

Students' Union (MUNSU) General Elections Report 2023 MUN STUDENT'S UNION, LOCAL 35

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Canadian Federation of Students Local 35

TO: MUN Students' Union Board of Directors'
FROM: Chief Returning Officer
SUBJECT: General Election Report

MUNSU Board of Directors:

In accordance with the MUNSU Elections Policy section 5.3.g.(xxiii), I am pleased to submit my report for the Fall 2022-2023 Memorial University of Newfoundland Students' Union (MUNSU) By-Election results.

This was the first election under the confidence vote for acclaimed faculty and exec positions. This election did not allow for executive banners, but did allow for one executive tabloid.

The nominations period was announced on January 26th for February 6th, closing February 15th, and later extended following strike and storm for all positions to Feb 17th. Further extensions were granted for vacant seats until March 2nd.

The Approved Candidates Meeting was scheduled for March 3rd, both to allow for the return of students to campus, and to allow processing time for validation. Some candidates were informed of make up dates March 4th and 5th. Some candidates were unable to attend and swore in writing they would read the elections policy and be held accountable as though they had attended.

Our Res town hall and Clubs and Societies town hall took place Tuesday and Thursday the week of the 7th. Both were used as training grounds for the executive town hall, and lead to 2 hour discussion of recommended improvements for campus engagement. These were later echoed in the Executive Town Hall March 14th, which was live streamed despite frequent technical malfunction.

All undergraduate students were emailed election dates, candidates, and updates through our webmonkey mailing service, as well as through our formal social media channels, and our faculty communications. Many candidates reported that they did not receive these emails, as did the CRO.

Voting was March 15th and 16th, with the final date for receipt submission March 20th at 4.30 pm. We shut down postering on campus ahead of a snowstorm on the 16th. Two winning candidates were expelled, as was one second place candidate.

This report includes the following information for the Winter 2023 MUNSU General Election:

1. Election Dates
2. General Election Promotion
3. Election Staff
4. Election results
5. Election Vacancies
6. Candidate Expenditures and Fines
7. Election Expenditures
8. Recommendations
9. Appendix A: Pertinent Outgoing Communications
10. Appendix B: Pertinent Reports

Kind Regards,
Derek Semerad

1. Election Dates:

- Nomination Period:
 - February 6th to February 15th
- Extended Nomination:
 - March 2nd
- Campaign Period:
 - March 4th to March 17th
- Election Days:
 - March 15th to March 16th

2. Election Promotion:

The majority of election campaigning and promotion was delivered remotely, in keeping with Public Health advisories of the province and the university, as well due to the strike mandate and a few snowstorms. The following is a list of activities that were done to promote the 2023 MUNSU General Election:

Tabling: the CRO and some polling captains canvased and tabled the 6th floor, the 1st floor, and the 3rd floor of the University Center, in addition to Faculty Rooms throughout campus.

Polling Stations: MUNSU Polling Captains were posted on the days of the General Election, initially in the UC 3rd floor, the Library Lobby, and the Residence Cafeteria.

Town Halls: Residence Town Hall March 7th, 5pm, Dining Hall Mezzanine. No Res students on site other than candidates. Double booked with res elections the room over.

Clubs and Societies Town Hall March 9th, noon, Council Chambers. Strong Resource Center attendance, limited candidate attendance, some clubs and societies attendance despite C&S mailing list outreach.

Exec Town Hall, March 14th, noon, Loft. Reorganized and made mandatory for Executive Candidates. Double booked with a pharmacy fair on the 3rd floor UC despite month notice to all faculties and to front desk staff. Minimal student attendance.

Posters: Using ~1200\$ of Attic Print Budget, 200+ physical posters were created, printed, or circulated for this election, between BOD Election Candidates and the main accounts. We downgraded all executive candidates from Banners to Tabloid, at maximum size; no one seemed to care.

E-Mail: An email sent out to students via the Registrar's Office to promote the election and encourage students to vote. All undergraduate students were emailed through the webmonkey mailing list. Each Faculty was emailed and encouraged to advertise the election to students.

Website: MUNSU 2023 General Election information was promoted via the MUNSU homepage at munsu.ca/elections.

Social Media: The MUNSU Facebook page was updated to promote nominations, extended nominations, advertising the election dates, and how to utilize the WebVote. Allowed candidate platforms included Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Discord, and tinder. Only two active board members not on executive shared these through social media. Some board members noted errors in

the event advertising templates, following strike delays, that were not raised to event organizing staff until the event was done. We received several complaints about communication fall through, and booked our res townhall during res elections, neither side knowing the other was going on.

