

Dear Councilors,

Well, my term ends as it began: with a flurry of activity over a particular issue. Last May it was the HEQCO report, this April it is the time to completion affair. I'll refer you to the reports from Terry and Becky on that. Also, congratulations to everyone who ran in the SGPS elections!

### **Meetings with politicians**

On March 20th I participated in the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario Lobby Week in Toronto. I met with three MPPs from the Brockville and Ottawa areas (Ottawa is my hometown). The meetings occurred with other student union reps and they were short. We mostly discussed the Federation's recommended tuition fee framework proposals (basically a 30% reduction across the board). The proposal also included recommendations to re-instate post-residency fees, to audit institutions to ensure that they are not charging illegal ancillary fees, and to ban the flat fees in place at some institutions (whereby a student taking a nearly-full courseload pays the same as flat rate as someone paying the full courseload). You can read the full recommendation here: <http://cfsontario.ca/downloads/CFS-ChangingPriorities-En.pdf>

The end result of this is that the Ontario government introduced a new framework that is a compromise between the demands of the CFS and other student groups and those of the Council of Ontario Universities, which actively lobbied for higher tuition fees. The new framework caps increases for new graduate and professional students at five percent (down from eight). While a lower cap is good, it is still a rise, and, combined with no additional funding for institutions, represents an overall bad deal. At a local level, the SGPS will be sure to talk with Queen's administration to keep costs down for our members. In the past couple of years, Ph.Ds and research/non-terminal MAs and MScs have been spared any increase, as administration recognizes that potential recruits look at the overall funding package when making a decision about where to do their grad studies.

Speaking of a more local level, Becky and I participated in a "Town-Gown Townhall" with the Mayor of Kingston last week. The Mayor outlined city council priorities and we asked questions about housing and childcare. I'm happy to say that the Mayor agrees that Ottawa was wrong to explicitly disallow graduate students from accessing the childcare subsidy.

### **Other matters**

In my report for the last General Meeting, I gave some thoughts about how the SGPS can do what it does better. I think that actually served as a pretty good end-of-year report after all. I just want to leave with two items that we can't afford to leave off of our sights.

First, we continue to have a problem with Community Housing. They are numerous, but foremost among them seems to be that CH does not allow month-to-month deals after the first year. In other words, they impose a new lease every year. More students have approached the SGPS for help on this issue than any other. We'll work on this problem for the rest of the month but it must be a priority in the future as well.

Second, I mentioned in the GM report that the next exec will have to renegotiate the terms of the Student Life Centre management agreement. This is actually coming up more quickly than I expected: the negotiations are this month. Our VP Finance and our Executive Director will serve as the SGPS representatives in the negotiations with the AMS and with the University. So this just makes the questions more urgent: what can we do to make the JDUC, Queen's Centre, and Grey House better for SGPS members? The end of year surveys done by Queen's includes surveys of professional students and explicitly asks what Law and Education students think about the JDUC. The building has not scored highly in the past. How do we deal with this and other issues with the SLC?

It is also perhaps appropriate that I give some comments on the position that I held over the past year. The way I see it, the President's role, as "chief spokesperson," is to be the exec team member in charge of communication, broadly understood. So that includes media communications (and I admit that I mostly passed the buck on this one this year) and communications to other university constituencies, prominently the Board of Trustees and Senate. Our Bylaws and Policies have the President as a non-voting member of all SGPS committees (and a voting member of Finance and Services), which I think is to ensure that the President knows all the major facets of what's going on in the society and to be able to speak to it. That's great, and I think that it makes sense for one of the exec positions to be centralized in that way. However, the term "President" causes some confusion. It makes it sound like that person is the boss of all the SGPS, or, even more ridiculously, of the graduate and professional student community. This creates a problem whereby people think that they can diffuse graduate and professional student issues by getting the President onside. But the President should speak for SGPS members and not to them. The solution might be as simple as a name change. Some student unions use terminology like "Director of such-and-such" for members of their executive committee. Maybe the President should be "Director of Communications" or something like that. Anyway, I put it out there as something to think about.

