

GSA MEETING MINUTES – October 5, 2009 – The Crypt

Present

Lindsay Thomson – President
Andrew Farnsworth– VP Executive Affairs
Shera Birnbaum – VP Finance
Rathika Balthasar– VP Student Affairs (Science)
Julia Lane – VP Student Affairs (Arts)
Lisa Pollock– VP Operations
Rachel Herron - Arts Liaison
Stephen Oni - Science Liaison
Alison McDonald - Environment Commissioner
Carling Beninger - First Year Representative.

Absent with regards:

Kaitlin Breton-Honeyman - Senator
Lynette Schick - CUPE Representative
Kelly Woodley - Human Rights Commissioner

Motion by Lisa: to approve minutes from the previous GSA meeting (held Sept 21/09)

Seconded by: Julia

Voted: 4 in favour, 1 abstained

1. President

a. Presidents meeting:

- i. CASSC (Colleges and Student Services i.e. health services, bus pass etc) –The orientation committee falls under CASSC and organizes undergraduate student orientation. Last year the GSA sat on this committee was removed since we deal with our own orientation. Julia suggested that in the future the GSA could work with the education program. Even though they are listed as an undergraduate department, the average age of students is 27. These students frequently take this program as a second degree and could be considered more like graduate students. Therefore, planning events geared towards them during orientation week would be helpful.
- ii. Religious affairs task force: Trent is contemplating developing a plan to build a religious space on campus. It would consist of one building with a washroom. There is an administration position available on the committee who would aid in developing the proposal to apply for this religious space as well as dealing with issues such as who will be allowed to use the space, how the space will be used etc. There is representative position available on this committee to graduate students.
- iii. The Transport committee deals with issues of accessibility on campus. One major issue is the difficulty of reaching the DNA building for disabled persons. As it stands now, the DNA building is inaccessible except by vehicle.

Shera suggested that the Trent Bus system could add a loop to bus route up to DNA building to improve accessibility.

- iv. The GSA has been informed about a graduate student position to sit on the Non-academic Misconduct Policy Committee (NAMPC). At the moment, there are very loose guidelines on punishment for non-academic misconduct. If the panel suggests a harsh punishment, it then is passed on to student affairs. The main issue at the moment is whether the same people should be on the review panel as well as sitting on the committee. If the panel and review board consist of the same people, they would have a better grasp on the details of the incident.

Motion by Rathika: to vote on CASC sub committee members to review the charter of rights and freedom be the same persons sitting on the review panel

Seconded by: Shera

Voted: All in favour

- v. Athletic fees – Andy has heard complaints about the amount of money students are paying for the use of athletic facilities, which are not fully functional due to the construction of the new athletic complex. Other universities have the option to opt out of athletic fees for those not using the facility.
- b. The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) is currently on campus trying to recruit students to join. The CFS lobbies the government about student issues (i.e. tuition) and provides ISIC cards for students. The CFS is in crisis mode as the TSCA is trying to back out of their memberships with the CFS. This is also occurring at many other universities in the country. Simon Fraser is one of the few to successfully cancel their membership. As a result, the CFS has been misinforming students on campus, as they are desperate to keep students.
 - i. The CFS being present on campus reminds us of the issue the GSA had with them 5 years ago. The previous GSA thought of becoming a member of the CFS and they took a trial membership in order to evaluate it if it would be beneficial. At the end of the trial, the GSA at the time decided not to become members and thought they could refuse the membership. However, the CFS said that they had to hold a referendum if they did not want to continue being members. The GSA contacted a lawyer about this issue. The lawyer informed them that since no contract was signed (verbal agreement) that there were no obligations for the GSA to hold a referendum. It was on the onus of the CFS to tell the GSA the obligations involved and since it is a large corporation they should have had a contract.
 - ii. Lindsay brings this issue up as she feels it might become a problem if the CFS speaks to current GSA members. However, there is a high turnover rate of CFS members so it is unlikely that the current people on campus would know about the previous involvement.
- c. Policy – There will soon be a standard format for all policies, which will make it easier to read and understand.

- d. There are issues with charges being made to internal college accounts. Lindsay wishes to close the internal account we have at Trent as things are charged sometimes without people knowing.
2. VP Student Affairs
- a. There have been a few issues regarding graduate course grades being submitted after the date allowed. Presently, there is no recourse for students who encounter this problem. There is a similar lack of a clear process for students regarding grade change deadlines and processes. This issue will be brought to the attention of Graduate Studies and Senate.
 - b. Social Events
 - i. The social event for October will be bowling (Thursday October 15 at 7pm, Bowlerama - 845 Chemong Rd). Last year the GSA booked 2 hours, costing \$60 per lane (includes shoes, pizza and pop). Each graduate student will need to pay \$10. Last year 25-30 students participated. If there are 5-6 people per lane, we should book 5 lanes. We should encourage people to make teams before they come as this may bring more students out to the event.
 - ii. The November social event is to be determined. Some suggestions include the reptile zoo and the Peterborough Art Gallery. Last year we held a pub night with live music co-funded by graduate studies.
 - iii. The January event will again be a Peterborough Pete's hockey game. Rathika attempted to book the skybox but it is all booked for January. We will buy tickets for the restaurant as people enjoyed this location last year. The tickets are \$21/person, which includes a \$10 food voucher. Last year the GSA subsidized \$2 off the ticket for students and we hope to cover \$3 to keep the ticket the same price. We will look into the budget to see what deal we can work out this year.
 - iv. One suggestion for February is ice-skating either at an indoor rink or on the canal.
3. Environment Commissioner
- a. The Center of Knowledge in the Environment is opening in a few weeks with the grand opening being held October 21-22, 2009. They are looking for graduate students to provide posters for display about research occurring at Trent.
 - b. There is the potential to get a \$5000 supplement for the GSA to hold an environmental event or aid in an environmental issue. A suggestion was to purchase carbon offsets for students traveling to conferences. In addition, the GSA could hold an environmental event such as tree planting. A proposal has to be approved in order to receive this money.
4. VP Executive Affairs
- a. AGM – We need to make quorum at the annual general meeting (AGM) being held October 21, 2009. Since there are approximately 400 graduate students at Trent, 10% need to vote to meet quorum. If this does not occur, then voting goes to webCT but there still needs to be enough people voting to reach quorum.
 - b. There are still several committees that require graduate students to sit on including campus cards, religious affairs, transportation etc.

Motion to adjourn meeting: Shera
Seconded by: Andy
Meeting adjourned