

# **How to Run, How to Win**

## **A Guide for Candidates, Managers and Volunteers in the Students' Union Elections**

Produced by the Office of the Chief Returning Officer  
University of Alberta Students' Union

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# Table of Contents

1. Section 1 – Elections in a Nutshell
2. Section II – Twenty Questions
  1. What are the differences between running independently or on a slate?
  2. How many volunteers are needed to run a successful campaign?
  3. What do I look for in a campaign manager?
  4. Where should banners be hung?
  5. What should I know about poster placement?
  6. How much time should be dedicated to the campaign?
  7. What colours are most effective on poster material? How should posters be designed?
  8. What literature should a campaign expect to create?
  9. Where does most campaigning take place? How do you talk with students?
  10. What role do tables have in campaigning?
  11. What emphasis should be placed on the forums, and how should I prepare?
  12. When should I start campaigning?
  13. When is it reasonable to start planning?
  14. When should you approach the incumbent about their position?
  15. Who else should you talk to?
  16. Should you have a campaign headquarters?
  17. How helpful is it to fraternities, clubs or faculty associations?
  18. How do I create a platform? Is it necessary?
  19. What happens if I lose?
  20. What happens if I win?

## Section 2

### Campaigning

#### The candidate

##### Classroom Speaking

##### Scheduling

##### Speaking tips

##### Visibility and 1 on 1 speaking

##### Volunteer Recruitment and Motivation

##### Slates

#### Te Volunteers

##### Tables/literature Distribution

##### Speaking

##### Posters and Banners

##### Netwrking

##### Forum Attendance

#### The Manager and Core Campaign team

##### Structure

- Coordination of Tables
- Speaking
- Scheduling
- Publicity
- Liason
- Motivation

### Section 3 Propaganda

#### Background Decisions

##### Approval

- Posters and Literature
- Size, Design, Photos and Paper
- Literature

##### Other Materials

##### Media

- Gateway
- CJSR

### Section 4 Understanding voter turnout

#### Results

##### Interpretation

- Age of Voters
- Residence
- Fraternities and Clubs
- The politically active
- Where ballots are cast
- Gender

##### Trends in Student Elections.

#### Evaluation and Feedback

# I. Elections in a Nutshell

“Mankind will never see an end of trouble until ... lovers of wisdom come to hold political power, or the holders of power ... become lovers of wisdom.”

— Plato, *The Republic*

Welcome to the University of Alberta Students’ Union and its holy grail of undergraduate political activities – student elections.

Deciding to run for an elected position on campus takes a great deal of dedication, initiative, organization, and passion. The road is rough but the result is rewarding – you’ll get to have a say in decisions that directly impact the student body, and you’ll be able to bring the views of your constituents to the forefront of discussions at many different levels of University governance. Rad? Rad.

But where to begin?

This guide is designed to act as a resource for candidates and their campaign teams who are considering running for a position during the 2009/10 student elections.

Available positions include:

- Member of the SU Executive Committee, includes President, Vice President (Academic), Vice President (External), Vice President (Operations and Finance), Vice President (Student Life), and Board of Governors Representative;
- Member of Students’ Council;
- Member of General Faculties Council (GFC)

“How to Run, How to Win” includes the answers to a number of FAQs and some background information on how Students’ Union elections actually work, so that you can have an idea of how to get started!

This is an inexhaustible document, constantly growing with trial and experience. If you still have burning questions after reading (which you most likely will), feel free to contact the Elections Office. We can be of help in pointing you in the right direction and partnering you with students who have gone through similar elections experiences.

Good luck. May the electoral force be with you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Huygen  
Chief Returning Officer 2009/10  
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## II. Nineteen Questions

THIS SECTION is designed to answer some of the most commonly asked questions managers and candidates have. The answers are based on the responses of half a dozen former candidates and managers whose experience in student campaigns is extensive. Use this section as a quick reference, and as a prompter for other more detailed inquiries you may have.

### 1. When is it reasonable to start planning?

Some start planning as early as October, but most make the final decision over the Christmas holidays and begin planning in January. This provides you with a comfortable amount of time to feel out your support bases, ask for advice, get your core team in place, do research, develop policy and materials, and explore potential options in running mates.

A few make the decision very late. This can be done, but carries some major risks. If you decide late, you should immediately address time-sensitive concerns like materials development, printing, and management.

### 2. What should I have completed by the nomination deadline?

Nomination deadline: February 12, 2010

Campaign period begins: February 22, 2010

In order to hit the ground running when the campaign officially starts the vast majority of your physical campaign materials should be print ready for the nomination deadline. This means that during late January you as a candidate and your campaign team should take photos, design posters, handbills, (possibly bagtags and buttons), and determine the number of banners that will need to be painted and the locations where they will be hung.

Why should these materials be finished so early? Reading Week is the time when a campaign is busy with other activities such as actually printing and producing the designed materials, spending several days painting banners, writing submissions for the Gateway supplement and SU Website, conducting media interviews, organizing volunteers and tables, along with writing and practicing classroom speeches, one-on-ones, and forums speeches.

The more work that you can put into your campaign before the nomination deadline, the less stressed you will be during Reading Week, and the more prepared you will be to hit the ground running when campaigning officially starts.

### 3. How much time should be dedicated to the campaign?

Running in an election campaign will likely be the toughest balancing act you've encountered in your undergrad career. How much time you decide to spend on campaigning is up to you – the more visible you are the better your chances, but you won't be able to partake in the spoils of victory if you're put on Dean's vacation.

The best advice is to speak with all of your professors well before the campaign begins, to explain your plans and absence from class/labs/seminars. Many will be very understanding and make arrangements—if they don't, please talk to the CRO. Use the time before Reading Week, and Reading Week itself, to catch up on your essential schoolwork, papers, etc. The last thing you need to do on the weekend after the campaign is write a research paper (because you might not be sober).

Each day will have a number of Elections Office-sanctioned events that you or a proxy **MUST** attend. These include forums (occurring five times over the course of the campaign) and daily candidates meetings at 5pm. You'll also want to book ample time for classroom speaking, table sitting, and walking around campus to get the word out.

Do **NOT** expect to be able to travel during Reading Week.

#### **4. When should I start campaigning?**

Campaign period begins: February 22, 2010

A no-campaign period will be in effect from the nomination deadline to the formal start of the campaign period on February 22, 2010. Campaigning during this period is not allowed and the penalties for doing so are severe.

However, you should begin the process of socializing and being highly visible long before the campaign begins, and you can obviously put together your core campaign team to develop policy, plans, strategy and ideas. Let your friends know your intentions and let word get out. Be careful while recruiting volunteers and promoting yourself as a candidate that you are not overstepping your bounds – talking to your friends and acquaintances is acceptable, but some potential voters may be turned off from voting for you if they feel as though they are the victim of a “cold call” or aggressive recruitment. Aggressive pre-campaigning prior to the nomination deadline can hurt your campaign, lower overall voter turnout, and is against the spirit of the election bylaws that are in place to promote equality and fairness.

While public campaigning is prohibited during this time, remember that the planning process continues throughout.

#### **5. How many volunteers are needed to run a successful campaign?**

Two issues are more important than the simple question of numbers: how dedicated are the core volunteers, and are the volunteers used effectively?

Any campaign is most effective when there is a small, dedicated, cohesive core group managing the campaign, providing direction and doing the “grunt work”. Some campaigns have formal titles for positions—this can help engender pride and a sense of worth in the volunteer, but can also provide fodder for conflict, over-organization and an inefficient hierarchy. Keep the core volunteers on an even playing field, and suit their jobs to their skills.

Most core groups number between four and eight people. They can be relied on to manage tables, posters and literature distribution, assist in writing and designing materials, deal with banners, and keep order while the candidate is busy campaigning. Six hard-working people who are knowledgeable about the whole campaign are worth dozens of volunteers who can only be relied on intermittently.

The larger group, dedicated to spreading the word, manning tables, distributing materials and enlisting their friends can number in the tens, dozens or even hundreds. Don't pass up the chance to twist an arm and get a few hours of work from your friends, classmates, and distant acquaintances. Keep organized lists of volunteers, when they work, and try to reward them with a get-together afterwards. Make sure your volunteers come from a wide variety of faculties, residences, and student groups. Use everybody, keep in daily contact with them in person or on the phone, and be sure they get themselves and their friends to vote on Election Day.

## **6. What do I look for in a campaign manager?**

The best manager is a close friend motivated by personal loyalty. Other than that, the most important skill areas are:

- An ability to organize, delegate and make decisions in a high stress environment;
- Excellent interpersonal skills for dealing with the candidate, volunteers, and the CRO/DRO team;
- Knowing the rules, and what jobs must be done;
- Someone you share your trust with completely;
- Someone who will dedicate themselves completely to the campaign, before Reading Week, during Reading Week, and during the campaign period.

It has sometimes been said, and only half-facetiously, that the most important person in a campaign is not the candidate, but the manager. It is very important that the candidates worry about few of the details of running a campaign, and be able to devote themselves solely to meeting voters, talking with volunteers, and getting a decent night's sleep. The good manager will take the burden off the candidate's shoulders, direct them appropriately, put them to bed before midnight and get them up in the morning. A candidate should never have to do a managers job for them, or worry about their manager's judgment.

It takes a very special person to be a manager and keeping in mind how hard they work and how few of them there are, a good candidate will make sure they receive the recognition and appreciation they deserve when the campaign is over.

## **7. When should I approach the incumbent about their position?**

Firstly, you should approach the incumbent—that's the best way to find out what you're getting yourself into.

The only factor that might affect when you approach the incumbent in the position you are running for is your concern about rumors, or your concern about their own plans as a candidate. That aside, you are best to talk to them at least twice: when you are initially thinking of running, to discuss the position, issues they are working on and what their work entails; and when you are definitely decided to bounce specific ideas off them and ask more specific questions. You do not want to put the meeting off too long, as you will need time to think about the information you discuss, but you should play your cards fairly close to your chest, and be careful not to reveal too much.

