

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## 1. MEMBERS OF THE ELECTORAL COMMITTEE

Director of College Affairs ..... Marcus Ng  
Executive Director/Chief Returning Officer..... Brynn Joyce  
Interim Organiser Advocacy & Governance/Deputy Returning Officer ..... McKenzie Hutchison  
Women Students' Representative..... Ridhi Bhatia

## 2. MEETINGS OF THE ELECTORAL COMMITTEE

The Electoral Committee met several times over the course of the election to review disqualification appeals.

## 3. SCHEDULE OF THE ELECTION

The election was scheduled for October 2 at 10AM and closed October 4 4PM as per the Bylaws. The election was held online using Simply Voting software.

## 4. VACANT/EXPIRING POSITIONS

All 12 positions were vacant. No student ran for the Indigenous Students' Representative position

## 5. CANDIDATES

The following nominees met the following requirements to become candidates:

- Submit a complete and valid nomination form
- Attend an orientation session
- Sign a candidate roles and responsibilities acknowledgment form.

### Accessibility Representative

Joshua Belonio  
Manjot Kaur

### Broadway Campus Representative (2)

Arshpreet Kaur  
Prabhdeep Singh Pannu

### Chairperson

Rishabh Pandey  
Rahul Ranwa \*Disqualified before voting started\*  
Jaskaran Singh  
Dilraj Sandhu

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## **Director of College Affairs**

Karthik  
Mayur Patel  
Jagraj Singh  
Tanveer Singh  
Chandan Verma

## **Director of Events**

Isabella Cheung  
Priya Gupta  
Harleen Kaur  
Sarah Judd Parmar  
Snehdeep Rattu  
Ashmeet Singh

## **Director of Internal Affairs**

Gurdeep Singh Gill  
Howell Repaja  
Mahakdeep Singh  
Ash Yadav

## **Downtown Campus Representative (2)**

Ravinder Pal Kour  
Akashdeep Singh  
Gurpreet Singh  
Jag Singh  
Sehajpreet Singh

## **Pride Representative**

Jaskaran Singh  
Melika Heidarian

## **Women Students' Representative**

Darnoop Kaur  
Navroop Kaur  
Banita Sanawa

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## 6. RESULTS

**1474 ballots submitted of 10237 eligible voters — 14.4%**

### Accessibility Representative

Joshua Belonio

Votes: 359 (34.7%)

**Manjot Kaur \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 677 (65.3%)

Votes Talled: 1474

Abstentions: 438 (29.7%)

### Broadway Campus Representative (2)

**Arshpreet Kaur \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 491 (42.2%)

**Prabhdeep Singh Pannu \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 672 (57.8%)

Votes tallied: 1474

Abstentions: 497

### Chairperson

**Rishabh Pandey (Disqualified)**

Votes: 510 (43.2%)

**Dilraj Sandhu \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 297 (25.2%)

**Jaskaran Singh (Disqualified)**

Votes: 373 (31.6%)

Votes tallied: 1474

Abstentions: 294 (19.9%)

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## Director of College Affairs

Karthik

Votes: 182 (18.6%)

Mayur Patel

Votes: 81 (8.3%)

Jagraj Singh

Votes: 249 (25.5%)

**Tanveer Singh \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 272 (27.8%)

Chandan Verma

Votes: 193 (19.8%)

Votes tallied: 1747

Abstentions: 497 (33.7%)

## Director of Events

**Isabella Cheung \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 320 (28.0%)

Priya Gupta

Votes: 169 (14.8%)

**Harleen Kaur (Disqualified)**

Votes: 317 (27.7%)

Sarah Parmar

Votes: 34 (3.0%)

**Snehdeep Rattu (Disqualified)**

Votes: 248 (21.7%)

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Ashmeet Singh  
Votes: 55 (4.8%)

Votes tallied: 1747  
Abstentions: 331 (22.5%)

## **Director of Internal Affairs**

Gurdeep Singh Gill  
Votes: 297 (27.4%)

**Howell Repaja \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 312 (28.8%)

Mahakdeep Singh  
Votes: 218 (20.1%)

Ash Yadav  
Votes: 258 (23.8%)

Votes tallied: 1474  
Abstentions: 389 (26.4%)

## **Downtown Campus Representative (2)**

**Ravinder Pal Kour \*Successful Candidate\***

Votes: 305 (20.0%)

**Akashdeep Singh (Disqualified)**

Votes: 285 (18.7%)

Gurpreet Singh  
Votes: 297 (19.5%)

**Jag \*Successful Candidate\***

403 (26.5%)

**Sehajpreet Singh (Disqualified)**

Votes: 403 (26.5%)

