



Hello Council,

This is my last report to Council as President. While Kingston has been cursed with eternal winter, we've been busy at the SGPS finishing up many long term projects in preparation for the new executive team to take over. I am confident that Saba and her team will do an excellent job in the coming year, and I hope that you will all support them in their initiatives, as you have supported my team throughout this year. Here's a quick overview of some of what I've been up to this past month!

#### **Course-related Fees**

I met with representatives from the Provost's office and the University registrar to review fees applied to students directly connected with academic programs. While most of our membership is not impacted by these fees (they are rare in graduate courses), there are a large number of fees assessed to students in the Faculties of Law and Education. There are some fees that sit on the threshold of legitimate (as per MTCU guidelines), and I, along with Kyle Beaudry from the AMS, have been working to keep various academic units honest when it comes to the acceptability of these fees.

#### **Severe Allergies Review Committee**

The Severe Allergies Review committee had its ultimate meeting to review a set of recommendations that will be put forward to the Principal for implementation. The recommendations of this committee will be made public over the next month, and a new implementation group will be formed to fulfil them.

#### **Non-Code Personal Harassment Initiative**

Over a year ago, I attended the first meeting of the Non-Code Harassment Working Group. This was the first committee that I joined as SGPS President. The work of this committee has continued slowly throughout the year. Thanks in part to my regular insistence on the importance of this issue with both the Principal and the Board of Trustees, this committee has now been tasked with producing a document outlining guidelines for students facing non-code personal / workplace harassment on campus. The committee now contains representatives from the Human Rights Office, the School of Graduate Studies, the Office of the University Ombudsman, the SGPS, and Faculty Relations. Progress in this area is slow, but the addition of a representative from Faculty Relations is a particularly notable victory, as this indicates that the University agrees that some onus for the problem may lie with faculty, not simply with students. I believe that I will be transitioning my role on this committee to my successor, and I believe that this is a very exciting development in the quality of life for graduate students at Queen's.

#### **Kingston Transit**

Sandy (our new Finance Director) and I had a meeting with representatives from Kingston Transit. The City is developing a new five-year plan for Kingston Transit, and they are seeking our input on how to enhance service. There will be ongoing consultations over the coming months. You can participate by either sending me direct input, or by filling out the survey that will be included in our newsletter.

The agenda for this month's Council meeting is quite voluminous, and this reflects the broad commitment of many SGPS members to the betterment of our Society. Thank you very much to all who have contributed to governance of the SGPS over the past year, be it through the proposal or debate of motions, or simply by keeping the Executive honest by your steadfast attendance at meetings. It takes all kinds to raise a child, and I think that we have all done well over the past year to help the SGPS mature. If you have any questions or ideas about the SGPS, please feel free contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Cochrane  
President, SGPS

[president@sgps.ca](mailto:president@sgps.ca)



Dear Council,

Try not to break out into tears, but this is the last council report you will be reading from me. The past year has gone by incredibly quickly and I'm very proud of what this Executive has been able to accomplish. It has been a pleasure working with all of you to make the SGPS better for all members.

We are in the process of transitioning the new Executive into their positions so they are ready to go on May 1<sup>st</sup>. I can say unequivocally that VPG-Elect Sebastian Gorlewski will do amazing things next year. He already has given me a sneak peek at some things he's planning.

#### **Student Advisor Program**

The SGPS seeks candidates for the position of Student Advisor! The Student Advisors offer advice and advocacy services to graduate and professional students in issues concerning their well-being while at Queen's. In addition, they act as an effective referral service for issues and needs that fall outside of the Student Advisor Program's jurisdiction or expertise. Application deadline is April 15th. For more complete details, please visit [www.sgps.ca/jobs/jobs.html](http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/jobs.html).

This year's Advisor team has done an amazing job and certainly made my life easier. If you have been a client of the program this year, I would love to hear your feedback.

There are also a lot of Student Advisor related Bylaw and Policy changes coming to Council, so please keep your eyes open.

#### **Committees**

The University Council on Athletics and Recreation (UCAR) Budget Committee has sent a motion of approval for the 2017-2018 budget to UCAR. I am happy to say that Athletics and Recreation are taking a hard look at recreational programs to see if they are offering students that best options. This still has to go through many University-level approvals before it can be finalized.