## **8. Who else should I talk to?**

For more information about the SU, you should solicit ideas and knowledge from past SU executives, other current office-holders, and student politicians. You and your manager should establish a positive relationship with the CRO early on and discuss rules and questions you may have. It will also be useful to talk to fellow students and friends for ideas and input. You may find that time-intensive support is difficult to find. You should be familiar with your support and resources early on.

Executive members of student groups, faculty associations, fraternities, and residences are all important people with which to meet. Not only do these individuals usually turn out to vote in elections, they will have already likely identified key student concerns and issues which can be integrated into your platform strategy.

You and your manager should read and re-read the elections bylaws and manuals over and over again to be sure you understand the rules. It will be helpful to highlight and annotate a copy or two for easy reference.

## **9. Should I have a campaign headquarters?**

You probably won't need a headquarters: literature, table information, etc. can be brought with you in the mornings to campus or left in the storage area designated by the CRO. The second will be a place during the day you use as a central message/meeting point to keep you and your campaign informed: it helps to designate a table you have as the headquarters during the day and check back there regularly.

## **10. Where does most campaigning take place? How do I talk to students?**

Candidates, managers and volunteers should be familiar with the entire campus. Walk through all of the buildings before the campaign begins, and visit all the major student lounges and classrooms. When you are running to a classroom speaking engagement in a new building, you don't want to spend time finding the room.

Candidates can speak with students in classrooms, one-on-one and in small groups. Large volumes of students pass through and lounge in a few principal locations: the main floor and cafeteria of CAB, HUB Mall, the Tory/Business Atrium, ETLC, and SUB. This is where volunteers distribute the bulk of the literature, and where candidates can speak to students lounging or eating. It's important to cover these areas continuously, but not to overdo them. Students who lounge in these areas get "tired" from being talked to within the first few days; always ask for a moment of time before you launch into your spiel. If they decline, leave some literature, but don't press the point. Keep your discussion brief, and only stay if they continue to ask questions and are interested. Should the discussion drag on, politely excuse yourself and move on – you have many people to talk to.

In classroom speaking, the same logic applies. Keep your remarks brief and to the point (30 to 45 seconds), state your name or side clearly at the beginning and the end of your speech, and thank the professor and class at the end and invite questions.

Always verify with the prof beforehand that you can speak during their class.

Practice speaking in front of the larger classes with an experienced speaker to help you before the campaign begins; during the first day or two have someone sit in the class and offer you advice about your speaking. Use the time before class to talk to the students. Where several classes are close by, try speaking in two or three at one time. If a large number of candidates are there to speak, either try another less crowded room or be the first or last speaker. Finally, change your speech regularly to avoid voters hearing the message repeated and losing interest in you. Speeches in classrooms are the main point of contact between many voters and candidates.

It is important to divide your campaigning between the various buildings and faculties on campus: direct your speaking schedule to accomplish this, and to have you highly visible in important area especially in the first few days. In less well-attended buildings/classrooms, you benefit from appearing and are much more likely to be remembered.

Winning is often a combination of doing well in the large areas of campus which produce the vast bulk of the votes, and of dominating in a few select areas of campus (see the section on turnout/voting patterns). Candidates who can combine tight blocks of support with good general performance have the best chance of winning. Be aware of where you are strong and weak, and where your opponent's support comes from also, and tailor your campaign to that.

## **11. What literature should a campaign expect to create?**

With classroom speaking, literature is the primary tool for the development of policy, promises and specific ideas about the future. It is also used to introduce the electorate to the candidate's experience, ideas and approach.

A voter should be able to read a brochure or website and know: who the candidate is, what they believe in/ want to do, and why they should vote for them.

Some campaigns produce only one brochure that they use throughout the campaign. Always consider whether you wish to photocopy or print your literature, and if you want to leave room to produce new material part-way through the campaign to respond flexibly to new issues before or during the campaign. You do not need to spend late nights or busy days, cutting literature because a table has run out. Know your budget limits very well, and exactly how much you can produce. If you produce literature, be sure it gets distributed. It is no use printing 6000 flyers if you only have a few volunteers to distribute them.

It is not a productive use of resources to "drop" individual flyers on lecture hall seats, bench or tables. Current production and distribution for a campaign range from 1500 to 2000 copies.

Finally you will also be expected to write a very short piece for the Gateway, and you may want to provide your tables or volunteers with additional information for their reference and for when a voter has an inquiry.

## **12. How should posters and materials be designed? What makes them effective?**

What is the most important thing to remember to put on a poster? Well, after the candidate's name it is the printer designation and the vote online logo. Do not forget to put in small print in the corner the name of your printer and this logo.

You should consider you options in relation to your objectives. If the purpose of a poster is to promote name recognition and visibility, then it should:

- Be bold, eye-catching and simple;
- Contain your name in print legible from 30 to 50 feet;
- Stand out from other posters and provide face recognition;
- Have a look that suits your style and your campaign message.

Two of the most common ways to achieve this are to use a novel paper size, and to use color well. Understanding design and use of photographs is also important.

Color: Consider this very carefully. Some colors jump off a piece of paper and are highly visible: primarily shades of red and green. Other colors recede into paper and are often lost in the background: most blues, browns and oranges. Examine posters

from previous years (available from the Elections Office staff), and consult the pantone color samples available at your printer. The best colors are bright and have a deep, rich saturation, making them more visible at a distance. Using various shades/ densities of the same color can help enhance the poster while lowering costs. The bold look of a reverse bleed poster, while more expensive, can also work with large clear prin. Think twice about a one-color poster: It means your photo will be that color. Also be certain you know how a color will appear on the color of paper you use.

**Size, Design, Photos and Paper:** Use a size of paper that is economical and different; be certain there is room for a clear large photograph if you have one, and the candidates name in large, legible type. The best photos are taken indoors against neutral, uniform background, and show the candidate relaxed, friendly and smiling. Be very careful about the exposure and contrast in the photo, especially where the clothing or complexion of the candidate is very pale or dark. You should use a digital camera with the highest resolution possible to avoid blurriness and pixilation.

Using a different shade or stock of paper can also enhance the look of the poster. Check with the printers about various sizes, prices and stocks. The best designs are the simples ones. The purpose of a pose is to market a very specific product. It achieves this marketing by promoting recognition of the name and face of the candidate, and linking this visibility to the literature, speaking and campaigning of the candidate. Posters may have, but do not require slogans. Choose a slogan that is simple, short and not too cheesy. This is not as easy as it looks, which is why more and more campaigns opt not to have one. The look of a poster typeface (and any special design, slogans, etc) should be repeated in brochures, other advertising, buttons and other materials. This creates unity and identity, and a greater chance the voter will piece together different elements of your campaign. Whatever they are looking at, though, make sure your name appears and is easily read at a passing glance. Remember it may be all they read and remember when going to vote. Whether on posters or literature, keep the print large enough to be read comfortably, and avoid having a cluttered appearance to your material.

Finally, you may want to create posters in French for Campus Saint-Jean: these can be photocopied.

### **13. What should I know about poster and banner placement?**

As per our agreement with Facilities and Maintenance, here are the major rules and guidelines for candidate and elections material that is distributed or posted on campus.

- Posters can be taped onto any wall that is NOT painted (ie. Tile, brick, etc)
- Posters are NOT allowed on glass walls
- Posters are NOT allowed to be placed on doors, either inside or outside of buildings
- No duct tape can be used to put up posters. Scotch or masking tape works, but painters tape is preferred

- All the general bulletin boards are fine, but if the board is controlled by a student group or association, or by a faculty office, then permission must be obtained
- Posters are not permitted on the outside of buildings
- Stick up signs on the grounds outside are permitted, but must be removed by the appropriate dates and not left to the University staff to take care of
- Chalk is not permitted
- Any snow sculptures or other installations in Quad must have approval from Facilities and Maintenance. If you are approached about something of that nature, please direct the inquiry to the CRO or one of the DROs.

Candidates should know that University staff has been instructed to tear down and recycle any materials that do not adhere to the rules above. Other infractions may incur penalties delivered by the Elections Office.

### *Specific Rules and Regulations for Buildings*

**Education:** In order to post any materials on ESA approved bulletin boards, their permission must be obtained. Any other location, such as walls, etc are fine.

**Business:** The BSA has fairly strict guidelines about posting in the Business building. They only allow a limited number of posters, and each one must be stamped, dated, and approved by the BSA.

**Humanities:** As a general rule, we recommend you run by any materials through CBAS, whose office is located on the second floor of the Humanities building. They'll usually ask to review the posters and sign/date them and then you're free to post wherever you can find space (ie. bulletin boards or otherwise).

**Engineering Buildings (ETLC, NREF, CME, ECERF, MEC):** Four years ago postering policy in the engineering buildings was abused leading to a five year poster ban. Consequently, posters can only be put up on the designated postering board(s) rented by the Elections Department and put up in ETLC. Banners are not permitted.

**Campus Saint-Jean:** Poster approval for Campus Saint-Jean is done through the CERF office, which is located on the second floor of the main building of campus. Once approved, the general rules and guidelines for posters apply. Also, please note that candidates who wish to leave their campaign materials on tables during the campaign period, they are welcome to leave any pamphlets around for students, but if they are not removed by the end of the day, they will be recycled.

### *Banners outside of SUB*

Please see BYLAW 2000 Sections 36-47 for information regarding candidate materials.

**HUB:** Posters – All posters must be approved by HUB Administration. Their office is located at 209 HUB Mall with office hours between 8:30am-12pm and 1pm-4pm from

Monday (until 3:30pm on Fridays). There are 6 main boards where posters can be posted permitting they don't conflict with merchant posters. Banners are permitted in HUB permitting that they are approved by HUB Administration and are fireproofed. Banner space is currently free of charge.

HUB Administration: 492-2241

\*Residence sections of HUB are not to be posted in, in accordance with section 38 of Bylaw 2000, this includes stairwells leading to residential areas, laundry rooms, dorm rooms, etc. However, HUB proper (cafeteria areas) may be posted in.

**SUB:** Banners that are going to be placed in SUB must be submitted to the Elections Office the Friday morning, no later than 11am, prior to their scheduled Monday placement. They must be fireproofed. We will ensure that they are delivered to 2-900.