Votes tallied: 1474  
Abstentions 364 (24.7%)

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## Pride Representative

Jaskaran Singh \*Successful Candidate\*

Votes: 568 (63.0%)

Melika Heidarian

Votes: 334 (37.0%)

Votes tallied: 1474

Abstentions: 572 (38.8%)

## Women Students' Representative

Darnoop Kaur

Votes: 264 (24.1%)

Navroop Kaur \*Successful Candidate\*

Votes: 464 (42.3%)

Banita Sanawa

Votes: 368 (33.6%)

Votes tallied: 1474

Abstentions: 378 (25.6%)

## 7. COMPLAINTS

The CRO received many complaints for any of the following offences:

Minor Offences:

- Posting on non SUVCC poster boards
- Posting on social media platforms not approved by the Electoral Committee
- Altering other candidates campaign material
- Using unapproved campaign materials

Major Offences:

- Running on a slate
- Engaging in harassment of any kind against members, other candidates, members of the Board or College officials
- Interfering in the voting process
  - Specific student and non-students forcing other students to vote for candidates against their will
- Making, joining, or participating in campaigning that defames other candidates, members of the Committee, or officials of the Students' Union and/or College
- Removal or vandalism of other candidate's campaign materials

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

- Being endorsed by an outside organisation

Most of these complaints were able to be followed up on however some could not be either due to the complainants not submitting a proper complaint or a lack of evidence to follow up on the complaint. Complainants were informed how to submit a formal complaint.

This election was the most "violent" the CRO has managed and is concerned about the future of running a democratic election at SUVCC. In previous years the majority of complaints or offences witness by the Electoral Committee were minor offences. This year the vast majority were major offences including interfering in the voting process through forcing other to vote for candidates against their will, and candidates friends threatening other candidates.

## 8. RULINGS

Minor Offences:

13 minor offences occurred during the election. The offences were;

- Posting on a non SUVCC poster boards
- Posting on Snapchat
- Printing campaign material not approved by the CRO
- Campaigning before the start of the campaign period

Major Offences

7 Candidates committed major offences and were disqualified. All candidates appealed the disqualifications, and 3 candidates had all or some of their disqualifications removed.

Candidate: Rahul Ranwa

Offence: Engaging in harassment of another candidate (Threats of physical violence against another candidate)

See Appendix A

This disqualification was appealed and overruled by the Electoral Committee as they believed there was insufficient evidence that the caller was Rahul's friend.

Offence: Participating in campaigning that defames SUVCC officials.

See Appendix A

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee.

Candidate: Rishabh Pandey

Offence: Running on an apparent slate

See Appendix B.

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee

Candidate: Akashdeep Singh

Offence: Running on an apparent slate

See Appendix B.

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Candidate: Gurdeep Gill

Offence: Running on an apparent slate

See Appendix B.

This disqualification was appealed and overruled by the Electoral Committee, citing a lack of evidence.

Candidate: Sehajpreet Singh

Offence: Running on an apparent slate

See Appendix B.

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee

Candidate: Snehdeep Kaur

Offence: Running on an apparent slate

See Appendix B.

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee

Candidate: Jaskaran Singh

Offence: Engaging in harassment of another candidate (Threats of physical violence against another candidate)

See Appendix C

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee

Offence: Interfering with the voting process

See Appendix C

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee

Candidate: Harleen Kaur

Offence: Running on an apparent slate.

See Appendix D

This disqualification was appealed but upheld by the Electoral Committee

## 9. STATEMENT OF THE CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER

The 2024-25 Board of Directors election was the most well participated election post covid at SUVCC. 34 students took out nomination packages with 32 completed the nomination process and participating in the election. It also saw the highest voter turnout in recent years with 14.4% of votes casting a ballot. Anticipating a higher participation this year, the Board chose to appoint a Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) to assist the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) which ended up being very necessary as both the CRO and DRO were kept incredibly busy throughout the election.



# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee

Students' Union of Vancouver Community College

Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Along with being the busiest election in recent year, this election was also the most violent. Two Chairperson candidates were disqualified for allegations of their friends threatening other candidates with physical violence if they do not step down. Students were confronted by other students, and in some cases random people who were friends of candidates, and were forced to vote for specific candidates. In some cases these students phones were taken from them and their votes cast by someone else.

The CRO is concerned that these issues will only become worse in the coming years and has outlined a list of suggestions to improve the safety and security of the electoral process while maintaining the ability of all students to participate in that process.

## 10. SUGGESTIONS

Issue #1:

Not enough space on poster boards for all candidates posters.

