

A Guide: How to Campaign to be a UVSS Director

This guide contains common strategies for conducting a campaign to be a UVSS director for both in-person and online campaigning. If you have any further questions that are not answered in this guide, please reach out to the Electoral Office at election@uvss.ca.

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Before You Begin

What is the Board of Directors? Why should you run?

A democratically elected student Board of Directors leads the activities of the UVSS.

The Board is made up of:

- Five Lead Directors (Director of Events, Director of Finance & Operations, Director of Student Affairs, Director of Outreach & University Relations, and Director of Campaigns & Community Relations)
- Eleven Directors at Large
- One Director of International Student Relations
- [Five Advocacy Group Representatives and the Native Students Union Representative](#) (representing the Students of Colour Collective, UVic Pride, the Gender Empowerment Centre, the Society for Students with a Disability, and the Native Students Union)

The Board meets twice each month and all students are welcome to attend! Elections for all positions take place in March (with the occasional by-election in the Fall). The exceptions are the Advocacy Group Representatives, who are elected at each group's general meeting. All undergraduate students are encouraged to run in these elections and gain invaluable job experience while giving back to their campus community.

[More about UVSS Governance.](#)

The Holy Grail that is the Electoral Policy

Your first task is to read the [UVSS Electoral Policy](#), and then read it again. The UVSS Electoral Policy is integral to your success as a candidate. Know the rules, play within them, and if you aren't sure, ask the [UVSS Electoral Office](#)! It's their job to help you, so please take advantage of this resource.

Getting Ready for Campaigning

Your Platform

Your platform consists of the values and changes you will advocate for once elected. Students will likely be voting for directors based on their platforms. Start building this early on. Your platform should focus on areas you are passionate about and that resonate with undergraduate students. By the time the first day of campaigning begins, you should have your platform ready to go and incorporated into your graphics.

Get Informed

If you know what position you would like to run for or are considering your options, reach out to a current or previous director of that position for advice on the day-to-day responsibilities of that position, and to chat about campaigning. They will be able to answer a lot of your specific questions, but keep in mind that they can only provide neutral, non-partisan advice.

The Voter Information Guide

The Electoral Office puts out a Voter Information Guide each election. This is a great way to put forward your ideas and platform in a quick and easily accessible manner, along with all the important information and dates that voters need to be kept up to date on the election! After you have submitted your nomination form, the Electoral Office will reach out to you regarding your Voter Information Guide entry. Click [here](#) for an example of a previous Voter Information Guide (previously known as Election Supplement). Be sure to keep it short but still provide your main points.

Graphics: Posters, Handbills, Banners, and Social Media Content

Please closely consider accessibility when creating graphics. You want your graphics on your banners, posters, handbills and social media content to be clear, hard-hitting, and easy to read. Condense your key platform points down to a digestible format and

create your campaign materials from there. Leave the longer and more nuanced information for social media and website content.

During in-person campaigning, most candidates create the following four materials for promoting themselves throughout the campaign period: posters, handbills, banners, and social media content. Posters and banners must be within a certain size (see the [Electoral Policy](#)), but handbills can be any size you want. Remember, all physical posters and banners must be stamped by the electoral office and must be printed using your allocated funding.

Keep track of how many posters and banners you have, as going over your allotted banner/poster limit could result in penalization.

Handbills are typically small versions of your poster distributed when conducting in-person campaigning, also known as canvassing. They usually have your key platform points, your photo, and any social media accounts you have for campaigning. Remember to clear your handbills from empty tables, as stray handbills left on tables are not allowed.

In entirely online campaigning, snazzy, eye-catching graphics are still very helpful to get your key ideas across to the membership through online advertisements and posts. Some of the social media platforms you may want are an Instagram account, a Facebook page, and a website. Do keep in mind to boost events on Instagram, classifying it under a business account will make it much easier to access the boosting capabilities.

Ad Boosts

Boosting advertisements on social media is an incredibly effective way to get your message out to the masses. There are a few key steps you will want to make sure you follow, for not only will they make the advertisements more effective in reaching your target audience (UVic Undergraduate Students), they will also have important ramifications for your campaign budgeting.

Firstly, make sure you have adequate funds necessary for ad boosting. Facebook and Instagram will give you estimations on the number of people reached per dollar spent, and the duration of the boosted post/video/content. When submitting your preferences

for the ad, make sure to adjust the age and distance range to what you think best matches the student population that you wish to see your message!

Secondly, make sure you keep detailed records of these expenses, as they count towards campaign expenses. Failure to do so will likely result in being disqualified from the election. This can be found in the [Electoral Policy](#) Section 8.3 Major Infractions. a. v. **“Financial non-compliance** – Includes failure to submit a completed Expense Allowance Form, exceeding spending limits, failure to disclose all expenses and donations, and failure to properly submit receipts after the grace period has elapsed.”

You can submit either receipts or screenshots of the advertisement costs that are recorded on your Facebook page account. You can find that information under “Ad Centre” on the left hand side of the Facebook page which you are managing.

