An independent, non-profit, public service student press covering the University of British Columbia community since 1918.

The Ubyssey

Published in Vancouver, British Columbia, on the traditional, ancestral and stolen territories of the Coast Salish peoples including the xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) nations.

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A Third of Sexual Misconduct Reports at UBC Aren't Investigated

From dropped reports to long investigations, UBC's process ends with the president alone deciding sanctions, with no minimum penalty.

By Saba Majd
Deputy News Editor
& Madeline Semple
Community Reporter

UBC published its 2025–26 student discipline summary last Wednesday. It reports eight students at the Vancouver campus found responsible for sexual misconduct, the most in a single year since 2021–22.

Between September of 2022 and August of 2026, 22 students at UBC's Vancouver campus were found responsible for sexual misconduct by the university, according to the annual student discipline summaries. Nine got a letter of reprimand and probation. Nine were suspended, for a median of 12 months. One got a letter of warning and probation, one was barred from re-applying to the university for two years, one was put on probation with cultural awareness sessions, and the last one, who was both a student and an employee, had "no discipline imposed to [their] capacity as a student." None were expelled.

These outcomes are the result of a long process, and along the way, many reports are dropped. Across four reporting periods, 2022–26, the UBC Investigations Office (IO) — which investigates formal complaints under multiple UBC policies, including sexual misconduct (SC17, formally the Sexual Misconduct and Sexualized Violence Policy), discrimination (SC7), and retaliation (SC18) — said it could not investigate 66 (35 per cent) of the 189 sexual misconduct reports it had received across both campuses. This was mainly because the reports did not meet SC17's jurisdiction requirements, the conditions that determine whether UBC has the authority to investigate, such as the alleged conduct having a connection to UBC.

From 2022–26, UBC's Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO), which supports people affected by sexual violence, recorded 892 disclosures at the Vancouver campus; the IO received 143 sexual misconduct reports from Vancouver in that time, less than 1-in-5 disclosures; and the Office of the University Counsel (OUC), UBC's in-house legal office, reported 22 SC17 breaches, about 1-in-40 disclosures. Names and specific details are not shared in the reports.

Across both campuses, the IO decided it had jurisdiction over the other 123 reports, 108 of which were sent to investigation. The IO completed 80 investigations, 53 of which found a breach. Of the 28 investigations that were not completed, 14 were still in progress at the time of the annual report, four were suspended pending an external process such as criminal proceedings or a human rights complaint, and two were withdrawn: the IO did not provide reasoning for the eight incomplete investigations in the 2024–25 and 2025–26 reporting periods.

Sexual Misconduct Policy: SC17

SC17 is a Board of Governors (BoG) policy dating back to 2017. That year, the provincial Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act required every B.C. post-secondary institution to have a stand-alone sexual misconduct policy. UBC set up SVPRO and the IO, and SC17 took effect on May 18, 2017. It was amended in 2020, as part of the policy's commitment to a review every three years.

The policy applies to students, employees, faculty and teaching staff, post-doctoral fellows, emeriti, and anyone else who is contractually bound to follow it. SC17 defines sexual misconduct as any sexual act, or act targeting a person's sex, sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, that is committed, threatened, or attempted against that person without their consent, whether physical or psychological. The document gives sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking and cyberstalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, and distributing a sexually explicit photograph or recording without the person's consent as examples, though it says that the list is not exhaustive.

Section 7 of SC17 requires UBC to report — in aggregate and without identifying information — how many requests for services SVPRO received, how many reports the IO received, how many reports were investigated, handled through an alternative resolution process (ARP) or referred to another UBC process, and how many reports the director of investigations at the IO — currently Carly Stanhope, who has been in the role since 2021 – has declined to investigate. An alternative resolution process is a voluntary, non-investigative option for resolving a formal report, tailored to the parties, that may include restorative justice circles, facilitated dialogue, mediation, shuttle diplomacy or online resolution options.

Continued on page 4.

The Restaurant Students Don't Deserve

Students should have better options than mediocre, overpriced campus food. Rosie's Burgers didn't rise to the challenge.

By Jack Paransky
Food Critic &
Deputy Arts & Culture Editor

Campus food never feels worth it. I have yet to meet anyone in Metro Vancouver who would travel to their bus's terminus to get food at the University of British Columbia. Because we have no restaurants anyone in the city would classify as "worth it" or "great," all campus food is judged like a faustian bargain — are you willing to sell your wallet's soul for the convenience of food near your class?

I considered this bargain more as Rosie's Burgers' siren call crept its way into my mind after summer break. I'm sure you've thought about it too — Rosie's is everywhere. In September, I only saw one red and white bag in the Nest during lunch. By October, the corpses of dozens littered garbage cans around Main Mall. I haven't bothered counting them in November, as I am a writer and I can't count past 837. In a couple months, teams of custodians will rake up discarded bags into neat, towering piles. In five years, squirrels will use them as fashion accessories, where the Rosie's logo signifies a higher quality of mate.

Continued on page 7.



On Aboriginal Title, Debaters Agree Litigation Isn't the Way Forward

A debate panel of three lawyers and a political science professor all favoured modern treaties as a path to reconciliation.



Renée Pelletier, Stewart Prest, Chief Aaron Pete, Thomas Isaac, and Geoffrey Moyse (left to right) atthe UBC Debates event at UBC's Robson Square Theatre. Photo by Aleah Kippan / *The Ubyssey*

By Suhani Dosanjh
Community Reporter

Hundreds of people packed into a sold-out theatre to hear four experts debate one of the province's most contested questions: Can Aboriginal title and private ownership coexist?

Last Monday's debate was the second UBC Debates event hosted in Vancouver, at UBC's Robson Square Theatre.

Chawathil First Nation Chief Aaron Pete — a graduate of the Peter A. Allard School of Law, and host of the podcast Nuanced with Aaron Pete — was the debate's moderator. He said the point of the night was "not [to tear] down one side ... but to examine what coexistence could mean in law and in practice."

"It is a democratic responsibility to test ideas rather than to retreat from them," said Chief Pete. "Universities have a special responsibility to make room for difficult conversations."

Audience members walked in split on whether coexistence was possible. A live poll conducted right before the debate began saw 45 per cent of poll participants say "yes," 31 per cent say it was "too soon" to know, and 24 per cent say "no."

On stage, arguing that Aboriginal title and private ownership can coexist were Renée Pelletier, a lawyer who has led two Aboriginal title claims, and Dr. Stewart Prest, a lecturer in the political science department at UBC.

On stage, arguing that Aboriginal title and private ownership can coexist were Renée Pelletier, a lawyer who has led two Aboriginal title claims, and Dr. Stewart Prest, a lecturer in the political science department at UBC. Arguing against coexistence were two more lawyers: Thomas Isaac, who specializes in advising businesses on Aboriginal law, and Geoffrey Moyse, who has advised six governments on Aboriginal law for over 30 years.

Nonetheless, by the very end of the night, the speakers generally agreed that disputes between Indigenous groups and the government can be better resolved through negotiation rather than court battles. "This is a big deal, guys. We just had multiple lawyers agree litigation may not be the path forward," Chief Pete said jokingly to the crowd.

On Nov. 19, the Government of Canada announced the establishment of the Commissioner of Modern Treaty Implementation, a new independent agent of Parliament meant to "provide independent oversight of the federal government's implementation of Modern Treaty commitments, strengthening accountability to Indigenous Treaty partners and Parliament." Modern treaties are enduring commitments negotiated between Canada and Indigenous partners to clarify Indigenous land ownership and rights.

Other shared beliefs emerged during the debate. Prest — the only non-lawyer in the panel — agreed with Moyse and Isaac that conflicts can arise between Aboriginal titles and fee simple titles. However, unlike them, he does not think that is a valid reason for why the two can't ever coexist.

Continued on page 3.

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Postdoctoral Fellow Sues University Alleging Retaliation, Early Dismissal

The claim, filed in B.C. Supreme Court, has not been tested in court. UBC's own investigation rejected the retaliation complaint, and the fellow now faces losing her campus housing on Nov. 30.



ARTS | FILM | Page 07

Club Kid, a Hilariously Honest Portrait of Growing Pains

Queer internet provocateur Jordan Firstman's directorial debut — and starring role as a New York-based party promoter — is a candorous display of self-awareness.



SPORTS | SOCCER | Page 08

New Kids on the Throne

In a U Sports final of two underdogs, the Guelph Gryphons seized their first ever title against the TWU Spartans in a 2–1 thriller.



OPINION | POWERS THAT BE | Page 11

Don't Import the Worst of Politics

Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro grew negative partisanship into extremist rhetoric. We can't let the same happen in B.C.



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Callout from News

The Ubyssey's community team in news are working on an investigation of UBC's handling of sexual misconduct (violations of SC17) reports. If you (or someone you know) have experienced sexual misconduct at UBC and feel comfortable sharing information about your experience with UBC's support systems (the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office, the Investigations' Office, and Office of the University Counsel), please reach out to *news@ubyssey.ca*. If you wish to remain anonymous to the publication, submit a tip at forms.*ubyssey.ca/tips*.

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News

After Protest, AMS Pulls the Plug on SHEIN's Pop-Up

Student clubs want comprehensive changes to how the society books events, and a public commitment from VP Admin William Sparks.

By Lizzy Whiteson & Harper Jasinski
Community Reporters

A SHEIN pop-up outside the AMS Nest was shut down a day early on Wednesday, after about 15 student protesters gathered at the display and the AMS moved to end its contract with the company.

The "Box Santa" pop-up ran during UBC Sustainability Hub's Climate Week. Visitors could take a social media photo in exchange for a free gift and register for SHEIN's Campus Ambassador Program.

AMS President Dylan Evans told The Ubyssey in a statement that the society has since launched an audit of the event booking. He wrote that the display "was not an endorsement of [SHEIN's] business practices."

"We have immediately begun developing event flagging policy and updating booking procedures — ensuring future bookings align with the values and expectations of the students we serve."

Evans confirmed the booking was made by AMS Catering & Conferences (C&C), the department that schedules events at the Nest. He said the AMS will recommend Council send all the society's profits from the pop-up booking to an unspecified human rights charity.

On Tuesday afternoon, several UBC clubs — including the UBC Environmental Sciences Students' Association, Vegans of UBC, and UBC Greens, among others — advertised a "SHEIN Off Our Campus" protest.

Demonstrators stood along the pop-up's barrier on Wednesday, a measure added after a few protesters gathered on the event's first day. Some held signs with phrases such as "SHEIN off our campus" and "holidays aren't fun in a sweatshop."

At a picnic table nearby, organizers set up a poster-making station where passersby could grab a premade sign or create their own.

About 20 minutes in, AMS VP Administration William Sparks and VP Finance Nathan Shack came down and began talking with the protesters. Sparks told the demonstrators that the AMS's contract with SHEIN would be terminated a day early and that they would begin dismantling the statue within the next few hours.

Protesters stayed until plans to take the display down were in motion. Passersby were seen high-fiving protesters, giving thumbs-ups, and congratulating them.

Three external security guards hired by SHEIN were also at the event. Evans wrote that this is "typical practice" for events requiring additional security.

Climate Justice UBC, the UBC Environmental Policy Association, and the UBC Greens said in a media release that protesters were treated poorly. They alleged that certain SHEIN representatives "engaged in demeaning, belittling, and inappropriate behaviour, including, but not limited to, recording close-ups in protestors' faces and telling them to 'show off your face,' 'smile,' and 'say hi to the camera.'"

The Ubyssey reached out to SHEIN for comment, but did not receive a response before press time.

Human geography student Ava Rihani called SHEIN's presence on campus during Climate Week "ironic."

"I just feel that it's a bit of a slap in the face that the AMS has agreed to promote an event like this on our campus. We are asking the AMS to represent the needs and the desires of the students, and I don't really think that most students are on board with the immense amount of pollution that comes from SHEIN clothing."

Dominic Tomkowicz, known on social media as Scooter Dom, also stood with protesters. He said he was there to "record the aftermath of SHEIN being kicked off campus," and cited the company's underpayment of workers and its environmental impacts. "SHEIN has no business being here, and that's why I was recording them ... making sure word gets out that they're not welcome here."

SHEIN is an online retailer based in Singapore often described as "ultra-fast fashion." Estimates vary, but a new design may take as little as 10 days to become a garment, and up to 10,000 items are added to the site each day.

A January 2025 BBC investigation found workers at factories supplying SHEIN in Guangzhou were sewing for around 75 hours per week, in contravention to Chinese labour laws. Most workers said they got one day off a month.

