TORONTO SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (TGSA)

TGSA BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2016 AT 11:00 IN THE JAY BOARD ROOM OF THE TST BUILDING

2016.3.1. OPENING PRAYER

Action Items

BECCA SPELLACY opened the meeting at 11:00 and requested that MICHAEL BUTTREY open the meeting with a prayer.

2016.3.2. ATTENDANCE

2.1. PRESENT

BECCA SPELLACY (*President*) (Chair), GORDON BROWN (*Knox College Representative*), MICHAEL BUTTREY (*Vice President External*), MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH, S.J. (*Treasurer*), MATT KOVISK (*Trinity College Representative*), JONATHAN LOFFT (*Vice President Conferences*), BENJAMIN LUJAN (*University of St. MICHAEL's College Representative & Theology Program Representative*), BETH MCCUTCHEON (*Vice President Academic*), ALLISON MURRAY (*Emmanuel College Representative*), and ANDREW NUSSEY (*Master of Theology Program Representative*).

2.2. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

RACHEL BALL (*Contextual Program Representative*), ROBYN BOERÉ (*Regis College Representative*), DEAN DETLOFF (*ICS Delegate*), STEVE HEWKO (*Wycliffe College Representative*), ANTHONY SPELLACY (*Secretary*), JOHN SUNDARA (*UTSU Director*) and BRUCE WORTHINGTON (*Bible Program Representative*).

2016.3.3. APPOINTMENT OF ACTING SECRETARY

BECCA SPELLACY NOTED that due to ANTHONY SPELLACY'S absence, she had asked MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH to take minutes. She REQUESTED that MATTHEW email the minutes to ANTHONY at his earliest convenience.

MC

2016.3.4. OTHER MATTERS FOR THE AGENDA

BECCA SPELLACY explained the due to some members needing to leave early, the Agenda would be re-ordered.

BECCA SPELLACY requested that the issue of the *Varsity* article on the ThD/PhD be added to the Agenda.

MICHAEL BUTTREY had requested before the meeting that a *Special Nomination* be added to the Agenda.

2016.3.5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

In the absence of the Secretary the Minutes of the previous meeting were not able to be presented, however Members were aware that they had been emailed and no comments had been received prior to the meeting.

2016.3.6. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes that were not covered by items on the agenda.

2016.3.7. TREASURER'S REPORT

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH reported that he would circulate the latest Financial Statement by email to members, but NOTED that he had no concerns since the last meeting.

2016.3.8. CONFERENCE

JONATHAN LOFFT reported on the preparations for the forthcoming TGSA Conference to be held on Friday, 11 March 2016. He referred to the documents circulated to the TST Listserv on the 25 February and attached hereto.

He UPDATED the Board on some financial arrangements, which he happily NOTED were well within the approved budget. He gratefully ACKNOWLEDGED that the office of the Director of TST had undertaken to help with the costs of catering lunch, with our share of the costs being \$300.

He REPORTED that following the suggestion from the previous meeting, he had approached the Keynote Speaker, Prof JAMES GINTHER, *Dean of the University of St Michael's College*, to ask what sort of gift would be most meaningful to him, and that it would be to donate the offering to the University of St Michael's College campaign to sponsor a Syrian Refugee family. JONATHAN ASKED that the Treasurer make a cheque of \$200 payable to the Archdiocese of Toronto and that he would present Dean GINTHER with the cheque at the Conference.

With regards to the Program, JONATHAN NOTED that there has been a change. In the second session of the morning in Board Room 2, *LAURA VAN DER VELDEN (Wycliffe College)*, has been replaced with *HECTOR ALFONSO* (ICS). JONATHAN undertook to circulate an updated program, *JL* and to inform the moderator, ALLISON MURRAY.

Document A

Documents B and C

MCJL BETH MCCUTCHEON enquired about the efficiency of pouring beverages and whether Cans or Bottles would be appropriate. JONATHAN replied that we need 4 or 5 liter bottles of Pop and Juice, but was happy to leave the specifics to those that would purchase it.

The final part of his report concerned the need for Volunteers. After explaining what was needed, it was AGREED that:

- MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH and MICHAEL BUTTREY would purchase refreshments for 50 people on Thursday and deliver them to Regis College where they could be stored overnight. BETH MCCUTCHEON offered to arrange for these to be kept at Regis College overnight and to help transfer them to the TST BM building in the morning.
- JONATHAN would arrive at 9am on the morning of the Conference.
- The moderators of each session would offer a Welcome. JL JONATHAN asked for more moderators: BENJAMIN LUJAN and GORDON BROWN volunteered. BL, GB
 BECCA SPELLACY would receive the Catering RS
- BECCA SPELLACY would receive the Catering.
 BECCA SPELLACY and JONATHAN LOFFT would clean up
- BECCA SPELLACY and JONATHAN LOFFT would clean up.
 ALLISON MURRAY would make fresh coffee.
- ALLISON MORRAY would make resh conee.
 BECCA SPELLACY would introduce Dean GINTHER.
- MATTHEW THOLLANDER, or otherwise ALLISON MURRAY, would be the sommelier.
- JONATHAN LOFFT would bring a projector.

ALLISON MURRAY suggested that members bring Tupperware to help with any left-over food.

BETH MCCUTCHEON recalled that in previous years the room was setup in such a way that the audience faced away from the Park, but wondered whether the speakers required audio-visual equipment which might necessitate re-orienting the room.

BECCA PROPOSED to email the Heads of Colleges to invite them and their Faculty to attend.

MICHAEL BUTTREY asked whether Posters had been distributed. JONATHAN LOFFT reported that Dr DAVID WAGSCHAL had sent electronic versions using the TST Graduate Students' Listserv. He expressed mixed feelings about posters. MICHAEL reminded JONATHAN that WAYNE at TST Reception can print anything for TGSA and TST would bill TGSA accordingly. MATTHEW cautioned that if color printing is to be done by TST that JONATHAN carefully check the price as there was no need to RS

RS, JL, AM

MT, AM

RS

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accumulate expenditure unnecessarily.

2016.3.9. COLLEGE REPORTS

9.1. EMMANUEL COLLEGE

ALLISON MURRAY explained that there was nothing to report at this time.

9.2. INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES (ICS)

DEAN DETLOFF could not attend today's meeting but MICHAEL BUTTREY read out a text message from him, where he thanked the Board for the invitation to be at the meetings and for the hospitality provided. He went onto explain how summer classes were being run at ICS on Aesthetics. MICHAEL BUTTREY PROPOSED that he respond to the text and encourage DEAN to use the TST Events Facebook group to advertise their events. The Board AGREED. JONATHAN LOFFT also congratulated ICS for their support of the upcoming TGSA Conference, noting that several papers were being presented by ICS students.

MB

9.3. KNOX COLLEGE

GORDON BROWN reported that Knox College Community council will be meeting next week.

9.4. **REGIS COLLEGE**

ROBYN BOERÉ could not attend the meeting and BECCA SPELLACY asked if MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH could offer a report in her absence. MATTHEW reported that the following events will be taking place in March and April:

- The 2016 Royackers Lecture will be presented by STEPHEN SCHARPER, Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology, U of T Mississauga and School of the Environment on Wednesday, 9 March 2016 at 7:30pm at Regis College.
- The next LRI Graduate Seminar will be held on 19 April at 3pm at Regis College and will be given by Dr DANIEL DE HAAN, a visiting postdoctoral fellow in Philosophy and Neuroscience from the University of Cambridge.