The Martlet

The Martlet has decided to ensure that candidates can afford to advertise through a special advertisement deal in their newsletter [sample of their newsletter [here](#)]. With an online election, they didn't want candidates' only option to be advertising through large tech companies.

Ad space in their newsletter will cost candidates and referendum proponents and opponents \$40.

The Martlet is happy to answer questions about the newsletter from candidates through their email: edit@martlet.ca

Questions specifically about Martlet advertisements can be directed towards business@martlet.ca.

Budgeting

Budgeting your expenses is a crucial aspect of your campaign. You will want to check out all the various advertisement and outreach methods, and pick which ones you see as being the most valuable to you! Once you arrive with your preferred methods of outreach, you will want to make sure you budget accordingly. As has been mentioned

before, KEEP RECORDS of your financial expenses. The importance of this cannot be understated.

You do not need to use all the money allotted to your campaign, but you do want to make sure you do NOT go over the specified amount given to you. This will result in disqualification from the electoral event.

Try and get your budgeting done before you start campaigning, rather than as you go along. Expenses can catch up with you quicker than you might realize, so it could also be helpful to leave a specified amount for unexpected costs.

Staying Organized

Start to plan as early as possible. Schedule when you are going to get the following tasks completed to stay organized. As is shown in the Electoral Policy, you have a specific budget to stay within. Be sure to stay within the budget and to provide all receipts and proof of expenses, as any financial misconducts may have repercussions.

See below for a recommended timeline:

Activity	Completion date
<p><u>In-person campaigning:</u> Create graphics for your posters, banners, handbills, and social media posts; schedule when you will assemble banners and tape up posters and banners</p> <p><u>Online campaigning only:</u> Create graphics for your social media posts</p>	<p><u>In-person campaigning:</u> You should start making your graphics as early as possible for your posters and banners. Pay special attention to the size of these materials, as there are restrictions outlined in the Electoral Policy. A week before campaigning, print and cut out handbills, posters, and other physical campaign materials. Physical posters and banners must be stamped by the Electoral Office. [Tip: use Gorilla Tape when taping up banners and posters to exterior surfaces! It sticks the best.]</p>
<p>Create a schedule for social media posts</p>	<p>Have a loose schedule in mind for your social media posts a week in advance. Be sure to use a variation of videos, pictures, and sources to attract the most interest.</p>

Create a schedule for classroom talks you will do	Two weeks before campaigning will allow you to email your professors if you need extensions, or allow abstentions from class to allot extra campaign time!
<u>In-person campaigning only</u> : Think about which hours in the day you will spend canvassing	A week before campaigning will create enough space for you to see where you have extra time in your schedule, and take full advantage of canvassing.
Create a detailed budget	Two weeks prior to campaigning will be best so that you can begin preparing graphics, printing them, and scheduling social media posts!

During the Campaign Period

At the end of the day, getting out and meeting your voters where they are is what wins. Build a list of all the tasks that you need to do, paying special attention to classroom talks and canvassing. Be sure not to start campaigning early, as this will have heavy penalties or even result in disqualification.

Classroom talks

The best way you can reach as many students as possible is to meet them where they are: their classrooms. Email the Chief Electoral Officer, election@uvss.ca, to receive a list of all UVic classes, including information on when they are, where they are, and how many students are in each class. During these talks, speak for 30 to 60 seconds about who you are, what you are running on, and how people can vote. You are usually able to leave your name, key platform points, and the link to vote on the board.

For in-person campaigning, common practice is to arrive a few minutes before the class and ask the professor if you can speak to the class shortly before class begins. Don't be afraid to speak up to get their attention!

For online campaigning, it is best practice to email the professor first asking if you can take a few minutes before the class begins to make an announcement on your candidacy. You are usually able to leave your name, key platform points, and the link to vote in the chat.

Budgeting

Keep track of all your spending! You do not want to have one receipt missing or one cent over your budget. Make sure to keep every single receipt in a safe place. As mentioned above, when submitting expenses to the Electoral Office, you can submit pictures of your receipts, and of the itemized lists of expenses from the pages which you are managing!

Candidate Forum

During the campaign period, there will be two forums for candidates to share their platforms with members-at-large: One for Lead Director candidates, and the other for Director at Large candidates and referenda proponents and opponents. Preparation is key! Having a variety of platform details memorized and having key speaking points you would like to emphasize during the forum is incredibly helpful.

Social Media

Social Media is a key part of your campaign, and the main part of your campaign if it is an entirely online election with no in-person campaigning allowed. Build content that is easy for your followers to read and share. Make sure your friends like and follow your pages and you are always plugging your social media accounts to voters. To reach as many undergraduates as possible, you can strategically boost your posts, just make sure to edit the target audience to best fit voters!

Wellness Throughout the Process

You are more than capable of running an effective campaign and winning on your own, but if you have friends that are willing to help, make sure you reach out to this support

system. Campaigning can cause burnout and stress, so make sure your personal network will be there to offer emotional support.

Make sure to look ahead at the assignments you have due before, during, and after campaign period. It is best to get these done as early as possible and, if you can, talk to your professors about extensions. Campaigning is a tiring process, so don't spread yourself too thin.

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