The ITS Student Advisory Committee met this month and the discussion was focused on the accelerated rollout of the D2L online learning system. Students were asked for feedback on the platform, so if anyone has had a good (or bad) experience with it this year, please let me know.

If you have any questions or comments about an issue, please feel free to send me an email at [vp.graduate@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.graduate@sgps.ca). I hope to see everyone around campus this summer enjoying the sunshine. Keep smiling!

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Kellenberger  
Vice President Graduate  
[vp.graduate@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.graduate@sgps.ca)



Dear SGPS Council Members,

As this is my last SGPS Council I would just like to start by thanking all of you, and the SGPS Membership, for a wonderful term in office. As many of you know this year has been challenging at times as the Executive was faced with challenging issues and unexpected obstacles. However, even with the challenges I found my 12 months as the VP Professional to be highly educational and deeply rewarding. I genuinely believe that together the SGPS Executive has done some great work for the society and our members, and that some of the changes and systems we have implemented will provide benefit to the organization long after our terms. Of course, this work would have been impossible without the help of Council. Every question, amendment, and suggestion has been tremendously helpful to us throughout this process and I am grateful to all of you for keeping us honest, accountable, and in-touch with our community. Student governance is a thankless job at times, but **your work has made a difference** and I thank you for it.

For my final report I would like to inform you about my last 3 big projects:

1. The SGPS/AMS Merged Clubs Office

Following the motion passed at the last SGPS Council I signed the Queen's Clubs Office MoU with the AMS and am proud to report that there is now a unified clubs office for all Queen's students. This is a big change on our campus and will substantially improve access to resources and support for SGPS members interested in clubs and extracurricular activities. As part of this change I have brought policy changes to this Council in order to have our bylaws and policies reflect the new system, and I hope you will vote in support of the motion to finalize this move. Thank you again for your feedback throughout this process, and I hope all of you will get involved in new extracurricular groups as a result!

2. Info from the HR Standing Committee

Since our last Council I have received submissions from the sub-committees of the HR Standing Committee. These submissions outline the structure for a progressive discipline system for all SGPS employees, and improvements to SGPS hiring policy. Unfortunately I have not had the time to implement these recommendations into our own B&P due to the complexity of the task. However, I am submitting these documents to Council for your inspection and will be recommending that my successor use these resources in order to draft B&P improvements at the start of their term. The HR Standing Committee report on the status of SGPS Commissions is still in progress, and you can expect to hear about the result in May from the new VP Professional.

3. SGPS / SHRC Official Partnership

Following up from a conversation during the clubs ratification change, I have just finished working with the SHRC Executive to arrange for the organization to partner and merge with the SGPS. The SHRC has faced rising financial and legal challenges over the last two years, and their Executive approached the SGPS earlier this academic year to discuss how our organizations could work together in order to ensure that the SHRC can continue to provide its valuable services to the Queen's and Kingston communities. I am proud to report that we have collaborated and created a plan to have the SHRC become an official part of the SGPS, but in such a way that it maintains operational autonomy and its distinct identity on campus. I will discuss these changes more in my oral report, and have brought a motion containing new bylaws. I hope you will lend me your support.

All in all it has been a wild year in the SGPS and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve our community in the role of VP Professional. Thank you all again for your support and insight. I know that I am leaving the society in the

capable hands of the next SGPS Executive, and I hope you will continue to challenge and support them as well. All the best, and have a very happy summer.

Cha Gheill,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Asfar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Mark Asfar

Vice-President Professional

[vp.professional@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.professional@sgps.ca)

PS: While I will not be an Executive of the society any longer, I will still be drinking many coffees a day, and will always be happy to sit and chat with anyone who wishes to discuss ideas or concerns about our community!



Dear Council,

Where has the time gone? I cannot believe I am saying this, but this is the last report I will make before the end of my term. It has been a pleasure working with all of you. For those who stay on as counsellors, I hope you continue to try and make the SGPS a better, more functional Society and to everyone else, I wish you all the best. I am excited to welcome Stuart Clark on as the new VP Finance and Services and I wish him all the best in his term.