Solution:

- Limit posters to 20 per campus
- Empty poster board ahead of campaign period
- Black out period for non SUVCC or VCC posters during campaign period

Issue #2:

Poster limit language unclear in policy.

Solution:

Limit posters to 40 and make it a minor offence to print more than 40 posters.

Issue #3:

Students' and non students grabbing students phones and voting for them

Solution:

Return to in person elections and investigate a way to allow online students to vote online.

Issue #4:

Candidates did not have enough time to prepare of the election

Solution:

Increase the duration of the entire election period and consider moving the election to February with a term start date of May 1.

Issue #5:

Candidates wanted to use Snapchat and other unapproved social media platforms.

Solutions:

Include Snapchat on list of approved social media. Remove twitter as it does not seem to be used by any candidates. Remove the ability for candidates to request other social media platforms as it is not

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

feasible for the Electoral committee to consider and approve another social media platform during the course of an election.

## Issue #6:

The Electoral Committee lacks a robust Terms of Reference which makes it difficult to rule on edge cases not covered by the Electoral Bylaws or Policies.

## Solutions:

Review other Student Union Electoral Committee Terms of Reference to develop clearer language.

## Issue #7:

Candidates believed that the CRO and SUVCC staff were being partial to certain candidates (often current board members).

## Solution:

Amend the policy to require that the CRO and any other election staff be hired externally. Amend the policy to clarify that current board members can, and are, expected to continue to serve on the board during the election.

## Issue #8:

CRO and DRO had difficulty determining who was volunteering for candidates

## Solution:

Require candidates to submit a list of volunteers and their social media accounts before the start of the campaign period

## Issue #9:

Nominees missed info sessions and asked for make up sessions

## Solution:

Amend policy to limit the number of info session held and how late a nominee can attempt to reschedule.

## Issue #10:

Candidates waited until the day before the poles opened to request help making posters/buttons.

## Solution:

Limit the period in which candidates can sign up for help making posters and buttons.

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## Appendix A: Rahul Ranwa

Hello Rahul,

This email is to inform you that you have committed two major offences and have therefore been disqualified from the election.

### Major Offence #1: Defamation of SUVCC Officials

On Thursday, September 26, 2 anonymous posts appeared on the Instagram page @vcc.confessions stating that SUVCC is being unfair and partial to certain candidates. You also replied to one of these posts agreeing with it. This is considered a major offence in that you are "participating in campaigning that defames other candidates, members of the Committee, or officials of the Students' Union and/or College."

Myself and McKenzie have worked very hard to ensure that all candidates have a fair opportunity to campaign in this election and I believe that the above statement posted to the @vcc.confessions page falls under the category of defamation. Candidates are expected to act appropriately and your actions were not appropriate.

### Major Offence #2: Threat of Physical Violence Against Another Candidate

We received a complaint from another candidate stating that they had received a call from someone threatening to inflict harm on them and their family if they did not drop out of the election. The caller stated your name and we have a voice recording.

SUVCC does NOT tolerate violence or harassment of any kind against any candidate, member, or staff person. Please note that a report has been filed with the police and with VCC Security.

Your name will be removed from the ballot.

Regards,

Brynn

**Brynn Joyce**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

P 604-871-7072

British Columbia Federation of Students -  
Local 16



# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## Appendix B: Apparent Slate

Hello,

This email is to inform you that you have been disqualified from the SUVCC Board of Directors for running on an apparent slate. Here is the evidence as to why we believe you are running a slate.

1. On Wednesday we received a recording taken at the Broadway campus which captures Rishabh and another student (we suspect this to be Akashdeep but lack sufficient evidence) approaching students and asking them to vote for Snehdeep, Sehajpreet, and Akashdeep, while confirming they had already voted for Rishabh.
2. On Wednesday SUVCC staff witnessed Rishabh and Akashdeep get in a car together at the downtown campus. Not long after we received the above audio recording from Broadway.
3. Multiple students have submitted complaints regarding volunteers pressuring them to vote for Akashdeep, Sehajpreet, and Rishabh in the same conversation.
4. Throughout today SUVCC staff have witnessed Rishabh, Gurdeep, Sehajpreet, Akashdeep and Snehdeep standing together in the middle of the atrium downtown, collectively engaging in behaviour staff perceive to be campaign-like behaviour and often dispersing when SUVCC staff saw them.
5. SUVCC staff also witnessed these same candidates taking each other aside to have discussions.

You all received the Nominee Information Package and were made aware that running in a slate, whether real or apparent, was a major offence resulting in disqualification. You all had access to the policy and should have reviewed them. Section 3.7 of the Electoral policy states that "Candidates are expected to campaign independently, but if joint campaign activities...do occur, they must be reported to the Electoral Committee within 24 hours of their occurrence. The Electoral Committee will act accordingly."