In November of that year, Greenpeace Deutschland had 56 SHEIN garments and shoes bought in eight countries tested at an accredited lab. Eighteen exceeded EU chemical limits, including three children's items. Seven jackets exceeded PFAS limits by up to 3,300 times, and 14 products exceeded phthalate limits. SHEIN said the products in question had been withdrawn.

In their release, the clubs called on the AMS to make "comprehensive changes" to how it books events. They pointed to the AI Summit held in the Nest earlier this month as another example, saying the AMS must keep out companies that "have, or uphold human rights violations."

They also demanded a public statement — by email and on the AMS website — "outlining the steps VP Sparks will take to ensure this situation, now having occurred twice under his watch, does not happen again."

When reached for comment on the clubs' release, Sparks reiterated the AMS' initial statement. He said that the booking was made without the knowledge of student leadership, and reflected deficiencies in their current process.

Over the next few months, Sparks stated that the AMS will work to establish a new precedent to "immediately flag and refuse" booking requests with a history of human rights or environmental violations. He said he is also personally reviewing future bookings over the next four years to ensure "nothing slips through the cracks."

Protester Kaylynn Walmsley said she was disappointed the event happened at all, but hopeful about what its early end means. "The fact that it got shut down just goes to show [that] your voice as a student matters," she said. "I think it's really important that we remember that this is our campus."



Photo by Jason Zhang / *The Ubyssey*



Photo by Sophia Clearwater / *The Ubyssey*

EXTENDED BYLINE

Saba Majd was this story's backfield editor. **Isabella Donn** was the copy editor. **Qiansheng Zhang** and **Sophia Clearwater** took the photos and designed the page in print.

On Aboriginal Title, Debaters Agree Litigation Isn't The Way Forward

A debate panel of three lawyers and a political science professor all favoured modern treaties as a path to reconciliation.

By Suhani Dosanjh
Community Reporter

Continued from page 1.

Aboriginal title refers to the constitutionally-protected inherent right that Indigenous groups have to their traditional land. To establish Aboriginal title over a land region, an Indigenous nation must prove that they were the sole occupants of that land before European settlers claimed sovereignty over it.

Fee simple title is the highest form of private ownership in Canadian law. Fee simple owners have full rights to their land and can do whatever they want to it, with the exception of taxation, debt obligations, or zoning restrictions.

"We haven't walked through the door of trying to understand how these rights can coexist [and] interact with one another," said Prest. "[The Cowichan case] decision is controversial because it has forced us to look through that door ... The solution is not to ignore questions of injustice, saying our legal concepts are too narrow to allow redress."

Prest was referencing a Supreme Court of British Columbia ruling from August 2025, which established that the Quw'utsun (Cowichan Tribes) have Aboriginal title over around 732 acres of land in the City of Richmond, including properties previously sold as private fee simple land.

Prest added that "the creation of B.C. without land treaties was a choice of the province's earlier governors [that now] has consequences for us all." He said we can either take action now, or leave these injustices for future generations to deal with.

Both Prest and Isaac agreed that the B.C. government was too vague when they enacted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) into law.

DRIPA is a provincial law passed in 2019, which dictates that B.C. legislation must align with the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). However, DRIPA does not have any influence on whether or not an Aboriginal title is granted. Both sides of the debate also agreed that DRIPA did not play a role in the Cowichan decision.

DRIPA's future has been at the forefront of public discussion in B.C. over the past year. During the provincial election campaign, now-Premier Lorne Doerkson promised to repeal the statute. Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, has called Doerkson's win "hugely disappointing to First Nations in B.C." because of his promise to "rip up" the Declaration Act. In a press release, he said, "We are at a historical crossroads: Battleground B.C. or reconciliation through the principles and road map of the Declaration Act."

Isaac said his problem with DRIPA is that, in his view, it is impossible to implement. "Saying you're going to align every law and regulation of B.C. [with UNDRIP], which is what the previous government ... did, is doublespeak, and it's not true."

He added that the government's focus on DRIPA went against the spirit of reconciliation. "Reconciliation is serious business, and governments should say what they mean and mean what they say ... [DRIPA] is feel-good window dressing, as opposed to actually getting on with the real work of reconciliation, which means making lives better for people and respecting [their] rights," said Isaac.

Prest shared some criticisms of DRIPA, but not all. "I thought the idea of DRIPA was well-intentioned, but there was a sense of simply passing this one declaration [and saying] we've done a bit for now, we're just going to sit back and relax ... But you need to be really clear about what ideas you're using and how you're using them and why," he said.

Pelletier argued that Aboriginal title has already coexisted with private property in British Columbia "for a very long time." She invoked the 1997 Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) ruling Delgamuukw v. British Columbia. In this case, the SCC determined that land titles, such as fee simple, "could not and did not legally extinguish Aboriginal title," according to Pelletier.Since the Delgamuukw ruling, Pelletier says Canadian courts have carefully balanced competing interests.

"Everything we are seeing from Canadian courts on this issue demonstrates a very cautious case-by-case approach, not a wholesale setting aside of private property," she said. "It is disingenuous, and frankly, irresponsible to suggest that an Aboriginal title declaration places everyone's private property in jeopardy."

Pelletier said that the solution is not to reject coexistence or deny the possibility that any private land can ever be given back.

"That would amount to categorically preferring the rights of fee simple owners over the constitutionally-protected rights of Indigenous people ... And that cannot be reconciliation," she said.

Isaac argued that Aboriginal title does threaten the sanctity of fee simple title, because it weakens the rights of private landowners. "The minute you say that they can coexist on the same parcel of land like two exclusive interests of land ... one of them needs to be watered down at law."

According to him, if Aboriginal title can overrule fee simple title, then fee simple is no longer an indefeasible title, where property is owned forever, but a defeasible one, where land can be taken away anytime by somebody "with a superior interest."

Isaac and Moyse's argument consistently went back to the economic value of land. Isaac said if British Columbia's economy becomes the "only Western economic zone on the planet where you can't take your [...] indefeasible title to the bank," the province may struggle to attract foreign investment.

"What I'm concerned about is that a fee simple landowner, with their defeasible title, goes to the bank and says, 'I want a mortgage.' And the bank [...] has to say: 'I'm not giving you a mortgage. There's a group of people sitting over here who, at any time, can go to BC Supreme Court and take your land. So why would I give you a mortgage?'" Moyse said.

In reference to the Cowichan ruling, Moyse said, "If [the Cowichan Tribes] go to court and prove their Aboriginal title over my piece of property, and I want to take down [my] barn, who do I ask? Am I allowed to take down the barn, or do I have to go to the Cowichan Tribes and say, 'Can I take down the barn, please?' Or do I even have a legal interest in this property at all?"

Though the Cowichan Tribes did not ask the B.C. Supreme Court to invalidate the fee simple interests of private landowners' rights or evict private landowners, the court did declare certain government-held fee simple land titles as legally invalid. The court also found that Aboriginal title and fee simple title coexist, and that the government must reconcile what that means by February 2027

The Cowichan decision is currently being appealed before the B.C. Court of Appeal.

After over an hour of discussion, Chief Pete concluded the night by stating why, to him, debates matter. "The value of a debate is not measured only by which side wins or whether someone changes their mind ... Sometimes it comes from understanding an argument we had dismissed or discovering that people who disagree may still share important goals."

EXTENDED BYLINE

Juan Pablo Sastoque Vega was this story's backfield editor. **Isabella Donn** was the copy editor. **Aleah Kippan** took the photos. **Sophia Clearwater** designed the page in print.

A Third of Sexual Misconduct Reports at UBC Aren't Investigated

Eight students were disciplined for sexual misconduct at UBC Vancouver in 2025–26. Their punishments were decided solely by the president, with no minimum penalty. The next review of the sexual misconduct policy will be in the coming fall.

Editor's Note

This is the first article in a series from *The Ubyssey* on how UBC handles sexual violence cases, including how the Investigations Office, the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office, and the Office of University Counsel do their work — and how that work impacts students.

We'd like to hear from you. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual misconduct at UBC, and you feel comfortable talking about your experience with UBC's systems, you can reach Deputy News Editor Saba Majd at *news@ubyssey.ca*. You decide how much to share. If you'd rather stay anonymous, you can send a tip at forms.*ubyssey.ca/tips*.

By Saba Majd
Deputy News Editor
& Madeline Semple
Community Reporter

Continued from page 1.

The Offices

SVPRO's most recent report, from 2025–26, pointed to two trends: more consultations from heads of units, staff, and faculty asking how to respond to disclosures, and more disclosed incidents in cohort-based learning programs — such as the Sauder School of Business and the Faculty of Education — which SVPRO said require more complex responses and coordination. The report did not give potential causes for either of these trends.

The report also said cases that are reported to both UBC and the police — specifically campus RCMP — have fallen.

Upwards of 90 per cent of sexual violence cases in Canadian post-secondary settings are never disclosed, the report said, and the cases in the annual report likely represent a small fraction of the experiences across UBC. The office also noted that survivors are put off by the length of the reporting process, the exhaustion of having to prove an experience, the probability that the process will not lead to a finding, and especially the worry that nothing will happen to the person who caused harm, even with a finding.

An external review of SVPRO's Vancouver office in 2025 produced 10ten recommendations, which SVPRO said are being turned into a five-year plan. SVPRO has not publicly provided a timeline or a list of the recommendations made, but indicated in their 2025–26 report that work was underway and would include developing a new student education framework, hiring a new director, and "strengthening engagement with provincial and national dialogues on sexual violence response and prevention."

SVPRO does not participate in or direct reporting processes to the IO. However, they can provide support for individuals through the reporting process. In 2025–26, SVPRO reported supporting 16 people through the process — 10 through individual reports and six through two institutional reports. (Under SC17, the director of SVPRO may file an institutional report with the IO when the office has received multiple disclosures about the same member of the UBC community. There were none the year prior, but in 2023–24, there were three; typically, there are none. The office has said that the increase in institutional reports leads to more complex casework.)

The IO, the office that participates most directly in the reporting process, is impartial, neutral, and separate from SVPRO.

In the IO's process, the "complainant" is the person who files a report, and the "respondent" is the person the report is about. The "investigation" is a fact-finding procedure wherein the investigator assigned to a case determines what happened and whether UBC's policy was breached. The only cases investigated are those the director of investigations decides the office has jurisdiction to investigate.

The IO has handled sexual misconduct complaints since its inception in 2017; since then, its jurisdiction has expanded to cover discrimination and retaliation complaints, public interest disclosures, investigations under the respectful environment standard, and consolidated investigations. Consolidated investigations — which fold multiple policy breaches, including those involving the Student Code of Conduct, into one investigative process — have reduced parallel investigations, spared complainants from having to respond to several investigators, and helped manage costs, according to the IO.

When the IO was created, all investigations and alternative resolution processes went to outside practitioners. By 2022–23, however, it had four investigators of its own. As of 2026, the IO has 11 staff members: the director, the associate director, seven investigators, an operations manager, and a case manager.

In 2022, UBC added a Respondent Resource Specialist (RRS) to support people who are accused under the sexual misconduct and discrimination policies. The current version of SC17 includes the RRS as a point of contact as well — when the IO tells a respondent about a report, they must give a summary of the allegations and information on available resources, including the RRS. The IO's 2022–23 report adds that the RRS takes part in the IO's collaborative case management. The Vice-President, Students Office page lists the RRS under its portfolio.

Policy Reviews & Jurisdiction

In both the 2020 and 2024 reviews of SC17, the OUC conducted consultations with students, staff, and faculty, and published the findings. The BoG's Policy Development Committee (PDC) received almost 100 comments from 14 sources during the 2024 review, and made changes to SC17 in response to some of the suggestions.

The IO's 2023–24 report said the most common unmet requirement for jurisdiction was that the alleged conduct must have "a real and substantial connection" to UBC, per section 3.1.3 of SC17. The 2024 review replaced that wording, and the revised policy is still in effect.

The PDC heard that the "real and substantial connection" test was not clear. One student commenter said that UBC had declined to investigate their allegation because of jurisdictional issues and that fear of running into the person on campus affected their time at UBC. To give complainants the most protection, some members of the PDC argued that membership in the UBC community should alone be enough for jurisdiction. Ultimately, the executives responsible for the policy chose a "sufficient connection" test instead, with a non-exhaustive list of relevant circumstances — these include whether the sexual violence happened at a UBC-related event (even one that was held off-campus) and whether it had a significant impact on the complainant's ability to take part in UBC programs. The committee said they would evaluate the efficacy of the new provision over the next few years — the next policy review is coming up in fall 2027.

Timelines & Delays

Once a report has been made, the director of investigations has 14 calendar days from the time of receiving the report to decide whether UBC has jurisdiction to investigate. From then, the investigator assigned to the case has 90 calendar days to finish the investigation. (Before the October 2024 policy review, this was 60 days.)

