



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: SRA October By-Election Report
DATE: November 4, 2018

Hello Members of the Assembly,

We are thrilled yet again to report to you the results of an 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. This report is on the SRA October By-Election.

We are quite excited to say that our two SRA By-Elections ran successfully without any major issues.

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

Best,

Uwais Patel

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Elections Department

RESULTS

Below are the results of the October By-Election ratified by the Elections Committee. Please note that these results are *unofficial* until the appeals process has been exhausted.

SRA Commerce: Cole Reesor

SRA Kinesiology: David Benzon

Position	# of Candidates Running
Commerce	4
Kinesiology	4
Total	8

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

- [Voter Breakdown](#)

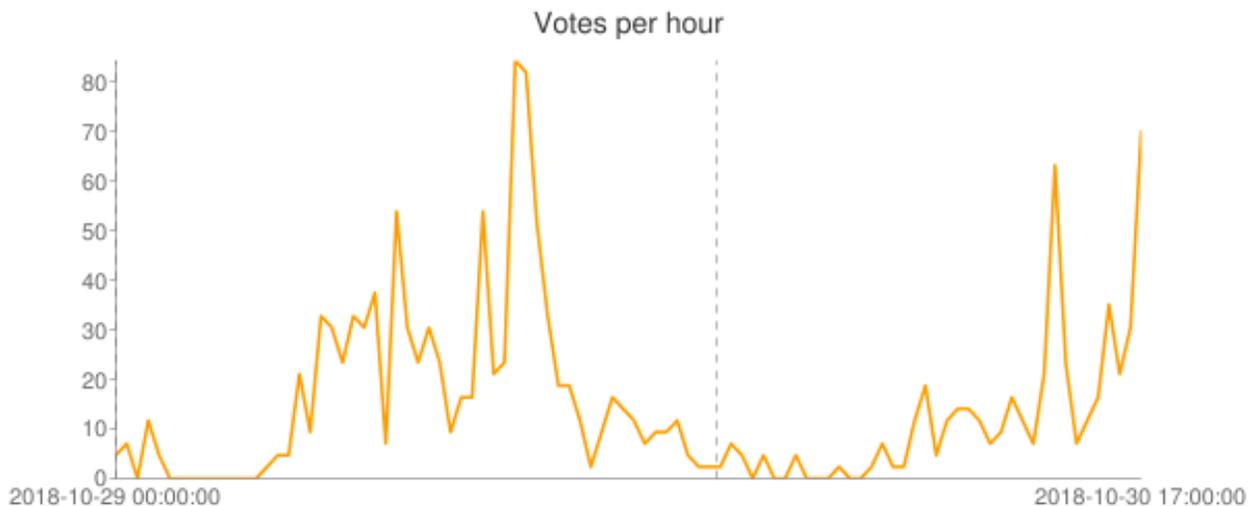
Due to an accidental human error, the ballot was run using a preferential voting method instead of a plurality one (re: Bylaw 10 -- Elections 7.2). The results, however, continue to remain valid as the candidates elected had received the most votes in the first round of voting.

TURNOUT

Overall Turnout

Overall turnout for both elections was **15.7%** with 617 students casting their ballot. The table below goes more into details on overall year turnout. In former by-elections, turnout hovered just below the 20% mark. Last January, turnout for a Kinesiology by-election was 19.8% with 133/671 students voting. In October 2016, turnout for a Social Sciences by-election was 17.6% with 655/3731 students voting.

Year	Electors	Votes	% Voted
1	1193	199	16.7
2	959	154	16.1
3	1013	181	17.9
4	753	83	11
9	2	0	0
TOTAL	3920	617	15.7



SRA Commerce

Voter turnout for the SRA Commerce election was only **9.3%** with 286 students voting this year. Though there were four people running in commerce, only one individual was *actively* campaigning. I believe this contributed to the low voter turnout in this faculty. While correlation does not equal causation, I feel there is an increased likelihood that the interest that a candidate shows can affect the way students perceive and vote in the election.

Year	Electors	Votes	% Voted
1	943	107	11.3
2	779	66	8.5
3	803	73	9.1
4	553	40	7.2
9	2	0	0
TOTAL	3080	286	9.3

SRA Kinesiology

Voter turnout for the SRA Kinesiology election was **39.4%** with 331 students voting this year. In retrospect to what occurred in the SRA Commerce election, all the candidates running in the division of kinesiology were actively campaigning.

Year	Electors	Votes	% Voted
1	250	92	36.8
2	180	88	48.9
3	210	108	51.4
4	200	43	21.5
TOTAL	840	331	39.4

PROMOTIONAL EVENTS & STRATEGIES

Nominations Promotion

This by-election, the effectiveness of promotion of nominations shone through the impressive amount of nominations we had (4 per faculty) in comparison to past by-elections. While planning promotional events and campaigns for this election, I tried to involve the current SRA members of each faculty as much as I could, as they would have the best reach to their respective faculties. They were reached out to for ideas for events, and for help in promoting on social media.