Campus Journalism: Candidates were encouraged to promote their campaigns on The Muse and CHMR, in accordance with respective policies as set out by editors and newscasters. A CHMR interview was carried out by the CRO, and the Muse reported on election results.

3. Election Staff:

| Position Name | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| CRO | Derek Semerad |
| DCRO | Aritra Das |
| MUNSU Staff | Kat McLaughlin |
| Elections Committee Member | Ely Pittman Isabel Ojeda Aminah Sulaiman Khaled Ashlinn Pennell |
| Polling Captains | Rahbar Khan Mai Khanh Vu Aryan Biju Daniel Tazuar Nihal Marium Mim Tajrian Rushat |

4. General Election Results:

At the conclusion of the extended nomination period, the following positions were acclaimed:

| Student Representative Position | Candidate Name |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Indigenous | Desiree Cornect |
| CIRCLE Chair | Desiree Cornect |
| Undeclared | Eva Redmond |
| Nursing | Brooke Simms |
| First Year | Diai Chukwukaima |
| Burton's Pond | Moyo Ajao |
| MacPherson College | Morgan Andrews |
| Paton College | Trent Loveless |
| Part Time | Kaleem Ahsan |
| Sustainability | Harshvardhan Mehrotra |
| Women's | Rachel M. Hawco |
| Students With Disabilities | Kaleem Ahsan |
| Students of Colour | Jenrola Oluwadunsin |
| ISRC President* | Waqar Masood |

At the conclusion of the voting period, the following candidates were voted in.

| Student Representative Position | Candidate Name |
|--|---|
| SAGA External | Theo Walsh |
| SAGA Internal | Theodore Browne |
| DISC President | Eva Redmond |
| SOTA Preident | Martina Hynes |
| Nursing | Brooke Simms |
| Centre for Nursing Studies | Ileladewa A. Adeyemo |
| Human Kinetics and Recreation | Dorcas Habila |
| Education | Marcello Caranci |
| International | Axel Hossain |
| Trans+ | Randi Whelan |
| Engineering 2/2 | Nicolas Keough Shair Yousef |
| Business 2/2 | Rachael Olasupo Khondkar Habib |
| Science 2/3 | Kate Smith Wasif Ibram |
| Humanities and Social Sciences Students' Representative (3/3) | Nathan Gillingham Bruce March Maxim Sizov |
| Director Campaigns | Jawad Chowdhury |
| Director External | John Harris |
| Director Student Life* | Mohammed Farhan Basir – 340 Russell Waye -253 Frances Utomi – 245 |
| Director Finance* | Waqar Masood – 318 Colby Squire – 249 Mahbub Alam – 248 |
| Director Advocacy* | Mackenzie Broders – 375 Sameer Masood - 317 |

All Votes were cast through MUN Self Service.
Marked* Positions facing expulsion strikes.

6. Election Vacancies and Packages:

The following seats are still vacant at the end of the 2023 MUNSU General Election. These positions can be filled via packet submission at a General Board Meeting before the end of the academic year.

| Position |
|--------------------------------------|
| Pharmacy Students' Representative |
| Social Work Students' Representative |
| Medicine Students' Representative |
| Music Students' Representative |
| Science Students' Representative 1/3 |
| Student Parents |

7. Candidate Expenditures and Strikes:

By decision of the Elections Committee, candidates are to be held accountable for the actions of their supporters, in addition to on behalf of their campaign workers, following the BSA drama of February 2022. This follows precedent of Candidates being fined on behalf of resource center support in past elections.

Many candidates are in violation of subsets of Section 4 under Policy, relating to improper posting, taken as separate fines under each type of violation. 4.2 a-e; 4.1, and 4.6 were also raised, for general social media posting faults.

8.01.c 'In the case of infractions which are designated by the CRO to be especially serious, the CRO may, upon approval by the Elections Committee, charge the candidate a strike, to be applied to the candidate's strike total.' has been used again to deal with harassment of voters, resulting in expulsion.

As well, all reports are being taken at face value, barring inconsistencies in Reporting to an injurious extent.

E.g. 'Reginald campaigned to me in the Breezeway Bar on Tuesday night' would not be accepted were Reginald photographed on vacation in Calcutta that evening.

