



CRO Elections Report – Winter 2020

Dear Assembly,

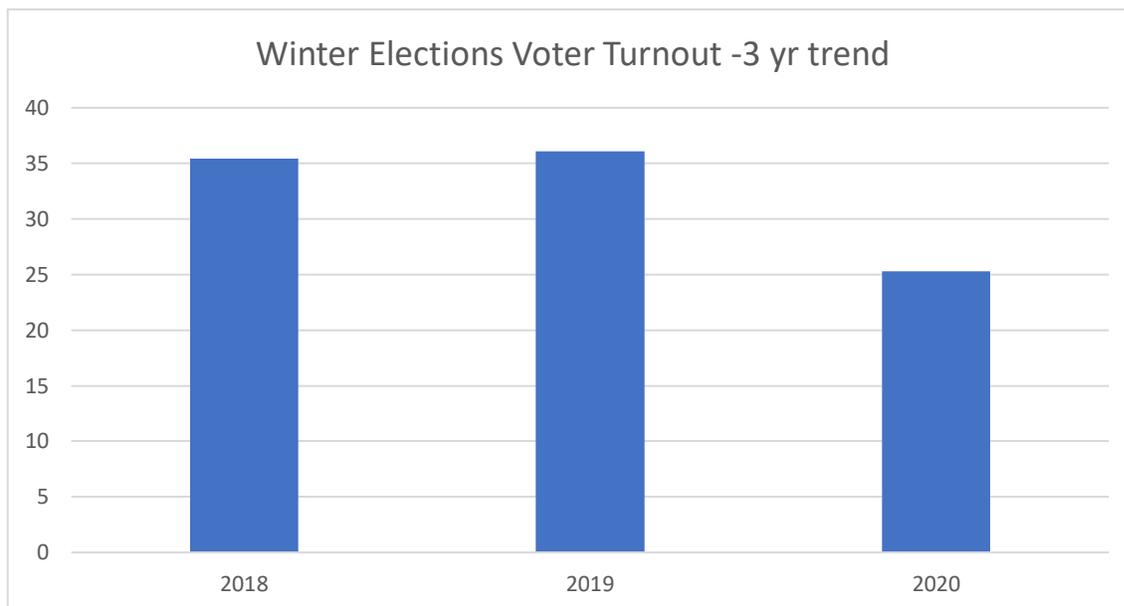
Thank you all for your participation in the SGPS Election and Referendum this year. We enjoyed interacting with all of the candidates and students who voted. The following individuals were successfully elected to their roles:

SGPS President-Elect Justine Aman
Vice-President Graduate-Elect Courtney Bannerman
Vice-President Community-Elect Anthony Lomax
Vice President Professional-Elect John Jeyaratnam
Vice President Finance and Services-Elect Tamara Mitterer

Graduate Trustee-Elect: Ali Saghari

Voter Turnout

This year there was a cumulative turnout of 25.3 percent (974 of 3852 electors). Efforts to attract voters included a \$50 Visa Gift card draw and a social media post. This was a three-year low, having turnout in mid 30s over the past three years. The student choice initiative was an influence in the drop-in voter turnout.



Executive Elections:

The executive nominations process went smoothly. We received a total of 7 nomination package, all positions were uncontested except for the VP Graduate role. The VP Trustee, Finance & Services and Community positions were extended by three days. We delayed our campaign period so that positions would not be campaigning while nominations were ongoing. This was a different decision than what the Bylaws recommend

which was to have a byelection. Overall, we were pleased that candidates came forward for these roles. There were no disciplinary issues. There was a question as to whether a SGPS Graduate Senator would need to take a leave of absence and if they were able to use SGPS Resources. It was ruled that if a Senator were to run for an executive position in the future, the candidate should take a leave of absence and would not be permitted to use SGPS resources.

During the campaign period, questions were raised about social media use. Interpretations needed to be made about access to closed group and what content can be posted on them. Additionally, P.9.6 I (1) was found to be unclear:

“The following shall not be considered “campaigning”:

- (1) Any communication encouraging members to vote in the election, so long as the communication does not encourage support or opposition for any candidate or referendum question; and:

Debate

Overall, our debate had engaging questions and the candidates appeared to be cohesive. The debate moved to the Lower Ceilidh of the JDUC on the Friday to encourage more awareness of the SGPS. However, there was very low turnout for the event. It was prudent to have a livestream as we gained 600 views from the debate stream.

