

Welcome back, Councillors! I hope your winter breaks were rejuvenating and you are now up and running once again. It has been a rather quiet month since we last met and I have very little new items to report. Also, as per my notice to you at the last meeting, we will be discussing the issue of SGPS's capital commitment for Queen's Centre and I hope to give the issue justice by focusing on this issue only in my report for this month. I wish to start an informed discussion and ask the Council to deliberate this issue before we meet again in February.

In 2004, Queen's University announced a \$230-million construction project designed to build a student life centre. In 2005, Queen's Alma Mater Society signed a memorandum of agreement with the University administration that it will pledge \$25,500,000 collected from its members through a mandatory fee over 10 years. SGPS executive at the time briefly considered the idea of a similar contribution, but it has never been formally addressed beyond that. This year, an incident at the Queen's Centre Transition Working Group propelled the current executive to address this issue formally with the University administration. The former General Manager of the AMS has drafted a mock operational budget for the Student Life Centre of Queen's Centre and included in this budget was a budget line called 'SGPS Capital Surcharge.' There were multiple problems at the idea, but my main concern was that it appeared to me that the SGPS was demanded to cough up more in the operational cost because we did not pay to build the building. Previous executive have also informed the current executive about various incidents where they felt the SGPS was being unfairly treated or penalized for not making an extraordinary commitment. As a whole, we felt as an executive that the time is ripe to bring the issue to light and settle the question.

One of the main reasons why this issue did not reach the Council is a student space and services survey that the SGPS launched in year 2006-2007. There were questions asking the membership's opinion on the Queen's Centre project itself and also about a mandatory Queen's Centre fee as a collective capital commitment toward the project. Majority of our members were in favour of the project, but were against the mandatory fee. The results were shared with the University administration and I believe that the administration decided not to pursue the question further at the time, given the strong opposition. Before and since the survey, however, the SGPS executive has been asked through unofficial channels for a similar donation.

At the next Council meeting, you will be asked to consider establishing a mandatory fee for Queen's Centre. Specifics of the commitment are up to us to decide, but as it stands now, we are looking to pay roughly \$100 per each member per year as a mandatory fee for the next 10 years. The collective sum is \$4,500,000.

It is not my intention to persuade you in either direction. I simply wish to give you as much information as possible so you can make an informed decision about this issue. Your decision will directly impact our successors for the next 10 years. As a student myself, I would not like to simply fork over \$4,500,000 and call it a good faith. At the same time, I do not wish to carelessly forego what may be a fantastic addition to my education and future graduate and professional students at Queen's in fear of its price.

What can the SGPS do for our members with an additional \$450,000 per year, and a total of 4.5 million dollars? What can the University offer us in return for this significant contribution? What can we ask the University to do for us in return? I look forward to find answers to these and many more questions with you at this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Victoria J. Bae
President

My report is unusually brief this month owing to the holiday break but I'm eager to continue the important work of the SGPS in the new year.

Student Advisors:

On December 1st the Student Advisors met alongside the Equity Commissioner and Coordinator to find ways to share important information regarding international students, TA/TF issues, academic authorship, etc. Another Advisor-Equity meeting will be held in January. Advisor reports from 2004 to the present are now available online at <http://www.sgps.ca/advisors/reports.html>. The Autumn 2009 reports will be online before the February council meeting. The Student Advisor office was closed for the holiday season between December 18th and January 10th.

Teaching Fellow Policy:

As you may be aware, there is a Senate policy for Teaching Assistants but there is currently no policy for Teaching Fellows. Without a TF policy, there are no mechanisms to ensure that TFs are allocated fairly, have clearly defined contracts including hours of work and responsibilities and have an effective grievance procedure. Working alongside several SGPS members I am developing a TF policy to present to the administration. If you are interested in participating in gathering the data and preparing a TF policy please contact me at ypg@sgps.ca.

