

As you may have already heard, at 5:00pm today I overturned Monday's ruling of the AMS Elections Committee and reinstated the candidacy of Omar Chaaban in the AMS President race after a lengthy investigation in to the circumstances surrounding his incomplete nomination. This investigation included officers at UBC, Corpus Christi College, the AMS and me chasing down a number of documents to ensure that Omar's 50th nominator needed for his nomination form to be valid was indeed a valid member of the AMS. After this investigation, I am satisfied that his 50th nominator is valid and that his nomination is also valid.

On Monday, January 11 2011, Omar Chabban was ruled by the AMS Elections Committee to be disqualified from the AMS President race due to having an incomplete nomination form. The facts behind this decision were:

1. Omar Chaaban had only 50 signatures on his nomination form, and one student number was determined by UBC Enrolment Services to be invalid, which placed him at 49 valid signatures of 50 needed.
2. The student number in question on the form was ruled a legitimate student number by UBC Enrolment Services, but after triple-checking, the student was determined to not be a valid member of the Alma Mater Society for reasons that cannot be disclosed due to the Privacy Act.
3. Upon review of the AMS bylaws – specifically Bylaw 2 and Bylaw 14 regarding AMS membership and payment of fees, I was assured by UBC Enrolment Services that this student is indeed not a valid member of the AMS.

Due to the nature of these circumstances, I opened an investigation in to the matter by talking to the nominating student in question. During this investigation I determined the following facts:

1. The student isn't (or is no longer) a student at UBC – but at Corpus Christi College, which is an affiliate of St. Mark's College, which is an affiliate of the AMS and the student is therefore a legitimate AMS member, however;
2. The student admitted that their finances aren't necessarily in order, so that they were unsure whether or not AMS fees have been paid. Without payment of AMS fees, the student would not be a valid nominator of any candidate (AMS Bylaws 2 and 14 cover this).

In follow-up to this, I spoke with Helen Lamb, the Director of Operations at Corpus Christi and St. Mark's. Helen looked through her files and determined that the AMS fees for the student in question were indeed transferred to the AMS in a payment made in November 2010 from St. Mark's College.

Finally, I followed up with Amy Lam, the AMS Accounting Supervisor, and asked her to determine whether or not we had received this fee payment. She looked through her files, and showed me proof that we had indeed received this payment.

The nominating student's financial standing with Corpus Christi is irrelevant – their AMS fees have indeed been paid by Corpus Christi on their behalf, they are a valid member of the AMS, and therefore a valid nominator on Omar's nomination form.

I sincerely hope that future candidates view this as a lesson to collect more signatures than the minimum amount required to submit their nomination. Thankfully, this situation has worked out for the positive, and Omar Chaaban is free to run for the AMS Presidency.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Regards,

Erik MacKinnon

