



**University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union
Special Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Zoom Meeting Monday, March 13, 2023 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

Directors must register by emailing register@utgsu.ca before the meeting.

1. Meeting Comes to Order

Meeting is called to order at 7:11pm. Lwanga M. will be chairing today's meeting because our Chair Sandhya could not make it. The Chair reminds everyone of the 2-strike system, and to direct all comments to the Chair.

a. Equity Statement (Commitment) (Page 3)

Volunteers read out the equity statement.

b. Adoption of Agenda (Discussion & Decision)¹

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors adopt the March 13, 2023, meeting agenda as presented or amended. Moved by Danielle K. and seconded by Nooshin A. Motion carries.

c. Seating Guests (Discussion & Decision)²

Guests introduce themselves in the chat.

Levi Clarkson - UTGSU Executive Director

Madalena Liougas - General Member, applicant for Board of Appeal Vice-Chair

Jessie Schwalb - The Varsity

Lynne Alexandrova - General Member, Access for Wellbeing and SJE Department/OISE

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors move to seat all guests with speaking rights. Moved by Danielle K. and seconded by Neelofar A. Motion carries.

2. Appointments

a. Motion to appoint CRO (Discussion & Decision)³

Levi C. says that the Elections Committee reviewed applications for the CRO position, conducted interviews, and are happy to bring forward Justin Patrick as this year's CRO for board approval. Justin is getting his PhD in Education Leadership and Policy, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Justin has extensive knowledge and experience with the UTGSU. He is a former executive officer for the UTGSU, and supported our re-structuring so he is very knowledgeable about our current bylaws and elections policy. Outside of the GSU, he has extensive experience working with policy at other student organizations, has chaired many committees and very strongly meets all the requirements of the job description. The Elections Committee is confident he will be a successful CRO, and are happy to have him on board so that our elections can happen smoothly.

¹ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors adopt the March 13, 2023, meeting agenda as presented or amended.

² DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors move to seat all guests with speaking rights.

³ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors appoint _____ as the CRO for the 2023 general elections.



BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors appoint Justin Patrick as the CRO for the 2023 general elections. Moved by Neelofar A. and seconded by Danielle K. Motion carries.

b. Motion to appoint Board of Appeal Chair & Vice-Chair (Discussion & Decision)⁴⁵

Danielle K. says that the function of the Board of Appeal is to respond to internal complaints, disputes and conflicts in the manner set out in the Dispute Resolution Policy. The Board of Appeal is the final level of appeal within the UTGSU. The Board of Appeal Chair and Vice-chair are responsible for advertising to attract nominees for the Board of Appeal, chairing meetings of the Board of Appeal, preparing all relevant documentation for issues before the Board, and serving as the Board's spokesperson. The Chair and Vice-chair must not be currently serving on the Board of Directors, the Elections and Referendum Committee, or as Chair of the Board of Directors, Equity Officer, or Chief Returning Officer. They must have the ability to maintain confidentiality and handle sensitive information with care. So far, the ED has received two nominations. Noah Khan for BOA Chair, and Madalena Liougas for BOA Vice-Chair.

Danielle K. reads a statement from Noah Khan who is interested in the Board of Appeal Chair position: Noah Khan is a PhD student in Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. He has significant experience in mediation, having sat on the York University Tribunal for two academic years. Noah is currently Co-Chair of the Anti-Racism Committee at Massey College and was Co-Chair of the York Graduate Students in Education, as well as having been appointed a member of the faculty's Anti-Black Racism Committee. He was also an Internal Relations Community Officer at York University, where he engaged in significant mediation among members of York's Sustainable Development Goals Hub. Noah also has lived experience of racism within York's University Graduate Student Association (of which he was Chief Councillor of Education), wherein he was called a racial slur by one of its members. He went through the entire dispute resolution process, receiving threats which were acted upon, and came away with significant embodied knowledge of what dispute resolution can feel like for marginalized peoples. Noah is committed to ensuring that dispute resolution functions in an equitable manner that upholds values of justice and fairness.

Madalena Liougas introduces herself as a second year master's student at the faculty of medicine. She is interested in the position of Board of Appeal Vice-Chair because she has extensive experience advertising university events and working in large groups as an event coordinator for the Kite Tech Team as well as Co-Editor in Chief of Rehabbing, and a member of the Kite Young Innovators Group. She meets the requirements for the position, as she is not currently serving on the Board of Directors, the Elections and Referendum Committee, or as Chair of the Board of Directors, Equity Officer, or Chief Returning Officer. She will strive to create a sense of belonging and community at U of T by meeting the needs of all her peers, and this position will enable her to exercise those principles alongside the direction of the Board of Appeals Chair.

