

**Agenda of TGSA Board Meeting, 11/01/2017**

**Start:** 10:00, **End:** 12:00

**Location:** Wallis Hall 102, Traill College, Trent University

**Chair:** Alexandra Ha

**Scribe:** David Hollands

**Attendance:** --

**1. Presentation(s) and Discussion(s) without voting**

- a. -none

Minutes

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**2. Call to Order**

**3. Motion to Approve the Agenda:**

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

**4. Past Meeting Minutes**

**4.1 Motion to Approve the Verbatim Minutes from the December 12th, 2016 Board Meeting:**

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

**4.2 Motion to Approve the Summarized Minutes from the December 12th, 2016 Board Meeting:**

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

**5. Presentation(s) and Discussion(s) with/without Motions**

- a. **VP Communications:** Discussion of Response to the TGSA's letter to the Trent Administration and other relevant parties. (See email sent to the board on December 22nd, 2016.)
- b. **OGSA Commissioner:** Board members, please review the [attached document](#) pertaining to the OGSA, which explains its function and what it does/has done for Trent graduate students. During the board meeting, I would like to have a longer discussion on whether or not we agree with the proposed fee change for the OGSA. Currently, different member schools each pay a different fee to the organization, which is disproportionate and unfair for those members paying more and receiving the same services. The ED of the OGSA has proposed that each member school put to referendum a new fee, so that it is equal across all participating members. The proposed fee is \$2.37 per fall and winter term (\$4.74 per year). Currently, each graduate student at Trent pays a \$2.00 student levy to the OGSA. This fee increase is to be used to buy more human resources/ human capital for the association, so that more time can be spent lobbying for political gains on behalf of graduate students. I was hoping to discuss with the board to see if this new fee seems feasible and appropriate to us, or if there are concerns about raising the fee to this amount. Any changes will have to go to a referendum vote amongst all of our members at the Spring General Meeting, so this preliminary discussion is simply intended to provide feedback from the TGSA that I can bring to the OGSA.

Minutes

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**6. Executive Reports (see [Addendum I](#)):**

- a. President
- b. VP Internal Affairs
- c. VP Finance
- d. VP Communications
- e. VP Student Affairs
- f. Senator

**Motion to accept the reports:**

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

**7. Commissioner Reports, Board of Director Reports, Committee Reports, and Other Reports** (see [Addendum II](#))

- a. Equity Commissioner Report
- b. Environmental Commissioner Report
- c. Health Benefits Commissioner Report
- d. OGSA Commissioner Report
- e. International Student Representative Commissioner

**Motion to accept the reports:**

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

**8. Departmental Issues/Question Period**

- a. -none

Discussion

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**9. Main Motions**

**9.1 Redesigned TGSA Budget to Present at Reschedule Fall GM**

Whereas the 2016-2017 budget was changed to reflect additional funds to be given to the Symons Seminar Series, and

Whereas the new 2016-17 budget needs to be ratified at the rescheduled fall GM,

BIRT that the TGSA board approves this budget to bring to the general membership.

Justification:

The new 2016-17 TGSA budget needs to be approved by the board to bring to the general membership.

**Motion:** David Hollands

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

## **9.2 Sponsor ReFrame Film Festival**

Whereas Krista English, the executive director of the ReFrame Film Festival, has requested a sponsorship donation from the Trent Graduate Students' Association (hereafter TGSA) for the festival, and

Whereas the executive officers of the TGSA motioned successfully in their executive meeting on December 12th, 2016 to bring the ReFrame Film Festival donation request to the TGSA Board of Directors,

BIRT the TGSA donate \$150.00 in sponsorship funds to the 2017 ReFrame Film Festival.

Justification:

The ReFrame Film Festival takes place across several venues in Peterborough, Ontario from January 26th, 2017 to January 29th, 2017. The aims of the festival are "to build strong, sustainable, and engaged community audiences for film and art that explore and document issues of human rights and social justice, from the local to the global; to use film and art to provide educational opportunities and encourage activism and thoughtful debate." The aims of the festival correspond to those of the TGSA, which is why a sponsorship donation is appropriate, as well as encouraged.

