

I have very little to report since my AGM report last week. Specifically, I am in the process of negotiating a better meal plan for SGPS members and would welcome any and all input from members-please email me if you have any ideas. I am still meeting every other week with the AMS and Student Affairs with respect to the co-curricular record (CCR) proposal. We are still sorting out the details with respect to the CCR. As you will note, there will be a presentation at the beginning of our council meeting-I encourage you to ask questions during the presentation in order to become fully informed.

I had the opportunity of attending the National Day of Action on February 1st here at Queen' s. Despite what the newspapers claimed, I am delighted to report to you that we had well over a hundred attendees throughout the day with the crowd swelling at times beyond expectations. It was a great event and I look forward to future action in efforts to reduce tuition fees to allow for accessible education for everyone! A special thanks goes out from me to our hardworking team of VP' s with an extra special mention to Anne Marie for her commitment to this project well beyond our expectations-thanks for your dedication to the SGPS.

I also had the opportunity of attending the SGPS ski trip where I met a number of new faces and was pleased to see some familiar ones too. The weather was fantastic and the slopes were ideal for skiing-I am delighted to report that there were no significant injuries. I encourage you all to get involved with the events that the social team puts on each year. It is a great opportunity to try something new and to meet new faces as well.

In closing, it has been a great year to date and I am already feeling somewhat nostalgic as my term draws to a close. Please be sure to join us at all of our regular council meetings to be kept up to date about my and the rest of the SGPS' activities. Council meetings are always open to members to attend and dates, times, and locations are posted on the SGPS website.

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell

President



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Graduate
February 2012

Greetings!

I hope that you all have had a great start to the Winter 2012 term! Here is what I have been up to this past month:

Academic Affairs Standing Committee (AASC)

In the December 2011 SGPS council meeting, the AASC was tasked with developing the Committee's Terms of Reference (TOR). While this initiative is still in the works, the Committee intends to bring forward its proposed TOR to the March 2012 SGPS Council Meeting. A few items that were discussed at length included the number of Committee members, the responsibilities of the Committee and its members, the attendance minimum, the Committee's deliverables, and quorum. These elements will be present in the TOR that will be presented to Council at the March 2012 SGPS Council Meeting. Another item that was discussed by AASC members was the composition of the Committee's membership. More particularly, the AASC members discussed if the Committee's membership should only include SGPS Council Representatives and/or student representatives of the various Graduate Councils and Committees (for a complete list of Graduate Councils and Committees, see here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/facultystaff/governance/council.html>). The reasoning behind this is to increase the communication between the AASC and the SGPS members pertaining to any academic-related issues that the AASC is working to address. The Committee, however, felt that it would be in the best interest of the SGPS membership to keep the AASC open to all SGPS members so that those interested in volunteering their time to serve on the Committee would have the opportunity to do so. In order to address the lack of communication between the AASC and SGPS members, the Committee suggested that a better reporting mechanism was required so that the initiatives of the AASC were being communicated effectively with those serving on the SGPS Council as well as the Graduate Councils and Committees. Doing so would help to increase the impact and influence of the AASC among decision-making bodies at Queen's. The Committee aims to address this in the TOR that will be presented to the March 2012 SGPS Council Meeting.

FREE Queen's 2012

The first FREE Queen's 2012 workshop was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at this year's FREE Queen's venue: Pathways to Education, 263 Weller Avenue. The event was well-attended, and I would like to thank the Steering Committee members, and all the FREE Queen's 2012 workshop facilitators for helping to make the FREE Queen's 2012 workshop series a reality. Please kindly spread the word about FREE Queen's 2012 amongst your respective departments and the Kingston community outside of Queen's. For a complete list of FREE Queen's 2012 workshops, please visit <http://www.sgps.ca/events/freequeens.html>. In the February 2012 SGPS Council Appendices, please kindly find a poster advertising FREE Queen's 2012. Feel free to print out a few copies and post them on community event boards within the Kingston community to help spread the word. Alternatively, you can email me at vpg@sgps.ca and request that I print some out for you to pick up at the SGPS office (JDUC, Room 021). Thank you in advance for your help and support!

Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

On Monday, January 16th, 2012 the CTL celebrated proudly its 20th anniversary, welcoming many Queen's staff, students, and faculty throughout the entire day to showcase the CTL's achievements. At the Brown Bag Conversation with Principal Woolf, the AMS and the SGPS were each presented with a certificate of appreciation for all the help and support that Queen's students have provided to the CTL over the past many years of its existence. The CTL would like to thank everyone for helping to help make this event a huge success!

Student Advisor Program

On Tuesday, January 24, 2012 the Student Advisors brought to SGPS members a workshop titled *Effective Communication Strategies with your Supervisor*. The workshop was well-attended, and due to its success, the workshop was conducted again on **Wednesday, February 8, 2012, 6:00-7:30 p.m.** at the Ed Churchill Friendship hall (second floor, JDUC). Thank you for all your help in spreading the word about the Student Advisor workshops and helping to make this great resource known to SGPS members within your respective departments!

Additionally, the Student Advisors will be presenting their Fall 2011 term reports to the SGS in our next SGS-SGPS meeting coming up in a few weeks. During this meeting, the Student Advisors will present to the SGS (Dean Brouwer, Associate Deans Rappaport and den Otter, and Director Dean McKeown) any recurring issues and trends that they are witnessing with regards to their clients. While the identities of all clients will remain anonymous, the overarching recurring issues will be relayed to the SGS, as well as any suggestions on how we can move forward to minimize the occurrence of these issues in the future.

This concludes my report to council. Wishing you all continued success in the Winter 2012 term!

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Karagiorgakis
VP Graduate
vpg@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Professional
February 2012

I hope everyone is having a great winter term so far.

I don't have a lot to report on because I just submitted an annual report last week that sums up most of what happened in January.

Elections

Elections for Exec positions are coming up. If anyone is interested in either my position or one of the other exec positions, I would be happy to discuss this with you. If you haven't already read the reports provided for the AGM, they are a great place to get an idea of what kind of stuff these positions consist of.

Equity Commissioner

As you may have read in your e-mail, our equity commissioner tendered her resignation last week. We are thus seeking a new equity commissioner. If you are interested in applying, you can see the posting on our website under the 'get involved' – 'jobs'.

Hired positions

We are also hiring 2-3 part-time RA positions through the work-study program. This means that in order to qualify for these positions you will have to be approved for work-study. Information about the work-study program is available here: <http://www.queensu.ca/studentawards/financialassistance/workstudy.html>

Don't worry that it says the deadline was September 15th, students in the past have been able to get approved later. Look out for an e-mail about these positions soon.

Non-Academic Discipline Review Committee

Just to update you all on this committee, nothing much has changed since last month. I have been talking with Kieran, one of the AMS VPs, who also sits on this committee, about how we can approach this committee strategically. I will keep you posted on any developments.

Respectfully submitted,

Cody Yorke, VP Professional
vpp@sgps.ca

..drop fees...drop fees...drop fees...drop fees...drop fees...drop fees...drop fees...drop fees...

Holy Drop Fees National Day of Action, Bat-Council! The drop fees organizing committee was in full gear this month, meeting up to twice weekly to bring that National Day of Action to Queen's campus. As you are aware, the goal of the campaign was to call on the government to increase funding and to decrease tuition fees and student debt. But the students and faculty members involved in organizing for February 1st felt it was also important to raise awareness of the rising costs of education, and to call on our administrators and various other representatives, when considering rising fees, to also consider how the national student debt level, soon to reach \$15 billion, will affect us all.

The Day of Action began at 7.45am on the corner of University and Union, where we set up temporary camp and, armed with our camping gear, made 'Ocqpancakes,' which we gave away at no cost (often to the dismay of passers-by who reluctantly accepted their pancake while wondering what the small print entailed –a sad sign of the times, indeed). Organizers then moved and set up camp –or ocQpation-- in the ARC/SLC, where we stayed all day and most of the evening. The day was punctuated by General Assemblies, several faculty presentations on democratic governance and process, workshops, brief documentary screenings, and even live music. Most importantly, however, were the students from all walks of life with whom we spoke that day. Most students were surprised to find out, for instance, that the government's tuition "rebate" would be accompanied by a 5% increase in tuition over the next year, and that it was being given at the same time as several other funds were being slashed (for instance, the \$42 million research fund; the Ontario Trust Program; and the Queen Elizabeth II scholarship for high-merit, high-need students who will now be getting \$1,600 instead of \$3,900 annually – but only if they qualify).

