



REPORT

From the office of the...

Elections Department

TO: Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Helen Zeng (CRO) and Kritika Seth (DRO)
SUBJECT: MSU Elections Department Report 5
DATE: March 7, 2017

UPDATE

Since our last report, the major changes that have taken place include the beginning of campaigning for SRA Generals and the initiation of the Special Referendum regarding the Athletics and Recreation proposal. We have seen a sharp decrease in the number of SRA candidates running compared to the previous year (52 as opposed to 73). Of these candidates six were acclaimed:

SRA Health Sciences: David Lee and Franci Lao
SRA Kinesiology: Brian Zheng and Sara Mustafa
SRA Business: Selene Dominguez Florean
SRA Humanities: Landon Fama

Three seats on SRA Business and two seats on SRA Humanities were re-opened and we are running an election for both. We can only speculate the reasons for this, it may be the hectic nature of elections this year or the timing of the nomination period, which ended right after reading week. However, we can't really be sure why less people nominated themselves.

Nominations for the special referendum has also opened and will follow this schedule:

Nominations: March 2-15 ending at 5pm
All-Candidate night: March 15 at 6pm
Campaigning: March 16-23 ending at 5pm
Voting: March 22-23 ending at 5pm

We met with the Elections Committee to confirm this schedule as well as to set the new question. The question, if not already, should be released on the website soon.

SERVICE USAGE

Service usage has been low for the last half of February, and we were away for reading week. Usage has been increasing steadily as people request more elections and begin utilizing our office hours. This will increase over the course of SRA campaigning and throughout the referendum period.

We have two external elections coming up, one for the McMaster Engineering Society and one for the McMaster Humanities Society. These will be run in the same week as SRA voting.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

We have not held any extra events in the time between this report and the last. We held the All-Candidate meeting for SRA Generals February 28 as well as another one for the extended nominations on March 1st.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

We are planning the special referendum and preparing to promote the question and election. We recognize that this being the 9th referenda this school year means that students are tired and may be more concentrated on the upcoming exam period than they are on Elections. We hope to engage them as best as we can, possibly using the Elections Committee to carry out class talks and tabling. We will see what resources are available to us in this regard and do our best to ensure at least quorum is met and if possible a high voter turnout.

Due to unforeseen complications, we were not able to yet reach out to faculties to promote SRA Generals. However, we hope to at least send an e-mail asking them to engage in some social media promotions of the candidates. Moreover, we hope that current SRA members can also help promote their respective candidates to their constituents. It seems that there are a good number of people who are not re-running so there should be plenty of people to help out.

BUDGET

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	McMaster Student's Union							
2	Dept. 0303 - Elections Committee							
3	For the Nine Months Ending January 31, 2017							
4		Current	Prior Yr.	Current	Prior Yr.	Prior Yr.	Approved	% Budget
5		Month	Month	YTD	YTD	YE	Budget	Used
6		January	January	2016-17	2015-16	2015-16	2017	To Date
7								
8	All:							
9	3801-0303 ELEC - OTHER REVENUE	(700.00)	(550.00)	(2,434.00)	(1,320.00)	(3,030.00)	(1,400.00)	173.86%
10	5003-0303 ELEC - OFFICE SUPPLIES			46.79			180.00	25.99%
11	5101-0303 ELEC - TELEPHONE		28.30	70.75	84.90	141.50	24.00	294.79%
12	5201-0303 ELEC - PHOTOCOPYING					0.56		#DIV/0!
13	6102-0303 ELEC - PRESIDENTIAL REIMBURSEMENT			(209.77)		2,148.38	2,500.00	(8.39%)
14	6151-0303 ELEC - POLL BOOTH SET-UP	5,277.27		5,277.27		5,277.28	5,500.00	95.95%
15	6201-0303 ELEC - ELECTION REFUNDS	122.50		2,112.07	726.70	3,350.67	2,500.00	84.48%
16	6402-0303 ELEC - AWARDS & MEETINGS	205.59	382.39	205.59	406.53	503.30	300.00	68.53%
17	6501-0303 ELEC - ADV. & PROMO.	982.50		3,052.60	1,440.57	2,003.05	1,500.00	203.51%
18	6512-0303 ELEC - ADVERTISING - PRESIDENTIALS	970.36	3,246.63	970.36	3,246.63	4,799.31	3,000.00	32.35%
19	6513-0303 ELEC - PROMOTIONS - SRA MARCH						200.00	0.00%
20	6514-0303 ELEC - ONLINE ELECTION EXP.					124.84		#DIV/0!
21	6901-0303 ELEC - TRAVEL & CONFERENCE					9.10		#DIV/0!
22	7001-0303 ELEC - WAGES	731.22	720.28	8,026.00	7,778.61	12,388.60	12,000.00	66.88%
23	7101-0303 ELEC - BENEFITS	52.55	54.25	602.54	565.96	912.40	1,200.00	50.21%
24	8001-0303 ELEC - DEPRECIATION EXPENSE			181.24	169.90	271.85	300.00	60.41%
25								
26	Total All	7,641.99	3,881.85	17,901.44	13,099.80	28,900.84	27,804.00	64.38%
27								
28								75.00%

The budget in January was used for all promotions related to Presidentials and Referenda. Since this is our biggest election, it also accounted for a significant portion of our overall budget. For promotional material, the most expensive item were the T-shirts, which we ordered for 1280, Compass, UM, EC and Underground. We also got the standard promotional package, buttons, coffee stickers and laptop stickers. Furthermore, we booked out the MUSC Atrium due to a consistency in students' complaining about the lack of space in MUSC due to the presidential election. This was an effective method to mitigate this complaint, but was also costly. We are currently unsure if this is something that the Elections Department will continue to do. This has been noted on the budget proposal sent earlier.

VOLUNTEERS

Two new EC members are joining us: Ellen Veinot and Meg Hsu. We are excited to have these members on board and introduce them to the dynamics of EC. There will be 4 or 5 meetings left before the end of the year, so EC still has some way to go. We are thinking about ordering food for the fines meeting for SRA. We will also be facilitating a feedback session for EC at the end of the year to gather their input on how they think the year went. We will be discussing further volunteer appreciation techniques in the near future.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Some challenges we may be facing will be promoting the referendum and the SRA Elections simultaneously. This referendum is unprecedented, so we will have to find a balance between the two. Due to the strict nature of timelines, we will also have to have an EC meeting every week until the end of March to finish these two elections cycles. It may be difficult to ensure quorum at every meeting, but we have given EC advance notice. Another challenge is to ensure that an adequate number of people are engaged in the referendum process in March, as there have been a great number of referenda put forth this year. We are hoping to achieve a maximal number of votes, and devising strategies to do so, including having EC deliver class talks to promote voting.

SUCSESSES

The Elections Department had a successful event (MSU Governance and You conference). SRA Nominations period went well, and we are looking forward to campaigning.