



## **2018 SGPS Electoral Report**

The SGPS has a recent history of troublesome membership apathy, particularly with respect to electoral engagement. All elected positions in winter 2016 went uncontested, and voter turnout was a lamentable 6%. The 2016 election also marked the third year in a row that the presidential candidate has ran uncontested (dating back to 2012, only one presidential election has been contested). In the past six years, voter turnout has peaked at 27.5% in 2015 and dropped as low as 5.7% in 2012. This trend does not bode well for the legitimacy of elected representatives and referenda results, or the reputation and viability of the Society more broadly. As a result, the electoral engagement committee came up with some proposals on how to address two core issues for the upcoming 2018 elections: (1) Increasing the number and diversity of candidates; and (2) increasing voter turn-out.

### **(1) Increasing Number & Diversity of Candidates**

At least two executive-level positions have been uncontested in each of the last six years. This past year was the worst of the six, with every position going uncontested. Moreover, no member of this year's executive is from a visible minority group. This could be attributed to the perception that taking on an executive position adds on to a graduate students already frantic workload

The electoral engagement committee proposes the following:

- SGPS President to pitch Executive positions during JDUC presentations
- Targeting specific equity-seeking groups/clubs via emails
- Selling skills and opportunities associated with the positions via SGPS newsletter and Facebook, including testimonials by SGPS Executives & Commissioners

### **(2) Increasing Voter Turnout**

An election in which 6% of members cast a vote is incredibly problematic. Initiatives must be implemented that systematically encourage and increase participation in the democratic process. Thus, the team proposed the following options in order to increase voter turnout by 25% in 2018:

- Upcoming fees (Bus-it, walk home, student advisors) likely to increase voter turnout due to heavy campaigning done during this period
- Incentives for voters:
  - o Free coffee or tea from CoGro/Tea room for voters
  - o Draw to win a reserved table at the Grad Club for Trivia Night
- Increased promotions:
  - o SGPS President to send out newsletter highlighting specifics of positions
  - o Two information session periods, including an electronic webinar session
  - o Posts from each Executive member highlighting roles
  - o Posters and other promotional materials



### **Election Timeline for Council Approval**

Below are the proposed dates for the 2018 elections and fee referendum

Nomination package available	January 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 9:00am (SGPS Offices)
Executive Information sessions	January 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 12:00pm (McLaughlin Hall) January 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 6:30pm (McLaughlin Hall)
Rector Information session	January 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 7:30pm (TBA)
Nomination period begins	January 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ midnight
Nomination period closes	January 16 <sup>th</sup> 2018 @ 4:00pm (SGPS Offices)
Validation night (@Council)	January 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 5:30pm (McLaughlin Hall)
All Candidates Meeting	January 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 5:30pm (McLaughlin Hall)
Campaign period begins	January 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @midnight
Rector Election debate	January 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 7pm (Wallace Hall)
Executive Election debate	January 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ 5pm (Wallace Hall)
Campaign period ends	January 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 @ midnight
Voting days	January 30 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> @ midnight til 8pm
Announcement	January 31 <sup>st</sup> evening (~9pm)
Referendum and campaign expenses due	February 2 <sup>nd</sup> @4pm (SGPS Offices)