MATTHEW also REPORTED that the Graduate Degrees Committee at Regis College is planning to organise a Pub Night later on 21 April 2016 at The Bedford Academy at 5pm.

9.5. TRINITY COLLEGE

MATT KOVISK reported that Trinity College is running their Divinity retreat the same weekend of the conference, and thus regrets that he cannot participate at the Conference. He also reported that Class elections are coming. He continued to fill members in on certain developments in the College and at one point used language that at the objection of JONATHAN LOFFT, was immediately retracted and apologized for.

9.6. UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE

BENJAMIN LUJAN REPORTED that he has made special arrangements to attend the upcoming TGSA Conference. He NOTED there was a meeting with Dean GINTHER about three weeks ago where all Graduate students at the College were invited and encouraged to become more involved in the life of the College and of TST. One of the outcomes of this meeting was the idea to hold a small colloquium in two weeks to as an informal means to share with each other. He also reported on the following upcoming events:

- The Quality of Mercy is Not Strain'd: Symposium on Christian-Muslim Relations in a Year of Mercy to be held on 3 March at 3:15 pm - 7:30 pm, and is organized by the Dominican Institute.
- Cardinal PETER TURKSON, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and Archbishop emeritus of Cape Coast (Ghana), will deliver this year's Kelly Lecture, with a talk entitled *Laudato Si': Let's Redefine" Progress,* " on Monday, March 14, in St. Basil's Parish at 7 p.m.

He also NOTED that the College's Student Life Committee is having their Pub Night on the 16th March.

BECCA SPELLACY commented that it was nice that the University of St Michael's College and Regis College were trying to engage Graduate Students more deliberately.

9.7. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO STUDENTS' UNION (UTSU)

MICHAEL BUTTREY NOTED that John Sundara was unable to attend this meeting and that there was nothing to report. He explained that he was waiting for more information from the GSU but explained that one of the more interesting pieces of information he has discovered in the differences between how the UTSU and GSU handle their medical benefits is that the GSU allows students who go on paternity and medical leave to Opt-In to health and dental coverage.

9.8. WYCLIFFE COLLEGE

BECCA SPELLACY NOTED that STEVE HEWKO could not attend due to his TA duties, but REPORTED that Wycliffe College is hosting a public lecture in their Religion and Society Series, entitled "What's Behind it all? A Dialogue on God, Science and the Universe" on Saturday 19 March, 2016 at 7pm-9pm in the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall. In addition, RICHARD FOSTER, author of *Celebration of Discipline* will be at Wycliffe College's annual conference, *Refresh!*, on May 6^{th} and 7^{th} 2016.

2016.3.10. PROGRAM REPORTS

10.1. MASTER OF THEOLOGY PROGRAM

ANDREW NUSSEY INFORMED members about a hidden gem which is the Toronto Center for Pastoral Counselling Education, an accredited training centre with the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC) and an approved Pastoral Counselling Education Program within the Pastoral Department of TST.

JONATHAN LOFFT asked whether this was something operating under Trinity's wing and ANDREW replied that several staff (e.g. JOHN CLARKE) and students at Trinity are involved but it is not based at Trinity. MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH asked where the Centre is located. ANDREW explained that it meets physically at Woodbine Heights Baptist Church (1171 Woodbine Ave, Toronto, ON, M4C 4E1), in an effort to keep costs low. He explained that it is like the CPE, but operates in a more pscyhothereapeutic domain. He explained how it offers an opportunity for lots of personal growth.

BECCA SPELLACY NOTED that there are lots of gems of programming that TST are becoming more aware of, and thanked ANDREW for sharing this with the members of the Board of Representatives.

2016.3.11. REFERENDUM

BECCA SPELLACY UPDATED members on the progress of the subcommittee established at the previous meeting to prepare a policy on Referenda.

She EXPLAINED how the Director of the GCTS, Prof JERRY SKIRA, had emailed her a sample structure for a By-Law (*Document E*).

BECCA SPELLACY explained how Prof SKIRA had REQUESTED that the TGSA Board approve something at this meeting so that a Referendum on Student Life Fees could be conducted. She also EXPLAINED that she understood the University's opinion to be that we are opting in to an existing fee structure, and not a *new* fee structure.

MICHAEL BUTTREY REPORTED that the Sub-Committee had prepared a more generic Policy (*Document D*) and EXPLAINED that the student-life fees are not the only issue that a referendum might be required. Given the possibility of future referenda, it would be better to have a referendum

Documents D and E

policy in place that TST and the TGSA agrees to.

ANDREW NUSSEY asked who the TGSA reports to, and whether TST approval is required. BECCA SPELLACY responded that whilst the TGSA is fully autonomous from the TST, owing to previous referenda results that have been disputed by TST in terms of process, she felt it was prudent to have an agreed protocol, so that future referenda would not be disputed.

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH asked if it was possible to do a Referendum before the Annual General Meeting in April. BECCA SPELLACY responded that the deadline for fee changes to the University is this Friday, and thus it seems unlikely that a Referendum on Student Life Fees needs to be rushed through. She proposed that the Board agree on a policy for conducting Referenda and allow the newly-elected Board to run a Referendum in the Spring.

MICHAEL BUTTREY SUGGESTED that we could approve the Sub-Committee's document in principle and then meet with Prof SKIRA to see whether he thinks it contradicts the suggestions in his Document and make adaptations to ours if necessary.

JONATHAN LOFFT MOVED that the TGSA Board ADOPT IN PRINCIPLE the Policy submitted by the sub-committee (*Document D*). BETH MCCUTCHEON SECONDED the motion. The motion was supported UNANIMOUSLY.

RS, MB

BECCA SPELLACY PROPOSED that she meet with MICHAEL BUTTREY, DIANE HANSEN and Prof SKIRA to present this Policy and to secure recognition from TST for the Policy.

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH asked, in ANTHONY SPELLACY'S absence, *MB* who would update the website with the new Policy. MICHAEL BUTTREY AGREED that he would add the approved policy to the website.

2016.3.12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

12.1. ACADEMIC COUNCIL

BETH MCCUTCHEON REPORTED that the new conjoint MA is nearing final approval. She EXPLAINED that TST hopes to advertise for students entering this September in the final intake of the ThM to bridge into the new MA when it starts in 2017. MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH asked if the new conjoint MA would allow part-time students. BETH MCCUTCHEON replied that for the time being this is not possible.

12.2. GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL

BETH MCCUTCHEON NOTED that the previous meeting had been cancelled, but that a meeting had been scheduled for next week.

12.3. LIBRARY COMMITTEE

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH REPORTED on the meeting he had attended on 8 February in place of RACHEL BALL who could not attend. He EXPLAINED how he had, as previosuly requested, raised the issue of the differing loan and renewal periods at the various TST Libraries and the Library Committee had AGREED to investigate and to harmonise where possible loan and renewal periods between all TST libraries.

JONATHAN LOFFT reported that he sits on the joint Wycliffe/Trinity Library Committee and offered to raise this issue at that level too.

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH also REPORTED that the Library Committee is investigating a renewal of the Bible Works package, and that he had also suggested the Committee investigate the software at http://www.logos.com/ and http://www.verbum.com/

12.4. TST BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BECCA SPELLACY REPORTED on the recent meeting of the Board of Trustees. She explained that TST is currently responding to the Department of Religious Studies, allaying their fears and explaining how the new conjoint MA and conjoint PhD programs are unique and distinct form the offerings in the Department of Religious Studies.