For this report, I will be including a re-cap of many of the accomplishments we have made this year as well as some new items worth noting.

### **Student Activity Fees**

The Fee Slate for next year has been created. The only changes that you will see are an increase in the fee for our health and dental plan (pending your approval), an elimination of the OPRIG fee (as a result of the referendum) and an elimination of the Kingston Coalition Against Poverty Fee (due to not picking up their cheque from November). Everything else has been consistent.

We are also working on dispersing the last set of Fees for the 2015-2016 year as I speak. This should be available for pick up in mid-April.

Further, I have included a motion in this council meeting to change the Activity Fee Policy. I am proposing to move this to bylaws. Also, the new bylaw would make disclosure requirements by our groups mandatory. This was brought as a notice of motion at last council meeting to receive feedback. I have received some feedback and incorporated much of it into the new Bylaw.

### **Bursaries and Grants**

We have received a large number of requests for bursaries and grants over the past couple of weeks. I just wanted to remind everyone that applications are still open during the summer for bursaries and grants. Please do not hesitate to apply for them throughout the summer.

### **Finance Director**

Sandy Beaton, our new Finance Director has almost been with us a month and is fitting in wonderfully. If you haven't had a chance to meet him, please come to our office in JDUC 021 and say hi. He has been working hard to understand our Society. We are very pleased that he has joined us.

### **Health and Dental Plan**

I have brought forward a few changes to our policy on the SGPS Health and Dental Plan. Going forward, the opt-out period will only be available in September but will go to the last day of September to match the AMS' time period so we decrease the confusion. For opt-ins, we will no longer be offering a couple plan, just family and single. This is because our provider charges us at the family rate for a couple. Further, members will only be able to opt-in, in September or if the member is starting in January they will only be able to opt-in, in January.

Unfortunately, the costs of our plan are going up and in order to ensure everyone is treated fairly, we are implementing the above.

I am bringing a motion to this council meeting to increase the fee of our health and dental plan.

**PSAC-901 Contribution**

Our Health and Dental Plan Fees for 2015-2016 have now been fully paid, however, we are still waiting on PSAC 901 for their 100,000 contribution to our Plan. We hope to hear from them in the near future, to ensure that this money is available to our members.

If you have any questions about the above or my term. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Christina Huber  
Vice President Finance and Services  
[vp.finance@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.finance@sgps.ca)



Dear Council,

And here we are. After two years serving this society my time as an executive is all but done. Looking back to my year plan with its intent to foster a stronger, healthier, and more inclusive campus community, I feel that over the past year my time was well spent, and my tenure was a success. The majority of the items that I set out to accomplish this time last year have been completed and well documented for the benefit of the organization. I'm going to document the status of each of the items from my year plan, but before I do I hope that you'll permit me some time to discuss other matters.

Reflecting on it, this is something of a bittersweet moment for me - despite the ups and downs, I genuinely enjoyed the unique challenges that I and the rest of our team were faced with on a weekly basis. A few months ago during elections, familiar faces in working groups, and subcommittees, as well some students approached me to ask if I were going to attempt a third term. While it was an attractive proposition, between parenthood and the other challenges of graduate school, I admitted to them that I wouldn't be able to give it my full effort and that my time as an executive would be two-term only. However, I am confident in the ability of my successor, Anastasiya to hit the ground running as of May first when the portfolio fully transfers over to her. We've been working on her year plan for a while now and I honestly can't wait to see all of her wonderful ideas come to fruition.

Before I get to the meat of this final report, I hope that you will also permit me to commend our office staff on their resilience and dedication to this organization. The SGPS has been through a number of significant changes over the past year, and this could not have been possible without the tireless professionalism displayed by Andria, Nancy, Pam, and Sandy too. Likewise, as skilled as the executive were individually, I can safely say that we were nothing without each other. This executive ably demonstrated a consistently high bar of teamwork, and genuine camaraderie, and I'd like to let Chris, Mark, Christina, and Mark know that I not only valued our time together but cannot thank them enough for their support.