⁴ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors appoint _____ as the Board of Appeal Chair for 2022-23.

⁵ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors appoint _____ as the Board of Appeal Vice-Chair for 2022-23.



BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors appoint Noah Khan as the Board of Appeal Chair for 2022-23. Moved by Danielle K. and seconded by Neelofar A. Motion carries.

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors appoint Madalena Liougas as the Board of Appeal Vice-Chair for 2022-23. Moved by Danielle K. and seconded by Neelofar A. Motion carries.

c. Motion to appoint members to the following committees: Elections and Referenda Committee, Finance Committee, Governance Committee, Graduate Affairs Committee, U of T CASAS Committee (Discussion & Decision)⁶⁷⁸⁹¹⁰

Neelofar A. says that we need 2 more people to join the Elections and Referenda Committee, so that we can hold our annual election of executive officers and directors. The Elections and Referenda Committee shall oversee the annual election of the Executive Officers and Board of Directors, as well as any referenda question. The committee will ensure that nomination papers are valid, rule on any appeals regarding campaign rule violations, and work with the CRO to develop and enforce policy for a fair and equitable election. The ED has received one nomination from Nicholas Silver.

Neelofar A. reads a statement from Nicholas Silver: My name is Nicholas Silver and I previously served as a Course Union Representative for Biochemistry during the 2021-2022 academic year. As a Course Union Representative, I served on the Elections and Referendum Committee for the prior UTGSU elections (April 2022) along with 2 other members. With previous experience on the ERC, I am familiar with both the requirements and responsibilities of the ERC and the bylaws that govern elections within the UTGSU. This year I have been more involved with my course union as opposed to the UTGSU, but would like the opportunity to once again serve on the ERC.

Neelofar A. says that we need 4 people to join the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee is a closed committee and will be responsible to prepare proposals on fiscal

⁶ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves _____ and _____ for appointment to the Elections & Referenda Committee for the 2023 general election.

⁷ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves _____ and _____ from Division 1 & 2, and _____ and _____ from Division 3 & 4 for appointment to the Finance Committee.

⁸ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves _____ and _____ from Division 1 & 2, and _____ and _____ from Division 3 & 4 for the Governance Committee.

⁹ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves _____ and _____ from Division 1 & 2, and _____ and _____ from Division 3 & 4 for the Graduate Affairs Committee.

¹⁰ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves _____ as a student representative on the U of T CASAS Committee.



policy and financial estimates for the consideration of the Executive, to review all monetary donation requests of the Union, to prepare the Special Grants allocation, to prepare the Conference and Academic Engagement Grants allocation, to execute the Conference Bursary funds allocation, to execute the Graduate Community Development Fund allocation, and to assist the Finance Office and Officers in their duties. The ED has received one nomination from Mina Mahdian.

Neelofar A. reads a statement from Mina Mahdian: My name is Mina Mahdian and I am 3rd year PhD student from the Mechanical and Industrial Engineering department. I am writing to let you know that I am interested in joining your finance committee. As an individual passionate about finance and governance, I am eager to contribute my skills and expertise to this committee's efforts. I am excited about the prospect of working alongside like-minded individuals who share my passion for finance and governance. I believe that together, we can make a meaningful impact and drive positive change. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my qualifications further.

Neelofar A. says the next committee is the Governance Committee. For the sake of time, she will skip the description and go straight to the nominations. The ED has received two nominations from Etinosa Oliogu and Lynne Alexandrova.

Neelofar A. reads a statement from Etinosa Oliogu: My name is Etinosa Oliogu, I am in the first year of the Clinical Psychology master's program at UTSC, and I am interested in joining the Governance Committee and/or Graduate Affairs Committee. I have a long and wonderful history with UofT as I was very active in the school community during my undergrad. Now that I have begun my graduate studies, I am looking for ways to stay involved and improve programming for future students. I am a part of Division II.

Neelofar A. says the next committee is the Graduate Affairs Committee. The ED has received two nominations from Etinosa Oliogu and Clara Risk. Etinosa's statement is the same as previously read.