It has now been 24 hours since the initial complaints were received and none of you have contacted us with concerns about slate activity.

Snehdeep and Akashdeep, I am aware that you are dating however the fact that you both have been witnessed standing with Sehajpreet, Rishabh, and or/ Gurdeep throughout the last two days leads me to assume that the 5 of you are running a slate.

In light of the above evidence I am disqualifying the following candidates:

Rishabh Pandey  
Akashdeep Singh  
Sehajpreet Singh  
Gurdeep Gill  
Snehdeep Rattu

Please note that you have 48 hours to submit an appeal request.

## Brynn Joyce

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

P 604-871-7072

British Columbia Federation of Students -  
Local 16



# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## Appendix C: Jaskaran Singh (Chairperson Candidate)

Hello Jaskaran,

This email is to inform you that you have been disqualified from the SUVCC Board of Directors Election for the following reasons.

1. Engaging in harassment of any kind against members, other candidates, members of the Board or College officials
2. Interfering with the voting process

### Evidence for Engaging in harassment:

Over the course of the campaign and voting period I received multiple complaints from several other candidates stating that a Nav Saini was calling them and telling them to drop out of the election. Some candidates said that there was an implicit threat that they would not be safe if they did not drop out of the election. All candidates said that Nav Saini was your brother however they were unable to provide any proof.

On Friday I received a very thorough complaint from another candidate which provided ample evidence that Nav Saini was in fact your brother. I received multiple recordings of a conversation between Nav Saini and other candidates in which Nav tells the other candidates not to interfere with Jaskaran's campaign. Implicit in that statement to not interfere was the threat that Nav will harass the other candidate if they did interfere (by submitting a complaint to me).

I am now aware of Nav Saini's history at VCC and the threats and physical altercations he was involved in prior to his graduation.

In light of the diverse candidates submitting complaints regarding Nav telling them to drop out, and the proven connection between Nav and you, I believe this is sufficient evidence to disqualify you for engaging in harassment of any kind against members, other candidates, members of the Board or College officials.

Please note that for the safety of those candidates who submitted their complaints I will not be provided the recordings they sent me.

### Evidence for interfering in the voting process:

I received multiple complaints from voters during the voting period saying that students (or in some cases non-students) had approached them, taken their phone, and completed the student's ballot for them. This is a serious violation of the democratic process and one which we do not tolerate.

Most students were unable to identify who took their phone but one was able to identify the student as a friend of yours.

I also received complaints of men standing outside the Downtown campus and confronting Indian students, asking them if they voted, asking for their phone, and in some cases attempted to vote for them. McKenzie and I personally witnessed this as well.

I spoke to you and your volunteers about these men on Thursday of last week. While you stated that you did not know these men, I witnessed your friend immediately run outside. I went outside not long after and found that those men were gone.

In light of the complaints I have received from voters and other candidates regarding these non-students and your student volunteers forcing students to vote for certain candidates and the fact that I have not received any complaints from you, Jag, and Jagraj (who we witnessed sitting with you at various times throughout the election) I am inclined to believe that these non-students and your students volunteers confronting and forcing students to vote are connected to you.

As such I feel confident in disqualifying you for Interfering in the Voting Process.

Please note that you have 48 hours from the receipt of this email to submit an appeal request to the Electoral Committee. They in turn will have 48 hours to reply to your appeal.

Again, for the safety of those candidates and students I will not be providing any records of complaints or voice recordings.

Regards,

Brynn

**Brynn Joyce**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

P 604-871-7072

British Columbia Federation of Students -  
Local 16

# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

## Appendix D: Harleen Kaur

Hello Harleen,

This email is to inform you that you are being disqualified from the SUVCC Board of Directors election for running on an apparent slate.

While investigating another candidate (Jaskaran Singh running for Chairperson) I received a number of ballot receipts from students. These ballots had the exact same votes and your name appeared on both.

When the electoral committee was review an appeal from Jaskaran they heard a voice recording in which the Jaskaran's brother Navi calls another group of candidates and, among many other things, states that they all were supposed to vote for Harleen. The electoral committee also said that you had spoken with Navi prior to the start of the election. For these reasons that electoral committee is asking that you be disqualified for running in an apparent slate alongside Jaskaran.

Please note that you have 48 hours to submit an appeal. The Electoral Committee will have 48 hours to respond.

Regards,

Brynn

**Brynn Joyce**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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P 604-871-7072

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British Columbia Federation of Students -  
Local 16



# Electoral Report

Electoral Committee  
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College  
Local 16 British Columbia Federation of Students  
Wednesday, October 16, 2024