#### **SGPS Parenting Room [Complete]**

I'm pleased to report that this room is seeing strong early usage, and solid recognition across the campus. I've continued to meet with community partners, students, and support staff, and have even arranged for a continued ad campaign around the SLC and Queen's Centre.

I also met with some nursing students highly interested in the room, who referred to it as the "gold standard" for what needs to exist on campus. They wanted to add it to a database in their department of breast-feeding rooms across campus, and interviewed me for a report on child and baby-friendly spaces. Interesting to note is that on nearly every other campus they've investigated, staff and faculty push for a room like this, leaving them happily surprised that it was such a "bottom-up" effort on our behalf. I plan to have an executive summary of what went into the room as a "how to" package for others who wish to follow our lead.

The nursing students have also confirmed that they will be working alongside the Human Rights Office over the summer to develop an app for new parents to locate facilities on campus for feeding, nurturing, and breastfeeding of their children. I'm happy to say that this new and helpful service has been warmly received and supported despite its recent arrival.

### **Emergency Childcare Student Assistance [Complete]**

Working closely with Christina, the VP Finance & Service over this past summer, I established a new line in our general bursaries of \$20,000 for those members with children who find themselves in duress.

### **Out of City Healthcare Travel Bursary [Complete]**

It took ten months and the wrangling of several departments from across the campus, but pending a rubber stamp by Senate the creation of this bursary, a joint project by the AMS and SGPS, is complete. This bursary features an MOU with Student Awards where the AMS agrees to pay \$4000 and the SGPS \$1000 annually, until 2021. We decided to go with a cap on this award because ultimately, we see this as a Band-aid solution to a larger problem—the ideal is that we will soon have more physicians in the city that are able to provide the type of care that people are travelling for (i.e. hormone therapy), and would hate for this bursary to be used as a reason to delay those processes.

Pending approval by Tom Harris and the Senate Committee on Student Awards the bursary will be in effect and active by September 2016 at the latest, and likely more like June 2016. On the application form, students will have to fill out: name, student number, telephone number, e-mail address, local address, date of appointment, address of appointment (city and province), and expected cost of travel. In short, this means that students will never have to disclose the nature of their healthcare needs. As well, decisions about amount of subsidy will be decided by average cost of travel (i.e. average trip to Toronto on a bus) and will be provided beforehand rather than on a reimbursement model. Finally, students will be eligible for up to 100\$ per occurrence and 300\$ per academic year. I really cannot thank my partner in crime, the AMS' Social Issues Commissioner Alex Chung for all of her hard work on this project; I only wish that I could've had her passion, vision, and dedication back when I was an undergrad myself.

### **Graduate Research Assistantships [Ongoing]**

I've been meeting and working closely with my investigators as we wrap up this final stretch of research. By now you've all had time to answer the multiple surveys that have been sent out, but otherwise I am confident that our investigations into Time to Completion, Graduate Mental Health, Post Residency Fees, and Access to Childcare will be complete before my time in office is done. As I've said before, I'm consistently impressed with what this talented, and dedicated group is able to accomplish.

### **Graduate Student Societies [Complete]**

During the winter break I concluded my work on introducing additional graduate student societies, and attempted to sit down with those departments that could benefit from this oft-overlooked system. Drawn up were guidelines, logistical plans, administration, and even a sample constitution. And while it doesn't have the flash and sizzle of a parenting room, or food bank, the research that I undertook and the framework that was developed should prove useful to the incoming executive in their own attempts to reinvigorate the campus community and draw more people into active participation in our society.

### **Drop & Shop [Ongoing]**

Spoke with Joan in Student Community Relations and while she's interested in running this event again, there are logistical issues. My successor will definitely be out of the country during this time, and so I am approaching the incoming executive to see whether or not one of them would be able to shoulder the administrative burden of running the event alongside myself and Joan. She did, however, mention securing nearly 30 volunteers from an interested church, meaning that we'd need far fewer hands on deck this time around. Discussions continue, but if you are interested in helping out, please let me know your thoughts.

Best,

Lorne Beswick

VP Campaigns and Community Affairs, 2014-16

[vp.community@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.community@sgps.ca)





Hello Council,

And here is it, my last report to Council for the year (fret not, there is still another GM report at the end of the month to recap the year). We have had a very productive year on Council this year, and I want to thank all of you for your engagement levels. We have seen more motions, questions, discussions, and overall involvement from Councillors this year than many of the ones in recent past.

