

Hello Council,

Committees

I continue to sit on The Joint Board/Senate Committee to Review the Principalship, which has started its work. All members of the Queen's community are encouraged to send feedback on the Principal's work and on the role more generally.

Please consider leaving a comment at <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/principalreview.html>. The SGPS Executive will also be making a formal submission to the committee.

The Senate Operations Review Committee has recommended new, more precise language on minute-keeping at Senate, which passed. We have also submitted a notice of motion that would give the Principal discretion not to call a May meeting of Senate. The May meeting is notorious for having low student participation, especially among undergraduates. By having a May meeting only if necessary, there's less of a chance that students will go underrepresented for important Senate business.

The Student Learning Experience Task Force has met twice now. At our most recent meeting, we had a group-brainstorming session about how the committee will proceed with its work over the coming year (it has meetings on hold through December 2013, and while it may complete its work before then, I will likely be done my term before even its preliminary report. So we will have to think about how to deal with that). I look forward to jumping into more pedagogical theory and thinking about what works best for Queen's in future meetings of the committee.

The Community Housing Board also met in January. Unfortunately, rent continues to increase for residents in community housing: between 2.5% and 3.75% for those in An Clachan and between 2.5% to 5% for those in John Orr Tower, depending on whether the resident took the lease before Community Housing went to a market pricing model. Community Housing is forbidden by Queen's to have a deficit and, in fact, must pay a dividend to the University, hence the ongoing switch to market rates. On a more positive note, the Community Housing online complaints process is almost ready and should be live soon.

I'm also on two new committees. One is the Queen's National Scholar Advisory Committee, which will help select candidates for this prestigious position. The second is the Health and Wellness Steering Committee, which is the meta-committee for the Mental Health Working Group, the Alcohol Working Group, and the campus safety committee. The Steering Committee did not meet for a long time while those committees did their work, and now it is considering what its exact role on campus should be. How do you think health and wellness should be managed at Queen's?

Student Life Centre

There has been some discussion about future renovations to the JDUC. Part of this has to do with the AMS election, where there were ideas presented about how to spend the million dollars owned by the AMS and the University and targeted for JDUC revitalization. However, the SLC also has a small capital projects line (\$50,000 a year) that has been used for window cleaning, the room reservation system, and other things. (The new tiles are from another long-term capital projects line). There is still \$30,000 left in the small capital projects line, and the feeling is that it would be best if it were invested in the JDUC. Ideas include new cork boards for posters, new "cafeteria" tables for the ground floor, and new locks for the doors. But those aren't set in stone--what would you like the JDUC to look like? The SGPS is a partner in the Student Life Centre, and we can help direct what these buildings should look and feel. I encourage you all to send feedback to me or the other SGPS SLC reps about how the JDUC (and the Queen's Centre, the Grey House, and Mac-Brown Hall) can best serve students.

In other news, the SLC is considering putting interior signs in the JDUC and the Queen's Centre to link the two together and to advertise the SLC to students. The University has been pushing back against a formalized use of the SLC logo, as it hasn't been approved by the proper channels at Queen's. I quite like the logo, and hope we can keep it, or one like it, and use it in signage. It's the one on the SLC website: do you like it? <http://studentlifecentre.ca>

Finally, Queen's Hospitality Services are going to renovate the space that currently houses Quiznos and the Mediterranean stand in the JDUC, the "sidewalk cafe." They'll move Quiznos forward and block it off from the rest of the space, create a whole new Mediterranean stand, and add a stand that sells Southeast Asian food and sushi. The goal is to create an experience reminiscent of a street market with food that attempts to be culturally authentic. Hospitality Services kindly let me sample some of the food, and it's good!

