

## Teaching and Research Assistants at Concordia

### Regular General Assembly – November 19, 2019

#### Meeting minutes

#### 1. Opening of the GA

The meeting is called to order at 5:32 pm.

**Lynn Brown** seconds.

#### 2. Appointment of the chair and minute taker

**Jacqueline Ristola** moves to appoint **Thomas David-Bashore** as Chair and **Nicole LeBlanc** as minute-keeper.

**Jeremy Tessier** seconds.

*(The appointment is approved by majority, with no oppositions and 2 abstentions.)*

**Todd:** Has quorum been established, and if so, what are the figures?

**Chair:** We will establish that now.

**Jacqueline Ristola:** I just want to clarify now because I've received a couple of questions about it - in order to vote during the elections, you need to be physically present. You may not vote by proxy for another member or give your ballot to another person.

**Chair:** Right. Any motion on voting procedures can be considered receivable during the voting point. But in order to vote, you need to be physically present and deposit your ballot during the voting period.

**Zarish Abbas:** According to the sheet, we currently have 64 TAs and RAs and 36 invigilators present.

**Chair:** With these figures, as per quorum has been met as per TRAC's quorum standards. My name is Thomas and I'll be your Chair this evening. Before we get into the agenda points, I just want to establish a few ground rules - for the speakers' list, I'll ask people to line up behind this standing microphone. I'll suggest that people who have already spoken on a point form a line on the left side, and that those who have not already spoken form a line on the right side. This will allow me to keep track of

who hasn't spoken yet so we can ensure a better representation of voices in the room while still remaining efficient. When you take a speaking turn, please state your name and unit for the minutes. Please address all remarks to me as Chair and avoid speaking to each other directly - we want to avoid argumentation and back-and-forth. Also, please try to avoid repeating each other's points so that the discussion can be kept as succinct as possible. You should have received a reference sheet called "TRAC rules of order," which is a summarized version of the procedural code we'll be using tonight. If you have a point of order or a point of privilege, please signal that visually with a peace or metal sign.

### 3. Approval of the Agenda

**Jacqueline Ristola** moves to approve the agenda as presented.

**Pierson** seconds.

**Todd, invigilator:** I would like to add a point of standard procedure, "New business," to be covered as soon as possible.

**Chair:** Do you have a specific point of new business to address?

**Todd, invigilator:** Yes - election of invigilator delegate alternates for the delegates council. We could have a discussion about the feasibility of alternates.

**Thomas:** So would this be a non-substantive discussion on this issue?

**Todd, invigilator:** I just don't know if it would be very useful for us to have four additional delegates.

**Jacqueline:** I'd add a new point 10, ie. Invigilator delegates.

**Thomas:** Since these are incompatible points, I think we should vote on whether or not to have a discussion about invigilator delegates this evening.

**Todd, invigilator:** We have a lot of invigilators here this evening, which is a rare occurrence. So it's important to discuss this here, rather than to send it to delegates' council, which could take another month.

**Thomas:** Something would have needed to be sent in advance in order for a motion that could change the bylaws to be considered this evening.

**Pierson:** I just want to point out that this person is saying over and over again that they're speaking for invigilators while addressing one side of the room, whereas there are 30 invigilators here this evening, and only about 12 are over there.

**Thomas:** Let's vote on whether to consider an agenda point on alternate delegates for invigilators.

**VOTE:** 17 for, 21 against, 10 abstentions.

*(The motion fails.)*

**VOTE** on adopting the agenda as presented: *(The motion is adopted by majority.)*

**Todd, invigilator:** Can we ensure that all votes throughout this meeting are numerically recorded?

**Eileen** seconds.

**Todd, invigilator:** It's best practice in a democratic assembly to record all votes numerically.

**VOTE:** 20 for, 20 against, 11 abstentions. *(The vote is tied; a recount is performed.)*

**RECOUNT:** 20 for, 23 opposed, 13 abstentions.

*(The motion fails.)*

#### **4. Approval of the April 10th 2019 GA minutes**

**Dee** motions to approve the minutes from the April 10, 2019 General Assembly.

**Jeremy Tessier** seconds.

**Todd, invigilator:** Can we consult the PSAC rules of order in terms of how names are to be recorded in the minutes? Personally, I would prefer for first and last names to be recorded, as well as unit. The minutes from last year's GA include first names only, and I'm just not sure if that's standard procedure.

