

**TGSA Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday December 9th, 2020 3:00 - 5:00 pm**  
**Via Zoom**

In Attendance: Michael Rogers, Hannah Scanlon, Sam Needham, Nathan Williams, Mia Theocharis, Maureen Ononiwu, Josefina Leventhal-Noble, Gustave Ineza, Sam Needham and Andrew Youssef

Regrets: James DeGurse, Jordyn Tower, Deborah Lee, Jordan Balint

**1. Prayer and Territorial Acknowledgement**

- Sam N. offers prayer; Mia T. offers territorial acknowledgement.

**2. Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes from November 18th, 2020**

- Mike R. motions to accept the agenda and meeting minutes from November 18th, Gustave I. seconds.
- **All in favour, motions carries.**

**3. Reports**

A. PRESIDENT

**I. GSC Meeting**

- Adding courses to catalogue based on student applications and areas of interest — push back from some grad directors about 1) timeline — not reasonable; 2) students look at courses before they even apply; 3) profs still want freedom to determine course and not have them based off of incoming cohort
- Adding [MC] to methodology courses to make this easier for students; professors still have the authority to determine what is considered a methods course — pretty straight forward proposition, some push back from professors, should pass in January
- ThM II closing in 2023

**II. Tuition Fee Exemption**

- G directors were very sympathetic to this and said it was definitely something that they would get behind
- Everyone agreed in principle that there is definitely an issue when it comes to money
- Jerry Skira, Regis grad director, was in support. But he also said not to limit options, we should consider additional propositions such as stipends or scholarships if the tuition exemption isn't possible; he also said it would prudent to gage how many students are affected by this (concrete evidence) — it would make our case stronger
- Heads will have to take this to their colleges because money is a college issue and has nothing to do with TST — they can't make those decisions. For example, Darren Dias, St. Mike's grad director, did say this really isn't an issue for his students because St. Mike's has very good funding and they've also

created options such as a covid relief fund for students where faculty have went into their own pockets to donate money

- HyeRan Kim, Emmanuel grad director said this leads into a bigger discussion of the need for advocacy for international students (which has also come up among the TGSA execs)
- What we are proposing would only be for PhD students in the general exam or dissertation phase of their program, not students in coursework; and they would still need to abide by the criteria outlined in SGS decision for tuition exemption: <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/graduate/covid-19-mitigation-graduate-students/sgs-tuition-fee-exemption>
- So essentially they would have to argue that because of covid their studies have suffered as a result (before covid, they had to have been making good progress). They also have to show that because of covid more work is required in their program which means an additional session of registration.
- In order to receive the exemption, they have to with go any funding (double-check this because there funding would have ended anyways?). Colleen said there was one TST student that fit the criteria for the SGS decision but they decided to forgo the tuition exemption because they wanted to keep their funding.
- I say we plan to have something sent to SEC for their next meeting which is January 11th — Pam also suggested we could give something for Dec 14th but that's too soon considering we are in final assignments and this way we could try to gather more evidence from students over the break (if people are willing).
- Gustave I.: Full scholarship — frame it in terms of timing, extending funding (st. Mike's)
- Hannah S.: it sounded a lot of people were really supportive — legitimate cause.

**III. Letter of Concern** — Sent to Board of Trustees, Senior Executive Council, and Pam; I also mentioned the letter at the GSC meeting yesterday to the grad directors, they have access to the letter on Quercus. Pam is going to meet with us at our next meeting on January 20th to discuss things with us and ease concerns.

**IV. Colleen's Farewell** — Dec 14th at 3pm; Should we sent flowers or something of a sort on behalf of TGSA?

- Motion to allow Mia T. to buy flowers for Colleen on behalf of TGSA.
- Mike R. motions, Andrew Y. seconds.
- **All approve. Motion carries.**

**V. College Reps** — contact your college grad director; build strong relationship with each other

**VI. New Facebook Page** — Maureen and I met to discuss creating a new Facebook page, should be up and running in the new year.

