



Dear Councillors,

In the past few months, I have been attending many meetings. I try to summarize most of them in below. Please note that some items could fit under different categories. For such items, I have included them only once.

Health and Wellness:

- 1- I have participated in a meeting to draft the final version of a proposal on guidelines for Queen's Joint Health and Safety Committee, to be submitted to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. The guidelines determine how the employer needs to work with the employees (and non unionized graduate students represented by SGPS) for assessment of workplace through different committees in order to identify, evaluate and recommend a resolution of all matters pertaining to occupational health and safety in workplace, in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Act. I would like to thank PSAC901 Health and Safety Executive Officer for their help on this. A training session on how the assessments must be done will be offered by QUFA for free, open to all members of the involved unions and SGPS.
- 2- I have met with the newly appointed Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator, Barbara Lotan, to identify areas where SGPS can collaborate with her office.
- 3- I have met with SHRC management board, as required by the new Bylaws. Issues of budget and financial audit were discussed.
- 4- A meeting with PSAC Local 901 was held to discuss the terms for renewal of a previous agreement on continuation of a generous sponsorship of Health and Dental plan by PSAC Local 901, and their contribution to the Dental and International Bursary. Issues with regard to how these services are advertised and mentioned in SGPS Bylaw and Policy document were discussed.
- 5- I participated in hiring of new Student Advisors.
- 6- A memorandum of agreement between SGPS and SGS was renewed which entitles SGPS to continue receive funding from the SGS for the Student Advisor Program.
- 7- I submitted a report to Provost Advisory Committee on Mental Health, highlighting the work that SGPS has been doing to support its members during the last year.
- 8- SGPS, jointly with Campus Planning and Development, is going to create a new award for SGPS members who propose a small project on making campus more accessible. The award will be named after the SGPS member, James McNutt.

Campus Planning, Student Spaces

- 1- I've attended meetings with the City of Kingston and other stakeholders on bus schedules from the West Campus to the Main Campus, and back, to provide transportation for large number of students attending classes in there. Having classes on West Campus is partially a result of the new vision that the Campus Master Plan has for the West Campus to become a modern space for a vibrant, active, social experience for the students.
- 2- A conversation is happening on recycling left bikes
- 3- Updates from my meetings with Campus Planning Advisory Committee:

- a. Revitalization of PEC: The PEC is turning into a Wellness and Innovation Center, with resources on mental and physical health being next to resources for inter-disciplinary research in the same building. The construction might take two years or more, which means limited access to the gymnasiums during this time. Temporary gymnasiums are being planned to be built on the West Campus, to compensate for this, partially because of the reason cited in 1.
 - b. Terraces at Stauffer Library will be prepared for utilization.
 - c. Signs for celebration of 175th Queen's anniversary
 - d. Richardson Stadium Revitalization:
- 4- AMS has started a consultation process with SGPS on the future use, re-structuring, and re-purposing of space at JDUC, particularly in the light of the plans to move many service that currently reside in JDUC to the Wellness and Innovation Center, after revitalization of PEC

Academics

1. I have started conversations with Center for Teaching and Learning on how to embed the indigenous knowledge, history and culture, in the relevant curricula, in the light of findings of the Provost Task Force
2. I participated in an interview with an external review team on Principal's Review of Research at the Request of Dr. Steven Liss, Vice-Principal (Research). I raised the issues about how research metrics defined by the office of the VP Research currently do not measure student success.
3. New programs were approved by Senate Committee on Academic development and Senate Agenda and Summer Action Committee. Some of the proposed graduate programs were: Combined B.Sc/M.Sc program in Pathology and Molecular Medicine, PhD in gender Studies, and pain diploma.
4. Student-supervisor relations project: I have started to look into the level of satisfaction of students with their supervisors' productivity, mentorship skills, support for academic or professional development, availability for feedback, etc.

I have talked to the Chair of Cyclical Program Review Committee for the possibility of accessing relevant information from different departments self-study reports, such as time-to-completion stats, or number of publications per student. I am hoping to get more information through surveys or focus-groups with students. For this, I am going to start a research project through the work-study program, which I've already posted a job description for. I also look forward to consult with the council members on this, and I would appreciate if you **contact me**, if you are willing to share your ideas on this with me.

