

Attachment 1

It is the position of both Deputy Returning Officers that the voting days for the Vice-President (Student Life) by-election should take place on the same voting days for the 2011 General Council Election, March 24 & 25.

Specifically, the Elections Office requests that DIE Board use its authority to allow the VPSL by-election to occur concurrently with the 2011 General Council Election, to take place March 24 and 25.

The Elections Office believes that this is beneficial in this instance because:

- Having the VPSL by-election on separate dates from the Council General Election brings the serious possibility of low voter turnout. Although by-elections historically have a low voter turnout, following s. 75(4) of Bylaw 2000 conflicts with the realities of **a)** subjecting voters to a third round of voting in a single academic term, and **b)** having voting occur days before final exams. These two factors risk pushing voter turnout to extremely low levels, and thus risk affecting the legitimacy of the VPSL by-election.
- It will be extremely difficult for the Elections Office to maintain proper staffing levels to administer a by-election so close to the exam period. Exams risk making the availabilities of Poll Clerks and Poll Captains virtually non-existent. The Elections Office risks cutting the number of polling stations in half at best if s. 75(4) is followed. The polling stations typically account for 25 percent of overall voter turnout and serve as an effective marketing vehicle.
- Additionally, the mental health of senior Elections Office staff needs to be stressed. The DRO (Human Resources) has two other jobs and is a full-time student. The DRO (Marketing) is a full-time student, has two ongoing projects with an on-campus student organization as a volunteer, and serves as an administrator for a non-profit organization. Notwithstanding the effectiveness of the next Chief Returning Officer, the DROs risk making significant mistakes in discharging their duties if subjected to a third election so close to exams. These mistakes risk tainting the credibility of the by-election beyond repair.

For the above reasons, it is appropriate and just in the circumstances the Students' Union faces, as well as the VPSL candidates. The Elections Office is pleased to have the support of David McBean (please see Attachment 2) and Colten Yamagishi (Please see Attachment 3) for this application. Both have expressed interest to the Elections Office in having the voting days for the VPSL by-election take place at the same time as the 2011 General Council Election.