The K-12 Environment

The Faculty of Education is obviously closely linked to events at the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario College of Teachers. The Provost announced recently that continuing education enrollment has dropped. Many continuing education students seek out extra credentials that are incentivized by teacher union contracts, which of course have been in the news a lot recently. Now, continuing education students are distance learners and thus not members of the SGPS, but it makes me realize that the SGPS could be quite affected by changes to enrollment as demands for teachers falls or rises. Another example of how we could be affected by Ministry of Education decisions is the Ministry's recent suggestion (there is currently no plan to follow-through) to double the length of consecutive education program. More generally, a large portion of our membership seeks jobs in this sector immediately upon graduation and thus has a significant investment in it. My point with all this is just to say that we in the SGPS need to stay aware of the K-12 environment and respond to changes as appropriate.

Last, but not least: I'm happy to report that the University Librarian has agreed to extend the hours of the Law Library as the LSS recommended in the letter that SGPS Council voted to endorse. For those keeping track, that's three for three victories that SGPS Council has won through its letter endorsements since May!

Thanks, and cha gheill,

Matthew Scribner

President

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@SGPSPresident

Dear SGPS Council Members and Members-At-Large,

Student Advisor Program

The Student Advisors have completed their Fall term (2012) reports, including recommendations that will be brought to the SGS in a meeting at the end of February.

The reports are available here: <http://www.sgps.ca/advisors/reports.html>.

Please contact the Advisors at advisors@sgps.ca with any questions and/or if you would like to meet with them.

FREE Queen's

If you would like to get involved in this year's FREE Queen's event (as either a volunteer instructor or as a member of the Steering Committee) please contact the FREE Queen's Coordinator, Shadi at freequeens@sgps.ca. This event will take place in March; stayed tuned for dates and session abstracts.

T4/T4A INFORMATION

Following the release of a memo by the SGS in November regarding T4A status the Academic Affairs Standing Committee (AASC) compiled further information to better define the two classifications (T4/T4A) for students. This information can be found on the Human Resources (HR) website at <http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/managers/gradraincome.html>. Please note that the GRAF/RA distinction is created by the University and not by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

During discussions with the SGS in November, it was understood that classifications could not be mandated and, for students working with principal investigators (PIs), that PIs would consult with students before changes were made to their tax statuses. Further to this, T4 status is the default, in cases where the classification is not clear. In January, many members received an e-mail notification from HR regarding an automatic change to their status from T4 to T4A status. **Further communication with CRA indicates that it is the student who is responsible for their tax status, and CRA officials argue that scholarship-based RAs could easily fall under T4 status.**

The SGPS would like to communicate this information to students and would ask for Councillors' support. For information regarding your contributions (EI, CPP), please contact Trina McGarvey in HR at trina.mcgarvey@queensu.ca.

Academic Affairs Standing Committee

In January Council tasked the AASC to investigate the topic of mandatory external scholarship applications. The Committee discussed the issues at a meeting later that month and it is likely that they will produce a report outlining the advantages and disadvantages of said applications, from the student perspective, and will set a list of recommendations for the SGS. If you would like to share any comments with the AASC, please e-mail academic-c@sgps.ca.

Ontario Visiting Graduate Student (OVGS) Plan

Graduate students enrolled in an Ontario university may take a degree-related graduate course for credit at another Ontario university. The home and host universities work to bypass processes including admissions and credit transfers. This program is great for students who find a lack and/or delay of course offerings in their departments. For more information, visit the SGS website: http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Visiting_Graduate_Student.html

Respectfully,

Becky Pero

VP Graduate
vpg@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Campaigns & Community Affairs
February 2013

Dear SGPS Members,

2013 has started off with a bang on the campaigns front, with Idle No More taking the entire country by storm. While the initiative has obviously been primarily from off-campus First Nations groups, some SGPS members have been heavily involved in the beginning, and we've been doing everything we can here at the SGPS to support them in any on-campus events (printing and distributing posters and flyers, promoting events online, etc.); our new Outreach Coordinator has been very helpful in these initiatives (he's also been going around collecting signatures on the Post-Residency Fees Now! petition). The past month has seen a round dance outside Stauffer with ~300 people attending; a teach-in on First Nations and settler issues at Kingston Hall, with a turnout of ~100 people; and a march from Stauffer to City Hall that drew ~50 people in the midst of a blizzard, leaving First Nations flags flying in Confederation Park, and garnering front-page coverage in the Whig Standard.