As a final note, let me say that I am very proud to be part of the graduate and professional student community here at Queen's. Increasingly we find people unwilling to engage with community organizations like the SGPS and others that we find on campus and across Kingston. Instead of finding an identity among unions or other kinds of non-profits, they find a connection with corporate brands. (A volunteer instructor for our FREE Queen's program made exactly this point, by the way). SGPS members buck this trend, not so much through participation in the SGPS itself, but from their involvement in other community organizations and initiatives. This makes me very happy and it has been an honour to serve this community.

I begun the year thinking that the SGPS could do more to better integrate its members into "Queen's culture and traditions," and as a modest way of doing that, I began signing off these reports with "Cha Gheill." I no longer care about doing that. Nevertheless, I still identify with the meaning behind the words "Cha Gheill" : No Surrender!

Matt Scribner

President

president@sgps.ca

@SGPSPresident

Dear SGPS Council Members and Members-At-Large,

I am excited to write to you as your (re)elected Vice-President Graduate; thank you for voting! I look forward to another year of promoting the interests of graduate and professional students on campus.

### **Student Advisor Program**

The Student Advisors hold office hours on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please find additional information here: <http://www.sgps.ca/services/advisors.html>. Please contact the Advisors at [advisors@sgps.ca](mailto:advisors@sgps.ca).

### **FREE Queen's**

The 2013 Free Queen's event was a success! Overall, the event saw approximately 25 eager community participants, who came to listen to the presentations of and interact with our 10 student instructors. **Thank you to the FREE Queen's Coordinator, Steering Committee and instructors; this event would not have been possible without you!** There were several media releases on the event including a piece in the Whig Standard on March 12:

<http://www.thewhig.com/2013/03/12/grad-students-open-doors-to-studies>; a piece published by e-Queen's: <http://www.queensu.ca/news/articles/graduate-students-share-their-expertise-kingston-community>; and an interview on CBC Radio. SNAP Kingston was also in attendance on one of the evenings.

### **Times to Completion**

**The Times to Completion of Programs motion** was voted on at GSEC (the Graduate Studies Executive Council) on March 14, and **passed** with 10-4 in favour of the proposed policy change. All incoming students will be expected to complete within 2 (Masters) or 4 (Doctoral) years of their original program entry dates. **The Extensions of Time Limits was tabled** when the Council ran out of time to discuss and vote on it; **it will be voted on at the April 18 meeting of GSEC**. Students who require more time to complete can potentially only access 2 time limit extensions.

Terry Bridges ([senator@sgps.ca](mailto:senator@sgps.ca)) and myself compiled a report that was presented to GSEC to discuss the issues with the motions and the complexities of issues surrounding times to completions. The working group recommendation in that report has been identified by the SGS as viable; however, that SGS does not desire to meet with the entire graduate student working group to discuss the working group and its parameters in a preliminary way. Terry and I will bring the working group to GSEC at our next meeting.

**For more information on this issue or if you are interested in getting involved, please contact me at [vpg@sgps.ca](mailto:vpg@sgps.ca).** You can find additional information (i.e. media coverage, letters of support from faculty members and alumni, etc.) on the SGPS website.

### **T4/T4A INFORMATION**

Your taxes. Your choice.

**For individuals and groups looking to reclassify under a T4 status, you can do so through the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA); please contact me at [vpg@sgps.ca](mailto:vpg@sgps.ca) for more information.**

Further communication with CRA indicates that it is the student who is responsible for their tax status, and CRA officials agree that scholarship-based RAs are difficult to define and could easily fall under T4 status.