'A large man who said his name to me blocked me from voting for the evening of Tuesday and he wore a Reginald shirt' would be accepted as a valid submission of a strike-able offence worthy of investigation.

At the time of writing, greater than 250\$ has been spent on the personal elections account, to be confirmed once our financials are verified by the Attic.

| Student Representative Position | Candidate Name | Attic Credit Remaining | Fines |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Director of External Affairs, Communication, and Research | Zubayer Ahmed | 110.88/125 | 2 Strikes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 strike – Improper Posting (Legal Size Posters vs 8.5x11) - 1 strike – pre-existing platform (use of academic website) |
| | John Harris | 58.59/125 | 1 Strike <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 strike – Improper posting (on a doorway) |
| Director Advocacy | MacKenzie Broders | 97.49 /125 | 1 Strikes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 strike – Improper posting (Release of Campaigns Materials before appointed time) |
| | Sameer Masood | ?/125 Receipts not submitted | Expulsion [Report 1] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supporter harassment of resident - slating on behalf of supporter |
| Director Campaigns | Jawad Chowdhury | 124.34 / 125 | 1 Strike <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improper posting (disallowed faculty board) |
| Director of Finance and Services | Waqar Masood | 120.84 /125 late on social | Expulsion (s) [Report 1] [Appealed] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supporter harassment of resident - slating on behalf of supporter |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|
| | (also running for ISC PRES) | media takedown Late submission of receipts (2 days) soft expulsion last year 'Was not given 6 hour notice of meeting with munsu board' [elections committee provided verbal notice 24 hours prior] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more than 5 strikes 6 Strikes [Appealed] - 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 strike improper postering (covering current posters) - 1 strike improper postering (on glass) - 1 strike improper postering (peppering) - 1 strike improper postering (posting in location reserved for faculty) - 3 (1+2) strikes improper postering (leaving materials beside polling station on voting day) - 1 strike - standing within range of a voter accessing the ballot and not letting them by until they voted [Reports 2-5] |
| | Colby Squire | 53.01 /125 | 2 strikes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 strike improper postering (multipostering) - 1 strike improper postering (peppering) |
| | Mahbub Alam | 111.24 /125 | 3 strikes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 strike improper postering (covering current poster) - 1 strike improper postering (multiple tabloid posters up) - 1 strike improper postering (computer adjacent handouts) <p>[Report 6] campaigning on job (report was for safe drive on weds, when Mahbub was not on safedrive and had in fact gone home early.)</p> <p>[Appeal of Elections Results, asking for recall of Finance Election, following harassment on behalf of another candidate's campaign workers]</p> |
| Director of Student Life | Farhan Basir | 83.82/125 late on receipt | Expulsion [Report 1] [Appealed] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supporter harassment of resident - slating on behalf of supporter |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| | | submission (30 minutes) | 2 strikes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improper postering (adjacent to computer on polling day) [appealed] - improper postering (covering current poster) |
| | Russell Waye | 78.50/125 | - |
| | Frances Utomi | 40.29/125 | - |
| Nursing Students | Brooke Simms | 2.90/50 | - |
| Centre for Nursing Studies | Ileladewa A. Adeyemo | /50 | - |
| Human Kinetics and Recreation | Dorcas Habila | 4.35 /50 late on receipt submission (16 Hours) | - |
| Education | Marcello Caranci | /50 | - |
| International Students | Axel Hossain | /50 | - |
| | Javier Lopez | /50 | - |
| Trans+ | Randi Whelan | 14.50/50 | - |
| | Violet Drover | /50 | - |
| Engineering | Nicolas Keough | /50 | - |
| | Shair Yousuf | /50 | - |
| | Ahmed Khamel | /50 | - |
| Business | Rachael Olasupo | 18.20/50 late on receipt submission (16 hours) | 2 Strikes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improper Postering (Peppering) - Improper Postering (Computer Adjacent) |
| | Khondkar Habib | /50 | - |
| | Keval Joshi | /50 | - |
| SAGA INTERNAL | Theodore Browne | 17.40/50 | - |
| SAGA EXTERNAL | Theo Walsh | 0/50 | - |
| SOTA PRESIDENT | Martina Hynes | 0/50 | - |
| Humanities and Social Sciences | Bruce March | 16.25/50 | - |
| | Nathan Gillingham | /50 | - |
| | Maxim Sizov | /50 | - |
| Science | Kate Smith | /50 | - |
| | Wasif Ibram | /50 | - |

Appeals that recall elections for a given position in green.

