

It has been a very busy and active month at the SGPS. I wish to firstly thank each and every one on Council and all members for your participation at the SGPS annual referendum and election. We surpassed the quorum this year and all positions have been filled. Congratulations to all elects, and I look forward to their successful installations on floor.

Bylaws and Policies

VP Professional Kate Kahn and I have worked on the SGPS Bylaws and the revisions have been submitted with this report. I tried my best to make the changes easy to notice and follow. Please review them thoroughly and say 'aye' when we reach the motion to approve these changes!

A fundamental change I hope to employ is to contract all positions within the SGPS governance. This is a standard practice for student societies and has many benefits, one of which is to streamline and better equip the VP Professional and Executive Director in reinforcing the HR issues within the governance. The actual contracts have not yet been drafted, but will soon be done with the aid of Kate and members of HR Committee, along with revisions and additions in the HR policies. These will reach the Council by April meeting. Please email Kate or me if you have any questions, thoughts or suggestions.

Sustainability

A cause for celebration! Principal Woolf has been making a series of progressive movement in making Queen's a green campus. In addition to his working extensively working with our VP Campaigns, Steve Osterberg, on pushing for bottled water free campus, he recently signed off on the BC Commitment, also known as "made-in-Canada sustainability pledge." I wish to thank Principal Woolf for this significant action and I, along with other student representatives such as the Rector and AMS executive, will be urging the Principal to soon announce Queen's to be the first bottled water free campus in Canada.

Tuition

The recent prank Journal article about tuition for Arts and Science being deregulated got me thinking about . After the much disappointing decision by the University Senate back in 2002 to defeat a motion opposing tuition deregulation (thereby indirectly but surely supporting tuition deregulation), faculties and schools at Queen's have been lobbying for deregulation of tuition for their respective departments. Tuition is already deregulated for Faculties of Applied Science, Law and Medicine as well as School of Business and international students. At this rate, it will not be long before all faculties and schools at Queen's including the School of Graduate Studies opt for deregulated tuition and Queen's' turning essentially into a private institution without really being one.

The letter opposing an increase in international student tuition and lack of consultation in its process has been signed by both myself and the AMS President and has been sent out to administration. It is attached to this report.

Committees

Many thanks to the HR Committee for working diligently in getting the personnel data together for bylaw revisions, and more in advance for the help you will be giving Kate and me for the next month with policy revision. Also many thanks to the Finance Committee for your many hours of reviewing documents and making final recommendations for the Council and membership regarding the fees at the referendum.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual General Meeting!

Respectfully submitted,
Victoria Bae
President
president@sqps.ca

I'd like to begin by congratulating all the candidates who ran for SGPS executive and the Representative to the Board of Trustees positions in the February election. It was heartening to see a number of contested positions, a broad audience at the debates and an above-average turnout at the polls.

Student Advisors:

Over the past two months, the Student Advisors have dealt with cases where clear mistakes ranging from TA/RA issues to graduate supervision were made by the department. After these mistakes, no accommodations were made by the department on behalf of the student. While the department was not contractually or legally obligated to accommodate the student, it would have been the right thing to do. In one case, a student was given a TAship of a certain amount of hours but the TA supervisor did not provide work to the student despite student prompting. With just a few months left on the contract, the supervisor made the student work all the hours that should've been worked throughout the academic year. In another case, a supervisor of a student retired shortly after the student got to Queen's because of a health problem that the department knew about! Yet the department did nothing to dissuade the student from coming, the supervisor from hiring the student, or from accommodating the student. With no one else qualified at Queen's, the student was left without appropriate supervision. Cases like this highlight the need for contracts for all graduate students. If the contracts could be standardized by SGS, that would be better! Contracts would allow students to see what departments were and were not responsible for before coming to Queen's. Of course, the best strategy to deal with TA issues at Queen's remains to unionize since only a TA union has the legal authority to bargain with the University and represent TAs on their behalf.

TF Policy:

I'm currently completing a draft TF Policy with our incoming Vice President Graduate to present to Vice-Principal Academic Patrick Deane in March. Once the draft is submitted Patrick Deane intends to strike a committee to begin preparing a policy to be considered by the senate.

TA Agreements:

TA contracts/agreements continue to be applied only haphazardly within departments. For councilors representing departments that fail to use and/or have an inadequate agreement form please see Appendix A, for the agreements used in Global Development Studies (the second two pages are the recommended senate agreement forms). You should pressure your departments to ensure that they use a similar form.

Qspace:

As included in my last report a number of graduate students have raised concern over the Qspace publication of dissertations and Master's theses. Currently, students can

defer online publication of their work for up to two years so that they might publish their work in a journal(s) or as a monograph. David Rappaport of the SGS has stated that owing to the desire of graduate students to defer online publication, the SGS is considering extending the deferral time from 2 years to 5 years.

Authorship Issues:

Also related to my February report, Patrick Deane has agreed with the need of an independent referee and/or committee to deal with problems/disparities with supervisors/faculty claiming authorship of graduate student work, beyond the current final arbiter of the VP Research. The SGPS Executive will work closely with Patrick Deane and his successor Rod Morrison to ensure that once the VP Research post is vacated that a new method to deal with contested authorship issues is instituted.

Accessibility Training:

First introduced in my February report, the government has mandated that all staff and faculty including TAs, TFs and RAs receive mandatory Accessibility Training or face possible institutional fines. While the online training (which takes approximately 90 minutes to complete) will not be mandatory this term, as of the Fall of 2010 all graduate students must complete the Accessibility Training in order to work as TAs/TFs. The SGS has decided that because the training is "professional development" it will not be paid.

You can access the course at

<http://www.queensu.ca/equity/content.php?page=CSOnlineTraining>. At council I'd like to discuss this issue to ascertain whether the membership would like to lobby for the Accessibility Training to be part of a TA/TF's paid employment.

Departmental TA Training and Development Annual Activity Report:

There is currently an annual activity report that senate has mandated that all departments complete to assess what type of training and development they offer to TAs/TFs. Unfortunately, only a few departments comply with this request and those reports that are submitted languish in a file cabinet at the Centre for Teaching and Learning. At this month's TA Consultative Committee we discussed the possibility of these reports being forwarded each year to the CTL as well as the AMS and the SGPS. That way, student bodies can publicize departments that fail to either submit the report, or provide adequate training to teaching assistants. The TA Consultative Committee will also be revising the current report form (Appendix B). If you would like to see any changes please contact me.

Council on Employment Equity: Annual Report to the Principal

http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Feb18_10/CEERpt.pdf

As the March 2010 report of Senator Andrew Stevens indicates, the Council on Employment Equity annual report highlights how Queen's has failed to meet its hiring goals to improve equity amongst its TAs/RAs. Patrick Deane and incoming Vice-Principal Academic, Rod Morrison have agreed to meet with SGPS representatives, Janice Deacon and Adnan Hussain to discuss ways to hire more women and visible minorities as TAs/TFs. As Stevens points out, this is an especially important issue given

the changes in International Tuition Awards and the mandatory English training to international student TAs/TFs.

Graduate Life Working Group (GLWG) – Job Opportunity:

The School of Graduate Studies and the Division of Student Affairs of Queen's will soon be issuing a call for a work study position to maintain and update the Graduate Student section of the Student Affairs website, provide event support for the Expanding Horizons Professional Development Workshop Series, act as an administrative support to the GLWG and generally promote student affairs programs and services to Queen's graduate students. All interested and eligible graduate students are encouraged to apply.

Respectfully submitted,
David Thompson
VP Graduate



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

Human Resources Committee

A very big thank you to The Human Resources Committee who this month completed their job analysis reports. The committee did fabulous work in outlining the hours/tasks/communication structures of each SGPS position, and in making recommendations for the future of each position. Over the next month, Vicki and I will be using these reports provide a basis for new job descriptions and contracts.

Bylaw and Policy Revision

I spent the past month working with Vicki and other members of SGPS governance on changes that we felt would be beneficial to the SGPS bylaws and policies. Hopefully, you have had the chance to review our proposed changes. If you have any questions about any of the changes, please email Vicki or me.