### **Academic Affairs Standing Committee**

The AASC continues to investigate the topic of **mandatory external scholarship applications** and has created an outline for a report (which the Committee expects to produce in April). **If you would like to share any comments with the AASC please e-mail [academic-c@sgps.ca](mailto:academic-c@sgps.ca).**

Matt Scribner and I have addressed the passed Council motion regarding transcript fees for mandatory external scholarship applications with Student Affairs, as they oversee the Registrar's Office. Student Affairs has suggested an **Omnibus fee**, into which students would pay during their time at Queen's, and which would ensure access to any number of transcripts needed both during graduate studies and post-graduation. **I welcome any thoughts that you might have about this suggestion ([vpg@sgps.ca](mailto:vpg@sgps.ca))**. We are also waiting on calculations from Student Affairs from questions that we brought forward (i.e. approximate numbers of transcripts requested for mandatory applications and revenues generated).

Respectfully,

Becky Pero

VP Graduate  
[vpg@sgps.ca](mailto:vpg@sgps.ca)

Happy April!

I have very little in the way of updates since our GM two weeks ago. I wish to thank all of you for supporting my acclamation to this position for the upcoming year and I am looking forward to the 2013-14 year!

The Finance & Services Committee continue to adjudicate a number of ESA's, Grant and Club applications for our members. As well, there have been a few dental bursaries for us to adjudicate.

I attended the food committee who indicated that the current increase for food services is estimated at approximately 3% which means likely there will be an increase in the costs we pay for items on campus. The new food place that will be opening on campus in the JDUC in the near future after Renos which are set to commence in April. It will be something that all of our members will enjoy & the food is simply delicious!

Our fee submission package is almost ready to be submitted for approval at the Board of Trustees in May. We are continuing to communicate with the Registrar's office to try to resolve some of the outstanding issues in relation to fee transfer. In order to complete our audit, we needed information on membership and fee transfers from the registrar's office. We have finally received this necessary information which we forwarded to the auditors. I am hopeful that they will have their work completed in the near future so I can provide an update.

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell

VP Finance & Services  
vpfs@sgps.ca

### Canadian Federation of Students

I attended the standalone meeting of the National Graduate Caucus (NGC) in Ottawa March 7-9, 2013.

1. New NGC website was launched early March: <http://www.graduatestudents.ca>
2. Focus of the NGC's campaigns for the upcoming year will be: a) post-residency fees (dubbed otherwise to prevent the misconstruction of the campaign as advocating for added fees); b) student-supervisory relationships (including new materials on rights and responsibilities); and c) European PhD employment model.
3. The NGC developed new policies on student-supervisor relationship and Aboriginal research, and amended existing policy on the commercialization of research and tri-council scholarships.
4. Met with Brent Roe of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL). Mr. Roe sits on a panel formed to investigate the creation of mandatory tri-council open access policies. The new policies are set to come into effect in 2014. Shared SGPS members' concerns around online thesis repositories, particularly for students hoping to publish their theses as books, those who need to simultaneously publish their research results in non-open access publications, and those seeking to patent their research. The CFS National Executive took note of these concerns as well, and will continue to represent them during ongoing participation on the tri-council panel.
5. Met with representatives from SSHRC and NSERC. Doctoral awards for SSHRC will be allotted for 3 years instead of 4, with eligibility over 5 years of study. All three Councils set to be harmonized (single online application and set of dates).
6. After losing the only student seat on the Board of Administration of the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) two years ago, the NGC has decided not to renew our membership to CAGS next year. This will not affect participation, since student delegates from universities across Canada are invited to participate, with or without the CFS' payment for membership.
7. The CFS has lobbied for changes to international students' work and study visas for several years, leading to a recent victory. A new Bill to Modernize the Immigration Act is likely to come into effect this year. If it passes, it will be implemented in Fall 2013. Most notably, the amendment will roll the work permit into the study permit (i.e. the study visa will double as a work visa). Existing work permits will remain in force until expiry in January 2014. The new study/work visa will allow for 20 hours of work on and off campus, plus full-time work in the summer (exceptions are likely to be placed on co-op placements). International students will no longer need to apply and pay for separate work permits, or provide certification via their home embassy approval, or endure waiting periods. They will, however, need to continue demonstrating that they are in 'good standing,' based on institutional definitions. Students enrolled in programs of shorter than 6 months' duration will be considered 'visitors' and not 'students'. Obligations will be removed for medical exemptions and language requirements, shortening the process even further. Changes to the Act may eventually be applied to post-graduate work permits as well. Finally, private career and language schools, fraught with high-profile cases of fraud, will now be required to provide certification prior to obtaining recognition of credentials.
8. James Turk, President of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), gave a presentation on 2 important campaigns: 1) the Canada's Past Matters campaign; and 2) the 'Get Science Right' campaign, which will be officially launched sometime soon. Mr. Turk will be presenting on this second campaign at Queen's in just over one week, at the Town Hall on Austerity in PSE.