Strikes in Orange come from the same board.

Strikes in Red granted within 12 hour grace period for repeat strikes initially set out, following closure of polling day for snowstorm. Appeal relating to this accepted.

For **[Reports]**, refer to appendix B; additional reports were received that were not strikeable offences or did not relate to expulsion charges specifically.

In accordance with policy 3.3.e. the candidates above who have not submitted receipts before March 20th at 4.30 PM would thus be unable to appeal any part of our elections process. The elections committee has decided to allow expelled candidates submission of their appeals regardless, as two executive decisions should come down to community decision as opposed to policy technicality. Note that their inability to submit timely receipts or follow email instructions should be noted in relation to the rest of their appeals.

Many posterings fines were accrued between candidate infighting and visual confirmation. Posterings as a whole was stopped on March 15th to prevent petty 'gotcha' strikes on behalf of candidates and to stop us printing too many materials on student money that would just go to waste on a snow day. Hand-outs and online campaigning were still allowed.

If a candidate is not listed, they incurred no fines and either did not submit receipts or provided in writing that they didn't go over their spending limit.

8. Election Expenditures:

At the time of writing, greater than 250\$ has been spent on the personal elections account, to be confirmed once our financials are verified by the Attic.

| Account | Expenses (CAD\$) |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Elections Print Budget | ~250.35\$ |
| Candidate's Print Expenses | ~870\$ |
| TOTAL Expenses | ~1120\$ |

9. Recommendations:

1. General Elections

- It is recommended that the Board of Directors ratify the candidates listed under Acclaimed Candidates for the 2023 MUNSU General Election.
- It is recommended that the Board of Directors ratify the candidates listed as Winning Candidates for the 2023 MUNSU General Election, with the exception of those up for expulsion.
- It is recommended that the Board of Directors advertise the positions listed under Vacancies for the 2023-2024 academic year
- In the case of Waqar Masood, it was resolved that the motion to expel be upheld per the recommendation of the Elections Committee.
- In the case of Basir Farhan, it was resolved that the motion to expel be upheld per the recommendation of the Elections Committee.
- In the case of Sameer Masood, it was resolved that the motion to expel be upheld per the recommendation of the Elections Committee.
- In the case of Mahbub Alam, be it resolved that the Finance Election be recalled for the remaining two candidates on that ballot.

- h. Further, following the discussion in the General Meeting on Mar 22, 2023, be it resolved that the Student Life election be recalled for the remaining two candidates on that ballot.
- 2. Operational
 - a. It is recommended that the CRO/DRO be hired by the end of the Spring semester to allow sufficient time to prepare with the duties of the role and adequately plan for Fall and Winter elections.
 - b. It is recommended that the CRO/DCRO be provided some measure of Training and office standards at hire.
 - c. It is recommended that new means to validate student numbers be determined, as the largest time sink for elections workers is the student validation process.
 - d. It is recommended that the D/CRO receive their own door code for the duration of their employ, so as to access the only computers capable of validation.
 - e. It is recommended that the banner system of more office members also receive access to the validation software of SGASTDN on Banner, if not a formal banner account be made for the D/CRO.
 - f. It is recommended that the Elections Committee be maintained throughout the course of the academic year, with regular meetings rather than meeting by necessity.
 - g. Encourage submission of all reports through dedicated typeform with contact info, or mandate reports only through @mun.ca emails.
 - h. It is recommended to explore the option of a preferential vote, to kill first past the post in our internal elections process.
- 3. Policy
 - a. It is recommended that a formal weight, of expulsion, be assigned to harassment of students or classroom under current policy,
 - b. It is recommended that 'Emergency Board Meeting' policies be ammended to reference 'First Board Meeting after Close of the Elections' as we have not done that in practice for 4 years.
 - c. It is recommended that the policy committee, in consultation with the elections committee, adopt a policy to strictly prevent candidates from having QR Codes for the Elections website link to an intermediary site, with expulsion recommended for any intermediary site used that grants money per click.
 - d. It is recommended that new polling booth policies be created by the Elections Committee to account for accessibility to voting during the MUNSU elections during an ongoing pandemic, if not the viability of polling captains going forward; 50 students were convinced to vote over 1 days by 6 polling captains.
- 4. Candidates Input for Consideration:
 - a. Candidates are prohibited from campaigning within the University Residence to avoid granting an unfair advantage to those running from said residence, and off-campus students are not allowed to engage in door-to-door canvassing. Campaigning is restricted to university spaces and areas only, as other locations may be considered intrusive to students who consider them their homes.
 - b. The CRO/MUNSU is responsible for gathering the names and contact information of all RAs to aid in the election process. RAs are prohibited from endorsing any candidate to