Conflict Resolution

1. Following the approval of new policies on student non-academic misconduct, SGPS (along with AMS) will sign an agency agreement with the University which allows the student organizations to take in some of the cases referred to the Central Intake Office and process them internally.
2. As a result of work of my predecessor, there will soon be a protocol for the graduate students experiencing harassment by a faculty or staff member.
3. I met with the Ombudsman Advisory committee and received some points of information about the Ombudsman's Office.

Canadian Federation of Students

1. I attended some workshops by CFS-Ontario to both share and increase my knowledge of finances, campaigning and communication skills, equality issues, etc.
2. I attended the National General Meeting, participated in discussions by National Graduate Caucus, Women constituency group, racialized students constituency group, and international students constituency group.

Other

1. Meeting with Vice-Principal of Student Affairs (Student fees, PEC revitalization)
2. Meeting with the membership through social events (once in June, and once in July)
3. Meeting with the new Chair of Board of Trustees
4. Principal's advisory committee for hiring VP- Facilities, Properties, and Sustainability
5. Meeting with other student leaders for homecoming
6. Special Meeting of board of trustees, July 14th
7. Report on SGPS philanthropy and Volunteerism

Thank you for your kind attention.

Saba Farbodkia

President

Society of Graduate and Professional Students



Below are my portfolio specific updates:

Student Advisor Program

- We have hired 3 student advisors for the upcoming year: Jeremy, Pavan, and Darryl, out of 26 applicants. We were impressed with the amount of quality applicants, and likewise are very enthusiastic about our hires as they hold a breadth of experience in human rights and student advocacy. On the other hand, obtaining a position as a student advisor is more competitive than any other position within the SGPS. In the upcoming year, I will be striking a committee to ascertain the reason why this is and hopefully come up with some recommendations on ways we can involve enthusiastic applicants in the SGPS and allow them to support our community.
- Our student advisors have handled 15 unique cases (from May-till now) with issues ranging from program changes, finances, academic appeals, and most commonly forced withdrawal from a program. Nearly every case has required follow up assistance in order to be resolved.
- Building on the previous Executive's work, we have negotiated a MOA with the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to pay for the salary of up to 2 student advisors belonging to the SGS and who are in funding eligible years. This will help reduce our costs associated with the program and we are planning to use this saved money for marketing and improvement of the program.

Assessing Student Mental Health

- One common concern among students I have talked to is the lack of *available* mental health services for SGPS members. Specifically in regards to the long wait times in seeing the graduate specific counsellor.
- I am currently in the process of compiling a report on SGPS member mental health to provide a more quantitative assessment of our needs and how we can be improving resources available to our students.

Increasing Networking Opportunities for Graduate Students

- Connecting graduate students with young professionals in *their* respective fields is an opportunity that could open up networking opportunities for our members.
- We are helping the SGS establish an inaugural program called *175 Mentors* this upcoming semester to help connect students with recent graduates who can offer tangible and specific advice to SGPS members.

Lastly, I have dealt with emails and drop-ins from students dealing with a wide range of issues and concerns. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or feedback before, during, or after our meeting. It's my favourite part of the job!

Regards,

Sebastian Gorlewski (vp.graduate@sgps.ca)



Hello SGPS Council Members,

I hope you all have enjoyed the summer weather and have had a restful summer vacation period or successful summer term. As the new term rapidly approaches, I look forward to welcoming in incoming members to the SGPS and facilitating a smooth transition into the general SGPS student body.

Mentorship Program

During these past few months I have been working diligently to improve the services the SGPS currently offers, and build on new initiatives to better serve the membership. I had spoken about the Mentorship Program that I had included as part of my platform, and I have been working to establish the groundwork for such a program to kick off. As explained before, the Mentorship Program will aspire to match members from the SGPS with alumni and/or other mentors in their respective fields/careers. It will aim to provide assistance in members' current education, guidance for future goals, and connections for potential jobs and careers. I have been evaluating similar programs at other universities and researching what has worked, what could change, and what could be different specific to the SGPS at Queen's University that would optimize such a program for our membership. I have been in contact with the Office of Advancement and numerous Career Development offices in multiple faculties that make up the SGPS

Membership. I look forward to bringing the plan to council in the coming months, with an aim to host an event at Homecoming to kick off the program.

