

TGSA Board Meeting
Wednesday October 14, 2020 3:00 - 5:00 pm
Via Zoom

In Attendance: Michael Rogers, Hannah Scanlon, Sam Needham, Nathan Williams, Mia Theocharis, Deborah Lee, Maureen Ononiwu, Jordyn Tower, James DeGurse, Josefina Leventhal-Noble, Gustave Ineza, Jordan Balint

Regrets: Andrew Youssef

1. Prayer and Territorial Acknowledgement

- Hannah S. offers prayer; Mia T. offers territorial acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes from September 16, 2020

- Sam N. motions to accept the agenda, Gustave I. seconds.
- Nathan W. motions to accept meeting minutes, Sam N. seconds.
- **Motions both carry. All approve.**

3. Reports

A. PRESIDENT

- **Library Committee Meeting:** Info sessions are going to be held monthly; there was discussion of international students having a difficult time accessing their **utorid** — something to be aware within your colleges. Regis is open for indoor study space and Kelly is planning on doing the same — mask are mandatory while studying.
- Next TSTLC meeting is in October — are there any questions I should ask or any information that needs to be put forward? 1) can students browse the stacks? 2) do we have access to the downsvew library?
- **Website:** I've been using the website as a means for communication — the blog section specifically, so it would be great if you can tell students that anything they need to know will be there.
- **LISTSERV:** The only downside of the TGSA LISTSERV is that it only has about 90 people on it, I'm going to ask David if there's any way to get a full AD student list on there — that's why we usually send really important emails via David so it reaches more students.
- **Facebook Group:** Our current Facebook group has around 140 people, some of which are no longer part of TST. I wanted to get your opinions on the possibility of creating a new group and we could verify the students in the group. We need a secure place to discuss issues pertaining to the referendum come January.
 - Communication issue — add a VP Communication role? Appoint someone on the board?
 - Motion to appoint Maureen O. to the position of non-voting communications chair for TGSA.
 - Mike R. motions to accept this, Sam N. seconds.
 - **Motion carries. All approve.**

- Motion to empower Maureen O. to take charge of creating a new Facebook group.
- Mike R. motions to accept this, Gustave I. seconds.
- **Motion carries. All approve.**
- **Graduate Studies Council:** Mike R. and I had a GSC meeting last week, but he will talk more about the details in his report. The next meeting is in December and that's when we will bring the motion for tuition fee exemption, we thought it best to wait until we have all the support before bringing it to council!
- **UTSU — Email from CRO:** Director of Theology to sit on the board of directors — the election has passed for us to nominate but they can appoint and interview someone if we are interested in having the position filled. Sam N. and I talked briefly and we agreed to not fill the position, especially if we decide to leave UTSU. But if anyone feels called to sit on UTSU, Sam N. can talk more about what the role entails because he took on the position in his first year.
- Mike R. motions to accept the President's report. Hannah S. seconds.
- **Motion carries. All approve.**

B. VP ACADEMIC

- **Constitutional Referendum:** See Mike R.'s changes; 4.2.1 change to add the position of VP Communications; 4.2.2 change to take out area rep positions and replace it with two at large representatives (ex. Someone from KSA could sit on the board, they've voiced in the past that they didn't feel well represented on TGSA)
 - Mike R.: There were times we didn't have quorum, these changes help for TGSA to find committed members instead of scrambling to fill positions — purposes of continuation and continuity; we need approval from everyone to change constitutional policies. This also gives the board freedom to invite people into the conversation whose voice are needed.
 - Motion to approve Mike R.'s constitutional language change.
 - Sam N. Motions to accept, Nathan W. seconds.
 - **Motion carries. All approve.**
- **Graduate Studies Council:** UTQAP assessment; a lot of documentation about what we are doing well and not as well; something we are not doing well is funding for international student, half of TST students are international who pay 3x more than Canadian students in tuition; there are plenty of options for funding and scholarships for Canadian students but not for international students.
 - Also discussion of how to arrange classes in the fall; they are going to base courses off the research areas of incoming students so that the cohort has a better selection; the issue that arises with this is that professors want to know 4 years out what they are teaching — there is some pushback in this regard.
 - Hannah S. motions to accept Mike R.'s report, Maureen O. seconds.
 - **Motion carries. All approve.**