The PDC's 2024 briefing to the BoG said investigations under SC17 are among the most complex that the university does, and argued that 90 days is much more realistic. The 2024 revisions also gave investigators the power to set deadlines for individual steps, because complainants, respondents, and witnesses often ask to delay interviews, the office said, and some requests are "excessive or without reason."

The IO's annual reports do not disclose average investigation lengths, the share of cases that are completed within the 90-day limit, or how many cases go over the limit. The 2023–24 report listed "improved investigation timelines" as a priority and said it had started tracking timelines to find sources of delay. The 2024–25 report said the office had cut its average investigation timeline by 14 per cent from the year before. Community members had told the IO they were frustrated by how long investigations can take, according to their recent reports. They Community members also said they found investigation reports dense and full of legal language, and were confused by getting information from several UBC offices.

Part of the investigations' lengths can be attributed to pauses due to other proceedings. Section 9.4 of SC17 says complainants can file simultaneous reports outside of the university and section 9.5 lets the director of investigations suspend the UBC procedures while an outside process, such as a criminal case or human rights complaint runs. The investigations can be resumed when the director sees fit. The policy sets no limit on how long the director can suspend the investigation.

The reports don't speak to how UBC's process and a police investigation compare at the Vancouver campus, but SVPRO's 2024–25 report says some clients had trouble navigating the RCMP process simultaneously with UBC's investigation. Criminal trials, the report said, can take 2–3 years, and survivors were left waiting or deciding whether to take part in the UBC process knowing that that could affect the criminal case.

The draw of a criminal investigation, as opposed to one conducted by the university, is its outcome. Whereas violations of SC17 can result in a written warning, probation, loss of privileges, discretionary sanctions, exclusion from campus residence, suspension, or expulsion, being found guilty of sexual assault under section 271 of the Criminal Code of Canada can result in up to 18 monthstwo years in prison for a summary conviction and up to 10 years under an indictment. But criminal cases take much longer, and charges and convictions for sexual assault are rare.

Discipline & Appeals

In UBC, once the IO finds that a student has breached SC17, it does not decide the disciplinary measures. UBC's president Benoit-Antoine Bacon does. Under section 61 of the University Act, the president of the university has the authority to suspend students and deal summarily with student discipline. The policies reviewed by The Ubyssey do not make clear who advises the president on these decisions. For violations of the sexual misconduct policy, the president has to rule within 30 calendar days of receiving the findings, though the director of investigations can set different timelines and change them at any time depending on the complexity of the case, the number of witnesses, or the parties' availability.

Other cases of student non-academic misconduct are reported to Campus Security and the student conduct manager, or referred to the President's UBC Vancouver Non-Academic Misconduct Committee. The committee then advises the president on next steps. However, for SC17, the president alone decides, at their discretion, and the policy sets no minimum penalty for a finding of sexual misconduct.

After deciding, the president sends the respondent a letter with their decision, the reasons — including the investigator's report if necessary — and the nature and length of any measures.

Sanctions in Vancouver were heavier this year than in the three years before. Five of this year's eight students found responsible under SC17 were suspended, for 4four, 12, 12, 18 and 24 months, respectively. Two were reprimanded, and one got a letter of warning with a year of probation. This year's 24-month suspension went to a student whose case the summary calls a second offence, given "the previous finding of non-academic misconduct of this nature." From 2022 to 2025, only four were suspended, all for 14 months.

These summaries are the only public record, in the documents reviewed by The Ubyssey, of what a sexual misconduct finding at UBC leads to. Complainants are not told the outcome, have no role in the disciplinary process, and the summaries are usually their only source of closure as to what actions are taken against the respondent.

UBC says the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) limits what it can disclose about a respondent's discipline. The 2025–26 summary withheld the outcome in five of its 16 non-academic cases, citing "privacy laws."

A student respondent has the right to appeal the president's decision to Vancouver's Senate standing committee on student appeals of discipline for up to 45 calendar days after receiving the letter. The respondent can argue on multiple grounds, including that the conduct was wrongly found to be misconduct or that the investigator was biased. If the standing committee finds the investigation unfair, it can send the matter back to the director of investigations for a new investigation, which can start the process over again for complainants.

SC17 also allows the director of investigations to decline to investigate, even when jurisdiction conditions are met, if proceeding would be unfair and cause substantial prejudice, because time has passed and witnesses or evidence are harder to reach. The revised policy, after 2024 consultations, requires the director to give the complainant written reasons and to report each decision to decline in the IO's annual reporting. Some commenters in the consultations asked for more detail on when the director can decline, but the PDC refused, saying details could limit the director's discretion.

There was also a proposal to give respondents a summary of the investigation report instead of the report itself, which drew support from some commenters and dissatisfaction from several others. The PDC said respondents will always get the allegations and any other information they need to respond, and that investigators are trained to identify that information and will not make findings of fact on information the parties have not seen and had a chance to answer.

On the issue of appeals, one commenter in the consultation said complainants should have a right to appeal the disciplinary outcome of an investigation, but the PDC made no change, saying that the appeal process is largely beyond the scope of the policy and more closely tied to the Senate's appeals committees. Another commenter said a complainant should "find out that an appeal has been submitted [by the respondent]" and should be able to present evidence. The PDC disagreed, saying that informing the complainant could violate the respondent's rights and UBC's obligations under FIPPA. Letting complainants present evidence, the PDC said, "miscomprehends the purpose and model of the process," which is not "the complainant versus the respondent (like a civil trial)."

Bill 18 & SC17's Future

More changes are on the horizon. Bill 18, the Sexual Violence Policy Act, received royal assent on Oct. 30, 2025. Its main sections are not yet in force and come into force by regulation of the Lieutenant Governor. The bill repeals the Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act that created UBC's SC17.

Bill 18 has the capacity to change the university's sexual misconduct policy in multiple ways. For one, it covers everyone in the institutional community, including employees, faculty, contractors, volunteers and governing-body members. For another, it replaces the term "sexual misconduct" with "sexual violence."

The federal government defines sexual misconduct as "conduct of a sexual nature that causes or could cause harm to others" in a Defence Administrative Order, while the federal Department for Women and Gender EqualityEquity describes sexual violence as "a form of gender-based violence ... [including any] non-consensual behaviours of a sexual nature."

Despite the two terms' differing definitions, Bill 18 uses the same criteria for sexual violence as the Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act uses for sexual misconduct. This shift in terminology could impact reporting; for example, a potential complainant might be more hesitant to describe sexually inappropriate comments as "sexual violence" than they would be to describe them as "sexual misconduct.".

Moreover, Bill 18 stipulates that each institution's policy must set out the disciplinary actions that may be taken as a result of the findings of an investigation. Institutions must also set up an advisory committee with at least one student and they may, but are not required to, tell a person who makes a formal allegation about interim measures and the outcome, including any discipline.

Alongside Bill 18, the province also released its Sexual Violence Action Plan for post-secondary communities. In a statement earlier this fall, former minister of post-secondary and future skills Jessie Sunner said the ministry continues to develop policy to bring Bill 18 into force. SVPRO's 2025-26 report said the legislation would be enacted in fall 2026, alongside the action plan. SVPRO's priorities for the coming year include aligning with Bill 18 once it takes effect and setting up a sexual violence prevention advisory committee for education work and the upcoming policy review next year.

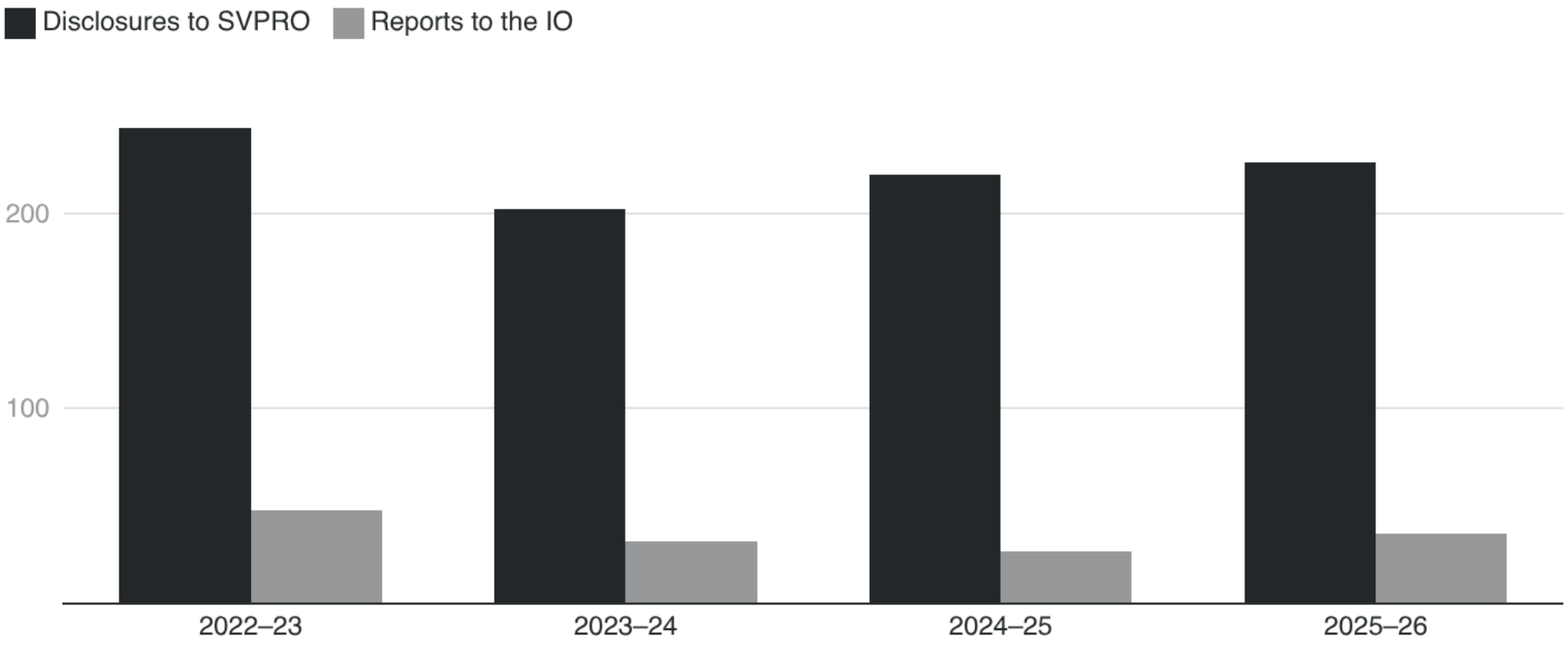
B.C.'s 2025 action plan will also require post-secondary sexual violence policies to respond to the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Calls to Justice and Calls to Action of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, respectively. The plan also instructs institutions to consult First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and partners in their three-year reviews.

Despite backlash from First Nations, Premier Lorne Doerkson has said he is committed to repealing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA), a 2019 provincial law that aims to align B.C.'s legislation with UNDRIP.

In June of last year, the province conducted a survey on students' perceptions of sexualized violence, covering all B.C. public post-secondary institutions. Participants were asked what would make them more willing to report sexual violence incidents. The top answers were accountability measures for people found to have caused harm (34 per cent) and clear reporting procedures (30 per cent), followed by transparency in how incidents are managed, a safe space and anonymous reporting options (each 28 per cent). Students also reported the least trust in their school's use of appropriate accountability measures, and the survey said a lack of trust in follow-through may be a barrier to reporting.

The province's action plan commits the ministry to guidelines on how to share case outcomes and sanctions with survivors.

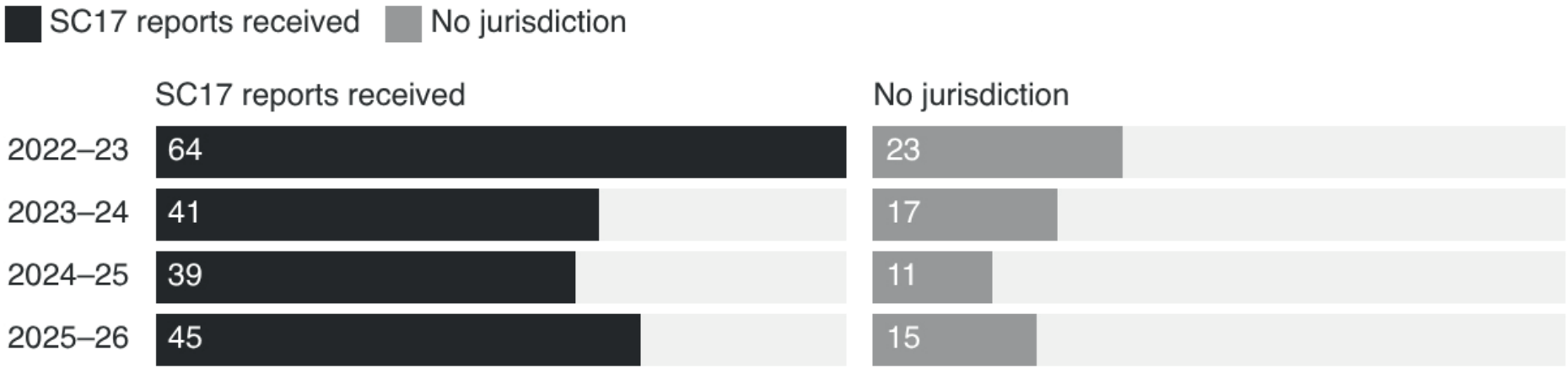
Disclosures to SVPRO and reports to the IO, UBC Vancouver



Disclosures do not automatically become reports.

