidating to most students not already part of the SFSS subculture in some form.

SFSS elections remain enormously expensive and time consuming. Considerable amounts of Society resources and money are used to organize and fund an event which the vast, vast majority of students do not care about. A student disengagement rate that is consistently over 90% is simply not a number to be shrugged off. Society politicians may receive a mandate of some sort from the thousand or so students who chose to vote, but a far more significant mandate continues to be espoused by the tens of thousands more who consciously boycott the election altogether.

### ***Reinventing elections***

The SFSS is a democratic society and as long as it exists its members should have a right to vote in periodic elections. At the same time, there is no excuse for continuing to string along a tired and stagnant election regime that is clearly not producing a truly democratic culture or an engaged society.

The Society should begin to explore constitutional changes that would dramatically simplify the process through which its directors are chosen. Campus-wide elections for all 16 board positions are simply not events which generate enough student interest to merit such continued high spending and investment. Several alternatives to the status quo may be worth pursuing.

The SFSS should strongly consider reducing the number of positions which are put to a campus-wide ballot and increase the number of positions which are

selected internally. At present, students are asked to elect too many officials whose duties are not representative or student-centric enough to suggest a full democratic mandate is necessary. The Internal Relations Officer, for example, is an individual with duties which are largely irrelevant to the vast majority of students, and unlikely to be fully understood to anyone uninvolved with the internal complexities of SFSS bureaucracy. The same can largely be said of the External Relations officer, University Relations Officer, and Graduate Issues Officer, and to some extent even the Treasurer.

The duties of President and Board Members-At-Large are more amorphous, and thus more interesting to students. This is reflected by the fact that these jobs consistently receive the highest percentages of the popular vote and the lowest number of blank ballots. Similarly, the Member Services Officer is directly involved in the sort of public, on-campus activities that actually affect the school's student majority. These four jobs are positions that can be clearly understood as "student representatives" in a meaningful sense, as opposed to the other executive positions, which are essentially administrative/bureaucratic jobs, and the other Board reps., which are the emissaries of very specific academic communities.

If only four or five of the jobs on the SFSS Board were directly elected in a campus-wide vote it may become much easier for students to become involved and engaged the election process. When there are four jobs up for grabs with clear titles, mandates, and purposes, elections will inevitably become far less intimidating than they are at present, where over a dozen unclear and vaguely-defined jobs are put to a vote by students who know little about them. Fewer directly-elected positions improves visibility, and visibility increases accountability.

For the other existing positions, delegating voter authority is perhaps the best way to achieve democratic legitimacy for such offices while sparing the expensive charade of a general election with minimal public interest.

Faculty board reps could easily be chosen by departmental student unions in the same way the majority of Forum reps presently are. Since faculty board reps tend to go acclaimed or vacant during general elections, putting a greater onus on student unions to appoint them may actually *improve* the accountability and quality of their selection.

For appointing the other executive positions mentioned above, one possibility would be to have Forum formally vote to approve nominees selected by the Board. Once a year the Board could advertise all positions, then hold interviews of all interested candidates, either collectively or through an appropriate committee. A favored candidate would then be selected, and his or her name would be forwarded to Forum for a vote of either approval or rejection. When such votes are held, the Forum meeting could be open to all students, with the intent of allowing all interested members of the Society to cast a vote on the nominee. Other observers will doubtlessly be capable of coming up with equally creative methods of appointment that are both open and accountable.

Some will be doubtlessly be hostile to the idea of scaling back elections at SFU, believing that a truly democratic system must give all students a chance to be involved. Students can get democratically involved and make their voices heard through processes other than simply general elections, however. Indeed, a case can be made that the SFSS should place greater emphasis on encouraging student participation in the decision-making process at *all* times, rather than simply believing a once-a-year election is sufficient.

Similarly, rather than naively trying to get elected to jobs in the SFSS which are fundamentally bureaucratic, administrative, and managerial in nature, rather than activist and legislative, students should be more encouraged to run for seats in the University Senate and Board of Governors. These institutions are ultimately far more powerful legislative bodies that play a larger role in the campus policy-making process that directly affects students' day-to-day lives. Such elections are

notoriously under publicized on campus, however, and this is admittedly largely the fault of the University administration. However, as the representation of student interests on campus, the SFSS has a responsibility to publicize, inform, and popularize what the school chooses not to. SFSS insiders may chuckle at first-time candidates who run for the Society's Board declaring their intentions to make massive change to university policies. Insiders know full well that such ambitions are well beyond the rather limited scope of the SFSS' powers. Rather than simply having their sentiments dismissed, such students should be made to understand that their ambitions are better directed towards running for the Senate or BoG, even if this requires an admission of the SFSS' comparative irrelevance.