**Motion:** David Hollands

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

## **9.3 January Event**

Whereas we are given funding to hold a January event,

BIRT the TGSA will partner with the Trent Film Society to host a movie screening, at Market Hall on January 25th, 2017

Justification:

We are hosting a GM in January and hence would not have sufficient funds for food for the GM and money to go towards the January event, hence I am proposing a free movie screening for our

January event. I contacted the Trent Film Society and they are willing to partner to host this event.

**Motion:** Swarsattie Kishun

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

#### **9.4 February Event**

Whereas we are given funding to hold a February event,

BIRT the TGSA will host Pool night at Riley's on February 17th at 7 pm, and

BIFRT a budget of \$200.00 will be used for paying for pool games and light snacks.

Justification:

Pool night at Riley's was proposed in our initial plan for events for the year and seems like a good idea at this time of the year. Pool night will give graduate students the opportunity to connect while having some social time away from campus.

**Motion:** Swarsattie Kishun

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

#### **9.5 March Event**

Whereas we are given funding to hold a March event,

BIRT the TGSA will host Family Bowling night on March 17th at 7pm at Lakeview Bowl, and

BIFRT a budget of \$150.00 be used for paying for bowling games and light snacks.

Justification:

Bowling at Lakeview Bowl was proposed in our initial plan for events for the year and seems like a good idea at this time of the year. Bowling night will give graduate students and their family the opportunity to connect while having some social time away from campus.

**Motion:** Swarsattie Kishun

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

### **9.6 April Spring Fling Event**

Whereas we are given funding to hold an April event,

BIRT the TGSA will host "A Semi Formal Spring Fling" on April 7th at 7pm at Shots Lounge, and

BIFRT a budget of \$600.00 be used for paying for snacks and a drink per graduate student that attends.

Justification:

We are required according to our bylaws to host a Spring Fling in April. Using Shots is usually free and hence it is proposed the we host this event there. This is the end of the year, therefore a lot of students are expected to attend this is why a budget of \$600 is proposed.

**Motion:** Swarsattie Kishun

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

### **10. Other Business**

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### **11. Notice of Motions and Announcements**

a. --

**12. Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn the meeting:**

**Seconded:**

Discussion

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**Approve:**

**Oppose:**

**Abstain:**

**Addendum I:**  
**Executive Reports**

**President:** --

**VP Internal Affairs:** --

**VP Finance:** Collecting conference bursaries. I also attended an Academic Planning and Budgeting/Provost Planning Group meeting. Things discussed that are relevant to graduate students include a step in approving a new graduate program M.Sc. In Instrumental Analysis. This program (with some cross-over with ENLS) has two proposed streams: a one-year diploma course to get grads "job ready" and a two year degree program. There was a consensus of general agreement in sending this proposal to the next step (still a few steps away from external review and ultimate approval).

**VP Communications:** Scheduled upcoming meeting on January 11th, 2017 with the TGSA executive, the Symons Seminar Series executive, and Dr. Michael Eamon to discuss the terms of the MoU agreed to by the general membership at and after the TGSA's last Spring GM. The MoU still hasn't been signed, but hopefully will be at the conclusion of that meeting.

**VP of Student Affairs:** --

**Senator:** --



**Addendum II:**  
**Commissioner Reports**

**Equity Commissioner:**

- Work in collaboration with the CHREA and other experts in the design of information sessions:
  - AODA, Human Rights Code, Discrimination and Harassment Policy, Accessibility Policy, Sexual Violence Policy (this session was postponed, next date to be confirmed by CHREA in January).
  - People with chronic diseases and invisible disabilities and illnesses (tentatively March 2017)
- Participation in the Presidential Advisory Council on Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility, and in the Accessibility Subcommittee of this Council (PACHREA):
  - Attending first meeting with President Leo Groarke in December 20<sup>th</sup>. Council members discussed issues surrounding the organization of an Equity Event to be held during Winter 2017. Concerns were raised about institution-wide awareness of equity and accessibility and related knowledge.
  - Attending the Accessibility Subcommittee of PACHREA . Committee members discussed issues surrounding interpretation of legal AODA requirements to the “letter of the law” versus the intent of the law. Strategies to address challenges in the structure of this Subcommittee were also discussed during this meeting, as well as the Multi-year Accessibility Plan.

Call to participate in the TGSA Social Justice Committee: Projected to be organized during February 2017.

