University of Toronto Graduate Students’ Union
Annual General Meeting Agenda
Hybrid, on Zoom and in person (ES 1050)
Thursday, December 7th, 2023 5.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

5.00 pm - Meeting comes to order

1. Meeting Comes to Order
   a. Appointment of Meeting Chair (Discussion and Decision, Page 3)
   b. Appointment of Equity Officer (Discussion and Decision, Page 3)
   c. Land Acknowledgement and Equity Statement (Commitment, Page 19)
   d. Introduction and Rules of Order (Information)
   e. Adoption of Agenda (Discussion and Decision)
   f. Guests and Media (Discussion and Decision)
   g. Approval of Minutes from 2022 AGM (Discussion and Decision)

2. Reports
   a. Executive Committee (Information and Discussion)
   b. Board of Directors (Information and Discussion)
   c. Motion to receive reports (Decision, Page 4)

3. Financial Business (Page 5)
   a. Audit FY 2023 (Information and Discussion)
   b. Appointment of Auditors for FY 2024 (Discussion and Decision)

4. Bylaw amendments by the Board of Directors (Discussion and Decision, Page 6)

5. By-elections
   a. Ratification of Interim Executive Positions (Page 8)
   b. Presentation of candidates for Board of Directors

6. Referenda (Information and Discussion, Page 9)
   a. Regenesis UofT
   b. University of Toronto Sexual Education Centre

7. Motions by Members (Discussion and Decision, Page 11)
   a. Academic freedom and freedom of assembly
   b. Reinstating BDS caucus
   c. Violations and departures from UTGSU Bylaws, Policies, and the CNCA
   d. Referendum to create a Canadian University Press levy
   e. Clubs and Societies for Graduate Students
   f. Meeting Transparency
   g. Revive Board of Appeal
   h. Reconciliation and Recognition
i. Funding caucus

8. Other business

9. Adjournment
Motions for Consideration - Item 1

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU appoint Sandhya Mylabathula as Chair of the 2023 UTGSU AGM.

Moved; F. Krannich

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU appoint Gadfly Stratton as Equity Officer of the 2023 UTGSU AGM.

Moved; F. Krannich

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU approve the agenda for the 2023 UTGSU AGM.

Moved; F. Krannich

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU seat all guests and media with speaking rights.

Moved; F. Krannich

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU approve the Minutes from the 2022 UTGSU AGM.

Moved; F. Krannich
Motions for Consideration - Item 2

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU receive all reports under Item 2.
Motions for Consideration - Item 3

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU receive the Audited Financial Statement for the UTGSU as prepared by MNP LLP for FY 2023.

Moved; Z. Tawhidi

**BIRT** the Members of the UTGSU appoint MNP LLP as the auditors for FY 2024 and pay them remuneration.

Moved; Z. Tawhidi
Motions for Consideration - Item 4

BIRT the Members of the UTGSU approve the proposed Bylaw amendments.

Moved; F. Krannich

WHEREAS section G2.16.6 of the UTGSU’s Policy Handbook states that: “Notwithstanding the above, vacancies on the Officers of the Union shall be filled at the discretion of the Board of Directors, under Bylaw 7.3.”

WHEREAS the UTGSU By-laws address Executive Officer vacancies at section 7.3;

WHEREAS a by-election may prove impractical in certain circumstances;

WHEREAS section 142 of the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act permits the appointment of officers by the board of Directors;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Section 7.3 of the UTGSU Bylaws be amended by adding the following provisions:

7.3.4 If a by-election for a vacant Executive Officer position has not been held before the calling of the annual meeting of the Members, the Board of Directors may appoint a Director to fill a vacant Executive Officer position.

7.3.5 Any interim appointment under 7.3.4 shall be approved by the membership at an annual meeting of the Members.

WHEREAS section G2.16 of the UTGSU’s Policy Handbook addresses by-elections for directors;

WHEREAS the UTGSU By-laws address Director vacancies at section 4.4;

WHEREAS a by-election may prove impractical in certain circumstances;

WHEREAS Part 9 of the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act permits the election of directors at an annual meeting of the members;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Section 4.4 of the UTGSU Bylaws be amended by adding the following provisions:
4.4.8 If a by-election for a vacant Director position has not been held before the calling of the annual meeting of the members, the UTGSU members may elect directors at the annual meeting of the Members to fill any vacancy on the board of directors.