**Chair:** I cannot find any regulations requiring for the full recording of names. If anyone from PSAC knows otherwise, please let me know.

**PSAC:** Same thing - no specific regulations.

**VOTE** on the adoption of the April 10, 2019 minutes: *(Adopted by majority, with 1 abstention.)*

#### **5. Executive check in & PSAC report**

**Jacqueline Ristola:** I'd invite the executives from PSAC to give their presentation at this time.

**PSAC:** I think it's very relevant to read this all together so that we can move forward in a respectful and serene way. We're all aware there are some tensions; that being said, here is my report:

My name is Jonathan and I am with PSAC; I am currently working with TRAC on labor issues. I help them solve the case if any issues arise. The executive committee has asked me to do a short report on the latest events. To maintain confidentiality, I will have to stay very vague - I apologize in advance if any of this is confusing for that reason.

As some of you may know, we have been called upon to investigate various complaints regarding some members of TRAC. Shawn Corey, who is AMURE's President. Should any invigilators have any labor problems, they would have someone to speak thing There is an ongoing investigation - through an investigation committee conducted by PSAC - of issues between several TRAC members. Shawn has accepted the task of helping us throughout the investigation. Each party will be heard by impartial investigators. TRAC needs to focus on its mission to sign its first collective agreement. As some of you may recall, this investigative process has happened before. We need an honest discussion about how we can solve conflicts going forward.

**Donald Chambers, invigilator:** It's one thing to have someone from a different union come consult, but we don't understand why an invigilator from Concordia wasn't appointed for this. I've never seen somebody come in from an outside organization and for us to say, "Okay, you're in this position." I don't necessarily want PSAC to justify this because I know you didn't make the decision, I'd actually want to hear from the execs on this.

**PSAC:** Actually, I will justify, because it was Yvon Barrière from PSAC who made the decision; this situation has happened before at TRAC, in 2014. This decision wasn't made lightly. The objective was to ensure that the investigation would be impartial, and to ensure that the person appointed would be completely objective. To this end, it's ideal to have someone who isn't directly involved. If I bring someone from outside who has experience with labor unions, that ensures that any invigilator who needs to reach out for TRAC for help feels comfortable doing so and isn't hindered because of interpersonal issues. All of this is temporary.

**Todd:** Can the PSAC discuss why it's taking so long to start this process? Do we have any kind of a timeline on this?

**PSAC:** I understand that it will start pretty soon, but I don't have specific dates because I am not an investigator myself. I wouldn't be able to do my job in an impartial way if I was also an investigator.

**Alex:** Is there a way to contact the people involved in the investigation to get more information? This is the end of November, the process was supposed to begin before now, so I agree that this is quite frustrating.

**PSAC:** The people conducting the investigation will communicate only with the individuals they need to communicate with. I can appreciate that this is very frustrating.

**Todd, invigilator:** Can you debrief the investigation process? We have a hearing, and then what happens?

**PSAC:** After the hearing, there will be deliberations, and a conclusion will be reached with recommendations. This will then be submitted to the Quebec Council, which will then submit recommendations to the NBOD of PSAC. If the people involved don't like the conclusion, they can appeal.

**Mario:** Typically, the investigators would come in to a General Assembly and present the findings, and then the Assembly is allowed to vote on the outcome. I believe the way of proceeding that you're describing is very biased, and doesn't sound very democratic.

