

GSS Fee Referendum

2024-25 REFERENDUM GUIDE

- 1) The referendum is called on May 15, 2024. The deadline to register for a referendum side to campaign in this referendum is May 22, 2024.
- 2) The campaign period begins on May 23, 2024 and runs to June 4, 2024. We strongly recommend referendum sides use the referendum side registration period to plan their campaigns, including designing any posters for circulation, planning how to circulate your materials, etc. GSS staff cannot advise referendum sides on how to campaign nor provide resources outside what is included in this guide, including access to listservs.
- 3) Voting will be entirely online at <https://uvicec.simplyvoting.com/>. Polls will be open 9:00AM on June 5, 2024 and close at 4:30PM June 7, 2024.
- 4) **The GSS will provide the following resources to referendum sides:**
 - ✓ The copying of (50) fifty 8.5x11 campaign posters (available at GSS office).
 - ✓ A mail out of posters: one to each graduate department. Please note: campus mail picks up from the GSS office on Wednesdays only. In order to mail out your posters, we must have them no later than May 28 at noon.
 - ✓ Circulation of a short campaign statement for each campaign side to all members subscribed to the GSS bulletin list-serve, the Grad Rep Council e-mail list and posted on the GSS website. This statement must be no longer than 500 words and must be submitted by email to votegss@uvic.ca when you submit your registration for the referendum side form.
- 5) Posters, no larger than 8.5 x 11" can be posted on all authorized posting boards on campus if approval-stamped at the UVSS Student Union Building Info Booth. Posters cannot be posted without the approval stamp, and can only be posted on bulletin boards.
- 6) Campaign sides may distribute leaflets for their campaign. Leaflets must be handed directly to the recipient and not left unattended i.e. on top of tables and chairs. If left unattended the UVIC Facilities staff will remove them.
- 7) Campaign sides may use e-mail to disseminate campaign information. Campaign sides may make use of their own formal or informal listservs.
- 8) Campaign sides are responsible for their own campaign expenses and may **not** spend more than \$250 on campaigning. Campaign expenses **must not** be used to directly incentivize voters to vote a specific way (vote buying). The Electoral Officer retains the right to check all receipts at any time.
- 9) **The Electoral Officer is Jono Qualter.** They can be reached at votegss@uvic.ca. They will handle any complaints about the election process. Complaints about election results must be lodged within 7 days of the result being announced.

Thank you and good luck!

Campaign behaviour

Campaigning involves candidates, referendum sides, and/or supporters communicating with voters about the election or referendum through:

- Public appearances or speeches (e.g. at a Meet the Candidates events)
- Advertisements via email, social media or other platforms
- Distributing posters, leaflets, etc. in compliance with the regulations outlined in this guide
- Buttons, stickers, displays, chalking on sidewalks/signs, etc.

Campaign material means any verbal (e.g., speech, classroom talk, video), digital (e.g., electronic, website, social media) or physical (e.g., paper, chalking, advertising) material produced by or on behalf of a candidate or referendum side to promote their campaign. Candidates are responsible for organizing their own campaign materials outside the provisions in point 4 above.

Candidates, supporters, and endorsers **may**:

- advertise when, where, and how to vote to all GSS members and encourage voting in the election/referendum
- organize their own meet and greet events (provided no incentives for voting are given to voters)
- authorize their supporters to distribute their posters and leaflets on their behalf
- organize their supporters to canvas around campus (e.g. knocking on grad student office doors to raise awareness about the candidates or referendum question and their platform)

Candidates, supporters, and endorsers **may not**:

- Engage in vote-buying (i.e. offering incentives to a voter to vote or not vote or to vote for a particular candidate). Vote-buying including providing electors with food and drinks where there is a real or perceived obligation to vote a certain way
- Intimidate or harass voters, including compelling voters by action or threat to vote or refrain from voting, retaliating against voters for voting or not voting, etc.
 - Voter intimidation may include aggressively questioning voters about how they intend to vote, falsely presenting yourself as an elections official, spreading false information about fellow candidates, referenda questions, or election procedures or other behaviours that violate the UVic Discrimination and Harassment policy.

When a question arises about matters not covered in this manual, the Electoral Officer will use the rules governing provincial and federal elections as our guide.

The GSS expects campaigns to be honest and respectful in their campaign communications.

Campaigning is allowed only during the campaign period. As voting takes place online, our members may be voting on any internet connected device on campus during the polling period. Knowingly campaigning within hearing range of members who are in the process of voting is not allowed.

Simply Voting is a secret ballot. All GSS members are expected to respect the privacy of those who are casting their ballot.

Who is required to register for a referendum or election campaign

GSS members are NOT required to register to campaign in order to share their opinion or make fair comment on a campaign or candidate. GSS members are encouraged to discuss the election and referendum in their conversation, in meetings of graduate students or campus organizations, on social media, or in letters to the editor. Members may share campaign material they have received from a campaign with others without registering to campaign (e.g. pass on a handbill or forward an email to other graduate students). However, only formal referendum campaigns may access GSS resources to promote their side.

Formation of referendum campaign side (i.e. campaigning for a referendum question)

All GSS referenda allow for the formation referendum campaign sides. This means that individual student(s) and group(s) can campaign for either a “Yes” or “No” vote for any referendum question. A campaign is the organized development and circulation of official campaign materials such as posters, flyers and an official campaign platform. Only formally registered campaigns may access the resources provided by the GSS, or post posters and banners on campus. Only UVIC graduate students are eligible to campaign for a referendum side. Grad students who wish to campaign for a referendum side must register with the Electoral Officer by email to votegss@uvic.ca.

There can be only one registered campaign team for each side (“yes” or “no”) on a single referendum question. The Electoral Officer will put individual students or groups who register for the same campaign side in touch with each other by email.