



# Report

*From the office of the...*

## Elections Department

**TO:** Members of the Student Representative Assembly  
**FROM:** Returning Officers, Uwais Patel (CRO) & Emily Yang (DRO)  
**SUBJECT:** First Year Council (FYC) Election Report  
**DATE:** October 1, 2018

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### **Hello Members of the Assembly,**

We're thrilled to report for the first time in a long time, a report on the results of the First Year Council Election. As per Bylaw 10 - Elections 2.1.5, my department is required to relay to the SRA the results of each electoral period, including recommendations of the Elections Committee.

We are pleased to say that the FYC elections ran successfully without any major issues. This year was quite unique as we had an unprecedented number of candidates put forward their nomination form to run for a position. We had tons of student engagement and we also had a wonderful voter turnout as well. It has been really validating to see this outcome as it shows the hard work done by Emily and myself. It was also delightful to work closely with Melissa Paglialunga, FYC Coordinator.

We apologize that Uwais is not being able to present this report in person as it conflicted with a previously scheduled engagement, however Emily is more than capable of answering any questions you may have.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Best,

**Uwais Patel**

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**Emily Yang**

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# Elections Department

## RESULTS

Below are the results of the First Year Council Election ratified by the Elections Committee. Please note that these results are *unofficial* until the appeals process has been exhausted.

<b>Chair:</b>	Ajay Gandhi
<b>Vice Chair Internal:</b>	Jennifer Tran
<b>Vice Chair External:</b>	Angelo Marmolejo
<b>Vice Chair Events:</b>	Leah Kogan
<b>Bates Residence Chair:</b>	Charlie Violin
<b>Brandon Residence Chair:</b>	Jennifer Odenigbo*
<b>Edwards Residence Chair:</b>	Will Lee
<b>Hedden Residence Chair:</b>	Diana Dolghii
<b>Les Prince Residence Chair:</b>	Yar Al Dabagh
<b>Mary E. Keyes Residence Chair:</b>	Samantha McBride*
<b>Matthews Residence Chair:</b>	Jaiden Padda
<b>McKay Residence Chair:</b>	Bassil Issa
<b>Moulton Chair:</b>	Sophia Zhang
<b>Wallingford Residence Chair:</b>	Wendy Tang
<b>Whidden Residence Chair:</b>	Keshini Sri*
<b>Woodstock Residence Chair:</b>	Caitlin Gililand*

\*Acclaimed

Position	# of Candidates Running
Chair	9
VC Internal	5
VC External	7
VC Events	9
Bates RC	3
Brandon RC	1
Edwards RC	2
Hedden RC	3
Les Prince RC	3
Mary Keyes RC	1
Matthews RC	2
McKay RC	3
Moulton RC	2
Wallingford RC	2
Whidden RC	1
Woodstock RC	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

The full breakdown of the results can be found using the links below:

- [Chair and Vice Chair Breakdown](#)
- [Residence Chairs Breakdown](#)

### Quick Stats:

- 54 nomination forms were handed in
- 4 positions were acclaimed
- 4 candidates had withdrawn due to various reasons
- 46 candidates running in 12 simultaneous elections

# Elections Department

Below is also a breakdown of the faculties each candidate was part of.

