

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #1

Current Chapter X, Section 5:

S5) The Chief Returning Officer(CRO):

- a) Shall act as the voting chair of the Elections and Appeals Committee (EAC), and the liaison between the EAC and the Council.
- b) Shall act in a supervisory capacity throughout the election. The CRO shall not act as a polling officer. The CRO is bound by all rules under Article 21.
- c) Shall not be permitted to be a candidate in the elections in question. Once hired, the CRO is no longer eligible for candidacy in the upcoming elections, but is eligible in all other elections thereafter.
- d) Shall be responsible for conducting any referenda that the VUSAC and its constituent organizations may choose to hold for the duration of the semester.
- e) Shall disseminate important information pertaining to the elections in a timely manner through all possible Victoria University and VUSAC channels, including electronic communications and posting of all Victoria University spaces. The CRO shall also be responsible for informational events, including, but not limited to, the Elections Town Hall, to be organized in conjunction with the Executive.
- f) Shall make any decisions pertaining to the elections process, including, but not limited to, elections rules, campaigning rules, and violation of election rules, in conjunction with the Executive and the EAC.
- g) Has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that elections are conducted in a fair and democratic manner, This includes supervising and monitoring candidates and poll clerks, and ensuring that all information pertaining to elections is available and accessible.
- h) The CRO may resign between election periods. In such circumstances, a new CRO shall be hired for the remainder of the academic year. Resignations shall be referred to the Executive. No resignation shall be considered as tendered between the commencement of the elections and the official release of results.
- i) Shall be advised by the VUSAC Elections Policy Document.
- j) May appoint an Assistant Chief Returning Officer (ACRO) to assist in the administration of the elections. The ACRO:
 - i. May be appointed at the discretion of the CRO, in consultation with the Elections Hiring Committee.
 - ii. Shall be appointed for the duration of the election period in question.
 - iii. Shall not be permitted to be a candidate, poll clerk, or member of the EAC for the elections in question.

Proposed Amendment:

S5) The Chief Returning Officer

- a) Is bound by the rules outlined in the Elections and Referenda Code (ERC)**
- b) Shall not be a member of the VCU**
- c) Shall supervise the elections and any referenda, and as such shall not be a candidate in the elections or the responsible party for a referenda**
- d) Unlike other members of council, the CRO is not obligated to:
 - i) attend meetings unless an update about elections or the ERC is to be given**
 - ii) hold office hours**
 - iii) attend VUSAC events**
 - iv) attend VUSAC council retreat****
- e) The CRO must undergo equity training prior to the commencement of fall elections.**
- f) The CRO may resign between election periods. In such circumstances, a new CRO shall be hired for the remainder of the academic year. Resignations shall be referred to the Executive. No resignation shall be considered as tendered between two weeks prior to the commencement of the elections and the official release of results. If the CRO is unable to fulfill their duties during this time, the executive may appoint a replacement who can be a member of VUSAC/the VCU, but may not be a candidate in the election.**
- g) May appoint an Assistant Chief Returning Officer (ACRO) to assist in the administration of elections. The ACRO:
 - i) should be a member of VUSAC if possible, if not must be a member of the VCU**
 - ii) in Spring Elections, if it is a member of VUSAC, may only be a councillor**
 - iii) must be approved by the Executive**
 - iv) must not be a candidate in the elections and, if not already, will become a neutral party for the duration of the election****

Rationale:

Regarding a: the ERC will always be the most comprehensive list of elections rules, as such it is easier to have this rather than amend the constitution every time the ERC is amended.

Regarding b: most student societies do not have a member of their own college as the CRO, this is because there can be implicit bias when you know the candidate. Whereas if it was someone who was, relatively, separate from council neutrality could be better maintained.

Regarding c: to make it clear what the job of the CRO is and that they cannot be a part of elections in anyway.

Regarding d: to create distance between the CRO and council, they should not be considered a member of council the same way other staff is, again, to create neutrality and separation.

Regarding e: as the CRO need not attend retreat there needs to be a way to ensure they still undergo equity training.

Regarding f: from constitution, good to have policy on if the CRO resigns. Adds that CRO's are not to resign less than two weeks from the start of elections so as to ensure the VUSAC executive has ample time to secure a replacement. However, sometimes that will not happen so it gives the executive a broader pool of people to appoint should the CRO be unable to fulfill their duties during elections (and likely the appointee would be a former (A)CRO or councillor).

Regarding g: clear policy on the hiring of an ACRO, allows the CRO to go external if need be (because it is necessary to have an ACRO) but prioritizes members of VUSAC. Only a councillor in the spring elections due to dynamics of power (this was something that was in practice this year). Approved by the executive because other election business is. If it were a member of the VCU they should not be allowed to endorse candidates and act as ACRO.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT #2

Current Chapter XII, Article 21, Section 4:

S4) In the Fall, before the fourth Friday in the academic year, the following members shall be elected:

- a) Three (3) First Year Councillors (must be in their first year of study)
- b) Five (5) Upper Year Councillors (must be returning VCU members)

Proposed Amendment:

S4) In the Fall, before the fourth Friday in the academic year, the following members shall be elected:

- a) Eight (8) councillors, at least three (3) of which will be first years and three (3) of which will be upper years.**
 - i) The guarantee of three first years and three upper years is dependent on the fact that there are three first year and three upper year candidates. Should that number not run a by-election need not be held.**
 - ii) The CRO will make an effort that first year candidates and upper year candidates be asked questions separately in the Facebook Elections forum and at Town Hall**

Rationale:

This year showed that, often, first years have more interest in the councillor position than upper years and forcing them all to compete with only each other resulted in many of the candidates express fear or discomfort during the elections. The VCU should have the right to elect eight first years if they would like to. Given that councillor is the only position that first years can hold on council it is important to protect their voice with the three councillor minimum. However, as councillor is often a way for upper years to get involved as well, particularly if they were not as engaged in their first year, it is important to also protect their ability to be councillors.

However, to make campaigning more comfortable (ii) was added because the questions someone asks a first year should be different than those asked of an upper year. Additionally, given that there are usually 10+ people in the councillor election, at Town Hall councillors have to be brought up in groups regardless.