Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Hybrid, on Zoom and in person (Grad loft, 16 Bancroft Avenue)
Tuesday, February 20th, 2024 7.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. EST

7.00 p.m. - Meeting comes to order

1. Meeting Comes to Order
   a. Appointment of Meeting Chair (Discussion and Decision, Page 2)
   b. Appointment of Equity Officer (Discussion and Decision, Page 2)
   c. Land Acknowledgement and Equity Statement (Commitment, Page 24)
   d. Adoption of Agenda (Discussion and Decision)
   e. Approval of Minutes (Discussion and Decision, Page 2)
      i. Board of Directors meeting February 1st, 2024
      ii. Special Board of Directors meeting February 15th, 2024
   f. Guests and Media (Discussion and Decision, Page 2)
   g. Vacation of office by Director R. Harikumar (Information, Page 3)

2. Appointment of Chair and Vice-chair for Board of Appeals (Discussion and Decision, Page 4)

3. Elections and Referenda: Policy changes (Discussion and Decision, Page 5)

4. Office Furniture Order (Discussion and Decision, Page 23)

5. Executive Reports

6. Other Business

7. Adjournment
Motions for consideration - Item 1

**BIRT** the UTGSU Board of Directors appoints Justin Patrick as Chair for this meeting.

Moved; F. Krannich

**BIRT** the UTGSU Board of Directors appoints Gadfly Stratton as Equity Officer for this meeting.

Moved; F. Krannich

**BIRT** the UTGSU Board of Directors moves to seat all guests with speaking rights limited to 30 seconds per speech and with a two strike conduct rule to be facilitated by the meeting Chair.

Moved; F. Krannich

**BIRT** the UTGSU Board of Directors approves the minutes for the Board of Directors meetings as presented in Item 1e of the agenda.

Moved; F. Krannich
Information - Item 1g

Director Rohankrishna Harikumar (Division 4) failed to attend the Board of Directors meetings on August 9, 2023; December 8, 2023; January 19, 2024 and February 1, 2024. They have further failed to attend the Board orientation and anti-oppression training, as mandated by UTGSU Policy O9.1.2. They have further failed to alert the Chair or the Vice-president Internal of their absence from scheduled meetings, as mandated by UTGSU Policy O9.1.3. They have further failed to respond to emails inquiring about their absence from Board meetings. By UTGSU Bylaw 4.6.4 the Director has forfeited their honorarium. By UTGSU Policy O9.2.3.4 the position of the Director is vacated.
Motion for consideration - Item 2

WHEREAS the Board of Directors has appointed a Nominating Committee to review applications and conduct initial interviews for the Board of Appeals; and

WHEREAS the Board of Directors has been able to hear and ask questions for Board of Appeals applicants; therefore

BIRT that ________ be appointed as the Chair of the Board of Appeals; and

BIFRT that ________ be appointed as the Vice-Chair of the Board of Appeals.

Moved; F. Krannich
Motion for consideration - Item 3

WHEREAS the Elections & Referenda Committee has reviewed the Governance Policies on Elections and Referenda; and
WHEREAS any changes to the policy need to be made before the start of the Nominations Period; therefore
BIRT the Governing Policy 2 on Elections & Referenda be amended as presented.

Moved; K. Xie

Policy G2: Elections and Referenda

G2.1 Elections of Union Officers and the Board of Directors

(G2.1.1) The elections for all officers and the Board of Directors of the Union shall occur simultaneously on an annual basis.

(G2.1.2) The annual election of officers shall occur before April 01, under normal circumstances.

(G2.1.3) In extraordinary circumstances, G2.1.2 can be waived by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of members at a Special General Meeting at which the motion to waive must contain specific dates when the election will take place.

(G2.1.4) All ballots and nomination forms must be retained by the Elections and Referenda Committee for a period of at least one (1) week following the elections and shall be available to candidates or their representative and to members of UTGSU Board of Directors upon written request. During this period, the Elections and Referenda Committee shall receive and act upon any request for a recount or written allegation of election misconduct. All findings shall be made publicly available to Union members on the UTGSU website.