**Environmental Commissioner: --**

**Health Benefits Commissioner:** On Dec. 13, 2016 I attended the first meeting of the TSHDBP (the joint committee on the Health plan). In that meeting we agreed on establishing a unified effort in external communication with each SA's respected members. This is still at the drawing board but we agreed that once a unified process is established each SA can relay the messages (announcements and other important information) to its members. Also, that we will be getting a copy the TCSA's health survey to be potentially used in our TGSA survey (to have unified metrics) to aid us in our decision making process. The next TSHDBP meeting will be after the mid-year review of the Health and Benefits plan that will be with StudentVIP. The Health Benefits committee meeting is planned to be done by the end of January. Also, all January start student are now live and should not have any issues with their coverage. An announcement was relayed the VP Communication for distribution to them.

**OGSA Commissioner:**

**Ontario Graduate Student Alliance (OGSA)**

**What it is?**

- The OGSA is a coalition of graduate student associations across Ontario, including Waterloo, Guelph, Trent, Laurier, McMaster, Athabasca, and UOIT. It is an organization that strives to work collaboratively, informed by the voices of graduate students residing in Ontario (and in particular, its member schools), to advocate for policy and system change that will support the continued improvement of the graduate student experience in the Province of Ontario. It is a rather new organization (only about 4 years old), and is beginning to make strides in pressuring the Ontario (and federal) government(s) for these improvements. The OGSA is primarily focused on advocacy and political lobbying, and the group prepares policy papers to submit to the government. It has spent its initial years as an organization building strong relationships with MPPs and MPs. The lobbying takes place largely at the provincial level (but has also been done federally). Their ongoing focus is on solution-focused research on issues affecting the graduate student experience in Ontario, including those related to increasing the affordability, quality and accessibility of post-secondary education, and developing robust policy which addresses these challenges.
- The organization is different from the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA), the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), which are predominantly undergraduate associations, and therefore focus primarily on the needs of undergraduate students. The OGSA, on the other hand, is strictly composed of graduate student associations and focuses entirely on promoting the interests of graduate students in Ontario. It recognizes the unique contributions of graduate students and appreciates that graduate student needs are often quite different from those of undergraduates. It is also entirely member-driven, and takes its initiatives from the student associations that compose it.
- The OGSA is interested in supporting GSAs that are under-resourced by working on the larger issues of policy development and political lobbying that most GSA executives do not have time to undertake during their tenure. It also creates opportunities for different GSAs as a whole to come together and discuss what they are doing and allows these groups to share their best practices.
- OGSA Board members meet monthly; and there are two general meetings each year.
- For more information, feel free to visit their website at: <http://www.ontariogsa.com/>.

### **The TGSA's relationship with the OGSA**

- As part of the OGSA, Trent graduate students have the opportunity to shape the initiatives of the Alliance by raising issues that affect us most as graduate students. The TGSA has been a member of the Alliance since the beginning (one of the TGSA Presidents was a secretary on the organization in its first year, and a former TGSA President has also served as President of the OGSA). Since then, each year a Trent graduate student has sat on the board of the OGSA to offer the Trent graduate students' voice to the organization. Unfortunately, in past years, there has been less communication between the TGSA board and the OGSA board. Recognizing that this was a problem, the 2015-2016 TGSA Executive instated the OGSA Commissioner position as a required

position on the TGSA board as mandated by the TGSA Bylaws to allow for better communication between the two organizations. Moreover, in the 2014-2015 TGSA referendum, graduate students voted overwhelmingly to financially support the initiatives of the OGSA by paying a \$2.00 student levy for the service (that is, payment does not come from the TGSA budget but is collected individually from each student by Grad Studies in a separate levy that goes towards the OGSA organization). The OGSA primarily uses this financial support to pay an Executive Director to oversee the organization's operations, as well as to help cover transportation costs for the President and other members who are traveling to Queen's Park to lobby to members of parliament.