**Van Vliet:** Posters and banners need to be taken to the Dean's Office reception (W1-34 Van Vliet Centre) for approval and further instructions in regards to where they can be hung. Office hours are 8:30am-12:00pm and 1:00pm to 4:30pm. Posters are permitted on designated poster boards, most walls, and some railings (SU elections only). Masking tape must be used when putting posters up on walls. The direct contact for material approval and directions is Lois Arnson, who can be contacted at 780-492-3341.

**CAB/TBA:** All banner space in CAB and the Tory/Business is considered fair game. In preparation of the elections, we've asked that space be made for candidates to hang theirs. If you wish to place a banner in either building, it must be approved by the Election Office and fireproofed prior to hanging.

There are several tips about poster placement:

- Don't use all your posters at once. Use 75% immediately, but reserve the rest to replace missing ones and provide extra coverage for some areas.
- Hang Posters in high traffic areas slightly above eye-level. Try to obtain locations where they are not lost on a wall with a dozen others, but stand out:, for example, on a lone pillar.
- Hang them well. This is no time to skimp on masking tape. Most posters disappear not through mischief, but because they fall down. Use large amounts of tape at all four corners and the middle.
- Explain the rules about posters, how to tape them and where to put them very thoroughly to your volunteers. Pick people who know the buildings they are postering so they obtain the best location, the important lounges.
- Number your posters and allocate specific ones to each building. Get a campus map and be sure you have covered everywhere.
- On the first night and first morning, have the manager and key people walk thoroughly through every building with extra posters and tape, to check the posters, reposition them and add more where needed. Check them constantly.

- And most of all, know the rules, know who will be enforcing them, and act accordingly.

There are several rules that should be noted about banners:

- Banners must be flameproofed and not exceed the dimensions allowed by building services regulations. This limits how low they may hang.
- Banners may be double sided: note this for Tory/Business Atrium, Civil/Electrical and CAB particularly.

You should measure all your dimensions very carefully and double-check everything the CRO and Building Services before you act. Remember that it is the responsibility of the candidate to double-check all rules and regulations with the CRO and Facilities and Building Services before hanging banners.

#### **14. What role do tables have in campaigning?**

Tables are an important way of publicizing your name and distributing literature, especially in the first days of the campaign. The first days of the campaign are the most useful times to possess tables, although, a continued presence serves as a reminder to voters of about campaign and its resources as it draws closer to the voting dates.

Tables are mainly useful for the following:

- Distributing literature;
- Providing a focus/meeting place for a volunteers and voters;
- Giving the manager/candidate/CRO a contact point;
- Giving the campaign a personal tone/identifying it with certain people;
- Providing high visibility in the building in question.

To be effective, volunteers should constantly be in action, distributing material to passersby, talking and portraying a cheerful, positive image for the campaign. It does not help to have serious, non-communicative, seated individuals at the tables that must be approached by voters. Tables are your advance points to get the message out and give you focus. They should be used to their fullest advantage. Just beware of buildings like SUB that have non-solicitation policies and follow their guidelines. As a general rule, don't stray more than arms-length from your table when your specific task is to table-sit.

Be sure to set up an ENGAGING TABLE; create a backdrop and table banner to fully use the space available. The table should complement overall campaign themes, color and design.

Table assignments will be randomly drawn for each candidate and side for use during the campaign period. You are free to book your own tables outside of this and must reflect the cost if applicable.

#### **15. What emphasis should be placed on the forums, and how should I prepare?**

There are five standard forums: Lister Centre (Residence Forum), Campus Saint-Jean, two SUBstage forums, and the well-known Horowitz forum. We have also added the Augustana Forum for the 2010 Elections. While the conventional wisdom about forums is that they are not that important, it is always a mistake not to attend. Word gets out very quickly if a candidate does not attend, or performs particularly badly, so while you may not have as lot to gain, you certainly have a lot to lose.

Lister Hall is usually attended in mediocre numbers, but provides a good chance to practice speaking in front of an audience in the forum format, and an opportunity to practice using a microphone if you are not familiar with that skill. Campus Saint-Jean is important; as it is one of the few opportunities many campaigns use to speak there.

The Horowitz Forum is attended by a very large number of voters (600-800), and a few things are worth noting:

- A number of students in attendance are committed to a candidate(s) already;
- The time limit is very brief, and you should have prepared in advance with a speech comfortably under the limit;
- You will need to be prepared to answer questions, often from individuals who are opposed to you and will try to rattle or expose you;
- How you present yourself is very important;
- Your speech should be presented, not read, and should not be overly formal.

While many voters have made commitments prior to attending the forum, the nature of the attendance has changed greatly in recent years. With a large number of independents, voters may know one or two preferences, but be unsure about the remainder of the ballot. This is your opportunity to sway voters who are almost guaranteed to be casting ballots. Because the audience is so involved, it is a very important portion of the electorate.

The forum counts for more in setting the tone than it does for directly deciding votes. How your volunteers and others speak of you after the forum will have a large impact on morale and momentum in the final days of the campaign. It is important to have a 'positive spin' on the event from start to finish, and to have people speak well of you. Now is the time to cement your support and build for the last push, not be doing damage control after a bad speech which leaves your supports saying "yes, but look at this..." Don't get too worked up about the forum, but take it seriously as you do other opportunities like it.

## **16. How helpful is it to talk to clubs or faculty associations?**

Because those involved in groups, are already involved students, they generally have a fairly high rate of turnout in elections. You do not necessarily need to be a member to be well-received. It is a mistake to identify most students by any one characteristic (and a bigger mistake to just assume they will support you or oppose you because of it – never assume, you have to win every vote). You will need to stand out to be

remembered. Some clubs will allow you to speak at meetings. How useful is it all? It depends on your situation, but no campaign is won by a single method. You are best to ignore no one and attempt to reach as broad a spectrum of voters as possible.

### **17. What if I make a mistake during the campaign?**

While mistakes are never good, they always come in varying degrees. The first question you should stop and ask yourself is “Did I break any Election Bylaws, Rules or Regulations?” If the answer is no, then your response should simply be one of damage control. If your mistake is fixable, fix it as soon as possible, if it isn’t, then move on and put it behind you. Mistakes inevitably occur, however it’s how a campaign reacts to these events, which can be telling. Maintaining a calm appearance and dealing with these issues in a professional manner reflects well on a campaign and can sometimes even serve to turn a negative occurrence into a positive boost for your campaign team.

However if you know that your campaign has broken an election rule, or even think that you may have broken a rule, immediately talk to the CRO. It may seem counterintuitive, however the CRO will appreciate honesty in admitting to a campaigning mistake, and this is usually reflected in a smaller punishment or lower fine, and little if any media coverage. However if an opposing campaign files a complaint with the CRO about a bylaw infraction this is ten times more damaging. Not only will it likely result in a larger fine which limits the amount of money you have to spend, there is a very high probability that it will make front page news in the Student Newspaper the next day.

Overall you should not dwell on your mistakes. Deal with mistakes promptly, and then move onwards with your campaign, focusing on activities that will help get you elected.

### **18. What happens if I lose?**

Life goes on. Most candidates will lose, and most will take it very hard. You should expect to also. Never count on winning, but always believe you can win and fight hard to make it happen. But don’t put all your eggs in one basket. Is there a cliché that doesn’t apply? The best thing you can do is make a few contingency plans: apply for summer jobs, have your schoolwork under control, and consider other ways of being involved. Other than that, not much can be said. Remember, there’s a reason you have friends – times like this.

### **19. What happens if I win?**

The work doubles. You will have to catch-up on the school you missed in spite of being exhausted, and begin the transition period with the current executive, going through files, tackling issues, and discovering it is all a lot more difficult than it looked at first. At the end of the exams there will be the changeover council meeting where you will be installed, and the retreat where the new and old executives go into the woods only to emerge better people, backs bowed by work they have to do.



# III

## Campaigning

It bears repeating that there is no recipe book for running political campaigns – at least no successful one. The formal campaign period, as opposed to the long run-up to the election, is strictly defined as lasting from 1800h on the first Monday to 1800 h the following Tuesday. While extensive preparation will need to be done to prepare for the Monday evening and beyond, it is very important that no pre-campaigning occur (e.g.: the placing of posters, scheduling of volunteers, soliciting strangers for their support). In the past, campaigns have been temporarily suspended from the election for making this mistake; a flagrant violation could risk expulsion altogether. Even an honest error is a serious breach of the rules, and will be punished. This segment will describe what “campaigning” means and give you some pointers on how to tackle each element during the legal election period. It is easiest to understand all these elements if they are broken down for each person involved: the candidate, the volunteers, and the core management.

The Candidate:

Classroom Speaking – On a campus of over 30,000 undergraduates, classroom speaking offers candidates the best way to reach a large audience of students. Even an unambitious speaking schedule should expose a single candidate to at least 2500 electors in a day, more than 500 of which will likely vote. The impression, or lack of impression, that a candidate makes during that brief time is one of the most important elements in influencing the undecided.

Scheduling – Lacking effective scheduling, even the best speakers will find their labors unproductive. There are ten important things you should understand before composing a candidate’s speaking schedule, and that the candidate should know before going out there.

- 1) Do not use only the short list of “Large classes” provided by the CRO and the Registrar’s office. Instead learn to use the large index of all classes the university offers. This will take some work, but it pays off when it comes to finding sections offered at non-standard times or sections offered on only one day, finding several large classrooms next to each other which are full, having the professor’s name, and knowing

exactly how many students are actually in the class. By the late days of the campaign, when the large classes have been exhausted, it is useful to hit classes in the 100-150 student range, or even slightly smaller if there are no alternatives.

2) Do the speaking schedule the night before, taking into account classes, which were cancelled, places you have been invited to, where you have spoken already, and where your opponents have been speaking. It is very important to obtain a mix of students from various faculties and departments, and to cut down on overlap as much as possible. Keep a checklist of faculties and write down the classes you have spoken in for that faculty. Remember that in a number of the professional faculties most or all students take a given class. Instead of speaking in several different classes (say Law 110 C1 and 120 C1) speak to different sections of the same course (Law 110 C1 and 110 C2). Be very careful not to overlook smaller faculties (which may have smaller classes), and to leave room in the schedule for travel to distant rooms (Corbett Hall, Campus Saint-Jean, etc...)