G2.2 Nomination Process

(G2.2.1) The Nomination Period shall be held for a period of 18 days. If there is no candidate for a particular position when the Nomination Period ends, the Chief Returning Officer may extend the nomination period for that position by increments of one (1) week to a maximum extension of two (2) weeks.
(G2.2.2) Nomination forms for officers shall be submitted to the Elections and Referenda Committee. Each candidate shall have at least 25 supporting digital signatures in the process set out by the Elections & Referenda Committee. These shall include forms for the positions of:

- President
- Vice-President Internal
- Vice-President External
- Vice-President Finance
- Vice-President Academic Divisions 1 and 2
- Vice-President Academic Divisions 3 and 4

(G2.2.3.) Nomination forms for directors shall be submitted to the Elections and Referenda Committee. Each candidate shall have at least fifteen (15) supporting digital signatures in the process set out by the Elections & Referenda Committee. These shall include forms for the positions of:

- Seven (7) Directors, elected from the membership at large, representing Division 1: Humanities at the University of Toronto;
- Seven (7) Directors, elected from the membership at large, representing Division 2: Social Sciences Division at the University of Toronto;
- Seven (7) Directors, elected from the membership at large, representing Division 3: Physical Sciences at the University of Toronto;
- Seven (7) Directors, elected from the membership at large, representing Division 4: Life Sciences at the University of Toronto.

(G.2.2.4.) Appointed seats will be filled by the UTGSU Board of Directors in September. Interested members should contact the VP-Internal prior to the September Board of Directors Meeting. There are four appointed positions:

- One (1) Director, representing Graduate Students at the Scarborough Campus
- One (1) Director, representing Graduate Students at the Mississauga Campus
- One (1) Director, representing 1st year Master students at the University of Toronto
- One (1) Director, representing 1st year PhD students at the University of Toronto

(G2.2.5) No candidate shall be allowed to run for more than one position within the UTGSU in the same election.
(G2.2.6) No candidate shall be allowed to run for office with a group or party or slate affiliation, nor can they have the appearance of parties or slates in the elections process.

(G2.2.7) The Chief Returning Officer, the Deputy Returning Officer, and student members of the Elections and Referenda Committee may not run for office upon validation.

(G2.2.8) Nomination forms must include the name, student number, academic program and email of each nominator. Nomination forms must have either a digital signature/consent as established by the procedure set by the Elections & Referenda Committee at the beginning of the Nomination Period.

(G2.2.9) Candidates must submit a completed Candidate Application Form via the procedure established by the Elections & Referenda Committee. The application form shall include the candidate's legal name, ballot name (if different from legal name), email address, phone number, mailing address, student number, academic program, and the name of the position the candidate is seeking office for. Candidate’s who do not submit the Candidate Application Form will be rejected.

(G2.2.10) Candidates may submit a candidate statement of up to 500 words with their nomination forms by the nomination deadline, which must be free of hyperlinks, or images. Candidates may submit images and links to append to their candidate statement when the technological specifications allow. This statement shall be made publicly available on the UTGSU website at the same time the list of confirmed candidates is made publicly available.

(G2.2.11) All nominees must attend a Candidate Information Session and sign a declaration that they participated and understand the contents of the session.

(G2.3.12) The CRO shall verify nomination forms and candidate eligibility, and shall inform all nominees of their candidate status before the start of the Campaign Period.
G2.3 General Election Guidelines

(G2.3.1) In an election, the candidates shall campaign in accordance with the rules of fair play and those outlined in the Election and Referenda Code in accordance with UTGSU Policies and Bylaws. Breaking the rules of fair play include, but are not limited to, breaching generally accepted community standards, libel, slander, general sabotage of the campaigns of other candidates, malicious and/or intentional breach of elections rules outlined in the UTGSU’s guiding documents and documents issued by the CRO, interfering with UTGSU staff, attempting to undermine the electoral process, and misrepresentation of fact.

(G2.3.2) The Union may not verify, sanction, or endorse third-party campaigns.

(G2.3.3) Members of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and Chairs of Committees and Caucuses may not participate in campaigns that are unverified and unsanctioned.

(G2.3.4) Candidate campaigns shall be limited to the budget limit set by the Elections & Referenda Committee. No candidate shall accept funds, in-kind support, or aid in campaigning from organizations outside the Union, including but not limited to provincial and federal lobbying and service organizations.

(G2.3.5) No candidate shall expend funds or in-kind materials/support beyond that described in the current Elections Code.

(G2.3.6) Candidates are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the relevant University and Union Policies, Bylaws, and Codes (e.g. Harassment, Student Conduct), and to ensure that they and their supporters adhere to those Policies, Bylaws, and Codes.

