

Minutes of TGSA Board Meeting, 18/08/2016

Start: 14:00, End: 16:00pm

Location: Wallis Hall 102, Traill College, Trent University

Chair: Alexandra Ha (President)

Scribe: Mac Armstrong (VP Senate)

Attendance: Alexandra Ha, Alison Fraser, Miteb Abunayyan, Mac Armstrong, Marisol Campos Navarrete, Erin Laverty, Anastasia Nepotiuk, Matt Seaby, Phil Abbott, Sarah Jessup, Katherine Boyle

Regrets: Elizabeth Aslin, Laura Thursby, David Hollands, Swarsattie Kishun

1. Presentation(s) without voting

a. --

Minutes

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2. Call to Order

3. Motion to Approve the Agenda: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Anastasia Nepotiuk

Discussion

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Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****

4. Motion to Approve the Minutes from the July 14th, 2016 Board Meeting: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Miteb Abunayyan

Discussion

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Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****

5. Motion to Vote In Alicia Hartley as the New M.A. Anthropology Department Representative to the TGSA Board

Whereas there is now a candidate, Alicia Hartley, for the position of M.A. Anthropology Department Representative on the TGSA Board,

BIRT Alicia Hartley be made the new M.A. Anthropology Department Representative on the TGSA Board.

Justification

The position of M.A. Anthropology Department Representative on the TGSA Board needs to be filled.

Motion: Mackenzie Armstrong

Seconded: Anastasia Nepotiuk

Discussion

- **Motion:** to table motion until next meeting on account of Alicia being unavailable this meeting.

Mover: Alexandra Ha

Secunder: Mac Armstrong

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****

6. Presentation(s)

- a. **President: Health and Dental Plan Merger:** At the last General Assembly Meeting on April 18th, 2016, you voted in the TGSA referendum to be part of the Health and Dental Plans merger with the TCSA and the TDSA. The TGSA has been working this summer to see this merger through on the terms we provided as part of the referendum. However, some of the terms of the referendum have been altered in the course of negotiations. Specifically, the TCSA now has superior voting power to the TGSA and the TDSA when it comes to decision making about the joint health and dental coverage/plan. The TGSA executive team have tried to compensate for this by improving the specific details of the health and dental coverage/plan and its use. For example, we have worked to make the language in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) clearer and more specific; also ensuring that graduate students are informed before changes are made to the coverage/plan. Should decisions be made that graduate students are not in favour of, the MoU specifies that the TGSA can leave the joint health care plan by adhering to two criteria: 1) having the general membership vote through referendum and 2) by giving a 120 days notice. We suggested that the TGSA should only adhere to one of these criteria (to make it easier to leave). However the TCSA suggested that the Student Associations need 120 days to alter materials and publications if an Student Association decides to leave. In brief, joining plans would save graduate students money on their health and dental coverage, but voting power of graduate students will be impacted. The board must vote today on whether to approve the MoU and whether to merge health and

dental coverage/plans or not with TCSA and TDSA. Please see Motion 10.1. (MoU attached to email)

Discussion

- Alison: We've worked on this, rewritten this, 6 times, and the TCSA refuses to budge on their stipulations.
- Alexandra: This is being brought up because things have changed
- Anastasia: It no longer follows the wording of the referendum
- Alison: the referendum said we had equal voting power with TCSA and TDSA, but now it isn't equal voting power. TCSA has final voting power on the committee, which is completely different from the referendum. Tracy Milne, who is a staff person employed by the TCSA, now has voting power as well, which is a conflict of interest.
- Phil: What's the conflict?
- Alison: She's the Benefits Coordinator on the healthcare plan, and works for the TCSA.
- Phil: What role did Student VIP have in this?
- Alison: They've been pushing for this merger, and they've been upfront about wanting this merger with us, even not seeing the need for the MOU.
- Phil: I was the Health Benefits Coordinator when we switched to Student VIP, we received several proposals before, and we've been with TCSA before with Green Shield, but for the same reasons as this, we separated before. Since then TCSA joined Student VIP, and then we did after having issues with Green Shield. Part of the benefit of joining Student VIP was the better dental and eyewear, but we originally paid more to be able to have power over our own plan. I would suggest backing out of this now when we can.
- Matt: Will our benefits be changing with the plan?
- Alison: We were told we would still have all the same benefits, but now with all the changes we don't know. The only thing we know is that the rate we pay as grad students on our own will rise. If we join with the TCSA, our rates will be slightly lower.
- Phil: As grad students we tend to lose the plan more, so we tend to pay a higher premium.
- Erin: Those who opt-in are likely using it, so grad students might be opting out?
- Alison: We actually have more add-ons than opt-outs.
- Matt: So \$485 roughly last year with the amount going up to \$555 this year on our own versus a possible savings with TCSA
- Miteb: Even though TCSA has power over the committee it has only the ability to suggest things, but will still have ultimate power to make changes. Overuse of the plan shouldn't be a reason to raise the plan as TCSA has some similar demographics, so there should be decrease in fees overtime, however TCSA will likely manage the plan entirely over time including benefits and cost.
- Phil: They would have the most leverage in the conversation with the provider
- Alison: We could have the TCSA raise our costs without us having much say
- Matt: But if we're paying less by going through this plan isn't that a benefit?
- Phil: What we could do is strike a committee later to look into a lower cost plan.
- Katherine: If we wanted to join later, could we?
- Alison: We could do like Phil has said happened in the past and look for other options
- Erin: But would they welcome us back afterwards?
- Alison: They would likely
- Miteb: The benefit of this is that at least we do have some control as likely anything the TCSA Benefits Coordinator can't deal with will come to the TGSA, but overall it'll be

