

## 2024 GSA General Election

CRO Decision in the Matter of Benjamin Kucher and Rija Kamran  
Friday, February 23rd, 2024

A formal complaint was filed by Benjamin Kucher, a candidate for the position of Vice-President Student Life in the GSA General Election (hereafter “the Complainant”), against Rija Kamran, a candidate for the position of Vice-President Academic (hereafter “the Respondent”), on Thursday, February 22nd, 2024.

**Complaint:** The Complainant noticed that the Respondent uploaded an Instagram post where they are sitting at a table with a GSA banner beside them. The GSA logo is spotted three times in the image: on the banner, on their nametag, and on paper on the table.

**Response:** The Respondent noted that it was an oversight on their part and not intentional. They understood “campaign materials” as posters and materials created, rather than GSA logos in backgrounds of images. The Respondent immediately removed the post.

**Relevant Bylaw and Policy:**

*I.POL.10.10.d.i Candidates will not use the University or GSA logos on any physical or electronic campaign materials.*

**Consultation with the Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC):** The CRO, DRO, and ERC created pre-determined guidelines for issuing penalties for violating each campaign rule before the campaign period began. The CRO reached out to ERC and presented two options: 1) dismiss the complaint and resolve it informally with the Respondent or 2) impose a penalty for the violation. Suggestions from members of ERC ranged from giving the Respondent a warning to giving a penalty of up to 10% vote deduction.

**Decision:** The post is in clear violation of the mentioned policy, and gave the Respondent a potential advantage as their campaign material contained a large GSA logo, which could influence voters. However, the CRO acknowledges that the Respondent rectified the situation quickly, and appreciates that it was an honest mistake and oversight from the Respondent. The CRO’s decision is to issue a penalty of a 3% vote deduction in this election. The reason for this amount is that the large logo could have influenced voters. The penalty would have been more severe if the Respondent had not been so proactive in rectifying the situation.

**Appeals:** As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, “decisions of the CRO are subject to appeal to the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB)” (Section I.POL.11.6) and “candidate(s) or referendum campaign member(s) have twenty-four (24) hours from the time the CRO’s decision is deemed delivered to submit an Appeal (Section H.POL.15.2.b). “Deemed Delivered” is defined such that an email is deemed to have been delivered twenty-four (24) hours from the time it was sent (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section H: Definitions).