- Gustave I. motions to accept president's report, Hannah S. seconds.
- **All approve. Motion carries.**

## B. VP ACADEMIC

- Mike R.: Resigning from his position as VP Academic effective immediately; speech presented at meeting:

“Dear friends and colleagues, I have welcomed this opportunity to address this august body for the final time, and, through you, the students of TST to whom I am so deeply indebted for a tenure of friendship and trust, to tender my resignation as your academic vice president. For two and a half years I have placed my confidence in the students of TST--and they have generously responded by placing their confidence in me. Now, on next Thursday, I am to assume new and broader responsibilities in the General Court of Massachusetts. But I am not here to bid farewell to TST. For three years--whether I was in France, Rhode Island, Bolivia, or elsewhere--TST has been my home; and, God willing, wherever I serve TST shall remain a home and I look forward to returning to defend my dissertation and receive my PhD. I speak here neither from false provincial pride nor artful political flattery when I say that what Pericles said to the Athenians has long been true of TST and this body: "We do not imitate—for we are a model to others." And so it is that I carry with me from this board to those high and lonely corridors to which I now succeed more than fond memories of firm friendships. The enduring qualities of TGSA—the common threads woven by the Pilgrim and the Puritan, the Scholar and the Saint, the preacher and the poet—will not be and could not be forgotten in the Massachusetts State House. They are an indelible part of my life, my convictions, my view of the past, and my hopes for the future. Allow me to illustrate: During the last sixty days, I have been at the task of making my final negotiations on behalf of this board as your Academic Vice President. It has been a long and deliberate process. Some have counselled greater speed. Others have counselled more provocative rhetoric. In the end, Colleen’s proposal yesterday marked a step forward for all of us, and it was something which she and I were able to finally work out in a private conversation based on good will and mutual respect. I have been guided by the standard John Winthrop set before his shipmates on the flagship Arabella three hundred and ninety years ago, as they, too, faced the task of witnessing to belief on a perilous frontier. "We must always consider," he said, "that we shall be as a city upon a hill--the eyes of all people are upon us." In this time of crisis, the eyes of the students and administration are truly upon us--and our student governments, at every level, TST wide, collegial, and programmatic, must be as a city upon a hill—constructed and inhabited by women and men aware of their great trust and their great responsibilities. I hope you won’t think it folly when I say that you are setting out upon a voyage in 2021 no less hazardous than that undertaken by the Arabella in 1630. You are committing yourselves to tasks of theological leadership no less awesome than that of those who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony, beset as it was then by terror without and disorder within. The world needs the witness of committed theologians and scholars, and the academy needs scholars who can exhibit grace, magnanimity, and forgiveness in this era when the value of the theological pursuit itself is in question in the face of the overwhelming technocratic paradigm. History will not judge your endeavours merely on the basis of colour or creed or even denominational affiliation. Neither will competence and loyalty and stature, while essential to the utmost, suffice in times such as

these. For of those to whom much is given, much is required. And when at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each one of us--recording whether in our brief span of service we fulfilled our responsibilities to TGSA--our success or failure, in whatever office we may hold, will be measured by the answers to four questions: First, were we truly women and men of courage--with the courage to stand up to one's enemies--and the courage to stand up, when necessary, to one's associates—the courage to resist public pressure, as well as private hubris? Secondly, were we truly people of judgment--with perceptive judgment of the future as well as the past--of our own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others--with enough wisdom to know with Socrates that we did not know, and enough candour to admit it? Third, were we truly women and men of integrity-- who never ran out on either the principles in which they believed or the people who believed in them-- who believed in us-- whom neither pride nor ambition could ever divert from the fulfillment of our sacred trust? Finally, were we truly people of dedication--with an honour mortgaged to no single individual or group, and compromised by no private obligation or aim, but devoted solely to serving the public good and the student body's best interest. Courage—judgment—integrity—dedication— these are the qualities which, with God's help, this son of TST hopes will characterize this TGSA's conduct in the stormy years that lie ahead. Humbly I ask His help in my new undertaking--but I am also aware that on earth His will is worked by men. I ask for your help and your prayers, as I embark on this new and solemn journey. Thank You.”

- Mia T.: Thank you Mike for all that you have done for TGSA during your time on the board — you've built long-lasting relationships with faculty, staff and students; in turn, putting TGSA in a really great place by creating strong and fruitful relations with TST. Many thanks and wishing you the best success in the future!
- Hannah S. motions to accept Mike R.'s resignation. Andrew Y. seconds.
- **All approve, motion carries.**

#### C. VP EXTERNAL

- UTGSU and UTSU Referendum: Sam N. proposes we hold off. There is not the same urgency or motivation since we are not campus anymore and therefore, wouldn't be able to access the things that GSU offers and what initially brought us to consider the switch.
- Nathan W. motions to accept Sam N.'s report, Gustave I. seconds.
- **All approve. Motion carries.**

