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SCSU president impeached

By **Yeamrot Taddese**

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U TSC students have voted to remove Zuhair Syed from his presidency of the Scarborough Campus Students' Union, three months before the end of his contract.

Almost 10 per cent of students voted in the referendum amid fierce campaigning from both sides, with 554 for impeachment and 477 against. There were 14 abstentions and 34 spoiled votes.

The referendum was called after SCSU's board of directors gave Syed a Tier 3 censure last December for "his inaction in representing the student interest as the President & CEO of the SCSU." All of Syed's presidential duties have been handed over to VP external Amir Bashir, the current acting president and CEO.



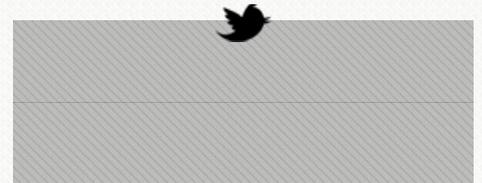
The board has yet to ratify the unofficial referendum result released on Saturday. The next scheduled board meeting is on Friday, Feb. 12. Since that date will be the last day of campaigning and voting for 2010-2011 executive elections—and a number of board members are running—there may not be quorum to hold a meeting.

Unless board members complain about illegitimacy in the voting process, the referendum results will be ratified, said humanities director Martine Lee. "I am glad the truth side won," she said. "Not

Contributor



Yeamrot Taddese



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because I have anything personal against [Syed but because] students deserve justice.”

Syed could not be reached for comment.

“I am happy about [the referendum results] but it is a bitter-sweet kind of happiness. [Syed] was my frosh leader and I used to look up to him,” said Stephanie Fan, a third-year management student. “But he had an important position. You have to do your job and you can’t assume things will go unnoticed. People are watching you.”

“[The vote] just goes to show that democratic values are fundamental to people on campus,” said Julia Varshavska, who added that some campaigners were disrespectful to their opposition.

Syed’s supporters were disappointed. Second-year student Maryam Shah said she is “through with student government” after this referendum. “Zuhair was a great president. The allegations against him are just that: allegations,” she said, adding that she is boycotting the presidential election to take place this week.

Last month, Syed admitted to some of the allegations regarding his negligence of presidential duties, such as missing numerous SCSU board, academic committee, and governing council meetings. He also acknowledged his failure to submit reports to the board from August to December last year. He said he was busy opening up a new restaurant on campus and attending meetings regarding the Pan Am Games athletic facility in addition to taking on the duties of the VP campus life, who was absent due to illness.

Syed denied allegations accusing him of unavailability during his office hours, smoking shisha in the office, and threatening the VP academics after she joined a Facebook group advocating his impeachment. The board’s chair, who investigated the allegations, also said Syed tried to threaten him.

Syed’s presidential term was to end in May 2010.

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