### Town Hall on Austerity in PSE

The SGPS and QUFA are hosting a town hall on austerity in post-secondary education on Thursday, April 11, 2013, from 1-3pm in BioScience room 1102. Join our presenters from CAUT, OCUFA, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative (CCPA), the Rector's Office, the AMS, PSAC 901 and the SGPS!

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Grondin  
Executive Assistant

Dear Council,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for such a wonderful year. It has been a great pleasure working with you and the SGPS, advocating for Graduate and Professional students. I look forward to continuing in my new role as Graduate Trustee

This month we will be holding elections at Council for our new Speaker and CRO. Both of these positions are excellent ways of becoming more involved with the SGPS. As you are undoubtedly aware, the Speaker chairs Council meetings, and also serves as the authority on the SGPS' Bylaws and Policies, chairs the Judicial Committee, and liaises with SGPS Office staff and Executive to help keep the ship sailing smoothly. The CRO position deals exclusively with elections issues (please contact Eric cro@sgps.ca with any questions you may have).

I would encourage each and every one of you to consider whether this may be a position you are interested in. I am available to address any questions you may have by email.

Respectfully submitted,

James MacLeod

Speaker  
speaker@sgps.ca

Here are relevant developments from Senate and committees I am on, since the March Council meeting and AGM.

#### **Academic Planning Task Force:**

Our draft report on Online Learning at Queen's has been released. You can download the report and comment at the SAPTF website: [http://www.queensu.ca/saptf/?page\\_id=864](http://www.queensu.ca/saptf/?page_id=864). There was a Town Hall open to the entire Queen's community on Tuesday April 2, with a possible second Town Hall on Tuesday April 9 if there is demand. Our final report will incorporate feedback received on the draft report, and will be presented to Senate on April 30.

#### **March Senate Meeting (Mar 19):**

This was a pretty full meeting. Some highlights:

- A SCAD policy regarding temporary suspensions to academic programs was discussed here, and will be come for voting to the April meeting. Broadly speaking, this policy proposes that the relevant Dean make any decision to temporarily suspend a program, and recommends that the Dean seeks input from all affected parties.
- SORC has been looking into possible restructuring of Senate, following restructuring of the Board and University Council. Three scenarios were proposed for discussion. The first would keep the numbers the same (68), but redistribute student positions (and would see SGPS senate positions increase from 1 to 4). The second and third scenarios would see the total numbers drop to 60 and 50; in scenario 3 the number of student positions would drop to 10. There was a lively discussion, with several Senators expressing concerns about any decrease in the numbers of Senate positions; it was pointed out that there is a case to be made for **increasing** the number of positions, while decreasing the number of ex-officio members to give a higher representation for the other groups. SORC will bring forward a policy for voting this fall
- There was discussion on the Strategic Enrolment Management Group Draft Report. Concerns were raised about whether Queen's has the capacity to properly support increased numbers of student proposed (e.g. Arts & Science proposes to increase the numbers of first-year students by up to 450 starting in 2015-2016). Projected increases in enrolment for graduate students (numbers were not given for professional programs) are smaller at ~2%, but I am concerned about whether new graduate students (and existing ones!) can be properly supervised and funded.