Moving forward, Idle No More Kingston is exploring collaboration with the Queen's chapter of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights, with joint events planned for Israeli Apartheid Week; a 'powwow-esque' conference, later in the semester; and, in the more immediate future, a vigil on Valentine's Day for Sister's in Spirit, an organization founded to draw attention to the absolutely terrifying number of missing/murdered aboriginal women. The Facebook event page for the vigil can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/534250266607033/>

Some of you may have heard of the erstwhile University of Ottawa physics professor Denis Rancourt, who was fired in 2009 for what the U of O administration termed 'fraudulent grading' (by which was meant, Dr. Rancourt's insistence on sticking to a pass/fail grading scheme for a graduate level quantum physics course, motivated by the mounds of critical pedagogy showing that grading and testing inhibits deep learning). Dr. Rancourt is currently embroiled in legal disputes with the university arising out of his tireless campus activism, and has become something of a poster-child for academic freedom disputes both in Canada and abroad. He has recently published a book, 'Hierarchy and the Struggle Against Racism', which collects his thoughts on activism, racism and anti-racism, oppression, the academy, and numerous other subjects, building upon the work of Malcolm X, Paulo Freire, Jeff Schmidt, and others (if you've never heard of Jeff Schmidt, 'Disciplined Minds' is available at Stauffer). Every politically conscious graduate or professional student should read that book). This is all said to try and pique your interest in the February 26th book launch at the Grad Club.

Finally, an update on the most recent Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario meeting. Our own Anne-Marie Grondin gave an excellent presentation on the Blue Lights issue at the 'Gender-based Violence on Campus' workshop, which was very well-received. For me, that was the highlight of the week. Less positive were the motions: virtually all of the motions aimed at reforming the CFS in some fashion (even simply posting the deadlines for motions on the CFS website) failed. While a motion to have meeting minutes posted online passed, barely, the minutes do not actually seem to be available yet (at least as far as Google seems to know). Meanwhile, the Issues Policies are not yet posted online (in contravention of a motion our local passed at the August CFS-O AGM).

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Shultz

VP Campaigns & Community Affairs
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There have been a lot of activities going on these days & the Finance & services committee was able to approve a number of Grant and Club applications for our members. As well, there have been a few dental bursaries for us to adjudicate. There has been a slight increase in the number of ESA's from last year. With the assistance of Sean Richards, our Executive Director, I have been following up on any outstanding fee renewal packages. In the next few weeks, the Finance & Services committee will be reviewing the fee submission applications and ensuring everything is in order for the upcoming General Meeting.

I attended a food tasting with Matt Scribner which unveiled the new food place that will be opening on campus in the JDUC in the near future. It will be something that all of our members will enjoy & the food is simply delicious!

The hiring committee met over the week of Jan 29 to Feb 1 to conduct interviews for the VP Professional position as per Councils direction. We were successful & would like to welcome David Francis, a first year law student to our team, subject to ratification!

I had the pleasure of attending this year's positive Space celebration. I was truly delighted to assist Jean Pfleiderer give out this year's Positive Space Award on Monday February 4th at the luncheon.

Just a reminder that the SGPS skate lending program is up & running so feel free to pop in & get your skate on! Stay tuned for exciting new services coming in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell

VP Finance & Services
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Dear Council,

I would like to report on the activities of the Judicial Committee this month. We have adjudicated one case (Incident # 201210013) pertaining to an intoxicated SGPS member at Alfie's. The case revolved around the member's action towards Student Constables, Campus Security, and Kingston police, when asked to leave the establishment.

Hearing Date: January 29th, 2013

Case Adjudicators: Ningsi Mei, Melissa Trezise, Jennifer Parker

Case Hearing: Personal accounts presented by Campus Security and the respondent.

