



TGSA Fall General Meeting

REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

Wednesday November 12th 6:30-8:30
Ceilie Cottage

Register using this link or QR Code
<https://forms.office.com/r/eM3dc8AJdc>



Voting Opens November 13th at 12:00pm

Referendum Question 1

Referendum Question: Consolidated Bylaw Amendment

“Do you approve the following housekeeping changes to the TGSA bylaws?”

☐ Yes, I approve the adoption of the changes found in Appendix A to the TGSA bylaws.

☐ No, I do not the adoption of the following changes found in Appendix A to the TGSA bylaws.

☐ I abstain.

Approval of this referendum would adjust the bylaws to accurately reflect the technical resources available to the TGSA, re-adopt line items that were dropped from the by-laws in error in January 2024, and to bring the TGSA bylaws in line with the Trent Act which supersedes these bylaws. The proposed changes can be found in Appendix A.

Referendum Question 2

Referendum Question : Honorarium Increases (pursuant to bylaw 3.3)

Do you approve) an increase to the honoraria for TGSA Board and Executive positions, as outlined below , to take effect beginning at the beginning of the TGSA’s next fiscal year in May of 2026, with funding allocated from the TGSA operating budget.

☐ Yes, I approve the proposed honorarium increase for the TGSA board of directors.

☐ No, I do not approve the proposed honorarium increase for the TGSA board of directors.

☐ I abstain.

The TGSA is experiencing ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining Board Members and Executives, The primary barrier identified is the imbalance between the high workload of these roles and the very low honoraria currently provided:

- MA/PhD Representatives (Arts & Science, Durham): \$33.33/month for 7–10 hours of work.
- Equity, International, and Environmental Commissioners: \$88.33/month for 10–20 hours of work.
- Vice Presidents (Internal Affairs, Student Affairs, Senate): \$250.00/month for 20–30 hours of work (often increasing depending on the role, committee work, and individual responsibilities such as the VPIF managing the elections, VPS filling in for others missing committees, VPSA planning and hosting events for graduate students).
- President: \$250.00/month for 80–100 hours of work, year-round (often increasing in response to emerging needs, stakeholder meetings, and urgent advocacy projects).

The time estimates vary from month to month, and include, at minimum, a monthly 2-hour board of directors meeting, and the creation and generation of a monthly report. These honoraria levels do not adequately reflect the time commitment and responsibilities involved. Many graduate students cannot afford to dedicate this amount of unpaid or underpaid labor, which creates barriers to participation and limits representation across the TGSA.

Increasing honoraria will:

- Make positions more financially accessible to a broader range of graduate students.
- Improve recruitment and retention of dedicated and qualified candidates.
- Recognize the significant volunteer labor required to represent graduate student interests at Trent University.

The proposed increases will be absorbed within the TGSA’s **operating budget**, without requiring an additional levy or fee increase from members. It would **not come into effect until**

after the next election, benefiting future student leaders. Proposed increase is to \$65/month for Representatives, 175/month for Commissioners, 500/month for VPs, 600/month for President.

Referendum Question 3

Referendum Question: TGSA Sanctioned Group Status

“Do you approve the development of a process that will give graduate student led on-campus groups the opportunity to apply for TGSA sanctioned status?”

- ☐ Yes, I approve the adoption of this bylaw.
- ☐ No, I do not approve the adoption of this bylaw.
- ☐ I abstain.

7. The TGSA will work in partnership with the Office of Student Affairs to recognize and grant TGSA Sanctioned status to graduate student on-campus groups. Sanctioned status does not include financial support. Groups are free to apply for and manage finances granted to them by bursaries, funding bodies, or relevant university departments.

7.1 Benefits of Sanctioned Status

Sanctioned groups may receive benefits including, but not limited to:

- Ability to book rooms on campus at little or no cost;
- Access to club fairs, advertising platforms, and event promotion;
- Assistance from the TGSA in event planning, completing risk assessments, making connections, and promoting group interests and events.

7.2 Governance and Reporting

The TGSA will formally recognize sanctioned groups on a designated page of the TGSA website. Groups are invited, at their discretion, to attend monthly TGSA Board of Directors meetings.

To maintain TGSA Sanctioned status, groups must submit a summary of their activities by the end of April. If a sanctioned group fails to submit the summary to the TGSA within 30 days of the end of the Spring semester they may lose status as a sanctioned group. If a sanctioned groups mandate stands in conflict with the mandate and objectives of the Organization they will not be granted sanctioned group status with the TGSA.

Approval of this referendum question will result in the replacing of the current bylaw reflecting an out of date process detailed in Appendix B with the language above.

Appendix A

Amendment 1

We propose to strike the following section of the bylaws, italicized below

Section 3.3 Disciplinary Act or Termination of Membership for Cause

“Upon fifteen (15) days of a written notice to a Member, the Board of Executives may pass a resolution authorizing disciplinary action or the termination of membership for violating any provision of the articles or By-laws.