Graduate Studies Executive Council (GSEC):

At the 7th December GSEC meeting the changes to the ITAs (International Tuition Awards) was approved and will be implemented in the fall of 2010. The SGPS senator (Andrew Stevens) and myself abstained from voting in approval of the dropping of the mandatory ITAs to international masters students as the SGPS has been unable to take a definitive position on the issue. Unfortunately, abstentions were not recorded. We both, however, expressed our concerns over how this change might affect the ability of Queens to accept international graduate students of lower economic status.

Respectfully submitted,
David Thompson



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President Professional
January 2010

Hello SGPS'ers,

Happy New Year! Welcome back to another semester. I hope you all enjoyed your holidays. Just a couple of quick things to mention as we begin the new year.

SGPS Bylaw and Policy Revisions Standing Committee

I will be sitting on the SGPS Bylaw and Policy Revisions Standing Committee in the coming months. My focus will be improving conflict resolution policies and ensuring equity concerns are met throughout the documents. If these areas interest you and you wish to participate on the Committee, please contact Mark Rosner at speaker@sgps.ca

Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee has structured their job analysis questionnaire and will complete their interviews and shadowing of SGPS employees and positions during the month of January. Their full reports and recommendations will be available for the AGM. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Principal's Advisory Committee for Dean – Faculty of Law

Law student Adrian Di Lullo is sitting as the SGPS representative on the Principal's Advisory Committee for the Dean of Law. If you have any questions or comments for Adrian, contact him at 6lpad@queensu.ca

Respectfully Submitted

Kate Kahn
Vice President Professional
vpp@sgps.ca

Holiday's Greetings from Europe:

Fortunately, there had been a bit of extra revenue in our last year's operational revenue so I decided to celebrate by taking off to Europe for the holidays. Luckily, I don't celebrate Christmas so I got the cheapest possible flight on Christmas Eve. I highly recommend Amsterdam during New Year's. Of course, I intend no pun for 'highly'. To make up for my missed report in December, I will be covering more material this time around.

Housing Authority:

QBC had presented its findings in the December Council meeting regarding the Housing Authority. In our opinion as an Executive, we believe that this will be a move in the right direction. We don't see this as a short term investment, but rather as a long term strategic move, enabling us to leverage ourselves financially while striving towards a valued service by a considerable portion of our membership twenty or thirty years down the road. We acknowledge that there are risks and uncertainties associated with this project and it would be folly to pretend otherwise. However, Councilors, consultants, legal advisors, and regular members of the society have spent unknown hours addressing these questions. There is much more that needs to be done, but we cannot move any further unless we have this motion approved. Time is not on our side, and further deliberating will not be of benefit, whether we decide to vote in favor or against this motion.

2008-2009 Budget:

The audit of the 2008-2009 budgets has begun on November 27th. The findings of the audit will be made available to Council at the earliest possible time and will be in our archives maintained by our Executive Director. You can either contact me or Sean Richards to access the records.

2009-2010 Budget Review:

As required in our Bylaws and Policies, the annual budget has to be reviewed by the Finance and Services Standing Committee sometime in January and presented to Council for re-ratification. The committee is scheduled to meet on January 20th, hence we will be able to present our recommendations for February's Council meetings. Currently, we are predicting budget surpluses as our revenues have increased greater than our projections, thus leaving us with some additional legroom for budgeting.

SGPS/AMS Service Agreement:

I am fairly confident in saying that we are in the final stages of negotiating a service agreement with the AMS. It is being currently reviewed internally by the AMS and hopefully is presented formally to both Council and proper AMS legislative bodies for approval in February. The most recent draft of the agreement has been presented in December's Council meeting. The Finance and Services Standing Committee has been crucial in negotiating and reviewing the agreement. There are 4 essential points to the agreement:

1. There shall be proportional representation to amount contributed for each service.
2. There will be a new class of fees that will be required for approval in the SGPS dedicated to shared services.
3. The SGPS logo will be branded visibly as a contributor for the service so that our members are aware of what is available to them.

4. The agreement has to be renewed every three years.

Fee Referenda:

The Finance and Services Standing Committee has set January 20th as the deadline to submit fee referenda establishment/renewal packages for the SGPS. There are quite a number of organizations that have to be renewed this time around. For details on fee establishment and renewal protocols, refer to P.1.2 and B.10.4 in the SGPS bylaws and policies.

Finance and Services Committee:

The committee has been busy in performing its work on stipend increase review in collaboration with the Human Resources Special Committee, health and dental review, SGPS relations with The Grad Club, and the SGPS/AMS service agreement. They will be reviewing fee referenda and the 2009-2010 budget in January and report back in February.

New Executive Assistant Position:

Sean Richards, our Executive Director, had made a formal request for a new Executive Assistant to the SGPS Executive. A document of the expected roles and responsibilities of this new position has been attached in the appendix of Council's November meeting. A new permanent position is expected to cost about \$36,000 to \$45,000 and will have to be compensated through increased student activity fees. While the Office of the VP Finance and Services is empowered under P.1.2.5b in our bylaws and policies to increase the student fees sufficiently to accommodate this increase, the Executive would like to gauge Council's thoughts on this matter before committing to this idea (ie. the need for the position, the possibility of starting with part time rather than fulltime, etc.). I have requested to add this as an agenda item under 'Other Business' for our January meeting to hopefully garner some discussion on where to head with this proposal.

Club Registration:

After ratifying the new policy on club registration and funding, I have liaised with our committee coordinator, Laura Gale on implementing this policy. We hope to begin advertising club registration and funding in January during the beginning of the Winter Term.

Office Space:

The Executive and I have begun formally discussing with the proper bodies (JDUC Council, JDUC Executive, Queen's Centre Transition Working Group, Student Affairs) to request additional office space for the SGPS. While we are guaranteed additional space under current plans of Phase II and III of the Queen's Centre, implementation of these plans are expected to take place 6 or 7 years down the road. We are facing increased challenges in accommodating our elected, appointed, and hired staff and would require additional space to operate effectively.

Queen's Centre Transition Working Group (QCTWG):

After the opening of the Queen's Centre, QCTWG has been winding down. One of the major responsibilities of the working group, the determination of the governance of the Queen's Centre, has been assigned to a new body that has yet to be struck. It is imperative that we provide proportional representation and governance in the new Queen's Centre through this body. The SGPS has provided crucial representation in QCTWG, ensuring equal access for SGPS members at minimal cost. However, I would like to point to an unfortunate stigma that has become evident lately in not only QCTWG but various other student affairs related bodies. Because the SGPS has not committed to a capital commitment for the Queen's Centre, there is an aura of partiality against the SGPS that must be challenged at every opportunity with the administration. The SGPS governance and membership has been clear in the past that it does not seek to commit

to a capital fund for the Queen's Centre. It is unacceptable to be penalized for self governance and we should not let this happen under any circumstances.

Queen's Centre Fees Proposal:

On a related note, and perhaps covered by President Bae's report, the administration has made a formal request yet again for us to explore the possibility of committing to the Queen's Centre. The administration has a debt of approximately \$4 million which would come at a heavy price to the membership if we decide to commit to it. Councilors should be wary of this proposal as it has been brought forward many times in the past (and as early as 2003). I have been speaking with Graduate Senator Andrew Stevens, the President of SGPS during the initial planning phase of the Queen's Centre, and have discussed the possibility of drafting a brief history of the SGPS and the Queen's Centre to provide context for future Councilors. However, as we reflect on this issue once again, it is my duty as VP Finance and Services to ask how the membership will benefit from this venture if we do commit to it and whether or not this financial commitment could be spent better elsewhere.

Strategic Planning Special Committee:

After ratification of striking a strategic planning special committee, the Executive and the committee coordinator, Laura Gale, will be beginning in the Winter term to set out what has been resolved in the motion. We hope to have a recommendation for a permanent strategic planning body as well as an initial strategic plan ready by summer time.

Dental Bursary:

After months of lobbying, the Queen's administration and our insurance broker, Morneau Sobauco, have agreed to replenish our fast depleting Dental Bursary. The total reimbursement is expected to be approximately \$4000, a dismal amount for a very valuable service for the membership. It has been my conclusion that we can no longer rely on lobbying to replenish this fund and must establish a permanent lifeline to the bursary to ensure its survival. I will be making a proposal to the Finance and Services Committee to allocate \$3 per insured member (under the SGPS health and dental plan) that will go directly to the dental bursary. If approved, the proposal will be brought before Council for ratification in February.

International Students Issue Policy:

While this is not an issue related to my office, it has been close to my heart. After witnessing various issues pertaining to international students (OHIP for all campaign, the removal of required ITA funding for master's international students, increased international student tuition fees, etc.) I have recommended to the Executive that the International Students Coordinator, Aasma Khan, to draft an issues policy for international students. VP Campaigns and Community Affairs, Steve Osterberg, has agreed to work closely with Aasma and our new Equity Coordinator in drafting this policy. Many thanks in advance for their hard work.

Respectfully submitted,
Amir Hossein Nosrat
VP Finance and Services



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Board of Trustees Representative
January 2010

As always, the minutes of past meetings are available at www.queensu.ca/secretariat (follow the Board of Trustees link).

Please feel free to contact me at alfonso.nocilla@gmail.com should you have any questions/issues. I would be pleased to hear from other students at any time about matters at the Board level.

Some highlights from last month:

University Planning Committee Proposal

Principal Woolf has proposed the establishment of a University Planning Committee, a joint committee of the University Senate and the Board of Trustees. The committee is intended to be a “senior planning committee and a bridge between the two governing bodies of the University” and will handle both academic planning and resource management. The committee’s precise mandate and composition are still under discussion. The Board has discussed the Principal’s proposal and will likely make a decision at its March 2010 meeting once Senate Operations Review Committee has made its report and recommendation to Senate in January or February 2010.

University adopts the Provost model

Effective May 1, the VP Academic will also be the University Provost. Bob Silverman, former Dean of Arts of Science, will succeed Patrick Deane as interim VP-Academic and Provost effective May 1. Principal Woolf recommended the move to a Provost model and the Board made its decision after some months of consideration. The general goal is to have the Provost handle operational matters so that the Principal has more time to engage in campus life, external relations, fundraising and strategic planning. Most Canadian universities are already on this model and the move had strong support from the current VP Academic, the Dean of Arts and Science, and students.

New VP Advancement

The Board has appointed Professor Tom Harris, former Dean of Applied Science, as head of Advancement for a 5 year term beginning January 4, 2010.

SGPS Computer Network

- Over the holiday I have worked on an entirely new server system for the SGPS. Some highlights of the new server:
 - Single sign-on centralized secure authentication
 - Full management for client systems
 - Finer control of the mail server including backups
 - Directory services for client login and folder sharing across office computers
 - VPN access
 - Calendar services
 - Address book services
 - Web, wiki and blog services
 - Workgroup management
 - Integration with Mac, Windows, Unix and mobile devices
- I will be installing the new server on Monday January 11th. I hope the work I have done over the holidays will allow for a smooth transition to our new server.

SGPS Website

- The website now supports wikis and blogs that will be used by our Executive and Staff to better coordinate with each other on projects. This will also serve as a strong addition to our transition process.
- The website supports a fully integrated webmail application so Executive and Staff have better access to e-mail when away from the office.
- The website will now support mailing lists with end-user control for joining a list, leaving a list and seeing list archives. This will be especially helpful for SGPS committees.

E-Newsletter

- The new server will allow the possibility for online newsletter submissions.
- The new server will allow moderated message boards for discussions among our membership.