Complacency and apathy are two emotions that can foster a permanent rot in democratic institutions if left unchecked for too long. Like it or not, the Simon Fraser Student Society is an organization in disparate need of dramatic internal change if it is to continue to remain relevant to the lives of 21<sup>st</sup> Century SFU students. Significant reforms to the present election regime would be an important first step to achieving a more productive, more engaging, and ultimately more successful SFSS.

## APPENDIX A

### Statements of Official Results

---

The following poll results represent the final election tally as approved by the Independent Electoral Commission at their April 10, 2007 meeting and subsequently ratified by the Board of Directors on April 11.

At the time of polling the SFU student population consisted of 23,650 “members in good standing” eligible to vote. This included 3,750 graduate members. Of this population, 1,325 students voted, creating a turnout of around 5.6%.

Results include the number of valid ballots cast for each candidate or referendum question response, along with the number of blank and invalid ballots. For the purposes of this tally, a “ballot” simply means the portion of a voting form reserved for one specific office or referendum question. Thus, a piece of ballot *paper* actually consists of multiple ballots in this sense; a ballot for the presidential race, a ballot for the external relations officer race, etc.

The “total votes” percentage indicates the percentage of the total number of valid, counted votes received by a candidate or response. The “total ballots” signifies the percentage as a fraction of the total number of ballots, valid or otherwise, received in the ballot box. Numbers are rounded and may not add up to 100%.

The terms used are as follows:

- Valid ballots are those that are correctly marked for one candidate or response, and thus registered as legitimate votes by the scan-tron machine.
- “Blank” ballots are ballots which contain no markings, and thus no votes for any candidate or response. Note that many voters cast both blank ballots *and* valid ballots, as they may have chosen to only vote for certain candidates and responses, while declining to vote on others.
- “Invalid” ballots are ballots which have been incorrectly marked in some way, such as selecting multiple candidates, or filling in spaces other than the prescribed areas, making the voter intent unrecordable or unclear.
- “Spoiled” ballots are ballots which have been clearly and deliberately ruined, such as by writing slogans or scribbling out all choices, which indicates some intent of protest or opposition.

**Members Elected / Acclaimed to the 2007-2008 Board of  
Directors of the Simon Fraser Student Society**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Status</b>
Derrick Harder	President	Elected
Adam Lein	Treasurer	Acclaimed
Sasha Fox	External Relations Officer	Elected
Joel Blok	Graduate Issues Officer	Acclaimed
Sean Magee	Internal Relations Officer	Acclaimed
Joe Paling	Member Services Officer	Elected
Amanda van Baarsen	University Relations Officer	Elected
Bryan Ottho	Faculty of Applied Sciences Representative	Acclaimed
Tyler Masse	Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Representative	Elected
Chris Sandve	Faculty of Business Administration Representative	Acclaimed
Keli (Marcus) Leung	Faculty of Education Representative	Acclaimed
<i>vacant</i>	Faculty of Health Sciences Representative	N/A
Anna Belkine	Faculty of Science Representative	Elected
Clea Moray	At-Large Representative (Graduate Student)	Acclaimed
Natalie Bocking	At-Large Representative	Elected
Alex Hemingway	At-Large Representative	Elected

**Members Acclaimed to the 2007-2008 Student Forum**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Status</b>
Niusha Bakhtiari	Department of Business Administration Representative (Undergraduate)	Acclaimed
Trevor Rabb	Department of Earth Sciences Representative (Undergraduate)	Acclaimed
Robin Steudel	Department of Economics Representative (Undergraduate)	Acclaimed
Ravi Patel	Department of Political Science Representative (Undergraduate)	Acclaimed
<i>vacant</i>	<i>All other departmental representative positions</i>	N/A