3) Be certain the schedule is clearly written, and that the candidate, manager and tables have a copy so they are certain where the candidate is at all times. Communication is very important. Also ensure the candidate understands exactly where each room is on the list: in your preparation for the campaign you should walk around any area of campus you do not typically go to.

4) Do not focus an entire day of speaking in one geographic area of campus or in one faculty exclusively. Keep the candidate moving around – if they were speaking in Chemistry, move them into Ed North for the next change so they can speak to students in CAB and Education on their way there. Then perhaps the large Humanities lecture, or the Tory Lecture, via HUB Mall and the Atrium.

5) At lunch hour, move the candidates back towards central gathering areas: CAB, HUB, and SUB. Have them take lunch early or late to maximize this time.

6) The candidate must keep a record of which classes were actually spoken to, which fell through, and which additional ones were hit if the scheduling is to work.

7) In the first few days it helps to focus on ETLC and Tory Lecture, because students in those classes will become very tired of speaking towards the end of the campaign and be unreceptive.

8) If you can manage (and most anyone can), speak to several classes offered at the same time by talking to the mostly assembled class before the lecturer arrives and then running to a room across the hall. This works best in the Tory Lecture, Business, Tory, CAB and ETLC. Maximize your time and your exposure. Get to the class early and speak with students as they go in, or once they are in their seats, offering them literature. If the class is cancelled or moved, you will then have time to find another – never leave a period unfilled.

9) The largest number of students attend classes on Wednesday (more students are on campus for a MWF rotation than for TR), and the bulk of classes are between 10:00 and 14:00. Do not stop work after this! You can easily find classes at 15:00 and 16:00 to speak to, and on TR there are 15:30 classes. Also comb the schedule for evening sections to speak to, and take the opportunity to talk to students who may have little other exposure to the election. Be sure to point out what evening polling facilities exist.

10) Always, always, ALWAYS ask the permission of the professor before you speak.

Speaking – If scheduling is that complicated, what must speaking be like? Really, it is quite simple, but very few people are natural public speakers. For most it is a difficult skill to master, and only comes with practice. The week before the campaign is the time to do this practice and to work through some of the nervous jitters associated with public speaking, while polishing the message you want to bring to the voters. Really good speaking is a triumph of style and substance; it leaves the audience with a sense of your personality, and of what you want to do if elected. Do not think that exhaustive substance can persuade an audience if you make no effort to project yourself, or that an audience can be duped by good looks and charm. Trust is earned. You must know your message, and know how to deliver it. Here are ten more points to remember:

1. Brief, Brief, Brief. The speech should be concise and short. These are not the same things. Some attempt to take the text of a 60 second speech and deliver it at machine gun pace in half the time: not an effective technique. Your speech should comfortably fit into a short amount of time (30 – 45 seconds) and match your delivery style.

2. Who was that again? Many candidates tell voters what they want to do, but then miss the link, forgetting to tell voters who they are. At the very least, tell your audience at the beginning and end of your remarks who you are. If you can find a convenient way to do this in your speech, do it again; remember, these people have never met you and who you are running with if you are on a slate.

3. Primacy and recency. If you didn't learn this in first year, you should have. When listening to a group, an audience will be most likely to remember the speeches delivered first and last. So if you walk into a room with four or five candidates, try to gain one of those two positions. People in the middle get lost in the confusion. And if you can give the audience something to remember you by (a slogan; a short, simple promise; "I'm the first name on the ballot"; etc.), do it.

4. Project! This goes not just for your personality, but also for your voice. Project does not mean shout. You should be able to speak in a comfortably loud voice to any of the largest lecture theatres on campus and have everyone hear you. If you are having trouble, ask the audience if you are loud enough, or have someone in the back give you hand signals. Many women, or men with higher pitched voices, should be

careful that when they raise their voice they are not also raising the pitch of their voice. The natural tendency is for the voice to rise an octave or two, making many people come across as shrill. Avoid this by practicing the week before in empty lecture theatre with your manager or someone experienced in public speaking.

5. The Valley Girl. A candidate of any gender can achieve this dreadful image by making a common mistake: looking at the back of the room, above the heads of the audience. You will make eye contact with no one, and will in effect be speaking over them. Avoid this by scanning the room with your eyes, making eye contact with people as you speak, focusing primarily on the middle of the room. This gaze will envelop everyone. Smile as you talk; appear friendly and likeable. This is very important to remember in the steep lecture theatres such as Physics: look up at the middle of the class, not all the way to the back or just at the people in the front row seats. Your voice will follow your gaze and fill out the space nicely.

6. Notes, what notes? This is why you practice – ideally, you should not be speaking from any kind of text, you should be speaking spontaneously, leaving your hands free to gesture, and giving the audience the impression you are someone who knows your message, and is on top of the facts. If you are hesitant to do this, make very brief notes on a small card, and keep it with you to prompt you to mention certain points. Do not carry a sheet of paper with you and read it to a class, though.

7. What to say? Other than your name, this is really up to you. In the early days, especially, it is important to let voters know who you are and what your experience is. Many candidates also briefly summarize the position they are running for, or describe the Students' Union. This is almost always true of the Board of Governors position, which receives very little public attention, and which needs to be explained. After these points, speeches diverge into two general areas: (a) describing general beliefs the candidate has, or ways of acting/thinking, and bringing these methods to the S.U., and (b) specific ideas (promises, commitments, etc.) the candidate wants to accomplish in the upcoming year. While both can be effective, the latter is more likely to be memorable – a simple promise or idea which voters can attach themselves to and vote for. Other than these two types of content, candidates have occasionally delivered stories (largely in an attempt to appear different or win rapport), or focused on the message or actions of another candidate (usually an incumbent who they are speaking negatively of.) Neither of these methods has been particularly effective.

As you think of what to say, keep on question in mind: Why? The reason you are speaking is to tell the voters why they should elect you. Give them a reason in the speech; give them three reasons. And do it quickly, simply and memorably.

8. Change your tune. Do not repeat the same speech over and over again during the campaign. You will find that some students overlap--that you speak to the same people in different courses--and they will be unimpressed if four days later you are still harping on the same old, tired points. Likewise, your opponent will know what you are about to say, and be able to tailor their speech to best counter your message. Their

speech will be better. So listen to what your opponents say, and keep your message fresh, original and different from theirs.

9. Head to head. Is it good or bad to speak in the same class as a direct opponent of yours? It is essential. There are different ideas on this, but most every candidate shares the view that is scary--a direct confrontation in front of 400 witnesses. Through practicing, and speaking in other classes, you should ideally build your confidence level where it is not an issue. If you do not have confidence in your ability to do so, however, then avoid the situation: an audience will perceive your nervousness, and be less likely to develop trust with you. If you are anything less than terrified of the encounter, do it. You have to. It will help you mature as a public speaker, and prepare for the forums. Use the opportunity to show direct or indirect comparison. Show your skills as the better speaker, the candidate with better ideas, and more relevant experience.

10. Advice. The first few days of speaking are hardest; the manager or someone experienced in speaking should follow the candidate around, sit in the back of classes, and offer constructive criticism and emotional support. By doing this, you ensure that bad speaking habits are not carried into the latter part of the campaign. Constant improvement early on is vital to honing your style and message. And if you're really nervous when you get up the first few times, tell your audience. Make a joke of it and let them identify you--after all, they'd be nervous too if they were in your shoes.

Visibility and One-on One Speaking: Classroom speaking is only one method of exposing the candidate to students. To personalize the message, candidates must speak to students on a one-on-one basis, or in small groups, where interaction is possible and the candidate has a chance to make a memorable impression. The time between class changes should be spent walking through lounge areas, cafeterias, and anywhere students are gathered or resting, speaking to as many individuals as possible, and being highly visible. Constant visibility through personal presence, posters and volunteer activity reinforces the message throughout the campaign.

As with speaking, brevity is an important component of personal speaking. No one wants to be concerned by a candidate and subjected to a longer version of their classroom speech, or an explanation of their entire platform. Likewise, if you are going to reach a large number of voters, you must limit the number of excessively long encounters you have with individuals and move on. If someone is very interested, ask him or her to volunteer, read your literature or have him or her speak with a key volunteer for more information.

It is generally in your best interests to politely ask voter(s) if they would like to hear from you/if they are familiar with you/ if you may have a moment of their time. Some voters have even been known to say to candidates "you may, you have exactly one minute," and hold the candidate to the time limit. When you meet one of these challenges, it often leaves a lasting positive impression. It is important to talk with people, not to them,

and to only talk to the willing. If you offend someone badly enough, they will go out of their way to not vote for you. Keep your comments brief, and talk about your ideas, why you are running and other areas that lead to questions or exchanges of comments. Always solicit the input of the voter and engage them in conversation.

One-on-one campaigning is really about the art of gentle persuasion, about being amiable, pleasant and leaving a good impression on someone you have just met. First impressions are made quickly, so dress nicely and practice with some friends in the CAB cafeteria before you go out to meet the world. It may help you in the first few days to do this work with someone at your side to prod you into action and help you overcome any reluctance. There is no time to waste, and it is vital that you not fall into the trap of talking to friends or volunteers for ten minutes (they're already voting for you) or sitting and resting. Always run as though you are a hundred votes behind, and use mutual reinforcement amongst the campaign team to keep up your motivation and confidence.

**Volunteer Recruitment & Motivation:** A significant responsibility of the campaigning candidate is the continuous recruitment, solicitation and motivation of volunteers. While area managers or volunteer organizers are important for the use of volunteers, the primary point of contact in motivating them remains the candidate. In most cases the loyalty of the volunteer is personal, and attached to the candidate. It should then be the candidate's task to ask these volunteers for time commitments, and obtain from them as much as possible. As discussed elsewhere, it is important to have a large pool of dedicated volunteers as you can use. Candidates on slates have the advantage of being able to draw on pools of friends who are unconnected, increasing the reach of their network.