Together with SRA Kinesiology, we held a cookies and coffee event at the Kinesiology Society office on the third day of nominations, where we were able to let students stopping by know about the open nomination period and had nomination packages available for students to pick up. This event had good turnout, with multiple students taking nomination packages, and the rest being informed about the voting dates if they were not interested in running. It was a pleasure to work with Ushwin Emmanuel in planning and executing this event, and we saw that

the majority of the nominees were students who had attended this event. SRA Commerce also held office hours to promote the open nomination period.

Another way in which the current SRA members in the faculties with open seats were involved was in a online campaign where edited headshots of each SRA member was shared with a blurb sharing why they chose to run to be on the SRA, and what their favourite moment has been so far on the SRA. This worked out well as it provided a more personal perspective on promoting nominations. A big thank you is due to Haley Greene for making these beautiful graphics.

Finally, as per usual, proclamation of nominations was put on all MSU Elections social media pages, the MSU Elections Website, as well as the homepage on the MSU website. Graphics were also circulated through MUSC TV screens and through the MSU facebook page.

Voting Promotion

Similar to nominations, the current SRA members played a big role in helping promote voting to the students in their respective faculties. Voting was mainly promoted through the MSU Elections social media pages and website, with help from the MSU social media accounts, the SRA social media accounts, and the current SRA member's personal social media accounts. Voting was promoted in specific faculty year groups by SRA members. As with the past FYC election, the direct voting link made promoting open ballots more streamlined as it was included in all posts made regarding voting.

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. This election, we also included an optional 100 word blurb from each candidate on the website. At the end of the election, unofficial results were announced on the website, MSU Elections social media pages, and emailed to candidates. The detailed voting breakdown was published.

SUCCESS

Kinesiology Voter Turnout

Voter turnout for Kin had increased almost two-fold during this by-election which is quite amazing. This is mostly due to the sheer amount of campaigning that each candidate had took part in. The result was that voters were more engaged and informed.

Number of Candidates

Based off of the number of candidates that had nominated themselves to run in past by-elections, we were incredibly happy to see four candidates nominate themselves to run in each election. This truly is a testament to the great work that we've been doing when it comes to engaging students.

Ballot/ Email

We are incredibly happy to say once again that with the changes we have made to our voting system, there were no issues with students being unable to gain access to their ballot. A student had mentioned in the anonymous feedback section that they had not received an email link but because no emails had bounced back. The likelihood is that the emails ended up in their spam/ junk filter.

In preparation for Presidentials, we will be creating graphics and a video to educate and inform students on how to access their ballot. This will include a graphic that will ask them to check their spam/junk box.

CHALLENGES

Poster Issues

It seems that there is a miscommunication that's occurring in various campus buildings in regards to how election posters should be treated vs. regular posters. We've tried our best to be proactive in communicating with our various campus partners, however, there still seems to be some confusion present. We will be reaching out H&CS as well as specific building managers in order to ensure that there aren't future issues with election posters.

No candidates had reached out informing us that their posters were taken down, however, one had said that they were told if it was not on a bulletin board in a specific campus building, it would be taken down.

CHANGES BASED ON PREVIOUS FEEDBACK

Email Notifications of Nominations

This election, we had made use of our resources and sent an email out to all students informing them that nominations were open for the Commerce and Kinesiology by-election. This wasn't something that had been done in the past but based on some feedback we got, it was something that was quite easy to do. We had used the SimplyVoting platform to send the email blast, however, for future elections, we will be using a UTS listserv. We are working with the Underground to design an email template and that will be used for future elections. The goal is to inform students about nominations, candidates running, polling, and results.

Headshot & Statement on Ballot

Based off feedback from FYC Elections, we decided to give candidates the opportunity to submit an optional statement and/or a headshot that would be available on the ballot. Students had mentioned that they didn't know a lot of the candidates running and some sort of statement or picture would be beneficial in helping them determine who the best candidate is. We had also included links to their social media pages as well. See below or click [here](#) for what the ballot had looked like.

-- **David Benzon** [\[hide details\]](#)

Truly we are a unique program - one that requires a unique voice. I am committed to integrating C.A.S.T in Kinesiology.

Collaborate with our stakeholders to develop an Alumni Mentorship Program

Advocate for Kin student space in the newly upcoming SAB.

Student feedback and recognition prioritization

Transcend MSU resources and services to the Kin forefront.

Let's do the real heavy lifting – lifting your voice. Remember, David B for the Kinmunity.

[Facebook Page](#)



ELECTIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Headshot/Photo on Ballot

There was a concern that was raised with how including a headshot could create an unconscious bias for voters (similar concept to why “Blind recruitment” was created) and also potentially create an unfair advantage to those who doesn’t have the resources to get a headshot taken. We will be doing some consultations with some campus partners on how to best approach this. Headshots are normally taken by the MSU Communications Officer for Presidentials and this process can be replicated for other elections.

NEXT STEPS

Appeals Process

The appeals process for candidates who chose to appeal their violations and fines will begin on November 11, 2018. Should candidates be satisfied with the outcome of the appeals process, the election results will then become official. At the time of writing this report, no candidate has appealed their violations and fines.

Candidate Reimbursement

Reimbursements for all candidates will be actioned off shortly. Should no candidates want to go through the appeals process, the cheques will start going through the MSU Accounting process by the end of the week. It won’t be long before candidates can get their deposits/campaign reimbursements back.