(G2.3.7) The Elections and Referenda Committee has the discretionary power to make decisions about issues and events not otherwise covered by the Bylaws, Policies, or documents issued by the CRO.

G2.4 Election Dates

(G2.4.1) The CRO shall ensure that the candidates list is made publicly available on the UTGSU website on the first day of the Campaign Period.

(G2.4.2) The Campaign Period shall start one (1) week following the close of the Nomination Period and shall last for two (2) weeks.
(G2.4.3) The last four (4) days of the Campaign Period shall be days on which votes can be cast, and shall be known as the Voting Period.

(G2.4.4) Candidates who wish to drop out of the race after declaring their intention to run must provide a written notice to the CRO at least twenty-four (24) hours before the start of the Voting Period.

**G2.5 Campaigning**

(G2.5.1) “Campaigning” is defined as any activity that, in and of itself, publicizes or promotes a candidate or referendum position in a UTGSU election or referendum. Furthermore, campaigning in physical spaces shall be confined to the three campuses of the University of Toronto. Candidates are free to campaign online using social media, websites, etc. if such promotions and interactions are conducted in a manner that does not violate University Policies and Codes. Campaigning includes, but is not limited to policy statements, paid advertising in media, promotional materials and the distribution of candidate information, and online material including social media, websites, etc. as approved by the Elections and Referenda Committee.

(G2.5.2) No campaigning of any form is permitted in the Union offices, or any area that can be perceived to be under Union jurisdiction, including but not limited to the UTGSU Pub, Gym and Grad Loft, UTGSU Board of Directors and Assembly Meetings and the UTGSU social media platforms. This does not preclude the CRO and Elections & Referenda Committee from creating designated campaign areas within these platforms.

(G2.5.3) Candidates may not campaign in any classroom without the express permission of the instructor and the person(s) in charge of the class. Such permission must be obtained before the beginning of the class. Campaigning may not interrupt or interfere with classroom activity. The CRO may request at any time that a candidate provides proof of having obtained permission to speak to a class. This proof may be in the form of prior written permission or a follow-up note from the instructor.

(G2.5.4) Candidates are allowed to utilize public listservs and educational platforms where anyone can have access and/or place a request to include their materials.

(G2.5.5) Candidates may not use in their campaign any service or tangible benefit conferred on them by virtue of their holding any position in any organization on campus or external to campus. This includes office supplies, equipment, advertising space, administrative services, privileged email lists or educational platforms (i.e. non-public listservs or Quercus), staff time, and funding.
(G2.5.6) Election candidates and their supporters who are current UTGSU executive team members, directors, course union executives, or members of UTGSU levy groups, committees, and caucuses shall not use any service or tangible benefit conferred on them by virtue of them holding positions within the UTGSU structure in order to directly or indirectly promote a candidate.

(G2.5.7) Candidates and members of the electorate must make all requests related to elections and referenda through the CRO or the CRO’s designate. UTGSU Staff are not to be contacted or approached by candidates for the purpose of providing administrative or other support services during the elections process.

(G2.6.8) The limit for election-related expenses for officers is five hundred Canadian dollars ($300). The limit for election-related expenses for directors is two hundred Canadian dollars ($150). These limits are set at the Canadian dollar value on January 1, 2024 and indexed to inflation thereafter. Candidate expenses must be pre-approved by the CRO or CRO-designate. The CRO reserves the right to deny election-related expenses that are frivolous.

(G2.6.9) Candidates must keep track of their expenses, save receipts and proof of payments, and submit these to the CRO no later than six (6) days following the end of voting. Expenses incurred by candidates for the purpose of campaigning will be reimbursed by the UTGSU up to the limit specified in G2.6.9. Only expenses incurred during the campaign period are eligible to be reimbursed.

**G2.6 Campaign Materials**

(G2.6.1) “Campaign materials” are defined as any physical or online materials and/ or publications that, in and of themselves, serve to promote a candidate.

(G2.6.2) Materials and statements by the candidates or their campaign deemed to be offensive, derogatory, and/or in violation of the rules of fair play are strictly prohibited.

(G2.6.2.1) Campaign or election-related materials or advertisements that seek to oppose the election of one or more candidates (e.g. naming them, showing their likeness, identifying them by their political affiliations, etc.) will not be approved and will be penalized accordingly.