LSS Internal Review of LSS/SGPS Relationship

Over the past semester, students from the Law Student Society created a document examining their relationship with the SGPS. As an executive, we highly commend the work the LSS put into this document. Such engagement on the part of a constituent group helps to strengthen the SGPS as a whole, and the executive looks forward to addressing concerns of the LSS. We encourage all of our constituent groups to maintain such an active overview so that the executive can ensure the SGPS continues to meet your needs.

Renewal of Grad Club Fee

A reminder that the Finance and Services Committee is currently preparing a recommendation for council as to whether to renew the Grad Club fee. The vote will be occurring at the April council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Kahn
vpp@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Finance and Services
March 2010

A Critical Review of
SGPS Finance and Services
(Public Version)

NOTE: There are two versions of this document. Due to certain political sensitivities and internal strategies, some information has been truncated. They are in the hands of Sean Richards, the Executive Director, to share with whom he sees fit. The public version that does not contain the truncated information will indicate where information has been withheld for public eyes.

0- Two Sentence Summary

If this report could be summarized in two sentences, it would be the following: SGPS Services are critically underdeveloped. There must be a very serious long-term committed investment of time, effort, and resources to nurture SGPS services.

1- Foreword:

As my term approaches a rapid end, I've decided to use this opportunity to not only update Council on my progress in the last month, but to also capture some thoughts and reflections during my eleven months as VP Finance and Services and share those with future Executives and Councilors if need be. This is a phenomenon common for many outgoing Executive and I encourage investigating their reports as many of them contain valuable information and recommendations on issues pertinent to many of our current discussions and decisions.

This document was crafted as a guide for future VPs of Finance and Service and the Finance and Services Standing Committee (and perhaps even others) to not only seek information for issues mentioned in this report, but also consider or reject recommendations that I make. Obviously, I have tried to focus on issues pertinent to this position, but some have such magnitude and overlapping jurisdictions with other roles and responsibilities that it would be folly to consider it as pertaining specifically to this Office. I have also given additional coverage to issues that I feel strongly passionate for that may admittedly not be the role of this Office to pursue. The essence of the following pages are what I believe should constitute the domain of the Office, most of which are to be done in collaboration with other roles. Again, it is up to every VP Finance and Services to decide what constitutes their domain, but I hope that this provides a 'reference plane' to build upon, modify, and deduct when needed. Documents related to these issues are plenty, and the SGPS has retained as much as possible and tried to make them readily available for SGPS Executive and Council, so I would advise that the reader research these independent of this report as I can only provide so much information.

Compared to previous Executive 'grand finales', however, this document is not a listing of 'accomplishments' and 'initiatives' that need continuation, but rather a compilation of abstract thoughts and concepts that are dynamic, ongoing, and changing with respect to time and 'events of the day'. I have tried my best to set the tone of this document as pragmatic, yet some personal beliefs may inadvertently find its way into this document. Last, I would like to stress that this is an amalgamation of the many *qualitative* experiences I have obtained during my time. While I have tried earnestly to solicit the opinion of colleagues and to reflect them in this document, this is ultimately limited by my experiences and interests.

2- A Note for Other Executive and Commissioners [Truncated]

Finally, I would also like to encourage future Executive (or even perhaps current Executive) to provide a similar 'reference plane' for their roles to work on and to develop. I am sure you are all aware of how frustrating it may be to start from virtually nil.

3- The Depoliticization of the Role

There are generally two widely recognized purposes for the existence of student societies. One is advocacy and the other is services. There are many disagreements between individuals and between societies on which should be the primary role. Some will argue that advocacy is a form of service that student societies offer, but I feel that advocacy is a function that is noticeably distinguished from services. For the purposes of this report, I will assume that advocacy and services are two different categories of functions that student societies strive to offer.

The SGPS historically has strong roots and beliefs in advocacy, while the AMS for example has generally leaned towards focusing on services to the membership. I believe both are important, but I cannot help but point out my perception that services have been severely neglected in the SGPS. This is not to diminish the importance of advocacy and the many strong initiatives the SGPS has taken towards equity, sustainability, and fairness but rather to indicate to a neglect of the 'service' in the society. The purposes of the SGPS as outlined in its bylaws, for example, make little reference to non-advocacy functions. Similarly, there are four Executive that are dedicated to advocacy while this position is the sole position dedicated to offering and reviewing services for the membership. Because of the strong advocacy roots of the SGPS, the VP Graduate, VP Professional, VP Campaigns and Community Affairs, and the President all generally tend to have associated ideologies with them. One can be strongly pro-Union and pro-CFS, or believe in a stronger equity push while another would lean towards more 'neutral politics'. As VP Finance and Services, however, I found little room for these ideologies to affect my performance. For example, a hypothetical VP Finance and Services may be strongly anti-CFS, but not acknowledging the services made available to the SGPS through CFS would be incredibly dangerous. Similarly, I may personally be pro-Union but I cannot help but be cautious of how a Union could challenge the services available to the membership through the SGPS .

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WRAP-UP: *Services have not been nurtured as strongly as advocacy in the SGPS. It is my opinion that this position should distance itself from external ideologies. There are enough positions in the Executive to deal with matters of advocacy. The ideology of the VP Finance and Services should always be to enhance services and protect the financial interests of the membership and of the organization. It should seek to insulate itself from external political sentiments but at the same time remain representative of the membership's needs. It should, at this point, expand the services made available to the membership and ensure their applicability in the future.*

4- The Office of Finance and Services vs. the VP Finance and Services

As you may have noticed by now, I have been mentioning the *Office* of the Finance and Services as a separate concept to the VP Finance and Services. I believe that the VP Finance and Services by herself can by no means tend to all the undernourished services of the SGPS and the financial interests of the membership. The VP must absolutely rely on her Office and more importantly allow the Office to function independently and outside of the strong oversight of the VP. The Office of the Finance and Services, a term that I feel captures the various bodies pertaining to this role, in my opinion comprises of the Finance and Services Committee, the Social Commission that has been allocated to the VP Finance and Services under the new organizational chart, and currently the Housing Authority Initiation Working Group. There are no barriers as to who can be part of this office. This year witnessed the tremendous input of Steve Osterberg, the VP Campaigns and Community Affairs, Presidents Victoria Bae and Jeff Welsh, Committee Coordinator Laura Gale, Executive Director Sean Richards, as well as the input of members from other committees (notably the Human Resources Special Committee).

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There are no formal mechanisms for this Office or Commission or Department (whatever suits you most). As such, moving towards the solidification of an Office for Finance and Services through needed Bylaws and Policy Changes, organizational structuring, staffing, and budgeting may be integral to the growth of SGPS services.

WRAP-UP: *The Office of the Finance and Services are the various individuals and bodies involved with the role of the VP Finance and Services. The Office should be nurtured and solidified in order for services to grow. The VP Finance and Services should be the connecting link between the various bodies of the Office, the Executive, and Council and strongly avoid stifling the input of individuals, perhaps even through policy and other legal mechanisms (as it is very easy to stifle others when in a position of power). The VP Finance and Services should 'nudge' the Office when appropriate and offer advice and counsel when needed. In short, the Office must be organic and not authoritarian.*

5- The Importance of Financial and Operational Independence/Oversight

In my little experience as a student politician in two completely different universities in two different countries (I served as Chair and later ombudsperson

of the Undergraduate Student Government of CUNY in New York City), I've generally come to understand that student societies, by virtue of their transient nature, become extremely reliant on the university administration. This is also true to a lesser degree of Faculty Societies, who like to focus on academics rather than administrative functions. A byproduct of this phenomenon is an incredibly asymmetrical power dynamic between the administration and student societies.

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WRAP-UP: *The SGPS is too dependent on the administration for services. If it is to provide effective services, it must have strong oversight. If it cannot attain strong oversight, it must look to provide them independently. It will be expensive, effort-intensive, and take a very long time to nurture.*

6- The Importance of Services and What the SGPS Offers

The most important question that I faced as VP Finance and Service can perhaps be the following: "Why are services important for the SGPS?" As for any student society, services create an identity, a sense of collective community, and a justified need for the society by the members. It will create a connection amongst individuals that would otherwise be submerged, overwhelmed, and disconnected by the administration and the faculty. Then why isn't advocacy the same as services? I believe the following would be a fair analogy of the difference between advocacy and services. Advocacy is temporary and specific to issue and is subject to many factors to become a cohesive force, whereas services are ever-present (so long as they are offered), and are generally always available and accessible by the members. In other words, if services are the civic institutions of a student society, advocacy is its militia. As such, it is important that services reach as many members as possible, are tailored to the diverse needs of the SGPS membership, and widely advertised as a service offered by the Society.