Clara's statement is as follows: Dear Graduate Affairs Committee, I am excited to express my interest in serving as a member of the Graduate Affairs Committee. As a current PhD student and an alumna of the University of Toronto's undergraduate program, I am passionate about the university and committed to improving graduate student experiences. My background at the University of Toronto includes my current positions as an IT Help Desk Analyst and Research Assistant, as well as my time as a Teaching Assistant. These roles have equipped me with the skills necessary to contribute to the committee. As an IT Help Desk Analyst, I work diligently to ensure that staff and students have a positive experience on campus by addressing and resolving any technological issues that arise. In addition, my experience as a Research Assistant has provided me with a deep



understanding of graduate student needs and the opportunity to collaborate with postdoctoral researchers and graduate students in various departments. As a Teaching Assistant, I was committed to student success, which included efforts to make tutorials more accessible to students with fewer computing resources. In this role, I fostered an inclusive and supportive learning environment where students felt comfortable seeking assistance. As a Teaching Assistant at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I also completed a seminar course focused on exploring a diverse array of approaches to teaching and attended training sessions on teaching and inclusivity, both of which I have leveraged in my work at the University of Toronto. With my extensive experience and commitment to the University of Toronto, I am confident that I am an ideal candidate for the committee. I look forward to the opportunity to serve and increase my exposure to individuals from other departments. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Neelofar A. says we need one person to join the U of T CASAS Committee. This committee meets on a monthly basis to consider and approve space on campus for student groups. It is important that graduate students have a seat at the table, and a say in who gets space on campus. Lynne A. self-nominates.

Chair asks Lynne to motivate her nomination. Lynne says she will motivate her nomination to the Governance Committee and the CASAS Committee. She has been involved with the UTGSU for a number of years and can offer institutional memory on a number of things. Legislation is her passion, and this has been the committee she has been the most involved in. She has drafts of legislation she is looking forward to other students reviewing. Her interest in space allocation for clubs has to do with the project she has launched, access for wellbeing. If she is selected for this committee she would do her best to seek broader participation. She is at the Social Justice Education Department of OISE, division 2.

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves Nicholas Silver for appointment to the Elections & Referenda Committee for the 2023 general election. Moved by Neelofar A. and seconded by Danielle K. Motion carries.

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves Mina Mahdian for appointment to the Finance Committee. Moved by Neelofar A. and seconded by Danielle K. Motion carries.

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves Lynne Alexandrova and Etinosa Oliogu for the Governance Committee. Moved by Neelofar A. and seconded by Danielle K. Motion carries.

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves Clara Risk and Etinosa Oliogu for the Graduate Affairs Committee. Moved by Neelofar A. and seconded by Danielle K. Motion carries.

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors approves Lynne Alexandrova as a student representative on the U of T CASAS Committee. Moved by Neelofar A. and seconded by Danielle K. Motion carries.



3. GCDF Policy Amendment

a. Motion to amend the GCDF Policy¹¹

Danielle K. says we are seeking to amend the GCDF award amount from \$500 to \$1000. This is correcting a technical issue from when we updated the award categories in the fall. We are required to fund a total of \$10, 000 for these awards, but with the new award categories and the existing amount we would only be able to distribute \$5000 which is half that amount. In order to distribute the full funds, we need to update the amount accordingly. This motion is coming forward so that we can give students the full amount of funding possible.

BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors amend the award amount in the GCDF Policy from \$500 to \$1000. Moved by Danielle K. and seconded by Dhanela S. Motion carries.

4. In-camera Discussion

Danielle K. says she needs to leave and we may lose quorum, so it may be best to put this item on the agenda for next week's meeting. The Chair acknowledges this and moves forward with adjournment.

5. Adjournment

BIRT the meeting is adjourned. Moved by Danielle K. and seconded by Neelofar A. Motion carries.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:58pm.

¹¹ DRAFT MOTION: BIRT the UTGSU Board of Directors amend the award amount in the GCDF Policy from \$500 to \$1000.



G.9.2 Equity Statement

G.9.2.1 The following statement expresses the Union's commitments to equity and informs the way in which we conduct business of the Union. The statement will be read aloud during the opening address of meetings of the membership, the Board of Directors, and at UTGSU events:

As many of our members are settlers on Turtle Island, the Union directly benefits from the colonization and genocide of the indigenous peoples of this land. It is imperative that the Union acknowledge that it is on occupied land and that to engage in acts of decolonization is an important aspect of equity work in Canada.

Student Union solidarity is based on the principle that all members deserve to be equal, respected and should be understood. As members of the Union, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We do not condone or tolerate behavior that undermines the dignity of any individual. Expressions of hate such as intimidation, harassment, offensiveness or hostility will not be tolerated.

We will struggle against all forms of discrimination and harassment, including but not limited to: Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, xenophobic, sexist, racist, classist, ableist, homophobic, transphobic, ageist sentiments and/or remarks. We all have an obligation to ensure that an open and inclusive space, free of hate is established.

We support growth and understanding and believe in providing opportunities for individuals to acknowledge the impact of their remarks, with the understanding that the experiences of those impacted by discriminatory sentiments or remarks will be privileged.

If you are not here in an understanding of good faith or you have violated this understanding, you will be asked to leave. Do you agree?