(G2.6.2.2) Campaign or election-related materials or advertisements that are discriminatory based on gender, ethnicity, race, class, ability, religion, spiritual beliefs, sexuality, sexual orientation, nationality, or age will not be approved. Any campaign
materials must be removed no later than twenty-four (24) hours after receiving a removal request from the CRO.

(G2.6.3) If the CRO or the CRO’s designate rejects a campaign material or advertisement, they must provide a reason for the rejection.

(G2.6.4) Each candidate is allowed a maximum of one hundred (100) physical posters no larger than 11x17 sized paper.

(G2.6.5) All text on campaign materials must have an accurate English translation that appears in equal stature and size.

(G2.6.6) Distribution and display of campaign materials must be in accordance with the regulations of Facilities & Services’ Procedure on Distribution of Publications, Posters, and Banners (https://www.fs.utoronto.ca/services/property-management/poster-procedure/), and the rules governing posting within each building. Campaigning material being posted improperly on university property causing damage to it will be at the expense of the candidate.

(G2.6.7) All posters may only contain information that is relevant to the election.

(G2.6.8) Print campaign materials may not physically overlap or be attached to any campaign materials, including one’s own, already affixed to an object or surface. This rule is inclusive of UTGSU elections and all other current campus elections including but not limited to those for Governing Council.

(G2.6.9) Candidates may not remove from any location, whether materials are posted legally or illegally, the materials of other candidates or third parties without the express authorization of the CRO.

(G2.6.10) Posters containing the logo of the UTGSU and/ or the University of Toronto and any of its affiliated groups (i.e., levy groups, caucuses, committees, or course unions) will not be approved.

(G2.6.11) Candidates may use electronic format (e.g. websites, email, etc.) in their campaigns so long as the materials adhere to all the rules contained in this Code, and have received explicit approval from the CRO.

(G2.6.12) Electronic formats that are normally considered “free” (e.g. Instagram, email accounts, University of Toronto personal webspace, etc.) shall be allowed and considered as costing $0.

(G2.6.13) In addition to adhering to the rules contained in this Code, electronic campaign materials must be in accordance with the University of Toronto’s policies regarding information and communication technology, and must respect the privacy of students, faculty, and staff.
G2.7 Violation of Rules

(G2.7.1) The CRO has the authority to enforce the elections rules, including the issuing of penalties and demerit points. The Elections and Referenda Committee may enforce the elections rules, including issuing penalties and demerit points, where no ruling is given by the CRO or otherwise stated in this policy.

(G2.7.2) The Elections and Referenda Committee has the discretionary power to make decisions about issues and events not otherwise covered by this Code.

(G2.7.3) Complaints and allegations of violations of the elections rules must be submitted by email to the CRO.

(G2.7.4) Candidates may appeal a ruling of the CRO to the Elections and Referenda Committee within five (5) days of the issue or event occurring, which reserves the right to modify any ruling of the CRO.

(G2.7.5) Appeals of the rulings of the CRO shall be dealt with by the Elections and Referenda Committee no later than three (3) days after the time of appeal submission. Penalties and demerit points may be changed at the discretion of the Elections and Referenda Committee and made known to candidates by email within twenty-four (24) hours of the committee ruling.

(G2.7.6) Rulings of the CRO and Elections & Referenda shall be posted on the UTGSU website within one (1) day of the ruling.

(G2.7.7) It is the responsibility of each candidate to be aware of every decision made by the Elections and Referenda Committee, especially decisions regarding violations committed by that candidate.

(G2.7.8) The Elections and Referenda Committee reserves the right to assign demerit points for a given penalty sufficient to disqualify a candidate should they feel that the severity of the penalty warrants such action.

(G2.7.9) A total of thirty-five (35) or more demerit points will result in a candidate’s disqualification from the elections.
(G2.7.10) Demerit points may be changed at the discretion of the Elections and Referenda Committee and made known to candidates by email within twenty-four (24) hours of amendments.

(G.2.7.11) Further appeal of the decision shall be taken to the Board of Appeal, as established in Policy G10.

G2.8 Voting Procedures

(G2.8.1) A candidate running for the position of an executive officer or director shall be elected using an online voting system. All UTGSU members may vote for all Executive Committee positions and for directors in their division.