*(No further questions or comments on the PSAC presentation.)*

**Jacqueline Ristola:** I am your Mobilization and Communications Officer. We had a picnic at Loyola. We often hear from our Loyola members that they'd like to have a lot more events there. Overall, we had multiple events this year, over twenty of which were department orientations. We also tabled in the EV and CSU info fair, and had our open house in the PR building. We really went all out for Orientation this year. We had an awareness campaign focused on respecting the workplace and delegate representation. That's pretty much it in terms of the big projects we've been working on.

Our grievance and representation officer has been working on a lot of current cases. On the one hand, it's great to see more people coming forward and feeling comfortable to come see us to discuss their issues, but on the other hand, it's sad that people are having so many issues in their departments. Our office assistant Lucinda has archived much of the information we've collected. We had a joint health and safety survey with Environmental Health and Safety. We still have monthly delegate meetings.

We've done a lot of work in terms of poster design, working on a shopping list with Concordia (eg. making sure we have a TRAC bulletin board in every department), and organizing the GA.

In terms of invigilator bargaining - a committee composed of Pierson, Yana, Eileen and myself, as well as three people from PSAC, has been working on striking a deal

with Concordia. We've basically come to an agreement at this point; there's just one small problem, but we believe that will be resolved shortly with no big issue. Nothing is finalized until the arbitrator awards the agreement. Typically, this takes 60 days, so that's what we are waiting for right now.

**Alex:** You said there was just one small problem - can you elaborate? What happens if the arbitration award is not in TRAC's favor?

**Jacqueline:** For the small problem, it's about definitions - we are just waiting for Concordia's response but hopefully it will be okay. We are kind of in agreement with the university at this point, so we don't really need the arbitrator to decide on anything. They will just rubber stamp the agreement.

**Mario:** I don't hear anything about \$15 an hour. And don't give me the number with 4%. What will be the union dues paid by invigilators if this agreement goes through?

**Mojtaba:** At the beginning, the university proposed just a 1% increase. After negotiation, we received an 8.8% increase. This will also be increased by 2.6% in June 2020. The other thing is that they talk about more job security. Part of why we can't say that this is 100% complete is that we're just waiting for the arbitrator to rubber stamp the deal.

**Mario:** You should have the agreement presented to the invigilators' special meeting if you don't get them to agree to a \$15/hour wage, this could give you an extra bargaining chip if the invigilators are really against it.

**Mojtaba:** From my point of view, the greatest achievement is respect - we'll be respected and taken seriously as a union, and we'll have more leverage to fight for our members' rights once we have a collective agreement.

**Jeremy:** What is the duration of the CA being proposed? When can we go back to the bargaining table?

**Mojtaba:** One of the big problems is that this is the first collective agreement. Our hands were tied in some ways. If awarded, this CA will be for two and a half years, and after that we can bring more demands to the table.

**Pierson:** Just to keep it in the room, we have no leverage, we cannot strike, and getting this agreement will give us that leg up. Even the arbitrator told us - we're agreeing this time so we can strike next time.

**Mario:** I have a question about Pierson's involvement on the committee. He mentioned he was on the bargaining team, but since when? I don't remember him being appointed to this committee.

**Jacqueline:** Executive members decided to appoint Pierson. I'm really proud of this committee, because they were great and did lots of great work.

**Kathy, invigilator:** I'd like to talk about job security. Between midterms and finals, there are a lot of differences between How can we have job security or do a good job if we are alone? We don't know who to talk to.

**Mojtaba:** We have four or five delegates for invigilators. Invigilators can directly or indirectly approach these folks.

**Jacqueline:** We do have one more executive report to get through, so if we could wrap up this discussion sometime in the near future, that would be great.

**Chair:** A motion to limit the discussion is admissible if we feel the discussion is going on for too long.

**Tom, TA:** I'd motion to close this section and move on to the next.

**Jacqueline** seconds.

**VOTE** on moving on to the next presentation: *(Motion fails due to not achieving the  $\frac{2}{3}$  of votes required.)*

**Donald Chambers, invigilator:** The arbitrator decides what we're going to get, right?

**Mojtaba:** The process was like, for the arbitration we need one or two days as hearing dates. In this court, both parties have to talk. We need two days off from the arbitrator. The arbitrator is not available before 2021. If we postpone until 2021, we lose the collective agreement and also the money for invigilators. If we can reach an agreement with the university, it's a great deal for us. We just need the arbitrator to award this agreement.