4.4.9 The Board of Directors may implement any necessary action or procedure, not otherwise written in the Policy Handbook or the Bylaws, to ensure the election process at 4.4.8 takes effect.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

Section 4.4 of the UTGSU Bylaws be amended by the following provisions:

4.4.6 the remaining Directors shall hold a by-election amongst the individuals referred to in Paragraph 4.4.3 herein in accordance with the UTGSU's Policy Handbook or, if a by-election for a vacant Director position has not been held before the calling of the annual meeting of the members, section 4.4.8 f these Bylaws;

4.4.7 if a vacancy is filled under sections 4.4.6 or 4.4.8 of these Bylaws, the individual appointed elected to fill such vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the term.

WHEREAS UTGSU Bylaw 4.10 does not specify if Directors can call a meeting of the Board of Directors,

BIRT that Bylaw 4.10 be amended by
4.10.5 A meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held if called by more than 25% of the Directors.

WHEREAS the UTGSU currently has a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Caucus by Bylaw 6.2.6 and

WHEREAS after a CRCSS ruling the Provost informed the UTGSU on March 4, 2022 of their decision to withhold fees collected by the University on behalf of the UTGSU until the UTGSU complies with its obligations under university policies,

BIRT Bylaw 6.2.6 and Policy G5.7 be removed from the Bylaws and Policies.
Motions for Consideration - Item 5

Whereas the Board of Directors, having voted and reached a consensus, appointed Director Jady Liang as the interim Vice President External and Director Friedemann Krannich as the interim Vice President Internal.

BIRT the membership approves the appointment of Director Jady Liang as the interim Vice President External and Director Friedemann Krannich as the interim Vice President Internal to serve the UTGSU until the end of the term.

Moved; V. Maksimoska
Motions for Consideration - Item 6

Petition for referendum - **Regenesis UofT**

"We, the undersigned, constituents of the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU), call upon UTGSU to approve a referendum to be held in the 2023-2024 school year, asking constituents of UTGSU if they would support the approval of the following proposal go to a referendum vote:

**Regenesis is an environmental organization at the University of Toronto.**

*We are seeking the consent of UTGSU members to help fund Regenesis programs and initiatives. Starting in Fall 2024, each UTGSU member would pay a fee of $7.23 per session and would be able to obtain a refund of said fee through Regenesis.*

*Regenesis would be required to spend all of the collected fees on its environmental and community-related projects and initiatives. The collected fees would go towards supporting environmental initiatives and programming on/near the three UofT campuses, including:*

- **Free Stores** that provides students free clothes, books and other items while diverting local waste (donations, lost and found, resident move-out)

- **Food co-operatives** that address student food insecurity with programs that provide affordable options for meals and groceries.

- **Growing produce** at our Dig In! Campus Agriculture community gardens and greenhouse. The produce is provided to students for free.

- **Item libraries** that lend items to students that might be too expensive, too large, or aren't often used - this would include tools, board games, camping equipment, media equipment, and other items

- **Reuse centres** that provide free repair, resize and restyle of clothing, repair of electronics, and repair/reuse of other items to reduce waste.

- **A Community Bike Centre** that provides free and low-cost bike repair, services, and education [Scarborough Only, as similar programs exist at UTSG and UTM already]
Do you agree to a levy of $7.23 per session for each UTGSU member; adjusted annually in accordance with the Ontario Consumer Price Index?
  o  Yes, I support the funding Regenesis UofT
  o  No, I do not support funding Regenesis UofT
  o  Abstain"

Petition for referendum - University of Toronto Sexual Education Centre

The University of Toronto Sexual Education Centre (SEC) has operated since 1976 to provide students with access to safer sex supplies and information about sex and sexuality. We offer students and the wider community free condoms, personal lubricant, and menstrual supplies and provide education about consent, pleasure, contraceptives and more through in-office peer education and presentations in the community. To continue serving the student body, and to meet current demand for menstrual products and condoms, we request a levy increase to $0.75/semester for part-time graduate students ($1.50/year) and $1.00/semester for full time graduate students ($2.00/year).
Motions for Consideration - Item 7

Academic freedom and freedom of assembly

Whereas: As the world bears witness to the ongoing genocidal violence against innocent civilians in Gaza, Palestine, there is a concurrent surge in Islamophobia, anti-Arab, and anti-Palestinian racism on campuses in Canada, including the University of Toronto. This surge has resulted in a disturbing increase in harassment, threats, and doxxing directed at students, staff, and faculty who actively engage in Palestine solidarity activism and call for a ceasefire and safe passage for civilians.