(G2.8.2) A third-party online voting system unaffiliated with the University of Toronto will be administered by the CRO.

(G2.8.3) The Chief Returning Officer will sign any relevant confidentiality forms associated with the online system and will oversee the voting process.

(G2.8.4) The voting procedures for the election of officers shall be as follows

   (G2.8.4.1) If there is only one candidate running for any given position in the office, a vote of confidence shall be held.

   (G2.8.4.2) If there are more than one candidates running for any officer position, candidates shall be elected using a ranked-choice, or "instant runoff," ballot. The ballot shall allow voters to rank choices in order of preference equal to the total number of candidates for each position being contested.

   (G2.8.4.3) In the event of a tie for a position, the CRO will extend the voting period by two (2) days for the number of tied positions. The runoff vote, for the tied candidates, shall be conducted no later than two (2) days after issuing of the results indicating a tie.

(G2.8.5) The voting procedures for the election of directors shall be as follows

   (G2.8.5.1) If there are no contested candidates for the positions of directors in a single division, a vote of confidence shall be held for each candidate.

   (G2.8.5.2) If there are more candidates than vacant positions available, voters will be able to cast up to the maximum number of votes as there are vacant positions. The successful candidates will be chosen based on plurality of votes.
In the event of a tie for a position, the CRO will extend the voting period by two (2) days for the number of tied positions. The successful candidates which won by plurality of votes shall be secured. The runoff vote, for the tied candidates, shall be conducted no later than two (2) days after issuing of the results indicating a tie.

G2.9 Demerit Points

(G2.9.1) Unintentional misrepresentation of facts in a campaign material or communicated orally or in writing by a candidate or volunteer for a candidate or referendum campaign team may garner up to 15 demerit points.

(G2.9.2) The use of materials that have not been approved by the CRO may garner up to 25 demerit points.

(G2.9.3) Campaigning in an unauthorized area may garner up to 5 demerit points.

(G2.9.4) Intentional misrepresentation of facts may garner up to 25 demerit points.

(G2.9.5) Distribution of campaign material within six meters of a polling station may garner up to 15 demerit points.

(G2.9.6) Improper distribution of campaign materials may garner up to 10 demerit points.

(G2.9.7) Exceeding the spending limits of the election by up to 20% may garner up to 20 demerit points.

(G2.9.8) Exceeding the spending limits of the election by more than 20% may garner up to 35 demerit points.

(G2.9.9) Conducting a class talk without the permission of a course instructor may garner up to 35 demerit points.

(G2.9.10) Impersonating or pretending to be a volunteer for another candidate or referendum committee and violating election rules on purpose to get the candidate or referendum committee disqualified, or encouraging an external organization to do so, may garner up to 35 demerit points.

(G2.9.11) A violation of a clause of Policy G2 for which there is no specified demerit point amount shall garner demerit points determined by the Elections & Referenda Committee.

(G2.9.12) The unsanctioned use of UTGSU resources or the resources of an external organization may garner up to 35 demerit points.
(G2.9.13) An intentional violation of University Policies, Codes, and Student Code of Conduct, or applicable municipal, provincial, or federal laws due to the way in which a candidate or referendum committee conducted election or referendum activities may garner up to 35 demerit points.

(G2.9.14) Harassment, violence, or intimidation by a candidate or their organization against another candidate or their organization may garner up to 35 demerit points.

(G2.9.15) Abuse of position or status may garner up to 25 demerit points.

(G2.9.16) In determining the appropriate penalty to be given for a violation the CRO or Elections & Referenda shall consider the following:

(G2.9.16.1) A violation may result in multiple penalties where the violation encompasses more than one offense.

(G2.9.16.2) Penalties shall be proportionate to the severity of the violation. A penalty shall be considered more severe if the evidence establishes any of the following:

(G2.9.16.1.1) A Candidate did not take reasonable available steps to correct the violation within a reasonable time period.

(G2.9.16.1.2) A Candidate continued violating the Code after being deemed informed by the CRO or Election Official, via ruling or otherwise, that their actions violated the rule.

(G2.9.16.1.3) A Candidate bears personal responsibility for the violations having occurred.

(G2.9.16.1.4) The rules of fair play are violated.

(G2.9.16.1.5) There was a significant unfair benefit to the Candidate because of the violation.

