

# **GSS Executive Board Election**

## **2026 CANDIDATE ELECTION GUIDE**

- 1) **Nominations open at 10:00am February 9, 2026 and close February 23, 2026 at 4:00pm.**
- 2) **Your duly signed nomination form must be submitted to the GSS Electoral Officer no later than 4:00pm February 23.** Use only the official nomination form. Submit your nomination form to the Electoral Officer by email to [votegss@uvic.ca](mailto:votegss@uvic.ca). You may request that GSS staff scan your nomination form to pdf sent to your UVic email address in the GSS front office during normal business hours. Please send all your nominators signatures as a single pdf. Please send your candidate statement and picture as separate files from your nomination form.
- 3) Candidates must have 10 nominators. Candidates and nominators must be currently registered graduate students. Student numbers of candidates and nominators **will be checked**, so make sure your nominators are currently registered (or get a few extra signatures to be safe).
- 4) The campaign period begins on February 24, 2026 and runs to March 3, 2026. **Campaigning is only permitted during the campaign period.** We strongly recommend candidates use the nomination period to plan their campaigns, including designing any posters for circulation, planning how to circulate your materials, etc. GSS staff cannot advise candidates on how to campaign nor provide resources outside what is included in this guide, including access to email listservs.
- 5) Voting will be entirely online at <https://uvicusec.simplyvoting.com/>. Polls will be open 9:00AM on March 4, 2026 and close at 4:00PM March 6, 2026.
- 6) **The GSS will provide the following resources to all candidates:**
  - ✓ The organization of a Meet the Candidate event(s) on February 25, 9-10:30 during Wednesday Coffee to give candidates a platform in which to address the GSS membership.
  - ✓ The copying of (50) fifty 8.5x11 campaign posters as approved by the Electoral Officer (available at GSS office). **The GSS staff will not print, copy, or circulate posters without Electoral Officer approval.**
  - ✓ A mail out of posters which have been approved by the Electoral Officer: 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 February 17, 2025. **Email your poster to [votegss@uvic.ca](mailto:votegss@uvic.ca) by February 16 to ensure that they will be approved before being mailed out.** The GSS staff will not print, copy, or circulate posters without Electoral Officer approval.
  - ✓ Circulation of a short bio and statement of intent for each candidate 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](mailto:votegss@uvic.ca) when you submit your nomination form.
  - ✓ Candidates can have a digital photo posted along with their campaign statement on the GSS website. Photos will not be circulated by email due to formatting requirements. Please submit photos to [votegss@uvic.ca](mailto:votegss@uvic.ca).
- 7) Campaign materials must not contain messaging that violates [UVic's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention and Response Policy](#) or [Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

- 8) Candidates 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) Posters, no larger than 8.5 x 11" can be posted on all authorized posting boards on campus in accordance with the [UVic poster policy and procedures](#). Candidate posters must first be approved by the Electoral Officer in writing (email posters to [votegss@uvic.ca](mailto:votegss@uvic.ca)). Candidates must then get the posters stamped for approval at the GSS Front Office. Posters cannot be posted without the approval stamp. Posters may only be affixed to authorized boards on campus. There are posting boards on the first floor of most UVic buildings. Per the UVic poster policy, each candidate may post a maximum of sixty (60) posters.
- 10) Candidates may distribute handbills/leaflets for their campaign provided they email a PDF copy of the handbill/leaflet to the Electoral Officer at [votegss@uvic.ca](mailto:votegss@uvic.ca) and receive approval in advance of distribution. Handbills/leaflets are made at the candidate's expense. Handbills/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.
- 11) Candidates may use e-mail and social media to disseminate the materials for their campaign which have been approved by the Electoral Officer. Candidates may make use of their own formal or informal listservs. Candidates may solicit and organize supporters to campaign on their behalf. All individuals engaged in campaigning activities **must** be currently registered UVic graduate students. Candidates are responsible for the behaviours of their supporters during official campaigning activities. Supporters may **not** contribute financially in any way to a campaign.
- 12) Candidates may solicit endorsement from campus organizations **only** if that organization includes currently registered UVic graduate students, is independent from the candidate (i.e. the candidate does not hold office or authority over the organization), complies with all GSS campaign regulations, and registers their intent to endorse a candidate with the Electoral Officer prior to engaging in any campaign activities. **Campus organizations must register their endorsement of a candidate by emailing [votegss@uvic.ca](mailto:votegss@uvic.ca) no later than the close of nominations.**
- 13) Candidates are responsible for any campaign activities carried out by or campaign materials produced by all third parties on behalf of the candidate. Candidates are responsible for ensuring compliance with the GSS election rules and University posting regulations.
- 14) Candidates are responsible for removing poster materials (posters, social media posts, handbills/leaflets) prior to voting starting.
- 15) **The Electoral Officer is Semyon Drozdetsckii!** They can be reached at [votegss@uvic.ca](mailto: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!*

## Definitions

**Campaigning** – means any activity in which candidates, supporters or endorsers communicate with voters about the election or referendum through:

- Public appearances or speeches (e.g. at the 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 6 above.

