

## **Enrolment Planning**

The Strategic Enrolment Management Group, which I sit on, has released a White Paper — a policy paper meant to generate discussion and feedback — and has held two Town Halls to elicit feedback from the community. Further, this past weekend, the Board of Trustees and Senate collective retreat focused on the White Paper and the general topic of enrolment planning. This is a key juncture in both this process and Queen's planning generally, as enrolment has significant implications for everyone across the university.

An important factor to note here is that there is no proposal on the table to significantly increase enrolment in academic graduate programs. The School of Graduate Studies has been clear that modest growth is the most the university could accommodate. However, the professional schools could see more significant growth — indeed such a proposal is already being floated in the Law School. In addition, the likely addition of a variety of new distance, part-time, or short-term certificates, diplomas, and other types of credentials stand to challenge not just our definition of what counts as a student at Queen's, and whether and to what degree such students require services, but raises valid concerns about the reputation of the university's other credentials.

During this Council I will be asking Councilors to share their views on how increases or changes to enrolment may affect their departments, their degrees, their ability to find work on campus, their access to essential campus services and infrastructure, and their future job prospects, among other things. However, this is not the only time to provide feedback on these issues, as I will be engaged with issues of enrolment throughout my term.

## **Embedded Counselor Program**

This week the university posted job ads for three new counselors. Unlike traditional counselors, these positions will be “embedded” within three faculties or locations across the university. One such position will be an undergraduate focused posting in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Sciences, but the other two will be housed in the School of Graduate Studies and West Campus, respectively.

The idea behind the counselor embedded in the School of Graduate Studies, is that they will be attuned more specifically to the lives, issues, stressors, and struggles of graduate students. Further, they will be able to act proactively with the School of Graduate Studies as well as particular departments to advance solutions to pervasive mental health issues. Student Affairs and Health Counseling and Disability Services have been well engaged with the SGPS to ensure that the hiring criteria for the position match.

The role of the West Campus counselor is a bit more nebulous, since the campus houses both a variety of departments — though principally education departments — as well as a diverse array of students in the neighbouring residences. From our perspective, the counselor will be a fantastic resource for the B.Ed students, as well as academic graduate students in the Faculty of Education, and our students who live in the John Orr Tower. Having counseling services that are more geographically accessible and/or more knowledgeable in the nature of a student's potential struggles is a fantastic step forward.

This is an approach the SGPS has advocated for years, and we applaud both Student Affairs — who proposed this program — and the Advancement Office — who secured a donor to fund the first two years of the project — in their efforts, as this is a massive gain for the university. The positions should be filled by the end of October, so we shall keep you posted on when students in your departments will be able to start accessing these services or communicating with the counselors.

## **Communications Coordinator**

It is my hope that — pending budgetary approval — the SGPS will create a pilot position called the Communications Coordinator. This position — set at a similar number of hours and rate of pay as our other coordinators — and will allow the SGPS to expand its communications beyond those elements that are covered under the portfolio of the Executive Director.

We will seek to hire someone with demonstrated communications experience and/or training for this position. Included within the position will be developing more aggressive and diverse communication of the SGPS' activities to our membership and constituent departments, developing relationships with campus and community media to promote SGPS activity and graduate and professional student issues, and assisting the

executive in situations when they need to prepare for interactions with the media or other forms of communication. In particular, we want the position to be one that develops innovative new tools, methods, or approaches to improve engagement in SGPS activities amongst our membership.

As I will do every month, I encourage you all to follow me on Twitter @sgpspresident, where I will keep all my followers up to date on my activities and views. I will also be regularly updating my President blog through the year with more detailed issues and opinions. You can find that at: <http://iainreevesgps.wordpress.com>. As always, never hesitate to contact me with ideas or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Iain Reeve

President  
president@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members and Members-At-Large,

### **Student Advisor Program**

The Student Advisor Program is a free and confidential support service for graduate and professional students at Queen's. Advisors can help students navigate through the variety of academic and non-academic issues they may experience during their time at the university. Please see the Advisor website for more information: <http://www.sgps.ca/services/advisors.html>

The Advisors and I are working on a number of items this year, and most recently have met with the Associate VP Research and an associate in the Provost's office to discuss and review the Senate Policy on Integrity in Research as there is a need to clarify the existing procedure.