G2.10 Documents the CRO Must Issue

(G2.10.1) The CRO must send a Candidate’s Package to all confirmed candidates containing the election dates, the CRO and Election and Referenda Committee’s contact information, a reminder for candidates to read the applicable Bylaws and Policies pertaining to elections, polling locations if any, and the name of the company hired to administer the online voting system.
G2.11 Amendments to This Policy

(G2.11.1) If Policy G2 is amended during an ongoing elections process, the amendments shall take effect after said elections process has concluded.

G2.12 General Referenda Guidelines

(G2.12.1) A Yes or No Campaign should be implemented if there are clear or likely divisions within the membership regarding an issue that is to be put to referendum. An Information Campaign should be implemented if there are no clear or likely divisions within the membership, and present an unbiased viewpoint on an issue that is to be put to referendum.

(G2.12.2) Prior to a referendum, the Board of Directors will determine whether a given referendum campaign will be either a Yes or No Campaign or an Information-Based Campaign. This decision will be made in consultation with all parties and the membership. This decision may be overridden by Clause 2.13.1.1.

   (G2.12.2.1) Prior to the start of campaigning, the decision of whether a Yes or No or Information campaign is appropriate may be appealed to the body designated to determine election and referendum appeals.

(G2.12.3) A referendum can be initiated by members at large via petition. The petition must garner at least 1% of digital or physical signatures from current members and be is submitted to the VP Internal before January 1st of each year so it can be presented to the Board of Directors.

   (G2.12.3.1) In the event of a member-initiated referendum petition, the petition shall be added to the agenda of the next January Board of Directors meeting at which the Board of Directors shall follow the process in G2.12.2

(G2.12.4) In referenda, the Yes or No, and Information Campaign Committee members shall campaign in accordance with the rules of fair play, as well as those found in the Election and Referenda Code. Breaking the rules of fair play include, but are not limited to, libel, slander, general sabotage of the campaign of the other candidate(s), and misrepresentation of fact. All campaigning and referenda rules not set out in the Bylaw shall be determined by the Elections and Referenda Committee and reported to Board of Directors and shall be made available to all candidates, Deputy Returning Officers, and Poll Clerks.

(G2.12.5) All ballots must be retained by the Elections and Referenda Committee for a period of at least two (2) weeks following the elections and shall be available to candidates or their representative and to members of Board of Directors upon written request. During this period,
the Committee shall receive and act upon any request for a recount or written allegation of referenda misconduct. All findings shall be available on the Union’s website.

(G2.12.6) The Union may not verify, sanction, or endorse third-party campaigns.

(G2.12.7) Members of the Board of Directors, the Executive, and Chairs of Committees and Caucuses may not participate in campaigns that are unverified and unsanctioned.

G2.13 Yes or No Referendum Campaigns

(G2.13.1) Council shall allocate up to a maximum of $1000.00 at the Canadian dollar value on January 1, 2024 and indexed to inflation thereafter to fund one Yes committee and up to a maximum of $1000.00 at the Canadian dollar value on January 1, 2024 and indexed to inflation thereafter to fund one No committee in each Yes or No referendum. Only these funds may be used in each campaign. Expenses must be approved by the Chief Returning Officer before being made. The CRO has the right to deny any expenses that are deemed frivolous. These committees are the sole representatives of these platforms during the referendum.

(G2.13.1.1) Should there be a lack of either a proposed Yes or No Committee for the proposed campaign period after two (2) week call for the formation of these committees, then the Elections and Referenda Committee shall be empowered to implement an Information-Based Campaign as described in Clause 2.14.

(G2.13.2) To qualify for funding, a Yes or No committee must submit to the Chief Returning Officer a proposal for funding on which must appear the following:

(G2.13.2.1) The signatures and student numbers of the members that constitute the Yes or No Committee; and

(G2.13.2.2) The signatures and student numbers of at least fifteen (15) members that confirm the composition of that committee and its capacity to adequately perform the campaign duties required.

(G2.13.3) The Chief Returning Officer shall verify through the University Registrar’s office that the names and numbers appearing on petitions presented in accordance with clause G2.13.2 above are those of members.

(G2.13.4) In the case of a referendum initiated by petition, the petitioning side shall be deemed to have fulfilled the requirements of clause G2.13.2 above, provided that it includes on the petition for a referendum a list of committee members as required by clause G2.13.2
(G2.13.5) If the committee fulfills the requirements of this article, the Chief Returning Officer shall designate it as the body entitled to receive referendum funding. Notwithstanding this provision, the Elections and Referenda Committee may decide to put a different committee in place or to add or subtract members from the original committee.