Chart: Saba Majd / The Ubyssey • Source: SVPRO and UBC Investigations Office annual reports • Created with Datawrapper

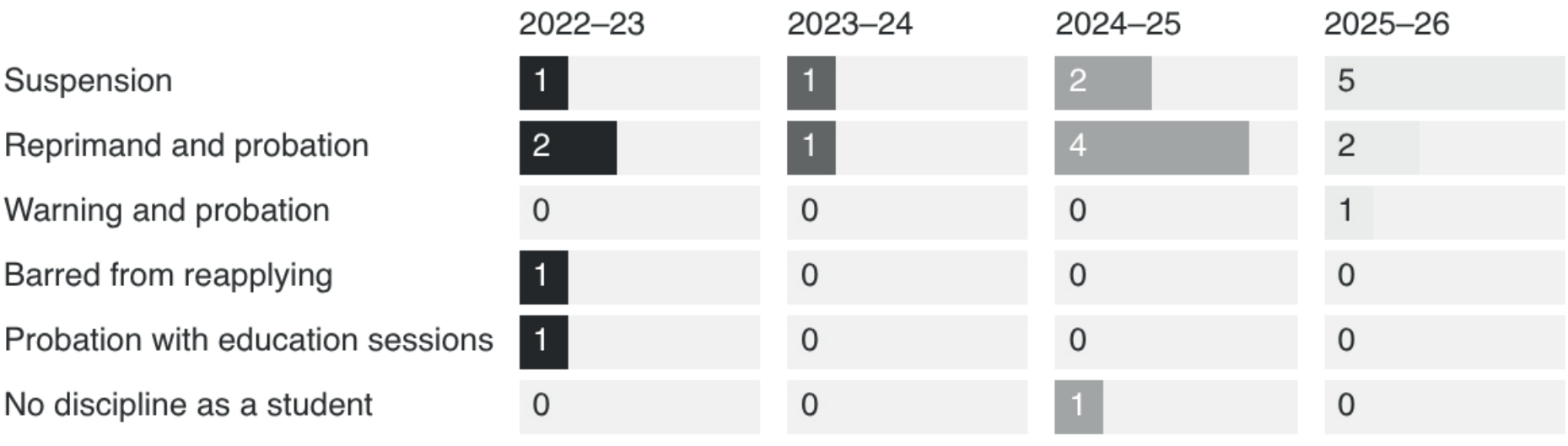
Reports the IO had no jurisdiction to investigate



Both campuses. Most common unmet requirement was "real and substantial connection" to UBC.

Chart: Saba Majd / The Ubyssey • Source: UBC Investigations Office annual reports • Created with Datawrapper

Sanctions for Vancouver students found responsible for sexual misconduct



Years run September to August. Students only.

Chart: Saba Majd / The Ubyssey • Source: UBC Office of the University Counsel, annual student discipline summaries • Created with Datawrapper

Postdoctoral Fellow Sues University Alleging Retaliation, Early Dismissal

The claim, filed in B.C. Supreme Court, has not been tested in court. UBC's own investigation rejected the retaliation complaint, and the fellow now faces losing her campus housing on Nov. 30.

By Danylo Korsei
Law Reporter
& Saba Majd
Deputy News Editor

A former UBC postdoctoral fellow has filed a civil suit against the university over the early end of her appointment after her research funding was cancelled — alleging retaliation, the unjustified reassignment of a research assistant, and premature dismissal.

At the end of October, Yi-Ting — a former postdoctoral fellow at UBC — filed a notice of civil claim in the B.C. Supreme Court against the university. The claim alleges UBC took away research assistance, subjected her to retaliatory performance management, and dismissed her prematurely, before the cancellation of her research funding had taken effect.

UBC's internal investigation did not find any evidence of retaliation and concluded that the project's industry partner withdrew funding over lack of progress. None of the allegations have been tested in court.

Yi-Ting was appointed to UBC's School of Nursing from September 2025 until August 2027, with a $120,000 fellowship for the period provided through the Mitacs Elevate Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, run by the Canadian funding organization Mitacs. UBC ended her appointment 14 months before scheduled, citing a lack of funding as the reason.

A June 30 termination letter, which she provided to The Ubyssey, says the appointment was ended without cause and gave her one month's pay in lieu of notice. Her offer letter says her appointment would be terminated if the external funds ceased to be available.

She was appointed to the Digital Companion project, under the supervision of Associate Professor of Nursing Lillian Hung. The project focused on the development of AI chatbots for older adults who face memory loss within long-term care settings through a partnership with CloudMind Software Inc., whose product would be used in care homes. According to the claim, Yi-Ting served as co-investigator and primary contact for the project.

According to her claim, the conflict began on May 4 when Hung removed Riea Singh, who Yi-Ting claims was her only active research assistant, without notice or a replacement. The claim alleges Singh was told to hand over her work within about an hour, and that the project's approved ethics application listed three research assistants.

Yi-Ting said this withdrawal impeded the research, which she alleged was already understaffed. In message exchanges provided by Yi-Ting to The Ubyssey, Singh reported working roughly 15 hours a week despite only being paid for 10 hours. Both Yi-ting and Singh discussed working overtime before the reassignment. The exchange shows Singh stated on Oct. 1, 2025 that she was working roughly 15 hours a week despite only being paid for 10 hours. In a March 20 exchange, Singh said she has been working overtime since January, and Yi-Ting said she herself has worked 20 hours beyond her 40-hour maximum.

Singh's reason for leaving remains disputed. UBC's investigation report says that Singh requested not to work with Yi-Ting, though it does not say what evidence supports that. Yi-Ting says she told UBC about a recording in which Singh says her reassignment came on Hung's instructions, and that the investigator never asked for it.

A transcript of a handover conversation provided by Yi-Ting shows Singh saying that the lab manager Paulina Santaella Tafolla told her she would be stepping into another role. Yi-Ting clarified Tafolla carries out decisions on behalf of Hung. However, the transcript doesn't specify whether Singh requested the change herself.

Yi-Ting also told The Ubyssey that Singh emailed her the weekend before the removal saying she wanted to take part in a future conference presentation, which she says makes it unlikely Singh had already decided to leave.

According to UBC's investigation, May 4 was also when School of Nursing HR and Finance Manager Rico Choi contacted faculty HR about managing Yi-Ting's performance and the possibility of termination if it did not improve. The report says Dr. Hung and Yi-Ting's meeting that day also covered performance concerns and social media posts by Yi-Ting that the department had received complaints about. It does not describe the posts.

Yi-Ting says the criticism of her performance came after her objection to losing support at the meeting with Hung, and that HR began exploring termination before she had submitted her written progress report. She raised this concern with UBC's Postdoctoral Fellows Office on May 5 and 8 and filed a Scholarly Integrity complaint (covered by Board of Governors' policy SC6) with UBC's Office of Research Integrity on May 9, which also alleged Retaliation (covered by policy SC18).

The claim says UBC scheduled a performance review on same-day notice on May 12. During that meeting, held May 19, Hung allegedly talked about the possibility of hiring another postdoctoral fellow. A meeting record prepared by Yi-Ting's support person and signed by both of them says Hung told her, "this is not working. I'll need to hire a new postdoc," and that she could either work with Hung or "fight" with UBC, in which case a new postdoc would be hired.

The record also says Hung told her the lab had no obligation to provide research assistants. Yi-Ting claims that Hung's ensuing written assessment, sent May 21, criticized her research progress and leadership, and described her overall performance as unsatisfactory. Yi-Ting disputed the assessment in an email on May 25, arguing that it overlooked her staffing problems and lacked specific examples, and said she was concerned the comments were retaliatory.

A record of a June 18 project meeting shows recruitment difficulties. No residents attended a June 14 demonstration at the original care home research site. Yi-Ting also reported problems regarding the product's Cantonese language functionality; most of the residents at the care home site speak Cantonese. In an alleged message exchange in May, CloudMind CEO Monica Tsai acknowledged that her engineering team did not speak Cantonese.

The minutes also show Yi-Ting raised adding a second care home in Coquitlam, about a 50-minute drive from UBC. The claim alleges Hung denied the proposal and later used recruitment problems to justify the termination.

CloudMind co-founder Tim Fields attended the meeting on June 18. The minutes show he left early, saying he would pass his feedback to Tsai. UBC's investigation says that Fields raised concerns about Yi-Ting's progress in an email to UBC several days later and independently decided the company should end her project's funding. When asked about what new information CloudMind had received to make this decision, Yi-Ting told The Ubyssey, "I really don't know." She mentioned that it was unusual for Fields to attend the meeting instead of Tsai. She said that Tsai had a personal reason for not attending, but she was not sure if Fields was attending on behalf of Tsai or whether Tsai had an agenda.

Yi-Ting said she did not learn of CloudMind's complaint to UBC until she read the investigation report, and had no chance to respond to it. The report says Tsai, in a recorded conversation with Yi-Ting, said the decision came from concerns about progress. Yi-Ting says the same recording shows Tsai calling the cancellation a joint decision with Hung.

On June 29, a letter from UBC's vice-president for research and innovation closed Yi-Ting's Scholarly Integrity complaint because her concerns did not fall within the scope of the policy. The claim says it did not address her retaliation concerns. That same day, CloudMind requested the cancellation of the Mitacs project with the agreement of Hung.

Allegedly, Tsai said that CloudMind's June 19 cancellation letter specified July 31 as the funding end date. This letter was requested by UBC on June 26 as part of its HR process. Tsai allegedly said she told UBC that CloudMind would like to continue the project wherever possible under different leadership and that UBC's decision to end Yi-Ting's appointment on June 30 was made according to the university's own policy.

According to the claim, UBC terminated Yi-Ting's appointment the following day, giving her one month's pay in lieu of notice. At the June 30 termination meeting, a transcript provided by Yi-Ting shows Choi saying UBC had been notified by the funder that it would end funding, and Hung saying the funders had ended it. Asked whether she had asked for the project to be cancelled, Hung allegedly said the decision was "not just coming from me," before leaving the meeting.

In an email on July 2, Mitacs allegedly confirmed the cancellation request had not yet been processed. A later message the same day established a notice period up to July 30 during which the fellow should continue to be paid, and on July 14 Mitacs said it would not place the project on hold. Mitacs also, however, clarified that its award was distinct from Yi-Ting's UBC appointment, and her signed offer letter said that the appointment would end if external funds stopped being available. Yi-Ting alleges that UBC misrepresented the circumstances of the cancellation, including by telling her the funder had requested that her appointment end.

After Yi-Ting filed a retaliation complaint on July 3, UBC held a retaliation investigation. Its report is dated Oct. 6 and was sent to her Oct. 15. The investigation rejected Yi-Ting's complaint, finding that the performance concerns were present before her formal May 9 disclosure and that Dr. Hung did not know about the complaint at the relevant time. It says Choi knew of the complaint but did not tell Hung or others on the project, because he worried it could compromise the performance process. The report also describes Yi-Ting as someone who "cannot be swayed by information that is contradictory to her convictions."

Yi-Ting objects to this. She argued the investigation did not sufficiently examine her earlier complaints regarding Singh's reassignment and CloudMind's decision. She said UBC treated only her May 9 complaint as qualifying under the policy, and that the report's listed interviews were with only Choi and Hung, not Fields, Tsai, or Singh. She also points to Mitacs' confirmation that Dr. Hung agreed to the cancellation request.

Currently, Yi-Ting says she has no income, and faces problems finding rent outside of campus because most of the landlords require income proof. The claim says she must leave her UBC-affiliated housing by Nov. 30 unless she can show she is still eligible. She also says that she was 2 months away from her 12-month of Canadian work experience that is required to be eligible for permanent residence. She told The Ubyssey the lack of a reference from Hung is making it harder to find a new job.