Whereas: In the last month, there has been a noticeable rise in incidents at the University of Toronto where members of the University of Toronto Community are surveilling and recording students, faculty, and staff expressing support for Palestine against their consent.

Whereas: The surveillance and recording are often used to intimidate students, faculty and staff; including international students who fear speaking out due to threats of deportation.

Whereas: Some UTGSU members have shared instances of having their keffiyeh (a symbol of solidarity with Palestinian liberation) forcibly removed.

Whereas: The Arab Canadian Lawyers Association has identified the University of Toronto as one of the most visible locations of anti-Palestinian racism in Canada.[1]

Be it resolved that: The UTGSU recognize anti-Palestinian racism as a class of discrimination that Palestinian students and their allies face, and explicitly include it in the equity statement.

Be it further resolved that: The graduate student union must commit to safeguarding students’ right to:

a. Academic freedom and
b. Freedom of assembly

Without fear of persecution, retaliation, harassment or intimidation. In particular, in the event of:

I. A student being penalized, persecuted, or doxxed by a professor, administration, staff, or another student for advocating for Palestine and the Palestinian people in lectures, tutorials on or off campus.
II. A student being penalized, persecuted, or doxxed by a professor, administration, staff, or another student for pursuing research or academic interests related to the apartheid state of Israel.

III. A student being penalized, persecuted, or doxxed by a professor, administration, staff, or another student for vocalizing pro-Palestinian sentiments.

IV. A student being penalized, persecuted, or doxxed by a professor, administration, staff, or another student for engaging in public or private activities, protests, or activism that supports the liberation of Palestine and its people.

V. A student is being withheld from professional opportunities, grants, mentorship and community participation due to their support for Palestine

The Graduate Student Union at the University of Toronto will safeguard the interests of its students, shielding them from persecution, reprisal, marginalization, intimidation and censorship.

[1]: Report by ACLA:
https://canadatalksisraelpalestine.files.wordpress.com/2022/08/1bdec-anti-palestinian racism-naming2cframingandmanifestations.pdf

Moved; S. Kazmi

Reinstating BDS caucus

Whereas: In 2012, the graduate student body of the University of Toronto has, through democratic means, responded to the international call from Palestinian civil society to hold the State of Israel accountable for its continued occupation of Palestine and the oppression of its people by creating a Boycotts, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) caucus within the UTGSU.

Whereas: The board of the UTGSU has revoked its commitment to BDS through undemocratic means and without consultation with the membership.

Whereas: The board of the UTGSU had over 26 vacant positions at the time, demonstrating years of neglect to and lack of engagement in relevant student issues.

Whereas: In March 2022, the University of Toronto administration interfered in the operations of
the UTGSU and in the academic freedom of graduate students by revoking funding to UTGSU dedicated to the BDS caucus.

Whereas: The UTGSU administrators did not not protect their constituents against the interference by University of Toronto administrators, despite a clear mandate from the membership. Despite lacking authority over the UTGSU, and in violation of the university's own commitment to academic freedom, the university's interference has been met with compliance by the GSU, setting a concerning precedent for our organization's independence.

Whereas: The action against the BDS caucus is a clear example of anti-Palestinian racism that is increasingly prevalent at the University of Toronto and in Canada as a whole.

Be it resolved that: The immediate reinstatement of the BDS caucus dissolved undemocratically and without consultation or a referendum, respecting the motion passed in 2012.

Be it further resolved that: The UTGSU pursues legal action against the UofT Provost for the improper exercise of power and for violation of university policy demonstrated through withholding of student funds allocated for the BDS caucus.