#### **April Council**

This Council meeting has a very busy, but very important agenda, with lots going on. Most of the volume comes from policy and bylaw changes, so please make sure you read through them carefully, and if you have any questions, contact the mover and/or myself and we should be able to answer your questions.

#### **New Speaker**

My term as Speaker ends at the end of the Month, and there will be a new Speaker elected at this Council Meeting – so if you are interested in stepping into the role, I highly encourage you to do so – it is very rewarding. If you want to know more about the position, please get in touch.

#### **April By-Election**

As you will see on the agenda, we will be holding a by-election in April to fill the vacant positions of Senator and Trustee. If you have any questions about the Election process contact Travis ([elections@sgps.ca](mailto:elections@sgps.ca)). If you want to know more about the specific roles, contact myself ([senator@sgps.ca](mailto:senator@sgps.ca)) or James ([trustee@sgps.ca](mailto:trustee@sgps.ca)).

#### **May Council**

While this is my last meeting as Speaker, there is still going to be another meeting of SGPS Council before it breaks for the summer – the next Council Meeting will be on May 17, 2016 at 5:30pm in the McLaughlin Room.

Thanks again for a great year everyone. As always if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Cheers,  
Eric Rapos  
Council Speaker  
[speaker@sgps.ca](mailto:speaker@sgps.ca)



### **Graduate Studies Executive Council (GSEC) – Highlights from the March 17 2016 meeting**

- Dean's report: S. den Otter reported:
  - The Master of Earth and Energy Resources Leadership (MEERL) proposal was passed at Senate and has been submitted to the provincial Quality Council for their consideration.
  - Brenda Brouwer wrote an opinion piece which recently appeared in the Globe and Mail, and also in University Affairs on what the PhD means or could mean for Canadian society, and our task within the university sector to communicate the value of the PhD.
  - The SGS hosted two webinars for students who had applied to hold a CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC CGS M at Queen's. Current Queen's graduate students participated in each seminar and spoke about Queen's and their programs here. There was good attendance at each webinar.
- Reports from Faculty Graduate Councils/Committees and SGPS:
  - Graduate Councils and Committees received and approved routine matters of business at recent meetings. At Science Graduate Council discussion topics were generated for a possible upcoming meeting of Science Associate Deans/Deans in Ontario. Topics of interest included possibilities for collaboration for course delivery, current practices and opportunities for senior PhD students to teach courses, and mentorship recognition for senior PhD students.
- GSEC approved:
  - Preapproval of Proposed Graduate Diploma and Professional Master's in Biotechnology
  - Proposed Major Modification, Changes to program structure, PhD Program (Physics)
  - Proposed Major Modification, combined BSc/MSc (Physics)
  - Omnibus Report March 2016
  - Fellowship Committee Report March 2016

### **Senate Meeting – March 22, 2016**

- A notice of motion was submitted regarding the Queen's Learning Outcomes Framework
  - This will be voted on at the April Meeting of Senate
  - If you have any feedback, please let me know.
  - [https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/79501/SCAD%20Queen\\_s%20Learning%20Outcomes%20Framework.pdf?handle=F8D20C56EED64A378D4AFB5439A2E766](https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/79501/SCAD%20Queen_s%20Learning%20Outcomes%20Framework.pdf?handle=F8D20C56EED64A378D4AFB5439A2E766)
- As a follow up to previous reports, the Senate will (potentially) be voting on the implementation of a Fall Break at the April Senate meeting. The reason I say potentially is that a notice of motion was submitted to March Senate to defer this decision until February 2017 in order to form a committee (much like the Advisory Committee on Non-Academic Misconduct) to review it further.
  - The notice of motion will be discussed first, and then if it passes, the original motion will be postponed, otherwise we will proceed with discussion on the main motion to implement a fall break. So if you have any feedback on my previous reports about the fall break, it would still be valuable to have.
- The May Senate Meeting was cancelled, so the April Senate will be my final meeting as Senator – I will report on this at both the General Meeting and to May Council.