#### D. VP CONFERENCE

- Gustave I. motions to accept Nathan W.'s report, Hannah S. seconds.
- **All approve. Motions carries.**

#### E. TREASURER

- Table tuition fee exemption for January 11th (when SEC is meeting next).
- Motion to give Mia T. and Hannah S. authority to move forward with this.
- Gustave I. motions to give Mia and Hannah authority to moved forward with tuition fee exemption. Sam N. seconds.
- **All approve. Motion carries.**

- Sam N. motions to accept Hannah S.'s report, Gustave I. seconds.
- **All approve. Motion carries.**

F. COLLEGE REP'S:

I. Emmanuel

- N/A

II. St. Mike's

- Monthly pro-seminars — anyone can come! They will start back up in January.
- Chapel, prepare and give reflection; Thursday's are Kelly Cafe.
- Student Life Committee Christmas event: All proceeds are going to charity.

III. Knox

- N/A

IV. Wycliffe

- **\*Trauma Warning\***: Sexual abuse, assault and violence. Letter by Carolyn Mackie, signed by Wycliffe students and alumni.
- Question: *Should TGSA send a letter of support or letter of concern? How do we want to come across?*
- Josefina L.: Opt for a letter of support, this will be strong coming from TGSA
- Gustave I.: Moral duty for us to say something.
- Andrew Y.: Is there a third party involved?
- Sam N.: This is listed in the action items from Carolyn, that there be a third party involved moving forward
- Andrew Y.: There needs to be a place where people can report issues such as these — someone to go to that is not part of Wycliffe or TST.
- Nathan W.: We need to advocate for a standardization; does TGSA throw our support behind Carolyn's letter or pressing Wycliffe specifically?
- Gustave I.: We should investigate first, what is available for students? What protocols are set in place to follow?
- Nathan W.: We need something standardized, the issue seems to be that there isn't anything available.
- Hannah S.: Standardization means access — there isn't a policy at Wycliffe for sexual abuse, assault and violence.
- Andrew Y.: We need to be preventive for the future, support for individuals affected. When did the incident occur? 2 years ago?
- Hannah S.: Before they were students, the issue was raised to Wycliffe faculty who didn't bring it to the proper authorities at U of T, and pastoral care was not there — both were students at Wycliffe, the victim had a difficult last semester because her abuser was at school.
- Motion for Hannah S. To draft a statement of support rather than a letter of concern.
- Andrew Y. motions for Hannah S. to draft a statement of support rather than a letter of concern. Sam N. seconds.
- **All approve. Motion carries.**
- Sam N. motions to accept Hannah S.'s report. Andrew Y. seconds.

- **All approve. Motion carries.**

V. Regis

- N/A

VI. Trinity

- Andrew Y. Had a discussion with Dr. Khan—the graduate director at Trinity—about what is going on at the college.
- Andrew Y.: Smaller number of students, more BD students than MTS or Mdiv; there are about 5-10 AD students. There are monthly meetings to voice any TGSA concerns (and vice versa).
- Whatever Andrew Y. gets from these meetings he will bring to our monthly meetings.
- Andrew Y.: Dr. Khan is currently the Vice President—and will be becoming the President—of the AAR Eastern division. There are two groups, indigenous religions, immigration experience and religion; topics are determined by the United States and Canada. If anyone would like to submit a paper you should speak to Dr. Khan, it's important that AD students are part of AAR and having Dr. Khan as the President of the Eastern division is especially helpful for TST students. Let your fellow colleagues and peers know about this if they would like to present. There is also Reading Religion AAR where you can submit book reviews.
- Sam N. motions to accept Andrew Y.'s report. Nathan W. seconds.
- **All approve. Motion carries.**

G. AREA REP'S:

- I. Master of Arts (MA) — N/A
- II. Master of Theology (ThM) — N/A
- III. Contextual — N/A

H. NON-VOTING CHAIRS

- I. Social Chair — December 18th, another virtual mixer for the end of the semester? Sam N. may consider this if people are interested.
- II. Communications — N/A.

**4. Events/Workshops**

- January — workshop about social media someone from SGS (first week back); time-management workshop; meet-and-greet with the new administrative and assistant registrar Victoria James.

**5. Questions/Concerns/New Business?**

- Next meeting? **Wednesday, January 20th @ 3:00 — 5:00 pm.**

**Motion to Adjourn at 4:47pm**

*Respectfully submitted by Mia Theocharis  
January 15, 2020*