### **T4/T4A INFORMATION**

**YOUR TAXES. YOUR CHOICE.**

The School of Graduate Studies (SGS), at a meeting on September 16, indicated that the University continues to seek advice from CRA regarding CPP and EI contributions made by RAs prior to January 2013.

**For individuals and groups looking to reclassify under T4 status, you can attempt to do so by filling out the CRA's CPT1 form; please contact me at [vpg@sgps.ca](mailto:vpg@sgps.ca) for more information.**

### **Canadian Association for Graduate Studies and the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies**

The Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) annual meeting will take place in Montreal in November, and the Deans who make up the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) will meet with student representatives in October in Toronto. Please look to future SGPS Council reports for updates on the activities of these meetings.

### **Graduate Studies Executive Council**

The Graduate Studies Executive Council (GSEC) met on September 19 after a summer term hiatus. The Council approved the terms of reference for a time to completion task force drafted by Hamid Falahati, SGPS Graduate Student Senator, Terry Bridges, former SGPS Graduate Student Senator, Kim McAuley, SGS Associate Dean, and myself. Hamid and I will both sit on the task force, and we anticipate the task force to complete its work by March 2014.

### **Time-to-Completion**

**The School of Graduate Studies established two time to completion policies in the winter of 2013 that are effective September 2013 (for all incoming students); these policies include the Time Limits for Completion of Program and the Extension of Time Limits** (the procedures associated with this policy were reviewed at the September 19 meeting of GSEC). Additional information can be found here: <http://www.sgps.ca/events/time-to-completion.html> AND the policies can be found here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/forstudents/ttc.html>.

**For more information on this issue, please contact me at [vpg@sgps.ca](mailto:vpg@sgps.ca).**

### **Graduate Councils and Committees**

All faculties at Queen's have a graduate council or committee that consist of faculty members from all departments within the faculty and several masters and doctoral students from the faculty. Each year the SGPS looks for members to sit on these councils and committees for a one-year term. If you are interested in being involved please contact Anne-Marie Grondin, SGPS Executive Assistant at [ea@sgps.ca](mailto:ea@sgps.ca).

Respectfully,  
Becky Pero

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

Greetings SGPS members!

The year has barely begun and there are already some very important policy decisions being made which could have a significant impact on students in professional programs. One issue, which has received a good deal of attention in recent weeks, is the proposed expansion of enrollment in the Faculty of Law. As some of you may already know, the law school is looking at a proposed expansion of either 35 or 50 students effective the 2014 academic year. The proposals would expand annual enrollment beginning next year to 200 or 215, from the current 165. This could have very serious implications for law students. It was just last year, that the Law Society of Upper Canada (LSUC) passed a motion to address what has been colloquially referred to as the “articling crisis”, which is a brief way of saying that law schools are producing more graduates than the market for their services can sustain.

What has not been commonly reported however is the reason for this expansion. Rather than making up for budgetary shortfalls, the proposal is to allow the school to expand existing services. That is, in order for the school to grow and attract more faculty an expansion of enrollment is needed. Although it should be noted that full details of the plan have not yet been presented to students. The details of the proposal will unfortunately be presented during the LSS AGM, which happens to coincide with our council meeting. I do however think that this proposal could present challenges and set a potentially dangerous precedent for all graduate faculties. When there is a disconnect between the number of graduates that a given faculty is producing and what the market bear in terms of career opportunities, it is the students who lose out.

Turning to happier news, I am excited to begin work with a number of committees this year. In particular, I suspect that the HR Committee will have a full agenda from the get-go. There is much work to be done in the areas of HR policy, hiring, and internal reviews. Looking forward to providing you with updates in the near future!