prevent any unfair advantages. It is essential to note that in past elections, RAs have granted access to various halls for door-to-door canvassing, so it is crucial that RAs maintain neutrality and abstain from granting any undue advantages to any candidate during the election process. Additionally, if an RA is running for a position, it is imperative that they do not allow their campaign activities to interfere with their duties. Furthermore, other RAs within the same residence hall should remain vigilant for any potential violations of election guidelines by their fellow RA candidate.

- c. Candidates can reserve a small space on an hourly basis at the University's food court and dining hall for campaigning, subject to the institution's guidelines and regulations. Candidates must ensure their campaign activities comply with the university's rules, and do not disrupt the normal functioning of these facilities. Additionally, any disruptions or damages caused by their campaign activities must be addressed and remedied promptly.
- d. All MUNSU Executive Candidates are required to participate in mandatory Town Hall meetings, as they provide a crucial platform for candidates to engage in productive debates with their opponents. Failure to attend these Town Halls may indicate to the student body that a candidate lacks substantive ideas or policies. In addition, it is recommended that the inability to attend Town Halls be considered a strike against a candidate since the MUNSU Executive plays a critical role in managing MUNSU business during the upcoming term. As a result, it is imperative that candidates make every effort to participate in Town Hall meetings in a diligent and constructive manner.
- e. To ensure a well-organized campaign process and encourage all MUNSU Executive Candidates' active participation in mandatory Town Hall meetings, it is suggested to create a poll to record each candidate's availability within the two-week campaign period. The poll would facilitate coordination of Town Hall meetings, enabling candidates to present their policies and ideas, engage in constructive discussions, and provide an equitable opportunity for each candidate to campaign. This approach would foster a fair and transparent election process that upholds the principles of democracy and student representation.

Appendix A: Pertinent Outgoing Communications

1. **[March 15 8 am]** 6.02 Online Voting

(a) The purpose of providing electronic balloting is to increase voter participation by providing maximum convenience for the voter while ensuring that the principles of an anonymous, democratic free vote are upheld. Voting is meant to be a personal, anonymous action and should not take place in a group setting, or in the presence of persons whose presence might influence a candidate to vote in a particular way. (b) Electronic balloting provides opportunities for abuse, intentioned or not, by voters, candidates and campaign workers. Abuse of electronic balloting includes, but is not limited to, the following types of action:

(i) efforts by voters to vote more than once. (ii) efforts by candidates or their campaign workers to influence votes by holding parties or social events at which individuals are encouraged to vote on the premises.

(iii) offering favors or gifts in exchange for votes.

(iv) pressuring individuals to vote in the presence of a candidate, campaign worker or any other individual.

(v) bringing the means of electronic voting to a voter. [THIS ONE APPLIES TO VOTING WITH CELLPHONES. SHOW THEM THE VOTING SITE, DO NOT SHOW THEM THE BALLOT]

2. **[March 15 - 3PM]** No more campaigning on Res.

Despite repeated assurances and basic decency, people are being forced to vote and having their phones physically taken from them to vote for a specific slate of candidates.

Those candidates face immediate expulsion. You will too, if you have been implicated, or if your campaign workers have been implicated in any capacity. If you are doing this to students, kindly give them your name and my contact info.

Stay home out of the storm. Elections committee is debating shutting down any further campaigning, in this elections process.

3. **[March 15 - 2PM]** We're entering into snowstorm territory. As well, more than 2/3 of candidates are reporting poster vandalism or improper postering physically.

To encourage communal safety, and to prevent any further postering violations, all candidate posters are no longer to be put up, and all candidate posters are being removed before I leave the office today.

Handouts are still allowed and still follow normal peppering policies. hand them out with consent, and do not leave stacks of them lying about as per the 1 per 4 table rule. Remaining Posters may be used as handouts.

No candidate may interact with any posters from this point on in this election. Only generic election posters from the munsu office are to remain up hereafter. My team and I may miss posters off the main campus, and those may be removed by folks on site.

Appendix B: Pertinent Reports

[REMOVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE]