



Hello SGPS Members,

Thank you all for your support over the year. Serving as the SGPS President has been an amazing experience. When I was elected last year, my platform had three planks: student health, member professional development, and systemic issues in the SGPS. Throughout my term, I have kept these issues at the forefront of my agenda. I will give a brief overview of some of the major work I have done this year under each of these three headings.

Student Health and Safety

I have approached issues of student health and safety from two directions: prevention and response. The bulk of my work in this area has been on initiatives with the scope of the entire campus. I will provide a small overview of some of the biggest initiatives.

I have worked with Severe Allergies Review Committee to ensure that the campus environment is safe and welcoming for our members who suffer from allergies (with a particular focus on anaphylaxis); in particular, I have focused on advocating for a stronger response network and wider awareness of the issue, while ensuring that any policy maintains victim agency without being victim-blaming.

I have worked with the Advisory Committee on Non-Academic Misconduct to help establish a suitable Student Code of Conduct and framework for adjudication of violations of this Code. My efforts here have focused on ensuring that the policy is clear, does not extend a reasonable scope, and will continue to advocate for a system that allows for diversion of cases where possible.

I have also continued the work started by my predecessor on non-code harassment on campus. Our members face harassment in many forms across campus, and an environmental scan (performed by the HRO) found that graduate and professional students are in fact one of the groups on campus at greatest risk of non-code harassment. I have spoken with individuals at all levels of the university, from students across departments, the Human Rights Office, the university Ombudsman, right up to the Provost and even several members of the Board of Trustees, and this issue is well on the radar. The first step to solving a problem is admitting that you have one, and I believe that the University is now well-situated to be a leader in addressing the non-code harassment of graduate and professional students.

In the scope of the SGPS specifically, the initiatives to introduce a framework for departmental graduate societies was intended to address, among other things, issues of social isolation and poor community health. The relatively diffuse community of graduate students has a lot to learn from the professional programs within the SGPS. Unfortunately, we have thus far been unable to make great strides on this project, and I hope that over the coming months we are able to make headway that can be carried on by our successors.

The elevation of the role of Athletics Coordinator to Athletics Commissioner is intended to bring greater awareness to student health and wellness, as the links between physical health and mental health are well established (and the social aspect is also beneficial). We also continue to support the ongoing development of the Student Advisor program, as well as the recent addition of the Sexual Health and Resource Center, as these services provide direct benefit to the health and wellness of the membership of the SGPS.

Student Professional Development

My work in the development of opportunities for professional development of our members has focused primarily on graduate students. The modern economy is such that academic training is no longer adequate for non-academic career paths, but the vast majority of our graduate student members will be seeking employment outside of academia. As such, it is important that graduate students are given opportunities to develop professional skills in parallel with their academic development.

Two major initiatives have been undertaken this year, in collaboration with the School of Graduate Studies, to better understand and address this issue: the first (annual) Graduate Leadership Summit, and the Queen's/City of Kingston Working Group. The Graduate Leadership Summit brought together students and administrators from across campus to discuss improvements to the structure of the PhD academic program, and there has already been progress made on some of the recommendations. One of the major spinoffs of this process has been the Queen's/Kingston Working Group, which has just started up, and will look at ways to integrate graduate students into the City of Kingston, providing relevant professional development for our members while enriching the economic and academic landscape of the City.

Within the SGPS structure, our modifications to the Commissioner structure also extend many professional development responsibilities beyond the executive level. By enabling the Commissioners to independently hire and manage their own coordinators, we hope to give valuable HR experience to a greater number of members, particularly those for whom executive roles are inaccessible.

Systemic Issues in the SGPS

Our work in addressing systemic issues within the SGPS structure started early. Extensive effort was undertaken by many members on two major review committees over the summer: the Student Advisor Program Review Committee and the Human Resources Standing Committee. These committees submitted reports to the August Council meeting, which I encourage you all to read. In parallel to these developments, the executive identified a number of issues throughout the summer, some of which we were able to address immediately (including, for instance, the untraceable open tab at the Grad Club) and some of which have taken more time to address. Unfortunately, many of the problems that we have identified are of a confidential nature, and we are as yet unable to disclose everything in public. Proper democratic governance requires transparency, so we have tried, where possible, to disclose as much detail as possible to Council through the use of closed sessions. The whole executive has greatly appreciated the input and understanding of councilors while we have tried to address these issues. We hope, over the coming months, to resolve these issues and pass along a newly strengthened SGPS to our successors. Three specific initiatives we hope to realize in the coming months are the hiring of a Finance Director, a comprehensive review of our B&P documents, and the cementing of the status of the Student Advisor program within SGPS Policy (as opposed to in an agreement with an external body).

Finally, to give you all a better idea of just what the President does, I feel it is worthwhile to include a list here of groups with which I have met within the campus community. All of these groups have helped us in some way throughout the year, and I am very grateful for their contributions and service to the SGPS and Queen's community.

I have held regular meetings with the following offices:

- Department of Student Affairs
- School of Graduate Studies
- Principal Daniel Woolf and Provost Alan Harrison

In my term so far I have served on the following committees:

- Senate
- Senate Committee on Academic Development (Observer)
- Senate Honourary Degrees Committee
- Student Senate Caucus
- SGPS Human Resources Standing Committee
- SGPS Student Advisor Program Review Committee
- SGPS Student Advisor Hiring
- SGPS Finances and Services Committee
- SGPS Council
- Provost Advisory Selection Committee
- Advisory Committee on Non-Academic Misconduct
- Implementation Team on Sexual Violence Prevention and Response
- Severe Allergies Review Committee
- Student Services Strategic Planning Exercise
- Campus Planning Advisory Committee
- Ombuds Advisory Committee
- Reputation Research Advisory Council Meeting
- Strategic Enrolment Management Group
- Queen's National Scholar Advisory Committee
- Polanyi Prize Review Committee
- Faculty of Engineering and Applied Sciences Joint Health-Safety Committee
- Queen's Engineering and Science Library Committee
- Queen's/City of Kingston Working Group

I have attended meetings with representatives from the following bodies:

- Queen's University Board of Trustees
- Queen's University Council
- Human Rights Office
- Equity Office
- Ombudsperson's Office
- Queen's University International Centre
- Drugsmart
- StudentVIP
- SHRC
- AMS
- Office of Advancement
- Queen's University Alumni Association
- University Secretariat
- Engineering Society (undergraduate)
- Queen's Human Resources
- Student Life Centre
- Canadian Federation of Students
- Education Students Society
- Grocery Check
- Multiple SGPS members
- Multiple SGPS alumni
- Meetings with staff in Office of Provost and Office of Principal
- Rector and AMS electoral hopefuls
- TD Bank
- PSAC901
- Queen's Journal
- Career Services

If you have any questions about the content of my report, want some help solving an issue on campus, or just want to bounce an idea off someone whose been on campus for almost a decade, please feel free to shoot me an e-mail.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Cochrane

President, SGPS

president@sgps.ca



Dear Members,

Its election time! Please take some time to check out the candidate's platforms that are going up on the SGPS website and make an informed vote. Don't forget the referendum questions as well! There are a ton of them on the ballot this year and some of them could have huge effects on the operations of those services. Get out and vote! By get out, I mean log into Moodle from the comfort of your bed and click some boxes on February 10th and 11th.

Student Advisor Program

After undergoing some positive changes at the beginning of my term, the Student Advisor program has been running smoothly. New internal case statistic collection policies have helped the program see trends in issues which are easily brought to the attention of senior administration at the university. Based on these numbers, we can make more informed decisions about the program can best serve students.

Information Technology

In an effort to more effectively manage the time of SGPS employees and staff, the current SGPS information technology structure has been reviewed. An evaluation of the current email, calendar, Wiki, and website was undertaken to ensure the allocation of SGPS resources are as effective as possible.

A switch to Microsoft Exchange/Office 365 will be happening over Reading Week and may result in the inability to receive or respond to emails to an @sgps.ca address. A temporary email address will be provided during this period. Please check the SGPS website for more details on this as we approach Reading Week. Challenges with preserving important information contained in the Wiki have come up and solutions are currently being investigated.

The SGPS is also reviewing how printing is done within the office. We have had our current printer for 13 months and have been able to collect statistics on how many and of what type (colour, black and white, single-sided, etc.) of pages have been printed. These will be used to evaluate current printing costs to members.

The SGPS is looking at ways to improve its current website! If any members have feedback on how the use the site or important information that might be missing, please let me know!

Departmental Graduate Student Society Framework

A goal of the executive's is to build a framework for the easy formation of departmental graduate student societies, including potential executive positions, election procedures and guidelines. The framework would include a basic constitution that could be adjusted and adopted by departmental student groups. Progress has slowed on this initiative, but the VP Campaigns and Community Affairs continues to consult with the executive and student groups.

SGPS Space Review

Much of the current SGPS held space in the Student Life Centre is unused or underused. The SGPS is looking into a consolidation of some of our storage space to free up more rooms. We currently use these spaces to store orientation week swag, agendas, and other SGPS goodies.

To accommodate the hiring of a new staff position, the SGPS main office will be undergoing a minor renovation to create another office.

We are currently implementing a graduate study space into JDUC 237. This would be a space exclusively for SGPS members to work quietly and study, something that is needed on campus. Individual study carrels have been moved into the room and the space now has to be cleaned up and organized before being opened.

If you have any questions or comments about an issue, please feel free to send me an email at vpg@sgps.ca. If you are ever having troubles with your hot water heater, you probably don't want to see the corrosion and calcium scale buildup that you have been showering in for the past 3 years. The good news is that if you have enough duct tape and a long enough piece of pipe, you can fix it. Keep smiling!

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Kellenberger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a red mark at the end of the last stroke.

Mark Kellenberger
Vice President Graduate
vpg@sgps.ca



Dear SGPS Members,

I hope that this general meeting finds you well in your academic, professional, and private lives. It has been a fairly busy year for all of us on the SGPS Executive, and I am happy to provide a full update of the projects I have been working on throughout my time in office:

Human Resources Standing Committee Report

Following a motion passed at May council I chaired the Human Resources Standing Committee to investigate the circumstances surround a series of SGPS personnel changes that occurred within the Student Advisor program during the start of the 2015 calendar year. A call out for membership occurred in June and the committee started its work in earnest the following month. Over the course of several meetings the committee examined official records and emails to review the human resources changes made, and created a report that was delivered in camera at the August Council. Any councilors who would like to see this report in the future will have to visit the SGPS offices to sign a confidentiality report in order to see a restricted copy. The committee determined, in consultation with the SGPS lawyer, that general members will be unable to view the report because it contains sensitive and confidential information about previous employees and staff. However, a list of recommendations for future improvements to SGPS Human Resources policy and procedure was released, and is available to members who wish to know more. Going forward this list of recommendations will guide the ongoing review of the organization's HR structure.

As of January 23rd I have called the Human Resources Standing Committee again to review our HR practices and produce new policies. The committee has been split into the following 3 working subcommittees:

- i. The Hiring Review Sub-Committee
 - This sub-committee will review SGPS hiring and rehiring policies and create a report containing suggested new policies, amendments, and best practices.
 - Further the committee shall produce resources to guide hiring panels on best practices and procedures.
- ii. The Discipline Review Sub-Committee
 - This sub-committee will develop a discipline policy for SGPS part-time staff.
 - They will also develop supplementary resources such as templates for warning letters and a guide for appropriately addressing discipline issues.
- iii. The Commission Review Sub-Committee
 - As tasked by Council, this sub-committee shall compile a report that reviews the SGPS Commissions and considers the changes made at the October 2015 SGPS Council Special Meeting, as well as improvements that can be made to the Commissions or their structures.
 - The review shall involve consultation with the current Commissioners as well as former Commissioners and Coordinators.

The members of the HR Standing Committee will assign themselves to these sub-committees in order to fulfill their given objectives and then bring their findings back to the main HR Standing Committee for final review and reporting to SGPS Council. The groups are estimated to meet approximately once a week for the duration of January and February.

Human Resources Overhaul

Since taking office I have noticed that the SGPS has effectively worked on an ad hoc basis, addressing issues as they arise. The management style and procedures of any given year has relied heavily on the previous experience and attitudes of the Executive. There are effectively very few policies or clearly outlined procedures, and where there are guidelines for human resources management or other functions they are typically inadequate or inconsistent and difficult to reconcile.

A strong example of this was the previous options for addressing harassment and discrimination. The SGPS holds a general stance against harassment per Policy 3.5 and recognizes the Queen's University Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedure per P.12.1. However, based on records and informal conversations with staff it appears that we have not actively used the university policy in the past. Individuals have mentioned that the university procedure is intimidating and formal, and typically reports have been handled informally and on a case by case basis internally to the SGPS. As such it became apparent that there was a strong need for a formalized policy that included procedures to guide the investigation of a report of a harassment or discrimination. I am happy to report that we implemented a new SGPS-focused policy and procedure that addresses these issues earlier this fall. Going forward it will offer a more accessible means to report issues, with clearly outlined policies to make the process more transparent.

Another area of change has been the SGPS Commissions structure. The previous policies outlining the Commissioner and Coordinator positions were inflexible and outdated, and meant that annual hiring did not reflect the changing needs of the SGPS or empower the Commissioners with the authority to fully pursue new initiatives and ideas. Changes to these policies passed at the special council meeting held at the end of October, and included the removal of the formal Coordinator structure, and a greater emphasis on the Commissions' year plans and self-directed structuring. I am hoping these changes will help create more flexible SGPS commissions, and empower future Commissioners to take on bigger and greater projects for our community.

Before the end of my time in office I hope to receive a series of reports and policy suggestions from the SGPS HR Standing Committee and will bring these to SGPS Council. We have made significant progress in improving our HR practices and workplace environment this year and I hope to cement these changes into bylaw and policy as I train the next VP Professional for the role.

Hiring

Earlier in the fall the SGPS hired 6 individuals to fill organizational research positions. These are new positions for the SGPS wherein the selected students will engage in targeted research projects in areas of student interest and wellness, and ultimately produce reports for SGPS use. They will hopefully provide valuable insight into various areas concern, as well as guidelines for improving students' lives and developing effective new policies. We received many strong applications for these new work-study funded researcher roles, and interviewed and selected candidates during the last week of September. Our researchers have been hard at work and it is reflected in the quality of the research they are producing. I have no doubt that their work will be a tremendous benefit to our society.

The SGPS Commissioners have now all been hired and the majority have submitted their year plans to the Executive for approval. I have to say that I have been thoroughly impressed by all of these individuals and their stellar work so far. All of them have brought an exciting and clear vision to their respective portfolios and it is clear from looking at their detailed and ambitious year plans. The society is luck to have found such talented individuals and I am excited to see them impress our members at large.

SGPS Professional Development

Currently there is a range of career and professional support offered by the Queen's University Careers Office, as well as by individual faculties such as the Law School. However, many professional and grad students are not aware of the services that are available to them. In addition, some of these services can be intimidating, or focused into areas that are not relevant to SGPS members. As such the SGPS organized the first SGPS Professional Makeover Week for the first week of October. The services offered to the members during the week included a free professional headshot event, men and women's tailoring events, and special SGPS discounts on business cards at the Print & Copy Centre. This event

was broadly successful and we saw nearly 200 students attend the highly popular headshot event, with dozens attending the other services as well.

Given the success of the event I hope that the SGPS will be able to provide more entry-level resources, and possibly even more advanced info sessions on networking, etiquette, and branding. All of these resources can help current students make connections and pursue their goals, and will helpfully further assist recent graduates with securing employment in their chosen fields.

Representation with the Canadian Federations of Students (CFS)

I have volunteered to be the SGPS Executive representative to the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). In this capacity I went to a CFS National conference in June to attend informational workshops, the meetings of the Graduate Caucus, and to vote on CFS policy, campaigns, and other motions. In August I also attended a meeting of CFS Ontario in Toronto where we discussed issues related to the federal campaign and the province's many academic institutions. These major CFS events present an opportunity for us to share best practices with other university, and to pool our resources in the pursuit of larger nation-wide causes.

Representatives from the CFS also attended our September Council meeting to present their findings from the *Not In the Syllabus* survey and report, which addressed conditions in graduate programs and research environments across Canada. The SGPS Executive has been raising some of these issues since the start of our term in office, but we were very happy to see the national organization producing further materials on these important issues. Right now there is no perfect answer to the problems that graduate students face, but we can begin to work towards a solution by raising the profile of these issues and starting discussions with administrators and colleagues.

With less than 100 days left in our terms as SGPS Executives our collective attention must now turn to preparing our successors and ensuring that the good work of the society continues on after we leave our roles. I am excited to meet the individuals who will volunteer their time and talent to take on our roles going forward and I am particularly keen to begin the transition process with the next VPP. We have made a lot of progress in the SGPS this year. Our work has not been particularly exciting or even particularly visible, but it has been very necessary to the long term stability and function of the organization. I hope the next year of Executives and Councilors preserve the work we have done and continue to build on it in service to our members.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me at vpp@sgps.ca as I am always happy to hear from our members.

Cha Gheill,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Asfar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Asfar
Vice-President Professional
vpp@sgps.ca



Dear SGPS Members,

Budget Actuals

Attached to my report are the budget actuals for this year. As you will note, there have been a few minor changes made to the budget and these include adding new budget lines. When I created this budget, I was unaware of some of the smaller revenues and expenses that our organization has. As a result, these were not included in the budget that was approved at our September Council Meeting. Most of these additions are expenses that are completely paid for by their revenues so they do not affect the budget in anyway. However, I think it is important that the membership is aware of these items as well.

We have gone over our budget this year for three items and a lot of this has to do with the fact that we have had many unexpected expenses this year. These items include our capital expenditures which includes purchases of furniture, software purchases, computer purchases, refurbishment of furniture and structural changes to the office including a security system for our upstairs offices. Coke has generously contributed money that was not accounted for in the budget that I plan to use to offset this amount. Advertising also has gone over as we have had to advertise for the Finance Director position as well as for our Student Advisor Program. However, it is important to note that we having advertising revenue that offsets most of the amount that is over budget. The biggest unexpected variation was the SGPS Handbook that is given out at the beginning of the year. The expense is almost double what was budgeted for. It is important to note that we did take in advertising revenue in August and September (some of which is not shown in the Budget Actuals Spreadsheet) that offsets some of this additional cost, however, we will still be over by a couple thousand for this item.

Overall, I am impressed with how we have been able to stay within our budget. We have had so many new expenses this year and changes in our expenses including an increase in the cost of insurance, increases in our audit cost, costs for implementing a new office into our staff offices for our Finance Director, taking on an additional salary, paying severance to an employee. All of these costs have been necessary and some of them are attributable to other budget years where we did not do things properly. I am confident that after this budget year, the next VPFS will have a much easier time at keeping track of our spending month to month as there should not be a large variation in the numbers.

Bursaries and Grants

We have had a fair number of applications for both our bursaries and grants for this year. We have been able to assist many students with Emergency Student Aid and many groups with Grants. These are our two most used bursaries and grants. Going forward I am implementing Sponsorship. This is a type of grant and the funds will be taken out of this budget line. But instead of just giving groups money, we will receive advertising of the SGPS in return for our contribution. This year we have started the project by sponsoring both TedX and the Med-Law Games. We have noticed as an Executive that many of our members are unsure of who we are and what we do. This way, we can attend events like this and inform our membership about who we are and what we do while still supporting different events and groups around campus.

Since my budget does not break down the different amounts for each bursary or grant we offer, here you can see the expenditures of each type:

	Emergency	Dental	International	Grants	Clubs	Sports	Sponsorship
September	\$2000	\$0	\$1900	\$600	\$0	\$535	\$5000
October	\$3000	\$634.90	\$2350	\$2625	\$0	\$283.63	\$0
November	\$3800	\$555.75	\$650	\$2585	\$155.05	\$550	\$0
December	\$2000	\$0	\$700	\$1200	\$29.39	\$0	\$0
January	\$615	\$700	\$761	\$1500	\$0	\$361.60	\$4000

Health and Dental Plan

Student VIP, our service provider has been fantastic in our time of restructuring. We have made the decision going forward that we will be allowing opt-outs for all of September and only for all of September. This year I had a lot of members miss the deadline and the Finance and Services Committee evaluated each member's reasons for missing the deadline and made a decision whether to allow opt-outs past the deadline. This costs our organization a lot of money, time and headache. As a result, we are going to have a firm deadline of September 30th, 2016, which will be in line with the AMS's deadline so that there should be no confusion. Further, Student VIP is going to assist with a more intense advertising campaign to our members to ensure that everyone knows how to opt-out and what the deadline is.

Further, we will be cutting the time down to twice a year for opt-ins to our health and dental plan. Members starting in September will only be able to opt-in their families during the month of September. Members starting in January will only be able to opt-in their families for the month of January.

Audits

KPMG was hired in November as our new auditor by a majority vote from Council. I had expected the audits to go smoothly but unfortunately they have not. We ended up hiring one of KPMG's accountants to assist with getting our books ready for the audit. She has been working tirelessly with one of our staff members to get everything up to speed. I am happy to say that we have draft financial statements for 2013-2014 and the books are ready to be audited for 2014-2015. My hope is that by the time we have this meeting ten days from now, I will be able to present to all of you the completed audits for both years. This will mean that the SGPS is finally up to speed with all of its audits. It will also free up a lot of time up for our office staff. This will allow them time to move into their new roles before the Finance Director starts their position.

Finance Director Hiring

We are well underway with hiring an additional staff member to our team of permanent office staff. This staff member will hold a CPA and be responsible for all financial matters for the SGPS. Part of their role will include running audits, day to day bookkeeping, and budgeting. We have a Finance Director Hiring Committee that is made up of permanent staff as well as some of the Executive. We are currently conducting phone interviews of eight shortlisted candidates and hope to get to our top four after these phone interviews are complete. We will be bringing the top four in for interviews right before reading break. Our plan is to have the new Finance Director's at the beginning of March. This is very exciting for the SGPS as it will free up a lot of time for our other staff members to focus on offering better service to our members.

Financial Policy

Since we have been undergoing audits for the last couple of months, it has made me more aware that we do not have a lot of controls in place for our money. As a result, I am starting to work on assessing our Financial Policy and including more controls going forward. You will see that I am bringing a new policy forward to the meeting concerning employee reimbursements. My final goal of my term in office is to ensure that we have enough financial controls in place through both our policy and by-laws.

Point of Sale

Our office has never had a point of sale and so we have been unable to accept credit cards or debit cards for in office payments by members. Day to day money intake usually has to do with opting members into the health and dental plan, signing up for Goodlife memberships and paying for copier expenses. We would like to make this service available to our members and it will also ensure that we don't have unnecessary cash floating around the office. We are currently looking into different providers. My hope is to have this implemented by March 1st.

I want to thank our staff for being so adaptable and helpful during our time of restructuring. None of the Executive would have been able to implement the changes that we did without their help. Further, Pam has done an amazing job at stepping up and assisting with the audit when it wasn't even part of her job description. Thank you everyone for your help.

It has been an overly busy year for this Executive, but I am happy to say that we have completed many goals and are well on our way to finishing everything we set out to do. I hope that all of the business changes that we made for the better will continue going forward and that the next Executive will have more time to spend advocating member's needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina Huber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christina Huber
Vice President Finance and Services
Society of Graduate and Professional Students
vpfs@sgps.ca



Dear Council,

I'm going to firstly outline my progress with the items in my year plan, as well as how close to completion they are, and then deal with how I spent the rest of my brief time since the last General Meeting was used.

Items Specific to my Year Plan:

More Equitable & Accessible Campus Community [2/3 Complete]

In order to foster a more equitable and accessible campus community, I specifically focused upon the issue of student access to childcare, student funding for childcare, and a bursary designed around the equity of access for those who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to have their medical needs met in Kingston.

- 1) The Queen's Daycare Board, an entity upon which I sit, was able to renegotiate with the university the opening of a second site at An Clachan - and all it took was a straight seventeen months of late nights, grey hairs, and fraught negotiations!
- 2) Working alongside the VP Finance & Service Christina, I have also implemented a SGPS Emergency Childcare Bursary in the sum of \$20,000. It will be determined much in the same manner as our regular member ESAs, and will greatly expand the ability of this organization to assist students, guardians, and parents who are finding themselves in difficult times.
- 3) The Out-of-City Medical Bursary is nearly complete. AMS-SIC Alex Chung and myself have gone through the survey results and have met with the Senior Awards Officer at Student Awards and she was quite pleased with our work. We're in the process of drafting an MoU between all relevant bodies and once that step is complete we'll send it off to senate for a rubber stamp!

SGPS Parenting/Breastfeeding Room [Complete]

One of the unused storage rooms has been converted into a fully stocked and accessible parenting room for the benefit of the campus community, and on 1 February 2016 I was finally able to reveal it to the community. I want to thank everyone who helped me along the way and really and truly hope that this may demonstrate to everyone what grads are capable of should we dedicate ourselves to a task.

Graduate Student Societies [Complete]

Earlier this year I recognized that one of the best means of giving students a voice experienced in the matters of their department would be to encourage the development of Graduate Departmental Societies (GDS). The benefits of such an arrangement are many, as these may serve as collectives whereby grad students might find support, friendship, and assistance with the issues and topics unique to their own department; and secondly, such societies are often warmly supported by faculty, and at times are invited to the table during departmental meetings, giving grads a much-needed voice on important matters

The example constitution is complete as is our list of services and bursaries available to any prospective society. If you or your department is interested in forming a GDS please let me know. My hope is that we will be able to arrange meetings for the interested, offer education, and then help these new societies hold their first elections. Too, we will be coordinating with many of the new societies' in order to offer them our institutional experience and logistical assistance where needed.

Graduate Research Positions [Ongoing]

There is an entire raft of issues of interest to students that, for various reasons, have been overlooked in past years. Recognizing this, the SGPS has hired from our own community a team of researchers to investigate accessible childcare around the campus, alternate fees for near-completion grads, better supports for international students, and an institutional history of the SGPS to name a few. Not only are our seven research assistants making wonderful progress, but this methodology enables us to address many topics of interest to our membership while at the same time affording our researching members valuable experience and resources. I believe that Michael Scott referred to this as a win-win situation.

Drop & Shop [Ongoing]

In partnership with Student Community Relations (SCR), last year Drop & Shop not only diverted significant resources from a landfill, but also raised the profile of our organization in addition to some funds for our community partners. As part of our debrief, Joan of SCR is interested in running the event again this year and plans are already underway to incorporate, and benefit a wider array of our community partners, in addition to fine-tuning some of the logistics involved. As this event cannot continue without the approval of my successor - they literally take over my position mid-way through the event - I'll have to wait and see who gets elected before moving forward with this.

Items Specific to my Portfolio:

Holiday Assistance Program

For the second year in a row I've worked with our executive assistant Andria to get our Holiday Assistance Program (HAP) up and running. The SGPS reached out to many of the top-tiered administrators, deans, and heads of department of this university in order to offer them the opportunity to contribute to HAP and I am pleased to say that some in fact have. As always, I'd like to thank Andria and the rest of our office staff for making another year of HAP the success it was.

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Working Group

At a recent meeting OPIRG released the details of a study that they'd authored urging the group and university to invest in a centralized sexual assault centre on campus. Too, they've approached us about funding an important conference on education, outreach, and the prevention of sexual assault happening later this year and I am hopeful that our organization will be able to commit some funds to this cause.

Equity & Diversity Commission

Our talented Equity & Diversity Commissioner has finished her field-work and the two of us met up to discuss the roles of our portfolios as well as means to improve the organization. Many of our discussed ideas might not be able to be completed by the time I leave office, but I am confident that my successor will be able to hit the ground running in light of meetings as these. Too, I (re) introduced Erica to AMS-SIC Alex, and also her Equity Caucus, as a means of ensuring that progressive and equity-minded folks on campus will be able to meet regularly and pool resources.

AMS Equity Caucus

I have become involved in this effort lead by their SIC Alex in order to pool valuable knowledge and resources around the campus pertaining to equity. During the introductory meeting, I met many respective campus leaders interested in accessibility, mental health, gender diversity, and other issues that are of interest to our membership. I will naturally keep you informed as developments occur.

If anyone has any interest in joining or serving on this caucus, please let me know.

Social Commission Hiring

I chaired a small, yet dedicated team tasked with running the hiring process and am confident to say that the SGPS welcomes its new, dynamic, and energetic Social Commissioner, Daniela Oliveira. Congratulations to all of the candidates who did apply, as the general high level of competency made our decision all the more difficult.

Mental Health Working Group and the Health & Wellness Steering Committee

Both of these went quite well as we wrapped up the academic year. As the National Collegiate Health Assessment for 2016 is coming up, I asked if we might have a closer role with this, or at least better access to the raw data for the purposes of our own research. I finally made mention of the role that the university might play in better supporting the mental health and wellness of our membership.

The Canadian Federation of Students & Mental Health

I completed surveys and reports dealing with student mental health from the CFS in hopes of helping them understand how things across Canadian campuses look. As with the previous research effort on this topic, I suspect that the results were not good and have encouraged the executive to investigate specific avenues that may offset some of the less beneficial aspects of grad and professional life.



SGPS Members,

Since my last General Meeting report, there hasn't been too much going on with the Speaker position, other than the big news that **the Bylaws and Policy Document is up to date on the website!** This has been a big project of mine stepping into the Speaker role, and it is finally complete. The document can be found here: http://www.sgps.ca/info/downloads/bylaws-policies_Jan2016.pdf

I have been keeping on top of the Council member list this year, and making sure that all Council members are attending and actively representing their departments, and finding a suitable replacement when necessary. It was my goal to increase Council attendance and participation this year, and that has certainly shown in our meetings!

In terms of the two committees that I chair as Speaker, please find attached two reports which detail their activities at the end of this reports document.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Cheers,

Eric Rapos
Council Speaker
speaker@sgps.ca



SGPS Members,

Since my last General Meeting report (which can be found on page 16 of the Fall GM Reports Document: <http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/november2015gm/Reports%20November%202015%20-%20GM.pdf>), Senate has met twice (December and January) so there isn't too much to report on, but I will highlight the big things. The agendas for the Senate meetings can be found here:

- December 1, 2015
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=862>
- January 25, 2016
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=893>

Here are a few of the highlights:

- Senate approved a joint BScH/MSc (Biology) degree program
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/72538/SCAD%20combined%20BSc%20MSc%20Biology.pdf?handle=A9A0A7CEF7DB42A18DB2FBC7EF428129>
- Senate approved a joint BScH/MSc (Biomedical and Molecular Sciences) degree program
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/72548/SCAD%20combined%20BSc%20MSc%20Biomedical%20and%20Molecular%20Sci.pdf?handle=8B72578355D04A26B5B4D5E6CB4CE5F8>
- Senate approved major changes to the MPH program
 - Reduction of mandatory core courses from seven to six in the 16-month non-thesis based program; and
 - The introduction of an accelerated 12-month non-thesis based professional degree where students are exempt from one practicum and one elective course because of their professional experience;
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/72555/SCAD%20Major%20Modification%20Master%20of%20Public%20Health.pdf?handle=C48F906B9B154F4C9EFF08AD4BFD1134>
- Senate approved an industrial internship field in the Master of Engineering (Mechanical and Materials Engineering) degree program
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/72563/SCAD%20Major%20Modification%20MEng%20MME.pdf?handle=60163D7BB9CE45E19A20BD1B7F365077>
- Senate approved the name change of the collaborative program designation "Specialization in Political Thought" to "Specialization in Political and Legal Thought"
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/72568/SCAD%20Major%20Modification%20Name%20Change%20Political%20Thou.pdf?handle=DA7F0612CD6348CC808BDABA169611E8>
- Senate approved the introduction of a Dual Degree M.Sc. in Chemistry (Queen's University and the University of Stuttgart)
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/75035/SCAD%20Dual%20Degree%20MSc%20Chemistry.pdf?handle=37F5C7DA3EFD4FFDA681D7DFDE45703D>
- Senate approved the name change of the Department of Art to the Department of Art History and Art Conservation
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/75049/SCAD%20Name%20Change%20Department%20of%20Art.pdf?handle=2C70EABDF8B14F6D8079A000385543CB>

- The first reports from various Non-Academic Misconduct/Discipline systems since the review started were presented to Senate. These reports come from the Interim system, which is a model being considered going forward, and involve the Provost's Office as a body responsible for overseeing major cases.
 - AMS - Fall Term NAM Report
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/75299/AMS%20-%20Non-Academic%20Discipline%20-%202015%20Fall%20Report.pdf?handle=9B588B33F7D6475D957F9351D88F6FD4>
 - SGPS - Fall Term NAM Report
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/75300/SGPSNon-AcademicDisciplineFallReporttoSONAD-2.pdf?handle=DAA9762A90434776BA489EEB18535AEF>
 - Residence - Fall Term NAM Report
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/75307/Residence%20Student%20Conduct%20Interim%20Report%20-%20Fall%202020.pdf?handle=E19737A719B345BF931458EA5F2FD755>
 - A&R - Fall Term NAM Report
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/75301/To%20SONAD%20-%20AR%20Discipline%20Report%20Dec%202015%20and%20Apr%202.pdf?handle=B399B8A6958D4B2D83E7DC4054609D92>
 - Provost - Fall Term NAM Report
 - <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/75302/Office%20of%20the%20Provost%20NAM%20Report%20for%20SONAD.pdf?handle=21AD92E3F16F4AA69F12498F48DD59B3>
 - Of note, there are a few cases reported here which do not fall into the category of major offences, such as a noise disturbance in residence, that are a little alarming to me, as it indicates that not all cases that should be dealt with by students are making their way to student hands. I have noted this to student representation on the Advisory Committee on Non-Academic Misconduct.

And that sums up the big things that have happened since my Fall term GM report.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Cheers,

Eric Rapos
 Graduate Student Senator
senator@sgps.ca



Hello Members of the SGPS,

I am pleased to provide some updates on the Board's recent activities. As many of you may be aware, Queen's is overhauling its non-academic discipline process (renamed non-academic misconduct, or NAM). This stems from an external audit of internal controls that was performed by PricewaterhouseCoopers. Queen's Audit and Risk Committee subsequently initiated a review of our system by Harriet Lewis, legal counsel and secretary at York University, which can be found below.

http://www.queensu.ca/principal/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.opvcwww/files/files/Lewis-Report_Redacted-FULL.pdf

An advisory committee has been struck which is drafting recommendations for the NAM framework. Concurrently, the Board elected to implement an interim protocol whereby all NAM referrals will now filter through a Central Intake Office which will refer cases to the appropriate body on campus.

Our current Board Chair, Bark Palk, will be reaching the end of her term shortly and Donald Raymond will be stepping into the role. Don is an active member of the Board and has current/previous involvement with the Capital Assets & Finance Committee, Pension Committee, Human Resources Committee, and Investment Committee. I am confident that he brings a great deal of valuable expertise to the position.

I am also pleased to report that efforts are underway to hire a sexual violence prevention and response coordinator who will work within the framework of the sexual assault policy, a draft of which was released by the sexual assault prevention and response working group in 2015. The coordinator will serve as a point of contact for students and in addition will undertake educational initiatives on campus.