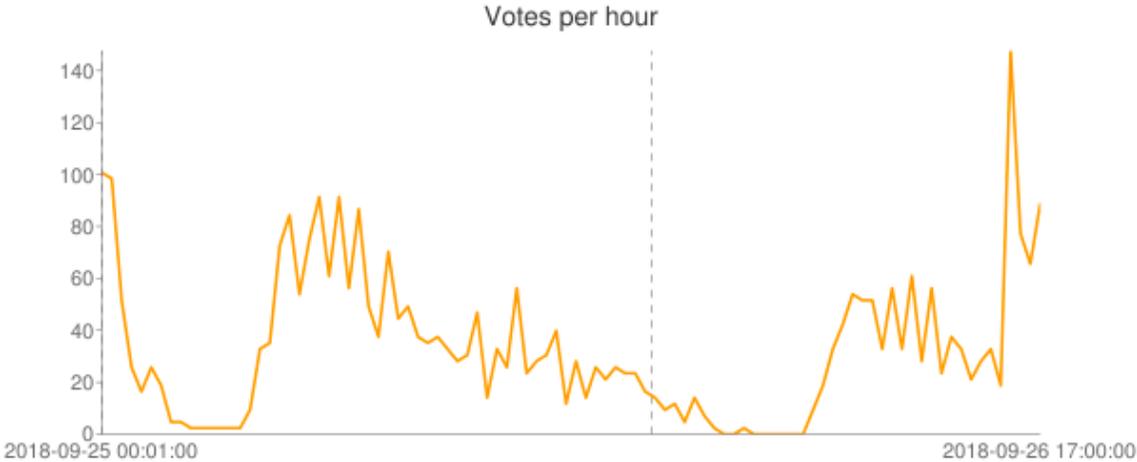
Faculty	Count of Candidates
ARTS & SCI	3
BUSINESS	10
ENGINEERING	4
HEALTH SCI	5
HUMANITIES	3
SCIENCE	22
SOCIAL SCI	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>

### Turnout

#### Chair and Vice-Chair Elections

Voter turnout for the 2018 MSU First Year Council Chair and Vice-Chair elections was **21.6%** with 1,373 students voting this year. In comparison, 14.6% of the first year population had turned out for the First Year Council 2017 Election. This indicates a rise of 7% in first year student voter turnout.

Faculty	Electors	Votes	% Voted
ARTS & SCI	70	53	75.7
BUSINESS	937	178	19
ENGINEERING	1432	249	17.4
HEALTH SCI	377	162	43
HUMANITIES	524	108	20.6
SCIENCE	1868	416	22.3
SOCIAL SCI	1163	207	17.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6371</b>	<b>1373</b>	<b>21.6</b>

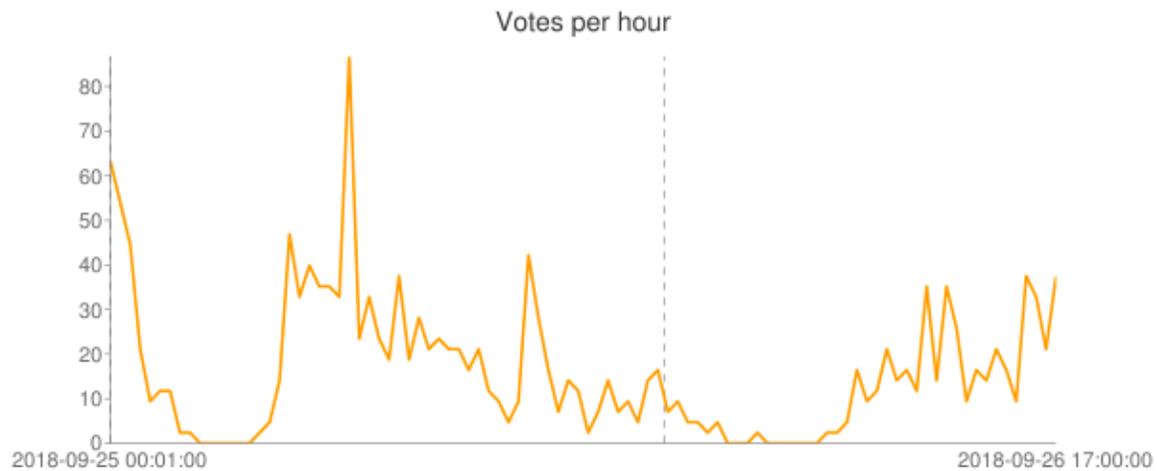


## Residence Chair Elections

Voter turnout in total for Residence Chair elections was **31.8%** with 665 students voting. Unfortunately, past statistics for total turnout are not available as this was the first year we had implemented the residence chair elections on a single ballot with segmented voting.

Working with the Registrar's Office and Housing and Conference Services, we were able to segment each voter by residence/faculty which allowed us to collect some useful statistics.