Respectfully submitted,

David Francis

VP Professional  
vpp@sgps.ca

Dear Councilors,

With orientation week done and over, and a variety of other orientation events under my belt, I am getting into the daily grind of my position as VPCCA.

The Stand up for Science rally last month was a success (despite my missing my chance to speak due to illness). In order to further support this initiative I have a motion on the table this month in support of "Stand up for Science." I would urge all councilors to sign the petition and to bring a copy of this petition back to their departments and encourage other members to sign. The more signatures we get the better. MP Ted Hsu has offered to bring it to the House of Commons and to speak about it.

The University recently released the "white paper on enrollment". I know that increased enrollment is of concern to some of the law school members, particularly in light of the current articling crisis. I would like to know more about how other members feel this move will effect them. I am particularly interested in how members feel about increasing enrolment at Queens, how (if at all) this may affect their studies, and how the increase in new kinds of diploma and certificate programs is viewed by graduate students. I will be contacting some of you to talk about the impact on your department soon.

### **Up - Coming**

There are 2 CFS events coming up in November, which I plan on attending.

The first, a grad symposium, is also open to the broader membership free of charge. Contact Anne-Marie Grondin at ea@sgps.ca If you are interested in joining me at this event.

The second event is the 32 annual national general meeting. Let me know if there are any motions/initiative you would like to see the SGPS bring forward at the AGM.

Thanks,

Meagan Crane

VP Campaigns & Community Affairs  
vpcca@sgps.ca

First I want to apologize for missing last month's council-I was ill.

This has been a busy month and I have noted what I have been up to below:

Finance & Services Committee:

The committee had its first meeting. We set out priorities and goals over the course of the year. First, we are working on tightening up some of our policies. We are in the process of establishing a more specific policy in relation to the Sports fund. We continue to see a high need for ESA (emergency student aid) applications. We made some decisions in relation to applications for grant subsidies and I am delighted to tell you there are some really exciting events/conferences planned. Check out the newsletter for details.

We have begun the preliminary planning for the Holiday Assistance Program which we are hoping to run again this year. More details to follow next month.

Homecoming:

We have partnered with Alumni relations and the Grad Club to host two events. On both Fridays of Homecoming (Oct 4 & 18) I am delighted to invite you all to come to the Grad Club to meet & mingle with Alum from 4p-6p. I hope some/all of you can come. It's a great opportunity to connect with those who studied here before you. I want to take this opportunity to remind you all that Homecoming events should be safe-have fun but make the right choices!

New Service:

The SGPS is delighted to let you know that we are now selling concert tickets! Feel free to stop by the office to get your tickets to upcoming events at the Grad Club and in the Kingston area.

As always, should you have an idea for a new service or for an event, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell

VP Finance & Services  
vofs@sgps.ca

Dear Council,

Please find my report below. Those of you who are attending their first meeting this month can find an introduction to my role at the SGPS in the report I submitted to Council last month:

<http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/august2013/Reports%20August%202013.pdf>

### **Committees**

This month, our Speaker will ask Council members to volunteer their time on one of several SGPS Internal Committees. As the legislative body of the SGPS, Council acts as our organization's steering or administrative body. And like with most organizations that have an administrative board, subcommittees exist to help the organization run more smoothly. A lengthier description of each committee can be found on the SGPS website: <http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/committees.html> . If you have any questions, or for more information, please contact me (contact details at the end of my report). To sign up for a committee, please contact both James ([speaker@sgps.ca](mailto:speaker@sgps.ca)) and I. If you are also interested in getting involved in committees external to the SGPS, I've appended a report of current vacancies that require SGPS representative (some of them urgently).

### **Outreach**

The SGPS participated in the Stand Up for Science Rally organized by Evidence for Democracy on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Students, faculty, local politicians and concerned community members were present. The SGPS was invited to speak, and we also distributed "public research" materials provided to us by the National Graduate Caucus of the Canadian Federation of Students. Queen's was one of 17 campuses who held a rally on that same day, from coast to coast.