### **What I do as OGSA Commissioner**

- As OGSA Commissioner, I am expected to attend both the monthly OGSA board meetings and monthly TGSA board meetings, thereby allowing for an ongoing dialogue between the two institutions. If I am not able to attend, I will send detailed notes in my absence. The OGSA Commissioner is responsible for keeping record of what is going on with the OGSA and is to keep the TGSA informed at each board meeting. These reports will become part of the TGSA minutes, and will allow our general membership access to this information. It is my goal to provide better communication and serve as a link between these two organizations in the coming year and I will be responsible for making sure that there is accountability to our membership.
- My goal is to communicate Trent-specific issues (as well as larger graduate student issues) that we face at this university to the organization, so that they can lobby on our behalf and offer us support.
- This year, I will be sitting on as member-at-large on the OGSA board and will be sitting on one of the OGSA's three committees (Membership, Policy, and Finance... It has not yet been determined which one I will be sitting on).

### **Provincial and Federal Initiatives Made by OGSA**

- The OGSA has created four Advocacy Proposals in the past year, which have been uploaded and are available on their website: <http://www.ontariogsa.com/index.php/advocacy/>. These include the Refundable Technology Tax Credit Proposal, the OGSA Submission to Funding Reform Consultation Proposal, the OGSA Pre-Budget Submission to SCFEA 2016 Proposal, and the OGSA Budget Submission 2016 Minister of Finance Canada Proposal.
- The OGSA has been working to buttress connections with MPPs to expand knowledge of the organization in the political realm.
- The organization has been working on university funding reform consultation with MPPs at Queen's Park. They are part of an invite-only consultation with stakeholders (and are the only student group representatives who have been invited to attend).
- They are working to be part of the funding formula consultations that are currently ongoing. Their goal is to address the incongruence in funding for graduate students in

Ontario, and to raise concerns about graduate student tuition increasing at a faster rate than undergraduate tuition.

- OGSA having a voice in Tri-Agency funding, and have so far successfully lobbied to secure increased Tri-agency funding in the federal budget.
- They have also secured graduate student access to the Ontario Student Grant. Members of the OGSA sat on numerous roundtable discussions to ensure that grant access accounted for the unique needs of graduate students. It will be important to keep an eye out to see how this is actually implemented. (Hopefully the government will not come forward by making this funding more akin to a reverse grant --- i.e. one is given this funding, so their other funding gets taken away). The following is an outline of this initiative:
  - Ontario Budget 2016 – Ontario Student Grant
    - Graduate students across Ontario are pleased after the government announced funding changes for students. The new Ontario Student Grant will provide up-front, non-repayable grants to students including those in graduate programs. Students from families with incomes of \$50,000 or less will have free tuition and the cost of a college or university education will be more affordable for middle-class families.
    - In pre-Budget consultations this year, the Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance (OGSA) pressed hard for a financial aid and student support system that didn't leave graduate students behind. The Ontario Student Grant is a step in the right direction.
    - "The Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance applauds the Government's investment in improving the access and affordability of higher education," said Chris Hyde, Executive Director of the OGSA. "Targeted grants for students from low-income families will help those most in need and that is something all Ontarians should support".
    - However, Hyde also noted that although the Ontario Student Grant is an important first step towards more accessible post-secondary education in Ontario, there are still financial challenges faced by graduate students. The Ontario Student Grant will base their needs assessment on the average tuition in Ontario; \$6,160. The average tuition for Graduate students in Ontario is closer to \$9000, so students in more expensive programs will need to make up a substantial difference.
    - Additionally, we will need to keep an eye on the changes to the tuition fee framework and funding formula review which could dramatically affect the price of tuition over the next few years. The Ontario Student Grant will be beneficial for graduate students, but could be offset by measurable increases in tuition over the next 5 years.
    - Graduate students pay the highest tuition fees in the country and they were ineligible for the Ontario Tuition Grant. Approximately 50% of our members have debt from their education and for over 30% of them the debt exceeds \$30,000. The up-front grant will not reduce the amount of

aid received because of scholarships and will have a significant impact on reducing debt for graduate students during both phases of their education.

- “As a father, graduate student and advocate for students I celebrated and took a deep breath when the announcement was made about the Ontario Student Grant,” said Michael Makahnouk, President of the Ontario Graduate Students’ Alliance. “A needs-based approach is the right thing to do. This is a good investment for the Government because it gives low income families the opportunity to send their children to university or college, providing more opportunities that will benefit Ontario in the long run.”

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- In previous years, the OGSA worked on a Technology tax credit proposal, which asked for tax credit support for graduate students in Ontario. Unfortunately, this proposal has not been successful.