Residence	Electors	Votes	% Voted
<b>BATES RESIDENCE</b>	462	108	23.4
<b>EDWARDS HALL</b>	93	45	48.4
<b>HEDDEN HALL</b>	408	158	38.7
<b>LES PRINCE HALL</b>	371	89	24
<b>MATTHEWS HALL</b>	243	58	23.9
<b>MCKAY HALL</b>	268	101	37.7
<b>MOULTON HALL</b>	176	67	38.1
<b>WALLINGFORD HALL</b>	71	39	54.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2092</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>31.8</b>



## PROMOTIONAL EVENTS & STRATEGIES

### Elections 1A03

This event is designed to break down some of the information barriers that exists between students and running elections, particularly for first year students. In collaboration with Melissa Paglialunga, FYC Coordinator, this year we held two Elections 1A03 events: one in Clubspace and one in Moulton Hall on September 11th and 13th respectively. Both featured a rotational workshop similar to previous year's event, with SRA members, AVP, BOD, and previous FYC members leading rotations. Both nights had good turnout, with around 30-40 students attending each night. This event also served as a great opportunity to promote and encourage students to run in the FYC election, as many of the FYC nominees had attended one of the two sessions.

### Nominations Promotion

This year, the effectiveness of the promotion of FYC nominations shone through the impressive amount of nominations we had (54), as well as the fact that we did not have to extend nominations for any seat. Promotion for nominations started with tabling at Clubsfest, where nominations packages were handed out at both the FYC and Elections tables. Through contact with Res Life, we put a blurb about FYC nominations and Elections 1A03 in the Residence Newsletter, as well as provided them with graphics and drafts of social media posts for Residence Life to share on their social media avenues. We also reached out to residence and faculty representatives, as well as SRA members to help promote FYC nominations through social media, word of mouth, and events. Posts were made in every residence's facebook groups, and a text was sent out through every residence's texting service. Some SRA caucuses held events to promote FYC nominations, such as SRA Health sci's coffee and cookies event where nomination packages were handed out. Promotion for nominations ran in conjunction with promotion for Elections 1A03, which was helpful as it allowed us to simultaneously advertise both opportunities.

### Voting Promotion

This year with the implementation of Mac ID authentication, promotion for voting became more streamlined as it was possible to simply provide the link to the voting website on promotional material and in social media posts. This hopefully allowed promotional posts to be more effective as students would be able to access their ballot directly through their post. We took advantage of this by having posts with the direct link to vote in all official residence Facebook groups and the McMaster 2022 year group. As per new bylaw requirements, the the voting site was also linked on the MSU homepage and through a button on the main page of the elections website. In the future, we will work on continuing to have the link to the voting site accessible in as many places as possible.

### Information Distribution

All information regarding the election was updated continuously throughout the nomination and voting periods on the MSU Elections website. As always, a list of nominees was made available on the website, with links to candidate social media pages if available. At the end of the election, unofficial results announced on the website and emailed to candidates, and the detailed voting breakdown was published.

## ELECTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

### Rule Changes/Clarifications

EC had suggested making some changes to certain rules to ensure clarity and consistency. Their full feedback is due after report needs to be submitted but nonetheless, we will be making some adjustments to our election rules.

## SUCCESS

### Voter Turnout

As mentioned earlier, voter turnout increased this year by a nice margin. Effective promotion, collaboration, and effort with our partners had helped us reach this feat.

### Amount of Candidates

I am so so happy that this year we had a huge number of candidates interested in running for 16 different positions on the First Year Council. We've never had to run 12 simultaneous elections and keep track of so many candidates for FYC but it was worth it to see such an engaged bunch of students.

### MUSC Posters

When we had realized that we had a large number of candidates running in these elections, I had promptly met with Lori Diamond, Administrative Director of MUSC to request an exception to the MUSC poster policy for FYC. We worked together to create an MSU Elections poster policy for FYC, Presidentials, and SRA elections: <http://muscmcmaster.ca/msu-election-posters/>.