Cheers,  
Eric Rapos  
Graduate Student Senator  
[senator@sgps.ca](mailto:senator@sgps.ca)



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Trustee  
April 2016

Hello Council,

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Capital Assets and Finance Committee is on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016, and the Board will be meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Should you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

James MacLeod

Trustee  
[trustee@sgps.ca](mailto:trustee@sgps.ca)



Dear Council,

This past month has been busy with a number of initiatives I am currently in the process of working on.

To begin, we are still running our weekly **Wednesday Sport Hour** events this month at the ARC in the upper-west gymnasium. I would like to encourage anybody who has yet to come out to swing by and check it out before things slow down for the summer months.

In terms of my current involvements, aside from attending our bi-weekly collaborative commissioner meetings with our director of logistics, I am currently in the process of hiring a Summer Activities Facilitator. The interview process and hiring is taking place this week (the week prior to council) therefore, we should be able to announce who the successful candidate is by the time our council meeting comes around. The Summer Activities Facilitator will be available to help in the planning and running of events throughout the summer months, as well as during orientation week.

Finally, I am currently looking to put together an SGPS beach volleyball team for the summer. Any SGPS member staying in Kingston over the summer months is welcome to join this 6's recreational beach volleyball SGPS team. The beach volleyball leagues run for 16 weeks during the summer in the evenings on weekdays. These are co-ed leagues open to all skill levels and abilities with no prior experience necessary. Sign up is on a first come first serve basis meaning the first 6 individuals to contact me at [athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:athletics@sgps.ca) will have a guaranteed spot on our SGPS team for the summer. This will include a guaranteed 14 regular season games + 2 playoff games.

I would encourage anyone who has further questions, or is interested in signing up to contact me.

Regards,  
Dominic Kucharski  
Athletics Commissioner  
[athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:athletics@sgps.ca)



Congratulations on another wonderful semester. Here are updates from the Equity & Diversity portfolio for the month of April:

### **SGPS Equity Issues Standing Committee Seeking New Members**

The SGPS Equity Issues Standing Committee is looking for new members. The Committee provides oversight and guidance to the SGPS on equity issues that impact our membership, such as the Queen's University sexual assault policy and accessibility issues. Members are required to meeting monthly to discuss on-going business and to advise the Equity & Diversity Commissioner on new issues and concerns from the membership. If this excites you, we want your involvement and input on the project. If you are interested in joining the Committee, please email me at [equity@sgps.ca](mailto:equity@sgps.ca) by **May 2nd, 2016**.

### **Committees**

Over this past month I have been attending meetings for several University committees, including the University's Built Environment Working Group, the University's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Working Group, the University's Academic Accommodations Committee, the AMS Equity Caucus, the SGPS HR Standing Committee and the Positive Space Steering Committee. If you want to discuss the on-going work of any of these organizing bodies please let me know.

### **Community Events**

Over the past month I have had the pleasure of attending many wonderful community events. These included ReelOut Kingston's Queer Film and Video Festival fundraiser, events during Aboriginal Awareness Week, and a Queen's Pride open mic night at CoGro. Congratulations to these groups for hosting these really wonderful initiatives and thank you for all that you do to make our community a more equitable place.

### **Equitable Queen's**

At the end of March I attended the launch party for Equitable Queen's: a new hub for equity and social justice advocacy on campus. The initiative is being organized by the AMS Social Issues Commission. The event brought together the leaders of equity-seeking groups on campus and we were able to network in order to strengthen our future working relationships. You can learn more about this initiative at [www.equitablequeens.com](http://www.equitablequeens.com).

### **Response to the Departmental Issue raised by the Sociology Dept. at March Council**

At March Council the Sociology department representative raised questions about the state of Coordinator hiring for the Commissions that was answered by the VP Professional. During the meeting, I did not have an opportunity to comment on why my Coordinators had not been hired for my Commission. Therefore I would like to take the time now to further answer the Councilor's question.