### **Recent Changes**

- The OGSA is undergoing several new changes this year. At the August 2<sup>nd</sup> general meeting of this year, a new board was voted in. The former President and Executive Director have finished their terms, and a new President was voted in, along with the VP, Treasurer, and Secretary. A hiring committee was established to hire a new Executive Director for the organization.
- In October, the OGSA has hired a new Executive Director (Lucas Dotto) to help oversee some of the operations of the OGSA.
- The OGSA has also started working on improving communications (I suggested that the OGSA board have a shared Google Drive that would give access to things like budgets, fees, best practices, so I can share that with the TGSA board); and the OGSA website is being updated with more information to allow for further accountability and better information.

### **Moving forward:**

- The OGSA is interested in focusing more of an effort on the individual member schools who pay dues to the OGSA. I had a Skype meeting with the new E.D. to discuss some of the issues that the OGSA should be focusing on this year. He also offered his support if we need any resources throughout the year. For instance, if something very important was going to be passed through senate (just as an example, the termination of a certain graduate program, or something extreme like that), then we could certainly either message him for advice, or he would be able to come speak on the senate floor and advocate for our graduate students for these important issues.
- As part of our discussion, and in collaboration with our TGSA board, I offered some of the priorities that I think Trent students might be most concerned with and that we hope the OGSA would help us address... I broke these down between graduate student-wide issues, and specific issues for Trent students, which I explain below (Some of these

points the OGSA will be able to help us with immediately; while other points are more likely part of the long-term efforts undertaken by the OGSA):

### **Trent-Specific Issues**

- 1. GSA Sustainability:** We need to find better ways to strengthen our GSA and provide support for executives. We also need more assistance transitioning from one executive to another, especially in terms of education about leadership, policy, etcetera. The OGSA can help us by creating a support network and best practices for GSAs.
- 2. Graduate Student representation at the university:** Finding ways for graduate students to have better representation at Trent, despite being dwarfed by the significantly larger undergraduate student population. Concerns about losing graduate student spaces, or not having specific graduate student services available (such as with mental health, academic skills, etcetera).
- 3. Teaching opportunities for graduate students (especially scholarship holders):** Looking at how universities across Ontario implement rules for graduate students that dictate who can and cannot teach. Looking at why some universities allow scholarship holders (of Trillium and OGS) to teach courses, while Trent has conditions that prevent this from happening. Looking at strategies from other universities to see how graduate teaching has been implemented in the program design.

### **Graduate Student-Wide Issues**

- 1. Tuition:** Graduate student tuition rising each year, while graduate funding is mostly stagnant and yearly union wage increases are failing to keep pace. The gap between tuition and wages received for student-workers is narrowing. The situation especially distressing for International students. I suggested that we work on promoting the idea that tuition and wages should be considered together (as should be the case for student-workers). (When tuition and wages are considered together, as they should be in the case of student-workers at Trent, this means that over a 5-year period the gap between tuition paid by students and wages received has narrowed from \$1946.23 in 2010 to just \$895.84 in 2015, a relative loss of \$1050. With many student-workers living at or just above the poverty line, and with increasing amounts of student debt and increasing inflation and the cost of living in Peterborough and across Canada, the narrowing of the tuition-wage gap is a serious problem that needs to be addressed).
- 2. Post-Residency Fees:** Recognizing that students are paying often excessive amounts in tuition, and for PhD students who are done their course work after the first year or two of their degrees), pay for a library card, and often infrequent meetings with faculty advisors. Reduce the amount that students pay after coursework is finished.
- 3. Differentiation:** Concerns about differentiation and what this could look like. I am not sure what is being planned in regards to differentiation, but this seems to be the trend for a lot of graduate student programs across Ontario. Some of the plans for differentiation that I have heard are being proposed are a bit concerning- i.e. different schools will only offer certain programming based on what the school does well. Also, different kinds of

PhDs could be offered (someone doing a project-based PhD and someone doing a traditional research-based PhD are doing very different things, and need to be recognized differently). There are concerns that this will seriously delegitimize the value of higher education, and make it more akin to a high-school model. I don't know very much about this issue, but I am hoping that we will discuss it in a future OGSA meeting so that I can update Trent graduate students about what is going on here.

