

Dear Council:

Welcome back everybody from December break, and happy 2015! Not much new has happened since last Council because I was buried in exams and then it was December break, but here are some of the major updates.

New Printer! And Floors!

Our SGPS office has some shiny new floors; you should come check it out. Finally we can have the office slip-and-slide we always dreamed of. We also signed a new lease for a printer with more features, and the per-copy rate in the lease is even lower than the old one. We'll be discussing at Exec whether it's feasible to lower our copying/printing prices even further. Otherwise copying will turn into a minor revenue stream. Our apologies to anyone who was inconvenienced by our early closure for renovations, but in addition to looking snazzy, the post-renovation offices now provide proper separated offices for our permanent staff members and there's now a small break room so staff members no longer have to eat their lunches at their desks.

Writing Centre

I'm going to be meeting with a rep from the Writing Centre next Monday to start discussing ways they can better make their programming and services available to graduate and professional students. A lot of programming for grad students on thesis-writing is done by the School of Graduate Studies, but there's certainly room for the Writing Centre to provide writing support to professional students and non-thesis workshops on writing tips for grads (particularly international students). I'll let you know at Council how the meeting went. If I forget to talk about it, someone at Council should remind me. If nobody reminds me then I'll know that none of you read my reports and future reports will just be a series of knock-knock jokes.

Do You Want My Job?

Elections are just around the corner (assuming the earlier dates are approved at this meeting). Nominations should be opening up the Friday after Council with voting right before Reading Week, and that means we need people to run for Exec! If you have any interest in helping to run the SGPS next year and in having a cushy basement bunker office rated to withstand a direct hit from a 300-kiloton nuclear weapon then shoot me an email and I'd be happy to talk to you about the workload and responsibilities of being an Exec member. Also, the new timeline means groups that want Council to put fees on the ballot should get new/increased fee requests in by **January 13th** and renewals in by **January 20th**.

Student Life Space Plan Survey

A survey to help us craft a Student Life Space Plan will be going out to the entire student body pretty soon. It will gather information on the ways different students use space on campus for their studying/extracurricular needs and allow students to rate the way those spaces do (and don't) work well for them. Once it's out, I hope I can have your help getting it out to the SGPS membership.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin Wiener
President

president@sgps.ca

Dear Members of Council and Members-at-Large,

The month of December was busy with regular monthly meetings including GSLAG, GSEC, and the second meeting of the Graduate Academic Caucus (GAC). GSLAG is working on promoting the new Queen's Connects LinkedIn page to grad students interested in connecting with alumni in their field and updating the Graduate Student Living Costs table on the Student Awards page based on some of the information I turned up in the informal survey I undertook in the summer term and with new information and ideas collected by other GSLAG members since. GSEC approved in December a new Aging and Health program, several new fellowships and calendric changes, and the addition of a new field to the PhD in Management.

GAC had a stronger turnout on 16 December and several folks who could not attend did submit documents and reports. We are still working on creating a space whereby GAC members can upload documents from the Faculty Grad Councils and Committees, so that way anything of particular interest at GSEC can be highlighted and then accessed for discussion by GAC members easily. Some documents are quite massive, so we prefer to streamline things a bit for GAC members. GAC will conduct meetings based on items of concern arising from or to be discussed at GSEC while also allowing a forum for faculty reps to discuss issues that have not made it to GSEC agenda yet.

Items of interest that have arisen at GAC include the reduction of funding in Arts for MA students and a slight increase in funding PhDs, the need to create more functioning grad student associations at the department level; discussion about the Law library and the uncertainty of where PhD law student carrels will be moved once Lederman undergoes renovations; Education is considering the creation of an online based grad program & FEAS is discussing a Master's in Innovation program and has approved a proposal to lower the PhD course requirements for direct entry and promotion from MAsc. Also, I believe each of the Faculty Grad Councils/Committees have added "Initiatives to Reduce Times to Completion" to their agendas at the request of GSEC. Given the interest graduate students have in the T2C policy, I will pay particularly keen attention to discussion around this new standing agenda item from each of the Councils. Thanks to our representatives on each of these Faculty Grad Councils/Committees for their diligence and work in helping our Senator and I be even more prepared for GSEC! Our next meeting takes place on 20 January. If Council members at large have any questions about GAC, please reach out to me directly. If members are interested in learning more about what's happening at their Faculty Council, please reach out to your Faculty rep!

On top of this, there were several other important meetings in December, but my major work was dedicated to conducting the annual Student Advisor Program Review, a process that is itemized in the Memorandum of Agreement with SGS but does not seem to have, historically, a set standard by which the Review is actually undertaken. I plan to submit the final Review as an Appendix item for either February 2015 Council or the AGM, whichever seems more appropriate. I did not have it ready for January Council as I must await the submission of the Student Advisors' Fall 2014 term reports that are due January 12th (The Student Advisors reports for the Fall in fact extend right up to December 31st since their clients sometimes contact them even when the SGPS offices and the university are closed, so it seemed right to ensure any clients who did reach out by email are still included in the annual Review even if this work was done outside the formal academic term). I expect to have the whole Review done by 15 January in any case, and it will be sent to all stakeholders and posted on the SGPS website. While undertaking the effort, I've also written a 'how-to' guide to add to the Student Advisor Program Manual that I am updating, as well as the VPG transition manual.

I think this year's annual Program Review is thorough, and necessarily so as the Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Student Advisor Program that SGPS and SGS have signed is coming up for renewal in the autumn of 2015. Essentially what I have done is sent out questionnaires to different individuals and offices around the University including QUIC, HCDS, the Equity and Human Rights Offices, SGS, the Office of the Ombudsperson etc. The questionnaire asked about working relationships with our Program, its strengths, areas to be strengthened, means of and targets for Program promotion, and the Program's value to students and the university in general. I also sent a questionnaire to the Student Advisors themselves that asked about working relationships with other offices, and direct questions about the work that they do including cases big and small. Happily, I was also able to get several testimonials and feedback notes from clients themselves. Furthermore, with the help of my research assistant, we have mined each

of the Student Advisor reports dating back to 2008 for data including demographic info that we have collected in the past (ie: faculty, degree level, domestic/international student etc) as well as the types of cases clients present, which are often themselves multilayered. I'm hoping to show how 2014 cases compare to earlier cases, if there are changes in the kinds of cases, or if there are general trends that indicate systemic issues that still require remediation for instance. In the end, I hope the thoroughness of the Review will be sufficient to give SGPS members and other stakeholders a clear idea of what the Student Advisor Program really does and what value it has for the grad and professional student experience at Queen's. At the same time, the SGPS will have up-to-date information to bring to the table when it renegotiates the MOA with SGS in autumn 2015.

Other than the 15 January completion date I have set for the annual Review, other things that are upcoming are the first meeting of the Student Health and Safety Committee, the resumption of my regular monthly meetings, and several meetings of the Principal's Advisory Committee. Please do get in touch if you are curious about what I'm up to, have suggestions or comments to share, or would like to get involved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dinah Jansen
Vice President Graduate
vpg@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President Professional
January 2015

Dear SGPS Council Members,

I do not have much to report since our previous meeting. I wrote exams for most of December and then escaped to my cottage.

I will be meeting with the professional students events planning committee to set up our next event and I am pretty excited about that!

As unbelievable as it sounds, transition is already in the back of my mind, as we only have 4 more short months in office!

Be sure to check out the renovated SGPS space, and I hope you all had a wonderful break

Best Regards,

Thompson Hamilton
Vice-President Professional
vpp@sgps.ca

Hey Council,

Lorne tries WORK/LIFE BALANCE and it's SUPER EFFECTIVE!

