



## TGSA Board Meeting Summarized Minutes

**Date:** October 7th, 2020 (Wednesday)

**Start time:** 0500PM      **End time:** 0725PM

**Location:** Zoom video conference

**Chair:** Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

**Scribe:** Shyong Quan (Elicia) Yap

**Attendance:** Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan, Nicole Covey, Sebastian Johnston-Lindsay, Alison Fraser, Elicia Yap, Jordon Williams, Connor Elverson, Janina Schmitz, Verena Sesin, Tanya Aminataei, Fatma Ozen (11, quorum met)

**Regrets:** Maryam Helae, Madhu Garg, Beatriz Bento

### 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: Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

Second: Verena Sesin

Discussion

-no discussion

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

**\*motion carries\***

### 4. Past Meeting Minutes

Adopt the Minutes from the Verbatim and Summarized Minutes from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 Board Meeting

Mover: Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

Second: Jordon Williams

Discussion

-no discussion

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

**\*motion carries\***

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

a) Sandra (President)

(i) Updates from meeting with Michael Eamon and Craig Brunetti

Sandra and Michael Eamon talked about the party under the bridge and all the college principals have been called by the administration to give a response from the community to incentivize safe practices. Sandra will be meeting Michael bi-weekly to maintain the relationship with Traill College and TGSA.

Sandra received an email from a student who expressed frustration about the fact that they still had to pay tuition. Sandra addressed the email by explaining the initiatives the TGSA has made in the summer, i.e lobbying to the Trent admin or the grad studies office for the tuition reduction and trying to take it to the Board of Governors. Sandra also asked them to email the Dean to ask if they can have their tuition fees waived. This is quite a process which involves articulation of the timeline with dates of how much longer it took you, if the delay, for example, was within the regular timeframe that's in the grad studies handbook. Craig also encourages students to obtain a support letter from their supervisor. Craig will mention the students-supervisor agreement that TGSA proposed awhile back to the Board of Directors and would like to create a subcommittee for it. Sandra relayed their frustration to Craig, especially about access to graduate offices. He mentioned that this is all part of precautionary purposes.

IRCC announced that international students could now travel in Canada, but they still don't deliver permits. The universities are pushing for this matter, which will be beneficial for international students, especially in the AMOD and management program.

Sandra also mentioned about Clean Tech commons, which is an employment that does research and business. It would create experiential learning opportunities for the sustainability studies students, the supervision of some of the analysis students and material science students, and employment opportunities.

b) Sebastian (VP internal affairs)

(i) Nominations for Program Representatives

(ii) Future Work and Goals Concerning Representatives

(iii) Board Member Roles and Duties

Sebastian brought up the Durham representative position, since this position was not in our policies. The board discussed about defining the role of the Durham representative in our policies and clarified the distinct process of approving executive members, Arts and Science representatives as well as program representatives into the board. The board discussed about having nomination period to streamline this process and setting up a subcommittee to review our bylaws and policies.

Sebastian also brought up an email regarding a concern from a student from Cultural Studies about the material that they were being taught in their core course, in which most of the readings are from the white male perspective view. This student has met with the professor and it seems to be moving in a positive direction. Jordon suggested them to contact James Penny who is the current chair

Frost Centre PhD Representative - Nicole Covey

[nicolecovey@trentu.ca](mailto:nicolecovey@trentu.ca)

Motion: The Frost Centre Student Association (FCSA) has acclaimed Nicole Covey as their PhD Representative to the TGSA. Under By-Law 16.01 a., “The right to elect a representative shall not be arbitrarily withheld from any constituent group” by the TGSA Board. In the absence of any legitimate concern about the nomination of this candidate who has been duly acclaimed and put forward by their constituent group, in this case the FCSA and the graduate students which make up its membership, I move that the Board appoints Nicole Covey as the FCSA PhD Representative to the TGSA.

Motion to Approve:

Mover: Sebastian Johnston-Lindsay

Second: Jordon Williams

Approve: 11

**\*motion carries\***

Frost Centre MA Representatives - Dominique O’Bonsawin and Carol Andrews

[dominiqueobonsawin@trentu.ca](mailto:dominiqueobonsawin@trentu.ca); [carolandrews@trentu.ca](mailto:carolandrews@trentu.ca)

Motion: The Frost Centre Student Association (FCSA) has acclaimed Dominique O’Bonsawin and Carol Andrews as their Acting Co-MA Representatives to the TGSA. Under By-Law 16.01 a., “The right to elect a representative shall not be arbitrarily withheld from any constituent group” by the TGSA Board. In the absence of any legitimate concern about the nomination of these candidates who have been duly acclaimed and put forward by their constituent group, in this case the FCSA and the graduate students which make up its membership, I move that the Board appoints Dominique O’Bonsawin and Carol Andrews as Acting Co-MA Representatives to the TGSA until such a time that a member steps forward in a full-time capacity.

