



## Graduate Students' Union Executive Reports to General Council December 2016

**Branden Cesare Rizzuto**  
**Academics and Funding Commissioner (Divisions I and II)**  
**5 November to 29 November 2016**

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### **A) Executive Committee and General Council Meetings**

- I attended and participated in the Executive Visioning Session on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- I attended and participated in the Executive and Staff meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- I attended and participated in the General Council Meeting on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016
  - o I delivered an Executive Report to council
  - o I solicited members of Council to volunteer for the Division 4 Representative position on the UTGSU Graduate Student Census Ad Hoc Committee
- I attended and participated in the Executive and Staff meeting on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016
- I attended and participated in the Executive and Staff meeting on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### **B) Other UTGSU Committee, Levy Group, and Caucus Meeting Highlights**

#### **I. Building Management Sub-Committee**

- o I attended and participated in the Building Management Sub-Committee meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

#### **II. Graduate Student Census *Ad-Hoc* Committee**

- o I attended, chaired, and participated in the Graduate Student Census *Ad-Hoc* Committee meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- o I attended and participated in the Building Management Sub-Committee meeting on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

#### **III. Finance Committee**

- o I attended and participated in the Finance Committee meeting on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### **C) University of Toronto Governing Bodies & Other Engagement Highlights**

#### **I. Meeting with SGS and Provost**

- o Alongside the Academic and Funding Commissioner (Divisions 3 and 4), I attended and participated in a meeting with the University of Toronto Vice-

President/Provost and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

- Issues surrounding the academics, funding, and general experiences of U of T graduate students – and how to remedy these issues – were discussed

## II. Academic Board

- Alongside the Finance and University Governance Commissioner, I attended the Governing Council Academic Board meeting on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## III. Graduate Curriculum Committee Executive (Arts and Science)

- I attended and participated in the Graduate Curriculum Committee Executive (Arts and Science) on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## D) Other Meetings, Issues, Significant Events and information Highlights

- I. I continued investigating issues associated with students losing portions of their base funding package in some U of T departments because they choose to seek external employment (i.e. employment outside of the University of Toronto)
- II. I continued to address additional funding complaints brought forth to the UTGSU by U of T graduate students
- III. Alongside UTGSU Executives and Staff, I finalized the UTGSU's Course Union President's Lunch at the Faculty Club on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- IV. I attended and participated in the UTGSU Course Union President's Lunch at the Faculty Club on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- V. I attended and participated in the UTGSU Auditor's Report on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- VI. I attended the School of Graduate Studies' Connaught-Vanier Scholarship Reception at the Faculty Club on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

**Andrea Constantino**

**Academics and Funding Commissioner, Divisions 3&4**

**5 November to 28 November 2016**

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## A) Executive Committee and General Council Meetings

I attended and participated in the Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>

I attended and participated in the Council meeting on Tuesday November 15<sup>th</sup>

I attended an Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## B) Other UTGSU Committee, Levy Group, and Caucus Meeting Highlights

### I. President's Lunch November 28

I attended and gave a presentation at the President's lunch at the Faculty Club. The event was well attended and a great opportunity to meet with our course union presidents to discuss important issues. We sought and received important feedback as to how the UTGSU can better support our membership.

## C) University of Toronto Governing Body and Other Meeting Highlights

### I. Meeting with Dean of SGS

Wednesday November 16<sup>th</sup>

I, along with the Academics and Funding Commissioner met with the Dean of SGS and Provost to discuss current issues and concerns, as outlined below:

#### 1. Tuition Rebate Strategies

- a. The **New Program Extension Arrangement** cuts fees to 50% Domestic tuition and fees for all students entering the 7<sup>th</sup> year of their doctoral studies
- b. Doctoral Completion awards exist for students outside of their funded cohort
- c. Tuition Assistance Funding also exists for CUPE 3902 members
- d. We propose introducing 'Program Extension Arrangement' in the year in which a student moves to unfunded cohort

#### 2. Graduate Summer Gym Fees

- a. SGS funds initiatives that support the positive mental health of graduate students
- b. Numerous studies have demonstrated that physical activity plays a crucial role in supporting mental health
- c. Graduate students lose access to gyms during summer
- d. Eliminate graduate summer gym fees

#### 3. Funding Letter

- a. Students are not receiving official funding letters from departments outlining what guaranteed funding the student will receive.
- b. An official funding letter is often necessary to receive loans, rent an apartment, visa applications, etc.