(G2.13.6) Funding for each Yes or No committee shall consist of any combination of credits for photocopying on the Union’s photocopiers and money provided as reimbursement for campaign expenses incurred elsewhere and approved by the Chief Returning Officer. A Yes or No committee must submit an application for reimbursement and supporting receipts to the Chief Returning Officer in order to receive reimbursement.

(G2.13.7) The Yes and No committees shall function as regular ad hoc committees, making spending decisions by Resolution.

(G2.13.8) The Chief Returning Officer shall publicize the availability of funding for Yes and No committees by means of advertisements appearing in a union publication or publications no later than seven (7) days prior to the referendum.

G2.14 Information-Based Referendum Campaign

(G2.14.1) Where Council supports the provision of information to the electorate, the Union, by a simple majority vote of Council, may provide financing for an information-based campaign to an approximate value of $1500.00 in every referendum at the Canadian dollar value on January 1, 2024 and indexed to inflation thereafter.

(G2.14.2) The Elections and Referenda Committee shall be responsible for administering information-based campaigns by selecting from the membership a single Sub-Committee for this express purpose. As a consequence, the Sub-Committee members shall be prohibited from sponsoring a side whenever an information-based campaign has been approved and shall refrain from participating in Committee discussions of referenda with regards to enforcement of campaign rules and demerit points.

(G2.14.3) All information-based campaign materials must be reviewed and approved by the Elections and Referenda Committee before being posted or distributed. The Elections and Referenda Committee shall review the materials to ensure that they are neutral, and unbiased.

G2.15 Voting Procedure and Conduct for Elections and Referenda

In any Union election, the following shall be adhered to:
(G2.15.1) Elections and referenda shall be conducted using an online voting system.

(G2.15.2) Recommendations for the type of voting system shall be provided by the Chief Returning Officer and approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

(G2.15.3) If voting is to be conducted using an online voting system:

   (G2.15.3.1) The rules and guidelines determining how a candidate will be elected will be established in the Election and Referenda Code.

   (G2.15.3.2) Voting shall be secret and protected by security measures adequate to ensure the privacy of the election, its results, and the UTGSU Membership.

   (G2.15.3.3) Mail-in paper balloting shall be permitted by the Elections and Referenda Committee if online voting is not possible.

   (G2.15.3.4) Proxy voting shall not be permitted.

   (G2.15.3.5) No access shall be granted to the results of the online voting system with the exception of the Chief Returning Officer and the Deputy Returning Officer, unless outlined by the Chief Returning Officer in the UTGSU Bylaws and Policies and approved by the Election and Referenda Committee.

   (G2.15.3.6) Should Board of Directors approve the use of a third-party managed system, the UTGSU will not share any personal information about its Members without the explicit written consent of the Member, and all information shall be governed by a confidentiality agreement.

   (G2.15.3.7) There shall be a minimum of minimum four (4) days allotted for the casting of ballots. There will be no time restrictions for online voting unless otherwise noted by the system administrators.

   (G2.15.3.8) In the event of any failure with the online voting system, the Chief Returning Officer shall be authorized to run a paper ballot election in accordance with Policy G2.15.4, as outlined below.

   (G2.15.3.9) If possible, the candidates shall be elected using a ranked choice, or “instant runoff,” ballot.

(G2.15.4) Should online voting system be compromised or deemed infeasible, the UTGSU shall maintain procedures to conduct a paper ballot system with the following procedures:

   (G2.15.4.1) Voting shall be by secret ballot.
(G2.15.4.2) Voting must be voluntarily cast; it will not be permitted to coerce or intimidate a member to vote.

(G2.15.4.3) Each Poll Clerk is responsible for ensuring proper voting procedures are followed at her or his poll.

(G2.15.4.4) The Poll Clerk must make certain that all candidates’ campaign materials (election posters, etc.) are removed from the general area of the polling station.

(G2.15.4.5) A candidate must not be allowed to loiter within twenty (20) meters of the polling station before or after her or his vote is cast.

(G2.15.4.6) The Poll Clerk must ensure, as far as possible, the secrecy of voting.