As mentioned prior, the SGPS is strongly rooted in advocacy and leaves little room for the development of services to happen naturally. What the SGPS bylaws has lacked for purposefully pursuing services, I have tried to compensate for in the Housing Authority (I will explain more in detail on the Housing Authority section). Now that I have (in my eyes) answered the importance of services, I will tend to the various services, both internal and external, that are pertinent to the SGPS and its membership. I will try to capture the non-quantitative aspects of these services and leave the reader to pursue the hard numbers and facts.

6.1- Health and Dental

The most visible, developed, and effective service the SGPS offers is its Health and Dental program. It is what people most strongly associate with the SGPS, if nothing else. Despite that, many are quick to compare its 'relative' high cost to the AMS. That is true for two reasons: 1) The AMS has a larger population, therefore it can spread its risks further and 2) graduate and professional students, who are on average older and wiser in the ways of insurance, are classified as a 'riskier' population. Despite this, the health and dental services are very well tailored to the needs of the older graduate and professional students, who would otherwise not benefit from AMS coverage for the many medications

they would require from their relative older age. A merger with the AMS would be politically and administratively challenging, both internally and externally, and will lead to severe neglect of SGPS member's different medical and dental needs. It is the fault of the SGPS for not providing this information clearly to the membership. Ways of advertising this should be developed in the future by the Office.

Our health and dental plan is offered by GreenShield insurance. We are brokered through Morneau Sobecau who more or less are good and honest, but could generally provide additional support services. The health and dental plan is also reviewed and brokered by the CFS national student plan that not only administer many of the plans through Morneau Sobecau, but also lobby quite effectively to meet the needs of the student network. I am not entirely clear on the relationship and the intricacies between the two organizations, but their connections and links are quite real and intimate. The SGPS has been in an odd situation where it has received poor servicing (for example, this year's opt-out server crash), but that has been due to bad luck more than anything else.

Considering alternative brokers is always an option, but may perhaps be unnecessary and a waste of time and resources. Sean, the Executive Director, does a great job in reviewing the service and negotiating new terms and rates (as he is quite apt in the inner workings of our insurance system)

Further to that is the concept of self-insurance, which we have been flirting with in the past but moved towards external insurers. Conversely, our Dental Bursary is moving towards a self-insured model that will cover many shortcomings (especially in regards to root canals and other expensive rare operations). The Dental Bursary was originally created as a deterrent to union drives in past years by the administration (specifically the School of Graduate Studies) that gave a \$15,000 donation for the 'benefit' of SGPS members. They have been much greedier when they see the threat of a Union more distant than before.

This year, outgoing VP (Academic) Patrick Deane donated \$3,000 to the Bursary (after a disappointingly effort-intensive amount of lobbying of the administration). This will probably be enough to keep the program alive for the remainder of this year, but will have to be sustained by a \$3 increase in the Dental Plan. The money obtained will be administered and distributed based on a 'self-insured' model.

As the Dental Bursary is becoming more permanent, the policy surrounding this program would require some more development. Similarly, a self-insured 'Health Bursary' may be worth looking into to cover expensive rare operations in our Health services that are not covered by GreenShield.

It may always be good to review our health and dental plan from a distance and always keep an eye out for more attractive alternatives. At the same time, the Office should avoid being tricked and dazzled by sales pitches from hungry brokers. Sean can speak more to that. The Office, like this year, should attempt to recruit one interested individual (Paul Webster, Physics PhD) interested in insurance policy and constantly review the process. Anything beyond that should be treaded carefully.

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6.2- Grants and Bursaries

The SGPS offers various grants and bursaries that try to address financial shortcomings (such as the Dental Bursary and the Emergency Student Aid application), as well as promote graduate and professional student life (such as the Grants Program Application and Clubs Funding). Admittedly, some are underutilized, some are abused, and others are limited in what they can offer. Developing further policy and guidelines to better administer these funding and looking at ways on how to augment them (perhaps with Alumni) can be beneficial.

It should be noted that there had at one point been a conference grants bursary originally intended for graduate students, but could very well have been used by professional students. There are still many today that ask for conference bursaries, but that is an impossible financial burden for the SGPS. The budget to operate such a behemoth would exceed that of our current operation budget. It may be more effective in securing external funding that we can administer ourselves. This can either be secured through the alumni, or bargained in negotiations with the administration over QC fees (as the SGS provides roughly \$300,000+ in conference bursaries that are administered by departments). Many departments may even welcome that as that may relieve some of the workload that the SGS continues to download on the department secretaries.

In short, grants and bursaries are a valuable service, but have obviously limited impact on the membership as a whole and they have much room left for growth and development so long as they do not disproportionately hamper the annual operating budget.

6.3- CFS Services:

The SGPS has access to a slew of services for being a local member of the CFS and are listed on the SGPS website. Some of these services are beneficial, but there are two that are actually utilized heavily by the membership (other than the Health and Dental). They are the UFile online tax filing services and the ISIC card. For a more detailed breakdown of the service usage, the reader can refer to the Strategic Planning and Organizational Assessment reports done by Queen's Business Consulting in 2007. This document is on file with the Executive Director.

Remaining true to the principles outlined in Section 3, it is in the Office's interest to advocate for membership in the CFS. If a move away from CFS ever does materialize and become real, there must be aggressive maneuvers in parallel from the Office to a) prevent secession from CFS and b) develop contingency plans (and implement when necessary) to minimize the impact of secession on SGPS services. The reader should be warned that this course of action should be weighed against the other impacts of a CFS secession drive will have on the SGPS (most notably with respect to Professional students as outlined in Section 8). I see very little alternatives.

Finally, other benefits of a CFS membership are alluded to in Section 7.5.

6.4- AMS Shared Services:

The SGPS membership also utilizes a number of services offered by the AMS. The membership generally contributes to most of these services, with the

exception of those pertaining to food and bar services (Common Ground, Queen's Pub, Alfie's, Student Constables). Contribution to food and pub services has generally been met with animosity by Council and the membership for a variety of reasons, most notably equity, age difference, and complex TA-student power dynamics, but the utilization of the services by a considerable portion of the membership is very real. Ensuring the free and fair access of AMS food and pub services to SGPS members is crucial to maintain. The SGPS at this moment cannot venture into providing its own food and pub services, as this market is already saturated (by AMS, Sodexo, Engineering Society, downtown Kingston and the Grad Club) and will be subject to high volatility and risks for moving towards this end. For a feasibility study of a SGPS café, please refer to the Queen's Business Consulting report for the SGPS in 2009.

The membership, however, does contribute through optional and mandatory fees to the less controversial services. These include Walkhome, CFRC Radio, Journal, Bus-it, Accessibility Queen's, and AMS Food Bank. One of the biggest improvements in AMS/SGPS relations has been the signing of a service agreement that is based on proportional and direct representation of the SGPS (through the Executive) on all of these services except Bus-it and AMS Food Bank. The Service Agreement has yet to be fully implemented and is expected to take place by 2011. I did negotiate with Sammy Boyce, the AMS Social Issues Commissioner, to change the AMS Food Bank to the AMS/SGPS Food Bank as there is a relatively high proportion of graduate and professional students who utilize the service. While she has agreed to this, it has been encountered with serious resistance from the AMS bureaucracy (explained better in 7.1).

Bus-it working group is a dysfunctional body as there are little negotiations taking place between Kingston transit for bus fees. The seat on Accessibility Queen's board has and should be kept for the Equity Commissioner, who is supposed to be apt in the knowledge of equity and accessibility (this year witnessed a crisis with the management of the funds, more information could be found in the Journal's coverage of the AQ fund in early to mid Fall 2009). One area of improvement could be P&CC, where SGPS members are charged extra with respect to AMS members. An alternative has been proposed by Sean Richards, where minimal, virtually free (1 or 2 cents a page), and online printing services could be made available through a more powerful copier machine in the main office. Details of this proposal should be discussed with Sean himself.