Professional Makeover Week

I have been organizing this year's Professional Makeover Week, which was a great success last year. Once again, professional tailors will be attending campus to tailor custom-made professional attire for any members interested. The professional attire will come at a wallet-friendly rate to allow for those who are in need of professional attire (or just want new clothes) can do so without straining their budgets. We will also be providing free headshot photos for those interested. Additionally, I have been working with multiple Career Development Offices to set up resume building/review sessions which will assist members as they begin or continue their job searches. I look forward to this week providing the membership with some professional development assistance and I hope everyone who can makes use of these opportunities!

Networking Events

I have been reaching out to alumni from numerous faculties/departments to perhaps attend networking events in the coming months. Unfortunately, I have not received a great deal of responses however I expect to as the busy summer months come to an end.

I am very excited about the initiatives and plans the Executive has for this coming year, and I hope the membership can truly benefit from them. I unfortunately will not be present at the August council meeting, but any questions and concerns can be emailed to me and I will get back to you as soon as possible. I look forward to seeing you all and the rest of the membership in the coming weeks.

Cheers,

Kishan

Lakhani

Vice---President

Professional

Vp.professional@sgps.ca



Council Members,

It is a pleasure to provide our second report to Council for the 2016-2017 SGPS Executive. I hope all of you have enjoyed your summer and have had a much needed rest. Over the past three months, our Executive Team has worked hard on a number of projects and have been diligently crafting our annual plans. With that in mind, I want to flag a few outstanding issues/ongoing projects for your attention:

Online Bursary and Grant System

I am happy to report that the switch to the online application system for grants and bursaries has led to an increased interest by members in the program. Over the next several months we will be compiling statistics to better chart the health of the program over time so we can conduct a more thorough review of our progress sometime mid-year.

SGPS Budget

Our new Assistant Director (Finance), Sandy Beaton, has been busy compiling accounts and receipts from the past several years, which will allow us to present the most accurate picture of SGPS finances ever delivered to Council. Once the package is completed and reviewed by the Finance and Services Standing Committee, Council will have an opportunity to review and provide input over two Council meetings in September.

Student Fee Policy Review

The Finance and Services Standing Committee is currently undergoing the review of the Student Fee Policy. At this stage of the process, the committee is working hard to compile the many suggestions and improvements suggested by members. We hope to have a series of meetings this month to finish off a final draft that meets the needs of both the SGPS and student activity fee recipients. I look forward to presenting the final report to you in September once the committee is satisfied with the final product.

As always, I am free to take your questions.

Respectively Submitted,

Stuart Clark

Vice President (Finance & Services)
Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS)
vp.finance@sgps.ca



Dear Council,

I apologize for not being able to attend this meeting- my work schedule over the summer has me at my part time job on Tuesday evenings and as we are currently short staffed, I couldn't get out of that commitment so if you have any questions on my report or what I've been up to, please feel free to email me at vp.community@sgps.ca.

Fortunately, unlike when I wrote my very first report in May, I am actually in the country this time so this should be a much more comprehensive read. It has been a pretty busy summer in terms of SGPS related work so below I have listed some of the main things I have gotten up to over the past few months.

Agenda/O-Week Guide:

With the help of Andria, the Commissioners and the Executive, and the great design work done by the very talented and patient team at Studio Q, we now have agendas and O-Week packages all set for the fall! I spent a few weeks in July re-working the agenda from previous years, as well as making a brand new O-Week guide. It took a while but I think the final product looks great and would love any feedback for including more elements in future years!

Centre for Teaching and Learning:

As part of my year plan, one of my projects is to work with the CTL to provide editing services for international students. I have already met with Sue Fostaty Young, who is the Educational Developer and Program Manager at the CTL, and we have worked out a few ideas on how to proceed. She and I also spoke about ways to transfer some of the information from the Teaching Development Day during Orientation Week into online content for graduate and professional students to access throughout the year. Finally, we are also discussing the possibility of creating further Expanding Horizons workshops along the lines of 'How to get the most out of your supervisor/graduate student' from last year.

Clubs Committee:

Following the merger with the AMS Clubs Office, I have been meeting with the Clubs Manager at the AMS (Grace Kim) on a weekly basis. We went through a round of grant distribution earlier in the summer and I am now providing her with some help on the Clubs Manual she has so tirelessly spent the summer working on. We are also coordinating the inclusion of information on the merger and how everything now works on both the AMS and SGPS websites and Grace is actually going to speak at the September Council Meeting in order to discuss the registration process for clubs and the benefits of doing so. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself or Grace (her email is clubs.manager@ams.queensu.ca).