She EXPLAINED the most recent headcount numbers and how there was a concern that TST has a lot of very small classes. One of the things the QA process has emphasized is that classes be condensed and not duplicated.

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH asked if there was a mechanism envisaged in how this could be done, if two Professors offered similar courses. BECCA SPELLACY explained that various options were being considered. She went on to explain how the Trustees are undertaking an 'enterprise risk management' exercise to gauge institutional perceptions of students, and how that effects current and future recruitment.

JONATHAN LOFFT asked if Doctoral intake is too large, and explained that this could also be considered a reputational risk.

BENJAMIN LUJAN felt this was a huge concern. He noted that currently there are 50 people in the cohort group, and that this is way above the expected 24.

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH queried how it was possible to go so far

above what was meant to be a fixed class size. He wondered how Colleges can admit more than their quota to the TST Program? He asked how does TST control, regulate, or manage conjoint admissions?

BECCA SPELLACY responded that TST does not have authority over classes, and needs good diplomatic skills to bring the Colleges together.

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH SUGGESTED that one mechanism might be for TST to investigate an agreement between the Colleges of a penalty fee to TST for students admitted outside their quota. This could be used to ensure that there is sufficient staff brought in so that the growth does not adversely affect quality.

BETH MCCUTCHEON EXPLAINED that although the cohort size speaks of 24 spaces, these are 24 "funded spaces", not 24 "total spaces". Hence TST can have 50 people if 26 of them are international students who do not apply for basic income units. This was met with some surprise and doubt as to how this contributes to the standard of the cohort class.

BENJAMIN LUJAN SUGGESTED that perhaps a softer option could be proposed, for example suggesting that TST publish on their website admissions statistics. He SUGGESTED that for each admissions cycle

- the number of new students in each program
- how many people applied
- how many people were offered admission
- how many people accepted their offer of admission

and to present these numbers for each College at TST every year.

MICHAEL BUTTREY queried the effect on the impression of quality given the multiple rounds of admission cycles within TST. BETH MCCUTCHEON responded NOTING that there is always a round in January and June – and only sometimes in April. Some discussion ensued about the merits of having multiple admissions cycles. It was recognized that TST would like to have a good programme, and that the University was prone to encouraging growth in academic units, especially the sort of units, like TST, whose students do not depend on any resources from the University. One of the reasons for the multiple admissions into the PhD is that some applicants, such as those in Master's programs, may not have their transcripts or theses graded and so what in Canada is termed a 'second admission', might perhaps be better understood by those familiar with the system in the United States as a 'deferred admission'.

BENJAMIN NOTED that when he looks at other Theology schools, such as Harvard, Boston College, and Chicago Divinity, they all have preset deadlines, and say to students who are yet to complete that they can be admitted conditionally. This avoids the current possibility that rejected students are able begin a fresh admissions procedure because of the multiple admission cycles.

BECCA SPELLACY ACKNOWLEDGED that the Admissions process is odd, but EXPLAINED that TST's GCTS is given the opportunity to reject a candidate in the beginning of the process, but if they accept the candidate, then the authority and responsibility falls to the College.

The sentiment in the room was that the Chair should relay to the Board of Trustees their desire that the admissions procedure remain credible and of a high quality. The Chair was specifically requested to share the desire, that like in other programs, the admissions statistics be published, and biographies of incoming students be published on their website. This could easily be arranged through a waiver and permission to publish at Orientation, and that this was already the case in several University Departments. (Examples of this at UofT were cited, e.g. <u>http://religion.utoronto.ca/people/grad-students/;</u> http://history.utoronto.ca/graduate/profiles/;

http://www.law.utoronto.ca/academic-programs/graduate/sjd/sjd-studentprofiles; etc.) In addition to statistics and graduate profiles, it might also be possible to publish the locations of where Graduates have found work. It was further NOTED that to do so would foster collegiality by allowing students interested in certain areas to contact each other.

BECCA AGREED to take this matter forward to the Heads of Colleges and to work with the new Chair of the TGSA so that this item is discussed in time for the Spring Orientation sessions.

RS

12.5. MEETINGS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF TST AND GCTS DIRECTOR

BECCA SPELLACY NOTED that there was nothing to report that had not been raised in other areas of the Agenda already.

At this point in the meeting, ANDREW NUSSEY, excused himself as he had pressing business elsewhere.

2016.3.13. SPECIAL NOMINATION

MICHAEL BUTTREY EXPLAINED how he wanted the TGSA to nominate BECCA SPELLACY for the *J.M. Kelly Award*. He went onto motivate his nomination (contained in *Document F*) citing BECCA SPELLACY's ability to deal calmly with the many issues that arose this year; making herself available to meet many times with the Director of TST and GCTS, and mediating between members of the board.

Document F

BECCA SPELLACY recused herself from the Chair, and requested that BETH MCCUTCHEON take the Chair.

JONATHAN LOFFT MOVED that the TGSA Board SUPPORT THE NOMINATION by MICHAEL BUTTREY, Vice President External of the TGSA, of the TGSA President, REBECCA SPELLACY for the *J.M. Kelly Award*. MICHAEL BUTTREY SECONDED the motion. The motion was supported UNANIMOUSLY by all members, except BECCA SPELLACY who recused herself.

BETH MCCUTCHEON recused herself from the Chair and BECCA SPELLACY re-assumed the Chair.

2016.3.14. ARTICLE FROM THE VARSITY

Documents G and H

BECCA SPELLACY UPDATED the Board on the Developments surrounding the article published in The Varsity on 8 February 2016¹ (See *Document H*). (This was a follow-up article from one previously publish on the 7 March 2013².) She NOTED the concern caused by the Article that has led students to contact her with concerns around the issue of the language of "substandard degree".

At this point in the meeting, ALLISON MURRAY, excused herself as she had pressing business elsewhere.

BECCA NOTED that she had spoken with the Director of TST, Prof ALAN HAYES, about this article and suggested that TST issue a response. He was concerned that if TST issued a response it would be seen as reactionary. He explained to BECCA that the University had reviewed all of the conjoint programs as part of the Quality Assurance responsibilities and had three concerns with the administration of the conjoint D.Min. and conjoint Th.D. programs with regards:

- to how TST relates administratively to the Colleges
- to the dropout of Th.D. graduates as they transferred into the nonconjoint University of St Michael's College Ph.D.
- to an isolated case of a Supervisor having too many students.

At the time, TST responded to the University acknowledging the administrative concerns and agreeing to address all of them, but also noting that the University's comments concerned the administration of the degree programs, and not the degree programs itself, and they pointed out that the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), to which TST is accredited and who conducts independent evaluations, had inspected

¹ http://thevarsity.ca/2016/02/08/from-thd-to-phd/

² http://thevarsity.ca/2013/10/07/proposed-changes-to-theology-program-cause-controversy/

TST's programs in 2011 and renewed TST's accreditation with ATS until 2021. TST argued to the University that this was proof that the degree programs were sound.

Prof SKIRA subsequently wrote a Letter to the Editor of the Varsity, responding to the concerns³.