looked as an overall use, percentage of our use of the plan, which we will likely not use the greatest percentage, so we likely wouldn't be forced to pay more for our plan later.

- Alison: we will need to think on this as we'll be talking about it more to come.
- Marisol: could we see the plan, especially looking at the merger from the point of view of graduates with families, as the cost will rise for adding my family.
- Alison: yes, the rates are higher for families and that is something with graduates is more of us have families so yes the rates are higher within the merger
- Phil: This is always the problem we have is that as grads with more likelihood of having families we have less control when going up against undergraduates without families, but we also opt-in part-time students as well.
- Alison: we currently don't have plan numbers for TCSA or TDSA, so we don't know exactly what's going on.
- Erin: Probably a lot of undergrads because they're under 25 and on a parents' plan are opting-out too, which would be interesting numbers to see
- Phil: so we negotiated a 2-year plan with Student VIP, right?
- Alison: Yes and the TCSA took out their same language in our MOU
- Matt: So if we back out we have to arrange a referendum by a certain set time?
- Alison: Yes, after several attempts to rewrite the MOU, that is still what they've suggested (approval by referendum and 120 days notice)
- Matt: So who is responsible for the health plan if we do not go with the TCSA?
- Alison: Well we have the same plan, just we'll be paying more.
- Phil: well based on the referendum, we already know what we have, same as we had before, and I highly recommend we stay with Student VIP because they have been great at being accommodating
- Sarah: So what was the reason for this happening before?
- Phil: I wasn't there personally, but part of it was apparently personality, and partly the fact that the TCSA was required to pay more back then. At Trent the student associations are not all that old, so there's still a lot of newness and doing the same thing again.
- Alison: Yes and they did originally even take out language that would let us know about changes in fees in this MOU.
- Phil: Yes, so back then similar to what is happening now, we had three options, to be separate in our own plan, to merge but be somewhat separate from the TCSA, or be completely integrated into their plan.
- Alison: The important thing here for dealing with this was the procedural issue that the MOU looks nothing like the referendum.
- Erin: Yes, so I remember during the General Meeting that everyone was fine with all the referendum questions except the health care plan changes.
- Alison: Yes, and we might lose control over the plan if we go with the merger.
- Sarah: The TCSA plan isn't dependent friendly which is a concern, and the fact that the change and loss of power we would have over this plan
- Matt: The fee that is charged is charged by Trent on behalf of Student VIP? So will this affect fee payments?
- Phil: Some people may have already paid their fees, some haven't but it usually all gets figured out in the end.

- b. **President: Discussion of Cultural Appropriation and Decolonization:** In light of criticism that the TGSA received over our Tex-Mex Fest (originally titled Taco Fest), a discussion should take place on the topics of cultural appropriation, decolonization, and ally-ship. This presentation relates strongly to Motion 10.2 below.

Discussion

- Marisol: I'd like to have a little information about this, as being Mexican, I didn't really see what happened or felt like there was an issue.
- Alison: We should have you at our next Exec meeting
- Marisol: We have training as TAs, so it would seem we had training, but looking into the Human Rights Commission, there's a few training sessions we could look at. We could distribute some materials, and have a self-assessment later to go over the information. Workshops too when we have some times to set up something. But I'm going to talk with Swarsattie about doing this together

- c. **President: Disorientation Event Ideas:** Currently what the TGSA has planned is to have a mental health outreach for grad students (e.g., letting grad students with mental health problems know that they are not alone). We plan something like a talking circle. We also suggested to end this outreach workshop with a "Self-Care talk". I would like to discuss with the board potential ideas for this mental health campaign and also if we have a budget to work with.

Discussion

- Anastasia: I volunteered at the sexual assault center in town, and they have pamphlets and other items we could use.
- Alexandra: Would you be interested in helping or facilitating something?
- Anastasia: Sure
- Marisol: Is there somewhere where we can provide statistics just to give some background research?
- Alexandra: I will look into that.