#### **March Graduate Studies Executive Council (Mar 14):**

Well, there is much to say here! As most of you probably know, the first SGS regulation "Time Limits for Completion" was passed at the GSEC meeting on Mar 14, despite strong opposition from graduate and professional students (including a motion from SGPS Council opposing, 1000+ signatures on an online petition, a silent protest before the meeting, and a report from Becky Pero and myself outlining the many factors that affect graduate student completion times). This motion sets completion times for Masters and Ph.D. programs at 2 and 4 years, respectively. The second motion on "Extensions of Time Limits" was not voted on in the March meeting, due to lack of time, and has been postponed to the April GSEC meeting (Apr 18). Since the GSEC meeting, Dean Brouwer has held meetings with graduate students in some departments (Geography, History, Political Studies, Sociology) to explain the T2C motions, where she faced numerous questions from what I would call a largely hostile audience. Resistance to the T2C motions continues on several fronts: through Senate, proposals to amend and clarify the Extensions motion, and attempts to form a working group of students, faculty, and administration to look carefully at all of the issues affecting graduate student completion times. The SGS has a variety of information about T2C on their website, including a FAQ: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/index.html>. I urge everyone to have a look and email Dean Brouwer with your concerns ([brouwerb@queensu.ca](mailto:brouwerb@queensu.ca)).

The SGS is organizing an Information and Q&A Session about the T2C policy, for faculty, staff and graduate students, this Thursday April 4 from 10-11am in Kinesiology Room 100. **Council reps, please share this with students in your departments. I would love to see lots of students at this session, to voice their concerns with the new SGS policies.**



**Mental Health Working Group:**

There was a meeting of the MHWG on April 2. At this meeting we were informed about a new Graduate Student Life Advisory Group, a joint initiative through the SGS and Student Affairs. There will be several SGPS representatives on this committee, and a graduate student at large. The Group will look broadly at programs and practices around services and support to graduate students, professional development and employment, and graduate student wellness and mental health. I can also report that Andrea Phillipson (also on the MHWG) will be the SGPS graduate student representative on the newly formed Provost's Advisory Committee on Mental Health (PACMH). Finally, the issue of Times to Completion and its effects on student mental health was raised at the meeting. Dean Brouwer will be asked whether mental health issues were considered in the formulation of the new SGS T2C policies. The MHWG will further discuss this issue in its May meeting.

I want to finish by saying that this will be my last council meeting, as my term as Senator ends May 1. I have really enjoyed representing graduate students at Senate and on other committees, working with the wonderful SGPS Executive, and I appreciate very much the great support I've had from Sean and Ann Marie. I wish incoming Senator Hamid Falahati all the best for this coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Bridges

Graduate Student Senator  
senator@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Social Commissioner  
April, 2013

Come on, April! It's supposed to be springtime! Enough with the cold winds and the "chance of snow"! Well, the Social Team thought ahead and has planned some indoor events for this April: karaoke (after a scheduling hiccup that pushed it back from March) and a euchre night at the Grad Club!

If you love to sing your guts out or if you love to play a fast hand of cards, April is your month!

Euchre night will be held on April 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm and we will be doing karaoke on April 16<sup>th</sup> (8:00pm-11:00pm) at Maru (354 King Street). Please distribute widely. And we'd love to see our executive—emeritus, incumbent, and elect—come out to shake hands and kiss some babies!

Best,

Cassandra Kuyvenhoven

SGPS Social Commissioner 2012-2013  
social@sgps.ca

### SGPS Computer Network

- More security patches were applied to our servers.
- Queen's IT made some significant changes to Queen's server on campus, specifically related to e-mail delivery. This change had a large impact on the way we send e-mail (especially off-campus). I have spent a fair amount of time tracing the issues and implementing fixes. I am currently in the process of trying/verifying the fixes.
- I had to work on the SSL certificates for the mail server due to the issues in the previous bullet point.
- I continue to investigate the possibility of integrating the SGPS calendar service with the Queen's Exchange calendar so University staff have an easier time of seeing availability of SGPS Exec and Staff.
- I am working on some updates to our servers that will allow me to create some new functionality on the site which is aimed at streamlining office processes during September. This work is moving along nicely.

