

TGSA Fall General Meeting Minutes

Date: November 17th, 2017, 6pm to 8pm

Location: Bagnani Hall, Traill College

Chair: Alison Fraser (President)

Scribe: Ibraheem Alimi (VP Communications)

Attendance: Katie Rosa, Melinda Auten, Devon Harding, Katie Petric, Peyton Seabout, Gabriel Maracle, Tristan Baeklund, Erika Crowley, Anhiti Patnaik, Jane Affleck, Dorothea Hines, Miteb Abunayyan, Graeme Bishop, Lisa Tejpar, Alejandro Garcilazo, Alison Fraser, Kevin Scotland, Ibraheem Alimi, Nicholas Van Beek, John Bassai, Michelle Arentsen, Alena Kalinina, Hanah McFarlane, Erin Hayward, Melissa Hennig, Holly Deighton, Aminah Hardy, Jaclyn Wong (28 – Quorum met [25 required to meet quorum])

Regrets: Brittany Cook, Jessica Hinton, Lee Campbell, Sarah Jessup

1. Call to Order

Alison: Alison presents TGSA Equality Statement

2. Presentations

2.1. How the Meeting Will Proceed – President [3 minutes]

I will provide a brief presentation on how the meeting will proceed. We also follow Robert's Rule of Order and I will give a brief presentation on how to participate while following this.

Alison: Alison discusses about the agenda and the additions to the other business which is about Miteb's Employment Support and Career Guidance Survey. Alison is the chair for the meeting and she explains the Robert rules of order. Alison also describes Robert rules of order. She describes how motion works. You can either approve a vote, go against or abstain from a motion. You can also ask questions but when you speak, make sure you say your name. Alison also mentions that referendum vote and other surveys get sent via email on November 20th. This is open to all graduate students.

2.2. Update on the TGSA – President [5 minutes]

This year has been a little tough. I just want to let everyone know an update on our state of affairs. Some of this is repeated, in brief, in my report.

This summer we had a number of vacant Executive positions: VP Finance, VP Internal Affairs, and VP Student Affairs.

As such, I did my best to do the essential tasks these positions had to accomplish over the summer. But, the annual audit of the TGSA finances is not done. This will be present at the Spring General Meeting.

I also did a number of updates to the Bylaws and Policies. These are not yet formalized and will not take effect until ratification. These updates include faster transfer of positions so that training is done over a shorter, more intense time frame. Essentially, the out-going executive have to finish all their projects as dictated by the bylaws then the in-coming executive pick up the TGSA. I have also added a conflict of interest policy and an emergency power for executives. I had to evoke emergency decision making, such as giving VP Communications signing authority, to keep the TGSA functional.

Also, due to this summer, we were not able to pick-up our summer dues cheque. This will be rectified as soon as possible.

While it was a tough start in many ways, I am positive that the TGSA will move forward and be successful.

Alison: Vacant position such as VP finance, VP internal Affairs and VP Students affairs were unoccupied during the summer and this made the operations of the TGSA difficult during the summer. Audit will be done in the spring GM not during the Fall GM (Aminah Joins the meeting). VP also Finance had to leave during the summer. Therefore, VP communications was given emergency signing authority to sign cheques. We don't yet have our Fall cheques deposited yet and we will be getting our cheques soon from graduate studies because it might be withheld until contract talks have been fully negotiated. Also, all cheques and conference bursary cheques have been issued and if you did receive it yet or are not sure about the cheques please contact us or VP Finance

3. Adopt the Agenda

Mover: Alison Fraser

Second: Graeme

Motion carries (24/24) – Accounted for proxy voting

4. Adopt the Minutes from the [Previous Spring General Meeting on April 13th, 2017](#)

Mover: Alison Fraser

Second: Kevin Scotland

23/24 (Graeme abstains) – Accounted for proxy voting

5. Executive Reports (reports will be attached as [Addendum I](#) at the end of the agenda) [18 minutes (3 minutes each), a 6-minute Q+A period, followed by motion to accept reports]

a. President

Alison Fraser: Worked on getting extra charges to the Traill College Fee removed. We have unknown bursary in which she is looking into. Inability to access the graduate listserv. Conference bursary cheques may have arrived late due to issues during the summer. New Contracts with the university will be renegotiated and changes to the bylaws. Please join the Long term planning Committee and constitutional change committee if interested in any of this. Make sure AODA is followed. Supervisor and students' relationship agreement is not accessible online and Alison will work to make it more accessible to graduate students.