Moved; S. Kazmi

Violations of and Departures from UTGSU Bylaws, Policies, and the CNCA

Whereas the UTGSU is a semi-autonomous student union representing over 20,000 graduate students across the University of Toronto,

Whereas the UTGSU’s Board of Directors has a substantial history of violating its bylaws, policies, and the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act,

Whereas the UTGSU has assumed extreme undue liability as a result,

Whereas the UTGSU’s function, reputation, and capacity to support its Members have deteriorated as a result,

Be it resolved that the Membership restrains the Board of Directors from any additional violation of or departure from its bylaws, policies, and the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act,
Be it further resolved that the Membership directs the UTGSU Board of Directors to re-establish the UTGSU Board of Appeal as soon as possible,

Be it further resolved that any further breach of UTGSU bylaw, policy, and the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act be immediately reported to the UTGSU’s Membership,

Be it further resolved that the Membership directs the UTGSU Board of Directors to hire a new legal counsel.

Moved; A. Hill

Referendum to Create a Canadian University Press Levy

Whereas there is a need for student journalism to report on student politics at all levels;

Whereas the Canadian University Press provides a way for student journalists at campus-level student newspapers to collaborate and report on topics relevant to students across the country and beyond;

Whereas the Canadian University Press has historically made important contributions to the student movement and social justice by helping student activists’ voices be heard;

Whereas the Canadian University Press, according to its website (https://www.cup.ca/history), appears to have fallen on hard times in the past decade, which limits capacities for supra-campus student journalism;

Whereas the UTGSU can provide direct aid to give the Canadian University Press a much needed boost;

Be it resolved that the AGM recommend that the UTGSU Board of Directors vote to hold a referendum at the earliest possible opportunity on the following question: “Should UTGSU members contribute $0.50 per academic year to support the Canadian University Press?”, and, if the referendum passes, the funds from the collected levy be given to the Canadian University Press annually.

Moved; C.Rogers

Clubs and Societies for Graduate Students
Whereas undergraduate students at the University of Toronto can form clubs and societies that can receive annual funding from their student union and other supports from their student union including but not limited to space, promotion, and regulation;

Whereas graduate students can also benefit from being able to form such extracurricular organizations;

Whereas there are types of extracurricular organizations that may particularly cater to graduate students which provide services that may not be offered by existing extracurricular clubs supported by the other U of T student unions, such as student-run academic journals, conferences, symposia, writing groups, research groups where students can work on projects that they co-publish, and support groups focused on graduate student issues and topics;

Whereas providing more support to graduate student extracurricular life on campus can help re-energize the sense of community among graduate students on campus in the post-COVID-19 world and enrich the graduate student experience;

Whereas graduate student clubs would allow for graduate students to engage in interdisciplinary collaboration that may not be as easy to foster without such extracurricular organizations;

Be it resolved that the following article be added to the UTGSU Bylaws:

Article 18: UTGSU Clubs

18.1 UTGSU members may organize into an extracurricular organization based on a common purpose, a type of organization which shall be referred to as a UTGSU Club.

18.2 The creation of a UTGSU Club shall require a statement of interest by at least five (5) UTGSU Members indicating that they want to create such an organization by email to the VP Internal.

18.2.1 Each statement of interest must include the following:

18.2.1.1 The names, University of Toronto email addresses, and University of Toronto student numbers of each interested student;

18.2.1.2 The name and a description of the purpose of the proposed UTGSU Club;

18.2.1.3 An agreed upon set of democratic rules outlining how the proposed UTGSU Club shall operate.

18.3 Each UTGSU Club must abide by UTGSU Bylaws and Policies.
18.4 The UTGSU Executive Committee shall review UTGSU Club applications and vote on whether to approve each proposed UTGSU Club.

18.5 The UTGSU shall provide each UTGSU Club with an email address ending in "@utgsu.ca".

18.6 The UTGSU shall provide each UTGSU Club's name, email address, description of purpose, and an updated copy of said UTGSU Club's agreed upon set of rules on the UTGSU website in a way that is publicly accessible.

18.7 The UTGSU shall provide information to UTGSU Clubs about how to reserve UTGSU spaces for Club activities.

18.8 The UTGSU Board of Directors shall, at its September Meeting, determine if funding shall be provided to UTGSU Clubs for that academic year, and if so, what the maximum amount of funding shall be for each Club.

18.8.1 The maximum amount of Club funding shall be standard across all UTGSU Clubs, so that no UTGSU Club has a higher threshold for maximum funding than another.

