

**MINUTES of Trent Graduate Students' Association Executive Meeting**  
**Meeting Date:** May 27, 2013

**Call to order:** An executive meeting of the Trent Graduate Students' Association was held in the Senior Common Room of Trill College on May 27, 2013. The meeting convened at 10:37, Vice President Internal Affairs Jason Rae presiding.

**Members in Attendance:**

Jason Rae	VP Internal Affairs
Jenilee Gobin	VP Finance
Veronica Lai	VP Student Affairs
Allen Priest	Environmental Commissioner
Kaitlyn Watson	Senate Rep
Latchmi Singh	Materials Science Rep
Kyle Kenniphaas	Psychology Rep
Erin McMorrow	History Rep
Stephanie Dotto	Canadian Studies Rep

**Regrets:** Karen Everett (President), Gozde Kilic (VP Operations), Barbara Potter (Indigenous Studies Rep), Andrea Samoil (CUPE Rep), Adam Marques (Equity Commissioner), Ian Fife (Health Benefits Co-ordinator), Andressa Lacerda (International Rep), Joy Tian (Applications of Modeling in the Natural and Social Sciences Rep), Sara Gallagher (English/Public Texts Rep), Laura Greenwood (Cultural Studies Rep)

**1) Health Benefits (Jason)**

- Previously we were paying \$300 per student
- 9.5% increase in premium
  - Standard industry inflation
  - Money raised by premiums was not sufficient to cover our usage last year
- ~\$326.06 total per student this new year
- Alternative options discussion
- *The increase in health benefit premiums was not considered substantial and has resulted from students using the policy. The amount of the increase was deemed acceptable by the members of the board. However, given dissatisfaction with our current insurance broker, the GSA will explore alternative options next year before handing off to a new executive committee.*

**2) Long and Short Term Goals (Jason)**

- Discuss current long term goals
- Solicit suggestions of long and short term goals from the board
- Additional professional development opportunities may be available from the career center in the future upon request – What would grad students want or benefit the most from?
- *The Executive proposed offering professional development workshops to grad students. It was brought to our attention that Trill College has offered these in the past, and*

- attendance/participation has been low. Proposition to establish a relationship/establish services with the career center similar to that which already exists with the academic skills center. We should also look into the availability of online resources, and perhaps make such services more available through the GSA website.*
- *Involvement of the membership and board has been a challenge in the past, with missing program reps presenting a problem in particular – general consensus was that these positions need to be filled. We should aim to fill these positions at events taking place early in the year such as BBQs to target new student, or push upper year students to participate now that there is some monetary compensation/incentive. We might also consider making email distribution lists available for program reps, or setting up a model like what is currently done with ENLS where messages are sent via program administrators to ensure we reach all grad students.*
  - *Much of the board expressed interest in sitting on various committees.*
  - *Proposed that the GSA host fundraisers.*
  - *For improving communication, we should distribute a weekly newsletter (in a more effective way than has been done in the past). Note that CUPE emails are not always being received by grad students in a timely fashion. We could also use the TGSA website to post weekly newsletters that are distributed by email (with a table of contents), as well as post to facebook and twitter. Timing of newsletters (especially those stating upcoming deadlines) is key, and we should be sending out reminders for various deadlines.*
  - *The board seemed more interested in an application/review and appointment process (rather than holding elections) for program rep positions on the board. If the program wishes to hold elections for their rep, then the onus should be on them to do so (not the TGSA).*
  - *We should also include some incentive to open/read weekly newsletters (e.g. coupons to Riley's).*

### **3) OGS (Jason)**

- *OGS has switched to an enrollment-based model where a number of awards are assigned to each university based on its size*
- *Awards are then distributed to students by the individual university*
- *UWestern is starting a committee to lobby their MPs in opposition of this change. They have offered an invitation to Trent to either work with or join their committee to express concerns with the new system works.*
- *How do the individual students at Trent feel about the change to OGS allocation?*
- *Jane and Joan believe that numbers of awards received by Trent have not changed as a result of the change.*
- *The board agreed that they'd like to see more transparency in allocation process (e.g. entering/1<sup>st</sup> years vs. upper year students) to ensure that awards, which should be awarded based on research and academic performance are not being used primarily as a cost saving measure/recruitment incentive. Obtaining numbers re: distribution across programs would also be of interest to the board. It was proposed that a task force be established to further research changes in the process and effects on graduate students at Trent in order to decide*

*our position on the matter. This task force should focus on the potential change in process to master's level tri-council awards as it is our understanding that this is a possibility that is currently under review; whereas the change has already taken place with OGS.*

**4) Budget approval for BBQ (Veronica)**

- *Could not be motioned/approved. To budget for same as last year (\$375 for first BBQ).*
- *Date/location of first BBQ has been set for Tuesday June 25<sup>th</sup>, in the grassy area in front of GSC.*
- *We should have a rain plan to move the bbq indoors as needed.*

**5) Event committees (Veronica)**

- *Kyle volunteered to assist with shopping and cooking. Jenilee to bring car and trailer to move bbqs on-site.*
- *We should ask the general membership to participate – have Gozde include something the newsletters.*
- *We should establish a general events committee. Those interested should contact Veronica.*
- *We would also like to recruit grad student volunteers who have life guarding and first aid certification to help with events.*

**Meeting adjourned: 11:44**