**Jacqueline:** Concordia has threatened to take away retroactive pay if we didn't have a CA signed by next June (2020).

**Tom:** Is this related to the executive check-in, or is this related specifically to the invigilator bargaining process? If the latter, I would recommend that this discussion continue at a special meeting about invigilator bargaining...

**Chair:** The scope of an executive is vague. However, this discussion does seem to be veering into specifics that might be best addressed at another meeting. If you're on the speakers' list, please keep your comments to the point and relevant to what was discussed in the executive check-in.

**Todd:** I would like a PSAC representative to speak to this if possible. Invigilators voted for a number of bargaining committee members, one of whom was the invigilating grievance officer, who is currently suspended. At this stage in the process, PSAC can decide the composition of our bargaining team. The interim was not allowed to take the place of the suspended member, and this all seems very bizarre. I would just like an explanation - I mean this with all due respect to all parties.

**Jean-Michel Fortin:** I am not the negotiator on this bargaining table so I can't provide any exact answers, but typically when we're asking the exec to get a replacement, we put a pause on the process. But it's not mandatory to stop the process in order to replace someone on the bargaining team.

**Todd:** We had a number of duly elected invigilators who could have taken the place of the suspended member. I know a lot of this has to do with timing, but why wasn't one of these elected members contacted to replace the suspended individual?

**Mario:** Invigilators in engineering get \$15, and math \$14. Unfortunately, the 28th of October was supposed to be the bargaining date, and we never got any update. Invigilators are expecting \$15/hour at minimum, and I feel I wasted 5 years of my life because I was expecting this union to fight for \$15 or more an hour at the time I signed my union card.

**Mojtaba:** I understand the frustration, and I just want to reiterate that a lot of these issues are due to this being our first collective agreement. In 2 ½ years, we'll be in a completely different situation and can negotiate from a higher vantage point.

**Zarish:** We're going to have a bargaining meeting which the invigilators will be invited to.

**Pierson:** The arbitrator no longer has any role other than approving the agreement.

**Alex:** I just want to propose that this discussion be postponed for now, and that the executive should organize a meeting specifically to discuss this. I agree that what this agreement has laid out in terms of remuneration is not very different from what the minimum wage is going to be. The proposal to Concordia needs to be rewritten.

**Michel:** I didn't follow everything, but it seems very vague. Like he said, an increase of 8.8% will barely match the minimum wage.

**Mojtaba:** The minimum wage will change around May. By that time, the minimum wage will be \$12.5.

**Jacqueline:** We can have a meeting on this. The specific date and time will go out in the newsletter as soon as it is determined. Now, if we can move on - I had mentioned earlier that there is a new project called TRAC App. I would invite Hossein to say a

few words about this project. He is the previous VP of Trac and has been our consultant on this project.

**Hossein:** Right now we have a Wordpress website for TRAC. We wanted to go ahead and redo this site so it is more user-friendly and able to catalog all the information we have. A situation we see often is that TRAC increases the hourly wage for a position, but then the University comes in and reduces the number of hours on the contract in order to compensate for the wage increase. We wanted to give TAs information about how many hours they should expect, based on historical information.

The current performance of the website is not the best, so we worked on a new project to improve the performance using Python for data analysis. We decided to develop this application for a couple of reasons - it facilitates tracking hours and keeping track of courses. We wanted to use Django as a platform instead of Wordpress, and do data analysis with Python, which is already native to the Django system. Security and authentication will be implemented in order to give access to the data for the people who need it, and only those people. We know who has access to what data, and ensure that only certain people have access to certain data. So, to wrap up, this might replace the WordPress, or we might implement a hybrid system, using both sites for different things. The goal is that this new website will be user-friendly. The team can decide based on needs how to move forward with this.