Several efforts went into organizing this very long but worthwhile day. In the weeks preceding February 1st, I inserted myself into various on-campus discussions by way of giving presentations to diverse groups to promote the campaign and to seek out endorsements or pledges. As a result, our campaign was officially endorsed by PSAC 901, the Kingston District Labour Council, two AMS clubs, OPIRG Kingston, CUPW Kingston, and Queen's TriCouncil at the local level, and by a much longer list at the provincial and federal levels, including the Elementary and Secondary Teachers' Federations. I was also invited to give a presentation to the Senate Educational Equity Committee (SEEC), where the Chairperson resolved to strike a sub-committee to investigate the impacts of rising fees (tuition and ancillaries) for students.

I also organized, along with the Grad Club staff, a special 'Drop Fees' trivia night which took place on January 19th, where bonus questions were specific to the topic of post-secondary education. Participants were provided with all materials necessary to answer the questions. We sponsored the event by providing the Grad Club with special prizes, including a gift certificate for spa care (to alleviate financial stress), a gift certificate to Old Farm Fine Foods (in recognition of the fact that it costs a lot to eat well), a photocopy card (because printer fees have increased), and a Kobo e-reader (because textbooks are expensive).

Further to these efforts, I contacted, through media advisories and press releases, several media sources, and secured interviews which were featured on the CKWS 6pm news, CFRC Radio, Queen's Journal, MyFM 88.7 Greater Napanee, as well as the St. Lawrence and King's College/Belleville campus news.

Now that the Day of Action is over, I have pledged myself to continue to attending OcQpy General Assemblies (every Monday at 4pm at the Grey House). Truly, this group of invested students and faculty have education for the greater good at heart, and they have won me over. I invite you all to attend at least one of their meetings to see for yourselves. Their next agenda item is to focus on the democratic governance structure at Queen's which very much aligns itself with the motion Council endorsed last December regarding the unilateral suspension of admissions to the Bachelor of Fine Arts.

Food Centre Fundraiser

And speaking of rising costs and their effects, I met with the Director of the Food Centre who suggested we work together to link the drop fees campaign to the Food Centre food drive/fundraiser, taking place February 6-10. Due to a rising demand for the Food Centre's services accompanied with a shortage of funding, the Centre has reached surpassed its budgeted allowance for fresh foods. The food drive/fundraiser will allow Queen's community members to donate food or money at the SGPS or AMS offices (cheques can be made to the AMS Food Centre and dropped off at the AMS front desk). If you would like to set up a donation box in your office or club space, please contact Laura Stairs (foodcentre@ams.queensu.ca). The Food Centre is located in MacGillivray-Brown Hall, and is open Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 4.30pm to 5.30pm.

Copyright Working Group

Mark Swartz, Queen's Copyright Specialist, is looking for an SGPS representative willing to sit on the Copyright Working Group. The working group's mandate is to provide input and feedback on copyright issues at Queen's, and the services and initiatives of the Copyright Advisory Office. Meeting as needed, the working group will provide feedback on copyright issues in teaching, learning, and research, as well as any operational matters related to copyright. Please contact me (vpcca@sgps.ca) or contact Mark directly (mark.swartz@queensu.ca) if you are interested in representing the interests of SGPS members on this important committee.