b. VP Internal Affairs

Alejandro Garcilazo: Consistent with what Ali mentioned, there were a few vacancies until recently for the TGSA Executives and this includes VP internal affairs. New to the team based on the vacancies during the summer. Alejandro describes his roles and duties to everyone. Currently working on making lots of changes to the TGSA bylaws.

c. VP Communications

Ibraheem Alimi: Ibraheem is the guy that sends out and manages TGSA emails. Person you deal with when you deal with the TGSA. Work to create agendas for all meetings. Work with everyone to make sure they are all on the same page. Good to have a history of what is done. When I take the minutes, I record as much of what is actually said and these get put on the website. There is a section called minutes. Doing the TGSA social media. Involved with updating the website. The website has all the information about the TGSA. Things might get missed, if you see something send me an email and I will update the website. Involved in many committees. List in report. Participated in the summer BBQ, orientation, and GM.

d. VP Finance

Alison Fraser: VP Finance, Brittany Cook is not here, which means Ali is presenting on her behalf, We have our Fall levy but not the summer levy. Brittany has processed all the conference bursary and the emergency bursary. More information can be found in the executive report.

e. VP Student Affairs

Miteb Abunayyan: He represents the TGSA and graduate students on so many different committees. Some of them have not have not been scheduled yet. Organized the TGSA MEd BBQ, summer BBQ, and many orientation events. He also brought the pizza for the GM tonight. Also made the TGSA LinkedIn page in which we can use to connect with each other, If you have any questions feel free to email him,

f. VP Senate Representative

Graeme Bishop: If you have any committees in which we haven't met yet you can email Graeme. If you

have not taken the survey for presidential review. Please do so as soon as possible as this is really important. Goes to senate and listens to the Board of Governors.

5.1 Motion to Approve the Executive Reports

Mover: Alison Fraser

Second: Alejandro Garcilazo

Motion carries (24/24) – Accounted for proxy voting

Michelle: when is the deadline to complete the survey?

Graeme: This has been extended till middle December

Motion carries (24/24) – Accounted for proxy voting

6. Commissioner Reports (reports will be attached as [Addendum II](#) at the end of the agenda)

[15 minutes (3 minutes each), a 5-minute Q+A period, followed by motion to accept reports]

a. Equity Commissioner

Alison Fraser: Alison is presenting on behalf of Jessica Hinton, the equity commissioner. Jessica is in the process of organizing a short presentation on the AODA. She is also organizing a KAIROS blanket exercise with other students such as Catrina and Gabriel. She also sits on the special appeals committee, PACHREA Committee and the Religious/Spiritual Affairs CASSC Subcommittee.

b. Environmental Commissioner

Lisa Tejpar: Lisa has been attending the board and executive meetings. She checked the office to make sure we have compost bin in the office. No compost at Traill college but we have it at Symons. Sings to help sort out garbage. She also made the HallowGreen event. Collaborated with Jessica from Random Acts of Green and she has her own company. Unfortunately, not a lot of people showed up for the event but some families showed up. Nice costumes at the event. She is currently working with other students on the wetland construction at Symons and working to create a survey/letter to distribute to students. Sits on several committees including EAB and NASAC.

c. Health Benefits Commissioner

Kevin Scotland: Kevin is the TGSA health benefits commissioner. Issues with listserv initially and some important notifications were not properly communicated with grad students such as the November 29th RWAM deadline and the blackout period. We recently switched from RWAM to BlueCross and there are several packages on the back in which you can pickup. I.M. Well is a 24 hours counselling service in which you can use. He usually sends important notifications through the listserv by Ibraheem. The TCSA own the health the benefits plans in which we currently use. In the spring, the health benefits plan will be renegotiated with TCSA and if people do come to the spring GM then it is

difficult for him to advocate for the needs of graduate students which are usually different from that of undergrads since we are usually older adults. He also has plastic cards in which anyone can take to show proof your health benefits coverage.