C. VP EXTERNAL

- **GSU/UTSU:** You can find comparisons online through these websites — <https://www.studentcare.ca/coveragemanager/summary/88-en.html> and <https://www.studentcare.ca/coveragemanager/summary/77-en.html>
 - Top level issue — UTSU is cheaper and GSU is more expensive but has more benefits such as mental health support and advocacy, accessibility services, better support for international students whose second language is English, physical health (i.e. access to all U of T gyms/intramurals).
 - Sam N. will be compiling the information for the referendum; Mike R. Says that we should talk about mental health more in the referendum, mentioning that is important and it's something TST needs most.
 - Gustave I.: Any reviews from students that UTSU or GSU is better? Personal experience, support from last referendum?
 - Sam N.: Working to have a comprehensive comparison — this is what our referendum should look like <https://tgsa.sa.utoronto.ca/referendum/> (2018) What's our deadline? November 30th. And we will need a CRO as well.
- **VP Social:**
 - PITCH! Sam N. proposes a social online zoom mixer with possible breakout rooms; Friday, Oct 23rd at 6:00 pm — will have an email sent out from David.
- Deborah K. Motions to accept Sam N.'s report, Gustave I. seconds.
- **Motion carries. All approve.**

D. VP CONFERENCE

- TGSA Conference coming up on October 30th
- Nathan W. is currently working on a schedule that will be sent to all the presenters, 8 students, 1 zoom room for the whole day rather than breakout rooms; keynote honorarium of \$200 to Dr. Connor Wood; advertising, sending out a TST wide email.
- Nathan W.: Will need people to volunteer to chair one of the sessions, 4 panels in total so 4 people to chair and facilitate Q&A, maybe a 5th to facilitate keynote; email Nathan W. if you'd like to volunteer!
- Mike R. Motions to accept Nathan W.'s report, Deborah K. seconds.
- **Motion carries. All approve.**

E. TREASURER

- **Tuition Fee Exemption:** Currently 67 signatures on the petition — when do we need this by? End of November.
- Mike R.: We need every TGSA members support — if we do, GSC will support us.
- Hannah S.: How do we continue to get this out there? Should we continue to post?
- Mia T: We can get David to send out a mass email with the petition linked, and I can call Colleen first to let her know so they aren't surprised. Mike and I want to continue to build good relationships with the GSC.
- Mike R. motions to accept Hannah S.'s report, Deborah K. seconds.
- **Motion carries. All approve.**

F. COLLEGE REP'S:

- I. Emmanuel: Virtual community lunches, homelessness and sanctuary; regular worship services.
 - II. St. Mike's: Thursday's is Kelly Cafe, where faculty and students socialize with a drink or two — 2 hours politics, papers; Wednesday liturgies, cafe afterwards; Kelly is open for study-space, ground floor, first come first serve — <https://stmikes.utoronto.ca/library/services/online-learning-support/welcome/>. What about study carrels? NO access to them at Kelly; Pro Seminars — every third Wednesday of the month, all are welcome!
 - III. Knox: Virtual communal lunch on Wednesdays, chapel on Tuesdays; we are using discord, chatting a lot with BD and AD students, talking about issues and students; prayer requests; we have a good system in place with lots of communication.
 - IV. Wycliffe: Socials, evening prayers which are live streamed, anyone is welcome to Zoom into that, the link is on the website — AD student lunches, coffee get together, various rates of participation, lunches well attended — theology discussions put on by faculty, pub nights where an article is sent out and people show up to discuss it, this event is well attended even during COVID, good way to connected.
 - Nathan W. motions to accept the college rep reports, Maureen O. seconds.
 - **Motion carries. All approve.**
- G. AREA REP'S:
- I. Master of Arts (MA): Cohort class is going well.
 - Maureen O. and Mike R.: Are there any issues around biases, or any anti-ecumenical sentiments? This has come up before in the MA cohort class so we just want to make sure that isn't the case. Are students also able to voice their opinions?
 - Jordan T.: Nothing of a sort has come up but will keep an eye on that.
 - II. Contextual: Huge issue with scholarship, polarities; different views in different cohorts.
 - Gustave I. motions to accept the area rep reports, Mike R. seconds.
 - **Motion carries. All approve.**
4. **Events/Workshops**
 - September: Grant "Polishing" Workshop was a great turnout! Very informative
 - October: Conference
 - November: Mental Health Event
 5. **Questions/Concerns/New Business?**
 - Next meeting? **November 18th @ 3:00pm**

Motion to Adjourn at 5:00 pm

*Respectfully submitted by Mia Theocharis
November 15, 2020*