Motion to Approve:

Mover: Sebastian Johnston-Lindsay  
Second: Jordon Williams

Approve: 11  
**\*motion carries\***

Bioenvironmental Monitoring & Assessment Representative - Autumn Jordan  
[autumnjordan@trentu.ca](mailto:autumnjordan@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 Bioenvironmental Monitoring & Assessment graduate program at Trent, the Board appoints Autumn Jordan as Program Representative for their respective program.

Motion to Approve:  
Mover: Sebastian Johnston-Lindsay  
Second: Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

Approve: 11  
**\*motion carries\***

History Representative - Alexandra Gerrard  
[mmillergerrard@trentu.ca](mailto:mmillergerrard@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 appoints Alexandra Gerrard as Program Representative for their respective program.

Motion to Approve:  
Mover: Sebastian Johnston-Lindsay  
Second: Jordon Williams

Approve: 11  
**\*motion carries\***

Psychology Representative - Logan Hamer  
[loganhamer@trentu.ca](mailto:loganhamer@trentu.ca)

Motion: Under By-Law 16.01 a. "If a 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 Psychology graduate program at Trent, the Board appoints Logan Hamer as Program Representative for their respective program.

Motion to Approve:

Mover: Sebastian Johnston-Lindsay

Second: Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

Approve: 11

**\*motion carries\***

c) Nina (VP Senate)

(i) Senate Update:

- New PhD program "Interdisciplinary Social Research"
- Student Initiative: Remote Learning Interim Assessment

(ii) CASSC Anti-Racism Subcommittee

(iii) Committee representation

Nina mentioned about the new PhD program called interdisciplinary social research and suggested to advertise it in our newsletter to grad students. The student senates are asking the Senate to put resources into creating a meaningful survey to obtain feedback from students on remote learning. There are positive things, especially for Durham students who have a lot of commuting, or struggle with commuting, really benefit from online learning. However, there are problems with study spaces. Nina also relayed all the concerns about TA-ing in the meeting.

The CASSC is forming an antiracist subcommittee. It's still unclear what it will look like or when it will meet. Nina and Sandra will keep us updated on it.

Some of the committee representative positions such as the academic planning and budget and the research policy subcommittee are vacant. The board was discussing about filling these spots by reaching out our newly joined board members.

d) Elicia (VP communication)

(i) Graduate student app

Elicia talked about the suggested features the board proposed for TGSA tile in the Trent Mobile App. The board decided that with the number of features we proposed, we can push for our own tile instead of living under the School of Graduate Studies.

e) Jordon (VP Student Affairs)

(i) Events for the rest of the term - Model Parliament update and Festivus.

Jordon updated the board about the progress on Model Parliament event. He spoke to the college principals and have received positive responses since. He has also reached out to TCSA, political studies and international development association for collaboration. This event will be held in February next semester as

a hybrid event. Jordon also suggested to organize a game night for our October event which is Jackbox game night, and possibly a discussion board in November.

Jordon also managed to reach out to Alison to discuss about having a grad input on the Trent talks. Finally, in December, Jordon is looking into organizing Festivus. It could be an ugly sweater contest and a social with maybe online games or an open mic/talent contest. This event can be a joint event with all the colleges. Sandra mentioned briefly about the panel discussion featuring racialized people at Trent and the racialized bursary.

The board brought up the Trent alumni event which most TGSA members attended. The board suggested that there could be a program specific talks in the future as well as inviting racialized alumni to these events.

Connor updated us on the progress with our financial statements.

## **6. Updates from CUPE**

### **Alison (CUPE Unit 2 representative)**

Alison brought up the CUPE Annual General Meeting which will be held virtually on October 27 at 6:30pm. Alison encouraged everyone to attend. Alison also mentioned about the two grievances currently ongoing and confidential which revolve around human rights related problems.

## **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: Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

Second: Elicia Yap

#### Discussion

-no discussion

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

**\*motion carries\***

**8. Commissioner Reports (see Addendum II)**

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

Minutes: Additions to Commissioner reports

**Motion to Approve the Commissioner Reports**

Mover: Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

Second: Elicia Yap

Discussion

-no discussion

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

**\*motion carries\***

**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 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020
- b. The reports and motions for that meeting are due 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**14. Adjournment**

**Motion to Adjourn the Meeting**

Mover: Sandra Klemet-N'Guessan

Second: Jordon Williams

Discussion

-no discussion

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

**\*motion carries\***

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

**Sandra (President):**

September was quite busy for me personally and as a TA so this month was more about events planning and a couple of meetings. I could not attend any of the Student leaders or student caucus meeting either due to time constraint or because no meeting happened as the committee was still transitioning to the news semester. Following VP Senate call, I also registered to sit on other committees but I still haven't been contacted by them.