Referendum

The following fees were successful:

1. Do you agree to the establishment of a mandatory student fee of \$3.00 for the SGPS Graduate Peer Support Centre?
2. Do you agree to the continuation of a student fee* of \$1.40 for Centre for Teaching & Learning? This fee is subject to triennial review.
3. Do you agree to the continuation of a student fee* of \$5.00 for Queen’s Legal Aid? This fee is subject to triennial review.
4. Do you agree to the continuation of a mandatory student fee of \$3.00 for Ban Righ Centre? This fee is subject to triennial review.
5. Do you agree to the continuation of a mandatory student fee of \$63.35 for Student Wellness Services? This fee is subject to triennial review.
6. Do you agree to the continuation of an optional student fee of \$1.00 for Queen's Daycare? This fee is subject to triennial review.
7. Do you agree to the continuation of an optional student fee of \$1.00 for Queen's Daycare? This fee is subject to triennial review.
8. Do you agree to the continuation of an optional student fee of \$1.00 for Queen's Daycare? This fee is subject to triennial review.
9. Do you agree to the continuation of an optional student fee of \$1.80 for Reelout Arts Project? This fee is subject to triennial review.
10. Do you agree to the continuation of an optional student fee of \$1.25 for Sexual Assault Centre Kingston? This fee is subject to triennial review.
11. Do you agree to the continuation of an optional student fee of \$0.75 for Telephone Aid Line Kingston? This fee is subject to triennial review.

12. Do you agree to the continuation of an optional student fee of \$3.00 for Union Gallery? This fee is subject to triennial review.

Two fees up for review, Oxfam and the Levana Gender Advocacy, were not included as they did not submit a nomination package.

Challenges with Referendum

- Some campus groups had difficulty collecting 100 signatures, some extensions were given until the start of the campaign period
- There were several requests to use “Qualtrics” to collect e-signatures
 - o It was decided that they would not be permitted to use it because it would give an unfair advantage for a specific group to administer the form.
- Some groups did not use the form provided, making it difficult to assess whether the nominator was a member
- Groups could only collect signatures from fee paying members, this was difficult to assess during the nomination period because nominators did not know if they opted out

Rector

Due to the uncontested nature of the election, minimal participation was placed on the part of the SGPS. Contributions included creating a Power Point and advertise the debate.

Recommendations:

1. **Increase membership rates:** Memberships had an effect on student participation this year. Some students who wanted to participate could not due to having opted out. A concerted effort will need to be made to advertise the value of the SGPS fee in future years. The impact of opting out should also be advertised prior to opting out.
2. **Clarify Bylaw: P.9.6 I (1):** The CRO recommends that the Bylaw be amended to read:

“Communication encouraging members to vote in the election for the duration of voting days is permitted, so long as the communication does not encourage the support or opposition for any candidate or referendum question.”
3. **Online Nomination Forms:** Make inquiries with the University Secretariat if the SGPS is able to collect student data for the use of creating centralized online nomination form. Inquiries should be made with other societies (such as ASUS) as to whether this is a safe and secure method, and whether it would uphold the integrity of the election process.
4. **Deputy Returning Officer:** The SGPS would benefit from adding a DRO. A DRO is needed to help with increasing voter outreach and assisting with the logistics of the elections debate.
5. **Addition to Bylaw B.8.1:**
 - e) All students registered in the Faculty of Law JD Program and the Faculty of Health Sciences Rehabilitation Program are eligible to hold the position of Graduate Student Trustee
 - f) Students who are members of the executive of the SGPS, or the executive of a union representing Queen’s employees, or serving as a member of the Senate who have been elected to the Board of Trustees shall, prior to June 1 in the year of their election, resign such position(s) and shall not, for the

duration of their tenure of service on the Board of Trustees, serve on the executive of the SGPS, or the executive of a union representing Queen's employees or on the Senate.