4. **Job Prospects for after the Masters or PhD:** Creating better job opportunities/ bridges between graduate programs and entering the workforce.
  5. **Mental health:** Recognizing unique needs of graduate students for mental health and bringing greater awareness to the mental-health issues faced specifically by graduate students. Highlighting the importance of advocating for services that are tailored to graduate-specific challenges.
- At the OGSA General Meeting in the summer, we also discussed following points as some of the OGSA's goals for the upcoming year, as well as in the long-term advocacy initiatives.
    - **Organization's goals**
      - Externally focused efforts:
        - Connect with the Ministry on upcoming funding formula review
          - The OGSA has been invited to a roundtable on the Ontario tuition fee framework. This is a great opportunity for us to get our foot in the door of a potential new tuition framework which is a multi-billion-dollar policy that we can have an impact on. This roundtable will be preceded by 1-on-1 meetings in Toronto that the E.D. will take part in.
        - Work to survey graduate students on their post-secondary experience and attitudes towards differentiation
          - For some background, differentiation refers to five main criteria: 1. Differentiation on the basis of structure, such as size (large or small) or funding (private or public) or legislated mandate (undergraduate students, or both undergraduate and graduate students); 2. Differentiation on the basis of type of program offered, such as research intensive, teaching intensive, technical, or design schools; 3. Differentiation on the basis of how research, teaching or services are provided by the institution; 4. Differentiation on the basis of institutional status, prestige, or rankings; 5. Differentiation on the basis of differences in the composition of student populations served (bilingual or Francophone or Anglophone; First Nations and other indigenous students, denominational colleges, mature students or direct from high school).

- (This information is taken from a report from Harvey P. Weingarten and Fiona Deller of the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), titled “The Benefits of Greater Differentiation of Ontario’s University Sector” accessed at <http://www.heqco.ca/siteCollectionDocuments/DifferentiationENG.pdf> <http://www.heqco.ca/siteCollectionDocuments/DifferentiationENG.pdf>, pg. 7).
- For information about the government’s plans about differentiation, please consult: [http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/PolicyFramework\\_PostSec.pdf](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/PolicyFramework_PostSec.pdf)
  - Put pressure on Federal partners to lift the funding cap on the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP)
  - Looking at mental health services on campus and advocating that they should be tailored to graduate-student specific challenges
- Internally focused efforts:
  - Improve website
  - Expand Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook feed for members
  - Communiques to members during events and announcements
  - More direct member support
- Long term projects:
  - Continue being a member-driven process with local members supporting research and policy development
  - Understanding graduate-supervisor relationships
  - Comparison of funding packages across Ontario
  - Advocacy ask on post-residency fees
  - Develop policy recommendations on accommodation and time-to-complete
  - Membership engagement - get other GSAs to join the organization
- **My goals as the TGSA’s OGSA Commissioner**
  - My own goals are to improve the communications between our organizations. The TGSA has a poor record of what has actually happened with the OGSA, but since the OGSA Commissioner is now a permanent position on the TGSA board, I will be working on creating better records of what is happening and make this information available to our board and general membership.
  - While the OGSA is largely an advocacy group, I am also interested in pushing for services for paying members of the organization. So far, some



services have been offered, but I am hoping to see these services improve (such as training on lobbying, assisting with GSA governance, leadership training, help drafting policy/ referenda). The new E.D. seems very receptive to assisting member schools directly in areas in which they might need further support.

### **Opportunities to get involved**

- The OGSA is working to split efforts into various committees that are tasked with specific objectives for the year. (As an OGSA board member, I will be assigned to sit on one of these committees). The committees are as follows:
  - 1) Policy development
    - GOAL: Drafting policy for members of OGSA to advocate on at Queens Park.
  - 2) Membership Engagement
    - GOAL: Focusing on membership relations (i.e. campaigns illustrating the value of OGSA, attempting to recruit more schools, etc.)
  - 3) Finance Committee
    - GOAL: To consider the financial policy of the OGSA and to strategize to aid in the financial success of the organization.

I have been asked to reach out to members within our respective teams to see if they would be interested in partaking in any of the OGSA committees. Please let me know if any of these positions would interest you. You can reach me at [laurathursby@trentu.ca](mailto:laurathursby@trentu.ca).

**International Student Representative Commissioner: --**