As stated in my year plan that was submitted to Council and approved by the Executive, I had planned on hiring two Coordinators. In January I was asked by the VP Professional and Executive Director to create job posting for both of these roles and I then submitted them for posting to the SGPS website on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016. However, overtime I was given several different reasons why there was a delay in posting them. After many weeks I had assumed the duties of both the proposed coordinator positions and I ultimately made the decision to end my efforts of working towards getting the job postings on the website after multiple efforts of trying to follow up on the issue. Therefore, both of these proposed coordinator positions have been absorbed into my role and a gap in services being offered to the membership has been avoided.

However, part of this issue stemmed from the policy changes that were made at the October 2016 Council meeting, where the changes created more challenges than opportunities for Commissioners to hire their own Coordinators. What I take away from this experience is that there is a continued need to review how the Commissions function within the SGPS organizational structure and to improve the supports that they receive so that situations like this one can be prevented in the future. I would highly recommend that after the recommendations of the Commission Review is presented by the HR Standing Committee at May Council, that Council passes motions for new policies that ensure that Coordinators can be hired in an efficient and timely manner, as current policy has significant gaps in this regard.

Sincerely,

**Erica Baker**

Equity & Diversity Commissioner

[equity@sgps.ca](mailto:equity@sgps.ca)



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the International Student's Affairs Commissioner  
April 2016



Good evening SGPS council and members-at-large,

My name is Kyle Curlew, I am an MA in Sociology and the new social commissioner. I very much look forward to working with all of you. I am also excited for the prospects of organizing events that you may all avail of. Before I give you the brief of my activities since being hired I would like to formally invite members of council to take part in the SGPS Social Event Standing Committee. As this committee will be built from the ground up, we have the opportunity to be creative in our endeavors and ambitions to provide the SGPS membership with exciting social opportunities. If you are interested in working with us, please don't hesitate to email me at [social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca) or just approach me in person at the end of the meeting of council.

My report will be brief, as I am still working on the foundations of the social commission in order to start regular events. I am in the process of building the SGPS Social Event Committee. I have sent out a call for volunteers, as well as, a call for the hiring of two Social Event Facilitators. This committee will be responsible for collectively brainstorming, organizing and facilitating social events for the SGPS.

In order to get the ball moving for the end of the semester—I have organized an event called the #Gradlife Social in order to get our membership out for an end of term gathering. As well as providing a chance for the incoming and current executive to meet with the SGPS membership. This event will be held on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, at the Grad Club. My year plan is soon to be finalized and I will certainly update all of you on its status and contents at the next meeting of council.

Until next time,

Respectively submitted,

Kyle Curlew

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





Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the University Rector  
April 2016

No report.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Chief Returning Officer  
April 2016

No report.



Dear SGPS Council,

First and foremost, congratulations on (almost) completing another academic year! I hope you are all enjoying a productive end of the term with minimal stress.

As representative for the Department of English, I am happy to report that this has been yet another successful year in providing graduate students with multiple social and professional development events. Some of the events hosted by the Graduate English Society (GES) have included regular "Works in Progress" workshops in which graduate students are able to present current work and receive feedback from colleagues and faculty. "Dissertation Bootcamp" was also a great success this year, helping our members take a week to focus entirely upon their dissertation work in a team environment. The GES has also hosted two Book and Bake sales this year, thus helping generate income for the society. The sales happen in November and March every year, so do watch out for them in the future at Watson Hall. The annual social events, including the Halloween and Valentine's Day parties, were held as usual.

This year also included a new event titled "Course Launch," aimed to promote the department to the undergraduate students at Queen's. The event was collaboratively hosted by the GES and the Department of English, and was an opportunity for the Teaching Fellows to explain the courses they will be teaching next year to prospective students. Since graduate students will be teaching quite a few of these courses, the event was productive in increasing the visibility of both the Department and the doctoral candidates. Another new endeavor, "Drinks with Profs," has been introduced as a monthly mingling event between faculty and graduate student population.

Lastly, the Association for Literature, Environment, and Culture in Canada will be hosting its biennial conference at the Department of English this upcoming June, titled "Making Common Causes: Crises, Conflict, Creation, Conversation." If any of you are interested in ecocriticism, the environment, or animals in literature and culture, do be sure to check out the website for the conference.

Best of luck to everyone in their future endeavors! Thank you for all of the hard work this past year.

Best regards,

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