Occupational Stress, Health, and Safety

PSAC 901 President, MaryAnne Laurico and I met with Queen's Safe Disclosure officer, Harry Smith, to discuss any progress made in implementing the Safe Disclosure policy passed at Senate one year ago. While the policy's implementation certainly suggests a step in the right direction, at the same time, the University has done little to promote this important protection. Harry, MaryAnne and I discussed possible new ways of advertising the policy and its associated process. Anyone interested in obtaining more details should contact Harry directly (hes1@queensu.ca). I also met with PSAC 901 Occupational Health & Safety Office, Shawn Lamothe, to discuss how we can work together to advocate for the inclusion of occupational stress within Queen's policy on occupational health and safety. I hope to introduce this idea at this week's announcement of Queen's new mental health 'partnership'.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Grondin
VP Campaigns & Community Affairs



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Finance & Services
February 2012

I have two large projects currently in progress.

SLC Policy Subcommittee

I am part of a small group working on policies for the Student Life Centre Council and which is currently discussing how to manage shared space. Currently the Grey House (51 Bader Lane) is the only SLC space allocated as shared between the AMS and the SGPS.

The subcommittee has decided that the shared space policy would cover the need for occupants of shared space to sign a) an agreement jointly drafted by the AMS and SGPS that outlines the terms of occupancy agreed upon by both student organizations, and b) a stewardship agreement jointly drafted by the AMS and SGPS that outlines the rights and responsibilities of occupancy.

Both of these documents are yet to be drafted, and they must satisfy both student organizations, so this work will be ongoing throughout the month of February.

Health and Dental Plan Funding Models

In early discussions between the SGPS and PSAC 901, both executive teams began exploring what changes to the SGPS Health & Dental plan might provide the best longterm benefit from the money gained in the collective bargaining agreement. At this time, the option we are considering most seriously is a change to the funding model of the plan.

Currently, the plan is fully insured by GreenShield. This means that we negotiate member premiums annually with the insurance company, and if those premiums are not sufficient to cover the claims made by plan members, then the SGPS is not liable to make up the shortfall. If the premiums paid are more than the claims made, then GreenShield makes a profit. As the SGPS has several years of predictable claims history, the plan is a good candidate for considering other funding options, in which SGPS may take on some or all of the risk, but would benefit from any overages. There are a number of precautions to consider before deciding whether a funding change is in the best interest of the SGPS and PSAC 901 membership. Both executive teams will be meeting with the SGPS' s current insurance broker on Friday, February 10 to further discuss the options and review the effects to union and SGPS members. I will provide an update at the council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Phillipson, VP Finance & Services



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Speaker
February 2012

Annual General Meeting

The SGPS AGM went off without a hitch (other than the projector and my laptop still not getting along). I am very pleased with the turn out, and the level of involvement of people going into the meeting. That has to be some sort of record on shortest AGM! Factoring in the late start, total time was just over one hour, which is shorter than most Council Meetings.

B&P Updates

Now that the AGM has passed and the motions have been approved, the large task of revamping the Bylaws and Policies is complete. For this round. As mentioned more to come at the March Council Meeting, and March General Meeting.

And that's pretty much it, not too much to report since I just submitted a report to the AGM.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Rapos
SGPS Speaker
(speaker@sgps.ca)

PS – If you are interested in being the new speaker, please contact me if you have any questions.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
February 2012

Hello All,

The SGPS social team is excited to inform you of the great events that we're going to be holding this month. Our events range from a variety of purely social, athletic and healthy living events. We hope to see everyone come out and interact with the diverse community that is our SGPS members.

SGPS SKI/Snowboarding Trip

The SGPS is excited to inform you about our upcoming trip to the Calabogie Peaks Resort. This event is guaranteed to be a great time whether you're an avid skier/snowboarder or looking to try something exhilarating and fun. The Calabogie Peaks Resort has a wide variety of runs, ranging from advanced black diamonds to novice blue and green runs. So come out and carve some powder with your fellow SGPS members. Additionally, you can rent some equipment for a discounted price (\$22) if your equipment is not readily available. Sign up for this event will begin on the 10th of January. Visit SGPS website (link below) or the office (JDUC 021) to sign up for this great event before we hit capacity. For more information please contact us at logistics@sgps.ca.

Cost: \$60/person

Package includes: Transportation, a day pass to the slopes and lunch.

Time: Saturday February 4th

Bus leaves the JDUC at 8 A.M. and returns at approximately 8 P.M.