Adjudicator Summary: Based on the comprehensive statements given by the three student constables, and the congruency between those and the respondent's statement, the Judicial Board is satisfied with their understanding of the events that transpired that evening. Based on the respondent's aggressive and inappropriate behavior, as well as refusal to cooperate with the Student Constables, Campus Security, and Kingston police, the Judicial Board has unanimously agreed to levy the following sanctions:

1. Mandatory completion of an Alcohol Education Sanction Workshop, hosted by HCDS, by no later than April 30th, 2013 (<http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/workshops/> Primary Contact: Kate Humphrys).
2. Personalized apology letters written to Campus Security, as well as the Student Constables involved, to be completed no later than February 29th, 2013.
3. A Tri-Pub ban for a period of one year, ending on January 9th, 2014.

Here's what I've been up to since the last Council meeting.

Academic Planning Task Force:

We had two meetings in January. At our first meeting we invited Isabelle Duchaine (AMS Academic Affairs Commissioner), Mira Dineen (AMS VP University Affairs) and our own SGPS President Matt Scribner to give us the views of undergraduate and graduate students on online learning. At our second meeting, we had several QUFA members to give faculty views. Both meetings gave us very useful information. Most recently we have been surveying department heads for the views of their departments about online learning. We plan to have a Town Hall for undergraduate and graduate students in the first half of February. We will post our draft report in early March, and will submit our final report for the May Senate meeting.

January Senate Meeting:

This was a fairly quiet meeting, typical for the first one of the year. The Principal reported on the return of Homecoming, the release of the Commission on Mental Health final report, and discussed how the administration will continue to work to address the emergency blue lights issue. The Provost reported that the Strategic Enrolment Management Group will present a draft enrolment plan for 2013-2016 to SCAD in March. He also discussed progress on the Campus Master Plan, the new Fair Dealing Policy, and the "very difficult budget environment for Queen's", largely due to the "parlous state of provincial finances". Senate approved a PhD in Environmental Studies, to commence September 2013. Notice for two motions were given: (1) a revision to the Research Integrity Policy from SARC, and (2) changes to the Senate Rules of Procedure from SORC (both notices and the Jan Senate agenda can be found on the Senate website: <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/agendasminutes.html>, and click on the "January 14, 2013" agenda).

Graduate Studies Executive Council (Jan 17):

At this meeting, Dean Brouwer reported that the SGS is meeting with department heads to set enrolment targets for the next three years. A workgroup to look at targeted funding for student support has been established, on which Becky Pero will sit as SGPS rep. The SGS medical leave proposal is now in place as a two-year pilot program, effective from Jan 1, 2013. It will include full-time students Master's students in years 1 or 2 with guaranteed funding packages, and full-time Ph.D. students in years 1-4. To be eligible, students must have been granted medical leave. Master's students will receive up to \$5000, and Ph.D. students \$5000, once only during their program.

The SGS is also proposing new regulations for Time Limits Extensions, and I will speak further to this to Council.

Mental Health Working Group (Jan 24):

At this meeting, we had a very interesting discussion with Heather Stuart, Queen's new Bell Canada Mental Health and Anti-Stigma Research Chair. Heather presented stigma as a complex form of social oppression, and discussed her plans for anti-stigma research and initiatives at Queen's and other universities. Most of these initiatives are currently directed at undergraduates, but they could be easily adapted for graduate students. Other things: the HCDS has produced an animation with Mike Condra, based on the well-known "23 and ½ hours" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUalnS6HIGo>), and a green card will be the next step in the green folder initiative.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Bridges

Graduate Student Senator
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Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
February, 2013

This February we're embracing the winter snow and going on a downhill/cross country/snowshoeing adventure to Mount Pakenham on February 9th. Although we've traditionally gone to Calabogie for our SGPS ski trip, this year we wanted to expand our winter activities to include more than just downhill. We're taking a Coach bus right from the JDUC to Mt. Pakenham and the price includes equipment rentals. Check it out on Facebook or on the SGPS website.