## Summary of Results by Position

Position	Candidates	Totals	% of Votes	% of Ballots
President	Ike Birk	139	12.4%	10.7%
	Gilles Grafstrom	105	9.4%	8.0%
	<b>Derrick Harder</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>49.6%</b>
	Xenia Menzies	229	20.4%	17.5%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	173		13.3%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	5		0.4%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	7		0.5%
		<b>1,305</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
External Relations Officer	<b>Sasha (Graham) Fox</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>58.6%</b>	<b>45.1%</b>
	Jonathon Leighs <sup>1</sup>	43		3.3%
	Lori MacDonald	445	44.4%	34.1%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	215		16.5%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	7		0.5%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	7		0.5%
		<b>1,305</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Member Services Officer	Daniel Green	336	33.7%	25.7%
	<b>Joe Paling</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>44.9%</b>	<b>34.3%</b>
	Joel Warren	213	21.4%	16.3%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	296		22.7%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	5		0.4%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	7		0.5%
	<b>1,305</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
University Relations Officer	Andrew Fergusson	288	28.8%	22.1%
	Ali Godson	134	13.4%	10.3%
	<b>Amanda van Baarsen</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>44.3%</b>
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	295		22.6%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	3		0.2%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	7		0.5%
	<b>1,305</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
At-Large Representatives	<b>Natalie Bocking</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>28.5%</b>	<b>24.5%</b>
	<b>Alex Hemingway</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>24.2%</b>
	Paul McCulloch	321	18.9%	16.3%
	Jeff Shemilt	415	24.5%	21.0%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	264		13.4%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	2		0.1%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	7		0.4%
	<b>1,967</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Jonathon Leighs dropped out of the race but his name could not be removed from ballots in time for voting day. Polling stations were equipped with signs clearly telling voters that ballots cast for Mr. Leighs would be invalid.

## Summary of Results by Position (cont'd)

Position	Candidates	Totals	% of Votes	% of Ballots
Faculty of Arts Rep.	Aman Baines	348	45.6%	39.3%
	<b>Tyler Masse</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>46.9%</b>
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	109		12.3%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	8		0.9%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	5		0.6%
			885	100.0%
Faculty of Science Rep.	<b>Anna Belkine</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>64.5%</b>	<b>53.5%</b>
	Henry Ma	110	35.5%	29.4%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	58		15.5%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	3		0.8%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	3		0.8%
			374	100.0%

## Summary of Referendum Results

Position	Response	Totals	% of Votes	% of Ballots
Question 1 (Grad Autonomy)	<b>YES</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>82.3%</b>	<b>75.3%</b>
	NO	212	17.7%	16.2%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	102		7.8%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	8		0.6%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	2		0.1%
			1,307	100.0%
Question 2 (Grad Membership)	<b>YES</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>65.4%</b>	<b>75.3%</b>
	NO	404	34.6%	16.2%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	131		7.8%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	9		0.6%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	2		0.1%
			1,307	100.0%
Question 3 (Grad Fees)	<b>YES</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>97.5%</b>	<b>95.5%</b>
	NO	8	2.5%	2.4%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	6		1.8%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	0		0.0%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	1		0.3%
			330	100.0%
Question 4 (CFS Separation)	<b>YES</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>78.0%</b>	<b>67.1%</b>
	NO	248	22.0%	19.0%
	<i>Blank ballots</i>	174		13.3%
	<i>Invalid ballots</i>	6		0.5%
	<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	2		0.2%
			1,307	100.0%

## APPENDIX B

### LIST OF CANDIDATES

A star (\*) signifies those who were elected or acclaimed.

**Bakhtiari, Niusha\*** sole candidate for Department of Business Administration Forum Rep. (undergraduate)

**Bains, Aman** candidate for Faculty of Arts Board Rep.

**Belkine, Anna\*** outgoing Department of Mathematics Forum Rep. (undergraduate), candidate for Faculty of Science Board Rep.

**Birk, Iqbal** candidate for President

**Blok, Joel\*** SFSS Graduate Issues Officer, uncontested candidate for re-election as GIO

**Bocking, Natalie\*** candidate for Board Member-at-Large

**Fergusson, Andrew** candidate for University Relations Officer

**Fox, Graham (Sasha)\*** SFSS External Relations Officer, head of "Yes" campaign for referendum question 4, candidate for re-election as ERO

**Godson, Ali** candidate for University Relations Officer

**Grafstrom, Gilles** candidate for President

**Green, Daniel** candidate for Member Services Officer

**Harder, Derrick\*** President of the SFSS, candidate for re-election as President

**Hemingway, Alexander\*** candidate for Board Member-at-Large

**Lein, Adam\*** Treasurer of the SFSS, uncontested candidate for re-election as Treasurer

**Liang, Keli (Marcus)\*** outgoing Faculty of Education Forum Rep. (undergraduate), sole candidate for Faculty of Education Board Rep.