Research Assistants:

With the help of Andria and Career Services, I have posted three work study positions for the year- one to look into the resources available for mature students on campus, another to consider what is available for international students, and the final one looks at non-academic jobs post-graduation. There may be one more position going up but I have to consult with a few different groups prior to figuring out what particular information will be sought from that position. More information will become available on that in the next few weeks, however for the positions already posted, please feel free to take a look through Career Services and apply through their Work Study postings.

I have really enjoyed working with the Executive, the permanent staff and the Commissioners over the summer and look forward to continuing the work we have started throughout the year.

Sincerely,
Anastasiya Boika
VP Campaigns & Community Affairs



Hello Council,

Since there were no council meetings during the summer, my work over the past few months has been largely administrative. The minutes for council meetings as far back as ten years are now available on the SGPS website, and anything further back than that are available on request. I've also been in contact with the exec and staff to answer questions they have about B&P.

I'd like to thank all the councilors who gave feedback regarding the scheduling of this meeting; hopefully this will be the last time we have to deal with the possibility of shifting things around like that. I would also like to welcome the new Councilors we have joining us this month. I know that not all departments change their representatives at the same time, but many seem to occur between August and October, so I will try to go over a few of the basics of how meetings are run a few times during that period for the benefit of those that are just joining us.

Travis Skippon

SGPS Council Speaker
Email: speaker@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Graduate Student Senator
August 2016

(no report submitted)



To my fellow SGPS members,

I hope you have had an opportunity to relax a bit throughout the summer months, which can be just as busy as the fall and winter terms for many of us! I am pleased to submit my first report as your graduate trustee for the August 2016 SGPS Council Meeting.

After my election to the position of Graduate Trustee, I was invited by my predecessor, James MacLeod, to attend the March Board of Trustees meeting as a guest. I was able to get a sense of the importance and magnitude of the position as I listened in on two days of meetings. James was also kind enough to indulge my request for a meeting beforehand to discuss his experiences serving on the Board over the last two years. I am grateful for his wisdom as I move forward in the position.

Before officially beginning my two-year term on June 1, I had an opportunity to meet with Principal Daniel Woolf and the University's new Provost, Dr. Benoit-Antoine Bacon. In addition, I thought it was integral to set up a meeting with Sheldon Levy, who is the Deputy Minister in Ontario's Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (formerly known as the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities). As the Deputy Minister, Mr. Levy is responsible for the operations of the ministry, which administers policy and law related to post-secondary education in Ontario. He is also the former President of Ryerson University, and oversaw numerous capital projects throughout his tenure. I met with Mr. Levy in late May to discuss the importance of student engagement in university governance as well as best practices for student representatives on university boards.

After beginning my term in June, I was appointed to the Capital Assets and Finance Committee, and was then called to attend a special Board of Trustees meeting on July 14, where two new capital projects were discussed and conditionally approved by the Board. I have outlined these two projects below.

Innovation and Wellness Centre

The Board of Trustees conditionally approved an investment of \$87.5 million to construct the Innovation and Wellness Centre, which is slated to occur through a revitalization of the Physical Education Centre (PEC) that is located across from the Athletics and Recreation Centre (ARC) and is adjacent to the JDUC.

The major components of the Centre include: (1) a much-needed expansion of space for engineering and applied science, as well as becoming a permanent space for the Queen's Innovation Connector (QIC); and (2) an investment in student wellness services, which specifically includes counselling services, academic support, tutoring, accommodation and accessibility services, as well as space for international student support.

Funding sources for this reconstruction, as it currently stands, do not include student fees (the open meeting agenda and relevant documents with the funding breakdown is available to the public on the Queen's University Governance Portal). This is, however, something to be mindful of as the project moves forward.

Furthermore, the closure of the PEC for reconstruction will have an impact on the recreation experiences of SGPS members, as it is heavily relied on by Queen's Athletics and Recreation for intramural programming as well as community partnerships and rentals. We must ensure that the current services offered to the SGPS community are being adequately maintained throughout this project.

