

## University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS)

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UVSS and CFS-BC decide to part ways

Tsawwassen, B.C. – Today at a Special General Meeting of the Canadian Federation of Students - British Columbia (CFS-BC) held at the Coast Tsawwassen Inn, member locals of the CFS-BC voted to expel the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS).

“We are glad to see the question of UVSS membership in CFS-BC finally come to a resolution,” said UVSS Chairperson Emily Rogers.

In a March 2011 referendum held at UVic, UVSS members voted overwhelmingly to leave the national wing of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). The vast majority of UVic students thought that the referendum addressed the question of termination of their membership in all components of the CFS, including its provincial organization, the CFS-BC.

The CFS-BC requires that its members hold membership in the CFS. Since the March 2011 referendum ended the UVSS's membership in the CFS, the UVSS took the position that its membership in the provincial component of the CFS, the CFS-BC, had also come to an end.

In August of 2012, a judge ruled that although the CFS-BC's bylaws required the UVSS to be a member of the CFS national, the March 2011 vote did not automatically terminate membership in the CFS-BC. Following this decision, in the first weeks of September 2012, students at the University of Victoria gathered thousands of signatures on a petition to trigger a referendum on the question of leaving the CFS-BC. The 2012-2013 UVSS Board of Directors has consistently supported its members' democratic right to vote on their membership in the CFS-BC. A referendum on the question of termination of CFS-BC membership was scheduled to be held on March 25, 26, and 27, 2013.

Instead of facing a referendum later this month, today the CFS-BC opted to expel the UVSS on the basis that the CFS-BC claims that the UVSS is in arrears with respect to past membership fees. The CFS-BC claims that approximately \$160,000 in past membership fees are owed by the UVSS stemming from alleged underpayments in the 1990s. The UVSS denies that any membership fees are outstanding.

“We respect CFS-BC as an organisation, for the work that it does on post-secondary issues, and for the contribution it has made to culture of the UVSS,” said Rogers. “As a progressive student

society that is at the forefront of student activism in BC, the UVSS will continue to work on post-secondary issues as a founding member of the Alliance of BC Students (ABCS).”

The University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) was founded in 1964 and represents the 17,000 undergraduate students at the University of Victoria. The UVSS is a founding member of The Alliance of BC Students (ABCS) - the largest non-partisan post-secondary advocacy group in B.C. representing over 180,000 students at nine institutions.

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Source: UVSS Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/TheUVSS/posts/486775434715263>