**Alex:** Over \$5000 has been spent on the website development so far. What actually has been done so far, and can we see any results? I don't think it would be in the best interest of TRAC to use Python, because not all of the execs know how to use Python.

**Hossein:** One thing that we paid for was the website host - previously we were charged \$15 USD a month, and we've now moved to a Canadian company. We got a good discount for 3-4 years. Overall we have spent much less than \$5000 so far. Our developer is very professional and gets work done very quickly. About the WordPress, it is very good in terms of content, but WordPress has PHP at the back end. Both systems have merits and demerits, which is why I suggested we could use a hybrid approach. Python is much more popular than PHP.

**Alex:** All you mentioned now... most people know how to use SQL, for example. I've worked in web development before, but not everyone knows Python. Most people have used databases, all the things you've discussed can be done for much cheaper. Money was spent, so from that time until now, what has been done? Can we see results? Can you tell us more about why we should be spending this money, since you're pushing for the project?

**Hossein:** Personally, I'm not pushing for the project. We actually are using MySQL with Django. Django is a framework that connects pieces together. This uses a MySQL database and Python language, so non-initiated users can absolutely use it.

One of the reasons we chose this system was the language. In terms of the money - I'll just describe the results briefly. One important result is that the member files and data are now all synched. The website is updated and information is more accessible. We can ensure the integrity of election results.

## 6. Elections of 2019-2020 president

**Todd:** Can we reestablish quorum?

**Jacqueline:** We can recount the room.

*(Chair performs a quorum count. There are 42 TAs and RAs, and 23 invigilators present.)*

**Todd:** PSAC regulations note that if you have more than two candidates for a position, the vote works by process of elimination. Since we have three candidates this evening, I specifically ask the executive to consider proceeding by ranked ballot.

**Chair:** Can you point to the specific regulation where you see that? I'm not finding anything on ranked voting specifically, but it's possible I missed something.

**Todd:** Regulation 12, section 25.

**Chair:** The argument of ranked voting is not in the regulation you pointed out. What I was asking is where specifically ranked voting is mentioned in the PSAC Constitution documents.

**Todd:** It comes up in PSAC Constitution section 23, under the subheading entitled *Nomination of Elections and Officers*. Subsection 8. It details proceeding by way of elimination - in other words, ranking the ballot from 0, 1, 2, 3... That's how runoff voting works.

**Chair:** I'm looking at this subpoint now, and I don't see anything that specifically requires us to proceed through a ranked ballot - but we can decide that as an Assembly. First off, we have two subpoints to this elections point, Presentation of Candidates and Questions for Candidates. But before we get into that, I'll go over the voting procedures. *(Chair reads out TRAC's voting procedures.)*

**Charlie:** Motion for a five-minute recess.

**Mario** seconds.

**VOTE:** *(Motion passes by majority.)*

**Chair:** *(Upon return from the five-minute recess:)* Okay, if everyone can please take your seats, I'll double-check quorum before we get into the elections.

*(Chair performs a quorum count; 33 TAs and RAs, and 22 invigilators are present.)*

**a. Presentation of candidates**

**Chair:** In order to proceed, we need two scrutineers from within this Assembly to count the ballots. The people counting ballots may vote; there will be a PSAC person overseeing the vote count to ensure that everything remains legitimate. I would now receive nominations for the two scrutineer positions.