**Endorser** – means a UVic campus organization that includes currently registered UVic graduate students, is independent from the candidate (i.e. the candidate does not hold office or authority over the organization) and who engages in campaigning in support of and/or on behalf of a candidate for the Graduate Students' Society's Executive Board. Endorsers must adhere to all GSS campaign rules.

**Referendum campaign** – A campaign is the organized development and circulation of official campaign materials such as posters, flyers and an official campaign platform, by an organized group of UVic graduate students and/or campus organizations who include UVic graduate students who campaign for or against a referendum question. Referendum campaigns may not endorse Executive Board candidates. For more information on referendum campaigns, please see the GSS Referendum 2026 Campaign Guide.

**Supporter** – means a currently registered UVic graduate student who engages in campaigning in support of and/or on behalf of a candidate for the Graduate Students' Society's Executive Board. Supporters must adhere to all GSS campaign rules.

### Campaign behaviour

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.

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 & greet events (provided no incentives for voting are given to voters)
  - Please note: candidates are responsible for complying with all booking policies and procedures for the space(s) they are considering hosting events in.
- authorize their supporters to distribute and remove their posters on their behalf
- organize their supporters to canvas around campus (e.g. knocking on grad student office doors to raise awareness about the candidates 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 includes 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.

### Board work expectations

Candidates for the Executive Board must be available for ~34 hours of work per month, including a minimum of three board/committee meetings during GSS office hours per month, regular (i.e. 1-5 per month) UVic committee/leadership meetings during normal business hours, and monthly GRC meetings on Tuesday evenings. The Chair and Director of Finance should be able to sign cheques at Halpern Centre during GSS office hours. Please also note that the work of the board is very intense in September and candidates should be prepared to conduct up to 50 hours of work during office hours that month.

Candidates are asked to make themselves available Monday, March 30, 10-11:30am for a transition board meeting and for training for up to 20 hours between March 25 and April 18. Board members elect are invited to attend the March meeting of the GRC Committee they will be chairing as of April. Please contact the GSS office for meeting schedules.

### Brief Position Descriptions:

**Chair:** leads the Board and guides the Board & GRC in accomplishing their goals. They are responsible for oversight of the Annual Plan and GSS governance. Chairs the Bylaw and Policy Committee.

**Director of Finance:** prepares the annual budget and oversees the annual audit. Ensures the financial health and transparency of the GSS. Chairs the Finance Committee and Appeals Committee.

**Director of Internal/University Relations:** acts as the primary liaison between the Society and University administration. Jointly with the Director of External Relations, they lead the Society's advocacy campaigns. Vice-Chair of the Advocacy and Campaigns and Appeals Committees.

**Director of External Relations:** acts as primary liaison between the Society and all levels of government and with media. Jointly with the Director of Internal/University Relations, they lead the Society's advocacy campaigns. Chairs the Advocacy and Campaigns Committee.

**Director of Student Life:** plans GSS-sponsored activities and participation in campus-wide events like Orientation. Liaises with student groups, clubs, etc. Chairs the Events Committee.

A longer description of roles can be found in the GSS Board Job Descriptions policy [here](#).

### Quick Reference: Calendar of Important Election Dates

<b>February 4, 2026</b>	Meet the Board event!
<b>9–10:30am in Side Project</b>	Thinking about running for election but have questions about what it's like to serve on the board? Come ask our current board at Wednesday Coffee!

<b>Monday, Feb 9, 2026, 10:00am</b>	Nominations Open, packages available at <a href="http://gss.uvic.ca/election">http://gss.uvic.ca/election</a> and at the GSS general office
<b>Monday, Feb 23, 2026, 4:00pm</b>	Nominations Close.
<b>Feb 16 – 20, 2026</b>	Please note the GSS office closed for Reading Week. The Electoral Officer can still be reached by email.
<b>Feb 24 – Mar 3, 2026</b>	Campaign period.
<b>February 25, 2026 9–10:30am in Side Project</b>	Meet the Candidates event!  Want to hear from the candidates for the Board? Come to Wednesday Coffee to ask your questions and hear why they're the right people to get your vote.
<b>Mar 4, 9:00am – Mar 6, 4:00pm PST</b>	Voting! All voting is conducted online: <a href="https://uvicusec.simplyvoting.com/">https://uvicusec.simplyvoting.com/</a>  Campaigning during the voting period is not permitted.
<b>Mar 9, 2026</b>	Preliminary results posted on the GSS website.
<b>Mar 16, 2026</b>	Deadline to file an appeal.
<b>Mar 24, 2026, 5:00PM</b>	GSS SAGM – Electoral Officer makes a formal election report to the members. Any seats remaining vacant are filled through an election at the SAGM.

Bylaw IV of the *GSS Constitution and Bylaws* governs all University of Victoria Graduate Students' Society elections. The bylaws are posted online here: <https://gss.uvic.ca/forms-pdfs/constitution-bylaws/>

**Current election information will be posted:** <http://gss.uvic.ca/election>