Biomedical Research Facility Revitalization

The Board also conditionally approved a project to revitalize the biomedical facility at a cost of \$31.8 million. The funding will come through government assistance for capital projects, contributions from three faculties, and an internal loan. This project will help strengthen Queen's University's position in the biomedical research field, and will no doubt have a positive impact on the research experience of graduate students.

More information about the Innovation and Wellness Centre project and the Biomedical Research Facility Revitalization project is available on the Board of Trustee July 14 Agenda Page here:

<https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=1008>.

Queen's University Governance Portal: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/>

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees takes place on September 30 and October 1. The Capital Assets and Finance Committee will also meet on September 30.

If you have any questions or concerns related to the Board or other happenings at Queen's, please feel free to contact me and I will be happy to discuss these further with you.

Cheers,
Adam

trustee@sgps.ca



Dear Council,

I hope everyone has had a wonderful summer thus far! I wanted to apologize about my absence at this month's council meeting but I am still finishing out my days here calling Ottawa "home" and will not be back in time for council unfortunately.

Despite being back and forth between Kingston and Ottawa this summer, there has been plenty of updates, events and on going initiatives that I wanted to share that I have carried out throughout my role as Athletics Commissioner. Before I begin my updates, I wanted to acknowledge that none of these initiatives would be possible without the help of our Summer Activity Facilitator, the other Commissioners and of course our wonderful staff here with the SGPS.

Looking back, our main goals for this summer were to offer graduate students the opportunity to get involved in an on-going recreational league and a number of larger events held throughout the summer. Past years have seen a diminished role in the athletic and recreational post and participation of our graduate students has been limited due to the nature of the summer months.

I am pleased to share that this summer we have seen a sizeable number of students get involved in our events. To begin, we have launched a summer SGPS Beach Volleyball recreational co-ed team. Our SGPS team has been playing weekly with the KSSC league in Kingston with a team of approximately 15 players including alternates. This league offers students the ability to play throughout the summer months in an inclusive and friendly environment. As I write this report, there are two games left before playoffs begin- go team!

On June 19th, we held one of our two main summer events. The Outdoor Adventure Day at Gould Lake Conservation Area was a memorable and successful action packed day in the sun. Approximately 25 participants joined us on this daytime event that offered beautiful hiking trails, boat rentals, sporting activities and swimming in the lake.

As I write this report, we are hopeful that our upcoming 1000 Islands Kayaking Tour on August 13th will bode similar results. While I am not yet able to comment on how this event played out, I would like to encourage everyone that did in fact join us on this event (since by the date of council it will have already taken place) to share their experiences so that we can continue to grow our numbers for future initiatives.

Looking ahead, we as commissioners, alongside our facilitators and staff, have been very busy planning what we hope to be an unforgettable orientation week. On the side of Athletics, the Summer Activity Facilitator and myself will be organizing a very unique and exciting event on Thursday September 8th from 11:30am to 3:30pm in the ARC upper gyms. Our Sports Day is designed to provide a platform for students to meet new people, interact with one another, check out the ARC facilities and have fun- all while engaging with the adapted sport community in Kingston. Athletes with disabilities who live and train in the Kingston area will be volunteering their time at the event in order to demonstrate sport skills and help coordinate games and scrimmages. Each of our sessions will begin with 15-minutes of instructional time followed by a 30-minute scrimmage and ending with 15-minutes for downtime/water breaks. The adapted sports will include sitting volleyball, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby and adapted dodge ball. This is a drop-in event that has never been run before and we are very excited to be bringing this idea to life. I encourage all of you to come on out and see what everything is about!

As we move further along into August and begin nearing Orientation Week, I ask that as a collective we help spread the word on all of our events that the SGPS family has worked so hard on. And as always, if anyone

has any ideas, opinions, comments or suggestions that they would like to share, please do not hesitate to contact me as I am always open for suggestions. Above all, enjoy the remaining summer days and I look forward to the start of another wonderful school year!

Regards,
Dominic Kucharski
Athletics Commissioner
athletics@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Equity & Diversity Commissioner
August 2016

(no report submitted)



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

(no report submitted)



Dear members of the SGPS council,

I am happy to report that it has been a successful summer for the Social Commission. First I will discuss the events that were completed, as well as events that did not work out. Second, I will discuss logistics of the social commission. Third, I will discuss the work completed for Orientation.

