

2024-2025 York Graduate Students in Education (YGSE) - November Meeting

Nov 14, 2024 4:00 p.m. EST | Zoom

Attendance List

Role(s)	Name	Here?
PhD Co-chair, CUPE 3903 Unit 1 Steward	Ari Paranthahan	✓
MEd Co-chair	Stephanie Soares	
Secretary	Ian Chan	✓
Treasurer	Aurra Startup	✓
Social and Professional Development Coordinator	Safra Dean	✓
Equity and Communications Coordinator, Graduate Mentorship Program Coordinator	Jennifer Tran	✓
Equity and Communications Coordinator	Shenel Williams	✓
Elections Officer, Coordinating & Planning (C&P) Committee	Mahnaz Dehghantezerjani	✓
Indigenous Student Representative (ISR)	Melissa Somer	✓
YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor, Admission Representative	Sheetal Prasad	✓
Graduate Lounge/Kitchen Manager	Tracy Kan	✓
Graduate Conference Coordinator, Committee for Faculty Research, Awards & Grants Representative	Ellie Van Berkel	
Graduate Conference Coordinator	Tesni Ellis	✓
PhD Representative	Ayesha Michelle Menezes	✓
MEd Representative	Aida Mohammadi	
Graduate Mentorship Program Coordinator	Runeni Mangwiza Zvemhara	
York University Graduate Student Association (YUGSA) Representative	Tristan Castro Pozo Castro	✓
York University Graduate Student Association (YUGSA) Representative	Chunlei Liu	✓
Faculty Council Representative	Sonia Martin	
Faculty Council Representative	Stella Kim	✓
Justice, Equity, and Redress of Anti-Black Racism (JERA) Committee Representative	Prilly Bicknell-Hersco	✓
Tenure & Promotions Committee Representative	Selina Greco	

Attendees (16 out of 22 - Not Simultaneous)

Ari Paranthahan, Ian Chan, Aurra Startup, Safra Dean, Jennifer Tran, Shenel Williams, Mahnaz Dehghantezerjani, Melissa Somer, Sheetal Prasad, Tracy Kan, Tesni Ellis, Ayesha Michelle Menezes, Tristan Castro Pozo Castro, Chunlei Liu, Stella Kim, Prilly Bicknell-Hersco

Apologies (6 out of 22)

Stephanie Soares, Ellie Van Berkel, Aida Mohammadi, Runeni Mangwiza Zvemhara, Sonia Martin, Selina Greco

