



TGSA Board Meeting Agenda

Date: September 2nd, 2021 (Thursday)

Start time: 3:00 pm **End time:**

Location: Zoom video conference

Chair: Sebastian Johnston-Lindsay

Scribe: Stephanie Gao

Attendance:

Regrets: Tanya Aminataei (Equity Commissioner)

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

Introduction and updates from board members

2. Call to Order

We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the treaty and traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg. We offer our gratitude to the First Peoples for their care for, and teachings about, our earth and our relations. May we honour those teachings.

3. Adopt the Agenda:

Mover:

Second:

Discussion

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

4. Past Meeting Minutes

Adopt the Minutes from Summarized Minutes from August 8th, 2021 Board Meeting

Mover:

Second:

Discussion

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

5. Presentation(s) and Discussion (s) with/without motions

a.) President - Sebastian

a. Motion:

Candidate for Vice President Internal Affairs
Meghan Ward - meghanward@trentu.ca

Under By-Law 15.02 d. "Should an Executive Officer's position, excluding the President, become vacant mid-tenure, the position shall be filled by a Full Member elected by the Board at a Board Meeting or Special Board Meeting;" I move that in the absence of any other nominees for the position of Vice President Internal Affairs, the Board appoint Meghan Ward as TGSA Vice President Internal Affairs.

Discussion:

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

Motion Passed?

b. Motion:

Candidate Interdisciplinary Social Research PhD Representative - Emelia-naana Baah
emelianaanabaah@trentu.ca

Under By-Law 16.01 a. "If a [Program] representative is not elected by their constituents in a timely manner, then one may be appointed by majority vote of the Board" I move that in the absence of any other nominees from the History graduate program at Trent, the Board appoint Emelia-naana Baah as Program Representative for their respective program.

Discussion:

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

Motion Passed?

c. Communications document update

- d. FCSA All-Candidates Roundtable communications and TGSA's role

- b.) VP Finance – Mariana
 - a. Donation from CUPE update
 - b. Updates on bursary regarding mental health
- c.) VP Communications – Stephanie
 - a. Update on student listserv

- d.) Environmental Commissioner – Emma
 - a. Update the Board on the situation with the Trent Land and Nature Area Plan and UC3 Plan
- e.) Canadian Studies Ph.D Program Representative – Nicole Covey
 - a. FCSA Election

6. Updates from CUPE

7. Executive Reports (see Addendum I)

- a) President
- b) VP Internal Affairs
- c) VP Communications
- d) VP Finance
- e) VP Student Affairs
- f) VP Senate Representative

Minutes: Additions to Executive reports

Motion to Approve the Executive Reports

Mover:

Second:

Discussion

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

8. Commissioner Reports (see Addendum II)

- a. Equity Commissioner
- b. Environmental Commissioner
- c. International Student Representative Commissioner

Minutes: Additions to Commissioner reports

Motion to Approve the Commissioner Reports

Mover:

Second:

Discussion

Approve:

Oppose:

Abstain:

9. Question Period and Departmental Issues

10. Business Arising from the Minutes

11. Motions

12. Other Business

13. Notices of Motions and Announcements

- a. The next board meeting will be held on July 5th at 3:00 pm
- b. The reports and motions for that meeting are due June 28th
- c. The next Executive meeting will be held on June 28th at 3:00 pm

14. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Mover:

Second:

Addendum I
Executive Reports

Sebastian (President):

Over the course of August, I attended many events on behalf of the TGSA. These included two orientation events for incoming graduate students and three TGSA organized events. The orientation events were meant as general information sessions for new graduate students and were organized by the School of Graduate Studies. I talked about the TGSA's role in supporting students, advocating on their behalf to the administration and our commitments to providing educational and informational events throughout the year. An example of the latter was the joint TGSA-CUPE information session "What to Expect as a GTA" and was relatively well attended with some good questions being asked.

We finally have received and signed the Communications Document from Graduate Studies and am awaiting a copy of that document which has been signed by Graduate Studies. I have also asked that following the signing of our fund distribution document that Graduate Studies will be able to release the levy fees for the Summer term.