Campaigns and Community Affairs Standing Committee

Many thanks to those of you who helped me in the running of our Holiday Assistance Program (HAP) and our Food For Fines programs. Both were quite successful and well received by both the community and our allies academic and non-around campus. This couldn't have happened without the hard work of my many volunteers, but I'd also be remiss were I to neglect all of the great work that our office staff did in promoting and supporting these great initiatives.

Insofar as stronger academic communities are concerned, I believe this paved the way to stronger connections between our friends in the AMS, and I'd like to specifically thank Rebecca, the AMS/SGPS Food Centre Coordinator, and Emily, the Social Issues Commissioner.

Community Affairs

Due to an illness I was unable to attend the Provost's Advisory Committee on Outdoor Arts, but am proud to say that otherwise I've taken an active role in advocating on behalf of our membership for the arts around campus.

One of the most frustrating things about being an advisory member of the Queen's Day Care board is that due to all of the closed-closed meetings that we've been having, I'm effectively barred from any serious discussion of what's happening. However, what I can say to the membership, and have been saying to interested parties at PSAC901, is that multiple and serious discussions have been underway since the beginning of December, and I hope that in the coming weeks I'll finally be able to announce what we've discussed.

Want PAID Academic Work That Will Look Great On A C.V. That You Can Do Entirely From Your Home? This is a call for a Work Study or Research Assistant

If you're a student in business, economics, management or policy studies, or have interests or abilities in any of those topics, please contact me for an exciting and largely self-directed opportunity to serve as a research Assistant for a Special Project that I'd like to undertake in the new year. This position is well paid, I don't micromanage, and I like to reward success. Please let Andria (ea@sgps.ca) or myself (vpcca@sgps.ca) know if you're interested.

Dear SGPS Council Members,

I hope everyone had a relaxing break over the holidays and had the opportunity to spend some time with loved ones.

We are very excited to get things going again with our various projects and initiatives. Some ongoing projects I hope to begin wrapping up include:

- online bursary applications
- investment report
- comprehensive policy updates on SGPS services

On a different note, the President has called a special meeting for later this month at which I intend to provide the recommendations of the Finance and Services Committee on:

- the "Bus It" fee
- the Student Advisor Program fee

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have by email or appointment.

Best Regards,



Patrick Gajos
VP Finance and Services



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Speaker
January 2014

Dear Council,

Welcome back!

You may recall from last term that our deputy speaker Jon Samosh was not able to join us at Council meetings due to a class conflict. You may also remember that MacKenzie Bulkowski-Rose, who always sat on my right hand side, took the minutes in Jon's stead. If you have had the chance to read some of MacKenzie's minutes, then you likely agree with me that she did a truly wonderful job with them. Indeed, they are the best ones I have seen so far in student politics. Thank you, MacKenzie!

Although you may not have seen Jon last term at Council meetings, Jon and I have been working together extensively behind the curtain. For example, we collaborate on compiling Council agendas and keeping track on Council attendance. Now I am delighted to report that in the coming term, Jon will be able to join us at Council meetings to take the minutes as well! Welcome Jon.

Kind regards,

Max Ma
Speaker (speaker@sgps.ca)

Hello Council,

I hope you all enjoyed the break and are all well rested for a new term!

Not much to report on since the December Council, since Senate has not met, but I do have a few updates from GSEC.

GSEC Meeting – December 18, 2014

- The 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) will be taking place again this year on campus in March, so if you are interested in an opportunity to share your research in a three minute talk, and feel you are up to the challenge, with a chance to win prizes, then keep your eyes peeled for advertising of that.
- The Ontario Visiting Graduate Student (OVGS) Fee, which is the fee per course for visiting graduate students in Ontario has been increased for the first time since the 1990s, from \$500 to \$1100 to bring Ontario in line with other places. There has also been a commitment to review these fees every three years from now on such that this disparity does not happen again.
- GSEC Approved New Programs (Diploma, Masters, PhD) in Aging and Health.
- GSEC Approved the Addition of a field to the PhD in Management Program.
- As usual an omnibus report of minor changes was approved.