#### 4. Access to Health Benefits while on Leave

- a. Graduate students lose access to mental health resources while they are on leave. This is counter intuitive, as students often take leave to address mental health concerns

#### 5. UHIP payment for International Students with Residency

- a. There is currently a time lag between when a student achieves residency and when they are enrolled in OHIP. UHIP ceases immediately after a student becomes a resident, leaving them without any resources until OHIP is activated.

#### 6. Unfunded Programs

- a. Major concerns regarding transparency of funding in programs in **Faculties of Music, OISE, and Law**.
  - **Faculty of Law:** Students are funded for 3 years of program instead of 4
  - **Faculty of Music and OISE:** Unfunded programs advertise easy access to funding and bursaries that do not exist. Inadequate amount of accurate information provided to allow students to decide whether to enroll in program.

#### 7. Create Bursary Opportunities for Students in Unfunded Programs

- a. Open the scope of bursary eligibility for more than just academically streamed full time students

## II. Meeting with the Supervision Group for Faculty Guidelines

Wednesday November 23rd

I met with the Provostial Committee that has been struck to create guidelines for what it means to be a good supervisor. Many subjects were discussed, such as different communication styles and how expectations should be set. These guidelines are going to be written and presented in January.

**Brienne Berry-Crossfield**

**Finance and University Governance Commissioner**

**5 November to 28 November 2016**

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### A) Executive Committee and General Council Meetings

- I chaired the Executive and Staff meeting on November 1<sup>st</sup>
- I participated in the Executive Committee Fall Visioning meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup>
- I attended and participated in the Executive and Staff Meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>
- I attended and participated in the UTGSU Council/Board of Directors Meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>. (The Executive and Staff Meeting was cancelled due to November Council).
- I sent regrets and was not in attendance at the Executive and Staff meeting on November 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- I was unable to attend the UTGSU's Presidents Lunch on November 28<sup>th</sup> due to scheduling conflicts.

### B) Other UTGSU Committee, Levy Group, and Caucus Meeting Highlights

#### I. Queer Caucus

*November 10<sup>th</sup>*

I met with the Chair of Queer Caucus to present them with their budget for the year and discuss any ideas that they would like to do over the new couple of months.

#### II. Finance Committee

*November 24<sup>th</sup>*

The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the new members of Finance Committee elected during October Council, discuss the relevant policies related to Finance, go over pending donation requests and set a date to look over Special Grants requests.

### C) University of Toronto Governing Bodies & Other Engagement Highlights

#### I. UT Academic Board

*November 24<sup>th</sup>*

I attended this meeting with the Academics and Funding Commissioner (1&2). For information, there was a presentation on the proposed *Policy of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment*. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) also presented findings from the 10,000 PhDs Project and there was also a presentation on the upcoming Alumni

Impact Survey, which is expected to begin in Spring 2017. Finally, the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Music outlined their Academic Plans for the upcoming years.

## II. UT University Affairs Board

*November 28th*

UAB representatives unanimously approved the proposed *Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment* for recommendation to the UT Executive Committee. The Conflict Resolution Centre (CRC) for Graduate Students also gave a presentation on the peer-to-peer program and discussed some of their findings/next steps moving forward.

## D) Other Meetings, Issues, Significant Events and information Highlights

### I. Council of Athletics and Recreation (CAR) Budget Committee

*November 9<sup>th</sup>, November 16<sup>th</sup>, November 23<sup>rd</sup>*

As part of Council on Student Services (COSS), I have been attending the Council of Athletics and Recreation (CAR) Budget Committee meetings. At this time, the Budget Committee has approved the 2017/2018 proposed Budget and it will be presented to the representatives in CAR.

### II. Canadian Federation of Students - National Semi-Annual General Meeting

*November 17<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>*

I attended the Canadian Federation of Students National Semi-Annual General Meeting with the External Commissioner. The SAGM took place from November 18<sup>th</sup> to November 21<sup>st</sup>; we met with the CFS-Ontario component on November 17<sup>th</sup> to do some orientation for the meeting and the agenda.