18.9 UTGSU Club funding applications shall be provided in advance to the UTGSU Finance Commissioner, and the UTGSU Finance Committee shall vote on whether to approve each funding application no later than thirty (30) days after receiving the application.

18.9.1 If the UTGSU Finance Committee rejects a UTGSU Club funding application, it must specify in writing to the UTGSU Club why the funding was rejected.

18.10 To retain UTGSU Club status, each UTGSU Club must send the UTGSU by email a statement of interest in continued existence by no later than the last day of September each year, which must contain the following:

18.10.1 The names, University of Toronto email addresses, and University of Toronto student numbers of at least five (5) UTGSU Members who are members of the Club;

18.10.2 The most recent name and description of the purpose of the UTGSU Club;

18.10.3 The most recent copy of the Club’s agreed upon set of democratic rules;

18.10.4 Minutes of any General Meetings of the Club’s members;

18.10.5 The Club’s updated financial statements from at least the previous year.

18.11 The UTGSU Board of Directors may vote to derecognize a UTGSU Club if they find that it no longer aligns with UTGSU Bylaws and Policies.
18.12 A list of derecognized and/or inactive Clubs shall be made publicly available on the UTGSU website.

Moved; C. Rogers

Meeting Transparency

Whereas there is considerable interest in increasing accountability and transparency in the ongoings of the UTGSU.

Whereas it would increase transparency and accountability in UTGSU business by having assembly, BOD, and executive meetings both recorded and live streamed.

Be it resolved that all UTGSU Assembly, Board of Directors, and Executive Committee meetings are publicly live-streamed and recorded on video and audio.

Moved; C. Rogers

Revive Board of Appeal

Be it resolved that the Membership task the Executive Committee and Board of Directors with filling the vacant Board of Appeal seats as soon as possible;

Be it further resolved that the Membership task the Executive Committee and Board of Directors to ensure the Board of Appeal is able to be active and functional as soon as possible after the Board of Appeal positions are filled.

Moved; C. Rogers

Reconciliation and recognition

Be it resolved that UTGSU membership direct its union, as a member of the University community, to correspond with the University of Toronto (UT) recently announced (Nov 26, 2023, President and Provost) Standing Committee on Recognition, to submit a request to the Committee to “derecognize” Duncan Campbell Scott by rescinding the honorary degree awarded to him in 1922 (See Section 4. Function and process. 2023, Nov 23. Terms of Reference, UT Standing Committee on Recognition).

Be it further resolved that UTGSU prepare a submission to the UT Standing Committee on Recognition citing evidence that the recognition of awarding Duncan Campbell Scott with an honorary doctorate of letters is fundamentally at odds with the mission and value of the
University, and that his genocidal practices towards Indigenous Peoples is known to have occurred. (UT Standing Committee Terms of Reference [4.1, 4.2, 4.3])

**Be it further resolved that** UTGSU inform its members of the open letter online petition campaign asking the University of Toronto to rescind Duncan Campbell Scott’s honorary degree which can be signed at [https://the.organise.network/campaigns/teamup-university-of-toronto-honorary-degree-to-duncan-campbell-scott](https://the.organise.network/campaigns/teamup-university-of-toronto-honorary-degree-to-duncan-campbell-scott)

Moved; L. Moorcroft

**Funding caucus**

**Whereas:** The funding for many grad student programs has not kept pace with the rapid increase of inflation and cost of living in Toronto

**Whereas:** The funding level of different departments is not well known across the student body

**Whereas:** The UTGSU is committed to advocate for student interests (i3.1.2)

**Be it resolved that:** Bylaw 6.2 is amended to add:

6.2.8 - Base Funding Caucus.

**Be it further resolved that:** Policy G.5 is amended to add:

G.5.9 - Base Funding Caucus

G.5.9.1 - The Base Funding Caucus shall act as the body that coordinates efforts centered around advocating for increases in funding across the university. Meetings will focus on issues relevant to the funding levels of graduate students. The Caucus shall seek to establish a livable base funding level across the university. The Caucus shall be open to all Graduate Students enrolled in the University of Toronto.

Moved; J. Nickel
Land Acknowledgement and Equity Statement

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:

We acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto Graduate Students’ Union operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to operate on this land.

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 behaviour 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 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?