Candidates should spend the evenings during the campaign phoning and emailing volunteers: asking them to work tables or offer other help, encouraging them to talk to their friends, and asking them to come to special events (parties, the forums, etc.). You must keep well-organized lists of your volunteers, especially if the contacting is split amongst several candidates/managers. This is most important on the first full day of campaigning, and during voting days to ensure your supporters have voted and are getting their friends out to vote. Get in touch with absolutely everybody you can think of, and then a few more, and don't be afraid to twist arms. If there is ever a time you need a favor from your friends, it is now.

During the week, make a point of dropping by the tables and thanking the volunteers for coming out to help, and motivate them to work harder by your example.

**Slates:** There are special features for campaigning when you are running on a partial or full slate. The most important of these is your ability to reach large numbers of personal supporters, and multiply your campaign's exposure to voters. Keep these points in mind:

1. You must promote not only yourself for your position, but your running mates. This means developing identity as a slate and selling that identity, and taking the time to

explain to voters why each of you are individually the best candidates for each position. Slates break down when members and volunteers start campaigning for “their members” and split support. There should be no weak link-you should all believe in each other. You are all in it together, and you must work effectively as a team to persuade the voters.

2. To be effective in recruiting volunteers, it is better if slate members are not from the same group of friends or faculty. A slate has the potential to encompass many diverse groups of people who share a common interest, bringing together people from all corners of campus who are talented and winners. Use all these volunteers, and have them mix.

3. Candidates should not speak in the same classes; the beauty of having several candidates is that you can multiply the number of students you reach. This is when having the full class list becomes useful-you can reach every faculty, and where support in an area is good for you, go there often to keep reminding them of your message. It is important to keep a balance in your speaking so each candidate is individually exposed to all the important parts of campus, and so students see all the slate members. And when speaking to classes, it is very important to create a strong identity with the slate name that voters can carry through to the Election Day.

4. As with classroom speaking, it is important that the candidates not “bunch up” during the day, but remain separate, keeping visibility high in all parts of campus. Use the larger volunteer base to maintain a large number of tables, and to develop visibility in areas of campus other campaigns don’t have the resources to reach regularly.

## The Volunteers

As campaigns become smaller, volunteers are often one of the most underutilized resources campaigns have access to. This should be a cause of concern for candidates, because with a few small exceptions only campaigns that use a broad base of support are competitive, particularly in the Presidential race. But what do volunteers do--what is their role in the campaign week? Here are the most common roles volunteers fill during the campaign.

**Tables/literature Distribution:** Tables are important for two parts of active campaigning: the distribution of materials, and the creation of campaign visibility/identity. It should be possible for you to permanently man tables from 07:30 to 16:00 in the main locations of CAB, SUB, ETLC and HUB/Tory, with two volunteers present; the more the better.

1. Tables should be coordinated by one individual, who can compose the schedule, keep track of volunteers and provide direction and motivation for the day. These “Area Captains” provide much needed continuity and management for the campaign.

2. Tables are for answering questions and distributing literature: particularly at class change time, all the volunteers in the area should be stationed at the main traffic flow points in the building to give away handbills and encourage students to vote for your campaign. Volunteers should NOT be seated at the tables waiting for voters to come to them; for that matter, neither should the area captain or the candidate. It is important to be positive, active, and energetic, portraying a confident, organized image to the passing voters.

3. It is important volunteers constantly man the tables; if a table will be vacant for an hour, the materials should be placed somewhere safe. Better yet, a surplus of volunteers from another table can be moved there to take up the slack.

4. If there are simply more volunteers than are needed to distribute literature at that location, use them in other ways by sending them to distant points in the same complex to hand out materials, chalk classroom boards, or put up extra posters and check on existing ones.

5. Keep some paper at the tables for those occasions when a student has a question your volunteers are unable to answer, and have them leave their name and number. Then make sure you call them that night with an answer, or at least to discuss the issue. Not calling, or doing it poorly, is as good as telling someone to vote for your opponent.

6. Use volunteers in buildings they are in most, and where they will recognize/be recognized by the largest number of students. Putting most Law student in Engineering or CAB will be much less productive than using them in HUB Mall where they can speak to friends passing by.

7. If you can, have music at the table-something cheerful. Your volunteer should be having fun; voters will pick up many cues about your campaign from their mood, and will react accordingly. A campaign that appears well organized, open, friendly and full of likeable, intelligent supporters will do better than one that does not.

Some of your volunteers will only have a few hours to spare during the campaign; others will be able to give you many hours, often during a break in their schedule. While both are valuable, the more hours you can get from the same person, the better: scheduling is easier, and voters in that part of campus will identify your campaign with their consistent presence.

Speaking: Some volunteers familiar with public speaking may wish to talk in classes on behalf of your campaign. Particularly in cases where the student is well known and liked this can be a great way to expand your publicity to smaller classes where it is inefficient for the candidate to talk. While you should encourage the volunteer to talk to all their friends about the campaign, you should not have people speaking in classes at random. Organize volunteers, be certain they understand just what to say-what message you

wish them to reiterate-and keep track of which classes they have spoken in, it can be embarrassing and a waste of time to speak in the same class several times.

**Posters and Banners:** You will need a large crew of volunteers on the first night of campaigning to put up posters and banner, and volunteers willing to wait continuously with your banners through the day to reserve the space you want. Volunteers can be paired, given specific buildings they are familiar with, and plenty of posters and tape. In this way you can get the best locations for posters as quickly as possible. It helps if you already have a good idea what some prime locations are so you can get ready, and if you take the time before 6pm to divide the posters into batches and put rolls of tape on cafeteria trays. It is very important you explain all the rules about posters to the volunteers, and that they follow them. Any posters they hang in violation are expensive and useless waste of resources. You should have a few knowledgeable people travel around after the posters are up to check where and how well they are hung, and move them where appropriate. In major traffic areas, votes should always be reminded of your campaign. And the more lone posters you get in a good location (a little known but much used lounge; a narrow pillar with only room for one; beside a clock; on a professor's podium; above or on a window) the better.

Of course you will also need volunteers to help you make the banners: either method (stencils or overhead projector) is labor intensive. You will have to devote a very intensive couple of days to this.

**Networking:** One of the reasons it is important to keep in constant contact with you volunteers is to keep them motivated and networking amongst friends. Many well-intentioned people will be reluctant to aggressively phone their friends or bring up the campaign in conversation-your constant encouragement helps them do that. It is always great news when a volunteer brings a friend by to hang out with them during a table shift, start working for or just to find out more. In an election where the margin of voters is typically well below 3000, 75 volunteers pulling out two or three friends each is the margin of victory. Have your volunteers introduce you to as many of their friends as possible so you meet them personally. Even if they are not political, this personal contact with someone their friend approves of may be enough to win their support-it is unlikely they will have a similar experience with another candidate. It is now quite common for volunteers and candidates to wear expensive badges or buttons that are colorful, contain the names of the candidate, and are instantly recognizable. Having dozens of volunteers around campus constantly wearing your badge and showing support is yet another reinforcement, and a non-verbal testimonial students value.

**Forum Attendance:** It is always a good idea to make a strong showing at the Dinwoodie Forum, and this goes for the candidate and the volunteers. Move as many volunteers as you can to the Forum, and encourage all your supporters to come and cheer you on. Have your volunteers publicize the forum themselves, and bring undecided friends out to see you and the other candidates. And be sure you are visible at the forum, with more information about the campaign for those interested.

## The Manager and Core Campaign Team

While there are many ways of organizing the core management team, the tasks they must complete during the campaign period are the same. For larger campaigns, three models of management have been most common in the past:

Three-tiered, with Senior Managers (responsible for specific types of work such as promotions, volunteers, strategy & research), Area Managers (three or four in charge of tables/zones of campus) and General Volunteers.

Two-tiered, where area managers are replaced by direct management from a smaller core team with greater responsibility.

Non-hierarchical, which is seldom found and usually only exists in very small campaigns where each person is defined by function and less management of large resources (mainly volunteers) is needed.

No successful attempt at having more than three tiers of organization has been made, and it is unlikely one would work. In the first two models it is possible to have a single ultimate campaign manager, or a team of two with shared duties and equal status. Some campaigns have also used the position as manager almost solely as a figurehead responsible for liaison with the CRO in daily meetings, and split up the functional management of the campaign amongst other less public figures. Each model can be very effective if it suits the personalities and abilities involved, and if everyone is clear which person bears responsibility and decision making power in different task areas. How much work each person takes on, and how much responsibility or power they bear, is highly variable.

During campaigning, there are many tasks that must be completely on a one-time basis or regularly throughout the week. They include the following.

**Coordination of Tables:** The team must ensure that tables are manned continuously over the course of any given day by at least two individuals. Where breaks in the schedule occur, someone should be designated to temporarily close them and store the materials, or work there alone. Just as important as keeping track of the volunteers is ensuring the tables open on time and that everything is there: a table, chairs for breaks, and a box with posters/table skirt, tape, enough literature for the day, a schedule of who works, signup sheets for future shifts, and a place for students with questions to write their names and phone numbers. In the main traffic areas (especially CAB) tables should be up and running by 0730 h at the latest to get the best location, and to catch the early traffic from the busses and residence. Opening at 0800 is foolish, as the rush of students going to classes has passed. This is the most difficult shift to get volunteers to work for, but the most important. If you can disperse a large number of people at different points in the complex, you can distribute material to virtually every student passing through. On the first and last days this is valuable exposure.

In addition to making sure the tables open on time and with all the needed materials, the team should ensure that their closure at the end of the day is just as orderly, and that all supplies are brought back to a central location and then to your office or headquarters off campus. This, along with early evening, is a good time to assess how the day went and what needs to be done, as well as coordinate schedules for the evening.

**Speaking:** All the activities related to speaking in classes and scheduling have already been mentioned. It will ultimately fall to one or two individuals to all this work and keep information coordinated. During the first two days, it is also important that an experienced public speaker accompanies candidates around to support them in classroom and one-on-one speaking, and offer constructive criticism to help them improve.