d. International Student Representative Commissioner

Aminah Hardy: She sits on the library committee and they will be meeting soon. We have 4 international students in the attendance and if you have any questions regarding international students or have any issues or business pertaining to this please email her.

e. Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance Commissioner

Katie Rosa: Katie is the OGSA commissioner. She went to the several OGSA meeting some of which are online meetings. This allows her to speak with other schools on behalf Trent graduate students so that we have a greater voice since we are a small school. Lobbies for the needs of the TGSA and OGSA. Issues with the OGSA which resulted in president resigning and led to firing the executive directors. This means the OGSA has essentially been disbanded. And if it continues we might need to join another external graduate student association. Also, the position will be renamed into External Affairs.

6.1 Motion to Approve the Commissioner Reports

Mover: Alison Fraser

Second: Alejandro Garcilazo

Motion carries (24/24) – Accounted for proxy voting

Katie: Apart from the Spring GM, are there any other ways to get involved with health benefits renegotiation occurring with the TCSA?

Kevin: There is a meeting occurring on November 24th and if there are any important details from the meeting, it will be sent via Ibraheem to everyone.

7. Motions

- None

8. Referenda

8.1. TGSA 2017/2018 Budget – VP Finance / VP Internal Affairs [10 minutes, followed by a 5-minute Q+A period]

A short presentation on the TGSA Budget for 2017/2018 followed by a referendum vote. The budget can be found [here](#).

Alison Fraser: Alison will be presenting on behalf of VP Finance, Brittany Cook since she is absent.

- 1. Student supports fee budget: This was renamed recently. Some of the values on the budgets are predicted (named '2017-2018 Projected Amounts Collected (from Spring GM)') whereas others*

were actually the amount used from last year (named '2016-2017 Amounts Deposited'). There is also amount collected from 2016-2017 as well as amount collected from 2017-2018. The amount collected for 2017-2018 is yet to be deposited. As shown in the budget, we have some inappropriate bookkeeping and projected accounting from last year which is why we are keeping track of the actual amount deposited from last year. This will help ensure that the budget is more consistent and accurate. Alison also goes through each of the income and expenses types under the student support fees. The "2017-2018 Amounts Collected" is essentially what we are budgeting for this year and this can be compared to the projected and actual amounts from last year. Some of the actual and projected amount last year do not correspond to each other which is why better bookkeeping is required this year. Alison and Brittany had to go through the bank accounts to figure out the actual amounts from last year so that it can be compared to the amounts presented during the spring GM by the last VP Finance. We give the Symons Seminar Series \$1000 not \$5000 like we used to in the past and the amount will remain consistent. The Symons Seminar Series is also now under the umbrella of Traill College. \$500 for the 3MT. We might want to put more money into the Emergency Bursary. Increase in the annual audit fee which will be done before the Spring GM. Health and dental plan has still has 194 dollars used up from last year which is why it is in the budget but it will not be in future TGSA budgets since this is now under the umbrella of the TCSA. We have \$233.13 left as balance after account for all expenses. This is a good balance and buffer for the TGSA.

Katie: Is it a good buffer? Don't we need more balance?

Alison: 200 dollars is a good buffer. We don't want too much money to go unused.

- 2. Student levy fee: Income: A bit higher than the projected during the spring GM and we get about a 900 dollars donation from students VIP and this year we get 100 dollars and the amount will be added to the emergency bursary. CUPE donation not yet deposited but will be collected this year, it wasn't collected last year. Levy fee is doing good overall.*

Expense: we needed to cut some of the orientation expense due to delay in receiving cheques but we got some assistance from CUPE which increased it to 677.33. Spring fling and festibus we need more people to come and advertise this more. We cut budgeted money for the GM due to the same reasons as the orientation. We now have money in place for the elections and campaigns. More money was brought in thesis binding since it is important. Printing is a new category and we need to get our printing account. Increased in the executive honorarium to 10,800 and we will make it a monthly payment of 150 dollars per month instead of 1000 dollars at the end of term. This will hopefully help attract more people to the positions and also deal with vacant and temporary filled executive positions. If people join and leave they still some honorarium for their work. Commissioner honorarium stay the same

We still need to get access into our printing account. We need to spend the money in the health overflow amount and we might consider putting it into bursaries for instance. Voting on the

budget goes into a referendum survey.