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** - 4:05 pm
2. **Land Acknowledgment** (by PhD Co-Chair Ari Paranthahan)
3. **Roll Call** (by Secretary Ian Chan) - $\frac{2}{3}$ majority (16 members) simultaneous attendance was not fulfilled as some members joined and left at different times; quorum was not reached and thus no voting took place
4. **Vote on Agenda** - cancelled
5. **Approval of Previous Minutes** - cancelled
6. **Vote on the Revised Budget** - cancelled; replaced with a revised budget presentation and Q&A session facilitated by Treasurer Aurra Startup
 - Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean pointed out that there is a lack of funding for YGSE professional learning events and graduate lounge decoration from the revised budget
 - Seminars delivered by guest speakers (possibly graduate students discussing their MEd/PhD journeys) should be included - e.g. Demystifying Series for winter term
 - An honorarium should be provided for guest speakers, rather than expecting them to spend their time and effort on a voluntary basis
 - Metaphorically speaking, a small amount of around \$50 for fall decorations can already make an impact on attracting people to use the graduate lounge
 - Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis seconded Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean's ideas and inquired about whether there are separate entries in the revised budget for social events and graduate lounge expenditures. Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean clarified that she did not use the social events budget to buy items for the graduate lounge, but rather any remaining funds for social events is left to be available for graduate lounge expenditures.
 - PhD Co-Chair Ari Paranthahan and Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis inquired about the purpose for which the Indigenous Community Support Fund from the revised budget was used. YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor / Admission Representative Sheetal Prasad referenced last school year's practice of allocating the Indigenous Community Support Fund for the Indigenous Students' Association at York (ISAY). In fact, the Indigenous Community Support Fund used to be called the Land Acknowledgement Fund, but the name changed as the Indigenous Student Rep back then brought up concerns. Now, the Indigenous Community Support Fund is supposed to help operate indigenous community initiatives like the ISAY gala and annual powwow (if done this school year).
 - YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor / Admission Representative Sheetal Prasad proposed to reduce the YU-WRITE Journal fund from \$2000 to \$1500, so that the \$500 remainder can be reallocated for something else if YGSE encounters an over-budget issue. Since last school year's budget for that was \$1000, it would be justifiable to argue precedence on this. When Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis inquired about what line items were increased from last school year's budget, Treasurer Aurra Startup answered that social event funds used to be \$1000 for a welcome-back event (corrected by Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean to be \$500 while there was another \$500 from YUGSA for a public appreciation event), but it was potentially carried over to increase to \$1500.
 - Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean pointed out that the social event fund has drastically decreased from the time when she was the Treasurer in the 2019-2020 school year. Treasurer Aurra Startup and Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis collectively suggested that it was due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Treasurer Aurra Startup shared her observation of the growth in conference budget over time, which would be beneficial for enhancing participant headcount and engagement. She raised a question on how much should the conference budget be, so that the Graduate Conference Coordinators may know how much to anticipate, and there can be an exact amount decided by the Graduate Conference Coordinators to share with all YGSE members and let everyone vote on. While last school year's budget for that was \$4250 (\$2250 from the dean's office, \$1000 from the guard's office, \$1000 from YGSE), Treasurer Aurra Startup proposed an increase to \$4500 (\$2000 from the dean's office, \$1500 from YGSE). Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis indicated her agreement with this proposal, as this school year's conference would be held in-person rather than online, and making sure that all participants are well fed and the infrastructures are adequate in quality would be essential. Speaking directly to Gabby Moser for graduate office funding would be a great idea.
- Treasurer Aurra Startup asked whether there are any kind of external sources providing YU-WRITE journal funding, and YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor / Admission Representative Sheetal Prasad indicated that she can potentially ask the dean for additional funding as there was none in history.
- Treasurer Aurra Startup suggested to include expenditures for the Faculty Meet & Greet as well as the other welcome-back event in the social event budget. Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean opposed this idea as the funding for such came from the grad office rather than YGSE, and thus Treasurer Startup abandoned her suggestion.
- Treasurer Aurra Startup pointed out that this school year's YGSE budget was still under balance, even after all of the aforementioned amendments to the revised budget. When YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor / Admission Representative Sheetal Prasad warned about next school year's YGSE opening balance skyrocketing to \$2000, Treasurer Aurra Startup defended her revised budget by indicating that this situation was better than the \$14788 balance as of last May, and the \$2000 current balance can be potentially covered by additional funding for EDI and the graduate lounge.
- Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean inquired about whether the bursaries are being used fully, and Treasurer Aurra Startup stated that there was a carryover from last school year's budget, but YGSE did receive many applications for bursaries from past experience. As Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean further questioned whether these bursaries have as much impact on YGSE community building (many students had reflected their frustration on YGSE bursary policies) as creating nice spaces for graduate students to gather, Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis added that a student organization like YGSE should not be responsible for providing bursaries.
- To conclude before moving onto the next agenda item, PhD Co-Chair Ari Paranthahan (along with YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor / Admission Representative Sheetal Prasad) suggested to establish a budget committee led by Treasurer Aurra Startup to discuss the details of budget revision before sending out a new revised budget draft for voting. Treasurer Aurra Startup indicated her intention to send out a sign-up form in the next couple of days for recruiting budget committee members. Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis recalled that half of the deposit for the conference venue had already been paid with the help of the grad office as an intermediate solution. In the long run, it would be ideal for the budget to be finalized as soon as possible so that the Graduate Conference Coordinators can know what they are working with. Charging a minimal registration fee (like \$5-10 or pay what you can) to help offset some of the costs would be the last resort. In order to give more information to the dean's office for funding and ask for clarification in regard to its failure to provide the requested \$2500 funding, Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis would send Treasurer Aurra Startup's report upon the latter's consent.

7. Multifaith Prayer Room for Education Students Presentation (by Elections Officer / Coordinating & Planning Committee Mahnaz Dehghantezerjani)

- Elections Officer / Coordinating & Planning Committee Mahnaz Dehghantezerjani indicated that her coordinating and planning committee did not have any venue suggestions, so it would be up to YGSE.
- YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor / Admission Representative Sheetal Prasad questioned whether the room upstairs across the elevator where a sign says "multi-faith room" can serve the purpose, Elections Officer / Coordinating & Planning Committee Mahnaz Dehghantezerjani replied that the space (along with the sign) was only for a limited time, and it would not work in the long run as it was then closed.

- When Graduate Conference Coordinator Tesni Ellis further inquired about the existence of a similar venue at the Student Campus Center where her students go, Elections Officer / Coordinating & Planning Committee Mahnaz Dehghantezerjani indicated that there were 3 spaces across the campus, but one of the professors suggested that it would be more convenient to have a space within the faculty of education. Social and Professional Development Coordinator Safra Dean seconded this idea by citing her personal experience of having to pray in the hallway prior to grad launch, and adding that timing-wise it would not work for Muslim students to travel back and forth between the faculty of education and the student campus center due to prayer time restrictions. In response to that, YU-WRITE Journal Managing Editor / Admission Representative Sheetal Prasad suggested that a request can be made to the dean's office to either keep the multi-faith room at the faculty of education unlocked at all times, or transform the flex room into a multi-faith or quiet room.

8. **End Time Without Adjournment** - 5:48 pm