I met with VP Student Affairs and Equity commissioner to discuss the symposium details, make calls for professor and student panelists, and discuss potential equity events and initiatives throughout the year. I also met with Michael Eamon and established a biweekly meeting schedule with him to maintain the TGSA's close relationship with Traill. We discussed the TGSA support to Traill's efforts to encourage students to follow COVID-19 restrictions (especially following the "bridge party" by undergraduate students). I also provided feedback on various executives and commissioners' initiatives and approved our VP Finance resignation. Lastly, I scheduled a couple of meetings for next month, including one with Craig Brunetti and one with the Trent Lands Plans team.

**Sebastian (VP Internal Affairs):**

My activities this month can be broken down into two main initiatives; the organization of Program Representative nominations, and the review of the VP Student Affairs position and related amendments to the Policies and By-Laws.

The first section of this report contains motions concerning votes by the Board on four nominees for Program Representative positions within the TGSA. The second contains the ongoing discussions concerning amendments to Policy 2 of the TGSA's governing documents. A draft of these amendments can be found at the following link in the TGSA Shared Folder:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_1fcEwpT1KIXOLmI8lpmzd1DwvCvBV2ruJ9pScr2LvE/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_1fcEwpT1KIXOLmI8lpmzd1DwvCvBV2ruJ9pScr2LvE/edit)

By introducing the topics of these amendments in the October meeting, we will be able to vote as a Board to approve them during our November meeting. If anyone has any suggestions about their portfolio as it is outlined in Policy 2, please reach out to me!

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[nicolecovey@trentu.ca](mailto:nicolecovey@trentu.ca)

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Board. In the absence of any legitimate concern about the nomination of this candidate who has been duly acclaimed and put forward by their constituent group, in this case the FCSA and the graduate students which make up its membership, I move that the Board appoints Nicole Covey as the FCSA PhD Representative to the TGSA.

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[dominiqueobonsawin@trentu.ca](mailto:dominiqueobonsawin@trentu.ca); [carolandrews@trentu.ca](mailto:carolandrews@trentu.ca)

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Future Work and Goals Concerning Representatives:

I hope to continue to build relationships between graduate programs and the TGSA. Program Representation is a key aspect of this work. Recognizing that the 2020/21 academic year is a year of rebuilding and re-establishing TGSA norms in terms of operation under rather unprecedented circumstances, I hope to carry out this work between the TGSA and graduate programs to ensure that graduate students are able to, whenever possible, elect their own representative.

As noted in the motions above, there is nothing unusual or unconstitutional about the Board appointing Program Representatives, however it's important that the VP Internal Affairs works as closely as possible with graduate programs and any student Associations they have formed to bring forward nominees.

Further, recent amendments to the TGSA's governing documents have clarified and expanded upon the criteria for the positions of Arts Representative and Science Representative. The nomination and election process for these two positions are explicitly under the jurisdiction of the TGSA Board and their role includes aiding in the formation of Department and Program specific student organizations meant to aide in the election/acclamation of Program Representatives as outlined in Policy 2.03.06 e. and Policy 2.03.07 e.

In the coming months, I hope to work with Program Representatives and their peers to bring forward nominees for the positions of Arts Representative and Science Representative to begin the process of re-establishing this aspect of normal operations of the TGSA under our By-Laws and Policies document. To achieve this, we also need to begin thinking about holding a General Meeting of the membership in order to carry out the nomination and election process.

#### Board Member Roles and Duties:

This month I have also started reviewing Policies concerning the roles and duties of Board members. I encouraged all Board members to look through their respective portfolios outlined in Policy 2 of our governing documents and reach out with any suggestions on where these might be improved to better reflect the work you are doing as a member of the TGSA Board. These will eventually be compiled into a list of amendments to be voted on by the Board and then later ratified by the membership under the process outlined in By-Laws 11.01 and 26.01.

One point of consideration should be the addition of a Trent Durham Representative position portfolio under Policy 2 (See proposed amendment documents in the link above).

#### Elicia (VP Communication):

This month, I have been working on:

- Finally have access to grad student listserv (Thanks to Sandra)!
- Publicized Life After Grad event on our social media, website and email. Jordon helped send it to Michael Eamon and CUPE.
- Distributed our first newsletter of the year!