Katie: is there anything we can do not to spend \$500 dollars on a single event such as the Spring Fling and Festivus in which only few students attend?

Alison: We tried to advertise it last year but many people didn't come to the event.

Kevin; About the health overflow. We could transfer this to the TCSA to cover the extra cost of health insurance or coverages which aren't covered by OHIP. It's either we do that or leave it there for now.

Devon: how do we advertise the Spring Fling and Festivus we need to advertise it better.

Miteb: I will ensure that it is advertised better on social media so that more people attend.

Graeme: Looking at the budget from last year and how projected and actual amounts do not match up, this is mostly an issue with the last executives. Thank you, Alison and Brittany, for going through this to help fix this.

Alejandro; same comment as Miteb

Kevin: program reps are required to bring all of this to the attention of students in their programs. Some rep positions are still vacant and need to be filled.

Do you accept the new TGSA Budget for 2017/2018? (*sent to all grad students to be voted as referendum*)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Abstain

9. Elections [10 minutes]

- Devon or Peyton want to be first year art reps and they will send biography and we can send it as a survey online to be voted upon.

10. Other Business [10 minutes]

Michelle: is there a way we can start a group in which we can remove ourselves from the mailing lists and so that we don't get emails that do not pertain to us? Michelle says she will bring to the board meeting so that we can properly address this.

Alison: The employment and careers survey will be sent out to all grad students via the listserv. This is because Miteb, Alison and some other grad students got an email about employment and careers opportunities from the university that they were third year undergraduate students.

Miteb: Miteb talks more about the survey a bit. One the reasons why he wants to bring this is up is because graduate students do not get enough attention and help from the university to get jobs after graduating. Not many people know Trent and if you were to go out there as a new graduate student, you may have issues finding jobs. Therefore, this survey allows to have an idea of how other graduate students feel about this issue.

11. Question Period and Departmental Issues [10 minutes]

Hannah: If you think you are hired as an AA and are doing the job of a GTA you can get with touch with CUPE and we can work on fixing this issue. Contact her at VP2@3908.org for academic assistance

Graeme; Graeme asks about how everyone feels about student recording lectures? This is an issue since this is not allowed by the University but they continue to do this anyway. If students continue recording lectures without the permission of the TA or professor then this is an issue that needs to be taken more seriously and addressed more formally by the Senate.

Devon: Asks Graeme to provide more clarification regarding the issue in which Graeme provides more explanation.

Kevin; Recording of lectures should fall under the AODA guideline and only if AODA is needed should it be allowed

Michelle: Some students do it because it helps out with studying. She did it during her undergrad and found it somewhat usefully but sometimes it wasn't used.

Nicky; This could also be because of the teaching style of some professors as some do not provide lecture styles or study resources to students which is why they are encouraged to record lectures. It could be needed for accessibility purposes

Katie: are we advocating against this or just getting a general feel of what everyone thinks about this?

Graeme: he will bring it to the attention of the senate and if you have any further suggestions send an email to Graeme at VPsenatetgsa@trentu.ca

Kevin: if profs are not providing slides then then it goes against the AODA because profs are required to provide slides to students.

Ali; any more questions or issues with this please send an email to TGSA (gsa@trentu.ca) or CUPE.

12. Notices of Motions and Announcements

- The TGSA is officially looking for a new logo. Our current logo is a little out dated, and, more importantly, all the versions of this image that we have are far to low in resolution to look good on any document.

So we are asking all graduate students to submit their artwork for a new logo! This is open to all graduate students. The image must be a high resolution, and have any colour scheme. Anything goes! Be creative! But please no homophobic, racist, sexist, or hateful imagery.

Please email all images as PNG files to gsa@trentu.ca. The call for designs will close February 16, 2017.