Yi-Ting's notice of civil claim says she is seeking seven forms of relief. This includes damages for breach of the Appointment Agreement, valued at the fellowship; research and travel allowance and housing for the rest of her term, or, in the alternative, damages for wrongful dismissal in lieu of reasonable notice, including the value of the fellowship; aggravated and punitive damages; unpaid vacation pay and expenses; costs; and interest. She said she wants pay through the end of her contract in August 2027 plus additional compensation, and that if UBC were willing to settle she would ask for a positive recommendation.

UBC did not provide comment regarding the litigation in a timely manner.



Arts & Culture

FOOD REVIEW

The Restaurant Students Don't Deserve

Students should have better options than mediocre, overpriced campus food. Rosie's Burgers didn't rise to the challenge.



Photo by Aleah Kippan / *The Ubyssey*

By Jack Paransky
Food Critic &
Deputy Arts & Culture Editor

Continued from page 1.

"Well, Jack," you might say, rudely interrupting my train of thought, "that's only a two dollar difference."

First, I say, grabbing you by the lapel and hoisting you three feet into the air, know that you will never comprehend my respect for reasonably-priced meals. Second, and maybe what upsets me more, is that it's never just stopping at the $13 burger, is it? Are these poor students convinced to push their wallet further into perdition and spend $6 on fries? Are they conned by man or divine beast?

The fries aren't enough, says the devil in their ear. You deserve a $7 milkshake, which is sensible price for a milkshake smaller than a mug of tea. Your wallet can take that beating. Give it to Rosie's. Give them that soul.

Rosie's Burgers, established in 2010, is an international chain that has put down its flag to claim campus in the name of the red and white. It's the second of two locations in B.C. — the other's in Abbotsford — so they must recognize a claim to the students as useful. The cynic buried deep in my bones sees this, and the new cohort of chains opened up on campus like Hungry Zus or Osmow's Shawarma, as mediocrity all vying for our money.

Rosie's UBC location is utilitarian and optimized. Two signs read "Treat yourself." and "You deserve it." The devil here lies in the decal.

The act of even walking up is a test of your nasal fortitude. Grease loiters in the air and burrows deep into your lungs — like getting a swirly in their frier.

I hesitate to call its location a restaurant. There are no seats, as most of the location is taken up by the kitchen. You order quickly then run so the other 10 people in line can do the same. It's sad when a place who calls themselves my "neighbourhood burger shop" decides the best way for me to see the neighbourhood is from the curb they kicked me to.

The fries ($6) were crunchy, well-salted, but seem straight from a frozen bag. They're crinkle cut, slightly mealy in the centre, and mostly forgettable. This would be fine — God knows I never make my own handmade fries — but these are $6, nearly the price of another burger. The only thought I have when eating them is "why did I spend 6 loonies on this"?

The Onion Rings ($7) were salty mounds of dough cleverly hiding a sliver of onion inside. Once you take a bite and the one vegetable you were going to eat that day slides out, you're left to cavort with this fried chunk. While eating, the greasy dough sapped something from me — maybe the regular blood flow from my heart to my extremities. I ended up throwing them out before I felt worse.

Each burger is a soft, mushy entity you have to delicately peel from its wrapping. The bun is always barely cooked — no time on the griddle in the nurturing heat of a blacktop. It tastes store-bought and convenient.

The Classic ($9 or $13 for one patty or two) was a dry, utilitarian burger. Acid cuts through every bite with pickles and a small dousing of ketchup and mustard. But even this chemical relaxant couldn't break through the patty. Mine was this laminated crust of beef that tasted reheated, even though I saw the people working there making hundreds of ground beef balls fresh.

But The Classic at least tasted like meat. The Rosie ($9 or $13),though still beef, had the bland, airy taste of a veggie burger. The shredded lettuce — merely packing peanuts — in the small bun edifice which only functioned to safely bring the tough and tasteless beef to my mouth. I was surprised how greasy I felt after the whole thing.

The BBQ ($9 or $13) is strongly acidic, even more so than The Classic. Sweet and tangy barbecue sauce does little to mask the dry meat. What's more baffling are the too-crunchy, uncooked onions buried in the soft sandwich, like biting into an apple pie and finding human bone.

I hesitate to write about The Party ($9 or $13), the favourite of our diligent sports editor, Caleb Peterson. The twinkle in his eye nearly blinded me as he earnestly and happily venerated this burger.

Two patties were thrown haphazardly on the bun, cheese seeped around them, encasing every inch of the meal in its neon orange goo.

The fattiness nullifies all other senses in your mouth. They use American cheese — which in any other situation would be my personal favourite for a burger — but it obfuscates all other tastes. There are onions and pickles, but for all intents and purposes, they don't exist. It's vegetable medicine being snuck into my feed — all of the nutrients, none of the flavour.

I told Caleb this, and it looked like I drew a part of his soul from his body, slammed it on the table, and ridiculed its pain. This is a man who watches and writes on loss for a living. He's seen those he admires knocked to the ground like broken and bloodied husks of people. Throughout all of that, he's never broken his warm and chipper smile. But my disdain for Rosie's cut something in him so far untouched.

So why can't I shake my hatred for this place and keep my relationship with Caleb intact? Why do I write in my normal hyperbolic style about the imaginary devil in their shop, or the goo they give me? Why can't I leave this place alone and let our sports editor live in peace?

I get the immovable sense that this campus has very few restaurants that make an effort. They know they're the only show in town — they charge us moderate to high prices for food that isn't even great. I ask you: have you ever had something really good on campus? A meal with flavours that push past your senses to give epiphany? One that brings you closer to whatever deity looks down upon you from heaven?

These restaurants are all fine. That's the only word my brain can muster when describing these places in a grand sense. Their food is fine, the service is fine, the prices are fine. The word means nothing and neither does the food on campus. Why should it, when all of it is convenient?

Rosie's burgers is the culmination of this mediocrity. It's distilled on-campus food: calories to satiate the appetite as you don't pay attention to cost while you run to class. Students deserve a neighbourhood burger shop and I wish Rosie's rose to the challenge.

Club Kid, a Hilariously Honest Portrait of Growing Pains

Queer internet provocateur Jordan Firstman's directorial debut — and starring role as a New York-based party promoter — is a candorous display of self-awareness.

By Selina Hay
Film Critic

Club Kid, the terrifically funny and earnest debut feature from first-time director Jordan Firstman, begins how any good night out should: packed cheek to cheek in a six-seater, hot-as-hell Uber.

Rihanna's "Sex With Me" blasts through the speakers as an eccentric gaggle of 20-somethings pile in. Among them are Peter (Firstman), a scruffy socialite who knows everyone who knows anyone; his business partner, the relentlessly coked-out Sophie (Cara Delevingne); and a handful of other friends. The journey quickly becomes a disorienting whirlpool of colours and lights as cinematographer Adam Newport-Berra keeps the camera spinning endlessly, thoroughly relaying the vomit-inducing sensation of taking a cab ride while three sheets to the wind.

The visual stimuli swell to new heights as Peter and his rowdy troop disappear into the underbelly of New York City's nightlife circa 2016, naturally skipping the multiple-blocks-long line and pulling in a couple of stragglers as they dip past the bouncer. This is a typical night for Peter, a queer party promoter whose work, alongside Sophie, consists of chatting up DJs and filling guest lists. He teeters across the dance floor and gleefully accepts substances before snuggling beside Sophie on a plush velour couch while they chant their mantra, "What do we want? Drugs! When do we want them? Now!"

Peter walks a delicate line between flagrant party animal and community caretaker, a dichotomy Firstman knows well. While Firstman may have got his start in Hollywood as a writer for HBO's Search Party, he broke into mainstream consciousness through his outlandish internet personality in the early 2020s.

He's made his name as a provocateur within queer digital spaces, receiving pushback for his criticism of certain queer representation — including Heated Rivalry, whose sex scenes Firstman deemed inaccurate and "not how gay people fuck," a comment he later apologized for. To move away from this digital persona, Firstman returned to Hollywood as an actor; his first prominent role was in the comedic thriller Rotting in the Sun, where Firstman got a chance to show us how real gay people fuck. His character, a social media star aptly named Jordan Firstman, is a meta play on Firstman's off-camera mystique. A mix of glaring narcissism, sincere loyalty and unbridled wit makes Firstman (both real and fictive) remarkably likeable.

That's probably due to Firstman's self-awareness, which he masterfully transfers onto Club Kid. Peter is another broadly autobiographical portrait — a messy but earnest creature of the night who never shies away from a drug-induced frenzy, even if it results in questionable actions.

Peter encounters the British Leonora (Paris Petitjean), who immediately becomes infatuated with his hairy chest and charming allure. Peter, who claims he's "never touched a vagina in his life," initially shuts down Leonora's flirtation, but after a couple more bumps of K (or was it C?) Peter finds himself agreeing to a threesome with her.

Cut to about 10 years later, and we find a now almost 30-year-old Peter slumped over in his Manhattan apartment recovering from yet another late night escapade. With Sophie's support, Peter's made a career (of sorts) of being perpetually intoxicated and surrounded by sweaty, moving bodies. But like the lights flickering on at the end of a warehouse rave, Peter, too, is starting to wake up from his never-ending night. The physical repercussions of a decade of drug use are putting a strain on his body — not to mention the cocktail of fast food, animated porn, and incessant self-loathing that fill his daylight hours.

His real awakening, though, is sparked by an unexpected visit from Edison (Kirby Howell-Baptiste) and the timid 10-year-old Arlo (Reggie Absolom).

In a rapid-fire recounting, Edison informs Peter that his seemingly inconsequential sexual encounter with Leonora was anything but. Leonora discovered she was pregnant with Peter's son, and decided to raise the child in England without informing Peter (despite putting his name on the birth certificate). But after a decade of frequent drug use and domestic abuse, Leonora has committed suicide. Edison — instructed to take Arlo to Peter should anything happen to Leonora — honours her friend's final request, leaving Peter in the improbable new role of father. Having been the ringleader of his queer found family for most of his adult life, Peter's knack for caretaking takes a poignant turn as he becomes the literal family of the adorable and shockingly culturally-competent Arlo.

Arlo is not your typical sob story. He's witty and well-versed in queer culture — he refers to the trans women in Peter's circle as "the dolls" upon first meeting them. Aside from a dairy allergy, he seems to be a perfectly functional child who rivals Peter's own degree of maturity. Those in Peter's orbit also recognize Arlo's brilliance, including the boisterous Saffron (Saturn Rising), a transgender DJ and mentor to Arlo. Impressing both Saffron and Peter with his fluency in indie music staples — from Cocteau Twins to Elliott Smith to Ethel Cain — Peter allows Arlo to DJ alongside Saffron for an early 10 p.m. shift at one of his parties. Safety concerns aside, this is just one of the many ways the film meticulously folds Arlo into the queer family at the heart of Club Kid.

There's a striking honesty to much of the film's depiction of queer counterculture, making for some enchanting and truly hilarious moments of dialogue. Firstman, with an unbridled clubbing past of his own, places the film firmly on the pulse of the current moment, at one point referring to the mix of cocaine and ketamine as "a little Charlie, a little Kirk." Despite the sometimes grim subject matter, I frequently found myself in belly-aching laughter. The film might appear to run the risk of villainizing (or romanticizing) the drug use and casual sex in clubbing scenes, I wouldn't second this concern. Instead, it lasers in on Peter's painful journey of finally growing up.



Jordan Firstman and Reggie Absolom star in Firstman's directorial debut. Film still retrieved from IMDb

Peter's arc is by far the most compelling aspect of Club Kid, but that unfortunately also comes at the film's detriment.

Arlo is kind and mature and immediately attached to Peter — while I trusted Arlo's capacity to suppress his trauma at first, my suspension of disbelief quickly ran dry. Aside from a teary moment or two (mostly in service to Peter's arc), Arlo never grieves his mother's death. We get one emotional outburst the entire film; most scenes present Arlo as an adventurous, joyful child who might be a little too trigger-happy with swear words. He keeps the film from dipping into the darker subtext present in many of the characters' backstories, but it does result in a shallow and somewhat instrumental character. I applaud Firstman for not focusing solely on queer trauma — he steers clear of any tropey rehashings of troubled coming-out stories. But the adult characters still contain depth that Arlo simply does not.

What Club Kid lacks in emotional complexity with Arlo, it provides in spades with Peter. Firstman's performance makes Peter, despite his blunders, undeniably likeable. He may begin an immature, intoxicated mess, but through Arlo's belief, he transforms. We, alongside Peter, begin the film in the thralls of euphoria. By its conclusion, we watch the party from afar — the pulse of house music only a whisper, disseminated into the New York City skyline.