During the SAGM, I was elected to sit on Organizational Services and Development (OSD) Committee on behalf of the Women's Constituency group, where we looked at motions pertaining to bylaw and services of the national organization. We attended workshops on building a trans-inclusive student movement, debriefed on the National Day of Action and learned from Chilean student activists who spoke about their campaign for free education. I also attended the Trans Day of Remembrance Vigil on **November 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Elizabeth Eng**

**Internal Commissioner**

**5 November to 29 November 2016**

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## A) Executive Committee and General Council Meetings

- I prepared the agenda, attended and participated in the Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday November 8<sup>th</sup>
- I attended the General Council Meeting on Tuesday November 15<sup>th</sup>. The Executive meeting on Tuesday November 15<sup>th</sup> was cancelled, due to conflict with the General Council Meeting
- I prepared the agenda, attended and participated in the Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday November 22<sup>nd</sup>

- I prepared the agenda, attended and participated in the Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday November 29<sup>th</sup>

## **B) Other UTGSU Committee, Levy Group, and Caucus Meeting Highlights**

### **I. Chief Returning Officer Hiring Committee**

Sent out an advertisement for the CRO through the UTGSU Digest. Due to technical difficulties with the listserv, this message did not get out, and so was promoted on Facebook and the Website until our Digest was working. The deadline was extended to Wednesday November 23<sup>rd</sup> (from Friday November 18<sup>th</sup>). The CRO nominating committee selected who will be interviewed Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, to be appointed at General Council Dec 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **II. Building Management Sub-Committee – Thursday November 24<sup>th</sup>**

Met with the building management sub-committee as well as the Building Manager, Mike Carere to discuss current issues with our building, relationship between the UTGSU and building management, and possibilities for the future. We established that our HDI Staff person will be the point of contact with the Building Manager, and that our Finance Administrator will be the back-up contact. The first order of business will be discussing Occupancy Agreements with the University, before moving on with other projects.

### **III. Defense Committee – Wednesday November 16<sup>th</sup>**

The Defense Committee met to discuss the case with newly appointed committee members.

## **C) University of Toronto Governing Body and Other Meeting Highlights**

No meetings took place over the period of this report.

## **D) Other Meetings, Issues, Significant Events and information Highlights**

### **I. Annual Meeting Preparations**

#### *Sign-ins*

I met with our Fieldworker to discuss better options for sign-in at the Annual Meeting, on Thursday November 24<sup>th</sup>. We discussed keeping the paper binder records on hand, but moving to a computer sign in system, which would involve at least three laptops. This decision will be brought to the Executive Committee prior to the December 6<sup>th</sup> annual meeting.

#### *Motions*

I have been in contact with UTGSU members interested in providing Notice of Motion. This has involved answering questions specific to the content they wish to present. It has also involved referring members to relevant Bylaw and Policy, providing information on what a motion is and what the procedure looks like.

### **II. Course Union Presidents' Lunch**

#### *Preparations*

I drafted and sent out the invitation for the lunch to the President's as well as the UTGSU Staff.

*Lunch – Monday November 28<sup>th</sup>*

I attended the President's Lunch at the Faculty Club and gave a brief presentation about my role as Internal Commissioner, and the work we will be doing on the Bylaw and Policy. I spoke with Course Union presidents about the obstacles they face. Some highlights from my perspective: 1) Improving communication between reps and presidents/the UTGSU and presidents. This could look like in addition to minutes/meeting highlights sending out highlights pulled from the Executive Reports, so the Presidents at least have a sense of what the UTGSU does when communicating with members. Feedback about the lunch being earlier. 2) Difficulties engaging memberships in faculties where there are a lot of online students/online programs. 3) Can the UTGSU keep knowledge of when elections in course unions occur, and have the Fieldworker/Exec contact the new Presidents early on, so they are aware of the resources they have. 4) Can the UTGSU provide templates for constitutions or transition docs.

**Sarah Cooper**

**Executive at Large**

**5 November to 29 November 2016**

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**A) Executive Committee and General Council Meetings**

- I. I attended and participated in the Executive Meetings on the following dates:
  1. November 22, 2016
  2. November 29, 2016
- II. I attended and participated in the UTGSU Council/Board of Directors on the following date:
  1. November 15, 2016

**B) Other UTGSU Committee, Levy Group, and Caucus Meeting Highlights**

**III. Policy and Operations Committee**

- a. Beginning individual work on an initial review of the UTGSU bylaws and policies, and preparing a framework for how to approach changes for this committee. Will be participating in the working group.

**C) Other Meetings, Issues, Significant Events and information Highlights**

**i. Executive Training & Financial Training**

- a. On November 15, 2016 I attended financial training on the current budget and relevant financial policies.
- b. On November 22, 2016 I attended executive training on the UTGSU bylaws and policies as well as general office protocols.

**ii. Presidents Luncheon**

- a. Attended and participated in the Course Unions Presidents luncheon.