- *Alison: We need this to be done by February 16th, 2018 not 2017*

The artist of the selected design will be awarded a honorarium [2 minutes]

- There are still several positions on the Board of Directors that need to be filled. This includes Program Representatives and First Year Arts and Science Representative. A full list of the Board of Directors can be found [here](#). [2 minutes]

- There are still several Committee Representations that need to be filled. A full list of Committee Representations can be found [here](#). [2 minutes]

- The Spring GM will be scheduled in between April 2nd and April 24th [1 minutes]

- Important announcements about events that involve graduate students are usually posted via the [Blackboard email listserve](#), Facebook [group](#) and [pages](#), [website](#) and also [Twitter](#) page. For more information about each of this, please click the corresponding links and keep an eye on each of this for important announcements. [2 minutes]

- *Alison: Festivus in December and Spring Fling in April and please check us out on social media for notification*

13. Adjournment

Mover: Alison Fraser

Second: Ibraheem Alimi

Motion carries (24/24) – Accounted for proxy voting

Addendum I: Executive Reports

a. President

This has been a very hard year for the TGSA. We got off to a bit of a rough start with many of

our executive positions being vacant and a transfer of positions that could have been smoother.

As such, there have been a number of errors. We have not received our summer dues cheque from Trent. Our budget is very conservative to reflect the nature of our income. I also have not signed the Distribution of Fees agreement with the School of Graduate studies. It is out of date, contain incorrect terminology, and included charging us extra cents on our Trail College Fee. It would be irresponsible of me to sign that document on behalf of all graduate students. I am working on re-negotiating it now. Unfortunately, our dues are being withheld by Graduate Studies until a document is signed.

I have been working to get extra cents charged to our Trail College Fee removed. This happened last year, so I am hopeful it will be fixed soon.

The annual audit will be late as well.

I have also noticed some discrepancies in our dues that we receive from graduate studies. These are being looked into.

I have also noticed there is a previously unknown bursary in our name being administered by Trent. I am looking into this.

Also access to the graduate email listserve has been permanently revoked. This has been officially communicated to me. As such I must re-negotiate our contract with the university because it mentions access to the listserve.

With all this in mind, if you applied for a conference bursary for the May or September deadline and have not heard anything from us. Please email me. There have been some problems this year in managing the conference bursaries.

While all that has been somewhat disheartening, I have some good goals for this year:

That all contracts with the university will be re-negotiated and place us on a strong and consistent footing for future years.

The bylaws will be redone to make the work load of the TGSA sustainable. As of right now this organization is not sustainable in the long run. Especially, if we have another year like this one where we got off to a very rough start. If you are interested in participating in these discussions, please join the Long-Term Planning Committee and Constitutional Changes Committee.

To make sure Trent is in compliance with the AODA in providing accommodations for graduate student with disabilities.

To follow up and make sure the way Trent administers Tri-Agency funding (SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR) applications.

To initiate a peer support group that can address graduate student mental health, address

issues of graduate student isolation, and built a network of grad student specific resources so that we can have a grad student focused support group to augment existing wellness services. This program will address that graduate students have very different needs than undergraduate students. It will be based on the University of Toronto's Gradminds.

Finally, the supervisor/student document needs to be significantly updated and made more available to both students and superiors so each knows what to expect from each other.

Since this is a lot of information and a lot of things in progress, email me anytime for updates: presidenttgasa@trentu.ca

b. VP Internal Affairs

Not Available. Position was recently filled as of September 27th, 2017

c. VP Communications

Main Duties include:

- 1- Schedule meetings and preparation of TGSA meeting agendas and act as scribe
- 2- Oversee the maintenance of the TGSA office
- 3- Oversee the maintenance of TGSA social media, website and Blackboard mailing list

Committees

- Health Benefits Committee
- Food Service Advisory Committee
- Technology for Teaching and Learning Subcommittee
- Trill College Council

Up-to date report:

- 1- Attended Food Service Advisory Committee and Trill College Council Meetings
- 2- Attended all TGSA Board and Executive meetings
- 3- Participated the TGSA Summer BBQ
- 4- Participated and helped organize Orientation week events
- 5- Participated and helped organize Fall General Meeting

d. VP Finance

As of November 17th, since taking on the position as VP of Finance, I have helped out and attended Orientation events (ie. pub night, BBQ, and tabling). I have attended Executive and Board meetings. I have processed all September 15th deadline Conference Bursaries. The amount of money spent for Conference Bursaries has been approved by the Board of Directors at \$4,018.48. I have written emails to contact the students to inform them of their application status for the Conference Bursaries and I have written cheques to be cashed out by the students who have been approved. I have dealt with Emergency Bursaries when needed. I have created the proposed budget for the academic year and I have chaired the Finance Committee that has approved this budget. At this point the audit is still being worked on and has not been completed as of yet, but the President and I are working on getting the information we need. We are very closed to submitting the needed documents to the auditors. I have also sat on Trent's Academic Planning and Budgeting Committee.

e. VP Student Affairs

Main Duties include but not limited to:

- 1- Act as a contact for student queries, issues related to non-academic issues.
- 2- Represent TGSA in various committees within the university.
- 3- Develop social events for Graduate students.

Committees

- Finance Committee
- Housing Committee
- Graduate Housing Committee
- Student Wellness Committee
- Convocation Committee
- Orientation Committee
- Entrepreneurship Centre User Group
- Long Term Planning Committee

Up-to date report:

- 1- Attended TGSA Board and Executive meetings
- 2- Attended all scheduled committee meetings
- 3- Organized the TGSA Summer BBQ
- 4- Participated in the organization of the Orientation week at Trail College.

- 5- Participated in the MEd Orientation presentation.
- 6- Participated in the organization of the Fall GM (Today).
- 7- TGSA LinkedIn Page

f. VP Senate Representative

I communicate with the University Administration and the Trent Graduate Student Association in an ongoing effort to elect Graduate students to sit as representatives on a wide variety of Committees at Trent. I have attended the regular meetings of the Trent University Senate, the Senate Executive Committee, and the Graduate Studies Committee. I am the Senate elected Graduate student member of the Advisory Committee for the Review of the Presidency. Several times, I was a panel member of the Special Appeals Committee. I have involved with the regular business of the TGSA Executive- and Board-Meetings, and will continue to actively listen to and represent the interests of Graduate students at Trent in discourse with the Senate and other advisory bodies I attend.

Addendum II: Commissioner Reports

a. Equity Commissioner

As Equity Commissioner, I have regularly attended both executive and board meetings for the TGSA since May (as many as possible since becoming a new mom in August!). I am in the process of organizing a short presentation on the AODA; the Human Rights Code; and the University's Discrimination and Harassment Policy, the Accessibility Policy, and the Sexual Violence Policy for the TGSA.

I am also planning an event called the KAIROS Blanket Exercise with the program representatives for PhD Indigenous Studies (Gabriel Maracle) and MA Canadian Studies/Indigenous Studies (Catrina Marchant), as well as First Peoples House of Learning (FPHL). This is part of my responsibility to promote/host equity focused events on campus. We are currently identifying which date, time, and location works best for members of the GSA before advertising the event to all other graduate students.

I received a one-on-one training session for the Special Appeals Senate Committee from Andrea Walsh on Thursday, 26 October 2017 at 9:00am. I am currently waiting to hear back about any mandatory/suggested training for the Presidential Advisory Council on Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility (PACHREA) and the Religious/Spiritual Affairs CASSC Task Subcommittee.

b. Environmental Commissioner

Since I began the role of Environmental Commissioner this July, I have been organizing green initiatives and communicating with environmental organizations and committees

both on and off campus. In October, I collaborated with Random Acts of Green in organizing a sustainable Halloween event (the HallowGreen Costume and Clothing Swap) for Trent students and members of the Ptbo community. A few people did turn up to grab a gently-used Halloween costume or two, and we received several large bags of used clothing and costumes, which we were able to donate to Talize.

To help ensure the TGSA remains environmentally conscious, I've also created signs for us to use at events to help people sort their waste appropriately into the various waste bins provided (i.e., landfill, compost, recycling). I've also purchased a bin for the TGSA to collect compost during events. Unfortunately, Trail College does not yet collect compost, but I'm hoping to arrange for its collection (and hopefully, it's sorting and delivery to Trent's compost pile).