New Kids on the Throne

In a U Sports final of two underdogs, the Guelph Gryphons seized their first ever title against the TWU Spartans in a 2–1 thriller.

University of Guelph Gryphons	2
Olivia Rizakos	25′
Isabella Trepanier	63′
TWU Spartans	1
Luciana Andrews	31′



By Wiktor Chojnicki
Men's Soccer Reporter

For 105 minutes, Thunderbird Stadium became its own little universe. On Sunday, every fan found their own quirky way of reaching a true sports exaltation: kazoos and tambourines, drums, ceremonial gongs and even simple sneakers raised a cacophony for soccer.

Atmosphere aside, this match was special.

This kind of bracket is rare: all top three seeds flunking out in the first round, leaving just the underdogs.

On one side, the Trinity Western University Spartans. They are a historic powerhouse and five-time national champions, but are currently in an extended slump. Having finished third in Canada West, they made it to nationals only because conference champion UBC qualified automatically by virtue of being the hosts.

On the other, the Guelph Gryphons. After an undefeated season, they had to settle for second place in the OUA. From there, they pulled off a miracle run, entering their first national final ever.

The Gryphons, however, have an ace up their sleeve: their first U Sports women's soccer coach of the year, Shayne Campbell. The positive influence that he is, he tried to distance himself from the victory as much as possible:

"They deserve all the credit, they play between the lines, they put all the effort in. I'm just happy to be a part of it", he said.

The mark of a true leader.

What Guelph displayed was a tactical masterclass, something the numbers don't show. Though they performed more shots — taking eight against TWU's five — , they held onto the ball much less than their opponents.

"We really believe in ourselves, in the resilience that we have at the back"

There wasn't much creativity out back — both teams instructed their centre backs to launch desperate long balls instead of looking for a calm way out — but the resilience was there. It took a true wonder-goal to penetrate Guelph's backline.

In the 31st minute, TWU's Luciana Andrews dribbled past five players in the final third to neatly slot it in by the far post to equalize the score line at 1–1. It was the type of highlight that makes it look easy; as if the ball was glued to her.

Such moments couldn't reasonably be used to criticize a defence. Magic scores goals, but it's consistency that wins titles. While the TWU looked tired and off-balance in the last 30 minutes, the Gryphons never took their foot off the gas.

They simply played a more modern game, so fluid one couldn't tell their positions apart. What was surprising was the width both teams were set up at: most offensive runs started down the flanks. The wingers, TWU's Destiny Omari and Guelph's Isabella Trepanier, were given absolute liberty to take the ball and progress it as far as possible.

That doesn't really happen in modern soccer. But it's the kind of magic that gets the crowd going.

"We have two former Gryphons playing in the NSL right now, and I fully expect that some of these players will have the opportunity to get there," Campbell said.

Bringing this finesse to the pro leagues is what's needed to keep the sport popular.

Olivia Rizakos was a standout. "She was the university player of the season last year and she's followed that up," Campbell said. "Every time she got on the ball, she made something happen."

The author of the first goal came up in every single conversation. There's a maturity to her game that any team in the country would value highly. Every decision she makes is well-calculated.

The coach went on to mention Katie Kimens, who "has just shown resilience at the backline," but that's the mildest way he could professionally put it. Kimens was bullying attackers for 90 minutes straight. Six feet tall, she reached crosses before anyone else could, holding any competitors at arm's length.

What might get overlooked is her positioning. She's not the most explosive player, but she compensates for it with incredible game awareness and intelligence, always at the right place at the right time.

Ultimately, the one to turn the tide was the Championship MVP Trepanier, perhaps the greatest discovery of the tournament.

Four goals and four assists in 15 OUA games was consistent at best, but by no means exceptional, let alone MVP material. Turns out, she's a textbook big game player. A big crowd flips a switch in this explosive dribbler.

Not only did she contribute on three of the Gryphons' five nationals goals, but each one was a game-winner.

The definition of clutch.

Numbers and narration cannot capture the full extent of her influence. Especially in the second half, she was the sole Guelph player tracking back and then making deep, progressive runs with the ball at her feet. Such work rate and grit on a player of such flair is the perfect mix.

The most telling of such moments happened in the 62nd minute. Bypassing three players, Trepanier cut inside and did something no reasonable player should: with her back almost turned to the goal, she spun around and shot from over 20 yards out. The ball went off the goalie's hand, the crossbar, then into the goal.

She's still got two more years of eligibility ahead, and in the context of both Rizakos' and Kimens' graduations, a team built around her could have the potential to aspire for a OUA title next year.

Those kinds of moments erase any disillusionment or burnout one has from soccer, especially if used to the men's game. This season has been completely unpredictable: not because of giant underperformances, but because many squads simply fly under the radar.

After the proverbial table has been flipped, a power vacuum is wide open in the women's soccer hierarchy. Next year, any throne and every crown is up for grabs. Just watch.



A Battle of the Underdogs

In a top-level match between the two lowest ranking teams in the competition, Laval earned a medal after beating all odds.

By Isabella Fabro
Women's Basketball Reporter





After the bronze-medal match of the U Sports national championship, Université Laval is heading back to the East Coast with a victory and some new, shiny hardware.

When the Rouge et Or took on Thompson Rivers University in the battle for third place, many spectators were likely surprised as both teams were coming from the lowest seats in the tournament rankings.

Yet, before they even played each other, their stories became ones to remember: together, they destroyed the top-two seated teams.

This tournament was the WolfPack's first ever national appearance, a showing that only happened due to a shoot-out victory in their first-ever Canada West appearance.

Their hunger was obvious from the get-go, as they pulled off a shocking 1–0 victory over last year's national champions.

With their victory against Université de Montréal Carabins under their belt, TRU was ready to push and make it to gold, but their semifinal game against the Trinity Western Spartans ended the dream.

The loss placed them in the bronze-medal game where they were set to play a team that had a very similar success story.

Laval was no stranger to the national stage, as the team has made six consecutive appearances in recent years. Yet, despite their lengthy resumé, the team was ranked in the last seat of the tournament overall.

Going into the tournament, head coach Yann Le Roy told his team, "If you want to win, we win altogether. And if we have to lose, then we will lose altogether as well."

Their experience was evident as they took down the first-ranked UBC Thunderbirds in their first game of the tournament. But after losing in the semi-finals to the Guelph Gryphons, the last round of the tournament had them facing off none other than TRU.

It was a match between two teams that made it farther than any spectator expected them to, and the game meant everything for them. "With the second game lost, we felt that we had something to prove to ourselves, that we were better than that," said Le Roy.

When TRU started with the ball, the competition and fight picked up instantly. Within the first minute of play, possession of the ball was flip-flopping between teams at a rapid pace. The WolfPack speedily took their claim on Laval's territory. No shots were successfully fired, but it was still enough of a scare that it woke up the Rouge et Or.

As a counter measure, Laval amplified their physicality and aggression. Unfortunately for them, these misguided efforts only allowed TRU to take on multiple free kicks.

For a majority of the first half, the game looked as if it would go in favour of TRU — the team demonstrated excellent footwork, had multiple attempts on target and had Laval looking confused and out of steam.

The entire field was utilized as the athletes ran up and down the sides to break through their opponents' defence and dampen the ferocity found in Laval's penalty box.

But TRU was only missing one crucial detail: actually scoring.

It was through missed shots that Laval was finally able to get a prolonged possession and work their way to a shot on goal. The team broke away and took the ball to the other end for their first shot of the game. Luckily, rookie goalie Anaëlle Marthouret held her ground and made her first of many saves.

Although the shot was a miss, it allowed the Rouge et Ors to get a peek into what would be needed for them to score. With no goals for either team going into the break, someone needed to step up and make a change.

After the game, Le Roy shared what he told his team: "I only said two things. I said, 'play with heart,' and 'just be a little more precise'."

And that's exactly what they did.

When the teams returned to the pitch, there was a noticeable shift in game dynamics. Laval started with possession, and it was TRU's turn to apply pressure and be as physical as they could be.

But despite their rivals efforts, Laval began to take a slower pace — but it wasn't from exhaustion. Instead, it appeared that their every move was meticulously planned. After the match, captain Léa-Jeanne Fortier shared their secret: "In those (physical) moments, you just need to reset and just calm down and stick to the game plan."

The Quebec team started to almost purposefully take on less shots on goal, as if they were waiting for the right moment to arise.

And then it happened. Twice.

Less than five minutes after the halftime break, senior Elsa Lessard scored the first goal of the game. She weaved through the defenders who had just fended off a Laval attack and found the connection to the back of the net.

Then, four minutes later, she scored the second. With a quick break and fast movements that confused the WolfPack, the Laval lead quickly doubled in size with a header followed by a corner kick.

The arena was abuzz with energy radiating from the Laval players. The stands roared, and the players ran and jumped down the length of the field to celebrate.

For spectators, it was that moment that determined the winner. But for Fortier, she knew that what they had was special and that it was always going to get them the win: "We stick together as a family. We always believed that this bronze medal was ours."

But TRU was angry, and they weren't ready to give up their fight just yet. They kept charging Laval and slamming into the players with force. Their aggression might not have guaranteed them possession, but an exchange of mysterious words on the pitch had Laval physically rebuttling.

With Macyn Jolly at the line for an open penalty kick, the WolfPack got their first goal of the night and cut the lead in half as a quick shot hit the deep corner of the net with ease. This goal came in the 85th minute, leaving Thompson Rivers to press for that equalizer — that chance of victory — throughout the last minutes of play.

As the 90-minute mark got closer, the game got increasingly feisty and aggressive in unnecessary aspects of the game. With bodies getting taken to the ground across the pitch, the final whistle blew as TRU ran to get a ball kicked out of bounds.

Both Le Roy and captain Fortier agreed on the key element that allowed them to take home the win: underneath the defence and scoring, the practice and effort put in, there was a family.

"(The win) was not an easy task, but it proved that this group is very special and is composed of a lot of great players," said Le Roy as his bronze medal hung from his neck.

EXTENDED BYLINE

Sofia Campanholo was this story's backfield editor. **Jasmeen Brar** was the copy editor. **Emaara Noorani** took the photos. **Aarna Upadhyay** designed the page in print

Salvaging Some Pride, Medal or Not

By Maia Cesario
Women's Soccer Reporter.

UBC Thunderbirds	2	
Jayda Thompson		49′
Hannah Bains		59′
uOttawa Gee-Gees	1	
Sabrina Mangiaracina		14′



For the seventh time in a row, Women's Soccer made it to a third game in the U Sports national tournament. It was not the game the T-Birds wanted to play in.

After a tough quarterfinals match against the Laval Rouge et Or, the No. 1 Thunderbirds' long-awaited tournament run came crashing down. With a 86th minute winner, Laval moved on. UBC was out.

With that heartbreaking loss, the Thunderbirds were sent to the consolation bracket, where the highest they could finish would be fifth place. In UBC's previous six straight national performances, only once did they not medal. This year would make it twice.

They were the favourites. They were the hosts. They had to shake it off.

After less than a day of rest, they had their semifinals match against the Dalhousie Tigers, toppling them 4-0 to keep their season alive. Awaiting them to play for fifth? The Ottawa Gee-Gees.

Ottawa had a similar path through the tournament. They finished on top of their conference. They were also undefeated. They were favoured to win their quarterfinal. They lost.

Both teams were looking to salvage their tournaments, at least in some sense. Ottawa had to face the defending champions Montreal. They were able to get the 2-1 win and send themselves to the consolation final in hopes of ending the tournament on a high note.

It seemed for a while that Ottawa would be the ones to achieve this, taking the lead with a goal in the first half.

The UBC group that stepped out in the second half looked like a different team. With a newfound intensity, they powered their way to the 2–1 win and fifth-place finish.

Initially, it looked like UBC had gotten off to a hot start. In the first minute, the T-Birds found the back of the net — but it was called off for offsides.

It's what would plague them all half: close chances but small mistakes.

It wasn't a great start, at least not for their standard. They held possession, but they were not in control, especially after conceding the first goal. With some bad touches, they couldn't score against the tough Ottawa defence, squandering chances.

Once such chance came from forward Maddy Norman — in a scramble, the ball bounced to Norman at the top of the box. It seemed like a dead ringer to score.

It was blocked — not by a Gee-Gee, but by a fellow T-Bird, trying to crouch out of the way.

As it bounded away from the net, midfielder Sienna Gibson took a chance. The ball went wide.

They were also having problems with their corners. UBC had a whopping seven corners in the first half and couldn't convert on a single one of them — Ottawa's defence was just quicker in the box.