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Despite this new agreement, there had always been a service agreement between the GSS and the AMS that was never renewed with the SGPS. They are all documented in a rather thick binder labeled AMS-GSS relations (documents date back as early as 1965), available in the Executive Director's archives. This may very well lie in the fact that GSS members were satisfied with AMS services and AMS was content with offering GSS with its services at cost. What actually happened in the past decade is beyond my knowledge or interest.

6.5-The Journal:

One AMS shared service I did not delve into has been the Journal. I believe this warrants its own section. I feel that strong guaranteed access to information and

news outlets is a crucial tool for the SGPS and the membership. The Journal is by far the most effective campus media that if utilized favorably, can be a very potent tool for the SGPS. Unfortunately, the Journal remains AMS-centric, does not guarantee coverage of time-sensitive issues that are important to graduate and professional students, lacks in-depth coverage of serious SGPS issues, is not sensitized to SGPS terms and 'political correctness' (ie. they always refer to the SGPS membership as graduates or refer to winter referendum, when we have no other) and tends to deprioritize SGPS interests with respect to AMS. While the new service agreement will now directly link the Executive to the Journal Board of Directors, there needs to be further development of how the SGPS can better utilize the Journal through arrangements and agreements with the AMS and Journal. The Journal is a service that receives its editorial rights through the AMS, and the AMS will never give that up. What I find may be most suitable is if a particular 'SGPS Bureau' is established that will dedicate an individual (preferably a graduate or professional student) that will develop consistent policy with respect to covering SGPS issues, cover in-depth and timely coverage of SGPS issues, and sensitize the Journal to SGPS political intricacies. The Journal has recently been investigating at ways of expanding its audience and outreach, and this could certainly be to their benefit as well. The Office should be willing to support providing additional operational costs for this position, but not be too eager as the Journal should by virtue of the SGPS shared fee take care of this independently. Historically speaking, the SGPS used to manage its own independent student run newspaper, the AntiThesis, which cost nearly \$30K-40K to operate and was led to ruins. Sean Richards can speak more to that, but instead of working to develop new infrastructure that will be risky and time-consuming to maintain, it may not be a bad idea to utilize the Journal's infrastructure to do virtually the same at lower cost. Supporters of advocacy should be a strong ally and proponent on this issue.

6.6- Communications:

Related to the previous section is the broader theme of communications. The SGPS, with the expertise of Sean, has dramatically improved its communication infrastructure not only internally within the central executive administration and Council, but also with the general membership. The successor of AntiThesis has been the newsletter which is widely read by the membership. The newsletter, however, could be better utilized and tailored for reaching out on issues concerning the membership (particularly by the Executive and for the transparency of the government). The newsletter should not be considered as a viable alternative to the Journal as it does not have effective external audiences nor does it have the 'independence factor' that increases the value of the message.

The Office, for the past year, has generally supported any investment in communications infrastructure, as we have witnessed dramatic improvements in connectivity and information relay (such as the new SGPS Wiki, enhanced email services, and website). The Office should generally strive to nurture and support such investments and perhaps look at ways of developing communication

infrastructure for the many subsocieties of the SGPS, especially those pertaining to professional students.

The elections, for example, remain to be on paper ballot that not only severely restricts voter turnout, but threatens to be equally accessible to many SGPS members. Many members are not available on campus during elections. In particular, the ESS has frequent month-long practicum that in all probability will interfere with SGPS election and referendum dates (as was the case this year). Sean has spent much time developing the infrastructure for an online-administered election. The only hindrance based on my understanding is Queen's IT Services who generally lack the will and knowledge of how to develop a user authentication system that will couple with Sean's online voting system (may be best to discuss this with Sean himself). Furthermore, the switchover of Queen's to a different IT system is draining Queen's IT resources and clarity on which system to couple the SGPS with. At this point, waiting for IT Services to develop something may be the wisest thing to do, but a heavy-handed lobbying strategy by the Office and other Executive may not be too far away (perhaps as early as this summer).

Some readers may be wondering why AMS has been able to develop this. They have outsourced their project, quite expensively, to a notorious American company whose CEO is interestingly being investigated for vote rigging. Despite this, the AMS online voting system is subject to very serious problems that continue facing them to this very day. Sean has not been able to find viable alternatives in Canada and has therefore decided to develop his own software. In short, investments in communication infrastructure, especially with Sean's knowledge, are always beneficial. There has been a very strong improvement in communications under Sean's leadership, and any future initiatives should generally be supported.

6.7- Social Events:

One of the more crucial but intangible services the SGPS offers are its social events. The social commission has radically grown since its initiation a few years back and has benefitted highly from the commitment of Social Commissioner Diala Habib and the Coordinators. While the Social Commission had been allocated to the Office under the organizational chart, I only met the commission once and never directed the commission as they were quite apt, capable, and established to do what was expected of them. Sean was also highly involved with the development of the commission. Social events are important especially during Orientation week where many incoming SGPS members are looking for ways to socialize with fellow peers. Having the SGPS at the forefront of the Orientation events early in the game will not only increase recognition but reliance on the society. The Social Commission's success in organizing these events has been a definite plus for the SGPS. Their meticulous planning has also drove down costs and led to significant budget surpluses.

The Office should seek to support and maintain the commission's infrastructure with proper financing and personnel. It should also seek to offer free events, events with international ethnic themes, and in coordination with LSS and ESS

societies who have their own social plans so as to appeal to a broader part of the membership.

One of the biggest initial divides between the SGPS and professional students may very well take place in the fact that the members are not exposed to SGPS-sanctioned orientation events. Information about the social commission can be found in the ample reports and transition manual prepared by the commission.

6.8- Housing Authority (SGPS Co-op):

The Housing Authority has by far been, in my opinion, the defining project of my term. This is not to say, by any standards, that I was the sole contributor. It is in fact a testament to the Office of Finance and Services and how it has through its organic structure given life to a concept that was miles away from reality. The idea was originally proposed by VP Campaigns and Community Affairs Steve Osterberg when I had approached the Executive for any viable capital projects that would help our revenue stream given the bleak interest rates our bank was offering. President Jeff Welsh was quick to support the initiative, based on his recognition of poor residence services for the SGPS membership. Council initially supported a rapid move on this initiative, as the real estate market was optimal for purchasing and the original plans were to have the project operational by no later than January 2009.

The development of the project has been fairly well documented and has been a bigger political challenge than originally anticipated, and with good reason. For the purposes of documentation, the QBC feasibility report was by many aspects a huge political show played by both the Office and the LSS. It was intended by the LSS, who constituted the core of the opposition to the project, to delay the project long enough to make it futile to continue. The LSS had also vaguely attempted to take this project to referendum for further delay, but with no legal prerogative or political capital, it never materialized. The Office played along to deter any sentiments against the project from ambivalent allies and to prevent further exacerbation of already tense SGPS-LSS relations that had marked President Jeff Welsh's presidency.

This is not to say that the QBC report was a waste of time and resources. It certainly shed a lot of information on how to proceed and helped shape the project (especially with respect to its recommended partnership with Sci' 44 Co-ops). Such a report would have happened regardless, but for it to have halted all other parts of the project (such as incorporation, money transfer, and organizational development) came at a cost. Average housing prices have risen significantly, and a house purchase will probably not be happening until any sooner than May. More specifically, the opportunity of buying two houses (total of 12 units) that were available for purchase in October for \$600,000 altogether were lost and are now valued at \$850,000. The most conspicuous damage of delaying the project had perhaps been, as intended by LSS, to demoralize the Office and to impede the momentum of the project.

In hindsight, I feel that this was in the end the best course of action to take. As opposed to small corporations and private ventures, a project of this magnitude required the deliberation of Council and the entire Society. Furthermore, as pointed out by LSS representative and Councilor Robert Church, we have taken

the necessary legal measures to prevent any future lawsuits against the Housing Authority by showing due deliberation and research before proceeding. In short, opposition to the Housing Authority had its costs, but the constructive criticisms that emerged from the opposition brought many benefits that I feel may have outweighed those costs.