Meet outside the JDUC (Union & University)

SGPS' Blades of Glory

To continue our theme of Canadian winter activities, we invite you to take to the ice for an ice skating session in the heart of downtown Kingston. The City of Kingston maintains an outdoor skating rink on the northern end of City Hall throughout the winter months, and we plan on utilizing it! People with all levels of skating experience are encouraged to come to this event. For the inexperienced, this is an opportunity to learn and for veterans it provides great afternoon exercise with good company. The SGPS will also be bringing hot chocolate to keep us warm and energized. Please contact logistics@sgps.ca for more information. Date: Saturday February 11th Time: 1:30- 4:00 pm Location: Meet at the downtown ring (pick up skates from JDUC office, at 021 JDUC, before 2:00 pm on Friday February 10th) ***We have a limited number of skates to lend, so it will be a first come first serve policy. Hope to see you all there!

CDC/HDH Run or Walk

Attention runners and walkers! As part of the SGPS's Healthy Lifestyles Initiative, we invite SGPS members to sign up for the CDC/HDH Race to benefit The University Hospitals Kingston Foundation, Child Development Centre. The SGPS will be subsidizing race entry fees for SGPS members and their families. Please download the PDF entry form, fill it out, place in an envelope with your EMAIL, \$10 cash or cheque ONLY and submit to the SGPS office by February 17th, 2012 at NOON. If you plan to collect pledges you can also submit those in your envelope on the 17th. The SGPS will drop off your entries to the proper locations.

ENTRY FORM: <http://www.sgps.ca/downloads/2012CDCEnterForm.pdf>

Cost:\$10 for SGPS members (actual cost is \$15 (Child) \$25 (Adults))

When: Sunday March 25, 2012, 9:45am

Distance:

1 km Fun Run for Kids (Includes a participation medal and a T-shirt)

5 km walk/run (Includes a T-shirt)

10 km run (Includes a T-shirt)

Where: Race begins and ends at the JDUC, Queen's University

Race Kits available on Race Day after 8:30 am.Unisex sizes: S, M, L, XL

See Website for further details <http://www.events.runningroom.com/site/?raceid=7492>

Questions or Concerns? Contact athletics@sgps.ca

Lastly, the social team would love to hear your feedback regarding the types of events we're running and ways we can make them more appealing to our SGPS members. If you have any general inquiries or feedback don't hesitate to contact us at social@sgps.ca.

Respectfully Submitted,

Abdullahi Abunafeesa
Social Commissioner
(social@sgps.ca)

SGPS Computer Network

- I replaced some components in the SGPS webserver to prolong its life. It should be able to handle the website for at least a while longer. I'm looking into replacement system costs.
- I have final numbers for a wiki/mail server software and hardware update, which I will discuss with the Exec in the next while.
- All wireless access points had software updates completed.
- Integrated workstation maintenance will be possible when/if we complete a server software upgrade. For the time being, I will continue manual updates to workstation machines.

SGPS Website

- I am working with the International Team to generate a section of our website for International students. I expect the information to be ready for posting in the next month or so.
- I have the details necessary for an update to the club section of the site. I will work to make the info live asap.

Communications

- I continue to work with Queen's IT to work out kinks with mailing list services. I am making plans to ensure all mailing lists are kept up-to-date.
- I am working with the Office of the University Registrar (OUR) to improve communications between SGPS members and the OUR.
- I continue working on the 2012-2013 version of the SGPS Handbook (dayplanner). Please send any comments or suggestions.
- **The 100th edition of the SGPS E-Newsletter approaches.** I am looking to do something special for the release of version 100. I would love to hear any ideas you have.
- I am working on a social media policy, which is to be submitted to Council for consideration (to be added to SGPS Bylaws and Policies). I hope to have this policy ready in the next couple of months.

Please note this report is a little more brief than usual as we just had our annual general meeting last week.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the International Team
Feb 2012

Dear SGPS Council Members and Members-At-Large,

This report outlines some of what the International Team has worked on in the last month.