On the other end of the field, Ottawa wasn't having the same problem. With two corners early, they quickly did what the Thunderbirds couldn't.

On their second corner, the Gee-Gee's Celina Bensebaa sent a beautifully placed ball into the box. Ottawa kept the play in the box with a header, making it a scramble for Marilena Spagnolo to defend. The ball went right to the worst possible person for UBC.

Sabrina Mangiaracina has been stellar player for Ottawa all season. She was the 2026 OUA East MVP, leading the nation in points. In this tournament, she came up clutch with her late strike in the semifinals against Montreal. With Spagnolo out of position, the MVP sent it into the back corner.

This was the second time in this tournament where the Thunderbirds have conceded off the corner. It hasn't been a massive problem for the T-Birds, but it is a pattern they would not want to see continue next season.

As halftime came around, UBC was left trailing 1-0.

"It was definitely a wake up call for us," said forward Jayda Thompson. "We [needed] to show who we are ... 'It's just, let's bring it home, because we are home, and that's all that matters'."

Whatever the talk in the locker room was lit a new fire under the T-Birds, as they came into the second half gunning for their final win at home. They made some changes in the lineup, subbing in Thompson, who was on the bench for the first half.

Her impact on the game was immediate.

In the 49th minute Gibson had another shot at net and while Ottawa's keeper was there to save it, she couldn't hold onto the ball. Thompson was prepared, swooping in to tap it in and tie the game at one.

Thompson's ferocity was exactly the energy the T-Birds' needed the whole game. It was once again anyone's game, and UBC rode the momentum of the first goal to find the back of the net again, 10 minutes later.

Whatever rust was ailing them was gone. Hannah Bains, in her final game as a T-Bird, fired an absolute sniper to score and take the lead. Like Thompson, Bains was subbed in later in the game, but unlike Thompson, coming off the bench was not unusual for Bains. She has added new energy to games as a substitute for a long time.

"At halftime, we talked about wanting it," said Bains. "[We focused on] getting after it and making sure that we're still making a statement today. We had a great season, we are a great team and if you're gonna come to Thunderbird Stadium, it's gonna be difficult to play against us."

The second half was much cleaner for the Thunderbirds. They had more possession, but this time, it translated to chances, outshooting the Gee-Gees 6-1.

In their last game at home, the T-Birds continued to push right until the end. In the final minute, the stadium filled with cheers, as the home crowd let UBC know how they felt about this team, medal or not.

"To be able to look in the stands and see so many people that I love, I couldn't have asked for a better way to cap off my career," said Bains.

It's not how they thought this tournament would go. They missed out on the medals this year, let alone the gold they were expected to win.

But they still ended fifth in the country. They ended with a win. And as per usual, they were a top contender, which is head coach Jesse Symons' perennial goal for the program.

At nationals, one game defines your season. With this match, UBC tried to write their own narrative. Stumbles are a part of sports. As a team, they have had so much to be proud of this campaign.

"It was really important for our team just to remind ourselves that we did have such a wonderful season," said Bains. "We really wanted to make sure that we ended on a high note, we gave our friends and family a show, we played to the best of our ability, and we played for each other."

For the graduating players, they can hold their head up high, finishing with the win at home. Bains, Thompson, Sophia Ferreira and Taiya Dennehy will end their UBC careers with boasting two national championships, four Canada West banners, and more.

"They've had storied careers," said Symons. "They built a legacy here for our program, and I'm excited to see the next group step up and continue a challenge for these championships."

"I've never been so grateful," said Thompson. "This will be the most unforgettable experience of my whole entire life, and nothing will ever amount to what it is to be a U Sports university athlete."

EXTENDED BYLINE

Caleb Peterson was this story's backfield editor. **Jasmeen Brar** was the copy editor. **Veronika Kapitanchuk** took the photos. **Aarna Upadhyay** designed the page in print

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UBC to Host Women's Hockey Championship in 2029

Vancouver has never hosted a U Sports national championship for hockey. That will change in 2029, with the women's tournament coming to UBC.

By Maia Cesario
Women's Soccer Reporter.

Within the past two years, UBC has hosted four U Sports national tournaments. As of today, the Thunderbirds can look forward to hosting another.

U Sports has announced a new rollout of championship hosts, including UBC, who earned the honour of hosting women's hockey nationals for the 2028–29 season.

This will be the fifth U Sports championship hosted at UBC in as many years.

"UBC just checks all the boxes for us," said Mark Alfano, director of sport at U Sports. "From a student-athlete experience, the facilities are tremendous, the staff here is so great and Vancouver itself is a destination."

In March 2025, the Thunderbirds hosted the men's and women's basketball championships. In October and November of that year, UBC hosted the women's rugby championships. Most recently, the T-Birds hosted the women's soccer championships just this month. Now, UBC will add to this, hosting women's hockey in the spring of 2029, from Mar. 22–25.

UBC has plenty of experience with hosting national tournaments. But not for hockey.

UBC has never hosted U Sports nationals for either men's or women's hockey. No B.C. school has. Usually, the tournament takes place out east or in the Atlantic provinces. The farthest west the tournament has been thus far is Alberta.

An OUA team has hosted the tournament nine times, the most of any conference, followed by Canada West at seven. The AUS and the RSEQ have hosted six and five, respectively. Within Canada West, every single tournament has been in Alberta or Saskatchewan — most often in Calgary, who is a three-time host.

The lack of hockey nationals on the West Coast will be further remedied with back-to-back Metro Vancouver tournaments. Other than UBC, the Trinity Western University Spartans, will be hosting the following year, during the 2029-2030 season.

It is typical for programs close to each other to host nationals in back-to-back years, so it's not strange to have a two-year West Coast hosting rotation. It will be historic for both teams, both hosting U Sports hockey for the first time.

The U Sports Women's Soccer Championship just concluded on Sunday evening, which left UBC without a national tournament on the horizon. Now, they have one to look forward to.

"We are very excited to be getting to come back to UBC," said Alfano.



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Opinion

DEGREES OF CHANGE

Recreation Isn't Safe from the Climate Crisis

Climate resilience focuses on protecting critical infrastructure, but we can't forget to support hikers, paddlers, and other outdoors enthusiasts.

By Astrid Maiz
Climate Columnist

The sun was setting through the turning leaves of Pacific Spirit Park and the air was chill. I was a couple kilometres into a looping trail run when a metallic yellow sign slowed me to a stop. In careful black text, it warned of the forest's dangers. Falling branches, flooding, and eroding ground were increasing, leading to risky conditions for park-goers.

These conditions were caused by bad weather events that are more frequent because of climate change.

We are used and somewhat desensitized to worsening climate conditions.

B.C. residents deal with everything from disastrous flooding and landslides to water shortages and restrictions. Locally we've experienced sweltering heat domes, stinging wildfire smoke, and relentless winter rain.

While seasonal weather changes are expected, the climate crisis aggravates these fluctuations to the extreme, threatening our livelihoods and safety. But these changes also threaten the activities that make life fulfilling.

Outdoor leisure shouldn't be a luxury. Having the time and space to enjoy yourself is a critical component of mental and physical health.

Yet climate adaptation is often discussed only in regards to infrastructure. Protecting essential systems is rightly a priority, but climate resilience must address more.

Compared to the immediate threats climate change poses, protecting leisure opportunities seems trivial. But these activities aren't indulgences — they're a part of how we maintain our health and find enjoyment in our daily lives. Spending time outdoors has countless health benefits and can foster community belonging.

If climate policy aims to create a better future for citizens, it needs to include the recreational experiences that add to our quality of life.

Vancouver is an outdoorsy city. UBC students spend free time biking, paddling, and mountaineering. Heck, even I've fallen for the running epidemic; I await Strava kudos, compare paces, and bring up my marathon training to everyone in my vicinity. (Did I mention I'm training for a marathon?!)

After seeing these Metro-Vancouver-issued signs on my run, I wanted to know more. What could I expect to see affected by climate change in my day-to-day recreation?

As it turns out, lots.

Storms will grow in frequency and intensity, leaving trails vulnerable to erosion and flooding. This means more regular closures, safety risks, and reduced access. Swimmers will face toxic algae bloom growths thanks to rising temperatures, rendering ocean waters unusable.

With new weather patterns, usual customs will have to change. Childhood campgrounds become inaccessible and the mountains that people grew up skiing every winter are now barely frosted.

Activities that used to require little more than a free hour and a bit of energy now demand considerations of weather forecasts, personal safety, and accessibility.

These extra concerns may not seem profound. If the air is too smoky for a safe run, you could just check out UBC's new indoor track, right? Yes, dedicated individuals may persevere, but for the average student looking to sweat it out between lectures, this time and effort to find alternatives becomes a barrier.

Not everyone can adapt the same, which may lead to some giving up on outdoor recreation completely.

Climate justice theory recognizes how climate change is not felt equally across the globe. The communities causing the least environmental damage often face the most severe consequences.

The disparities of climate vulnerability can be seen on campus, too.

A student with a car can drive to unsullied trailheads; someone reliant on public transit cannot. Gym memberships and paid recreational activities are alternatives to outdoor activities, but often come at a higher financial cost. Eroding beaches and parks can prevent those with physical disabilities from visiting safely.

Even when indoor facilities are available, the outdoors still provide unique physical and mental health benefits.

Climate change has already reached detrimental levels and reducing emissions is no longer enough. Alongside limiting further damage, we must mitigate and adapt to climate change's effects.

Protecting and ensuring safe access to what outdoor spaces we have is crucial.

The B.C. government announced their Look West outdoor recreation strategy earlier this year. It details a plan for a more accessible and diverse parks system and grow BC's highly profitable outdoor tourism industry.

Encouraging tourism supports local businesses and fosters an appreciation for the outdoors. But more visitors can pressure parks to prioritize profit over preservation of natural areas.

The BC Parks Foundation recognizes that accessing the outdoors is already inequitable, which climate change will only exacerbate. The foundation is working to protect sensitive habitats and support communities to ensure equal access to outdoor recreation. Specifically, BCPF park enhancement grants lets outside donors support the parks system where public funds fall short.

UBC student organizations like the Varsity Outdoors Cluband SISU are making the outdoors more accessible by providing trip planning assistance, gear and peer support. As the climate crisis worsens, these clubs meet students where they are and provide more ways to access the outdoors.

The university should take a more deliberate role.

UBC already has the framework for a sustainable and resilient campus. Campus Vision 2050, the university's long-term development plan, supports climate resiliency. Additionally, the Climate Action Plan 2030 lays out a broader climate response with an emphasis on reducing emissions and waste.

Nature access should be added as an essential component of student well-being.

Building on CV 2050's commitment to accessible green spacesand CAP 2030's intentions to improve engagement and outreach, UBC could identify which green spaces are most vulnerable to degradation and tell students and staff when these areas are inaccessible.

The school already has an interactive campus map featuring current construction zones, info centres and transit stops. UBC could add accurate and real-time updates about climate-caused issues such as closed beach access, damaged trails or flooded pathways.

For example, the cliffs along Wreck Beach are eroding at an accelerated rate due to climate change. Highlighting areas particularly vulnerable to environmental damage could raise student attention and action.

UBC could even offer alternatives when these outdoor spaces cannot be used.

Similar to how the province opens emergency warming and cooling centres, UBC can provide discounted or free drop-in recreation rates when the outdoors are unsafe, whether through wildfire smoke or heavy rainfall. This does mean extra steps for students, but being on-campus and low cost eliminates excessive barriers.

Clearly UBC cannot control every outdoor space students visit. The nearby Pacific Spirit Park is not operated by the university. But collaboration with the relevant boards and societies responsible for the park could mean reliable information for students.

Although I support institutional level solutions, students should still stay informed about current climate conditions and exercise caution, even if that means skipping an outdoor practice or moving a mental health walk to a treadmill.

But in the long term, outdoor recreation needs to be recognized in climate resilience frameworks.

Adaptation is often framed around protecting the infrastructure of work and home. This is essential. But climate adaptation requires more than the barebones of living.

Our quality of life depends on accessing places where we can move, connect and step back from our daily routines. Climate change regulations need to reflect this.

EXTENDED BYLINE

Quyen Schroeder was this story's backfield editor. **Ari Chase** was the copy editor. **Irisa Rao** designed the page in print.

POWERS THAT BE

Don't Import the Worst of Politics

Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro grew negative partisanship into extremist rhetoric. We can't let the same happen in B.C.

By Maya Tommasi
Politics Columnist

Last month was a major victory for Lula in Brazil's elections. He reversed a first-round loss in a runoff election win, something no Brazilian president had managed before. His opponent Flavio Bolsonaro, son of former president Jair Bolsonaro and representative of a potent far-right movement, made the race incredibly close. Examining the rise of the Bolsonaro and his far-right ideology, Bolsonarismo, can teach us about our own politics.