We have had a successful summer organizing events. Among our successful large events were the SGPS Paintball, the SGPS Improbable Escapes, several mixers and BBQ evenings, billiards at the Grizz, and movie at the town square. There were also several events that were smaller and easier to organize—such as board game nights and the zombie LARP. Unfortunately, there was a cancelled event, the Sci-Fi disco/costume party, because no one purchased tickets. After consulting the team, and others, I believe that the party was too elaborate. As it turns out, easy events for the SGPS membership to attend are the most likely to work. Embellishing with costumes or other things makes prep too difficult for the members and thus less likely to come. Tired grad students need easy and chill events. The most successful has been billiards, mixers, and BBQ.

In terms of the social commission itself—things have been smooth, however, changes had to be made because of the new sanctioning system. The original enthusiasm I brought to the job has proved tough because of the background work that needed to go into the event organizing. We have decided that we would hold less events, but more quality events. We will try our best to hold events that the SGPS membership seem to want the most. I have successfully, with the help of our directors, hired two new social facilitators. I have hired Jenn Wigglesworth as the logistics facilitator and Natasha Elena as the marketing facilitator. They have been doing a great job in event organizing and marketing. Finally, we have been encountering issues reaching out to the membership. It has proved to be our most difficult challenge. We are limited on the amount of emails the SGPS is able to send out a month, as well as, our Facebook reach is notoriously low. This is a problem we have been working with the executive to address. However, if any members of council have potential solutions, please email me!

Finally, the social commission has been especially busy organizing Orientation events. We have a full week of events. Not much has been changed from last year. However, there are some notable changes. First, the dates have been switched around so that we could have semi-formal at the Portsmouth Harbour Restaurant on Thursday evening. This venue is a bit more expensive, but will promise to hold a much higher quality experience. They will also do our semi-formal afterparty and bring in a DJ. Second, the International Student Commissioner has added an event to our schedule—a tour bus event. I will let Sara elaborate on this one. The event schedule is up on the SGPS website (<http://sgps.ca/orientation-2016/>).

Just as a notification. There is an event coming up on August 23rd at the Grad Club that might be of interest. This will be an end-of-summer BBQ which will turn into an evening of music. The final details are still being worked on. However, it will be a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow SGPS members before September begins.

Best regards,
Kyle Curlew,
Social Commissioner, SGPS.



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

(no report submitted)



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

(no report submitted)



Respectfully, we are concerned with the funding situation surrounding the Kingston Coalition Against Poverty and hope that the changes to the SGPS by-laws and policies, and the committee created to come up with guidelines for future issues with student activity fees will rectify these issues. Furthermore, we hope this coming year will see an inclusive use of Robert's Rules to aide discussion and not hinder it. Finally, we look forward to the discussion of commissions reviews at the August council meeting.

SKHS will be holding its annual general meeting in September with the hopes of drumming up participation in our own graduate student society. Elections for the 2016-2017 SKHS Arts and Science representatives will also occur in mid-September with the new reps attending the October council meeting.

SKHS is hosting a number of orientation events separate from and with the planned SGPS events. We are all hoping for a great turn out!

Deferentially submitted,

Emma Thompson, SKHS Arts Rep
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Robert Bentley, SKHS Science Rep
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Fellow Council Members,

The Philosophy Graduate Students Association (PGSA) had another successful year of advocating on behalf, and advancing the interests of, philosophy graduate students at Queen's. Highlights include:

- Fruitful conversations with faculty representatives on our Board of Graduate Studies, including suggestions that there be standardized discipline specific TA training offered to 1st year graduate students to help them understand how to effectively evaluate student work and provide constructive feedback.
- Continuing our successful [Graduate Student Colloquium](#), and consulting with our colleagues in Political Studies regarding how these events can be organized and gain support from graduate students.
- Amending our Constitution to ensure that the PGSA acts to retain its status as a Recognized Group within the SGPS, and thus has a voice on Council.

Our department is currently participating in a cyclical review, which has prompted open conversation between the graduate student body and department administrators about the strengths and weaknesses of the program. Special thanks is due to our Chair of Graduate Studies, Prof. Christine Sypnowich, and Graduate Student Assistant, Susanne Cliff-Jungling, for facilitating this process.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to represent philosophy graduate students on SGPS Council for the past two years.

Regards,
Jared Houston
SGPS Councillor (Philosophy)