In happy news, we have finally received confirmation of our closed account with Tangerine Bank. I scanned and forwarded a copy of this to Connor.

I've also been helping to support the FCSA's initiative to plan an All-Candidates roundtable event in preparation for the upcoming Federal general election. I'm hoping that by lending the TGSA's resources to help get the word out about this event that we'll be able to demonstrate our commitment to helping foster a more lively intellectual atmosphere on campus concerning relevant issues and events in our community.

Related to this, I have started to draft communications to be distributed on our social media regarding how and when to vote. This is especially pressing given the timing of the election and the fact that many of our members are new to Ontario or Peterborough, never mind grad school, and might not have the time or energy to seek out this information. This of course is compounded by the fact that on-campus voting has been discontinued by Elections Canada for this election so resources might not be as clearly available as they might have been in other years.

Finally, I've been working with our VP Finance, Mariana Castelli-Rosa, to re-work our bursary documents in a number of ways which we hope will increase their uptake and therefore our ability to provide financial support to our members.

Motions for Agenda:

Candidate for Vice President Internal Affairs

Meghan Ward - meghanward@trentu.ca

Under By-Law 15.02 d. "Should an Executive Officer's position, excluding the President, become vacant mid-tenure, the position shall be filled by a Full Member elected by the Board at a Board Meeting or Special Board Meeting;" I move that in the absence of any other nominees for the position of Vice President Internal Affairs, the Board appoint Meghan Ward as TGSA Vice President Internal Affairs.

Candidate Interdisciplinary Social Research PhD Representative - Emelia-naana Baah
emelianaanabaah@trentu.ca

Motion: Under By-Law 16.01 a. "If a [Program] representative is not elected by their constituents in a timely manner, then one may be appointed by majority vote of the Board" I move that in the absence of any other nominees from the History graduate program at Trent, the Board appoint Emelia-naana Baah as Program Representative for their respective program.

Devon (VP Senate): -

Stephanie (VP Communication): -

This past month I've created some posters for Tanya's LGBTQ statement, and some other statements regarding the 2021 federal election. I sent a survey to the students regarding if they would like to have a listserve. There were 74 responses but our SurveyMonkey account is capped at 40 responses, in which 36 said yes to the listserve. I have reached out to IT about creating a listserve. There are two ways we can do this. We can either collect emails from students ourselves and do this manually, or have a listserve created for us from IT. This is IT's response:

I can pass this up the chain to see if it can be created. Are you looking for the list serve to be manually set that you folks notify us everytime any changes are required or are you looking for a list that's automated?

Mariana (VP Finance):-

There's not much going on. Sebastian and I reached out to CUPE re: the donation they offered last year, but we still haven't heard anything.

Sebastian suggested that we add a disclaimer to our bursaries in case people ask for more money than we have. We have been working on a text.

I plan to change the way students apply for bursaries to make it more use-friendly (having a broken leg gives you way too much time) so I created a Google Forms document which was shared among the other execs. The question is: how does everybody feel about changing this? We could change one bursary type first just to test it.

I wrote a text (see text below) about mental health and shared it with other execs. My idea is to (try to) make mental health less of a taboo in academia. I hope we can post/send this text along with the announcement that we are changing the bursaries text to address mental health. Does anybody have more ideas about how we can support students who want to seek help? Please share. Then there's the idea of reimbursing students who had to buy books because RACER was not working during (most of?) the pandemic. How do you feel about this? How much money could we allocate to this?

Mental Health is Health

Grad school often is like-or, at least, feels like-the Olympics. As grad students, we are supposed to be at the top of our game constantly. No time to rest or to deal with personal matters and feelings. And this all can be so debilitating and soul crushing. This summer Olympics, the world stopped when Simone Biles decided to step back and not compete in the team all-around final claiming she had the twisties, a physical condition possibly caused by the incredible amount of pressure she was under. Inspired by Biles and Naomi Osaka, two athletes who have recently brought the talk about mental health to the realm of sports and, as a result, pushed for more conversation in this field, we,

the TGSA, want to encourage students, faculty and people working at Trent to prioritize their mental health. The pandemic has been hard on all of us and coming back to Trent can be challenging. We encourage anyone willing to seek mental health services to do so and to take breaks and rest whenever it is possible and needed. To tackle this issue, as a student organization, the TGSA has updated our emergency bursaries to include language that addresses mental health. It's about time we normalized talking about mental health in the culture of massive productivity and endless accomplishments of academia. We can change this culture by making sure we are doing alright, seeking help, taking breaks, doing hobby activities (exercise, video games, knitting...) and supporting our colleagues and classmates to do the same. We can do this!
#MentalHealthIsHealth

