

Interview with Sigvaldi Fannar Jónsson, the Treasurer of the student body council

Does everyone have the fund to go on a campaign

Of course it is so that everyone doesn't have the money ready on their bank account to be able to start a campaign. It can often be very costly. On the other hand, I believe that everyone has the chance to campaign despite money resources because it depends on how much you get from advertising revenue. Personally I was able to raise money for my whole campaign through ads in the booklet, poster and through funding as well. It is a lot of work but if you are willing to do it, then it is no problem getting funds from here and there. It is also a good practice for the upcoming work if you get elected.

Do elections matter?

Yes, definitely! Elections are the only democratic way that we have today to point people to office. I simply believe that our society is at the place where it is today due to democracy and thereof democratic elections.

What about „clique“, does everyone stand a chance?

I think „clique“ is highly overestimated in the Commercial College of Iceland. Again, personally I come from Blönduós up in the North and I didn't know anyone in the school when I started here. Two and a half year later I got about 60% of the votes for the Treasurer of the student body council, which are about 600-700 of the whole school. One never knows enough people to win elections solely on that. I think as well that the people of the Commercial College of Iceland are very conscious and get familiar with the policies rather than the social status of the candidates when they are about to vote.

Do you think girls have tougher time in the campaign?

No, I don't believe so. Girls are in the majority of our student body council, five girls and four boys and our president is a girl. The girls are today in similar or not more part of all the committees which is a good development towards equality between the sexes.

How is the democracy work within the school?

We have a very strong democracy work, in my opinion. We have annual amendment meetings where big and small amendments are made to the student body council's laws and all member's votes are valid. We elect candidates for all the committees, the student body council and more. Personally I am in favor of the whole voting process and believe that this is the only way to get all the students approval of what is done within our student body council. I am very pleased with this process in our school.

What are we affected by when we vote?

There are many factors that are involved. Firstly there is the candidates policies and what his aims are if he gets elected. Secondly who are supporting him and what those people say in the articles written about the candidate. Thirdly I think the experience within the student body council the candidate has is quite important, if not most important.

What qualities must the candidate possess?

The candidate must first and foremost be honest, conscious and hard working. He must set himself realistic goals with his experience and ambition at hand. He must be a social person and not at all shy. It is also important to have self-confidence which can be very appealing.

Is it democratic that not all can be candidates?

Everyone can in fact be a candidate for the committees but not the student body council, which consists of 9 people. I think that is justified that only the students on their third year of study are eligible for campaigning for student body council for then we have the most experienced students campaigning. The possibility of allowing everyone to campaign can be looked at but I think that in the end the older students would always win. It is probably not correct from a democratic point of view to put such constraints on the elections but it is to be mentioned that anyone interested can campaign for being a committee member and later campaign for being in the student body council when he or she is eligible.

Is it democratic that those who are about to leave the school get to vote?

Yes, I believe that it is democratic that those who are about to leave the school get to vote. Those are the people who know the school and the student body council. They care about the wellbeing and vote for the interest of the school. We cannot offer those who are about to enter the school to vote and therefore the seniors get to vote in their behalf. It is perfectly logical.