### **Services**

Two members of the Ontario office of the Canadian Federation of Students traveled in to staff an express ISIC distribution table last week. Approximately 400 new ISIC cards were distributed on main and west campus over two days. The ISIC is free to SGPS members, and acts as a passport to international discounts – like 15% off air travel with Porter (including on sales!). Our StudentSaver team also worked really hard this year to bolster local business uptake to the program, with incredible results: 60 new local discounts, launched in September, means 60 times the discounts we had last year. For a full list: <http://www.sgps.ca/services/discounts.html> .

### **Human Resources**

The SGPS posted three new employment opportunities open to SGPS members who are eligible for the work-study program. The first of these, the Campus & Community Liaison, is a collaborative project with the Levana Gender Advocacy Centre (the posting closed on September 27, 2013). The second and third, respectively the Free Queen's Coordinator and the Student Advisor Assistant, are both still open to new applicants.

And, in accordance with last spring's amendments to the Bylaws and Policies, we will be hiring new Commissioners and Coordinators for a November 1<sup>st</sup> start date. Commissioner and Coordinators already holding positions are eligible for contract renewal. Openings will be posted and advertised beginning this week.

### **Contact**

Email: [ea@sgps.ca](mailto:ea@sgps.ca)

Office: Monday to Thursday, JDUC room 235  
Twitter: @AMGrondin (tweets are my own)

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Grondin

Executive Assistant  
ea@sgps.ca

Hello Council,

I have been corresponding with Jill Scott, Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) over the past month to coordinate an update on the work of the Student Learning Experience Task Force and to solicit feedback from SGPS Councillors. Unfortunately due to timing we will be unable to host Jill at our upcoming Council meeting, however the report is available online via the following link: <http://queensu.ca/provost/index/InterimReportMay30.pdf> and comments and feedback may be sent to [provost@queensu.ca](mailto:provost@queensu.ca).

This month we will be filling positions for a number of committees, including the SGPS Academic Affair Standing Committee, SGPS Bylaw and Policy Revisions Standing Committee, SGPS Campaigns and Community Relations Standing Committee, SGPS Equity Issues Standing Committee, SGPS Finance and Services Standing Committee, SGPS Human Resources Committee, SGPS International Student Standing Committee, SGPS Judicial Committee, SGPS Social Standing Committee, SGPS Strategic Planning Standing Committee, and the SGPS Sustainability Committee. Of note, I will be placing particular emphasis on filling slots on the SGPS Judicial Committee so that we may schedule conflict resolution training, and ensure that the committee is up and running to process any complaints. A brief overview of these committees will be given at the start of Council.

The Queen's Board of Trustees will be meeting this coming weekend (October 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) where I will receive a number of updates, including an operational update. Of note, I will also be attending a joint Board/Senate Retreat to address the topic of long-range enrollment planning. Our Graduate Student Senator will also be in attendance, and I look forward to collaborating with him.

Respectfully submitted,

James MacLeod

Speaker & Trustee  
[speaker@sgps.ca](mailto:speaker@sgps.ca)

Dear SGPS Council,

I apologize for missing the last council meeting. I was out of town for a family emergency. Here is a brief update on the September GSEC and Senate meetings.

### **1. Graduate Student Executive Council (GSEC) Meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

Becky Pero (VP Graduate) and I attended the GSEC meeting (details on GSEC committee mandate can be found here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/faculty-staff/governance/gsec>). Here are a few updates on what was discussed at the meeting:

- The final draft of Terms-of-References (TORs) for the GSEC task force on times-to-completion was approved by the GSEC members. This task force will prepare a draft report and submit it to GSEC by the end of March 2014. Becky Pero (as a co-chair) and I will be SGPS representatives on that. I am seeking inputs from the SGPS council members and members-at-large specifically on research-related items/issues which would adversely affect the degree time-to-completion. In fact, this is very discipline-oriented so it would be great if we work together to prepare a comprehensive and university-wide report.
- Similar to the last year, the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) competition will be internal at Queen's. We were told that the Queen's University OGS allocation from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) for 2014-2015 will be 205 awards. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) will award a certain number of those to each department. A brief summary of OGS application, adjudication and allocation for 2014-2015 is as follows:
  - There will be no changes to the application process (only minor changes to the online application).
  - The deadline for OGS application will be March 1, 2014 or the stated departmental deadline.
  - In the interest of transparency, SGS will provide some general adjudication requirements. The OGS adjudication will be at the departmental level.
  - The total of 6 OGS scholarships will be awarded to the international students. The department will nominate the students and send the nominees' application packages to SGS.
- The SGS Graduate Supervision Handbook has been revised and can be found here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.sgswww/files/files/Students/13-0360%20Graduate%20Supervision%20Handbook.pdf>
- The new SGS website is launched, it would be nice if we can report any broken link or website related issues to Colette Steer (Coordinator, Recruitment Activities at SGS).
- The SGS Intellectual Property Guidelines at Queen's University has been revised and can be found here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.sgswww/files/files/Students/Intellectual%20Property%20Guidelines%20at%20Queens%202013.pdf>
- The SGS Handbook for International Graduate Students for 2013-2014 is now up on the SGS website and can be found here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.sgswww/files/files/Students/13-0360%20International%20Students%20Handbook-reduced.pdf>

### **2. Senate Meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

Here are a few highlights of the senate meeting:

- Principal Woolf mentioned that there was a discussion around the allocation of new graduate student spaces and the differentiation of Ontario's universities at the MTCU roundtables over the summer. In addition, online learning and credit transfer initiatives were also discussed.
- Recently, there have been long delays in processing visa applications for international students. Principal Woolf mentioned that *"The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has been working closely with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to mitigate the impact of the Foreign Service worker strike on international students and faculty"*.
- Senate Academic Planning Task Force-Report April 2013 to explore "virtualization and online learning" at Queen's which can be found here: <http://www.queensu.ca/saptf/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/SAPTF-Report-Submitted-for-April-Senate-Meeting-with-highlights.pdf>

The senate meeting minutes of September 17<sup>th</sup> is not available as of today (October 1<sup>st</sup>) but will be soon and can be found here: <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/agendasminutes.html>

### **3. Board-Senate Retreat on Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

I will attend the Board-Senate Retreat on Saturday October 5th. The discussion will be around the Long-Term Enrolment Planning. I will report on that in our next council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Hamid Falahati

Graduate Student Senator  
senator@sgps.ca

I would like to reiterate my thanks to everybody who helped out during Orientation Week this September. The SGPS executive, the Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, Executive Assistant, and the front desk staff were all extremely helpful and supportive throughout (and leading up to) Orientation. A special thanks to my team—Ciara, Sam, and Margaux—for their outstanding work and long hours toiled.

A few thoughts on Orientation week:

1. We found that a lot of people who informally signed up for free events (with an email to [social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca)) did not actually attend the events. Although we had over one hundred people register for the Amazing Race, only 20-25 people actually showed up to the event. Similarly, the Sports Day had ~70 individuals registered for volleyball, with only ~35-40 showing up. Looking forward to next orientation week, perhaps a more formal registration on the website would encourage individuals who have signed up for free events to attend. That being said, I responded to every person from whom I received an email – individuals were notified that they had been registered for the event. It was a bit perplexing (and difficult to get numbers/capacity sorted before the event).
2. The BBQ out at West Campus for the ESS students was very well received this year. We ordered enough pizzas from Pizza Pizza to feed 750 students (including vegetarian, gluten-free, and dairy-free pizza options) and some fruits/vegetables/cookies from Metro (stacks and stacks and stacks). The previous year we had the BBQ catered by Bert's Catering, but this year was much more cost-effective and required less supervision (the first day of Orientation is always jam-packed for the Social Team, often with several events being run simultaneously across campus).
3. We received some feedback about the vegetarian option at the Portsmouth Harbour semi-formal. Last year, the gnocchi was very well-received but this year's stuffed peppers were decidedly not as delicious. For next year, we would ask for a different vegetarian dish (or ask for a few changes to the stuffed peppers based on the feedback we received).
4. Due to inclement weather, the Corn Maze attendee numbers were lower than the registrants. The husband and wife who run the Corn Maze (who have been unbelievably accommodating and exceptionally flexible in the past) have offered to send passes to the SGPS office for those who were unable to attend (because they are lovely, lovely people who very much appreciate our business).
5. Due to a double-booking at The Grad Club, the Family Day BBQ (scheduled to be on the GC patio) ended up being moved to City Park. We had a lot of families come with their children (one couple even drove 1.5 hours for the BBQ!) and they enjoyed being able to play in the park.