**Vivek** and **Lynn Brown** self-nominate to count ballots.

**Tom** seconds Vivek's nomination.

**Todd** seconds Lynn's nomination.

**Tom** motions to appoint both **Lynn Brown** and **Vivek** as scrutineers.

**Jacqueline Ristola** seconds.

**VOTE:** *(The motion carries by majority; both candidates are appointed as scrutineers.)*

**Chair:** Our three candidates will now introduce themselves in the order printed on the card you received.

**Alex:** Hi everyone, I'm Alex, and I am running for the position of TRAC President. I am currently both a TA and an invigilator, as well as a delegate from the Mechanical Engineering program. Having been involved with TRAC for a long time now, I am very aware of how the union operates, and I am currently its Auditor. In the past, I've also been the President of GSA, and I therefore also know very well how the university operates. I can use my experience and my skills to ensure your rights as students and as workers are respected. I'm aware of the current problems with TRAC - if elected, I can do my best to solve these problems. I will not require extensive training for this role due to my previous experience with TRAC, so if elected, I want to get to work starting tomorrow on students' problems and the invigilator bargaining. I have a good relationship with Concordia; I have previously been on the Board of Governors. I am able to voice my opinions and dialogue with them in a mutually respectful way. I want to make sure I am able to give TRAC a voice with the Concordia administration. I want your vote to be able to work for you.

**Charlie:** Good evening everyone, I am Charlie and I am also running for TRAC President this evening. I have experience as Chief Returning Officer for the GSA, and am currently working on a Master's in public policy. I ran as a candidate with the NDP in the last provincial elections. I've been involved in

politics to some extent for the past decade. If elected, I will work to ensure the Collective Agreement is upheld and to effectively resolve grievances. I have experience with federal unions; workers have more power than we think. If you vote for me, you're voting for strong representation and a union that fights for you every day.

**Rama:** My name is Rama, and I am also a candidate for TRAC President. I'm a current PhD student; I come with 9+ years of experience with academia and the university environment. My goal or philosophy of working is that when rights are diminished, it's no longer a democracy or good work environment. I would make sure that every voice is counted, regardless of whether or not it's a majority or minority voice. No discrimination. I know that most university politics are based on where you come from. If you want fair things to happen, the start happens at the university level. You cannot become an MP or PM of Canada to make change happen, so make change where you are.

**b. Questions for candidates**

**Chair:** We will now have a 30-second time limit for questions and a 30-second time limit for each individual answer from the candidates. I'd ask that unless you have a pressing question for one candidate in particular, all questions be open to responses from all candidates - this is just in the interest of saving time.

**Raisel:** What is your background with unions? Have any of you worked for a union before?

**Alex:** I know how unions operate because I've been part of multiple unions. Notably, I'm the former President of the GSA. Everyone knows that I've been trying to contribute to TRAC's work for a long time now. That work will continue regardless of whether I am elected as your President.

**Charlie:** I've worked with the NDP for years, which has included working in an NDP office where the staff were unionized.

**Mario:** My question is for Charlie. We've never seen you at TRAC events before now, when you're running as President. Will we continue to see you around even in the event you are not elected tonight?

**Charlie:** It's true that I haven't been very involved with TRAC in the past, but I want to change that, and this is one way I feel I can contribute. But yes, I will continue my involvement regardless of whether I am elected.

**Firas:** This role requires sound decision-making, with a lot of input being considered. Can you describe an example when you made a sound decision in a work context?

**Rama:** At one point, I was the manager of 80+ employees. I had to make a lot of decisions in that context.

**Alex:** Currently I supervise invigilators. In my current role, many decisions that I make on a daily basis directly help and support invigilators.

**Charlie:** I would say that many of my decisions in the context of my role as Chief Returning Officer at the GSA are applicable here. I can't go into details because a lot of it is confidential.

**Pierson:** Alex, you have had a long history as a student leader at Concordia. As leaders, we always try to focus on how we lead. Can we trust you to stand up for labor rights when you have a history of forcing workers to resign during your time at the GSA?

**Alex:** I never forced anyone to resign. Resignations took place at the GSA just before I started there. If you ask anyone who was working at the GSA at the time, they'll tell you that I was one of the main people defending the rights of workers there.

**Mahmoud:** Workers here are overwhelmingly students. What would you say is the main difference between TRAC and a student union?

**Alex:** Student unions fight for students' rights. TRAC is specifically a labor union - it's focused on labor issues, and we do have workers who aren't students.

**Rama:** You can think about the difference between TRAC and the GSA, for instance; TRAC inherits the rights and representation of PSAC, whereas the GSA cannot.