BECCA SPELLACY EXPLAINED that *the Varsity* article had created confusion despite Prof SKIRA'S response, and that this was because people lacked the necessary information. She requested permission to share the information of these discussions – even though they are several years old. She prepared a Document (*Document G*) which gave the necessary background to the Article and links to the following:

- A letter, dated 23 February 2012, from TISA LEWIS, Director of Accreditation and Institutional Evaluation for the Board of Commissioners of ATS informing TST of their renewal of accreditation until 2021.⁴
- An article by TOM TANNER, published in August of 2015 on ATS's website, entitled "Tenure and other faculty facts at ATS member schools, ranking TST 3rd, in 2015, for the source of doctorates in all ATS member schools.⁵
- The University of Toronto's Review Summary of the Quality Assurance Process, published in October 2012, wherein the conjoint D.Min. and conjoint Th.D. were described as 'below standard' for administrative reasons – not academic - without specifying against which 'standard' this judgment was based.⁶
- TST's response to the University's Review process querying how the University could rank degree programs without at the same time assessing them, which it had not. They did point to the ATS report that did and found them satisfactory.⁷
- The response to the Varsity article by Professor Skira⁸.

JONATHAN LOFFT NOTED that some stories are worth responding too, and others are not. He pointed out the Varsity was run by students (and co-incidentally, several Trinity students), not professional journalists, and that it was clear they had not researched an issue – nor made any effort to contact members of TST or the TGSA about it for a comment before publication.

³ http://thevarsity.ca/2016/02/21/letter-to-the-editor-2/

⁴ http://www.tst.edu/sites/default/files/TST%20ATS%20Final%20Results%20Letter%20Feb%2023-12_0.pdf

⁵ http://www.ats.edu/uploads/resources/publications-presentations/documents/tenure-and-other-faculty-facts-part-2.pdf

⁶ http://www.tst.edu/sites/default/files/UTQAP%20summary_0.pdf

⁷ https://tgsa.sa.utoronto.ca/files/2015/11/TST-response-to-UTQAP.pdf

⁸ http://thevarsity.ca/2016/02/21/letter-to-the-editor-2/

BECCA SPELLACY AGREED that it is only a story if we make it; but NOTED that students had approached her concerned as a result of the article and so she responded with a website posting providing the context of the comments, as well as the age of the story, and concern that no officials, other than a Professor at Trinity, were asked for comment.

BENJAMIN LUJAN wanted to clarify whether the Professor was asserting that the degree was 'below standard' or whether he was quoting the University report. BECCA responded that the Professor was quoting a report, and that whilst nothing mentioned was unfactual – it did lack the necessary context and risked naïve readers, especially those readers reading this for the first time in 2016 – such as the current cohort of the conjoint PhD – believing that the judgment of 'below standard' applied to the current conjoint PhD degree program. BECCA SPELLACY NOTED that the article relied on alleged quotations from a Trinity College Professor reminding the public that the ThD degree had been judged by the University as 'below standard', and that these comments were unhelpful. She REPORTED to the Board that she, as President of the TGSA, and MATT KOOVISK, as Trinity College Representative had scheduled a meeting with the Provost of Trinity to express concern that one of the Professors at Trinity was saying these things.

JONATHAN LOFFT DISAGREED with the wisdom of this meeting, and NOTED that this will only serve to escalate the situation and that it gives more attention and credibility to a story that is out of date and incorrect to begin with. He feared that by acting in this way, *the Varsity* newspaper might now write another article about the TGSA's and TST's response and this would only elicit further confusion and misunderstanding among students who did not understand the context.

At this point in the meeting, JONATHAN LOFFT, excused himself as he had pressing business elsewhere.

BENJAMIN LUJAN AGREED that *The Varsity* article was an example of irresponsible journalism, and SUPPORTED BECCA SPELLACY's response and presentation of the fuller details, but cautioned BECCA SPELLACY and MATT KOOVISK meeting the Provost, and said that this should be handled by the Directors of TST and the GCTS.

BECCA SPELLACY responded that this meeting has already been scheduled and is following standard procedure, whereby official representatives can express concerns of students administrative members of TST and the Colleges.

2016.3.15. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

BECCA SPELLACY reported that the most recent Professional Development Seminar was held on Tuesday, 1 March 2016, from 1:30pm - 2:30pm. She NOTED that attendance was low, with roughly 5 attendees despite advertising, but that otherwise it was successful. She thanked the organisers.

2016.3.16. ELECTIONS

The Board NOTED the Election Timeline announced by MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH SJ, as Chief Returning Officer and CONFIRMED the Election Process:

Election Timeline

Nominations open	Monday, February 29, 2016
TGSA Board Meeting	Thursday, March 03, 2016
Conference	Friday, March 11, 2016
Nominations close	Friday, March 18, 2016
Palm Sunday	Sunday, March 20, 2016
Easter Sunday	Sunday, March 27, 2016
Campaign period starts	Tuesday, March 29, 2016
Campaign period ends	Thursday, March 31, 2016
Voting opens	Friday, April 01, 2016
Voting closes	Tuesday, April 05, 2016
Annual General Meeting	Thursday, April 07, 2016

MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH NOTED that the announcement for the *MC* Opening of Nominations had been advertised on Facebook, sent to the listserv and posted on the website, but that to date, no nominations had been received. He EXPLAINED that he would be making further reminders to the mailing list during the nomination period.

BETH MCCUTCHEON QUERIED whether the representation on the TST Committee's turned over in April, or in September. MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH responded saying that given that a new Board of Representatives would be elected and announced at the AGM the representation would be at the behest of the new TGSA President. A discussion ensued about the importance of continuity that representatives remain until September. MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH responded that the argument for continuity could be made at any point, and that so long as a hand-over takes place it shouldn't matter when the hand-over happens. BETH MCCUTCHEON replied that the hand-over consisted of presenting the Minutes of the relevant Committee to the new members. MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH SUGGESTED that this was not enough, and PROPOSED that TGSA Representatives on TST Committees should submit written reports for each meeting of the TGSA Board, and that these, and the minutes of the relevant external committee they represent the TGSA at should be provided to the new representative and that a meeting and face-to-face discussion take place. This would be possible, he NOTED, if this took place in April since people would be present.

BECCA SPELLACY AGREED that this was an issue she felt should happen and AGREED to discuss this with the new incoming TGSA President so *RS* that this might become standard practice in the future.

At this point in the meeting, GORDON BROWN, excused himself as he had pressing business elsewhere.

2016.3.17. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Board NOTED that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 7th April 2016. BECCA SPELLACY announced that although the date of the 7th April is confirmed, she was still confirming a time for when the meeting would take place. She undertook to inform the Board, and the Chief Returning Officer, of the time of the meeting as soon as it was confirmed.

RS

2016.3.18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

BETH MCCUTCHEON NOTED that the Meeting was no longer Quorate. MATTHEW CHARLESWORTH queried whether Quorum, once reached could be lost, as his interpretation of the Constitution was that quorum was for whether the entire meeting was quorate, not individual items, and that if members chose to depart before the meeting officially ended that would not invalidate the business of the meeting. BETH MCCUTCHEON responded that this was not the case.

2016.3.19. CLOSING

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1:45pm.