The notice shall set out the reasons for the disciplinary action or termination of membership. The Member receiving the notice shall be entitled to give the Board of Executives a written submission opposing the disciplinary action or termination not less than five (5) days before the end of the fifteen (15) day period. The Board of Executives shall consider the written submission of the Member before making a final decision regarding disciplinary action or termination of membership”

This bylaw stands in conflict with the conditions of membership as all current registered students are members of the TGSA and cannot opt out of paying the ancillary fee (other than for their health and dental plan which is administered by the TCSA). As such, it is beyond the purview of the TGSA to terminate student membership.

Amendment 2

We propose to strike Section 2.1 VI from the bylaws, italicized below.

“VI. To serve as an Official Guest on the Board of Governors”

Holding a Board seat is listed as a duty of the President (Chair); however, the Organization does not have the authority to mandate this requirement. Student representative seats may be filled by any student enrolled at the Symons or Durham campuses, whether undergraduate or graduate. The appointment of these representatives is subject to election protocols that take precedence over the TGSA’s internal mandates.

Amendment 3

We propose to update the following sections to reflect Trent Universities migration from Google to Microsoft SharePoint.

Applies to sections: 2.1.1 XXI
2.1.2 XVIII
2.1.3 XVI
2.1.4 XVII
2.1.4 XVIII
3.2
8.2
Appendix 2

And to strike the following sections as the responsibilities of the commissioners and representatives no longer include maintaining the online database.

Applies to sections: 2.2.1
2.2.3 VI
2.2.4 VI
2.2.5 VIII
2.2.6 XI
2.2.8 X
2.2.9 VIII

Amendment 3

We propose to remove reference to the graduate student ‘listserv’ (the Graduate Student Distribution List) from board of directors’ duties. The TGSA no longer has access to the list and the School of Graduate Studies sends out our communications over email. In each case, this is to be replaced with wording clarifying that communications are to be sent to the School of Graduate studies who will then forward the communication to graduate students using the listserv.

Applies to sections 2.1.2 VIII.,
2.1.6 V.
2.1.6 IV.
2.2.1 IV.
2.2.5 V.
2.2.6 VII.
2.2.8 IV.
2.2.8 VII.
2.2.8 VIII.
2.4.2
5.1 V.
6.1

Amendment 4

We propose re-institute language regarding annual consumer price index (CPI) increases to the levy groups approved by the membership. This was dropped in error from our bylaws during the last re-write in error and creates conflict between the bylaws and relevant memorandums of understanding (MOU).

Appendix B

Original wording of section 7 in the bylaws
Proposal to strike and replace with Referendum question 3.

Section 7: Groups Under the Auspices of the Organization

The following groups are run under the auspices and authority of the Organization and are responsible to its membership:

N/A as of 2022

7.1 Finances of Groups

All groups under the auspices of the Organization who are responsible for the allocation and dispersal of Organization funds must present two (2) budgets at the Fall General Meeting:

- I. One (1) budget describing all spending from the previous Academic Year; and*
- II. One (1) budget describing all proposed spending for the current Academic Year.*

These budgets must be presented to the Vice President Internal Affairs (Treasurer) fourteen (14) days prior to the Fall General Meeting. They shall be empowered to require changes or additional details before presentation to the General Membership. A group with any accounts that carry a year-to-year balance that is not returned to the general funds of the Organization shall report all excess monies to the Vice President Internal Affairs (Treasurer) in April and provide documentation of that money being transferred into the appropriate account.

Groups may keep a capital float of no greater than six-hundred dollars (\$600) that must be accounted for in the financial documentation given to the Vice President Internal Affairs (Treasurer).

7.2 Governance and Oversight of Groups

All groups under the auspices of the Organization must follow these By-laws and Policies as well as all pertinent policies of the University. Noncompliance with By-laws and Policies will mandate a review of the group to be conducted by the Vice President Senate who may recommend disciplinary action or impeachment to the Executive. Disciplinary action or impeachment will occur in accordance with By-law Section 4.10.

Any group under the auspices of the Organization is required to provide a report of its activities to the Board at a Board Meeting, or to General Meetings as requested by the Executive.

Committee meetings or gatherings will be held in accessible locations that include mobility- impaired accessibility, gender neutral accessibility, and access via Peterborough Transit.

The Board shall be empowered to demand any group under the auspices and authority of the Organization to prepare or amend its own By-laws and Policies; and The Board has full power to impose, accept, or amend the By-laws and Policies of any group under the auspices and authority of the Organization as required. Any decision by The Board to impose such documents or amendments must be done by majority vote of the Board and ratified by majority of the Voting Body at the next General Meeting in accordance with Policy Section 5: Referenda. Failure to abide by The Board's decision may result in discipline or impeachment as per By-law Section 4.10.