Please distribute widely and help us to promote this exciting ski-venture!

Later in the month, we'll be planning a mixer (location TBD). Stay tuned and please help us promote our events to your department. We look forward to seeing you at our next event!

Best,
Cassandra Kuyvenhoven

SGPS Social Commissioner
social@sgps.ca

SGPS Computer Network

- I had to iron out a few wrinkles in new software that was patched on our server over the winter break. Nothing significant had to be changed. No downtime was experienced.
- Looking into the possibility of a hardware upgrade for our mail/wiki server. The volume of data that routes through the server is large and the hardware can sometimes have issues keeping up with demand. Pricing and upgrade cycle possibilities will be discussed with the Exec and brought to Council as more information is available.
- Security updates have been applied to all workstations at the office.
- I updated all SSL certificates on our mail/wiki server. The old certificates expired so we need to renew.

SGPS Website

- I have been going over the website logs to determine the most used portions of the SGPS website. I am working on a sub-section of the website for mobile devices that cover the most used sections of the website. The idea is to make the viewing experience on mobile devices as good as possible. Work will continue on this over the next couple of months.

Communications

- I did a large amount of work with the Front Desk this past month. I worked on scripts and various other things that make sure communication from the Front Desk is consistent and accurate. The new scripts make it much easier and faster for the Front Desk to complete routine tasks. Specifically, the scripts help generate letters (we produce a lot of them!) and help with the process of filing health/dental claims and getting copies to our members. I will continue to work to improve other processes at the Front Desk.
- I am working to improve transitional documents for staff. This project is coming along very well!
- Anne-Marie and I have begun work on a comprehensive update to our job posting documents. This work will continue over the next couple of months.
- I am compiling a list of all past motions (directive based non policy changing) so the Exec can reference Council directives that are not reflected in our B&Ps. This task is in the final stages and will be done before my next report to Council.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Following is a summary of what was done during the month of January:

The month began introducing the new Equity Coordinator to the world of SGPS Equity. Tian has been amazing already and has started some wonderful initiatives (please see her attached report). I am very happy to have her on the team!

Early this month I did an interview for the twice-a-week news bulletin sent out to all Queen's staff. The interview was regarding the Accessibility Working Groups, of which there are four, that are currently working to ensure that all Queen's staff are adequately trained in working with clients with disabilities. This is in accordance with the AODA legislation of the provincial government. I sit on the Educational Accessibility Working Group Committee and so was giving the interview not only as the Equity Commission for the SGPS but also from the perspective of a member of one of the working groups. The interview was a success and was hopefully able to bring some increased awareness about accessibility issues to the Queen's community.

I had a final meeting with the student who was hired to organize Disability Awareness Month. Unfortunately, not much has been accomplished and I will now be scrambling to fix that! I am arranging to meet with the Equity Standing Committee to get some extra pairs of hands. I am hopeful that the SGPS will still have a presence for DAM. However, if nothing comes together, I will make sure to volunteer our services to other groups on campus that have exciting things planned!

I will be organizing with the Equity Office and the Disability Services Office to create an easily-disseminated form that I will pass out to all department heads and all faculty that summarizes all the information available in the AODA online training. The statistics for faculty who complete the AODA training are dismal and, rather than wait for the information to be gathered by faculty on their own steam, I think that manually handing them an organized summary of what is on the training will at least get the information out there in the meantime.

In conjunction with the International Commission, we are preparing an event for International Women's Week. We will be showing the movie Black Venus: Remembering the life of Saartjie Baatman. The movie will be followed by a discussion of feminist issues and pizza will be served!

One of my tasks is to sit on the Council for Employment Equity. As a sub-committee of that council I will be arranging to bring speakers forward to give us their thoughts and feedback about how to bridge the employment gap of aboriginals in the workforce. I made some good contacts at an Aboriginal in Mining Education conference in the fall and have been speaking with some of those contacts to see if they would be willing to share their wisdom with the CEE.