Document A

TORONTO SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (TGSA)

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2015-2016

as at 2 March 2016

EXPENSES									INCOME
01	A BUDGET	B ACTUAL	C ACTUAL VS BUDGET	PREVIOUS		BUDGET	ACTU AL	G ACTUAL VS BUDGET	H PREVIOUS
	2015-16	2015-16	2014-15 (A-B)	2014-15		2015-16	2015-16	2014-15 (F-E)	2014-15
02 03 04 05					Balance b/f 1-May	1034.57	1034.57		1,248.10
05					T-IAIA	1034.37	1034.57		1,240.10
06 BANK FEES					BANK FEES				
07 30-Apr Withdrawal Fees 08 30-Sep Withdrawal Fees	2.40 0.80	2.40 0.80		0.00	30-Apr Interest Credit 15-Sep Reversal of W/D Fees	2.40 2.40	2.40 2.40		5.00
09 SUB-TOTAI		3.20		0.00	15-Oct Reversal of W/D Fees	1	1		
10					30-Oct Interest Credit	0.19	0.19		
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS Sep Seminar: S5HRC/OGS Seminar (18 Sep, 1-3pm ~30)	125.00	100.00	25.00 (20%) under budget	125.00	SUB-TOTAL	5.99	5.99		5.00
18 2-Nov Michael Buttrey (Food etc.) (CHQ#00227-1143737166)	125100	100.00	23.00 (2000) 01021 000-22	125/00	TGSA Fees				
14 Oct Seminar:	0.00	0.00		75.00	TGSA Fees Income	4,947.42	4,947.42		2,934.61
 Nov Seminar: Conference Proposals & Presenting (30 Nov, 1-3pm, ~9) 10-Dec. Rachel Knight-Messenger (CHO#00229-3141178499) 	75.00	79.97 79.97	4.97 (7%) over budget	75.00	24-Sep TST Cheque 14648 30-Apr ChgBk Uncollect Fee	3,542.22	3,542.22 15.00		2,526.71
17 Jan Seminar: Town Hall for UTGSU - CANCELLED	0.00	0.00		75.00	30-Nov Dues Nov 2014	35.00	35.00		
Mar Seminar: Teaching Students how to Teach (1 Mar, 1-2:30pm, ~5)	225.00	30.00	195.00 (87%) under budget	0.00	30-Nov Photocopy Fees	8.10	8.10		
19 SUB-TOTAL 20	425.00	209.97	215.03 (51%) under budget	350.00	1-Dec Dues Dec 2014 31-Jan Dues Jan 2015	45.00 27.50	45.00 27.50		
20 21 TGSA CONFERENCE AWARDS					10-Feb Photocopy Fees	5.40	5.40		
22 Fall TGSA Conference Award #1	300.00	300.00		201.13	26-Feb Photocopy Fees	10.00	10.00		
23 4-Dec Chandra Wim (CHQ#00228-0148141877) 24 Winter TGSA Conference Award #1	300.00	300.00	300.00 (100%) under budget	400.00	28-Feb Dues Feb 2015 31-Mar Dues Mar 2015	7.50 2.50	7.50 2.50		
23 4-Dec Chandra Wim (CH200228-0148141877) 24 Winter TGSA Conference Award #1 25 Winter TGSA Conference Award #2 26 Winter TGSA Conference Award #3 27 SUB-TOTAI	300.00		300.00 (100%) under budget	200.00	31-Mar Photocopy Fees	6.78	6.78		
26 Winter TGSA Conference Award #3	300.00		300.00 (100%) under budget	200.00	30-Apr TSF Fees Collect 14/1	15.00	15.00		
27 SUB-TOTAI 28	L1,200.00	300.00	900.00 (75%) under budget	1,001.13	31-May Dues May 2015 30-Jun Dues Jun 2015	363.00 8.00	363.00 8.00		
29 TGSA SOCIAL EVENTS					31-Jul Dues Jul 2015	3,155.00	3,155.00		
Sep Social: Welcome Back BBQ (18 Sep, 4-6pm, ~80)	420.00	362.42	57.58 (14%) under budget	325.00	22-Sep Photocopy Refund	5.00	5.00		
31 18-Sep Loblaws#029 (BBQ Food) 32 18-Sep Loblaws#029 (BBQ Food)		216.70			22-Sep Reverse 1112-1	10.00	10.00		
S2 18-Sep Lobiaws #029 (BBQ Food) 33 9-Oct Newman Fee for Space/BBQ (CHQ#00222-0500433824)		73.22 72.50		65.00	13-Oct TST Cheque 14663	896.00	896.00		407.90
34 Oct Social: Oktober Fest (22 Oct, 4–6pm, ~50)	200.00	200.00		83.02	31-Aug Dues Aug 2015	896.00	896.00		101100
35 13-Nov Stephen Hewko (WADSA) (CHQ#00226-0200433886)		200.00							
 36 Nov Social: 37 Dec Social: 	100.00	0.00	100.00 (100%) under budget	12.51 97.65	14-Dec TST Cheque 14766 30-Sep Dues Sep-Dec 2015	339.66	339.66 384.00		0.00
38 Jan Social:	100.00	0.00	100.00 (100%) under budget 100.00 (100%) under budget	0.00	15-Oct Photocopy Fees	24.54	24.54		
59 Feb Social:	100.00	0.00	100.00 (100%) under budget	0.00	31-Oct Photocopy Fees	31.80	31.80		
40 Mar Social Teaching Students how to Teach (1 Mar, 1-2:30pm, ~5)	100.00	40.69	100.00 (100%) under budget	0.00	30-Nov Dues Nov 2015	12.00	12.00		
 2-Mαr Becca Spellacy - Apr Social: 	100.00	40.69		0.00					
43 SUB-TOTAL	100.00 1,220.00	603.11	100.00 (100%) under budget 616.89 (51%) under budget	0.00 518.18	3-Feb TST Cheque 14864	169.54	169.54		0
44					31-Jan Dues Jan 2016	116.00	116.00		
 TGSA OPEN BOARD MEETINGS ADSA Open Board Meeting (05 Oct, 11h00-12h20pm, ~16) 	100.00	110.16		0.00	31-Oct Dues Oct 2015	72.00	72.00 5.00		
 ADSA Open Board Meeting (06 Oct, 11h00-12h20pm, ~16) 9-Oct Becca Spellacy (Pop Drinks) (CHO#00224-0200535146) 	100.00	24.08	10.16 (10%) over budget	0.00	31-Dec Photocopy Fees 31-Jan Photocopy Fees	11.30	11.30		
48 13-Oct Jonathan Loft (Pizzas) (CHQ#00223-0500601199)		86.08			8-Dec Photocopy Fees	10.44	10.44		
49 TGSA Open Board Meeting (04 Feb, 12h00-14h00pm, ~16)	60.00	45.13	14.87 (25%) under budget	0.00	31-Dec Telephone Dec 2015	1.72	1.72		
 3-Feb Becca Spellacy (Pizza) (CHQ#00231-4140188526) TGSA Open Board Meeting (03 Mar 12h00-14h00pm, ~16) 	60.00	45.13 65.05	5.05 (8%) over budget		SUB-TOTAL	4,947.42	4,947.42		2,934.61
52 3-Mar Becca Spellacy (Pizza)		65.05							
53 AGM Lunch:	100.00		100.00 (100%) under budget	57.75	SPONSORSHIP				
54 7-Apr 55 SUB-TOTAI	320.00	220.34	AA 66 (AM)			0.00	0.00		1 (51 80
55	L	220.54	99.66 (31%) under budget	57.75	Conference Grant	0.00	0.00		1,651.89
57 STUDENT SEMINAR GROUP GRANTS					SUB-TOTAL	0.00	0.00		1,651.89
 1st Seminar: Liturgy 2nd Seminar: Bible (22 Oct, 4pm @ Wycliffe, ~30) 	100.00 100.00	0.00 100.00	100.00 (100%) under budget	100.00 100.00					
59 2nd Seminar: Bible (22 Oct, 4pm @ Wycliffe, ~30) 60 26-Oct WADSA/TST Biblical Seminar (CHQ#00225-0500030385)	100.00	100.00		0.00					
51. 3rd Seminar: Patristics	100.00	0.00	100.00 (100%) under budget	0.00					
62 4th Seminar: History 63 5th Seminar: Women in Theology	100.00 100.00	0.00	100.00 (100%) under budget	0.00					
64	100.00	100.00							
65 SUB-TOTAL	L 500.00	200.00	300.00 (60%) under budget	200.00					
66 67 CONFERENCES									
68 11-Mαr Spring Conference (11 Mar 2016, TST, 9-11am)	2,100.00		2,100.00 (100%) under budget	2,034.76					
69 SUB-TOTAI	2,100.00	0.00	2,100.00 (100%) under budget	2,034.76	NOTES				
70 71 CHRISTMAS SURVEY					Although under-budget, student numbers next ve		-catered. We sho	uld take into account larger	
72 Crux Gift Cards for Survey	100.00	100.00		100.00	² TGSA Fees for this year:		and \$4 for part-	ime students.	
78 19-Jan Crux Gift Card		50.00							
74 19-Jan Crux Gift Card		50.00							
75 SUB-TOTAI 75	L 100.00	100.00		100.00					
75	А	в	C	D		E	F	G	н
77	BUDGET	ACTUAL	ACTUAL VS BUDGET	PREVIOUS		BUDGET	ACTUAL	ACTUAL VS BUDGET	PREVIOUS
78 79 GRAND TOTAL	2015-16	2015-16	2014-15 (A-B)	2014-15	GRAND TOTAL	2015-16	2015-16	2014-15 (F-E)	2014-15
79 GRAND TOTAL 80 Total Spent	5,868.20	1,636.62	4,231.58 (72%) under budget	4,261.82	Total Income	5,987.98	5,987.98		#REF!
81									
82					Balance c/f	119.78		4,231.58 (3533%) over budget	
83 84						(E-A)	(F-B)		(H-D)
	А	в	C	D		E	F	G	Н
Bank Balance as at 2 March 2016				-	rified as correct by Menth	Г	\$4,351.36		
Datas Datanue as dt 2 Midren 2010				Le	rtified as correct by Matthew Charlesworth:	L			

