

Victoria University Postgraduate Association Inc.

Student Election

Thursday October 10th, 2019

Report of the Returning Officer



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SUMMARY

Appointment

Dylan Styles was appointed Returning Officer for the Victoria University Postgraduate Association Inc. Student Election on 10th October 2019. Dylan Styles would like to express its appreciation, not only for being appointed once again.

The Electoral Tribunal at the time of the appointment consisted of Rachel Brisbane, Jeremy Yap, Vanessa Alilie, Neelam Yadav, Ruwangi Fernando, Pooja Ganger and Omella Jayasinghe. The appointment was then endorsed and supported at the Annual Student Election.

Electoral Regulation Changes

A large number of changes to the electoral regulations were drafted, many in response to recommendations by past presidents and in line with incorporation. Fortunately the regulation changes were adopted at the 10th of October Annual General Meeting prior to the election. After the Annual General Meeting adopted the regulation changes, the election was held in accordance with the new changes.

Nominations

Nominations opened on Thursday 10th of October 2019 for the following positions:

Vice President (Coursework) –

Events Officer –

Equity Officer x 2 –

Nominations closed at the commencement of voting, a new nomination system was trialled where attendees could outline they would like to nominate from the floor of the annual general meeting. There were no issues with the nomination process and everyone reached the relevant requirements to run for the positions available.

A suitable number of nominations were received from candidates for all positions, ensuring that all positions were contested. It is possible that some of these individuals had no idea of the scale of the role and what running involves and might not have nominated if position descriptions and call for nominations were deemed a prior consideration.

A total of seven nominations were received for the four vacant positions, compared to the five nominations from 2018.

Lockup and Counting

Counting began after the election ran for each position, a lockup was instituted, in which scrutineers were permitted to observe but not to leave or communicate outside prior to the announcement of election. This process continued for all vacant positions and ran smoothly.

In all elections 23 votes were cast across the candidates.

In regards to the two positions of where only one member was to be elected, the election was run in accordance to the First past the post election process.

In regards to the two positioned to be elected of where two members where to be elected that was done through the Preferential voting process.

A total of 69 votes were cast during the election process for the four vacant positions.

Acknowledgements

The annual student elections are a major logistical undertaking, and the Returning Officer would like to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance received from a great many people.

The following are particularly deserving of mention:

2019 President – Rachel Brisbane

2020 President – Jeremy Yap

2019 VUPA Committee

Victoria University Facilities

Victoria University Staff, especially Naomi Dempsey and College Deans

Graduate Research Centre

All the candidates and participants for their cooperation

Recommendations

Many positive changes were made to the election regulations this year in accordance with the new constitution for incorporation, a series of recommendations have been proposed by the Returning Officer Dylan Styles for consideration and adoption for the election in 2020.

Appointment of Returning Officer:

A returning officer should be appointed one month prior to the election to be undertaken, this will ensure that the current association remains impartial during the election process, it allows time for the returning officer to prepare the relevant notices and documents accordingly and ensure that the notice of elections is prevalent to the postgraduate student community.

Nominations:

I would like to propose that the Victoria University Postgraduate Association consider opening nominations a fortnight prior to the election. These nominations should be opened in accordance to best practice including announcements via email, printed poster on student noticeboards, announcement on the VUPA social media pages, announcement on VUPA website, announcements through student online dashboards.

Secondly, I propose that nominations for positions should all be done via email to the Returning Officer, ensuring that the Returning Officer can prepare the ballots ahead of time of the election.

Democracy:

A consideration should be undertaken around how the Victoria University Postgraduate Association can increase its level of democracy during the election process.

This could be considered in a myriad of ways;

Email Voting – For those who would like to vote but cannot attend the annual general meeting

Polling stations – a consideration could be undertaken where you have a polling station in each research lounge across each campus and one at the annual general meeting to increase voting intake.

Notice of Election

A notice of the election was presented on Facebook through the creation of a Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/483041185781376/>

This election was then readvertised on October 9th as a reminder to postgraduate students through internal postgraduate channels including Facebook and online noticeboards.

Nominations were required at the opening of nominations at the Annual Election.

Nominations

In accordance with the Victoria University Postgraduate Association Inc. constitution four of the committee positions opened with vacancies to fill.

Postgraduate students elected at the 2018 election with a term completion of October 31st 2020

President – Jeremy Yap

Vice President (Research) – Ruwangi Fernando

Secretary – Pooja Ganger

Treasurer – Omella Jayasinghe

Positions vacant for election from November 1st 2019 – October 31st 2021 include;

Vice President (Coursework) –

Events Officer –

Equity Officer x 2 –

Nominations for the vacant positions are outlined below;

Vice President (Coursework)

David Lopez

Dawn Lafata

Events Officer -

Ajay Srinivasagan

Narasisha Etamsetty

Equity Officer - two to be elected

Richa Senjali

Carmelina Monea

Shahed Nishai

Turnout

Victoria University Postgraduate Association Inc. Annual Election Thursday October 10th,
2019

A total of 24 students signed the attendance register at the Annual Election.

Results

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE ASSOCIATION INC.

Thursday October 10th, 2019

FULL PROVISIONAL DECLARATION OF RESULTS

All counting has now been completed. The following are provisionally declared elected:

President – Jeremy Yap

Vice President (Research) – Ruwangi Fernando

Vice President (Coursework) – David Lopez

Secretary – Pooja Ganger

Treasurer – Omella Jayasinghe

Events Officer – Ajay Srinivasagan

Equity Officer - Richa Senjali (1st elected)
Carmelina Monea (2nd elected)

Complaints

There has been no complaints lodged regarding the election process. So at the time of this report there is no concerns to raise.

Declaration

I hereby declare that the 2019 Victoria University Postgraduate Association 2019 Annual Student Election was conducted and administered with impartiality by myself, I declare that I did not vote during this election. I declare that I held this election to the best of my ability in accordance with new constitutional reforms adopted.

Dylan Styles
Returning Officer
22 October 2019