- d. **President: Long-Term Planning Committee:** It is outlined in our bylaws that the President must assemble a Long-Term Planning Committee and chair the meetings. In this committee, the goal is to work on issues identified as priorities by the executive, and issues that come up along the year. The goal is to work together to map out a 5-year plan for the GSA. This year, perhaps we can involve the SMA, RCM and Traill College. I have Mac, Swarsattie, and Alison on the committee right now, I would like to know who on the board would like to sit on this committee.

Discussion:

- Alexandra: Does anyone want to be on this committee?
Miteb joins committee

- e. **President: Health Benefits Committee:** It is written in our bylaws that the health plans benefit committee must be formed in which will be chaired by Miteb our Health Plans

benefit commissioner. I would like to take this opportunity to recruit board member for this committee.

Discussion:

- Miteb: I will get on this.
- Alison: This is a committee we'd have regardless of the merger

- f. **VP Internal Affairs/VP Communications:** An update on the attendance of TGSA board members who have missed three consecutive TGSA board meetings without sending regrets.

Apologies that I only show two options here, but I couldn't remember the third (wasn't able to write it down fast enough)

Discussion:

- Alison: since the bylaw update this is the first time that we have a properly functioning discipline and impeachment section. If someone misses 3 consecutive meetings without regrets, the board can vote to remove them. Our AMOD and TCP reps have missed 3 consecutive meetings, David has issued an email notifying them and they have responded saying they aren't able to make it to Peterborough until September. So we can either let it slide, or remove them from their positions.
- Erin: I think it's important that we realize some people might have field work and be away, and removing them for not being around for the summer may seem unfair
- Anastasia: But they haven't even sent regrets, so all they had to do was say they couldn't make it.
- Miteb: we have the new bylaws and likely we've all read the bylaws, but maybe we can stress this as a learning experience, and that the proper procedure would be to remove them, however giving them a pass would be okay.
- Alison: In light of the bylaws and this summer, I motion to send them an email and encourage them to follow procedure in the future

Mover: Alison Fraser

Second: Miteb Abunayyan

In Favour: 10

Against: 0

Abstain: 1

****motion carries****

- g. **VP Student Affairs/VP Finance:** Social events budget. (see attached document "draft")

Move to table

Mover: Alexandra Ha

Second: Anastasia Nepotiuk

In favour: 11

Against: 0

Abstain 0

****motion carries****

Minutes

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7. Executive Reports (see document attached by email):

- a. President
 - Report submitted, nothing to add
- b. VP Internal Affairs
 - Report submitted, nothing to add
- c. VP Finance
 - Report submitted, nothing to add
- d. VP Communications
 - Report submitted, noting to add
- e. VP Student Affairs
 - Report submitted, noting to add
- f. Senator
 - Report submitted, addition: I recently had the opportunity to speak with to some of the current resident grad students in Wallis Hall, which shared their frustration that the changes happening at Traill as the result of the Traill Review have happened with very little notice, and until now they haven't felt much of an opportunity was made available to voice their concerns. I will continue to look into this and see about setting up an opportunity to gather their comments and concerns to bring them forward to the administration.

Motion to accept the reports: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Alison Fraser

Discussion

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Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****

8. Commissioner Reports, Board of Director Reports, Committee Reports, and Other Reports

- a. **OGSA Commissioner:** I organized and attended the OGSA General Meeting. Here, I volunteered to sit on the OGSA board, which meets monthly. This way I will be able to get monthly feedback for our board about the goings-on of the OGSA and can provide monthly updates at our board meetings. I took quite a few notes during the General Meeting and will provide a more thorough update at September's board meeting, which will include a brief presentation of what the OGSA is. (Rather than sending them all here, I figured it would be best to wait for when I can be present at the meeting so that I can answer any questions people might have). In the meantime, if anyone has any questions, feel free to email me.

Motion to accept the reports: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Miteb Abunayyan

Discussion

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Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****

9. Departmental Issues/Question Period

a. --

Discussion

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10. Main Motions

10.1 Health and Dental Plan Merger with the TCSA and TDSA (President)

Whereas the TGSA must approve the merger with the TCSA and TDSA voted on by the general membership at the April 18th, 2016 General Assembly Meeting, but on the terms specified in the latest Memorandum of Understanding between the TGSA, TCSA, and TDSA,

BIRT the TGSA merge with the TCSA and TDSA to have a joint Health and Dental Plan.

Justification

Joining plans would save graduate students money on their health and dental coverage. Please see Presentation 6.a for a more detailed overview.

Motion: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Alison Fraser

Discussion

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Alison: I wish Drew from Student VIP had stepped up and kept Alaine from taking over, but I think he's being pushed too.