The SGPS took over for OPIRG this year in donating \$100 to the Positive Space Award as well as processing the cheque for that award. We were very happy to be able to do so! One of our executive will be presenting the award as a result at the Positive Space luncheon the on February 4th.

That's about it for now!

Robin Westland

SGPS Equity Commissioner
equity@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members,

It is with great excitement that I take up the position of Equity Coordinator. First of all, I would like to thank Sean, Anne-Marie and Robin for their hard work in training me. During my four-year undergrad study at Queen's University Electrical Engineering, I had a very pleasant experience, as people at Queen's created a respectful and fair environment which highlights the levels of participation and innovation due to diverse thinking. Now as a first year Master student, I hope I can help promote equity in practices and ensures that everyone at Queen's feels comfortable working, learning and living. Below is a summary on what I have been up to.

Training:

I completed trainings with Sean, Robin and Anne-Marie early this month and have confirmed my roles and responsibilities as an equity coordinator. The responsibilities of the equity coordinator include (but not limit to):

- Attending SEEC meetings
- Assisting Equity Commissioner in organizing International Women's week and Disability Awareness month
- Planning/allocation the funding for disabled students
- My own equity-related initiatives

SEEC Meeting:

I have attended SEEC meeting on Jan 15th and meet all the members sitting on the committee.

- Main Business Discussed in the Meeting
 - People have been working hard to make a change on mature student status. The issue of mitigating if not eliminating inadvertent barriers to historically under-represented learners was reported to the A VP and Dean of Student Affairs, and corresponding strategies will be made in the New Year.
 - The first draft of the Diversity and Equity Self-Assessment and planning Tool was completed and discussed in the meeting. All the members sitting on the committee are required to provide feedback/comments. The final draft is expected at the end of this semester.
- New Business I would like to bring to the next meeting
 - Pam had received an email from a Grad student complaining the assessment of Queen's General Bursary (QGB) is against his/her culture. I have written a paragraph explaining this issue and emailed it to Jill. Jill confirmed that this issue will be on the agenda of next SEEC meeting and will be in the section of New Business. The statement is as follows:

SGPS received an equity-related complaint from a Grad student that the mean-testing for Queen's General Bursary (QGB) was against their culture. Currently, Queen's General Bursary would deny any students who did not have loans (either OSAP or adequate amount of line of credits). The panel of judges for QGB are adopting loans (OSAP) as a means test rather than students' real economic situation. However, a lot of Grad students, with great financial difficulties, do not get any loans, because their culture does not allow them to take out this type of loans. SGPS thinks that if the assessment for QGB goes against someone's culture, there should be different assessment to be made.

I did some research regarding the assessment of Queen's general Bursary and further confirmed that students need to have loans to be considered for QGB. There is a formal Queen's General Bursary webpage, where they gave the question-based explanation regarding the decision made. The link is below:

<http://www.queensu.ca/studentawards/financialassistance/generalbursary/decisions.html#decision>

Q2 explains the situation for undergrad student: they have to apply for loans (OSAP) to be considered for Queen's General Bursary. Q4 explains the situation for Grad/Professional students: Even if

Grad/professional students have OSAP and maximum amount of loans, they will still be denied by QGB, unless they are in debt for many years. I am copying the Q2 and Q4 below:

Q2. I was denied a General Bursary because I didn't apply for government student financial assistance. However, I would really prefer to complete my degree without taking on any student debt...

The Queen's General Bursary is a need-based program meant to supplement, not replace, government student assistance (loans and grants). Therefore, all domestic students are required to apply for government student assistance before being considered for a General Bursary. Students who do not apply for student loans and grants likely have other options available to them and will not be considered for bursary assistance.

4. I am a Graduate student or a student in a professional program (i.e. Law, Medicine) and I was denied a General Bursary even though I have received the maximum amount of government student financial assistance available and have applied for a line of credit...