The Capital Assets and Finance Committee was given a "visioning" tour by the Provost for a health, wellness, and innovation complex, which is to be built within the envelope of the Physical Education Centre (PEC). The budget for this project will be brought to the committee at a later date for review. The facility will house new space for the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, and aims to project an open atmosphere similar to the Athletics and Recreation Centre (ARC), which students regularly flow through.

Finally, our Provost, Alan Harrison, will be retiring in August. After a thorough search Dr. Benoit-Antoine Bacon will be joining us from Concordia, where he previously held the position of Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs. Dr. Bacon will be taking ownership of the new budget model put into place under his predecessor, and it remains to be seen whether any changes will be made. I maintain the position that as an academic institution we should provide a diverse offering of courses to allow students choice to pursue their passions. As such, it may be necessary to perform some level of cross-subsidization between budget units.

Respectfully submitted,

James MacLeod

Trustee
trustee@sgps.ca



Dear Council,

This past month I have begun preparations to officially begin running all of the various sporting and recreational events we have planned for the upcoming months. After waiting for our waiver forms to come through, we have officially received notice that we can go ahead and begin running our events.

I am pleased to announce that the official start of our “Sports Hour” weekly event will be Wednesday, February 3rd at 5:30pm in the upper-west gymnasium at the ARC. After being held back a few weeks with these events as a result of a few waiver issues that prevented us from starting, I decided to go ahead and plan a few meetings with the representatives over at the ARC to familiarize myself with all of the possibilities we have moving forward. I had a great meeting with the recreational coordinator who gave me a few interesting ideas that I plan on incorporating into my yearly plan of events moving forward.

Given that for a few of us commissioners this is our first term, we have decided to hold bi-weekly meetings with each other to stay updated on plans moving forward and to provide additional resources for one another. By working and meeting together with all of the other commissioners, we hope to build on one another’s progress and provide support whenever possible. We discussed the idea of collaborating certain events together. Above all, we look forward to getting things officially started and providing these resources and opportunities for our graduate and professional students. That being said, I cannot stress enough about how open I am in terms of listening to any new ideas or suggestions that some of you may find helpful or want to share. I continue to do my work as commissioner with the goal of creating an inclusive and welcoming environment moving forward.

I look forward to seeing some of your faces at the upcoming events.

Regards,
Dominic Kucharski
Athletics Commissioner
athletics@sgps.ca



Dear SGPS Members,

The theme for this AGM report is policy and organizational structure. Many of my key activities at the moment are focuses on giving some needed TLC to the Equity & Diversity Commission, as well as the overarching policy and support for all of our commissions. Having a richness of resources, a strong transition process between in-coming and out-coming commissioners, and building momentum from year-to-year are all legacies that I hope to leave with the SGPS once my term is complete. In this report you will see this theme as the connecting element between all of my work since I have begun my new term in office.

HR Standing Committee – Sub-Committee for Commission Review

In addition to sitting on the HR Standing Committee to ensure that the SGPS is implementing equitable employment practices, I am also serving on the sub-committee for commission review that was established in January 2016. We have been tasked with interviewing members of previous SGPS commissions and drafting a report of recommendations to improve the commissions. The report will be presented to Council later this spring. I am excited for the opportunity to recommend changes to our policy and bylaws that will add new energy and purpose to our commissions for years to come.

Re-Establishing Campus Partnerships

I am currently undergoing a process of re-establishing relationships between the Equity & Diversity Commission and equity-seeking groups on campus. So far, I have met with the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre, the Equity Office, the Ban Righ Centre, and the AMS Social Issues Commission. I will be meeting with other campus partners in the coming weeks. If you have a recommendation for a group or individual that I should be meeting with, please send their information to me at equity@sgps.ca.

National Coalition of Graduate and Professional Student Leaders in Equity

This past month I began establishing a national coalition of all student leaders from graduate and professional student societies in Canada who work on equity and diversity issues. Together, we will be able to share knowledge and information across our campus borders, as well as collaborate on special projects and issues that are important to our collective membership. There is currently no platform for us to connect and share, making this group the first of its kind for equity-related student leaders at the graduate and professional student level. I will share the results of this group as they develop.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Equity & Diversity Commission, please feel free to reach out to me via email (equity@sgps.ca) and I would be happy to meet over tea, coffee, or a good glass of water. Even if you know of a cool event or an issue I should be aware of, I am always happy to receive email updates.

Sincerely,

Erica Baker
Equity & Diversity Commissioner



Hello Council,

The events planned for January were put on hold as we were waiting for the insurance waiver to come through and it finally did. I am excited to start conducting the planned events in an attempt to accomplish my goal of integrating international students into Queen's student society. In the same context, I met with the international advisor at QUIC and the ACSA club representative and discussed the possibility of working together. Both expressed their interests and readiness to work with me on any upcoming events. My thoughts are to include all the students who are members of the clubs at Queen's, with the club's support, to ensure the turn out for the events is better than what we had in the past. I also believe that this way is better to get the word out on the available resources of the SGPS.

On another note, a biweekly commissioners' meeting was set to be able to stay up to date with each commissioner's plans and activities and to support each other when needed.

I have 3 events planned for February including the Multicultural Show and the International Student Night. I will also be attending several events around campus, including the Black History opening ceremony, to support the other clubs and ensure that more students know about our upcoming collaborations. I also intend to meet with other representatives this week and work with them in the same manner.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara SidAhmed

International Students' Affairs Commissioner

international@sgps.ca



Dear Council,

Firstly, I would like to share my contentment in being chosen for this position. I believe that social events are a very important part of a graduate and professional student's life, as it helps broaden our network and provides a sense of belonging to the community. Initially, I would like to introduce myself telling not only about my student and professional background, but also about my experience in organizing social events. Then, I will briefly share my proposed plans for the future activities.

With a professional background in urban tunnelling design, I have decided to deepen my technical knowledge in the tunnelling area, and, for that, I joined the Queen's Graduate School in September of last year, starting my PhD studies in the Geological Engineering Department. Previously, between the completion of my undergraduate studies and the start of my professional life, I have travelled around several countries, coming to know and experience many cultures.