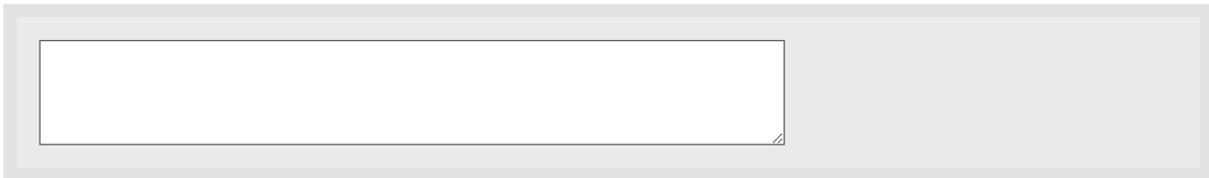
### Feedback

A goal this year was to make feedback a priority and embed it into our elections process. I am incredibly open to feedback and if there's something I can change, I am usually up for it. Any sort of new statistics or information we can get from constituents is useful information. On the FYC ballot, we included the following **optional** question to see if there was something on the minds of first years in regards to the elections process. We received a lot of good feedback which I will be implementing in future elections.

#### Any quick comments or suggestions for the MSU Elections Department?

Anything written is **anonymous** voter feedback. The Elections Department will only be able to see the comments once voting has finished.

This question is **optional**. You may type your response.



After students had voted, they were directed to a confirmation screen that showed them their voting receipt and asked if they wanted to fill out a more in-depth Post-Election Survey. While we only received a handful of responses, it was still good information that will assist us in building an elections process that is accessible and in the best interests of students.

## **No Voting/ Email Issues**

I'm incredibly happy to say that with the changes we have made to our voting system, there were absolutely no issues with students being unable to gain access to their ballot. Using the link to [msumcmaster.ca/vote](https://msumcmaster.ca/vote), students can now also use their McMaster login credentials to vote. Emails were still sent out to all students but are now complemented with the promotion of our new voting link.

I had only one candidate email informing me that their roommate in residence did not receive an email or have a ballot when logged into the voting portal with their Mac ID. Upon investigation, it turned out the roommate wasn't eligible to vote because they were not a level 1 student and an MSU member. This reinforces the notation that the system works properly which is a **huge** success.

## **CHALLENGES**

### **Amount of Candidates**

The sheer amount of candidates running in this election had resulted in us being more overworked than usual. As this is an election for first years, all them are unfamiliar with the MSU elections process which resulted in more election related inquiries, clarifications, and rulings. We tried to combat this by providing more updates than usual, creating and distributing election related resources, and responding to questions in a timely manner. Regardless, the amount of candidates running in this election presented challenges when verifying nomination forms, expense sheets, keeping track of complaints, and holding candidates accountable to run their campaigns fairly. Our usual work had more than doubled as we are overseeing and keeping track of 54 candidates.

### **Poster Issues**

A communique was issued to Facility Services to not take posters down before the start of campaigning, however, it was misinterpreted and resulted in posters being taken down. Candidates had brought concerns to myself and within 24 hours, we had rectified the situation after contacting MUSC Administration, Housing and Conference Services, and Facility Services. Emily and I reached out to all candidates and developed a fair solution with affected candidates. Community Advisors with Residence Life were also unaware of new changes for posters in residence buildings and after speaking with our Residence Life contact, this issue was also corrected. For future elections, we will be giving MUSC, H&CS, and FS, a heads up to ensure this doesn't occur again.

### **Lack of Transitional Resources**

One issue we faced was a lack of informative and in-depth transitional resources that explains how the department operates and how to make sure it functions properly on an election to election basis. Past transition reports were broad and didn't include information on the little things that matter — all candidate meetings, appeals process, reimbursements, etc.

This resulted in myself and Emily having to create new resources such as spreadsheets, formulas, and various process for our work to be streamlined. This will benefit us not only in future elections but will be incredibly useful for future RO's as well.

## **NEXT STEPS**

### **Appeals Process**

The appeals process for candidates who chose to appeal their violations and fines will begin on October 16, 2018. Should candidates be satisfied with the outcome of the appeals process, the election results will become official and our first major election will be over.

### **Candidate Reimbursement**

Reimbursements for a majority of the candidates was actioned off just before the start of reading week. As some candidates had appealed their violations, some reimbursements are currently on hold while others have started to go through the MSU Accounting process. It won't be long before candidates can get their deposits/campaign reimbursements back.