Communications

- Pro-rated prices for health and dental opt-ins are now on the SGPS website.
- The new server will allow the possibility for online newsletter submissions.

The new server is an important step in making the SGPS computer network work more efficiently and securely. There are many new features permitted by the server that will help in many important ways. I will continue to report on the features of the server as I get them all up and running.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Equity Commissioner
December 2009

Accessibility Queen's

The 4 Directions, native students building, is currently being undertaken as Accessibility Queen's capital project. Budgets and contractors are being looked into to make the building more accessible and accommodating for its elders.

Accessibility for the second floor of the Grey House is also being looked into.

The project to fund the Disability Services website is still underway.

Queer Grad Student Group

Several grad students have expressed interest in starting up a queer grad student group. We have finally had some membership from the grad student community and are looking to have this group up and running at the beginning of the New Year. We are still seeking membership and anybody interested in participating in the group should please email at equity@sgps.ca.

OHIP for All campaign

UHIP Action Campaign had its second meeting on Wed Jan 6th. More information about the campaign can be found at www.uhip.info.

International Student Award (ITA)

International student voice is still being sought in the matter of the International Student Award.

Queen's Day Care Center

Meetings will commence soon. The Queen's Day Care Center is looking to join hands with some of the other day care centers in Kingston in order to increase enrollment quotas.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any equity or otherwise related issues at equity@sgps.ca

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Virani
Equity Commissioner

And so the new year begins! Welcome back everyone, I hope you had fabulous Holidays and have your batteries fully charged for new conquests!

I have several things to report:

Update: Queen's Climate commitment!

Just before the Holiday break, Carles Sumbler Assistant of the Academic and Special Projects from the Office of the Vice-Principal Academic announced that Queen's University will become a signatory to the University and College Presidents' Climate Change Statement of Action for Canada – commonly known as the BC Climate Commitment Agreement. The signing will likely take place in January when it will also be officially announced.

This is great news as earlier Principal Woolf and the University indicated they would follow conservative commitments set out by the previous Principal Williams, and only be signing the Ontario Universities Commitment- COU. This document represented a mere philosophical commitment and very much lacked meaningful and tangible direction and means for action. On the other hand the BC Climate Statement goes beyond the abstract context and offers more factual direction. It was originally drafted by six Universities in British Columbia and it focuses on both responsibility of Universities to reduce emissions as well as an opportunity to larger solutions beyond campuses. So far there are 22 Canadian signatories from Western Canada with only one Ontario participant, Trinity College. In such context Queen's will very much be setting the bar for the Universities in Eastern Canada. The commitment includes GHG inventory, committee governance, targets, actions and reporting. This is a great step forward for Sustainability here at Queen's!

Solar PV Initiative – SGPS Sustainability Committee Study

The SGPS Standing Committee is still in process of helping conduct a viability study into a solar PV initiative at Queen's University. Currently, the project is in hands of an independent solar company (whose name escapes me at the moment) as per request of the University. The solar viability assessment could have been done for free, but funds had to be gathered to satisfy the neutrality aspect. At first it seemed the funds were not available but then the Faculty of Education stepped in and guaranteed to cover half of the costs at which point the Physical Plant Services stepped in for the rest. The assessment should be completed by end of January but Dr. Pearce has informed us that the University has requested extra information so it may take longer. As soon as developments happen they will be reported. In meantime a Facebook group "Help Queen's Become Solar Powered" has been formed to share information and collaborate- it has so far amassed to 1,890 members! If you haven't already join and be part of the change!

SGPS Sustainability Optional Fee

The SGPS Sustainability Standing Committee is in the process of developing a platform and a proposal to introduce an optional sustainability fee! This fee will be optional, realistically drafted and we hope provide the necessary funds for project development, collaboration and general promotion of sustainability initiatives at Queen's University and in the community. It will be ready for submission by the January 20th deadline.

Respectfully Submitted,

SGPS Sustainability Coordinator
Ivana Zelenika