Gabriella (VP Student Affairs):-

This month our primary goal was the running of Orientation programming. The TGSA Meet & Greet took place on August 13th at 6pm. This event had a successful turnout. To start, Sebastian gave a brief summary of what the TGSA is in place for. Then the TGSA exec that attended (Sebastian, Mariana and myself) introduced ourselves and gave a brief description on what our individual positions entail. We got the incoming students who attended to introduce themselves while playing 'Two Truths and a Lie' as an ice-breaker. After that we played another ice-breaker called 'This or That' in which students turned off their camera based on a certain preference they had (ex. camera off if you like dogs more than cats). Overall, this event ran smoothly and participants seemed keen to participate and communicate with one another.

The second Orientation event was a CodeNames Game Night that took place on August 18th at 7pm. This event was posted to our social media page so we had a mixture of incoming and current graduate students in attendance at this event. The turnout for this event was successful, but there were far more current than incoming students. There were some technical difficulties with this event, in which some participants had a hard time accessing the correct Zoom link, whereas other participants did not have this problem. A student let us know that an incorrect time for the event had been posted online, moving forward we will be more meticulous about making sure that all of our information is correct before publishing.

The final event was CUPE 3908 and TGSA's "What To Expect As a Teaching Assistant" which took place on August 20th at 6pm. CUPE did the heavy lifting for this event and it was a complete success. It covered the bases for what graduate students need to know as GTAs, especially in this unprecedented time. The information given at this event was invaluable.

I plan on communicating with Stephanie about posting another poll to see what types of events students want to attend in the fall.

Addendum II **Commissioner Reports**

Emma (Environmental Commissioner): -

Daniel Palberg was available for a brief Zoom meeting this month so I could share the idea of Trent joining the University Climate Change Coalition (UC3). He directed me to the Sustainability Office at Trent, and a woman named Shelley Strain is listed as the contact. Mr. Palberg expressed that it is essential that the proper channels are followed so the Board of Governors has all the information to take into consideration. A liaison, executive sponsor, and communications director is required for UC3 eligibility. These representatives will more than likely go through the Sustainability Office. Additionally, I contacted Sustainable Queen's about how they went about joining the UC3 and we are set to have a Zoom meeting come September. I was also directed towards their Climate Action Plan document for ideas and inspiration for Trent to consider. Comparison needs to be made between Trent's current green initiatives and what Queen's needed to implement to become a part of the UC3. September looks like an exciting month to move this project forward.

Beatriz (International Student Representative Commissioner): -

During the month of May my focus was on getting acquainted with the responsibilities and expectations for my new role as the International Student Commissioner of the TGSA for the 2021/2022 term. This has been particularly hard due to the lack of documents and reports from the previous commissioners.

However, I have compiled some ideas for my future work as I take on this new role.

- Contact TI and TISA for future collaboration.
 - Get the list of international graduate students. Maybe contact Graduate studies directly.
 - Identify if there are new incoming international graduate students in September 2021; if so, organize an event/brochure with places and activities in Peterborough
- Could include things such as: where to buy groceries, list of good banks to open an account as an international student; best mobile companies; where to apply for the SIN number, order of things to do (steps of moving to Canada), etc
- A general one with the best bars, restaurants and such could also be interesting for all students that are new to Peterborough, not only international ones – so we could do this even if there aren't new international graduate students coming in September
- Maybe a Durham version too? (I am not aware how big is the international community in Durham campus).
 - Identify the nationalities represented in Trent's graduate community: create an event for each different one, showcasing their culture, type of food, funny facts etc.

Tanya (Equity Commissioner): -