Graduate students and students enrolled in a professional program who are accessing government student assistance and a student line of credit for the first time may not qualify for General Bursary. In assessing General Bursary applications for graduate/professional students, there is an emphasis on assisting students who continue to demonstrate need over and above the maximum funding available through government student assistance and who have prior accumulated government student loan debt. Therefore, it is expected that students who incurred government student loan debt and, at times, student line of credit debt during their first undergraduate degree are demonstrating a higher level of financial need.

All those info listed above will be provided in the SEEC meeting to give members a good understanding of the assessment of QGB. I hope we can get some help from them and this problem will be well addressed. But regarding the content of Q4, I think it can be considered as "discrimination" for all the Grad/Professional students. I am also thinking bring this issue to SEEC committee later this semester.

Assisting Equity Commissioner:

Robin has great multi-tasking skills and her timetable was fulfilled with tons of different events/activities/meetings. I hope, along the year, I can help Robin to reduce her workload and assist her in the Equity Commission. Currently, I can be a proxy to attend some committee meetings and later in February and March, I would like to do some organization for the International Women's Week and Disability Awareness Month.

At the same time, I am also starting my own equity-related projects with a focus on helping disabled grad/professional students. I will discuss that in details in the report for next month. I can feel that it will be a fun and productive equity year! I look forward to more good work accomplished over the coming year!!

Respectfully Submitted,

Tian Lu
equity@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members,

The Accent Discrimination project that the International Commission has been involved in since the beginning of the year, is taking shape nicely. We're at the point of hiring an RA - the deadline for applications is the 8th of Feb, and interviews will be held on the 13th and 14th. The survey itself looks to be ready to be submitted to GREB.

The International Commission, in conjunction with the Equity Commission, is organizing a film night (plus discussion and pizza) as part of the International Women's Week (3rd-9th March) series of events organized by Interval House - posters advertising this week of events will be appearing around campus shortly.

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

The Co-ordinator has been attending Information Services and Technology Students Advisory Committee meetings and QUIC Council meetings.

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

Warm Regards,

The SGPS International Team

Holly McIndoe
International Student Affairs Commissioner
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Kris Singh
International Student Affairs Coordinator
isc@sgps.ca

Greetings Council,

Elections and Referenda

Elections and Referenda are fast approaching! As you will note, there is a motion on the agenda to approve March 26 & 27 as the dates for the Election and Referendum, so assuming that passes, things will officially be underway, and we can move towards electing a new Executive, Trustee, and Senator.

So yes, you will note we are electing both a new Trustee and Senator, even though they are both 2-year terms, both Tony and Terry will be finishing their degrees this year, so we will be electing their replacements along with the Executive. Of important note, the Bylaws for the Board of Trustees dictate that when a position is vacated in this manner, we are only allowed to elect someone for the remainder of existing trustee's term, meaning this year's election will be for a 1-year term as Trustee. The Senator position however will be for the full 2-year term.

As a summary, the positions that will be elected in this election are:

- President
- Vice President Graduate
- Vice President Professional
- Vice President Finance and Services
- Vice President Campaigns and Community Affairs
- Graduate Student Senator (2-year)
- SGPS Representative to the Board of Trustees (1-year)

Assuming the motion passes as submitted, the timeline for this year's election and referendum will be as follows:

- March 1: Nomination forms made available at the SGPS Office and Online
- March 11 - 4pm: Nomination period comes to a close
- March 12: Campaign Period Begins
- March 19 - 5:30pm: Candidates Debate at the SGPS General Meeting
- March 25: Campaigning ends at Midnight
- March 26 and March 27: Online Voting

If you have any questions about the positions, please feel free to contact the person currently holding the position, and they will gladly tell you more about the role. If you want to know more about the elections process, please contact me, and I will answer any questions.

Concerning the referendum specifically, there are a number of student fees that are due for renewal at referendum this year, and those questions will be discussed in further detail at the March meeting of Council, where Council will be required to vote on placing Referendum Questions on the Ballot. If you have any questions about referendum questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Rapos

SGPS CRO
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