The fundamental rift between the supporters and detractors of the Housing Authority has been over the prudence of investing so much of our financial reserves into such a venture. The opposition felt that this was a disproportionate amount of the money's membership to provide coverage for so few and could be faced with disastrous failure. The concern was quite legitimate, but also neglected the additional revenue stream the venture provided immediately, the much longer term implications such an initiative could have, and the fact that the money was not going anywhere. Sure, the SGPS would lose liquidity, but the net asset would in all probability increase much faster than the inflation index.

The Housing Authority was in many ways a push towards the principles outlined in section 5, where the SGPS could have the infrastructure to independently offer services without dependence on the administration or other external organizations. The Office has also tried to position the Housing Authority as a diving platform for expansion of services. As mentioned in section 3, the Housing Authority is as focused on providing services to the SGPS membership as the SGPS government is focused on advocacy. I had attempted to create a broader services corporation in which the Housing Authority could fall under, but resistance from the Office and other Executives made it difficult to accomplish. Regardless, this does not mean that this could be further developed in the future and make the Housing Authority to the SGPS what AMS Incorporated is to AMS. There are many concerns about future Council-Housing Authority power dynamics and they have been covered in the various documents pertinent to the establishment of the Housing Authority. If the Housing Authority does indeed turn out to be the main platform of providing services to the SGPS membership, then Council can potentially lose its full grip on the administration of these services and will be subject to institutional resistance from the Housing Authority Board of Directors. This is not to say that the Housing Authority will go rampant but can wield enough power and money to simply say no to projects they don't support but Council wants. Theoretically, Council controls the majority of the seats on the Board and can fill it with allies of its agenda, but personal dynamics and evolving power structures can very well render that theory useless.

[Truncated]

The Office should strongly support the Housing Authority, not only for its housing services but also as a muscle for growing and establishing other services that are important to the membership. Retaining control of the Housing Authority is an absolute must for the Office as it will be one of its strongest vehicles for implementation of projects. In short, the Housing Authority is intended to be much larger than just 'housing', though that is not to diminish the long term benefits a large scale housing services in the distant future.

The Housing Authority should be viewed as a first step for a very long term commitment of time, resources, and effort for the growth of SGPS services.

6.9- *Childcare:*

Childcare services look bleak not only in Queen's University, but all across Kingston. Access to these services is highly limited and waiting lists can take as much as 15 months (you would have to apply for childcare 6 months before getting pregnant). There is a very considerable portion of the SGPS that have children (I believe ~19%) and would benefit from childcare services. This information is available in many reports by President Jeff Welsh, as well as a Childcare Working Group Report from the University Senate. The SGPS membership had in the past relied heavily on a childcare service offered by the AMS. The AMS had terminated those services a few years back after finding out that SGPS members were the sole users of those services. I believe it had been a huge failure of the Office for not recognizing the need for and retaining the childcare service infrastructure AMS had provided.

Regardless, there has been a proactive approach by many of the Executive in revitalizing this service for SGPS members. Unfortunately, the Office never found the time to propel this project and should very well look at how this can be developed. Detailed recommendations and strategies as well as information on the AMS childcare are available in documents placed in the Executive Director's archives and the AMS Chief Information Officer. Former Equity Commissioner Usman Mushtaq had also initiated discussions on initiating a maternity/paternity bursary modeled on University of Waterloo's postgraduate society, which can be found in his reports and on their website.

6.10- *A Note on Student Advisors:*

This is arguably a very vital service the SGPS offers to the membership. However, this is a service strongly linked with the advocacy roots of the SGPS and does not fall into the normal domain of the Office. Nor should the Office seek to retain the Student Advisors. For a glimpse of how important they are, the reader can resort to the many student advisor reports and manuals available on the SGPS website. Their expertise and knowledge should be nurtured by the 'advocacy side' of the SGPS, most notably the President, VP Professional, VP Graduate, and Equity Commission. The role of the Office should be purely infrastructural. It should seek to enhance their capabilities whenever possible, but not interfere with their real work. An increase in the Student Advisor fees may be imminent to maintain and upgrade their hardware and space. There are concerns of Student Advisors' focus on graduate students as well as limited outreach to professional students and there can certainly be encouragement through the other Executive towards sensitizing to professional student needs.

Wrap-up: *The SGPS membership utilizes a wide variety of services, both internal and external to the SGPS. Even still, the SGPS fails to satiate the many needs of the membership. Identifying, retaining, and nurturing these services for the membership is a crucial task for the Office.*

7- **The Importance of Establishing Strategic Partnerships and Networks**

As one can imagine, the SGPS is not the sole player with interests in the University, and certainly not the most influential. As such, it will have a tough time in securing resources that serve its interests. The SGPS is already at a disadvantage with respect to its resources, and unless it can leverage itself

through strategic partnership and networks, it will remain disadvantaged. As a quick comparison, AMS direct public assets and operations are worth roughly \$15 million in a given year, and with a student body of roughly 13,000, that amounts to \$1154 per person. The SGPS currently is worth approximately \$2 million, and with 4,000 students, it amounts to \$500 per person, or less than half of what the AMS invests in its memberships. The qualitative impact of this difference in the services the SGPS offers is quite palpable.

I am not suggesting that the SGPS should seek to match its per capita value to the AMS, but rather imply that where we lack in financial assets, we can make up for strategic networking. Just as the SGPS and the Office should seek services targeted to its membership, the Office should also seek strategic partnerships and networks that will leverage itself for its goals. The Office cannot operate and maintain everything, and can very well outsource many of the required services so long as the principles outlined in section 5 are not damaged.

Such an endeavor, if done in congruence with the advocacy roles of the SGPS, can not only help the Office but also increase the efficacy of SGPS lobbying capabilities. The remainder of this section will try to identify the different organizations and power structures that the Office could survey and tap into.

7.1- AMS

The AMS, by all means and standards, is heavily intertwined with the SGPS (as briefly demonstrated in section 6.4 and 6.5). Other than the many shared services, the SGPS and AMS share seats in various governance bodies across campus. Some of these are the Board of Trustees, the University Senate, JDUC Council and Executive and many other task forces and working groups. It is much more developed and effective in doing what it wants as it is 100 years older, and has historically had a large impact on the SGPS membership, whether intentionally or unintentionally. At this point in time, they are in a relative position of power and prestige (though that does not mean the administration exploits them), and they capitalize on it often at the expense of the SGPS. The AMS is an ally and a competitor of the SGPS by many respects, and as such the Office must always seek to understand the AMS with respect to the past, the present, and the future.

[Truncated]

Therefore, the AMS and the SGPS certainly have differences and views on many issues. But they also have many common interests and these should be clearly identified, delineated, and used. When I began my term, there was much antagonism between the AMS and the SGPS, mostly due to strong personalities and ideological differences between the two governing Executive and staff. While relations were relatively friendly the year prior, the AMS and SGPS relations have become sore especially after the AMS \$25.5 million commitment to the Queen's Centre as well as a plethora of other issues. I find these perpetuating conflicts problematic for the SGPS and had tried to address many of these problems in an opinion piece I wrote for the Journal in Fall 2009 titled 'Why the Society Wars?'. I had proposed in the opinion piece one of the Office's principle strategies towards the AMS. They are:

- Strive to establish as many institutional relationships in writing as there are mutual interests. Civic engagement can work towards changing antagonistic cultures and will encourage collaboration.
- Actively embark on high-level confidence- building measures to establish trust between the two parties. This can be accomplished through regular meetings between the two executive teams. The SGPS meets regularly with the School of Graduate Studies, the Principal and the Faculty of Law. It only makes sense to do the same with the AMS.
- Both societies should respect each other's professional interests when they differ and learn how to work with each other rather than against each other to reach settlements.

[Truncated]

7.2- Sci '44 Co-op

Without delving too deeply into specifics, the Sci '44 Co-ops will be a very valuable asset in strengthening the Housing Authority and in providing the community networks the SGPS so strongly requires. Points of collaboration are discussed in various Housing Authority-related documents and can be found outside of this document. Sci '44 can be a strong ally and co-benefactor on a variety of issues, but given the dynamic and nascent nature of the relationship, I will leave the reader to assess for herself where these interests overlap.

