

# A Year in Review

TORONTO SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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By: Mia Theocharis

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By: Hannah Scanlon

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2021/2022 Academic Year

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## President's Report

We all did not envision that a world-wide pandemic would keep us in our homes and away from campus. This was a particular challenge for TGSA because in-person events and workshops are integral to how we connect with our peers. Although there were challenges to moving online, I'm proud of the work that TGSA accomplished during the 2020-21 academic year. In the fall we hosted our "Annual Grant Writing Workshop," a "Virtual TST-Mixer," and the "Yoga and Wellness Workshop." We also held our very first online conference, "What Matters? On Value and Valuing," with Dr. Connor Wood as our keynote speaker. During the winter term, TGSA worked closely with Career Exploration and Education at the University of Toronto to design a workshop centred around "Building an Online Presence." Furthermore, we collaborated with Academic Success at the University of Toronto to bring TST students a workshop entitled, "Getting Back on Track for Writing: A Time Management and Writing Workshop" and we also hosted a "Virtual TST Games Night."

Outside of planning events and workshops, TGSA advocated for students through continued discussions with TST and the colleges regarding Tuition Fee Exemption (the SGS decision) and the more general matter of financial covid-relief for students. Our goal was to advocate for students as much as possible by keeping the conversation going and stressing the importance of financial relief for students. Furthermore, TST has undergone administrative changes this year to which TGSA has been in close contact with TST to ensure that students are not negatively affected. We are very thankful to the previous Graduate Director, Dr. Colleen Shantz and the current Executive Director, Dr. Pam Couture for their continued support of TGSA; and of course, the entire administrative staff at TST.

## Treasurer's Report

Costs for TGSA-related activities, programs, and operations saw a record low in recent memory due to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because no in-person conferences, social gatherings, or workshops were held, there was little to no overhead costs related to the purchase of food, as is standard in previous years (e.g. Welcome Back BBQ, Grant Writing Workshop). Additionally, annual student fee rates were decreased to the following rates. In Fall 2020/Winter 2021 the fees were \$2.06 for full-time students, and \$1.03 for part-time students. Because many in-person options for classes will be resuming across the University of Toronto this Fall, TST student fees will be increasing to the rate that they were in our pre-pandemic state. For Fall 2021/Winter 2022, they will be \$9.50 for Full time students and \$4.75 for part-time students. If there is an unforeseen reason, the pandemic makes it that classes must return to online for the Fall of 2021, student fees will reflect this change. The only costs for this year were two honorariums (Connor Wood, featured speaker at Fall Conference and Lara Haddad, Yoga Teacher) and flowers to celebrate Dr. Colleen Shantz, the previous Graduate Director. It is projected that for the upcoming academic term, costs for the year will increase proportional to the holding of in-person gatherings and activities.

## Incoming Board 2021/2022

This past month TGSA held nominations for the following positions: VP External, Emmanuel College Representative and Doctor of Ministry Representative. It is our pleasure to announce that **Morgan Bell** has been ratified and approved by the board for the positions of VP External and Emmanuel College Representative. We are looking forward to working with him! As for the Doctor of Ministry Representative we will resume our search in September.