**McCulloch, Paul** candidate for Board Member-at-Large

**Ma, Henry** candidate for Faculty of Science Board Rep.

**Magee, Sean\*** SFSS Internal Relations Officer, sole candidate for re-election as IRO

**MacDonald, Lori** former Faculty of Arts. Board Rep., (2005-2006) candidate for External Relations Officer

**Masse, Tyler\*** President of the Geography Students' Union, candidate for Faculty of Arts Board Rep.

**Meznies, Xenia** former Faculty of Business Board Rep., (2005-2006) candidate for President

**Moray, Clea\*** Department of Biology Forum Rep. (graduate), sole candidate for Graduate Board Member-at-Large

**Ottho, Bryan\*** Faculty of Applied Science Board Rep, sole candidate for re-election as Applied Science Rep.

**Paling, Joseph\*** outgoing Board Member-at-Large, candidate for Member Services Officer

**Patel, Ravi\*** sole candidate for Department of Political Science Forum Rep. (undergraduate)

**Rabb, Trevor\*** sole candidate for Department of Earth Sciences Forum Rep. (undergraduate).

**Sandve, Christopher\*** outgoing SFSS Member Services Officer, sole candidate for Faculty of Business Board Rep.

**Shemilt, Jeffery** President of the Residence Students' Association, candidate for Board Member-at-Large

**Steudel, Robin\*** sole candidate for Department of Economics Forum Rep. (undergraduate)

**van Baarsen, Amanda\*** outgoing Department of Philosophy Forum Rep., (undergraduate) former Board Member-at-Large (2004-2005), candidate for University Relations Officer

**Vaid, Bhuvinder** outgoing Faculty of Education Board Rep. (graduate), head of the "Yes" campaign for referendum questions 1, 2, and 3

**Warren, Joel** former University Relations Officer (2001-2002), candidate for Member Services Officer

## APPENDIX C

### REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree that a separate and independent graduate student society should be created to represent the interests of the graduate students of SFU?
  
2. If the graduate student society is created, do you agree that graduate students should no longer be represented by the SFSS?
  
3. If the graduate student society is created, do you agree that the unrestricted fee graduate students pay the SFSS should instead be remitted to the graduate student society once incorporated?
  
4. Do you agree that the Simon Fraser Student Society should do the following:
  - i. Cease to be a member of the Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian Federation of Students- British Columbia Component, as well as cease to be a member of the Canadian Federation of Students- Services; and,
  - ii. Cease collecting student fees for the Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian Federation of Students - British Columbia Component (at present \$7.50 per full-time student per semester; \$3.72 per part-time student per semester: \$23.50 for a full time year; \$11.16 for a part-time year; for a total of \$435,204.72 for 2006); and,
  - iii. Instead, collect \$7.50 per full-time student per semester and \$3.72 per part-time student per semester, and put said fees towards improving student services such as departmental student unions, club infrastructure, online student services, affordable student housing, staffing at satellite campuses, a publicly-accessible indexed archive of SFSS documents, and lobbying the government for SFU student interests.

## APPENDIX D

### Grad and Undergrad Referendum Voting Patterns

All referendum ballots were marked by poll clerks in order to allow the Chief Commissioner to differentiate between the opinions of graduate and undergraduate voters, as requested by the Board.

The following information compares the totals and percentages of valid votes cast by graduate/undergraduate students to the numbers submitted by all voters collectively. Note that there is no data for referendum question 3, as it was voted on exclusively by graduate students.

#### Referendum question 1

*“Do you agree that a separate and independent graduate student society should be created to represent the interests of the graduate students of SFU?”*

#### Graduate voters

Answer	Votes	Percent	All voters
YES	320	96.7%	82.3%
NO	11	3.3%	17.7%
Total:	331	100.0%	100.0%

#### Undergraduate voters

Answer	Votes	Percent	All voters
YES	658	83.7%	82.3%
NO	128	16.3%	17.7%
Total:	786	100.0%	100.0%

## Referendum question 2

*“If the graduate student society is created, do you agree that graduate students should no longer be represented by the SFSS?”*

### Graduate voters

Answer	Votes	Percent	All voters
YES	289	88.1%	65.4%
NO	39	11.9%	34.6%
Total:	328	100.0%	100.0%

### Undergraduate voters

Answer	Votes	Percent	All voters
YES	469	56.2%	65.4%
NO	366	43.8%	34.6%
Total:	835	100.0%	100.0%

## Referendum question 4

*“Do you agree that the Simon Fraser Student Society should do the following .... Cease to be a member of the Canadian Federation of Students... ?”*

### Graduate voters

Answer	Votes	Percent	All voters
YES	259	87.8%	78.0%
NO	36	12.2%	22.0%
Total:	295	100.0%	100.0%

### Undergraduate voters

Answer	Votes	Percent	All voters
YES	609	74.4%	78.0%
NO	210	25.6%	22.0%
Total:	819	100.0%	100.0%