- Compiled information for the October issue
- Followed up on the Grad Student app with Laurie from Grad Studies.
- Communicated with Nina and Sandra about the open committee representation spots. Will be updating this information on our website shortly
- Looked over the policies regarding the duties of the VP communication and sent amendments to Sebastian
- Worked with Anique on updating the communication budget as some unexpected cost with the website came up
- Might look into making our emailing structure a little more interactive and visually appealing
- Will be attending the library advisory committee on October 14<sup>th</sup>

**(VP Finance):-**

**Jordon (VP Student Affairs):**

Since last meeting we have had our Alumni event for grad students, and it was quite successful. Real and Scott were fantastic panelists who brought a plethora of knowledge and experience to the table. I will be contacting Danielle from here on out to plan other grad specific alumni events. Community building for the TGSA on the event side of items is moving perfectly. I will be contacting the Frost center to talk about working on a potential event together but this will not be happening until the Winter term.

On the topics of events I have drafted a list of potential events for the rest of term. An ambitious if not at the very least a fun set. We have one guaranteed traditional event known as Festivus which I will also speak to at the meeting. But the breakdown for the event can be done as a hybrid physical event or a virtual social. Both are very much possible but will update at our next meeting after talking with Michael Eamon.

Model Parliament has not met but that is actually not a big issue. With the reality of a first time trial run signups will likely be low. But a major goal this year is to draft an event plan and budget for next year also that I will be presenting to the principals of all of the colleges, Mark Skinner Head of the Humanities and Leo the president of the university. A hybrid is our goal and it is what we will stick with, ultimately if we have to go online only I will not run a campus event and instead will put my work to planning for the following year.

We will be doing a game night October 22<sup>nd</sup> and playing some Jackbox games which are just fun trivia games requiring only a cellphone or a laptop. I will speak more to this when talking about events for the term.

Finally, I have been working with CUPE about a student grievance and cannot divulge many details but it is moving along and I have volunteered myself as a representative for said student if they feel comfortable with that.

N.B. I have drafted a portion of a motion to change the duties required of Student Affairs to better reflect the current makeup of our group. This will be presented in November.

**Janina (VP Senate):**

During the month of September, one of the VP senate's main tasks was to ensure that all senate, advisory, and CASSC subcommittees had graduate representatives for the upcoming year. Most committee representative positions have been filled by TGSA board members. To fill the remaining open spots, our VP communication Elicia will reach out to the wider grad community. I am in regular contact with Anna Lightfoot to update her on the rep situation. While I was reaching out to old and new board members to ask if they were willing to serve on a subcommittee, I revised and updated the old "How to be a committee representative" document in our shared google folder. In the spirit of completion, I also reorganized the VP senate folder and archived documents that seemed outdated after closer inspection.

Besides assigning graduate student committee representatives, I attended the first senate executive meeting, the first senate meeting, the senate orientation session, and the first CASSC meeting of the current academic year. The senate executive approved of the Academic Planning and Budget committee's proposal for a new PhD program as well as the program changes brought forward by the graduate studies committee. A proposal for two new teaching centres was delayed with the suggestion to work out budgetary details before presenting it to the senate. The senate approved of both the new PhD program in "Interdisciplinary Social Research" and the minor and major program changes as proposed by the GSC. President Leo Groake asked student senators to launch a student initiative that will report student's experiences with online learning back to the senate next month. I have been in contact with Rayna about this initiative as she was approached by Leo to take a leading role. We briefly discussed the initiative during the last student caucus meeting. Lastly, I have also been in contact with the board of governors representatives Rayna and Fareeda to make sure the communication between the universities two major governance organs is flowing.

The third area I have been working on last month concerns less senate specific and more TGSA shared projects. After consulting with my roommate who works in the field of system change, I researched other minority/ anti-discrimination funds in order to find out which terms of reference, eligibility criteria, and accessibility standards they employ. To be honest, the research led me to more questions than answers. Similar holds true for our code of conduct/ student supervisor agreement. The template Sandra put forward seems to address most difficulties that frequently arise in areas of communication and responsibilities between supervisor and student. Upon revision, I think the research ethics section could be a bit more extensive, and it might be worth including an ethical code of conduct that takes up forms of nonviolent communication, accommodation, or other assumptions specifically linked to structural inequality.

## Addendum II Executive Reports

### **Verena (Environmental Commissioner):**

- Contributed for the Green Tips section for the October newsletter.
- Meetings of the committees I am sitting on have not started yet.
- I have attended our events such as the Life After Trent networking Zoom, which was a great success.

### **Maryam (International Student Representative Commissioner): -**

### **Tanya (Equity Commissioner):**

Over the past month, I was working closely with Sandra and Jordon to make things ready for the upcoming TGSA symposium on Black Lives Matter. We have been working on forming the panel, and I have been actively in touch with students and professors who could be the potential members of the panel. In the upcoming month I am going to continue cooperating with Sandra and Jordon on the logistics of the event as well as working on arranging things with the accepted panelists, addressing any questions that they may have in order to help them feel as fit and comfortable as possible with the format of the symposium, so it would be held as best as possible. We are also looking forward to arranging more equality related events afterwards.