For October, we're looking forward to returning to Fort Fright towards the end of the month (close to Halloween but not *on* Halloween). Planning is looking into the price of the bus with Stover's Bus Lines from the JDUC to Fort Fright and Logistics is going to look into the group price admission at Fort Fright. Planning is also booking a karaoke evening with Maru (on King St.) for mid-October (we're considering October 10<sup>th</sup> for the tentative date). More details to come in the October newsletter. The Social Team will be having a meeting mid-October to finalize the rest of the events for 2013.

On a personal note, I would like to thank everybody at the SGPS for an excellent experience over the past few years as Social Commissioner (and one year as Planning Coordinator!). I am certain that my successor will be absolutely fantastic! I wish everybody an exceptionally productive school year and an even happier normal-life year.

If you have any questions, comments, concerns, or declarations of love, send an email to [social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca)!

Regards,

Cassandra Kuyvenhoven

Social Commissioner  
[social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca)

### SGPS Computer Network

- I reworked our entire wireless network to improve efficiency, reach and security. Everything is functioning as it should.
- The extremely high traffic part of the year is behind us in terms of website access. As this is the case, I have turned off our secondary website server and will be updating it so it is ready for our next high traffic time of year (January).
- I worked out a minor networking wrinkle that affected our mail server as a result of some changes to the Queen's network.

### SGPS Website

- I have completed updates to the website with respect to the health and dental plan. Updates for all the pricing, timelines, benefit booklets and plan details.
- I have updated the Council section of the site with meeting dates and an updates orientation pdf.
- I have completed work on the discount section of our website. The section now shows all the new (local) discounts available to our members. Please take a moment to check it out: <http://www.sgps.ca/services/discounts.html>
- Continual updates on the site with respect to opt-outs, fee waivers, etc.

### Communications

- I have been attending meetings with the Queen's Homecoming people in an effort to integrate SGPS members and past (graduated) SGPS members into the homecoming experience as it has traditionally been undergrad focussed. We have planned 2 great networking events for this year and are dedicated to continuing to improve homecoming for our members over the next few years.
- We have spent considerable time and effort over the last month executing communications for our membership with respect to Orientation Week, opt-outs and generally anything to do with new student arrivals.

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

Hello Everyone!

I hope that you have gotten off to a fabulous start this term.

The month of September involved focusing on the first Senate for Educational Equity Committee meeting as well as finalizing the Good to Know document and setting in motion a few new initiatives. As there will be a new Equity Commissioner starting November 1<sup>st</sup>, September also involved adding more to the transition manual which I will pass on to whomever is hired in this role.

At the first SEEC meeting, myself and Colleen Webber the equity coordinator, attended. We brought up the idea of SEEC supporting an equity initiative to have exit surveys for all students who withdraw from their graduate programs. The exit survey would include the opportunity to self-designate. The purpose of this would be to see if certain groups are finding the graduate student experience harder to complete than others. Whether there is an equity issue or not is impossible to say unless the data is available. SEEC itself did not seem very interested in pursuing this, but several members of the equity office said that they would be pleased to take part in some way. There will be a meeting in early October to discuss this. It is possible that there might simply be an entire graduate self-designation process put into place. These are the things which we will discuss at this meeting. As well, with the Time to Completion task force, a member of the equity commission of the SGPS will be one of the members. SEEC was distraught that they would not be given the opportunity to sit directly on the task force, so it has been tentatively decided that Colleen would act as a sort of liaison between SEEC and the new equity commissioner who will hopefully be able to sit on the task force. That way, the important contributions of SEEC can be heard.