The International Team

- Working on an SGPS webpage for international students
- Will participate in the upcoming Focus on Diversity training program as part of the student panel
- Continue to communicate relevant information on the SGPS Facebook page, and through the SGS and SGPS newsletters
- Invited the SGPS Commissioners and Coordinators to a meeting in February to discuss and share their projects
- Met with ASUS' the International Rep to discuss the undergraduate society's vision for international affairs on campus
- Helped reconstruct the SGPS bylaws and policies
- Sit on the FREE Queen's Committee, for which sessions will take place over the next month
- Met with the City's Student Relations Communications Subcommittee in January
- Secured twenty Frontenac's Club hockey tickets for international students on campus

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns about the above, or if you have any ideas that you would like to share. I urge you to become involved, if not with the international committee, than with other initiatives within SGPS.

Warm Regards,

The SGPS International Team

Becky Pero
International Student Affairs Commissioner
international@sgps.ca

Holly McIndoe
International Student Affairs Coordinator
isc@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Sustainability Coordinator
February 2012

Recyclemania

For the second year in a row, Queen's will be participating in Recyclemania. To promote the campaign, a video is being created with the help of Queen's TV and students will be `Caught Green Handed` when they are seen recycling, given a `green handed` sticker and have the chance to win prizes.

I have been working with The Journal developing advertisement to promote the event. The first ad will run in the February 10th 2012 issue. Updates on Queen's progress in the event and a final results ad will run through the semester.

Sustainable Kingston Community Forum

On Saturday January 28th 2012 I attended the first annual Sustainable Kingston Community Forum. The forum included an **interactive symposium on the Four Sustainability Pillars: cultural vitality, economic health, environmental responsibility and social equity that the city of Kingston has selected to reach its sustainability goals.** The forum was informative and a good opportunity for networking and exchanging ideas.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Athletics Coordinator
February 2012

Hello Everyone!

First, on January 24th, 2012 I attended The Athletics and Recreation Budget Committee meeting. The meeting was to establish familiarity with the process for the ARC budget approval, which will be finished by mid April. This year the ARC has met its financial goals and obligations to the university (last year it ran at a deficit) and is currently running with a surplus in the contingency account. Next year ARC student fees will only increase by the Cost of Living (COL) at 2.3%. This means **graduate student fees towards the ARC will rise from \$156.90 to \$160.51 next year**. The ARC fees are not up for referendum until 2019. We will meet again on March 09, 2012 to review the first round of budgets from Unit Managers.

Second, The University Council on Athletics and Recreation (UCAR) also met on January 24th, 2012. Reports from various unit managers were submitted including:

Director: New Strategic Planning Cycle (2012 –2017) commences Jan 2012. UCAR will be part of the design process, which will include the goals, visions and philosophy of A & R.

School of Kinesiology and Health Studies: No plans for growth in enrollment, new faculty appointment

Facilities and Business Development: Nixon Field's (old Kingston field) RFP went out last January 20, 2012. Bids for tender are due Feb 8th to be rewarded by 15th. The aim is to get approval by Board in March and have the field done by July 31st. Currently, 90% of funding already exists.

Marketing and Communications: The Carr-Harris Cup will be played on Feb 02, 2012 at the K-Rock Centre. Tickets are free for students.

Recreation and Sports Clubs: Queen's will be host to several events and Closing Ceremonies for The Ontario Special Olympics Spring Games; Richardson Stadium will host an International Rugby match between Canada and the USA on June 9th. The rugby match will be part of the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812.; Non-Academic Discipline Action has seen a decrease from last year, especially in Varsity Teams.

Inter-University Sports: Queen's will host the CIS Volleyball Championships in March.

Advancement Team: This new unit will work closely with The School of Graduate Studies and libraries in order to improve structure of programming.

Additional Important Items: UCAR, along with the various units in the university (SGPS, AMS, Residence Life, Faculties), is working to create a new discipline platform, which allows for communication and coordination across units. This is to flag potential students who may need HCD services. This was a recommendation brought down after the number of student deaths that occurred last year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Meaghan Frauts
Athletics Coordinator