Document B

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GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

2016

CONFERENCE

All members of the TST community are invited and encouraged to attend this year's Graduate Student Conference hosted by TGSA. This is a chance to engage with your colleagues, learn about their research, and reflect on the nature of Theological Studies' relationship to the broader academic enterprise.

FRIDAY

MARCH 1

FROM SOVEREIGNTY TO SERVICE: THEOLOGY'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LIBERAL ARTS

TST Building 47 Queen's Park Crescent E.

Conference Schedule

- 9:30am 11:00am: Concurrent Sessions
- 11:00am 11:30am: Coffee Break
- 11:30am 1:00pm: Concurrent Sessions
- 1:00pm 2:00pm: Lunch (Provided by TST)
- 2:15pm 3:45pm: Concurrent Sessions
- 3:45pm 4:15pm: Coffee Break

4:15pm — 5:30pm: Keynote Address from Dr. James R. Ginther, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College 5:30pm: Wine and Cheese Reception



STUDENTS' STUDENTS' SSOCIATION
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TST GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION 2016 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FROM SOVEREIGNTY TO SERVICE: Theology's Engagement with the Liberal Arts

Time	Jay Boardroom (Main Floor)	Boardroom Two (Upper Floor)
9:30 - 11:00	 Panel Presentation: The Relationship of Theological Studies and the University, Presenters: Mari Leesment (Wycliffe), How Theological Studies can contribute to a methodological critique of Biblical Studies Peter Gavin-Griffin (Regis), Are We really a University? Theology against disciplinary fragmentation and reductionism Bruce Worthington (Wycliffe), Militant Biblical interpretation Joshua Martin (Wycliffe), The University's foil: the significance of Theological Studies 	Carol King (Trinity), <i>This Truly Devotional Music: the development of Anglican sacred music, 1800-1867</i> Fortunato Trione (St Michael's), <i>Dante and Theology: a journey through emotions</i>
	Moderator: Allison Murray (Emmanuel)	
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee Break (Main Floor Reception)	loor Reception)
11:30 - 1:00	David Graham (Wycliffe), <i>What has UofT to do with TST?</i> a <i>post-liberal reflection</i>	Hector Alfonso Acero-Ferrer (ICS), "The Oppressed" In Catholic Cultural Imagination: Reading Liberation Theology Through The Lens Of Paul Ricoeur's Hermeneutics
	Alana McCord (Trinity), <i>A Mosaic of Visions: the language of</i> <i>Christianity in the liberal arts</i>	Shaun Brown (Wycliffe), <i>The role of social anthropology in the theology of Hans Frei and George Lindbeck</i>
1:00 - 2:00	Lunch Provided by TST (Main Floor Reception)	ain Floor Reception)
2:15 - 3:45	Gordon Brown (Knox), <i>Northrup Frye 25 years later:</i> Words with Power <i>in the task of theology</i>	Idara Otu (Regis), <i>Expanding the dialogue between</i> sociology and critical theology
	Josh Kirby (ICS), <i>The Three Books of Solomon and the spirituality of modern naturalism</i>	Mari Leesment (Wycliffe), <i>Christianity's particularity by</i> way of Gadamer and Levinas: a corrective to universalizing approaches in Christian history
4:15 - 5:30	Key Note Address: Professor James R. Ginther, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, University of St Michael's College	
5:30 - 7:00	Wine and Cheese Reception (Main Floor)	tion (Main Floor)

Document C

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES Toronto School of Theology Graduate Students' Association (TGSA)

E. Policies and Procedures for TGSA Elections and Referenda

E.6 Referenda

E.6.1 A referendum is required to admit affiliate students (Constitution Section 3.4.2), amend the constitution (Constitution Section 5.1), alter the TGSA fee once or on a recurring basis (Policy and Procedures Section B.5), join or leave a student union (per student union bylaws), or opt students in to, or out of, any sort of compulsory ancillary fees (per the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities Tuition and Ancillary Fees Reporting Operating Procedure.⁹)

E.6.2 The Board must set the issue(s) to be considered in a referendum no later than their December meeting. Board members will then be asked to represent the 'Yes' and 'No' sides of each issue, and finally an impartial Board member will be appointed as the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer, with the Yes and No representatives, will constitute the Referendum Committee.

E.6.2.1 If amending the Constitution is in view, the Board will appoint representatives from the Constitution subcommittee (Constitution Section 5.1.2).

E.6.2.2 The Returning Officer will chair the Referendum Committee and have the power to appoint up to two additional representatives per issue, as long as the balance between Yes and No sides is either maintained or improved.

E.6.2.3 Once the meeting minutes are approved, the President will request access to voting.utoronto.ca for the Returning Officer (see E.1.1).

E.6.3 The Referendum Committee will draft a Notice of Referendum with a short description of the referendum issue(s) and process, a list of the Committee members, and an open call for comments, questions, and additional Yes or No representatives. The Notice will be distributed through the TGSA website and the email list.

