

Expect to see some of these platforms again this year

Probable and previous promises

by Roberta Franchuk

In the apathetic atmosphere of this university it may be difficult, when elections roll around, to get out and vote. Witness last year's dismal election turnout — 22 per cent of the students bothered to cast their ballots. The situation in the '84 and '85 elections was equally bad, with turnouts of 15.5 per cent and 27 per cent respectively.

Apathy may be one excuse for this alarming trend. Ignorance is probably another.

Few students know exactly what the people they vote for are supposed to be doing, much less if the job is being done well. It is worthwhile to take a look at the elections, to see the responsibilities of the positions and perhaps to note what good and bad things have come out of these offices in the past.

The voting on election days (March 12 and 13) is for the Executive Committee of the Students' Council; the president of Athletics and the vice presidents of men's and women's athletics; and the student representative on the Board of Governors.

Few people are aware of the existence of these last few positions, much less of their duties. The Council Executive usually gets all the attention, because that's where the most interesting arguments, name calling and mudslinging are bound to take place.

To clear up the most misunderstood positions:

The Board of Governors representative does exactly what the name implies — acts as one of the three student Representatives on the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors, or B of G, is responsible for "the conduct, management, and control of the University and all its property, revenue, business and affairs", according to the Universities Act.

This is the big stuff — all the important decisions relating to tuition fees and facilities are passed to the B of G as their final stop in the progress through the university's bureaucracy.

Here is where the action really takes place. Since students are only represented by three of the nineteen members, this position carries a lot of responsibility.

The Athletics positions have recently undergone revision. Under the new arrangement, the President-elect of Athletics is elected by the general student body and serves one term under the President, then

becomes President the following year. Vice Presidents of women's and men's athletics are elected every year.

These positions are basically for liaison, fundraising and promotion of athletics. The President also sits as a member of Students' Council.

Because Athletics is the province of every student in the University, these positions are contested in the General Election rather than within the faculty of Physical Education.

Now, the Executive.

The Executive Committee consists of the President and four vice-presidents, each with a sector of responsibilities within the Students' Union organization.

These are the people that are taking care of the \$46.00 in SU fees that you pay along with your tuition. In 1986, the total revenue from fees and other operations (see the SU budget, published in the Jan. 15 edition of the Gateway) amounted to about 5 million dollars. What exactly are these people allowed to do with this money?

The President is, as you probably guessed, in charge of the supervision of the goings-on of the Students' Union. He works with the Vice Presidents and the Managers, as well as being a representative of the student body on the General Faculties Council and the Board of Governors.

He is a liaison for the government relations on the civic, provincial and federal levels, and coordinates the communications among Students' Council. It is a position of many broadly defined responsibilities.

The Vice President of Internal Affairs, also known as the VP Internal, is responsible for, among other



CRO Shelley Chapelski explains the rules.

things, the administration of Students' Union Services and building operations.

The VP Internal is in charge of SUB events such as concerts and other presentations, as well as services such as Dewey's, Dinwoodie, RATT, Typing Services, etc. The Clubs Commissioner operates under the direction of the VP Internal.

This is the position where beer promises tend to fly thick and fast at election time, as well as the cry for "More doors on the bus shelters!"

Recent accomplishments of past and present VP's include the HUB information booth and Dinwoodie renovations (Barb Higgin, 1986) and \$1 movies in SUB (Gord Stamp, 1984).

Vice President Academic is in charge of the Academic Affairs division of the Students' Union, and according to Bylaw 2200 of the SU constitution, is supposed to "prepare academic policy recommendations for consideration by the appropriate authority."

This is the scholastic side of the

SU. Fields of interest include the Writing Competency Test and the proposed professor/course evaluation guides.

The latter have been promised in the last two elections, but have as yet failed to materialize. The intricacies of setting up the system have proven to be more than those who promised had counted on, although rumor says that the preliminary work is progressing well.

The VP External "promotes an ongoing relationship with national, provincial, civic, and community groups in accordance with Students' Union policy." Thus, government liaison falls within the sphere of the VP External. He or she is responsible for keeping in touch with policies on the University.

Michael Hunter, this year's VP External, was behind the new student loan remission policy which sees the government paying a flat 40 per cent on all students loans.

The VP Finance "supervises all Students' Union funds and accounts, and all transactions arising therefrom." In 1986-87 the net revenue from SU enterprises amounted to over 600,000 dollars. Some of this money came from a rise in alcohol prices in Dewey's and RATT, although Tim Boston, this year's VP Finance, assures us that "Students' Union prices for alcohol are the lowest in the University area."

This, then, is a very short summary of the duties of your elected representatives. Perhaps a little interest in the elections will be inspired — at least enough to ensure that those who do get into office are the most qualified to represent the students at this university.

Assertiveness Training Workshop

When? Friday, Feb. 27: 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 28: 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
(Students must attend both sessions.)

Where? Room 225 Athabasca Hall, U of A.

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