And that's all I have for you wonderful councilors!

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Rapos
Graduate Student Senator
senator@sgps.ca

Hello Council,

For those of you who may have missed my oral report during our last Council meeting, I will provide a recap of the salient points:

I am pleased to report that during the last meeting of the Board of Trustees, we approved the Richardson Stadium Revitalization project. This project will involve the demolition of the existing stadium, and replacement with a modern facility with approximately the same capacity. The new stadium will feature an artificial turf, which should improve the slate of activities which may be hosted. Future fundraising efforts through Queen's Initiative Campaign may also lead to the addition of a pavilion to the stadium in the coming years. I am also happy to report that demolition of the existing structure will remove approximately \$1 million of deferred maintenance from Queen's books.

The Board of Trustees held a special meeting on January 5th to discuss some changes to our online learning system and investment practices. We have approved a contract with Desire to Learn (D2L) which will see the migration of online course material onto this new platform. Currently, there are several platforms in use on campus, with various departments independently securing their own licensing. Under this consolidated model we will achieve, in some cases, up to 50% savings on per-student licensing. In addition, the Board approved a Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures, which allows the Board to make top level investment decisions regarding risk appetite, which can be effected by the Investment Committee. The immediate implications of this approval will result in a more conservative asset mix, with a medium-term market outlook.

Respectfully submitted,

James MacLeod

Graduate Trustee
trustee@sgps.ca

December 6th Memorial

I wrote a solidarity letter to the Engineers Society indicating that we were willing to assist in whatever way possible with the December 6th Memorial. On behalf of the SGPS Equity Commission, and upon being invited, I attended the December 6th Memorial service organized by the White Ribbon Campaign, Kingston at the Sydenham United Church on Saturday December 6th. After the service, I interacted with the White Ribbon Campaign, Queens Branch who asked for assistance for certain programs they will conduct this term. I will forward the information to the Executives through Andria (the Executive Assistant) for approval.

Meeting with Disability Services

I had a meeting with Disability Services as part of the meetings I arranged with stakeholders to find out more about the key issues on campus (kindly refer to the report I submitted in December for more information). Jeanette Parsons indicated that plans were underway (and she has been communicating with Andria) to set up a bursary for students with disabilities and as such she did not believe that a separate program to provide transportation services to students with mobility challenges was necessary since they could use taxis which would be paid for by the bursary. I thus decided to discard the initial plans I had to ask the Equity Commission, Council and the Executives for approval to institute a transportation service on campus for SGPS members with mobility challenges.

Committee Meetings

The Committee meetings that came up in December were the Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Working Group meeting and the SEEC meeting. The SLC Accessibility Committee put a matter to vote which I participated in on behalf of SGPS.

Structure

I emailed Kevin (the President) for information about the structure of supervision at the SGPS because I was not clear on whether to report to him or to the SGPS staff. Kevin informed me that after having a meeting with the Executives, it had been decided that I should report to the Executives through Andria. I would like to respectfully suggest to Council that the by-laws be amended to clearly state the structure of supervision within the SGPS for the benefit of future appointees and to avoid any confusion.

Plans for Winter Term

I have requested for a meeting with Andria so that I can be informed about what the agenda will be for the Equity Commission this winter term. I further await the first Equity Committee meeting to find out information about which issues the committee would like to tackle this term. Moreover, I would be most grateful for Council's direction on same.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kuukuwa Andam
Equity Commissioner
equity@sgps.ca

SGPS Computer Network and SGPS Office

- Our new printer has arrived.
 - I have completed most of the setup work on the new printer.
 - New drivers have been installed on office computers.
 - Printer has been successfully configured to work with our mail server and the Queen's network so scan to email is working
 - The new printer has about a 50% dpi improvement over our previous printer
 - The new printer uses organic inks that are grown just outside of Toronto, Ontario!
 - Our per copy impression price has gone down slightly for black ink and more substantially for colour
- I successfully moved the servers to a temporary location so our office renovations could be completed. The servers remain at their temporary location until I am able to get my office back into shape.
- We have mostly restored the furniture and supplies to our offices. This was a significant task and took considerable effort from the office staff. Things are looking great, with the exception of my office :) The new layout is working very well. I believe that members will enjoy a better experience when they come to the office to print or bind.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members,

Happy New Year!