In one of the countries I lived my main activity was to work as an event coordinator, organizing events for a considerable amount of participants, including New Year celebrations, parties, multi-cultural shows, games and a wide variety of activities. It was a great time in my life, full of creativity and I look forward to share some of the events I have ran in the past, as well as to create new ones.

I have planned several monthly events varying from a small size that are simple to run, such as movie nights, karaoke and trivia, to bigger ones, as briefly quoted for each month below:

February – Carnival (6th), Movie Night (11th), Masquerade Party (20th) and Pub Golf (27th);

March – Trivia Night (10th), Let's Hockey (12th), Bollywood Extravaganza (19th) and Movie Night (24th);

April – April's Fool Game Night (1st), Let's Pancake (7th), Gender Bender Retro Disco (15th) and Movie Night (21st);

May – Karaoke (5th), Horror Movie Festival (13th), For All Party Forró and Square Dance (13th) and Trivia Night (26th);

June – Karaoke (9th), Paintball (11th), Let's Pancake (16th) and Movie Night (30st);

July – Canada Day Celebrations (1st), Lake Around & Picnic @ The Park (9th), Trivia Night (14th), Zorba The Greek Dance Party (21st) and Potluck @ The City Park (31st);

August – Beach Day (6th), Journey to The Nile Dance Party (12th) and Alien Disco Party (19th);

September – Queen's Amazing Race and Speed Meeting (5th), Fort Henry Tour and Dance Party @ Fort Henry Restaurant (6th), Welcome Dinner (7th), Trivia Night (8th), One World Celebration Boat Party (9th), Wolf Island Corn Mazze and The Glitter Manifest (10th), Lake Around with Bikes and Family Barbecue (11th), Full Moon Dance Celebration (16th), Gradsuec The Barbecue (21st) and The Great Gatsby Party (24th);

October – Gradfest, The Grads Oktoberfest (1st), Balkan Beats Gypsy Party (14th), The Walking Grads, Zombie Walk (22nd), Fort Fright (26th) and, finally, last, The Gralloween Party (28th).

Therefore, as you can see, we will have a fun year full of events. Great opportunities not only for social networking, but also to have lots of fun! I believe that when we do have fun, we are happier individuals, more satisfied and fulfilled with life, and as a result, we can be better researchers and bring this creativity to our professional and student lives.

All the activities are going to be announced and detailed in the SGPS pages and media. As they come along, I will be explaining them in detail. I ask your help and support to get the word around, so everyone can be included and feel welcomed here at Queen's University.

Lastly, I would like to pass the word that everyone that enjoy arts & crafts, we will be creating new decoration for the parties, always one week before it happens. For more details, feel free to contact me at any time.

Looking forward to the time ahead!

Best Regards,

Daniela Garroux G. de Oliveira

Social Commissioner

social@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the University Rector
Annual General Meeting 2016

None received.



Hello SGPS members,

For those of you who don't know, my role within the SGPS is to facilitate our elections, which are currently underway. I also sit on the Rector Elections Team and was involved in organizing that election as well this year.

As many of you are probably aware, Cam Yung was elected as the new Rector this month. Though I was disappointed that no SGPS members chose to run for the position, I was happy to see some SGPS members present at the debate, which touched on issues faced by graduate and professional students more than once. Unfortunately, the election did not go as smoothly as I would have liked. During the second day of voting I became aware of confusion amongst Education students with regards to voting. It quickly became apparent that although they had all been added to the voter list and could successfully log into the Moodle system to vote, they had not received the email that went out to the rest of the membership explaining how to do this. At first it was unclear whether this was a widespread issue or just only something affecting a subsection of the education program, but as time went on it became clear that nobody in education had received the email. In fact, it turned out that education students have not been receiving any SGPS emails for this entire academic year. This turned out to be a problem with the SGPS listserv (which is managed by Queen's, so we do not have direct control over it). At the time of this writing I believe that the executive director is in the process of getting the listserv fixed so that this does not happen again.

I'm happy to say that as I write this, the campaign period for the SGPS elections and referendum are officially underway. Sadly, no nominations were received for the position of graduate student trustee, so a by-election will be held at a later date that is yet to be determined. All other positions currently have candidates running for them, and I encourage you to see the SGPS website for details. Also, as I'm sure many of you are aware, the all-candidates' debate will be held the same night as our General Meeting. The debate is an excellent way to get to know the candidates better, so I encourage you all to attend.

This year's election is an important one, as there are not only the 5 executive positions being voted on, but also the position of graduate student senator and fifteen referendum questions on fee renewals for various groups and services. Again, for more information please see the SGPS website. Voting takes place on February 10th and 11th and will be done through Moodle, similar to the Rector elections.

If you take nothing else away from this report, please **vote on February 10-11th!**

Respectfully Submitted,

Travis Skippon
Chief Returning Officer
cro@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Bylaw and Policy Revisions Standing Committee
Annual General Meeting 2016

Dear SGPS Members,

The Bylaw and Policy Revisions Standing Committee has not yet met this year, as the policy changes submitted to Council were not substantial enough to merit additional consultation.

However, in discussions with the Executive, it has become apparent that the Committee will need to meet in the coming weeks, as there is going to be several larger policy changes coming through to Council, so look forward to hearing more from us.

Cheers,

Eric Rapos
Council Speaker, Chair of the Bylaw and Policy Revisions Standing Committee
speaker@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Judicial Committee
Annual General Meeting 2016

Dear SGPS Members,

I am pleased to report that the SGPS Judicial has not yet met this year, as we have received any complaints, and thus no rulings have had to be made.

That said, the SGPS Judicial Committee will be meeting with the Principal's Advisory Committee on Non-Academic Misconduct early in March to discuss the review of the NAM system.

If you have any comments or suggestions about the current system, please feel free to contact me, and I will pass those along at our meeting.

Cheers,

Eric Rapos
Council Speaker, Chair of the Judicial Committee
speaker@sgps.ca