The rise of Bolsonarismo has many factors, but I'm focusing on negative partisanship: a form of political loyalty defined not by support for anything, but by opposition to a political party or movement. This is a shadow of traditional positive partisanship, where loyalty is towards a party or movement.

The political systems in other countries are often driven by positive partisanship for two or more parties. Columbia politics professor Cesar Zucco, explains that Brazilian politics is instead defined through petismo and antipetismo — positive and negative partisanship towards Lula's Workers' Party. This dynamic has defined Brazilian politics since the late '80s. Bolsonarismo prospered because with no other parties on the right, Bolsonaro became the primary force of antipetismo.

The negative partisanship Jair Bolsonaro harnessed has rewarded the most violent and extreme rhetoric. During the impeachment of Brazil's first elected female president Dilma Rousseff, Jair Bolsonaro hailed Colonel Carlos Brilhante Ulstra. Ulstra was a leading torturer of the Brazilian dictatorship — which literally tortured Rousseff in the '70s. This was Bolsonaro's introduction to the Brazilian mainstream, but far from the only time he took antipetismo to the extreme.

He explicitly called to gun down his opponents and implicitly framed them as a movement which must be destroyed. Wishing violence against his opponents was a throughline of Bolsonarismo.

His politics legitimized all forms of violence and inhumanity — particularly against Indigenous people, nature, and even Brazilian citizens. This culminated in an attempted coup, following an election loss in 2022. Bolsonaro coordinated with generals to murder Lula and usher in military dictatorship as his supporters stormed congress.

Though Bolsonaro's attempted coup led to his arrest in 2025,it did not delegitimize his movement. Instead, it warped reality for millions of Brazilians. Bolsonaro's supporters believed the election was stolen, saw the vandalism of our congress as legitimate protest, and treated a well-documented coup attempt as if it weren't damning.

Even moderate and historically democratic conservatives underplayed the attempted coup's seriousness — not just radicals. The centre-right Goiás governor Ronaldo Caiado promised he would grant amnesty to those involved in the coup attempt during his run for president. Caiado would have also extend this amnesty to Bolsonaro.

There are two reasons this happened. The first is ideology. Many philosophers have recognized ideologies capacity to warp reality. In Bolsonaro's case, this happens through lies. Bolsonarismo uses antipetismo to create a fear of the Workers' Party. The effect is that the Workers' Party becomes a personalization of all that is bad, and comparatively Bolsonaro becomes reasonable.

The proof that an election is fraudulent is that the Workers' Party is evil. An attempted coup is just defending democracy; the elections were fraudulent, after all. Even to moderates, Bolsonaro might be an authoritarian who burned down the Amazon and led to thousands of needless deaths, but the other guys are the boogeyman, remember?

The second reason for the acceptance of Bolsonarismo is political pragmatism. If we accept Zucco's premise, the way to gather mass support for majoritarian elections is to either channel petismo or antipetismo. Petismo is an ideology intrinsically tied to the left-of-centre political movement, so right wingers must rely on the antipetismo. Doing so requires winning over Bolsonarists.

Morally, politicians on the right should battle Bolsonarismo and expunge the violent and anti-democratic tendencies from the Brazilian right. Though for electoral reasons, many decide not to. Eschewing the Bolsonaro supporters of the right wing would not help one's electoral cause, but pandering to those voters requires legitimizing Bolsonaro's narratives.

This warps reality and legitimizes his ideology. Even those not fully bought in benefit from appearing to be. Of course, this benefits Bolsonaro greatly — at the cost of Brazilian politics, critical thought, and our country.

Warping of truth is the root of all Bolsonarismo's harms.

Politics in Canada is getting more and more defined by negative partisanship. Former Premier David Eby's recent campaign is a good example of this. At first, he tried to tie his opponents, the BC Conservatives, to Trump. When this strategy failed, he pivoted. He called into question whether Conservatives interim leader Lorne Doerkson will be replaced by a far-right radical post election and spent much of his campaign attacking the Conservatives.

This negative partisan framing also shaped the perception of the ill-reputed bill to repeal the Human Rights Code. This bill, presented by far-right MLA Tara Armstrong, would repeal the BC Human Rights Code. The Conservatives voted for its first reading.

Eby framed this as support for the motion and repealing the Human Rights Code. This framing is misleading. As is tradition, MLAs will vote for the first reading on bills they disagree with.MLAs like Peter Milobar explicitly said this is why many conservative MLAs voted for the first reading. The party later voted en masse to maintain the Human Rights Code.

Voting for the first reading was still the wrong move by the Conservatives. The party made human rights an area for debate, legitimizing dangerous voices and putting minorities under threat. However dangerous voting on this reading was, it wasn't as bad as it was framed.



The NDP isn't the only party to employ negative partisanship. While done less explicitly by the Conservative campaign, social media — and unfortunately sometimes even national papers — is chock-full of examples of conservatives calling the NDP far left and radical. The NDP isn't, nor are their policies like providing a safe drug supply and SOGI education in schools.

This is the problem with negative partisanship. It creates fear and misinformation. To feed the boogeyman, sensible or semi-defensible positions are taken to their logical extreme in a way which breaks with reality. This has consequences not only for our democracy but also for citizens.

These incidents feed a self-reinforcing cycle of negative partisanship. Taken too far, negative partisanship causes serious problems, as we know from Brazil.

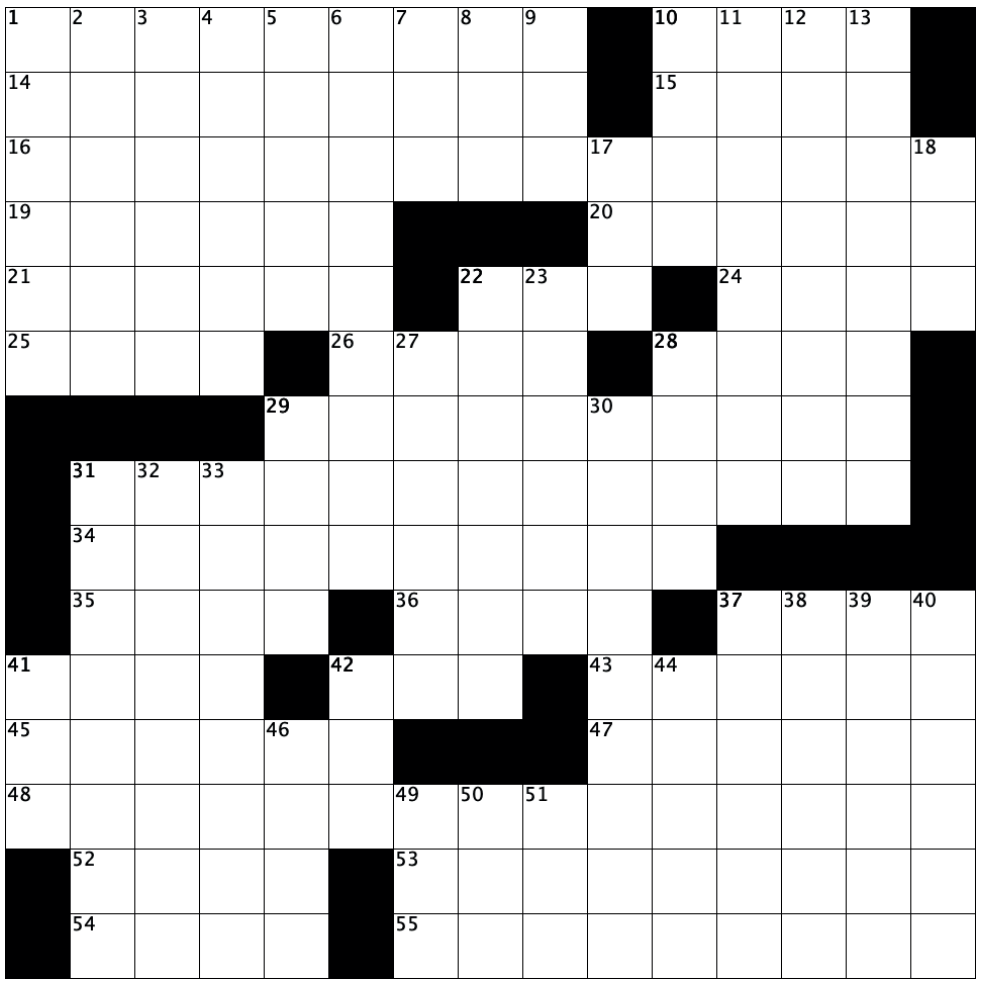
These trends are not irreversible. To counter them, we must be more careful with our information. Political parties' narratives must be questioned, and though it can be concerning how political movements — like the BC Conservatives — move, we cannot interpret all their acts in bad faith. Though we live in a difficult time, the advancements and rights we have gained have come from a well-functioning political system. Politics is very often frustrating and doesn't always bring the effects we wish to see. But our salvation from our current problems relies on politics. We must therefore shape politics to work for us, not reject it as it is.

The world is clearly not in a good place. Engaging in the the worst of politics will take us somewhere worse, not better.

EXTENDED BYLINE

Quyen Schroeder was this story's backfield editor. **Mackenzie Hazelwood** was the copy editor. **Claire Hennebery** created the graphics. **Irisa Rao** designed the page in print.

THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD



Crossword by Dylan Fitzhenry for *The Ubyssey*

Constructor's Note: As much as I enjoy making themed puzzles and finding a way to build a grid around a few meaningful answers, there's a certain fun challenge for both constructor and solver that comes with themeless puzzles. In a themeless puzzle, I try to fit more long words and deceptive clues than an average themed puzzle, resulting in way more open space and fewer words overall. This makes for a more challenging, but also more rewarding experience for the solver. So please enjoy this themeless puzzle! For questions and feedback, please reach out to games@ubyssey.ca

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS



Crossword by Dylan Fitzhenry for *The Ubyssey*

If you want to make the next crossword, go to:

ubyssey.ca/join

We want more custom games for our website and print but we need people like you to make them!

ACROSS

1. They may be stored beside Zeros
10. Huge Himalayan humanoid
14. Non-vegetarian caesar salad ingredients
15. It forms connections in your brain
16. Like a pizza painstakingly brought to your doorstep
19. Hated position, concerning some bad news
20. Fourth-wall-breaking remarks
21. Authors of Sapphic poetry
22. Tour featuring long drives while one hopes to see an eagle?
24. Muppet roommate (...are they really just roommates?)
25. It might be aimed for a Triple 20
26. Lacking funds
28. Surfer's destination?
29. It hardened the warriors of an ancient hidden army?
31. Big name at the Centre of UBC
34. Service that will send your letters to Santa if you include the code "HoH oHo"
35. Squeaks (by)
36. Number of symphonies for Beethoven, Dvorak, Schubert, and Mahler
37. One with a boot on their car, and a torch on their phone
41. "Just ___" ("Hold on!")
42. Direction from Vancouver to Seattle (abbr.)
43. "Move your butt"
45. Powerful movements to end a rally
47. Sister tormented by Vicky on "Fairly OddParents"
48. Overwhelming result of missing a spay-day?
52. Arc-en-___
53. Knowledge of when to signal and shoulder check, for example
54. Endings for benz and ethyl?
55. Proofreads before publication

DOWN

1. Father figure?
2. Lead up to hand, in a cry for help
3. Oblong chocolate pastry
4. Desire to down, or a desire from being down bad
5. Desire badly?
6. Max out one's credit card, say
7. French cocktail made with crème de cassis
8. Triple-extra wide shoe size
9. High speed computer storage device (abbr.)
10. Cries of joy
11. Second piece of evidence, in a procedural
12. Mario Kart character with pink braids
13. Body region featuring a bony labyrinth and spiral cavity
17. What do ewe say?
18. Temporal setting that has become permanent in B.C. as of 2026 (abbr.)
22. Flat-topped hat that shares a name with a flat-crusted meal
23. "Take my hand!"
27. Hearts, but not clubs, spades, or diamonds
28. Organize
29. Argentinian aunties
30. In-depth analysis, as may appear in med students' 40-Down
31. "Deli" rapper with a rhyming name
32. Win enough money to jump into a pile of cash
33. It may be graphic, with a certain letter cut?
37. Tapped, as a snoot
38. Pasta dish with a twist
39. Most in need of salt?
40. Long-term goals for grad students
41. Handy method of communication?
42. One-time union member, such as Lithuania or Kazakhstan (abbr.)
44. Small cluster of trees
46. Animals that scientists have, strangely, never observed reproducing
49. Enemy of Aragorn
50. ___ Fighters
51. ___ smear (cancer test)