7.3- Alumni

I know of no relationship between the SGPS and alumni. I had emailed the President of QUAA in early February to ask about past involvements and collaboration and have yet to receive any response. The Alumni can prove to be a useful source to augment services, enhance the image of the SGPS, and to create a strategic network for the SGPS to leverage itself towards its goals. The Office can benefit from financial assistance in starting many of its services (such as the Housing Authority or Childcare Services) from alumni. Fostering a positive relationship with the alumni can prove to be a very potent tool.

7.4- Administration

My primary sentiments toward the administration have already been covered in section 5. The administration is no ally of the SGPS and will never help the SGPS in any substantive manner unless they see a direct benefit, especially when it comes to services. But this does not mean that the administration is one entity. It is comprised of many power structures and entities, often competing for influence against each other. Identifying which entity can better serve SGPS Finance and Services will be crucial for the success of the Office.

[Truncated]

7.5- CFS

The Canadian Federation of Students, despite all of the controversies surrounding it, has intertwined its services quite intricately with the SGPS over the past decade. This is not to be confused with the advocacy side of CFS which has many of its problems and shortcomings or the ideologies associated with CFS. The CFS is a mega-organization with too many conflicting political agendas (both internal and external) that can often paralyze itself (as I painfully witnessed in their national general meeting in November 2009). Regardless, the CFS provides a valuable network of individuals and professionals that deal with many

of the issues the SGPS and the Office face. For example, their connections to lawyers and experts in the ministry of education have proven to be valuable in the past. Having a medium to connect with other societies can also be very beneficial for the Office (for example, I had learned in a conversation with other society Executive that UofT's postgraduate society also wanted to initiate housing services, only to have failed due to exorbitant tax schemes by the City of Toronto).

Therefore, the CFS has many direct and indirect advantages for the Office and unless a viable alternative has been developed or unforeseen circumstances make it very risky and dangerous to remain partnered with the CFS, it is in the Office's interest to protect its partnership with the CFS. The Office should with the help of the VP Campaigns and Community Affairs seek formal assistance from the CFS in developing services important to the SGPS membership. This can either come through contacting the national or provincial executive, or through introducing motions at the national general meetings.

7.6- Grad Club

The Grad Club has by far had the oddest relation I have witnessed between the SGPS and any external organization. The Grad Club is by all means an external entity, despite the same roots that the two organizations have. The Grad Club, GSS and many of the professional student societies began emerging at the same time in the 1960's and 70's, most probably due to the rise of postgraduate studies in Queen's. These societies and the Grad Club split ways as the AMS was the alma mater of all of these societies and the Grad Club was established as independent organization outside of the realm of the AMS. By the time the SGPS subsocieties separated from the AMS and formed the SGPS, the Grad Club and the SGPS were two different organizations with overlapping memberships. Currently, some of the professional student membership of the Grad Club is still under the auspice of the AMS (such as medical and MBA students).

Regardless, the SGPS and the Grad Club have a perceived connection amongst the membership and the Queen's Community. For numbers, please refer to the 2009 QBC survey results. The SGPS membership contributes roughly \$60,000 per year to the Grad Club as well as an additional \$4,000 towards the SGPS trivia night through the SGSP social line in the annual operation budget.

Despite this, the Grad Club offers little recognition of the importance of SGPS towards its organization and refuses acknowledgement of any SGPS involvement towards the Grad Club. When I took office, I had come across sentiments of concern towards Grad Club operations through some Councilors, past and current Executive, and general members through various forums. I had attempted to bring these concerns but was met with significant resistance from the Grad Club Board of Directors and I never pursued it as an active part of my agenda.

My primary concern, however, is now beyond Grad Club operations and more focused on the culture of antagonism that the Grad Club has been fomenting towards the SGPS. This has been especially worrying after a Director of the Grad Club had allegedly harassed LSS representative and SGPS Chief Returning

Officer Aniss Amdiss for having mentioned concerns about Grad Club operations in an internal report of the LSS. Even prior to that, the Board had treated the Finance and Services Committee with vitriolic behavior when the committee was attempting to do its duty of the tri-annual fee reviews. No other organization, including the administration, had made a normal SGPS procedure into a bitter fight. To this day, the Grad Club has refused to address the concerns of the committee and has rendered the committee incapable of making a recommendation for renewal. The Grad Club even viewed an offer from the Executive to pay for an external consultant to do an organizational assessment of the Grad Club as intruding and unnecessary. I had personally written a letter to the Grad Club explaining our views and concerns after these events and apologizing for any misconstrued intentions but have still not received any response.

My position on the Grad Club is very clear. The SGPS has and should acknowledge the independence of the Grad Club. But the Grad Club's resistance towards any SGPS input is damaging to both organizations and is a trend that the Office should seek to reverse with strategic partnerships and links with the Grad Club.

[Truncated]

7.7- Queen's Business Legal Clinic

I cannot stress enough how desperate we are for legal assistance. Lacking such expertise not only puts us at a disadvantage internally (our confusing bylaws and policies are but one example) but also when dealing with many external negotiations and initiatives. QBLC is an organization that helps local community organizations to deal with specific legal issues at free cost but should not be viewed as an alternative for a lawyer on retainer. The QBLC can be useful in many SGPS endeavors (such as the Housing Authority), but is also limited as to what they can offer as set by their scope and mission. The Office should seek a permanent lawyer for the SGPS and even consider instituting a separate fee for this purpose.

7.8- Queen's Business Consulting

Queen's Business Consulting is also a viable organization that can prove to be valuable towards the SGPS. Originally, there were many concerns about the quality of their performance, but after having witnessed firsthand the quality of their work and the assurances QBC has been making into increasing the quality of its hired students, QBC can very well be an organization worth approaching in the future. Looking into more professional consultants can also be highly beneficial. The SGPS should be less timid in spending on legal and research assistance.

7.9- TAFE Union

Putting aside ideological sentiments, the establishment of a TAFE Union on Queen's University is very real and in my opinion inevitable. It seems so especially this year due to the economic downturn, the lack of any TAFE controversies such as the York University TA strike last year, a notable increase in Arts and Science TA petition signatures with respect to the prior year, and the University's deterioration of TA/TF rights and benefits over the past year

(especially with regards to international students). The Office should be quick to acknowledge this reality and be proactive in establishing links and networks within TAFE to not only leverage itself during crucial times but also ensure that TAFE does not participate, intentionally or unintentionally, against SGPS interests and services, especially at the cost of non-TAs and professional students.

7.10- Note on Other External Links (ie. Faculty Societies and Media)

There are more external organizations that I could possibly know of and cover in this report. The SGPS and the Office should be proactive in seeking these networks and in identifying where partnerships can arise. Networking with Faculty can prove to be very valuable as they often share the same sentiments against the administration and can provide many benefits to the SGPS membership. Identifying and retaining key contacts in various media outlets are also important as they may be willing to give the SGPS a voice on many key issues. [Truncated]

WRAP-UP: *The Office should be proactive in establishing links with any external organizations that will leverage the SGPS and its services. These networks could be both formal and informal networks. Both forms should be as strongly retained as possible for future generations of SGPS leaders to benefit from.*

8- The Importance of Sensitizing Services to Professional Students

Frankly speaking, the SGPS tends to professional student needs only in rhetoric. The Society and the Office has done little in substance to sensitize to the needs of professional students, despite all of their claims to representing them more effectively than the AMS. The SGPS remains focused on graduate issues and has ineffective communication with its professional student contingent. This is due to a variety of factors, and I will not delve into them too deeply. But there is one dominant theme that I feel may lie at the root of the problem or at least very close to it: the SGPS does not commit the time and the research to understand professional students.

In my time, I have heard little, if any, concerns professional students may have. Any concerns have been mostly reactive rather than proactive and has therefore made the Office incapable of seeking to address their needs. Professional students operate on a different timeline and courseload than graduate students and have generally more limited time on campus. It is primarily the role of the VP Professional to advocate for professional students within the Executive, but I never felt this was accomplished during my eleven months as VP Finance and Services.

Therefore, I found one fundamental problem with respect to providing services to professional students: *The SGPS does not know enough about them.* A separate report of this size may be required to address professional student needs alone. Without referring to specific issues, I would recommend that a fulltime permanent employee be established within the SGPS that will dedicate her time to the research and sensitization of SGPS services to professional student needs. This role can be coupled with the advocacy role of the SGPS. The SGPS should naturally cover the bulk of the cost of said staff, but the various professional

subsocieties should also be willing to contribute a portion of the financial burden of this permanent staff.