E.6.4 The Committee will consult with external bodies, as needed. If the referendum involves student fees, TST should be consulted; if it concerns membership in a student union, the union should be consulted; and if it relates to a fee covered by the University of Toronto Ancillary Fee Protocol, the Council on Student Services should be consulted.

⁹ Available at https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/documents/TuitionandAncillaryFees.pdf.

E.6.5 Mindful of feedback received, the Referendum Committee will organize a town hall that includes short presentations from interested parties with relevant information and a diversity of perspectives. The town hall date and location will be announced through the TGSA website and social media pages and the email list. The Returning Officer will moderate the town hall firmly to ensure equal time for presentations and for questions, and if possible, a recording should be made available online for students who cannot attend.

E.6.6 Any interested parties who publically campaign on an issue must do so fairly. The Referendum Committee will write rules for campaigning, as needed, and if rules are violated the Returning Officer may issue cautions; ask the Board to add, remove, or replace Yes or No representatives; or even halt the referendum, dissolve the Committee, and ask the Board to restart the process.

E.6.7 After the town hall, the Referendum Committee will prepare the ballot for the referendum, endeavouring to write clear, neutral, and short questions with only two answers. The final wording of the questions and answers must be approved by a majority of the Board as well as a two-thirds majority of the Committee.

E.6.8 Once the ballot is approved, the Referendum Committee will set a voting period of at least 14 days, and draft a second Notice of Referendum that includes the voting method, dates, question(s), and brief statements from the Yes and No representatives on each issue. This Notice will be distributed through the email list twice, once before the voting period and once during it, as well as on the TGSA website and social media pages, college bulletin boards, and in other public forums.

E.6.9 The Returning Officer will work with voting.utoronto.ca and the TST Registrar to ensure a fair and secure online vote for every registered graduate student. If a TGSA member is unable to vote, they will be emailed a ballot to print, complete, and seal in an envelope, to be counted once their eligibility and inability to vote is verified.

E.6.10 For a question proposing a net increase in fees of more than \$250/year, quorum requires 50 students or 20% of those eligible to vote, whichever is greater. Quorum for any other question requires 25 students or 10% of those eligible to vote, whichever is greater.

E.6.11 To pass any referendum question requires the support of a two-thirds majority of those voting. (For constitutional amendments, this defines the meaning of 'ratify' in Constitution Section 5.1.6).

E.6.12 Referenda outcomes are binding on the TGSA Board and Executive unless overturned by another referendum. Any question that may overturn the outcome of a past referendum cannot be voted on until 12 months after the previous referendum voting period ended.

By-Law on Referenda (sample structure)

- 1. A referendum will be conducted by either mailed ballots or through secure electronic means (such as uElect on ROSI) by all registered conjoint degree students impacted by the referendum question.
- 2. Each referendum will have a Referendum Conduct Committee of three persons established by the TGSA to approve any regulations needed to supplement the provisions of this by-law, and to rule on any allegations that the provisions of the by-law or the committee's supplementary regulations have been violated.
- 3. Information accompanying the ballot will contain a concise description of the reason the referendum is requested. The referendum question itself should be clear and provide enough information to students in order to gain a full understanding of the implications of the question and proposed changes.
- 4. The referendum must be held in a fair manner, advertised and promoted in a reasonable manner, and each student member should be given a reasonable opportunity to vote.
- 5. The close of the vote will be no earlier than one week and no later than three weeks after the ballots are mailed or electronic voting is opened, and, in any case, not later than the last day of classes in the Spring Term.
- 6. The votes will be tallied by Scrutineers appointed by the TGSA. [how many? 3?]
- The resolution will be approved if approved by a majority of all votes cast. The results of the vote shall be reported to TGSA's membership.
- If the Referendum Conduct Committee meets to rule on alleged infractions of the terms of the protocol or of its regulations, it shall rule (1) on whether the infraction occurred and, if so, also (2) on whether in its opinion the infraction affected the outcome of the vote. The Committee shall report on its decisions to the President, TGSA.

Questions regarding the PhD/ThD and Degree Standards

Posted on February 22, 2016 by Rebecca Spellacy Source: http://tgsa.sa.utoronto.ca/2016/02/questions-regarding-the-phdthd-and-degree-standards/

As you may have heard, there have been some concerns raised over the degree standards regarding the conjoint PhD and the ThD. With the hope that information is what fixes miscommunications and uncertainties, the following is what I view as the relevant information on the subject, coming from the Toronto School of Theology, The University of Toronto, and The Association of Theological Schools.

The hope is that the facts speak for themselves. As always, if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email me or any member of the TGSA board, we're more than happy to help.

Some Background:

On February 8, 2016, the student newspaper of The University of Toronto, The Varsity, published an article titled "From ThD to PhD: Students questions novelty of PhD in theology program, petition university to permit degree change after graduation."¹

The main concern that has been brought to TGSA's attention is the line from the article that says "...the review [from the U of T quality assurance Process in 2013] examined joint programs offered through TST and U of T, resulting in recommendations that addressed the "below standard quality" of the Doctor of Theology."

Of course, I, and the whole of TGSA, can understand the concern, a substandard ThD isn't good for any of our students. Knowing that, I went to speak with TST to see what, if anything, at been said on the matter. I was shown the documentation I am now showing you.

The Association of Theological Schools:

Alan Hayes, as director of The Toronto School of Theology, received notice, via letter dated February 23, 2012, that the Board of Commissioners for ATS met and voted to reaffirm accreditation for TST for ten years (until the fall of 2021). You can see the whole letter here.² at

Tom Tanner, in August of 2015 published an article on on ATS's website, titled "*Tenure and other faculty facts at ATS member schools*."³ In this article is a table comparing the "25 Schools where the Majority of Faculty in ATS Member Schools Earned Their Doctorates" that compares data from 2001 and 2015. The University of Toronto, which includes TST (and in fact, TST represents more than half of the faculty), ranked, in 2015, 3rd (up from 15th in 2001) with 108 faculty.

University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP):

The final summary of the document was published in October 2012 and is located here⁴.

¹ Document H: http://thevarsity.ca/2016/02/08/from-thd-to-phd/

² http://www.tst.edu/sites/default/files/TST%20ATS%20Final%20Results%20Letter%20Feb%2023-12_0.pdf

³ http://www.ats.edu/uploads/resources/publications-presentations/documents/tenure-and-other-faculty-facts-part-2.pdf

⁴ http://www.tst.edu/sites/default/files/UTQAP%20summary_0.pdf

This report, and its fact finding, occurred around the same time as the ATS team was at TST, the time of the review being January 10-11, 2012.

The document highlights both strengths and weakness of TST as well as offering recommendations and I commend the whole document to your reading.

Of concern for graduate students however, is the section regarding the review of the Graduate Program. Here, both the Doctor of Ministry and the Doctor of Theology were listed as "below standard" in their quality.

The concerns were that there was not enough coherence and oversight of doctoral students, the transfers of ThD students into the non-conjoint (St. Mike's) PhD, and concerns over administrative structures at TST itself as regards to governance and authority of the TST Director and the Directors of Graduate Degree Programs.

The recommendations it then offered were regarding closing the ThD, not allowing transfers to the non-conjoint PhD, creating a conjoint PhD with The University of Toronto, and working on TST wide coordination of doctoral education.

The Toronto School of Theology:

In response to the UTQAP, The Toronto School of Theology, on October 2, 2012, published "Cyclical Review in The University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process Administrative Response to The External Review". I cannot find a copy of this online to link you to, so it is on our website for you to view if you would like-under documents and titled "*TST response to UTQAP*"⁵.