Phil: I'm pretty sure Tracy was there last time this happened in the same manner.

Alison: She's not made that apparent.

Phil: That's worrying. I suggest that we turn this down personally.

Alexandra: Before we vote, let's pull up Laura's email

Matt: Can you explain why the MOU isn't up to par?

Alison: You bet I can! (She said, joyously) Number one, Tracy has voting power on the committee, but has no legal ramifications if she does anything against this document. Number

two, the lack of requirements of the TCSA to send us anything. They are only responsible according to the document to giving information to Student VIP. The committee may get some information, but not everything, as they will only see information pertaining to the needs of the committee. The document also supports all aspects of the plan including the needs of TCSA's students specifically. We get \$500 but nothing is earmarked for where this money is going, and while we have attempted to make this clear, they've made it sound like the TCSA is responsible for determining where these extra \$500 total goes to.

Miteb: If it goes through the committee, we still may know where it's going.

Alison: That's assuming that they would have that come up, as likely it will not deal with daily operation as much as we hoped.

Phil: What's worrisome is that the emergency bursary plan exists, but they will issue the money.

Alison: All the information on who is responsible for what was struck which is concerning.

They want us to be subject to their bylaws, which we shouldn't be.

Sarah: So one TGSA and TDSA member on the committee except the chair doesn't vote

Alison: Yes, and they also have twice the voting power than us. Also we have to provide 120 days notice before leaving and hold a referendum. It's not difficult, but since they already have superior power they're adding superior power here too

Erin: This is something raised at the general meeting too, so that's concerning

Alison: Also they shouldn't put their header on the MOU

Katherine: So if we sign it are we locked in.

Alison: They don't even specify a length of time

Matt: So when was this supposed to happen?

Alison: It's been months of talks

Matt: So why is this coming up now?

Alison: They first issued a document back in May, but it wasn't good, so that's why it's gone back and forth till now

Alexandra: So what are the advantages of merging?

Alison: Besides being cheaper?

Miteb: We may gain better optical services.

Alison: I'm concerned though about the way we are talked to by them, and if they decide to put us on a second tier, we have no way to lodge complaints.

Erin: So the opt-out notice, is that them or is that grad students?

Alison: That would be us the grad students.

Mac: My issues with this is the lack of long-term dates and no terms.

Miteb: Have we heard from the TDSA?

Alison: No we haven't heard anything from them at all which is all concerning

Phil: Considering TDSA is new it may make sense, as they may not be fully functioning, and so it may make sense for them to join, but not maybe for us.

Alison: So my motion is that we decline to sign based on current wording

Approve: 0

Oppose: 9

Abstain: 2

****motion carries****

Motion: *Tabling of the rest of business except the Orientation events for next meeting to meet quorum.*

Mover: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Alison Fraser

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****

10.2 Indigenous Representative Commissioner (President and VP Internal Affairs)

Whereas the TGSA is committed to equality in its operations, and

Whereas the TGSA already has several commissioners (e.g., equity, environment, OGSA, first year science and arts representative, international student rep, etc),

BIRT a new commissioner position, the Indigenous Representative Commissioner, be sent to the Constitutional Changes Committee for inclusion in the bylaws, pending further ratification at the next general assembly meeting.

Justification

There is currently an absence of an Indigenous Representative Commissioners position. A Ph.D. candidate from Indigenous Studies suggested to the president that it may be useful to have an Indigenous Representative Commissioner on the board given the role of Trent and Peterborough in the Indigenous communities.

Motion: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Alison Fraser

Discussion

- Tabled till September

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

11. Other Business

Motion for TGSA Events for the upcoming year:

To developing a program of monthly social events from September through April and one (1) social event shall occur in July including an BBQ in September for Orientation Week, Festivus in December, and Spring Fling in April, in accordance with the constraints within the budget ratified by the general membership;

Discussion:

Erin: I'm a little concerned about the safety with pumpkin carving.

Alison: I motion that we approve just the September Orientation events

Month	Event	Budget
September	Orientation Week: (\$800-\$600)	
	Day 1: Barbecue Lunch	\$200
	Day 2: Pub Night at the Trend	\$300
	Day 3: Heritage walk and informal pub crawl	\$100
	Day 4: Outdoor Yoga at Traill	\$100
	Day 5: Art and crafts with recyclables	\$100
	Swagg Items:	\$300

Alexandra: So it's all roughly \$1000 also CUPE

Phil: Yes, also CUPE

Anastasia: The cost is fine

Alison: We don't have disorientation in there

Alexandra: It's okay we'll get it in there

Mover: Alexandra Ha

Secunder: Alison Fraser

Approve: 11

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****

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12. Notice of Motions and Announcements

- a. NONE

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting: Alexandra Ha

Seconded: Alison Fraser

Discussion

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Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

****motion carries****