The Office should also support the LSS desire to attain a VP Professional. This, in my opinion, is entirely reasonable and should also be granted the ESS as well. Why should there be a VP for graduate students specifically but not for the individual professional subsocieties? As an interesting lesson, the original reason the GSS and the LSS seceded were primarily because of not having access to lobbying rights to the highest echelons of the administration. The AMS remained undergraduate centric and therefore did not often cover issues pertinent to graduate and law students. Depriving the professional students of this prerogative may very well be against everything the SGPS has been rooted in.

[Truncated]

WRAP-UP: *The Office should actively seek to better understand the needs of professional students and strive accordingly to address their needs. This can be done strongly in collaboration with the advocacy functions of the SGPS. Failure to do so will come at a heavy cost to the SGPS.*

9- The Need for Strong Central Administration

As the reader can imagine, the breadth and depth of such tasks requires man-hours and dedicated staff. As of 2009, the SGPS had 4000 students served by roughly 32 paid positions (executive, staff, commissioners, coordinators, Council appointees etc.), or roughly a ratio of 28 students to 1 paid position. This does not take into account the meager salaries for most of these and the impact it had on the performance of these posts. The Executive and the Office in 2009-2010 had made a strong push to not only increase the pay of these positions, but also introduce a new permanent staff, the Executive Assistant to do much of the legwork and research that the Executive requires but cannot be managed by the Executive Director's already strenuous workload. This push has yet to receive final ratification in the March 2010 General Meeting and will result in an increase of roughly \$30 per SGPS member for their central Society fee. This has been coupled with increased investment in hardware and a push for increased space in JDUC.

The Office should continue these initiatives and should be especially wary of Student Affairs' attempts to prevent the expansion of SGPS offices. A stronger central administration will enhance the capability of the SGPS in coping with many of the demands of the membership, especially in research, planning, and the administration of services.

10- The Case for Long Term Planning

The nurturing of SGPS services and the strengthening of central administration requires planning that often supersedes the term of any single VP Finance and Services or most members of the Office. In an attempt to address this dilemma, I had proposed around November to establish a Strategic Planning Special Committee that not only came up with the SGPS first internal strategic plan but also recommend a more permanent body that regularly dealt with the review, update, and assessment of the 2 year strategic plans, marking the performance of the SGPS in attaining goals and ensuring that future goals are pertinent to the

past and the present. This was met with surprising resistance from not only the Executive but also from Council who had supported this initiative with a slight majority margin.

The counterargument was that a 2 year plan would impose the opinion of current generations of SGPS on future ones. I find that hard to accept as there is very little that is legally binding for any strategic plan. There may be politically binding issues that may not serve future generations but that will not detract future Executive from following the representative will of the membership. Even politically volatile issues such as the \$4.5 million commitment require supra-annum planning that is to be beneficial to the membership.

Wrap-up: *The Office should actively pursue the permanent establishment of a strategic planning contingent. If this cannot be provided by the larger SGPS organization, it must seek to provide one within the Office that deals specifically with services.*

11- Important Issues (\$4.5 mill commitment, International Students)

This section will cover two issues that are of high importance but could not have been covered in the specific domain of the SGPS Finance and Services. These issues require the input and efforts of the entire SGPS, of which the Office must be an integral part of.

11.1 \$4.5 Million Commitment

There is little that has not been permeated in the public realm that warrants Council's attention. Succinctly put, the Queen's Centre has been poorly managed, subject to multiple budget overruns, directly linked to the cutback of many departments and crucial programs, and does not necessarily represent the needs of graduate and professional students. As such I will only discuss issues that have been discussed primarily within the Executive.

[Truncated]

12- Final Remarks

As I look back on this report, I recognize that this report has perhaps been a critical review of services rather than finances. Despite this, finances and services are inexorably linked. The financial *health* of the SGPS is perhaps at its best in years. Sean's tedious organizational skills has helped cut back on many accounting errors that has come at a heavy cost to the SGPS in the past. But this does not necessarily equate with financial *strength*. In order to be effective in providing the services as outlined above, we must leverage ourselves financially in order to assist the SGPS community.

Finally, I certainly appreciate the positive input of all individuals that have crossed my path, whether it was in agreement or disagreement. This has been especially helpful during times of immense pressure and tough politics. As such, I wish future generations of the SGPS the best of luck and hope they are successful in their endeavours.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amir Hossein Nosrat
VP Finance and Services

Senate

Council on Employment Equity: Annual Report to the Principal
http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Feb18_10/CEERpt.pdf

The report highlighted several discrepancies between the hiring goals set by the Federal Contractors Program and the numbers achieved at Queen's. For the SGPS our chief concern should be directed at the gaps for both women and visible minorities employed as TAs/RAs in the Professional EEOG. It will be important for the SGPS Executive and Equity Commissioner to work with the SGS to investigate this matter further. Particular attention should be paid to changes in the International Tuition Awards policy and the introduction of mandatory training for international students whose first language is not English.

UN invites universities to sign Academic Impact statement:
http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Feb18_10/Impact.pdf

This was not initially intended to be an action item but after I spoke in favour of the proposal the Principal asked if I would like to move to that the University sign of the UN's Academic Impact statement. The motion passed. This comes at a crucial time since Queen's is currently revisiting it's core values, principles, and academic mission.

“Academic Impact is informed by a commitment to support and advance ten basic principles:

1. A commitment to the principles inherent in the United Nations Charter as values that education seeks to promote and help fulfill;
2. A commitment to human rights, among them freedom of inquiry, opinion, and speech;
3. A commitment to educational opportunity for all people regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnicity;
4. A commitment to the opportunity for every interested individual to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of higher education;
5. A commitment to building capacity in higher education systems across the world;
6. A commitment to encouraging global citizenship through education;
7. A commitment to advancing peace and conflict resolution through education;
8. A commitment to addressing issues of poverty through education;
9. A commitment to promoting sustainability through education;
10. A commitment to promoting inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and the “unlearning” of intolerance, through education.”

UPC Discussion

Senate reviewed SORC's dramatically revised proposals for the University Planning Committee (Appendix A not for distribution). Two options were presented to Senate but there was widespread disagreement over both suggestions. Deans in particular were not receptive to the removal of Decanal *ex-officio* positions. It was SORC's intention to have a committee structure that was representative of the Board and Senate and not overloaded with management. Other Senators voiced concern over the size of this committee, which has a total membership of 19 and 20 respectively. The Board of Trustees will review the proposals at its next session.

Graduate Council Meeting: Arts and Science Faculty – February 16

The Graduate Science Faculty Council group was very receptive to our proposal for student membership and accepted the suggestions. Several helpful recommendations were made with regards to the selection process and consideration for a rotating membership from the respective departments across the science faculty. The Graduate Arts Faculty Council group was less receptive.

Concern was expressed over the excessive number of graduate student representatives and the fear that we could out-vote the faculty considering their consistently poor attendance. After discussing this with the SGPS Executive, our compromise was to have five members, but only two of whom would have voting rights. See Appendix B for details. Neither of the proposals have been formally approved. Hopefully a complete manual will be agreed upon at the next meeting.

The Housing Authority Initiation Working Group has been established in accordance with the initiation action plan proposed to Council. The HAIWG has convened and reviewed the bylaws in consultation with the Queen's Business Legal Clinic.

The HAIWG has had on-going consultations with Queen's Business Legal Clinic who have provided the following information. The structure of a Not For Profit (NFP) corporation would ensure the SGPS was eligible for an income tax exemption but income cannot be paid out directly. Simply put, the Housing Authority could not directly pay the money to SGPS but would instead have the services housed at SGPS with the ones that make money offsetting the ones that do not. That is, if the housing authority makes money, the housing authority's board would distribute profits to supplement SGPS services rather than the SGPS directly.

The alternative suggestion is a For Profit (FP) corporation, which would mean the SGPS would be the sole shareholder and any profit would be paid out at the discretion of the SGPS. The SGPS would then have access to the funds to spend however council decides (easier to access the funds). However, the major drawback with a FP corporation is there would be income tax consequences for the SGPS.

