Instructions:

The purpose of this form is to present proposed policy amendments or additions in an explicit and standard manner. Members of the Graduate Student Society of UBC Vancouver wishing to make policy amendments or additions for Council approval must use this form. Consultation with the Code and Policy Committee is strongly recommended to ensure that the language and style reflects that of the current policy manual. The Code and Policy Committee can be emailed at cpcom@gss.ubc.ca.

As per bylaw 13.1.4 and policy 1.2.1, notice of a proposed policy amendment or addition must be posted on the Society’s website and emailed to all Council members at least seven days prior to the motion at Council. For assistance with putting forms on the website, you may contact the Communications and Marketing Director at communications@gss.ubc.ca.

Date: December 4, 2019  Submitted by: Katharine Sedivy-Haley, CPC Chair

What type of change is this?

☒ Amending an existing policy  ☐ Addition of a new policy  ☐ Removal of a policy

Original Policy #: 6.5.1, 12 (various)  New Policy # (if applicable): 12.5.4, 12.5.7, existing

Proposed Revised Policy:

Note: added text is indicated using bold formatting, while text that will be removed by this amendment is indicated using strikethrough formatting.

6.5.1 Student Senator representatives of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies are elected in accordance with Policy 12 policies stated section 9 of this manual.

12.1.1.(d) report to the Council during the next Council meeting following the election and make such recommendations on the election process and procedure as it deems proper,

12.4.2. The cost of a candidate's campaign shall not exceed one hundred and fifty dollars. Material used in previous campaigns shall be valued at original cost. The Society will reimburse candidates
up to one hundred and fifty dollars for new campaign materials. A signed statement of expenses with receipts must be submitted to the Electoral Officer at the close of the campaigning period, and will be subject to audit.

12.4.5 There shall be no campaigning within ten metres of: (a) the polling booth when polls are open, in the case of paper ballot, and (b) any member known to be using a device currently logged in to the electronic voting, in the case of an electronic voting system.

12.4.13 Candidates shall not in any way force, or dishonestly influence, or materially induce a member into making a voting decision in any way.

12.5.4. Candidates for Student Senators shall be appointed by acclamation if there are only two candidates for the two position openings.

As a result of this addition, existing policy 12.5.4 will be renumbered 12.5.5 (as indicated below), and 12.5.5 will be renumbered 12.5.6.

Policy describing the use of paper ballots will be removed from the manual, as follows:

12.5.5 Whenever possible, an electronic voting system shall be used. The GSS shall use the AMS SimplyVoting software for its polling purposes.

Current policies 12.5.6-12.5.10 and 12.6.5 will be removed entirely.

12.5.7 If a polling station is employed to provide access to the electronic voting system, the station must be kept secure and any materials at the polling station must be neutral and not influence the voter's decision in any way.

12.6.1 Each candidate may have one scrutineer present at any stage of the polling, including the counting of the ballots or collecting of an electronic voting system election results. The candidates shall not be present at the counting of ballots or collecting of an electronic voting system election results.

12.7.1. At the conclusion of counting, the Electoral Officer shall draft a report of the preliminary results and announce the preliminary results within five days of the close of polls. This report shall be signed by all present at counting, including scrutineers. It shall follow the form outlined in Appendix V and shall be made public immediately. 12.7.2. In the case of an electronic voting system, the full voting report must be released no later than 72 hours following the closing of the polls.

As a result of the above, 12.6.6 and 12.7.3 shall be renumbered to 12.6.5 and 12.7.2.
Rationale Behind Proposed Changes:

6.5.1 updates an incorrect reference.

12.1.1.(d) clarifies the time frame in which Elections Committee reports to Council following an election.

12.4.2 represents a minor grammatical clarification – these expenses are audited as part of the full audit of the GSS.

12.4.5 was suspended during our previous election, and we propose making this change permanent. First, polling stations may be used for an electronic interface, and these stations should still be free of campaign material. Second, the prohibition of campaigning near an electronic device known to be logged into the voting system means that, in the age of smartphones, any student could shut down any campaigning effort simply by logging their smartphone into the voting system and approaching within the indicated distance. The existing policy 12.4.13 prohibiting dishonestly influencing a voting decision should protect students from being coerced when they are logged into a voting system.

12.4.13 is itself clarified to prohibit materially inducing a voting decision, as previous cases of candidates attempting to provide material incentive for voting decisions was reported in a different student government organization.

12.5.4 describes a process required by the University Act Part 5 item 15; we insert this to make our policy clearly in accordance with this legal requirement.

The removal of policy regarding paper ballots is suggested because the GSS has consistently used the AMS SimplyVoting system in recent years. CPC and Elections Committee determine that the failure of this system is unlikely, and in that event the timeline surrounding an election is such that Council could easily by special resolution re-authorise paper ballots from an archived copy of the policy (CPC shall create such a copy while implementing this change in the manual). It was determined, thus, that the benefit of having a simpler elections policy outweighed any danger involved in committing to using the SimplyVoting system.