The basic response is that UTQAP did not assess TST programs and yet made a ranking of them, without even notice of what the standards were. It also notes that ATS did not come to the same conclusion during the same time period, rather, ATS viewed the programs as within the standard for accreditation. TST did acknowledge that there was room for improvement and said that they view the way forward as using the University's standards and ensuring that TST meets or exceeds them.

In a Letter to the Editor, dated February 21, 2016, Jerry Skira, Director of the Graduate Centre, outlines TST's response to the Varsity article, addressing not just the issue of degree standards, but the many issues around the ThD/PhD raised in the article, you can read it <u>here</u>.

In my meeting with Jerry on February 18, 2016 it was made very clear that TST stands by its students and their degrees. The ATS accreditation, the high level of faculty hires, as well as the rate at which students at TST publish and are selected for academic awards such as SSHRC and OGS, speak to the quality of the degrees and students at The Toronto School of Theology.

I hope this answers some of, if not all of, your questions or concerns about this issue, if you have concerns about this, or anything else, please don't hesitate to talk to me or anyone on TGSA.

Rebecca Spellacy, President, TGSA

⁵ https://tgsa.sa.utoronto.ca/files/2015/11/TST-response-to-UTQAP.pdf

From ThD to PhD

By Emma Compeau

Published: 11:12 am, 8 February 2016 (The Varsity, Vol CXXXVI, No. 16 under News)

Students question novelty of PhD in theology program, petition university to permit degree change after graduation

The University of Toronto has formally created a PhD in theology in conjunction with the Toronto School of Theology (TST). Students at the TST and faculty members at U of T are debating the claim that this PhD is an entirely new program, arguing that it is identical to the existing Doctor of Theology.

In 2013, *The Varsity* reported that the proposed changes were up for review by the U of T Quality Assurance Process. The review examined joint programs offered through TST and U of T, resulting in recommendations that addressed the "below standard quality" of the Doctor of Theology. Students who are pursuing or currently hold a ThD from the university are currently unable to transfer their title to a PhD.

The changes

Donald Wiebe, a member of Trinity College's Faculty of Divinity and a supervisor of both ThD and PhD students, has been an outspoken opponent of the process since its inception in 2013. Wiebe argues that the PhD is the "gold standard for employment in universities" and that this regulation is unfairly preventing past graduates from holding a title that is earned through the same process that new PhD students will go through.

Wiebe argues that the change from the ThD to a PhD in theological studies is simply a change in title, and therefore does not fit the university's criteria for a new program. According to the university's degree program approval protocol, unique programs must have "substantially different program requirements and substantially different learning outcomes" from existing ones.

Wiebe says that he has not yet received adequate response from the university explaining why these changes — which he describes as minor — qualify as substantial enough to change the program entirely.

Althea Blackburn-Evans, director of news & media relations at U of T, maintains that U of T considers the PhD to be a new program. She added that students must apply, be granted admission, register, and complete the new program to be awarded the PhD.

Currently, the ThD and PhD programs share a student handbook, which outlines nearly identical processes for the two programs. The hanbdbook refers to the two programs in tandem, calling them the "ThD/PhD."

The new program proposal published by the Governing Council states that, "TST also offers an approved doctoral degree, the Th.D.: the plan is to close that conjoint program once the Ph.D. is operational."

Student reactions

Students who entered the program in 2014 may complete a bridging course to graduate with a PhD in Theology rather than a ThD. Students who entered prior to that date are not eligible to do the same.

Andrew Woodward, who entered the program in 2013 and is expecting to complete his ThD this year, is appealing the university's ruling on his endeavour to participate in the bridging program. Woodward's appeal is set for consideration at Governing Council this term.

Woodward claims that he has to work harder than PhD holders to explain to potential employers that his degree is critical and non-secretarial. A PhD is beneficial, says Woodward, because it is already widely known as a critical degree. He adds, "One wonders why the university even bothers having its ThD accredited by the agency if it's not going to follow the agency's imperative that students be allowed to choose which name they would like."

Other students have objected to the structure of the program, including Stephen Hewko, a doctoral student. Hewko submitted a petition signed by several other students to U of T president Meric Gertler, which argues that unless the university can provide evidence of substantial differences in program requirements and outcomes, it is morally, ethically, and legally obligated to permit ThD students to change their degree to PhD upon graduation.

Following review from the Quality Council, the PhD was approved for government funding. Wiebe regards the Quality Council's review with suspicion, stating that they have "in no way made a case for this being an entirely new program."

Wiebe submitted documentation to the university which demonstrates the "identical program requirements." He claims that it has been ignored.

Weibe argues that the similarity of the two programs is akin to plagiarism. "[The process] is kind of wicked... it's definitely unfair," he says. Wiebe went on to state that "it's quite problematic when the university expects students to follow. The ThD is still being funded as it was before but the university has sought new funding for the PhD program. The ThD and PhD are both joint degrees, conferred by both U of T and the TST.

Background

On October 3, 2013, U of T provost Cheryl Regehr argued that "the changes are so significant we will have to take it through as a new program." The emerging result: the development of a PhD in theological studies was determined to be more research-focused than the current ThD.

Ontario's Quality Council and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities approved the new program in December 2013. It was then approved by U of T in October 2014.

The legitimacy of the decision-making process is also under scrutiny. Wiebe states that the ThD program was reviewed in 2012 as part of a cyclical review that takes place every five to six years, and that the TST agreed to not follow program regulations and consider the possibility of a PhD in Theology.

Wiebe says that a report sent back to reviewees contained allegedly problematic comments. Wiebe claims that these comments were eventually quietly removed. This report was resubmitted in April 26, 2012 and went on to the Committee of Academic Program and Policy. According to Wiebe, the university breached the protocol of their review processes on both occasions.

TORONTO SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (TGSA)

TGSA BOARD

AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 7 APRIL 2016 AT 11:00 IN THE JAY BOARD ROOM OF THE TST BUILDING

R. Spellacy TGSA President RS/as 07 March 2016

AGENDA

- 2016.4.1. OPENING PRAYER
- 2016.4.2. ATTENDANCE
 - 2.1. PRESENT
 - 2.2. LEAVE OF ABSENCE
- 2016.4.3. OTHER MATTERS FOR THE AGENDA
- 2016.4.4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES
- 2016.4.5. MATTERS ARISING
- 2016.4.6. TREASURER'S REPORT
- 2016.4.7. COLLEGE REPORTS
 - 7.1. UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
 - 7.2. WYCLIFFE COLLEGE
 - 7.3. TRINITY COLLEGE
 - 7.4. EMMANUEL COLLEGE
 - 7.5. KNOX COLLEGE
 - 7.6. REGIS COLLEGE
 - 7.7. INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES (ICS)
 - 7.8. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO STUDENTS' UNION (UTSU)
- 2016.4.8. COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - 8.1. ACADEMIC COUNCIL
 - 8.2. GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL
 - 8.3. LIBRARY COMMITTEE
 - 8.4. TST BOARD OF TRUSTEES
 - 8.5. MEETINGS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF TST AND GCTS DIRECTOR
- 2016.4.9. CONFERENCE
- 2016.4.10. REFERENDUM
- 2016.4.11. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
- 2016.4.12. ELECTIONS
- 2016.4.13. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
- 2016.4.14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
- 2016.4.15. CLOSING