**Scheduling:** The core team should coordinate information related to the candidate's schedule, and ensure that groundwork is done for meetings with clubs, fraternities, residence groups, faculty associations and other groups, and then follow through by getting the candidate there.

**Publicity:** The team will need to prepare for the first day blitz of posters and banners, and make daily checks on the posters to replace any that are missing. You should have called enough people to make the jobs small and easy, divided the posters for the volunteers and provided them with a detailed explanation of the rules, and designated individuals to monitor the posters that day and throughout the campaign.

With literature, you will need to ensure that enough material exists at any given time/location, and you will have to coordinate the production of any new material. If you are photocopying during the election week, you will have to plan ahead to account for how long the work will take. If you wish to produce new material during the campaign, you will have to write and layout the publication, have it approved by the CRO, obtain photocopies and cut the handbills before it will be available. Never wait until you run out of material, otherwise you will have a large gap of time where you have nothing to distribute and your campaign will appear disorganized. You should also be careful, however, not to overproduce any one material, as this reduces your flexibility. This is very true of your first introductory handbill (which people will tire of) and your final piece of material (there is no point having large amounts of paper left over – the money could have been better spent). Most important of all, you must have one individual to keep track of the budget and approve expenditures. You should always know how much has been spent and how much remains; you will be disqualified if you are over-budget.

**Liaison:** Every campaign must have a designated manager to liaise with the CRO. This person must be very familiar with the rules, constantly available, able to attend the daily meetings, and have the ability to act quickly to rectify any violations, make complaints or defend your campaign. This person should also continuously liaison with other managers, keeping track of the mood of the campaign, learning about their strategies and morale, and dealing with areas of friction before they blow up into major disputes. It is best to be friends with as many other campaigns as possible – to be liked by

everyone and seen as a tough but honest opponent is of great value to your reputation. In an election where many campaigns will not be running directly against you, building relationships with key people in those campaigns encourages their volunteers to vote for your candidate. At the same time, you often do not want to become too close to any other campaign unless you can afford alienating their opponents. In any year, this judgment reflects a unique dynamic and your personal strategy. There is no correct strategy, merely a need for one.

The CRO liaison must have power, be able to write and speak to complaints you wish to file, and must be able to get along with the CRO. This last quality is vital. If the relationship between those two individuals becomes poisoned, it can hurt your campaign severely. It is best at that point to swallow ego and reshuffle function if a more productive relationship can be obtained.

Motivation: The core team and the candidate should have a good rapport and be able to work well with little sleep and a lot of stress during the week. During the week you will have to deal with the unexpected, and you must be able to respond well during a crisis. Each individual can expect to have different high and low points; the group should work together at keeping morale up. This is very important for the candidate, who will need many things done for them – from scheduling to feeding. During the week a manager and candidate share decision making ability at least equally, the difference being that the candidate should be sheltered from some of the stress and anxiety so they can be well rested and upbeat when phoning volunteers or campaigning. The candidate is the leader; they are ultimately in charge and at least hear about everything, but exactly how you accomplish this in practical terms varies from group to group.

# IV

## Propaganda

Propaganda: Allegations, facts opinions and the like systematically spread with the intention of helping or harming or some individual, group, institution or movement.

At the core of any campaign is a communications strategy: a decision about various mediums you wish to use to convey your message to campus voters. An important element of successful campaigns at the University of Alberta has been the production of printed material, primarily posters and literature. In fact, while these constitute almost all of the “propaganda” used by campaigns today, there are a wide variety of tools available for use.

Before setting out to produce materials, you need to make a number of decisions. Each of these factors should influence what you decide to create.

Deciding how much to spend is one of the major decisions campaigns have to face. With strict limits on the budget, it is important to cost-out every aspect of your campaign in advance. Failure to do so may result in you going over-budget and being disqualified, or being substantially under-budget, thus failing to effectively use your resources.

When you have established your fixed costs, see how much money remains. In some respects, full or large slates are in a better position here because their large sum of money permits spending on big-ticket items such as two or four color posters, or newspaper advertising.

Keep costs low. Consult with a printer as early as possible about their deadlines, fees and paper and ink alternatives. Try to find a combination that gives you a professional appearance without breaking the bank. And shop around. There are sometimes big differences in price between printers, based on overheads, processes, material and the amount of work you expect them to do. You are almost always best to give them material camera-ready or prepared on disc; when the printers do work for you, costs increase.

You will need to have someone to produce your posters, literature or other material for free or at a nominal rate. The election rules allow for poster and web design as a

universal resource. The key is to find a friend who is competent with a computer, and who has a good eye for design. If you have not written all the copy, or developed a poster design, you will need to have someone do this also.

The most important consideration you have before deciding what material to produce is that of defining your objectives. You need to have a very clear idea:

- What your message is
- How the message affects what you should produce
- Who your primary and secondary audiences are
- What methods will reach that audience

A campaign whose objective is to promote environmental conservation would be wise not to reproduce vast volumes of handbills or posters. A campaign which desires an image as an “outsider” who is not part of the “system” would be not wise to faithfully reproduce material just like that of previous year’s campaigns or its competitors, but instead to create material clearly different in style or content.

### Approval

All campaign materials you wish to use must first be approved in writing by the CRO. This is important because it affects how quickly you can make changes during the campaign, and it has a big impact on your production schedule. You may find yourself in the campaign week thinking ‘we should put sandwich boards in front of our tables and write messages on them.’ A fine idea. But don’t spend half the night making them and then put them up the next morning. Material that has not been approved in advance, no matter how innocuous, will not be treated kindly by the CRO. In this example, you would need to seek approval from the CRO for the idea of putting up sandwich board. The CRO may ask you for an estimate of the cost, or require you to show that the amount you will spend will be within your budget. You must then have approved written copies of whatever material will appear on the boards. If you simply wish to post your existing handbills that have already been approved, you would just inform the CRO of that. But if you or your volunteers wanted to place other signs or notices there, a draft must be presented and approved before being displayed.

This process, which can feel cumbersome at times (usually when you are pressed by a printer to meet a deadline and you can’t find the CRO or it is after-hours) is in place to keep order in the campaign, and ensure your protection. Don’t grumble, because once material is approved for you to distribute, you can usually do so free from worries that complaints will have it withdrawn. The CRO’s approval is a guarantee that you have met the rules. This is much better than you releasing material that is against election rules and having to withdraw, losing the money out of your budget, and being penalized or disqualified.

The other reason for these restrictions is the budget. The CRO needs to monitor all of your campaigning to ensure that everything is accounted for in the budget.

The exact approval process varies from year to year. The campaign rules distributed should indicate to you what your CRO has created. Generally, you provide printed or electronic copies of literature or posters, which are approved, and then receive a go-ahead to have them reproduced at the SUPC or receive a Purchase order which allows you to go to an outside printer. You cannot go to the outside printer before you have a purchase order, or have items copied before they are approved on the assumption that they will be. This is very important for posters, which must be ordered as soon as nominations have closed. Because nominations close Friday, a purchase order is not available until Monday. Your printer should know this beforehand. For banners, you usually only need provide a sketch of your wording, and an indication of the dimensions. For other material, requirements may vary, but with printed material, text and layout are usually required.

Consult with your CRO early, and be clear on the approval process. Try to obtain approval for as much of your printed materials as you can during reading week, to avoid schedule crunches later on. The more work you can get done before campaign week, the better.

**Posters and Literature:** It is conventional wisdom that the poster plays an all-important role in the campaign, and that it has come to be more widely used in recent years. While they are important, their perceived increase is more probably a result of the increasing number of candidates running in the election.

Most of the details regarding poster placement, color, size, etc. are given in the Questions section of this guide (see question 5 and 7). Similarly, information on the literature is covered by question 8. You should take the time to review the CRO's files of old campaign brochures and literature.

You should consider your options in relation to your objectives. If the purpose of a poster is to promote name recognition and visibility, then it should:

- Be bold, eye-catching and simple,
- Contain your name in print legible from 30 to 50 feet,
- Stand out from other posters and provide face recognition,
- Have a look that suits your style and your campaign message.

Two of the most common ways to achieve this are to use a novel paper size, and to use color well. Understanding design and the use of photographs is also important.

**Color:** Consider this very carefully. Some colors jump off a piece of paper and are highly visible: primarily shades of red and green. Other colors recede into paper and are often lost in the background: most blues, browns and oranges. You should be incredibly wary of using yellow—it is often not visible at anything but the highest saturations, and disappears totally in bright light on white paper. Examine posters from previous years, and consult the pantone color samples available at your printer. The best colors are bright, and have a deep, rich saturation, making them more visible at a distance. Using various shades/densities of the same color can help enhance the poster while lowering

costs. The bold look of a reverse-bleed poster, while more expensive, can also work with large, clear print. Think twice about a one-color poster: it means your photo will be that color. Also be certain you know what color will appear on the color of paper you use.

**Size, Design, Photos and Paper:** Be wary of glossy paper; many people have negative associations with it. Use a size of paper that is economical and different; be certain there is room for a clear, large photograph if you have one, and the candidate(s) name in large, legible type. Do not take the photograph outdoors; the best photos are taken indoors against neutral, uniform backgrounds, and show the candidate relaxed, friendly, confident and smiling. Be very careful about the exposure and contrasts in the photo, especially where the clothing or complexion of the candidate is very pale or dark. Only the best quality photos are worth reproducing in this manner.

Using a different shade or stock of paper can also enhance the look of the poster. Check with the printers about various sizes, prices, and stocks. The best designs are the simplest ones. The purpose of a poster is to market a very specific product. It achieves this marketing by promoting recognition of the name and face of the candidate, and tying this visibility to the literature, speaking and campaigning of the candidate. Posters may have, but do not require, slogans. Choose a slogan that is simple, short and not too cheesy. This is not as easy as it looks, which is why more and more campaigns opt not to have one. The look of a poster (typeface, special design and slogans) should be repeated in brochures, other advertising, buttons and other materials. This creates unity and identity, and a greater chance the voter will piece together different elements of your campaign. Whatever they are looking at, though, make sure your name appears and is easily read at a passing glance. Remember, it may be all they read. Whether on posters or literature, keep the print large enough to be comfortable, and avoid having a cluttered appearance to your material.