**Mahmoud:** Worker and student activism is a global phenomenon, and there are currently many student protests and worker- and student-led protests going on around the world, in places like Bolivia, Lebanon, Algeria... If elected, will you ensure that TRAC stands in solidarity with all students and workers across the world?

**Charlie:** If the Assembly votes to support students across the world, I will do that. Personally, I think our focus is very narrow, and that local issues and issues within the union need to be our priority.

**Alex:** I participated in the 2012 strikes, and know from experience that unions often come together on common issues. I will absolutely work with other unions.

**Rama:** We should absolutely support and stand in solidarity with unions worldwide, and if elected, I will ensure that TRAC does this.

**Todd:** My question to all candidates has three parts: What powers will you have, who gave them to you, and who are you accountable to in your role?

**Charlie:** I will receive my powers as President from the members of TRAC. I am accountable to this Assembly and to the members of the union.

**Alex:** As President, I will have certain powers given to me by this Assembly. I am accountable to the Assembly, as well as to everyone within the union.

**Rama:** Students and invigilators give me the power I will receive to fulfill this role, and I am accountable to each individual here and each member of the union, as well as to myself.

**Hossein:** You're going to be the President within a team, which involves significant teamwork skills. Can you give an example of a time when you played a role in solving a problem within a team?

**Charlie:** As the President of the local NDP over the past three years, we have had to resolve many problems democratically, so I think I could definitely transfer those skills to my new role as TRAC President.

**Alex:** As the former President of the GSA, I've had to negotiate to resolve many problems, both internally and with various departments at Concordia.

**Rama:** I can't talk about confidential matters that I've had to deal with, but when I was doing my Master's, I was a resident member of a hostel community and I had to resolve a serious disagreement over food distribution.

**Todd** moves to extend the debate by 10 minutes.

**Eileen** seconds.

**VOTE:** *(The motion fails by majority.)*

**Chair:** As a Chairperson's note, I would recommend that TRAC establish specific voting procedures for the future, because this is very vague. Proposals I've heard so far are either a vote by simple plurality, or by a ranked ballot. I would submit these options to the floor to decide between them.

**VOTE** on whether to proceed with a ranked ballot or by a simple plurality: *(By strong majority, the vote will proceed by simple plurality.)*

**Hossein:** I'm actually not sure if I'm still a member or not, so just in case, I will abstain from voting.

**Chair:** Since we are proceeding by simple majority, ballots with multiple ticks will be counted as spoiled ballots. Following voting, the scrutineers will count the votes with a PSAC representative overseeing them to make sure everything is legitimate. The candidates may witness the count if they wish to do so.

**c. Election results**

Alex: 26 votes

Charlie: 31 votes - **ELECTED**

Rama: 5 votes

Congratulations to **Charlie** for being elected as TRAC President.

**Chair:** The scrutineers will immediately destroy all ballots.

**7. Financial report**

**Sahar:** So I'll go over the proposed budget in light of what we had at the beginning of the mandate, and afterward, I'll take any questions or discussion. (*Description of proposed budget, as received in advance by the Assembly.*) \$20,000 for the mandate started in June 2019. What I've just presented is for last year. Because the budget was not approved, PSAC asked us to use the previous budget, which was already approved. So the approved budget we were using was from last year, because we were unable to have a General Assembly before now. This new one is the one we want to use and that you can approve today, if you wish. As of tonight, if you approve the new one, we're going to be using the new one.

**Rama:** Budget for communications and mobilization, can you justify the \$20,000 amount? It seems like a large amount. Why such a large expenditure?

**Sahar:** Last year, the proposed budget was \$20,000; this year it's proposed to be \$12,000, because that's closer to what we've actually been spending historically.

**Rama:** How can flyers cost \$12,000? I've run a communications campaign before and it was nowhere near that expensive.

**Sahar:** The auditor calculated this, and they have access to all the information, and this is what has been spent in the past.

**Jacqueline:** Maybe I can speak to this, since this is my line in the budget. We have reduced this to \$13,000 in order to better reflect what we've been spending. Lots of

things fall under mobilization and communications, not just flyers and printing. We do stand by the number we have right now.