(G2.15.4.7) A maximum of two (2) elections officials, Union staff, or other individuals designated by the Chief Returning Officer, including the Poll Clerk, may be allowed to sit at a polling station at one time.

(G2.15.4.8) A minimum of four (4) polling stations must be set up for each day of an election. These shall be located at convenient, accessible locations on each of the University campuses. Polls must be located at each of the suburban campuses for at least one partial or full day of the election period. Polling stations should serve all units of the School of Graduate Studies (particularly those not on the contiguous St. George Campus).

(G2.15.4.9) There shall be four (4) days allotted for the casting of ballots. Voting for physical ballots shall be restricted to the time period locations established in the Policies or other documents issued by the CRO.

(G2.15.4.10) To be permitted to vote, a voter must present to the Poll Clerk, at a polling station, a current University of Toronto student identification card. The voter will receive a ballot previously initialed by the Chief Returning Officer, and initialed by the Poll Clerk in the voter’s presence.

(G2.15.4.11) In the case of the voting of a Poll Clerk, the Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer(s) or other designate of the Chief Returning Officer shall initial the ballot in place of the Clerk at a polling station and in the presence of said Poll Clerk.

(G2.15.4.12) The voter will then mark their ballot, fold it, and place it in the ballot box.

(G2.15.4.13) The Poll Clerk shall keep an accurate tally of votes that have been cast. Violation of these procedures shall be reported to the Chief Returning Officer as soon as possible.
(G2.15.5) These rules and procedures shall only be used for election of Union officers, Board of Directors and for referenda. Procedures for the election of departmental representatives to the General Assembly are in Bylaw Article 5. Board of Directors shall establish procedures for other elections, whenever the need arises.

(G2.15.7) There shall be no quorum for elections or referenda.

   (G2.15.7.1) Should a referendum require a quorum, this quorum shall be determined prior to the campaign period, communicated to the Chief Returning Officer, and outlined in the Election and Referenda Code.

   (G2.15.7.2) Should quorum not be met, the results shall be declared null and not made public.

(G2.15.8) The results of the UTGSU election and referenda shall be posted in a timely fashion. The Elections & Referenda Committee may defer releasing the results of elections and referenda should there be outstanding complaints and appeals which may impact the final outcome of the election or referenda. The Elections & Referenda Committee must agree by a two-thirds (2/3) majority to defer releasing the results.

G2.16 By-Elections

(G2.16.1) At least two (2) weeks public notice must be given for any by-election and it shall be conducted according to the procedures for elections outlined in Policy Clauses G2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7 and Article 9 of the UTGSU Bylaw where applicable.

(G2.16.2) All members of the Union, except those who have been impeached in the twelve (12) months immediately preceding the by-election, are eligible to contest a by-election.

(G2.16.3) Any Officer or Director of the Union who runs for another office of the Union in a byelection must submit her or his resignation of their current office effective upon assuming office, should they be elected. This vacant seat will be filled as per the provisions in the previous clauses of this policy.

(G2.16.4) Any Officer or Director of the Union who has submitted a nomination form for another Office of the Union shall submit a list of the activities intended by their current office during the electoral period to the Chief Returning Officer prior to the commencement of that electoral period. The elections committee shall prescribe those activities that unduly influence the election, and specify demerit points and penalties associated with those activities.
(G2.16.5) Officers of the Union elected in a by-election shall assume office twenty four (24) hours after the Chief Returning Officer declares the election results.

(G2.16.6) 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.

G2.17 Responsibilities of UTGSU Staff

(G2.16.7) UTGSU staff time and expertise will be made available to the Chief Returning Officer to assist with communications, design work, promotions, and room bookings.
Motion for consideration - Item 4

WHEREAS there is currently minimal to no office furniture in the UTGSU office; and
WHEREAS a motion was passed at the August 7, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting to allocate $25,000 to the purchasing of office furniture; and
WHEREAS due to organizational turnover no large allocations have been made from that fund; and
WHEREAS the internal Building Management Committee has sought quotes for office furniture and requested multiple revisions to balance the needs of the office with the size of the supplies order; and
WHEREAS additional furnishing and maintenance allocations will need to be made for UTGSU office and common spaces; and
WHEREAS the Building, Planning and Accessibility Fund has a healthy reserve; therefore
BIRT $35,000.00 be allocated to make initial purchases for the furnishing of the UTGSU staff and board room spaces.

Moved; J. Liang
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?