Finally, you will want to create posters in French for Campus Saint-Jean.

**Literature:** With classroom speaking, literature is the primary tool for the development of policy, promises and specific ideas about the future. It is also to introduce the electorate to the candidate's experience, ideas and approach.

A voter should be able to read a brochure and know: who the candidate is, what they believe in/want to do, and why they should vote for them.

Some campaigns produce only one brochure that they use throughout the campaign. Others, particularly presidential candidates, have a much larger scale to their efforts. Always consider if you want to leave room to produce new material partway through the campaign to respond flexibly to new issues or a new focus. It is best to have the bulk of your material produced, cut and bundles ready for distribution before campaign begins. You do not need to spend late nights, or busy days, cutting literature because a table has run out. Know your budget limits very well, and exactly how much you can produce.

If you produce literature, be sure it gets distributed. It is no use printing 6 000 flyers if you only have a few volunteers to distribute them.

There are many campaign materials other than handbills and posters, and they have been used to varying degrees of effectiveness. In previous years, campaigns have distributed in excess of 20 000 individual flyers in hand-to-hand exchanges. It is not a productive use of resources to “drop” them on lecture hall seats, benches or tables. Current production and distribution is much lower, many campaigns dealing with numbers ranging from 3000 to 8 000.

A full slate of literature might include an introductory pamphlet, two handbills about specific promises/ideas for the future, specific handbills (in French for Campus Saint-Jean; Mandarin for HUB Mall; and dealing with residence issues), and a final handbill for the last two days of campaigning. Large-scale serious campaigns have also been known to produce small volumes of humorous handbills halfway through the campaign period to lighten the tone and demonstrate a “friendly” quality. This scale is not required, nor is it often done anymore. But it can provide some useful ideas. Very importantly, with limited budgets you should not waste resources: because of this, some recommend that you not single side handbills -- you look and are wasteful. At the very least your names can go in large print on the second side. Other campaigns and managers disagree with this opinion, and no consensus exists. Very small pieces of paper may seem like a good use of paper, but give you little room and are seldom kept. On a three-panel double-sided foldout brochure, the back rear panel is the least visible and read-use it creatively. If you create “focused” handbills for residences or CSJ address special issues, but do not pander. Voters can smell cheap promises a mile away.

The most realistic approach for campaigns is to produce three high-quality handbills, with a small run of the main introductory pamphlet in French. You should be able to get all of your message out in this way. Use the tight space restrictions of the handbill format to help you focus on what commitments and ideas are most important to you. What three things matter most? What is the most important part of your experience? How are you different from the others?

Handbills can be either photocopied or printed. When photocopied, the most common formats are to do a three-column design on letter-sized paper, or a four-column design on legal-sized paper. These can be produced and laser-printed on computer, or through copying and manual layout. Use the highest quality laser print of your brochure for copying; do not use a low quality printout or make copies of a copy of a copy. The appearance and appeal deteriorate each time you do so.

When printed, it is best to produce all your material beforehand, and then layout the different handbills on a single piece of paper that can be cut by the printer. This option allows the use of high quality color, and gives you a large volume of product. Its limitations are that you can fit a limited number of handbills onto one sheet, they all must be written in advance, and you will want to make a large run to justify the expense. In some cases, these may not be limitations at all, but instead advantages.

## Other Materials

There are many campaign materials other than handbills and posters, and they have been used to varying degrees of effectiveness.

The most common campaign item now is the button. No longer usually a button, it consists of a plastic nametag holder and a card insert with the candidate or campaign name, and possibly a small slogan. With very little room, often only the names are promoted. These can be worn by the candidates, volunteers and supporters all day: on clothes, backpacks, etc and create high visibility. It particularly extends visibility when volunteers wear them constantly, as voters are reminded of a number of variants, the most recent of which has been the clear plastic luggage tag for attaching to backpacks.

Small campaigns may only be able to afford 50 or 100 nametags; if this is the case, use them sparingly. There is no use spending money on a nametag if it is not going to be worn to good effect. All the key volunteers should wear them, as should others who are helping your campaign. A larger campaign may be able to purchase a greater number, if so, the same priority applies: give them to people who will wear them. But here, the candidate may be able to carry some around to give to people who want to support the campaign, and volunteers may be able to hand them out to people who ask for them. Be wary of other campaigns sending around anonymous individuals to ask for a button; this can quickly deplete your resources.

Other products have been used to create an image or identity, particularly where slates are involved. While the button made a comeback and now is commonplace, higher end items tend to appear sporadically. T-shirts are always popular, and hats have been tried, although sometimes CROs have disallowed the expenditure as an illegitimate expense (one not made for campaigning, but for the personal benefit of the candidates, volunteers or student body). Other years CROs have permitted campaigns to set spending priorities with much broader limits.

There are other printed materials that can or have been used by campaigns. 1994 saw an attempt to revive an old tradition of booklets containing a detailed campaign platform. While the attempt didn't come to fruition, and can be very costly depending on how it is done, there has been a strong history of platform publishing in the Students' Union. Some campaigns choose to write a detailed platform, and then have the document available at tables for people to peruse. Others have printed small booklets or other documents and distributed them rather than handbills. Something not seen since the early 80s is the printing of a four or eight page tabloid size newsprint document, detailing a slate's credentials, ideas and promises. It is difficult to say whether the lack of these documents today represents a permanent shift or evolution in campaigning, or if it is financially driven.

## Media

Campus media play a role in elections, although often a limited or self-limited one. The Gateway needs to be considered in three aspects: as an outlet for advertising, as a source of coverage, and as the publisher of candidate statements. CJSR needs to be considered as an outlet for advertising, and as a host of candidate debates in some years.

**Gateway:** Advertising rates for the paper are contained in your nomination package. Only a few campaigns have used the paper as an advertising medium, largely because the high cost prohibits other campaigning. A quarter-page ad can eat up most of an independent's budget. If you are thinking of advertising, remember that purchasing an ad does not guarantee placement; the ad you spent all of that money on may appear on page 20 rather than page 3. Given the reach of the newspaper, and the proliferation of other, cheaper methods of communication, few find this to be a cost effective means to get the word out.

Where the paper can potentially have influence is in providing coverage of the campaign and the pre-campaign period, and in making endorsements of candidates. Opinion is divided over whether a Gateway endorsement helps or hurts campaigns, but regardless, the words they choose to describe you will help create your public image. If you are portrayed as a strong, coherent speaker whose quotations make sense, you are much better off than the individual who is written off as a lightweight given to make whimsical statements.

There is very little you can do to determine how you will be covered. But you can take a few positive initiatives.

**Candid:** If interviewed, be candid and open with the interviewer. Do not mentally place yourself in an adversarial relationship with them – you have nothing to hide.

**Think First:** They will perceive you as others perceive you. Think before you speak, and consider how what you say will sound to the average student.

**Soundbites:** Know what you are there to say, have a simple and coherent message that can be condensed into a very short sentence. Come back to that theme throughout and hope that your words appear in the interview. Do not run on or make long explanations, except as background for the reporter. Keep everything you say short enough to use.

**Friendly:** Be friendly, just as you would with any student you are speaking with. The media can help you a great deal; do everything you can to let them.

The Elections Office also prints a Gateway supplement during the election with statements from all of the candidates. These statements are prepared by you, given to the CRO for approval, and then laid-out by the SU Marketing staff. The same advice applies for these statements: keep them short, and have a simple, coherent message.

The statement should be such that a voter could read it alone and be able to come to a decision. To do this they need to know who you are, what you stand for, and why they should vote for you. Some students base their decision on these statements, and certainly they often reveal big differences between campaigns in their level of organization and ability to write. If photos are published with the columns, include your poster photo, or a similar high-quality photo for recognition. Are there key words or slogans you use throughout your posters or literature? Repeat them in the column to create a unified image.

Do not write over the word limit given to you; you do not want someone else editing your words for length and deciding what you will say. It also demonstrates a lack of professionalism. And do write your column in advance; do not do it the night before, and do not take time away from campaigning in the day to write it. A good organization should take care of these details.

CJSR: The radio station plays little role in the campaign. Advertising is available, but seldom used due to cost and the relative effectiveness of the medium. The station has in the past hosted a candidate forum, but usually only for Presidential candidates as the radio format limits the potential for a larger program. The same advice applies for dealing with the radio as for dealing with other media or students.

If you do choose to pursue campus-based radio, be certain you understand how the studio and microphone work, what sound level is acceptable, and how the format will be run. Be confident, but do not be too aggressive or negative towards opposition; this can backfire. As with negative classroom speaking, there is a lot to be lost from such a display.

# V

## Understanding the Vote

The following information is based on available aggregate data from elections in the years 1999 to 2006.

The MOST IMPORTANT characteristic of the voting population is the faculty or department of origin the voter comes from. More than four-fifths (85%) of all votes are cast by students in six faculties, while a further 900 votes are accounted for in nine smaller faculties

Faculty	Number of Votes Cast	Percentage of Faculty	Percentage of Total Votes
Science	1781		
Arts	1446		
Engineering	796		
Business	345		
Ag, Life & Enviro Sciences	330		
Education	313		
Physical Education & Rec	205		
Augustana	186		
Faculté Saint-Jean	106		
Law	88		
Open Studies	78		
Medicine & Dentistry	76		
Pharmacy	67		
Nursing	54		
Native Studies	34		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5905</b>		

54.63% (3227)

The first half of voter turnout comes from the two principal faculties

Science	1781	30.15%
Arts	1446	24.48%

13.49% (796)

A further portion comes from the largest professional faculty

Engineering	796	13.49%
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16.73% (988)

The final large blocks of voters are from the three other largest faculties, although the smallest in this group is still only a quarter of the size of science.

Business	345	5.85%
AFHE	330	5.59%
Education	313	5.29%

15.15% (894)

Nine faculties are responsible for smaller turnouts, but often produce larger margins of victory for candidates with strong bases of support in them.