After considering the above, the suggestion from QBLC is to continue with the NFP, with funds being distributed back to the SGPS to supplement services that SGPS provides to its members.

In addition to the above legalities, and in response to the concerns raised in the QBC recommendations, members of the HAIWG met with Sci'44 Co-op to discuss available options. The meeting of Feb 14, involved members of the HAIWG and Sci'44 Co-op members for an informal discussion in relation to the possibility of a strategic partnership in which both parties will benefit from such a venture. Two main points of discussion arose out of this meeting. First, the needs of the SGPS to establish the new service and secondly, the discussions of how the long-term relationship will be structured. Sci'44 has expressed an interest in helping the SGPS to increase the number (and visibility) of Graduate and Professional students involved either directly or indirectly with Sci'44 Co-op. Currently, there are a few SGPS members living at the Co-op and a mutually beneficial relationship between Sci'44 Co-op and SGPS would be beneficial to SGPS members by allowing access to the existing Co-op community (meals, social events, etc...). The following points encompass the discussions in relation to the establishing the foundation of the SGPS Housing service.

- Sci '44 Co-op agrees to provide their existing networks that they have developed over time to assist with the purchase of the first residence. SGPS will canvass Graduates to determine if there is a potential house available through that course of action.
- Sci'44 Co-op will assist SGPS Housing Authority to develop protocols and policies (administration) necessary for the SGPS Housing Authority to begin tenancies in Sept. 2010.
- The two organizations will collaborate to develop protocol and policies in relation to the daily management and the application process(es) of potential tenants. This will also encompass the day-to-day maintenance of the house(s).
- Develop a strategic plan for the SGPS Housing Authority to establish infrastructure and administration procedures to allow for the future goal of managing a larger number for housing units which will provide SGPS members more services.
- The two organizations will develop protocol and policies that will allow SGPS tenants to access and be involved in the Sci'44 Co-op. This includes but is not limited to meal plans, social events, etc....

Finally, it was determined that a relationship between the SGPS Housing Authority and Sci '44 Co-op would be mutually beneficial and preliminary discussions revolved around how the two organizations can work together for a mutually rewarding future that will allow both organizations to expand. As a result of these meetings, the HAIWG is now in a position to begin the preliminary search for a possible property.

Although SGPS reserves indicate the amount of \$250,000 is available to invest in this venture, after much discussion with Sean, and a review of the budget, funds up to \$90,000 are presently available for this venture. The remaining funds in our reserves are needed to payout the approximately \$30,000 to AMS (passed by Council when the ESS joined), and the remaining \$130,000 (approximately) is necessary to cover the expenses (health/dental, payroll) during September, October and November when the SGPS receives little in the way of income.

The amount of \$90,000 will cover the down payment towards the purchase of a property (20% down and financing the balance), any necessary legal fees and disbursements, as well as any possible upgrades needed as a result of the building inspection.

At this point in time, the HAIWG will be asking for (the first reading) the sum of up to \$90,000 to continue to the next Task in accordance with the Housing Authority Initiation Action Plan.

Respectfully Submitted, Jillian Burford-Grinnell



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
March 2010

Hello All,

I wanted to give you details of our upcoming social event in April. Currently, we are hard at work planning Charity Casino Night, in which proceeds will be donated to Dawn's House Woman's Shelter. We please ask that you inform your departments about this fun and important event and keep an eye out for advertisements. The details are below

Date: Thursday, April 8th

Place: Alfie's

Time: 7:00 – midnight

Event: Fundraiser

Cost : \$10.00 admission's fee (includes drink and food)

There will also be a silent auction for some fabulous prizes including an ipod, VIA rail train tickets, gift certificates and much more!

We hope to see you there!

Respectfully Submitted,

Diala Habib

Social Commissioner

SGPS Computer Network

- I have been working on a new mailing list system for using with the SGPS. The system, when ready, will allow committee members and other people within the SGPS to easily join mailing lists. The lists will also maintain archives so new people to the list are able to see what transpired before they joined. This will make maintaining committee and other mailing lists much more elegant. This should also improve our transition processes.

SGPS Website

- I have continued my work on the wiki system, particularly focusing on the transition section of the website. This work will provide the incoming Executive and Staff with a great resource when learning their roles at the SGPS.
- I have started creating audio-visual tutorials that are being posted on our wiki system. These tutorials teach Executive and Staff about the different e-systems at the SGPS and how to use them.

Communications

- I have been spending a good deal of time working on the agenda/dayplanner for the 2010/2011 year. I have been working on the content of the agenda as well and securing ads that will help offset the cost of producing the agenda.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Presently I am working on organizing a conference titled “Issues in Equity Education” specifically targeting student leader groups such as Residence Dons, AMS, SGPS, ASUS and other faculty societies. This project is still in its very early stages but for the interim, plans are to hold this conference in mid September. This conference will provide a form of equity training for these groups. If anyone is interested in working on this project or has any ideas relating to it, please contact me at equity@sgps.ca

Accessibility Queen’s

Disability Awareness Month has officially begun.

The Social Issues Commission is helping the Academic Affairs Commission to facilitate a Living Library; an opportunity for the Queen’s community to engage in thoughtful discussion on complex social issues through interactions with representatives of different areas.

Israeli Apartheid Week

The Sixth Annual Israeli Apartheid Week is now ongoing until March 14th. For more information please visit <http://apartheidweek.org/>

Steve Cutway Accessibility Award

Will take place from 1:30 to 2:00 pm on Friday, April 9. If you wish to make a nomination or if you know of others who are looking to nominate someone for the Award, kindly visit the following link on the Equity Office website:

<http://www.queensu.ca/equity/content.php?page=accessaward>.

Aboriginal Awareness Week

The Queen’s Native Students’ Association presents the Aboriginal Awareness Week 2010 “Love as Medicine” starting March 8th. For more information please visit:

<http://www.queensu.ca/fdasc/news/qnsa.html>

Queer Grad Student Group

Pride Week will be taking place this month.

Students interested in joining this group and getting it going should contact megsouthee@gmail.com

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

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Virani
Equity Commissioner



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Sustainability Coordinator
March 2010

Hello Everyone!

I have a few things to report: including several successful events that were organized.

Proposed SGPS Sustainability Action Fund (SAF) Fee Passes!

As most are already aware the proposed optional SAF fee passed on February's referendum/ elections. We are very much looking forward to the opportunity to be able to fund campus sustainability SGPS initiatives and hopefully entice even more of them now that students will have a source of funding. We will advertise the SAF furiously come September!

Kingston SWITCH

I have also joined the Kingston SWITCH sustainable networking cluster in February on behalf of the SGPS Sustainability Committee. The SWITCH group meets once a month to rehash news, ideas and events in the community on all things green. Last month's meeting featured over a hundred attendees: including business owners, professors, students and community activists. This is another platform to use and advertise events on campus and to simply network.

PBS Documentary Night

On February 18th we held a very successful documentary night featuring the award winning PBS documentary series e2 – the economies of being environmentally conscious. The event ran for 2 hours and we also had a special guest speaker – Ted Hsu the executive director of SWITCH make a small intro to our first documentary on California's energy policies. We would like to thank our Exec. Director Sean Richards and the SGPS for funding and support to make the event happen – and for all the attendees to enjoy tea, hot chocolate and popcorn! The dvd series are available at the Stauffer library and are highly recommended!

TRASH to ART and ECOArt Collaboration

During this past reading break in between the Olympics watching and scarce reading, the SGPS Sustainability Committee and the Masters of Environmental Studies students got together to work on our planned Trash to Art project. It was made using lightweight trash from around campus and encased in chicken-wire to spell out R-E-D-U-C-E and was set up in the BioSciences Atrium stage the night of February 28th to welcome the students come Monday March 1st. Learning that the Main Campus Residence Council was also working on some Eco Art project and that they were unable to book a space for

the exhibit we volunteered to share the stage and so it was. The event drew quite an attention and was advertised on the School of Graduate Studies webpage and we also had a reporter from the Kingston's Whigstandard come take a few photos! Our REDUCE banner will be hanging in the BioSciences all week so do check it out!