

Hofstra AAUP Unit Representatives Election Report
11 June 2020

Background: The Hofstra AAUP recently approved the inclusion of write-in voting for every race on the ballot, and the Spring 2020 elections are the first elections to include the option for members to write in a candidate on races with one or more nominated candidate listed.

The Elections Committee is thankful for the diligence of our membership, without which this investigation could not have been accomplished.

Initial Election Process: All candidates were afforded the opportunity to observe the ballot count. On Tuesday 5 May 2020, the ballots for the Spring 2020 Hofstra AAUP Elections were counted at the offices of Yes! Elections (155 Mineola Blvd, Mineola NY 11501). The process began at the Mineola post office at 1 pm, where the Chair of the AAUP Committee on Elections, Dr. Michael Dores, witnessed the collection of all ballots that had reached the post office box.

The counting process was witnessed in person by Dr. Dores as well as multiple candidates (Patricia Navarra, Elisabeth Ploran, Anthony Basile, Veronica Lippencott) via a Zoom video feed set up by Dr. Dores, which began at 1:25 pm and ended at approximately 4 pm.

Yes! Elections (formerly Election-America) handled past elections for the Hofstra AAUP chapter, and has a standard template for Hofstra AAUP chapter elections that they modify for each election cycle. Yes! Elections staff performed the direct count operations, including opening all envelopes, scanning the ballots through a pre-programmed and validated scanner, and sealing the election materials. The opening of ballot envelopes was made visible to observers through a window partition, and the ballots were in view of the camera at all times during the count. During the counting process, all paper ballots that had been received were fed into a scanning machine, and an individual image (tiff) file was generated for each ballot.

The process of feeding the paper ballots into the scanner was performed by two Yes! Elections employees. Counts were calculated electronically by the scanning machine. The paper ballots were then sealed in a box and stored at the Yes! Elections offices. An Election Information Report was generated by Yes! Elections and distributed to the Elections Committee. Write-in candidates were notified of votes received and confirmed their willingness to serve. Results from this digital tally were announced to the membership on Wednesday 6 May 2020 via email.

Questions by Membership: Following the announcement of the election results on 6 May 2020, the Elections Committee received 15 reports from concerned members stating that their votes for specific Unit Representatives to the Liaison Committee (Library, School of Education, Kalikow School, Zarb School) had not been counted.

Members of the Committee on Elections consulted with counsel to determine the correct process for a recount. Counsel advised waiting for a full 10-day period to allow for objections to be made before initiating any official recount activities and advised that written, signed

declarations were needed to challenge the vote and justify unsealing the ballots and recounting them.

By the end of the full 10-day period, 7 signed statements had been received and the Committee on Elections determined that an official recount of all unit races was necessary. Counsel clarified the distinction between a “revote” and a “recount” of the existing vote. The Committee on Elections determined that a recount was the appropriate course of action and notified Yes! Elections.

Upon being notified of the concerns raised by the AAUP Chapter members, Yes! Elections immediately initiated an internal investigation using the digitized ballot scans as a basis. Yes! Elections acknowledged an error such that all votes for candidates listed second on the ballot were counted as blank write-in votes and the write-in votes were not counted at all. This resulted in electronic tallies of zero votes for all candidates listed second; votes reported for those candidates or for write-in votes on 5 May 2020 were only those for which the scanner reported a discrepancy and were manually examined. Yes! Elections has provided a written report.

Official recount: All candidates were afforded an opportunity to observe the recount of ballots. On Friday, 29 May 2020 at 10 am, the paper ballots for the Spring 2020 Hofstra AAUP Elections were counted by hand at the Yes! Elections offices. The counting process was witnessed in person by the full Committee on Elections as well as multiple Unit Representative candidates (Veronica Lippencott, Debra Pollack), via Zoom.

The box containing the paper ballots and the paper ballots were sorted by Unit Representative race by Yes! Elections staff, following the numbering system printed on the ballots for each race. Within each race, ballots were first sorted by vote cast and then counted. Each vote was counted independently by two Yes! Elections officials who also confirmed that each ballot corresponded to the correct race.

Upon confirmation that the independent manual counts matched, the tallies were recorded by Yes! Elections and by the Committee on Elections. Results were conveyed to observers via Zoom chat and questions from observers were addressed during the recount. The ballots were in view of the camera at all times during the count. The original scanned and manual counts can be found in Table 1.

Following the recount, all ballots, envelopes and the original tallies were resealed and signed by the Chairperson of the Committee on Elections and the CEO of Yes! Elections, then stored at Yes! Elections. Yes! Elections then issued a revised Election Information Report.

Results: Errors in the ballot counts affected results for the School of Humanities, Fine and Performing Arts, the School of Education, the Herbert School of Communication, and the Library were all incorrect. The membership was notified of the corrected results.

Future recommendations: Committee on Elections suggests the following that future tallies should include the total number of votes received: overall, by race, and by unit as well as the breakdowns by candidate as this provides an added measure of validation

In solidarity,

The Elections Committee

Michael Robert Dores, PhD

Lisa DeTora, PhD

Ling Huang, PhD

Table 1: Results of the Spring 2020 Hofstra AAUP Unit Representative Elections comparing vote tallies by scan and vote tallies by manual counting

| Unit/School | Candidate | Vote Tally by Scan | Vote Tally by Manual Count (changes bolded) |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Engineering and Applied Sciences | Elizabeth Scott | 7 | 7 |
| Graduate Nursing and Physician Assistant Studies | Amy Roberts | 8 | 8 |
| Health Professions and Human Services | Jayne Kitsos Ellinger | 20 | 20 |
| Communication | Isabelle Freda (write-in) | 1 | 1 |
| | Aashish Kumar (write-in) | 0 | 1 |
| | George Nicholas (write-in) | 0 | 3 |
| | Hilary Topper (write-in) | 1 | 1 |
| Library | Sarah Glasser | 0 | 1 |
| | Carol Simon | 0 | 5 |

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|---|--------------------------|----|-----------|
| | Susan Stallwort | 0 | 1 |
| Humanities, Fine and Performing Arts | Tammy Hensrud | 20 | 20 |
| | Margaret Stein | 3 | 24 |
| Government, Public Policy and International Affairs | Robert Guttman | 28 | 28 |
| | Veronica Lippencott | 0 | 11 |
| Natural Sciences and Math | Scott Lefurgy | 55 | 55 |
| Education | Jeanne Henry (write-in) | 0 | 1 |
| | Jamie Mitus (write-in) | 0 | 1 |
| | Rebecca Natow (write-in) | 1 | 2 |
| | Alan Singer (write-in) | 0 | 1 |
| Zarb School of Business | Rina M. Hirsch | 17 | 17 |
| | Debra Pollack | 0 | 16 |