### SGPS Website

- I have been going over the website logs to determine the most used portions of the SGPS website. I am working on a sub-section of the website for mobile devices that cover the most used sections of the website. The idea is to make the viewing experience on mobile devices as good as possible. Work will continue on this over the next couple of months.
- The election section of our website was updated many times this past month. The final update was posted (results of the election).
- I added a new page on our site. The new page is a collection of items pertaining to time to completion. <http://www.sgps.ca/events/time-to-completion.html>
- I am reworking the services section of our website in an effort to streamline the information and to make room for a new section that will house student discount information. More updates in the next Council report.

### Communications

- Work has begun on the 2013-2014 SGPS Handbook/Agenda/Dayplanner. If you have any suggestions or want to chat about the handbook, please let me know.
- I am working to improve transitional documents for staff. This project is coming along very well!
- I continue to make progress on the Council motion section of the website. The page framework is complete and now I am working to add past motions. Creating the page framework required adding some new code and protocols to our webserver.
- I am working on a significant formatting update to our Bylaw and Policy document. I am transferring the source from one format to another. This will ease updates in the future and will also make the presentation of the document more friendly to end users.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Richards - [info@sgps.ca](mailto:info@sgps.ca)

Hello Executive!

Here is a report about what I worked on over March.

First of all, in conjunction with the International Commission we held a movie for international women's week. We served pizza and cookies and the event was fairly well attended (about 15 people). We were able to help Interval House with their preparations for International Women's Week by printing the fliers for them as well. Also, the equity coordinator and myself participated in the International Women's Day freeze mob in the ARC, having made the women-inspired posters in conjunction with other Women's Day organizers. That was quite a beautiful success.

I met with Sean Richards to talk the need to update and vastly improve the Good to Know document. We decided that money from the Equity Line will be used to pay one of the front desk staff, Leah Sarson, to do the work. My goal is to have the work done, and this does seem to be the easiest and most convenient way to do so! I met with Leah earlier in April to discuss how to proceed from here. Her goal is to have the document ready and accessible by the end of the summer. Essentially, the Good to Know document will be a one-spot-stop for all equity related needs on campus!

Regarding disability awareness month, I met with the Equity Standing Committee and we decided to reduce the scale that I had been thinking when we had a Disability Awareness Month coordinator. We decided to host posters and a disability display in Stauffer library. Anne-Marie Grondin suggested doing a button-making workshop as well, and too place on Tuesday of last week at Mac Corey. It was fairly well received and the Equity Committee even had a blurb written up about the event on the Queen's News Center.

I met with Victoria, the Student Advisor, to discuss the rampant issues with poor supervisors on campus. I want to support the Student Advisors however I can in their efforts to tackle the supervisor issues on campus, so am trying to maintain contact with them about that. We are going to form a small sub-committee which will hopefully meet early April.

The positive space committee met for the last time before the summer this month. We had a really good meeting and were happy to see that OPIRG appears to be getting back on its feet! We are going to try to work in conjunction with the SGPS, Positive Space, and OPIRG to rally together a gay pride parade event. Stay tuned! We hope that many graduate students will come and walk with us in the parade this summer!

There are, of course, a million other peripheral things which are bound to materialize shortly, but that's where things stand at this particular moment.

Have a lovely day!

Robin Westland

Equity Commissioner  
equity@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members,

Further updates on the Accent Discrimination Project: We've hired an excellent candidate to complete the research necessary for this project. We've sorted out a supervisory framework for the RA: Anne-Marie Grondin from the SGPS and Stephanie Simpson from the Human Rights Office will be overseeing and supporting the RA over the next few months. The supervisors and the RA have agreed on a time-line and a series of achievable research goals. All going to plan, by the end of the summer, we'll have some useful findings to help inform policy at Queen's regarding accented English.

Re. The project to re-envisage orientation for International Students:

The Graduate Student Life Advisory Group is meeting for the first time on Friday the 5<sup>th</sup> of April, where we will be able to discuss in some detail the possibilities and specifics for this project. I've had some feedback from a couple of different departments regarding their international students' experience of orientation, but again, I'd like to repeat my request from last month.