The Social Team will be kicking off our weekly sports hour on Wednesday 21 January from 5:30-6:30pm. Sports hours will run every Wednesday from 5:30-6:30pm all term in the ARC Upper West Gym and will rotate through different pick-up sports. Our team will post an event in the SGPS Facebook group each week so you can see what sport we will be playing in a given week. It's a friendly, non-competitive environment that welcomes people of all abilities and skill levels and it's a nice chance to meet your fellow graduate students.

We hope to continue to see high turnout at our events this winter, despite winter weather, as we saw throughout the fall. The Social Team has lots of great ideas planned for the winter semester: including a night of Rockin' Disco Bingo at the Grad Club and a Frontenacs hockey game in January; we are hoping to join up with the Agnes Etherington Art Centre for Speed Meeting and host our annual mid-winter mixer in February; curling in March, mixers, movie nights, trivia, and of course our regular Wednesday night sports.

As with the sports night, all of the social events are posted in the SGPS Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2310661892/>), and those events requiring tickets will be on the SGPS website (<http://www.sgps.ca/events/social.html>) where you can pay via PayPal or you can pay in person in the SGPS office.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Social Team for advice on your own event planning on campus or if you have any ideas or special requests for events that we can host for the SGPS community!

Respectfully submitted,

Ciara Bracken-Roche

Social Commissioner
social@sgps.ca

Dear members of the SGPS,

I hope you had a lovely winter break. Upcoming next week is our first Equity Commission meeting of the academic year which I hope many of you will attend. More information is below.

Equity Commission Seeking Membership

The SGPS Equity Commission is looking for new members who are interested in engaging in equity-related issues for graduate and professional students on Queen's campus. The commission informs and advises the Council and Executive with their perspective on equity issues on campus. In addition, the commission is involved in different initiatives and events on campus that promote equity and inclusion.

The Equity Commission is a great opportunity for SGPS members to become more involved with student governance and issues that are important to our members. Meetings take place the second Wednesday of every month at 5:00pm in JDUC 236. Accessible services are available upon request. **Our next meeting is Wednesday, January 14th, 2015.** All are welcome to attend and to contribute their ideas and vision for the Commission. To join the Commission and to RSVP for the January meeting please email Andria Mahon at ea@sgps.ca.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Baker
Equity Coordinator
equityco@sgps.ca

Rector's Report to SGPS
Mike Young
January 6th, 2015
rector@queensu.ca



OFFICE OF THE RECTOR
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON

Dear Council,

I hope everyone had a wonderfully relaxing winter break and is ready for second semester. I do not have much to report on at this time but will provide a brief overview of what I'm up to this month.

Tricolour Awards | The nomination period for the Tricolour Awards has closed. I cannot divulge how many nominations were received or who those nominees are, but I will say that I am extremely satisfied with the quantity and quality of completed nomination packages. Nominees for the award will be notified, following the application review and interview process, by January 31st of their outcome, at which time recipients will be made public. A reception for the recipients and their families featuring past recipients of the award and prominent members of the community will be held on March 28th in conjunction with the Queen's University Alumni Association (QUAA) Awards Gala.

Elections | Thankfully, I will not be running in any elections this year. However, I have met and will continue to meet with candidates for different positions. Firstly, I'd like those interested in running to know that my door is open and I am happy to meet and answer some questions. Secondly, and I'm sure you'll hear this quite a bit – these elections really do matter. Please do what you can over the next month to learn about the candidates for the positions that affect your day-to-day lives and make an informed decision.

That's all for now – I look forward to seeing you all next week.

Princeps Servusque Es