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## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Toronto School of Theology Graduate Students' Association (TGSA)

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#### 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*.<sup>1</sup>)

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.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/documents/TuitionandAncillaryFees.pdf>.

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](http://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.