At the October council meeting, the equity commission will be putting forth a motion to include the Good to Know document as part of the responsibilities of the equity coordinator in the bylaws and policies. This is to ensure that the Good to Know initiative does not end with my tenure as commissioner! I can foresee this document eventually serving as a valuable resource, shared amongst all members of the Queen's equity community. Next year, during orientation, I will suggest that the new equity commissioner arrange to have an advertisement for the Good to Know document in the orientation packages.

And that is about it for now! As this will likely be my last report as equity commissioner, allow me to say that it has been an honour to serve you all!

Robin Westland

Equity Commissioner  
equity@sgps.ca

Dear Council,

Following is a summary of what was done last month.

-Career Service for International Students

We made connection with Cathy Keates and career advisor Debbie to discuss about the career service for international students. We planned to have an “intro” resume/cover-letter workshop for grad international students. The tentative time to have the workshop would be November – after the busy October when all the career fairs are going on, but still before the resume/cover-letter sessions scheduled for Expanding Horizons in December. The idea for the “intro” level workshop is that it can be positioned as a first step for international students to get started. Once they get trained a bit, they can attend the regular resume/cover-letter workshops organized for the general students. In the “intro” workshop, we planned to have some comparisons among the resume formats from different countries. We aim to show international students what to avoid in their resume to have a Canadian look.

-Networking Opportunities for International Students

We have stayed in touch with KIP to implement the networking events for our International Students. Last month, we have discussed the possible time to schedule some events for the fall. I suggested Ruth, the Facilitator in KIP, to avoid the period of week 5 to week 8, which is the extensive midterm period. Also, this year there will be a lot of international students arriving late due to the VISA office strike. For those late-arriving students, they missed our orientation week activities. I was talking to Ruth and suggested that those networking events co-organized by KIP may compensate those students. We will make sure that those late-arriving students are able to attend those events to talk to different people and make new friends.

-Opportunity to start up the language training program

Had meeting with Becky and Ray. Ray is the Director of Business & Operations at E-languages, who had experience in teaching communication-based languages and in operating the similar type of programs. Ray showed interest in organizing and running such a program for Queen’s international students and their family members. Ray recommended the classroom based learning along with some online learning and simulation to teach the survival skills. More discussion is needed within the international team. We may come up with some specific topics and estimate the numbers of potential clients. We will send the topics and the estimated numbers to Ray to create a proposal including the possible cost. Then we will submit the proposal to SGPS Executives for approval. Meanwhile, we are also thinking about the idea of the student-run program where we hire our grad students to run the program.

If you have any question/suggestion/feedback, feel free to let me know. Thank you very much!

Best Regards,

Tian Lu

International Student Affairs Commissioner  
international@sgps.ca

Kris Singh

International Student Affairs Coordinator  
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In September I attended my first Senate Educational Equity Committee meeting. At this meeting, I presented an item from the SGPS requesting that SEEC conduct an exit survey of graduate and professional students who were withdrawing from their program of study. The goal of this survey was to identify factors that led students to withdraw from their studies, and to determine if members of the five designated groups are overrepresented in students withdrawing from studies. The reception from members of SEEC was mixed. Some members identified a need to expand this survey to include all graduate students, with a goal of just getting a better understanding of how students are doing, what barriers they are experiencing etc. However, SEEC did not think this fell within their mandate. So we are looking to pursue the exit survey by partnering with members from the Equity and Human Rights Offices at Queen's. We have a meeting scheduled for next week to further discuss this project as well as ideas of conducting a broader survey of all SGPS members.

At the SEEC meeting, we also discussed the Time to Completion taskforce. SEEC requested to have a representative on this taskforce, but this request was declined by SGS. As an alternate plan, I am going to sit on this taskforce as a representative of the SGPS Equity Committee. This will allow me to keep SEEC up to date on the work of the taskforce and bring any issues identified by SEEC to the attention of the taskforce.

