



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*  
**Elections Department**

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TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Saad Syed, CRO; Naomi Pullen, DRO  
SUBJECT: Elections Department Report 2  
DATE: November 11, 2014

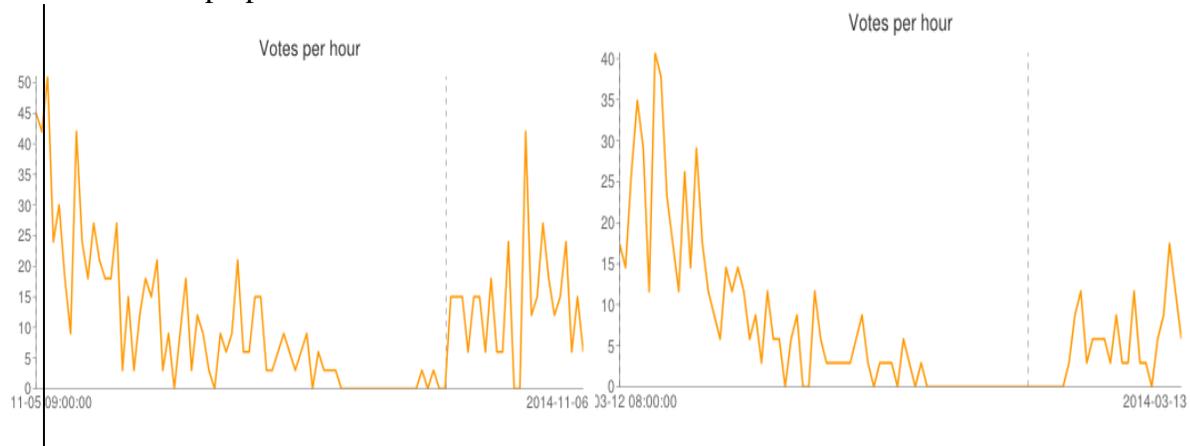
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## UPDATE

This is our second update to Executive Board. We are right in the middle of a couple of projects, in addition to having just finished October By-Election. These projects include a soon to be completed revamping of our bylaws and operating policy, ongoing discussions/events on a more equal representation of women on ballots, and holding an “Elections 101” night. In addition, we have begun preliminary discussions on Presidentials promotions. October By-Elections saw a turnout consistent with the percentages seen in past years. Currently we are looking to fill one SRA member seat on Elections Committee (EC).

## SERVICE USAGE

Voter turnout for the 2014-2015 SRA Health Sciences October By-Election was significantly improved from the turnout of the 2013-2014 SRA Generals Health Sciences Election with 116 more voters (see figure; left is 2014-2015 By-Election, right is 2013-2014 SRA Generals). This is an encouraging return to form and the highest turnout of the past three academic years for any Health Sciences SRA election. The 2012-2013 turnout was 333/772 (43.1%). Last year’s turnout was 235/822 (28.6%). This years turnout is 351/784 (44.8%). This could be due to a greater layover time between the all-candidates meeting and the start of campaigning, thus potentially allowing less prepared candidates at the time of the meeting the time needed to prepare.



Further support of this can be given by the fact that the SRA Nursing By-Election, which did not have the extended layover time due to extended nominations, saw decreased turnout compared to the 2013-2014 SRA Generals. No Nursing election was held in 2012-2013. The 2013-2014 SRA General Election saw turnout of 112/642 (17.4%) whereas the 2014-2015 By-Election only had 82/674 (12.2%) students vote. This intriguing difference between the two elections regarding layover time is something we will be hoping to explore. Lastly, this past Saturday, we hosted a round-table discussion for anyone interested to discuss how women don't run in our MSU elections as often as men do, why that might be, and what we can do to change that. Out of this discussion came a long-awaited name for our campaign, #McSUwantsYOU, and the importance of ensuring no one is excluded when we talk about trying to diversify our candidates. Turnout for this event was around 15-20.

## **PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES**

We have completed FYC Elections, Elections Committee training, October By-Elections, and 2 round table discussions regarding the representation of women on the ballot, in chronological order. In addition, we have run elections for MSSS, MUNSS, and MBAA since our last report and have also been contacted by IRC and the Kiniesology Society to run their elections in second semester.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES**

We have a number of projects that are culminating in the next few weeks. (I realize I said this last time but this time, it's for real). First, we are hoping to present our revised bylaw and operating policy to the SRA at the November 30 meeting. These bylaw changes were addressed in our previous report. We are currently in the midst of formulating the direction for #McSUwantsYOU but our upcoming plans include nacho-filled discussion nights (Taco Bout the MSU, Nacho Normal Elections, etc.) and a panel event in January. Our final events/projects for the semester are setting rules for this year's Presidential Elections and hosting an Elections 101 night (7PM, November 20, MUSC318, please spread the word to everyone/ any individuals you may know are/were interested).

## **BUDGET**

We have yet to receive an updated copy of our budget that includes the costs of FYC, October By-Election, and our roundtable discussions because all these events occurred in October. The new initiative on more equal representation of women on the ballot is an interesting budget quandary as we have currently been financing the entire initiative but would be interested in sharing the cost in the future/ coming years with other services that are involved (i.e. WGEN, etc.). However, we do not forecast it to be a problem this year and have ample space in our budge to accommodate it.

## **CURRENT CHALLENGES**

We have experienced significant issues in moving our by-law changes for presentation to the SRA, despite extensive conversations with a great number of stakeholders in the issue.

Originally, we had contacted the Bylaws and Procedures Commissioner and conducted consultation with other personnel so as to have these changes completed for presentation at the first SRA meeting. This did not occur due to a lack of response from the commissioner over the summer months. Thus, we adjusted and targeted the October 19 meeting but missed this deadline due to concerns, which were not communicated to us, from the committee regarding our changes. We have still not been informed about why the Bylaws and Procedures committee altered our bylaw changes as they did but have agreed to include them. This is despite the fact that the suggested changes do not align with what was suggested by informed stakeholders. We then readjusted for the November 2 meeting but were again met with little to no communication regarding the status of our changes despite reaching out numerous times. So, we planned to submit our changes for this upcoming (November 16) meeting. Recently, we engaged in a conversation with the VP Administration to speed up this process and ensure we would make this meeting and the commissioner has responded but again missed the deadline for submission. We are now hoping to present our changes on November 30. This process has been an aggravating challenge and has delayed us an entire semester.

In addition, we have had slight difficulties in reaching out to individuals ‘outside the MSU bubble’ regarding our #McSUWantsYOU initiative. We are also striving to frame the issue of ballot representation in a way that is amenable to everyone, which has proven to be challenging.

## **SUCSESSES**

We are finally presenting our by-law/ operating policy changes. In addition, the Elections Committee has been very vocal during meetings, another success of the training we held. There was improved turnout for SRA October By-Elections. We are ahead of last year’s schedule in regards to planning and are looking forward to our new event, Elections 101.

## **OTHER**

We would greatly appreciate assistance advertising Elections 101 and any future events we have regarding #McSUWantsYou! Thank you and please let us know if you have any questions.

Best,

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