**Raisel:** We present monthly our financial reports and receipts, so

**Jeremy:** I think this is a very reasonable amount of money, especially since mobilization is a very important part of what we do. This speaks to our attendance tonight, and how we can consistently get a lot of folks out for these meetings. I think if we're going to be spending money, this is a good place to put it.

**Alex:** Proposed budgets Can you clarify employee pay category?

**Sahar:** For admin assistant, 15 hr/week, their wage is \$20/hr. There's bargaining sessions, and then the Web developer and data analyst.

A member motions to limit the Q&A period on the budget to one minute.

**Jacqueline** seconds.

**Rama** asks for quorum to be verified.

*(Chair constitutes quorum: 31 teaching and research assistants and 24 invigilators, and a total of 40 members are present.)*

*(The motion on limiting the discussion to one minute is adopted by majority.)*

**Mario:** Orientation officers - were they all members of TRAC?

**Sahar:** Yes, they were members.

**Jeremy** motions to approve the 2019-2020 budget as presented.

**Charlie** seconds.

**Alex:** I would amend to remove web developer and data analyst line from Employee Pay.

**Todd** seconds.

**Alex:** A lot of money was spent on this, and there has been nothing to show for it. What was presented during the former VP's presentation are all things that can be done easily with Google Sheets. I think this is money down the drain for TRAC. I think we should vote for removing this, and have the corresponding money reassigned to some other category.

**Rama:** I just want to say that it is very disrespectful that everytime I come to speak at the front, people are making remarks behind me. Now, for my point - for web development, we already spent more than \$5,000 on this. It's not reasonable to cut this amount, because we've already spent \$5,000 on it; we might as well continue it at this point. In terms of data analysts, we do need data analysts. It would not be reasonable to cut this either.

**Jacqueline Ristola:** This project was actually demonstrated at our last GA. There have been results shown.

**Reza Khoe** motions to limit the discussion to two minutes.

**Moj** seconds.

**Chair:** You can also call the question.

*(The motion carries by majority.)*

**Alex:** I propose that there is no point in continuing the project. It's going to cost more money going forward.

**Pierson:** The tools are still in development, but the project will ultimately be useful and it is doable. It would be a shame to cut this

**Moj:** Only 40 hours are needed to finalize this project.

**Todd** motions to continue the discussion on this amendment for 10 minutes maximum.

**Alex** seconds.

*(Motion fails.)*

**VOTE** on the amendment: *(Amendment fails by majority.)*

**Todd:** I want to discuss the equity working group budget line. On April 10, 2019, we had a GA which approved this line item, but according to PSAC regulations, items that are not costed cannot be approved as part of a budget. I would amend to strike the equity working group line because it contradicts PSAC constitution.

**Alex** seconds.

**Pierson:** I don't understand how it's in violation of the PSAC constitution due to not being costed if it is present in the budget as a budget line - that means it is necessarily costed, no?

**Todd:** Point of clarification, it was not costed at the time when it was adopted. The item line was adopted at the GA; it was not costed at the time. In the future, cost things, and then present them.

**Chair:** That constitutes a policy proposal.

**Mario:** Before now, the equity committee members were never paid, so I don't know why these new folks should be paid \$3,000. If this new agreement goes through, almost half of the inviligators' dues would be going toward this amount. I don't think this is in the best interest of inviligators, especially seeing as we are always getting voted down on anything we want to do.

**Alex:** I do think that the equity line is very vague and should have been broken down further. Due to this, I think I agree that we should strike this and redistribute the funds so that the money can go toward other things that will benefit members.

**Jacqueline Ristola** calls the question.

**Reza Khoee** seconds.

**VOTE:** 27 for, 8 against.

*(The motion carries by majority.)*

**Todd** calls to constitute quorum.

*(Chair performs a quorum count; only 23 TAs and RAs are present. Quorum is not established at this time, therefore the meeting is immediately adjourned at 9:22 pm.)*