Phys Ed & Rec	205	3.47%	Medicine & Dent	76	1.28%
Augustana	186	3.15%	Pharmacy	67	1.14%
Faculte Saint-Jean	106	1.80%	Nursing	54	0.92%
Law	88	1.49%	Native Studies	34	0.58%
Open Studies	78	1.33%			

Total (5905)

Voter turnout certainly varies from year to year, depending on a number of issues. The data used here is an aggregate of available voter data, with the highest turnout being 2004 with 6,685 votes, and the lowest turnout being 2001 with 4,737 votes. While the number of ballots cast varies, the proportion cast by faculties remains fairly constant from year to year.

Avg. Total Ballots	5905	100.00%
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## Interpreting the Vote and Understanding Voter Trends & Turnout

What does all this mean? These numbers should be used as a guide for you when you are dividing your time for classroom speaking, one-on-one campaigning, and materials distribution. It should be obvious to everyone that it is not prudent to spend an entire day with Pharmacy students-even if you could double their turnout and bring it all to your campaign it would do you relatively little good. The bulk of your time, and particularly your classroom speaking, should be focused toward the Big Six faculties, which produce nearly all your voters.

There is a significant exception or qualifier to this strategy, however for while the smallest faculties produce one thousand votes, they often will show a strong preference for one candidate or group of candidates. The best example of this phenomenon came

from several years ago. In 1992 Kevin Kimmis and Danya Handelsman were the principle candidates for Vice-President (Academic). The ballot counting revealed a completely even split over all the polling stations; neither could develop a lead of more than 10 votes over the other. With the count even, the ballots from Cortbett Hall (Rehabilitation Medicine) were tabulated. Danya, a student from faculty, collected a margin of over 100 votes from one polling station, and thus one by the margin provided by her faculty.

A higher rate of voter cohesion most often is the result of students coming from the faculty of the individual they are voting for. Unsuccessful 1992 Presidential candidate Mark Ewanishin carried a large margin in his home faculty of Engineering, but was uncompetitive elsewhere on campus; likewise, 1991 Presidential candidate Francois Bouman won 80% of the votes cast in Lister Hall, where he had served two terms as LHSA President, but the margin was insufficient. Candidates in this position need to focus some energies on their strengths, relying on the networks of loyal friends and volunteers to produce votes amongst their core supporters. In most cases, turnout from the group in question will temporarily increase for that year, as was the case in all three of the above examples. They must be careful to remember, though, that such target markets provide an extra push over the top in the counting, and cannot produce all the votes they need.

Some of the most remarkable examples of voter cohesion have historically come from the Faculte St. Jean. Students at this campus have limited exposure to candidates and volunteers, and the bulk of voters live in the student residence. This uniformity of experience, when combined with quality volunteers from within the Faculte itself, has produce lopsided margins. In both 1991 and 1992, the two-man slates with Faculte student Randy Boissonnault as a candidate obtained near unanimity from the voters there. More extraordinary still are the results from 1989. The Direction 89 slate elected four of its six members, losing a vice-presidency to the opposing slate and the board position to the incumbent independent. While none of the six slate members came from the Faculte, several key volunteers did, and they produced support for every candidate ranging from 68.4% to 79%, while increasing turnout by a third. In the race for VP Internal, Aruna D'Souza made up a 34-vote deficit by capturing 129 votes in Faculte, compared to her opponent's 39 votes. That crucial 90-vote difference gave her a margin of victory of just 56. This result, by the way, came at a time when manual counting was still in use. The original count had shown Melinda Bang with a 1-vote victory over D'Souza. Although reversed by the recount, the margin still stands as a lesson to never stop campaigning, and to keep up with efforts to get the vote out. The 1994 victory of President Suzanne Scott over Karen Wichuk by only 10 votes continues to reinforce the lesson that you should always be working, and that every moment counts.

It is not only the total number of votes you receive in any given area of campus, then, but whether you have substantial margin of votes over your key opponent.

There are other characteristics than faculty membership that are important in the voting population. While every individual makes their own decision, it is important to understand what forces influence voters as a group.

**Age of voters:** While no data is collected formally, it is generally believed that a disproportionate section of the vote comes from first and second year students. In part, this is the product of greater interest/novelty, and a rise in apathy amongst senior students. More significant, though, is the fact that younger students in the large class sections associated with junior courses have more exposure to classroom speaking and campaigning than the student whose classes are 24 person seminars or 80 person lectures. Increased exposure to candidates increases turnout.

**Residence:** Students who are residents in Lister Hall, Faculte, or even HUB Mall often have loyalties and voting patterns more to do with their residence than their faculty. As a constituency, they often have a shared interest in certain issues or candidates, and historically have sometimes shown hesitation or mistrust when dealing with candidates from outside their social circle. As with all students, there is a level of suspicion when dealing with individuals who are only seen at campaign time, and who are absent during the remainder of the year.

**Clubs and groups:** As discussed elsewhere, fraternities are probably given more credit than they deserve for having high rates of voter cohesion. It can be argued, however, that they have a higher rate of turnout, and certainly that they have often been used in the past by candidates as a resource pool for highly visible volunteers. Understanding their influence on voting patterns is tricky, however, as they become interwoven with the other networks of friendship and influence. The same can be said for club membership. A candidate may experience a very high rate of support from a tight-knit club they are a key member of, or they may enjoy greater exposure through membership in a number of clubs which helps them expand their visibility and network. The most noticeable examples in recent years have been membership in the Ski Club, which exposes a candidate to a large number of people in a friendly social setting (a personable candidate may be able to capitalize on this); membership in the Debate Club (an experience many candidates have shared); and founding or leading a club whose members have not been politically active – Terence Filewych (92/93) drew many of his volunteers from the Ukrainian Students Society which he founded; Karen Hudson (89) was President of the Curling Club when she ran for SU President. This last phenomenon is the most important. When a candidate comes from a background or network that has not traditionally been politically involved in the Students' Union, it means the introduction of a previously excluded group of voters and volunteers which other campaigns have limited access to. This loyalty creates an important advantage.

**The politically active:** A significant number of voters are already very involved in the Students' Union, are familiar with the issues and personalities, and have defined opinions about its future direction. Along with personal friends, they compose the core of most campaigns' volunteer base. These voters are most influenced by complex personality networks. Where they have no preference, however, candidates who share

their view of the Students' Union and offer knowledge, competence and trust most often influence them. These are many of the voters at the Dinwoodie Forum, and the volunteers of other campaigns – they are certain to vote. It is very important to be perceived positively by this voting group because of its level of participation and disproportionate influence. Candidates who run negative or dirty campaigns, seem dishonest, or who have an unprofessional, unpolished image are less likely to receive the support of this group. It is in your interest to be enemies with no one.

Where ballots are cast: The year 1994 saw a shift in the voting pattern. The polling stations in CAB have historically produced the largest number of ballots, followed by HUB Mall and the Tory/Business Atrium. These areas have the highest traffic flow, and are focus points for campaigning. With the renovation to SUB, however, traffic flow has increased through the building, and voter turnout at that one poll now surpasses CAB. These central traffic areas are very important to campaigns – visibility in those areas is of great significance. This extends not only to personal campaigning, but also to tables, literature distribution and poster visibility. Campaigns should take the time to analyze turnout by faculty and poll location when developing their strategy and dividing their time.

## **The Preferential Ballot System**

One of the most significant aspects of the Students' Union Elections to note has been the evolution of the voting process over the last two decades. Prior to 1984, the Students' Union used a full-preferential ballot. From 1984 to 1988, a partial-preferential ballot was used, where voters only marked a first and second choice. If your first or second candidate no longer in the running, your vote was no longer assessed. In 1989, the Students' Union introduced the single non-transferable ballot (more commonly known as "first past the post"). As technology improved and saw the emergence of automatic tabulating systems, the move was made in the late 1990s back to a full preferential ballot. Since 2006, all Students' Union Elections, including Councillor Elections and By-Elections, have used a fully automated, Scantron-based ballot.

In the current system, on a ballot where three candidates exist, the voter is asked to mark their first, second, third and fourth choice, with "None of the Above" being an option. For a winner to be declared, one candidate must have more than 50% of the vote. When the ballots are counted, each person's first choice is recorded – in the example below, 1270 people indicated Candidate A was their first choice for the position, but this was less than half the votes cast. The last place candidate is then dropped for the second counting. For the purposes of counting, "None of the Above" is considered a candidate that can be eliminated. Anyone who voted for Candidate C as a first choice now has their second choice counted. In this case, 120 of Candidate C's supporters picked Candidate A as their second choice, 100 preferred Candidate B and only 30 chose None of the Above. Because of the strong showing of the third-place candidate, no one has a majority, so Candidate B is dropped from the count. There were 730 people who picked Candidate B as a first choice: from the number, it is clear

that 430 of them selected Candidate A over None of the Above, and 300 preferred None of the Above over Candidate A. Of the 100 voters who had Candidate C as their first choice, and Candidate B as their second, 80 preferred Candidate A and 20 voted for None of the Above. At the end of the counting, Candidate A moved past None of the Above in the count to win a majority, being the preferred second and third choice of other voters.

<b>Full Preferential Vote</b>	<b>Count 1</b>	<b>Count 2</b>	<b>Count 3</b>	
<b>None of the Above</b>	1270	1300	1620	
<b>Candidate A</b>	1150	1270	<b>1780</b>	<b>*WINNER</b>
<b>Candidate B</b>	730	830		
<b>Candidate C</b>	250			
<b>Total Votes</b>	3400	3400	3400	
<b>Needed to Win</b>	<b>1701</b>	<b>1701</b>	<b>1701</b>	

Did you follow all that? No? The concept is fairly simple, but the counting becomes a little more complex than you might expect. Because the manual counting of preferential ballots is time-consuming and prone to error, the modern-day system is fully automated, with optically-scanned ballots and electronic ranking software.

Campaigns in each of the past systems had to make it very clear to voters how they wished their preference to be recorded, and voters had to be literate with the system if they were to fully understand the consequences of their actions.