The reps from Computer Science (28), Chemistry (22), Biology (7), Economics (10), Maths (9), Physics (10), Geography (6), Chemical Engineering (16), Civil Engineering (11), Mechanical Engineering (15), and Electrical and Computer Engineering (16) all have large numbers of international students in their programs - so not that theirs are the only voices we're interested in, but since there are large concentrations of international students in these departments, it looks like it might be a good place to start. Could these reps especially as well as everyone else see what their international students thought about orientation?

We're looking for feedback from international graduate students regarding both a) their experience of Queen's orientation for international students and b) their sense of the existence of a network of both support and information required by international students. This is with a view to asking Student Affairs to work with the SGPS, QUIC, and other organizations on campus to improve both these aspects of international student life at Queen's. Please ask any international students in your department to e-mail or arrange a meeting with either the Commissioner or the Co-ordinator if they have any thoughts in this regard - we'd like as much feedback as we can get!

As I'm going to be back in Dublin as of April the 27<sup>th</sup>, I'm also working on a transitional document for the next commissioner. The SGPS will be hiring soon for the role of International Commissioner, one of its paid positions. If you know of anyone who might be interested, do let them know and tell them to keep an eye on the website for the job-posting.

Kris has been attending Information Services and Technology Students Advisory Committee meetings and QUIC Council meetings.

Looking forward to hearing from you about any of the above, or indeed regarding any ideas that you would like to share pertaining to international students at Queen's.

Warm Regards,

The SGPS International Team

Holly McIndoe  
International Student Affairs Commissioner  
international@sgps.ca

Kris Singh  
International Student Affairs Coordinator  
isc@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members,

Following is a summary of what I have done during the month of March.

First of all, I attended the meetings for Equity Standing Committee and helped Robin to organize the Disability Awareness Month activities. Disability awareness posters were displayed in the Stauffer Library for a week and students were encouraged to take the equity-related buttons and stickers from the poster boards. Then, Make-a-Button event was held in Mackintosh-Corry Hall, which gave students the opportunity to make and wear their own button in support of equity. All the events aimed at raising awareness of disability and equity issues, and reached success due to the high volume of participants.

Secondly, I attended the SEEC meeting on 19<sup>th</sup>. It was a big disappointment that they did not even include the Queen's General Bursary topic in the agenda. The QGB issue was under the new business section in the meeting of February, and it supposed to be in the Minutes section in this meeting. However, it did not get mentioned in the agenda and no one got a chance to report the progress made regarding the QGB. Robin suggested me to meet with the SGPS Executives first, and then email SEEC to bring up this issue again.

At the SEEC meeting, I had a conversation with the other two undergrad representatives. They missed the February meeting due to the reading week and demonstrated interests in addressing this issue as well.

If you have any thoughts/comments regarding the QGB issue, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tian Lu

Equity Coordinator  
equityco@sgps.ca

Greetings Council,

This is my last report as the Chief Returning Officer, and surprisingly it will be a brief one, not too much left to say at this point.

### **Election and Referenda**

As you are all likely aware, the Election and Referendum have come to an end, and the new Executive, Senator, and Trustee have been elected. I would like to thank all of the candidates in the election for a very smooth and well run election season, and to congratulate Iain, Meagan, Becky, Jillian, David, Hamid, and James on their election. Additionally, I would like to note that **ALL** of the fee referendum questions passed in the referendum, renewing 7 student fees, increasing 2, and establishing 1. Full results regarding the election can be found here: <http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/election.html>. I would also like to draw attention to the 12.7% voter turnout, a large increase from last year, but we still have a long way to go; I would like to thank everyone on Council for helping spread the word and being part of that increased voter turnout.

And that's pretty much all I have, other than that it has been a great year around Council. I look forward to working with my successor (yet to be elected) in transitioning into the role, and working on some changes to improve the way elections are run for the SGPS. That being said, if you are reading this and are interested in filling the CRO position next year, please let me know, as the election will be happening at the April Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted, one last time,

Eric Rapos

SGPS CRO  
cro@sgps.ca