

NTUSU's Statement on Union Elections AY20/21

Dear Fellow Union Members,

I write to give an update regarding the Union Elections and the delay in election results. The Union Election Committee encountered several difficulties during the process and felt that it was important to uphold our values of transparency and accountability, which we have endeavored from the beginning of our term.

Before delving into the causes of the delay of Election results, I would first like to apologise for the inconveniences caused during this year's election. This year, we decided to continue using the same platform and vendor that we have employed in past elections. This was done for several reasons: i) the vendor used had by-and-large tried and tested with issues nonetheless, but not major issues that caused over 16 hours of delay; ii) it was most cost effective option that supported a voting platform that could support our needs and our student population out of all the external vendors; and iii) minimise unfamiliarity in the midst of the COVID-19 situation. Unfortunately this year, the vendor for the platform has failed to meet expectations and instead created situations we wanted to entirely avoid in the midst of an already uncertain period. The UEC will work closely with Student Affairs Office (SAO) and CITS to hold the vendor responsible.

Additionally, we also found flaws and ambiguities in our Union Constitution Election Regulations that allowed potential differences in interpretation. We have made necessary clarifications with SAO to maintain the consistency and integrity of the voting for this year with an acknowledgment that improvements are required to prevent this. Moving forward, the 29th NTUSU Council and Executive Committee will work with the 30th Council to conduct a full review of the entire election process, including the governing Constitution and E-Voting platform services – notwithstanding the voting mechanics to ensure similar issues do not arise in the future.

Secondly, we have also delayed the announcement of Election results this year due to irregularities found in the vote count on Thursday, 17 September 2020. The UEC has found discrepancies in the count between the *number of unique voters* and *total vote count* which should not have a different count. Thus, the UEC had launched an investigation into the issues and highlighted it to SAO and CITS to ascertain the root cause of the discrepancy. We have concluded that no foul play had been detected and a computational error from the vendor's code was the cause in discrepancy. We are currently in the process of manually finalising the results with SAO and will release the results tomorrow, Sunday 20 September 2020.

Ultimately, the Union and our constituent bodies would like to extend our gratitude for your patience and understanding despite the situation. The UEC and I

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STATEMENT RELEASE

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acknowledge that the Elections process this year has not met the minimum expectation required nor upheld the standards expected from our student body and we must take full responsibility. The system cannot function like this again and the UEC will take the necessary steps to prevent this from repeating in the future. We seek your continued understanding and patience in this matter.

Sincerely,
Bryan Michael Chiew



President
29th NTU Students' Union

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