I am currently working with two Trent students, as well as the rest of the TGSA executive committee, to put together a brief survey to inform Trent students of the construction on the East bank of campus and gauge their support for its development. I will also be presenting the University's Environment and Sustainability Policy for the board at the next meeting.

The committees I plan on being involved in are: the Fair Trade Campus Steering Committee, the Trent Sustainable Agriculture Experimental Farm Committee, the Nature Areas Stewardship Advisory Committee (NASAC), the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB), the Sustainable Trent Committee and the Distinguished Research Awards Subcommittee. In addition, I plan to begin my duties as chair of the TGSA Sustainability Committee in the coming weeks. So far I have only been in contact with the EAB and the NASAC committees, but I look forward to hearing from and working with the others soon.

c. Health Benefits Commissioner

1. There was a change over from RWAM to Blue cross as insurance provider on September 1st 2017. This did not change the content of the health plan but “did” / should improve the efficiency of claiming medical expense. The change over from RWAM to Blue Cross should also mean that more practitioners should automatically bill. There is a list of preferred practitioners on the student vip website (www.studentvip.ca/trent). These providers automatically bill to Blue Cross.
2. I.M. Well. The I. M. Well initiative is a program put in place by student vip to help all students with numerous issues. It can help with counselling for stress and depression, legal issues, life coaching, relationships, addiction and more. You can call them (1-877-234-5327) or chat online someone in person. Please visit www.studentvip.ca/trent for more details.
3. Enrolment/ OPT-IN/OPT-OUT/ADDING FAMILY Did not go smoothly! This was due to the inability to communicate with our student body.
4. THE MAJOR ISSUE: The blackout period: It should be noted that there is an early enrolment date. If you register for your courses before the middle of August, you will get on the early

enrolment insurance list in September. Meaning that on September 1st the insurance company will have your name and your coverage will continue without interruption. If you do not register for your classes before that time you will not be on that early enrolment list. Which means that you will be on the list with the new graduate students. These individuals do not get coverage until the middle of October when the insurance company gets their names. They will have no coverage during that time because the insurance company “does not know they have registered yet” thus the blackout period.

5. Health benefits survey: The health benefits plan that we now subscribe to is owned by the TCSA. They control this plan but we have a say about what happens to it. However, we need your input on the plans so that we can show the TCSA that we have grad student support for changes to the plan. To that end a survey will be coming around next semester, when it does come around please fill it out. The TCSA will be in negotiations with student vip this spring. We need to be heard and we need your support to do it.

d. International Student Representative Commissioner

Main Duties include but not limited to:

- 1- Act as a contact for international student queries, issues related to non-academic issues.
- 2- Represent TGSA in various committees within the university.

Committees:

- Library Committee

Up-to date report:

- 1- Attended TGSA Board meetings
- 2- Attended all scheduled committee meetings
- 3- Participated in the TGSA Summer BBQ

e. Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance Commissioner

I am the representative of Trent University's graduate students on the board of the Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance (OGSA). The OGSA's mandate is to represent the interests of graduate students across Ontario and is of particular value to smaller schools like Trent which tend to have smaller graduate students associations with less resources to lobby governments on their own behalf.

I did not take an Executive role in the OGSA, and as such my primary responsibility has been to attend the monthly board meetings and both report happenings at Trent to the board and bring back the happenings of the OGSA to Trent. So far, I have attended the AGM in Waterloo in the summer and attended three online monthly meetings.

I also attended an eCampus Ontario event in Toronto with the rest of the OGSA board. This was an event planned by eCampus (a non-profit affiliated with, but not under the purview of, the Ontario government) to which all major post-graduate student associations were invited. I learned about the efforts of this organization to make educational materials more open and accessible to students, and brought the graduate student perspective to the room that was dominated by undergraduate representatives.

The OGSA board has experienced some challenges in leadership this fall, but I am trying to monitor the situation closely and I will ensure that, as long as Trent grad students are paying into the organization through levy funds, that we are being adequately represented.