I have conducted outreach with various university equity-related groups. I sent emails to campus organizations to introduce myself and the SGPS Equity Committee and to offer my assistance or support in any initiatives that they may be working on, particularly those targeting graduate and professional students.

I have heard from Anne-Marie that there are some students who are interested in getting involved in the Equity Committee. I am really looking forward to growing the Equity Committee and having more people to help out with our equity-related initiatives! In preparation for our first Equity Standing Committee meeting, I have been identifying important dates throughout the year (e.g. International Women's Day, Black History Month, Disability Awareness Month) that the Equity Committee will be running events for and developing a list of potential activities that the Committee can work from.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Webber

Equity Coordinator  
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Hello everyone,

Here is an update of my activities over the last month:

Sustainability Week (Sept. 30th – Oct. 4)

Sustainability Week occurred this past week and several activities were being organized by the SGPS Sustainability Standing Committee. I have personally been involved in the entire planning process and have been having 2-3 meetings a week with the Sustainability Week Planning Committee in order to make sure everything is properly organized and ready. I had taken the lead of the planning of two events in particular. The first one was the screening of a documentary on sustainable food systems titled “Diversidad” which was aired on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> in Ellis Hall Auditorium. This event was done in collaboration with the Sierra Youth Coalition (SYC) in Montreal who were gracious enough to fund the travels of the Director of the documentary to come to Kingston in order to discuss their first-hand experience during the filming process. The other event was a Sustainability Career Workshop (also called the “Green Careers Forum”) where different sustainability professionals from inside and outside of Kingston came to discuss their experience working in the field of sustainability. This will hopefully provide a great opportunity for those studying sustainability topics here at Queen’s to see how their knowledge is being practically applied in the outside world.

Committee Meetings:

We had our third Sustainability Standing Committee meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Most of the meeting was spent voting on a Sustainability Action Fund application (which was passed after discussion) as well as a brief discussion regarding Sustainability Week. The Sustainability Standing Committee was involved in the execution of the two Sustainability Week events. Another Sustainability Action Fund application was also voted on via email and passed. Both applications were to cover the costs of speakers for different events during Sustainability Week.

Most of my time this month was focused on Sustainability Week planning. I am looking forward to focusing more on other projects in the months to come.

That is everything for now.

Sincerely,

Gulaid A. Egeh

Sustainability Coordinator  
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Dear Members of the SGPS Council,

The Education Students' Society election in early September resulted in acclamations to 22 of 29 positions. Two further positions were preemptively elected last year, while five positions remain vacant. Ultimately, due to the number of nominations received and nominees' positions of interest, it was not necessary to hold an election (which had been scheduled for 12 September), as the ESS Constitution stipulates that uncontested nominees are to be acclaimed directly rather than face a vote of confidence. The acclaimed executive will conduct an internal application process for the remaining positions.

Let me take this opportunity to welcome three new members to the SGPS Council representing the ESS: Alanna Gilmour (Bachelor of Ed. Liaison to the SGPS), Tyler Hughes and Mairead Weir (SGPS Representatives). Congratulations are also in order to incoming ESS President Natalie Tsui and her executive, as well as all the other new members. I would also like to thank outgoing ESS Transition Officer Philip Lloyd for his assistance promoting and organizing the election.

Traditionally, stimulating interest and debate around the ESS election has been a difficult task due to the timing of the election so early in the academic year, the 100 per cent annual turnover of ESS students, and the difficulty achieving continuity from year to year. This year's level of interest was largely consistent with previous years. The election process itself was also somewhat hampered by several outdated clauses in the ESS Constitution. I have recommended that these issues be addressed to avoid confusion and controversy in the future, but the incoming executive now faces the challenging task of amending their constitution. They may appreciate hearing from members of the SGPS who have experience in this area.

With the ESS election over, I will now be turning my attention to the SGPS elections to be held later this year. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Levick

Chief Returning Officer  
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