

Hi Council!

Fee Protocol and Board of Trustees

At long last all parties--us, the AMS, and the University--have approved the final version of the Fee Protocol, with a vote this past Sunday at the Board of Trustees. We decided that the language in the Protocol about when the University transferred the money to us and to the AMS needed to be taken out and negotiated separately. The AMS in particular needed more money in October than what the Office of the University Registrar was prepared to reconcile. We have already begun three-party negotiations on this point, and should be completely decided before the turnover of the student societies. At any rate, the University has promised that the number will not be more disadvantageous to us than what existed in the version of the Protocol that you approved.

Other discussions at the Board included a proposed renovation of the West Campus servery. The Campus Master Plan people already recognize that West Campus needs to be more of a "destination," which includes more attractive eating options. As part of this, by the way, Queen's has issued a news story announcing its intention to rename both campuses. The current preference seems to be to rename West Campus "Macdonald Campus" in honour of John A's upcoming bicentennial and because, well, it's on Sir John A Macdonald boulevard. The preference for Main Campus is something from a local First Nations language. The Principal assures me that he will consult the local First Nations communities before deciding on such a name. If you have an opinion, please let me know!

The final thing to report from Board is that the vote to decide the fate of University Council (UC) is coming up. UC is the third governing body of Queen's, made up of all senators, trustees, and an equal number of elected alumni. The alumni members have felt for some time that they are a fifth wheel on this body, and not many senators are engaged with it either, for that matter. As such, there is a proposal to reform the Council so that there will only be 40 alumni members, with no trustees or senators. I understand the frustrations of alumni councilors, but since students can be senators and trustees, that means that we currently have a voice on UC. I am reluctant to vote to remove students--including myself and future SGPS presidents--from a Queen's governing body. I'll need to make a decision before the vote comes up in April.

Library and Archives Master Plan

Committee members are now beginning to participate in workshops with the consultants. The consultants are preparing different scenarios about moving collections in the libraries around. As we continue with this process, I will be advocating for more space geared towards graduate and professional students.

Student Learning Experience Task Force

The SLETF has had a visioning session where we discussed where we could make the biggest improvements to student learning. We then split up into four different groups, each to look into a different aspect of student learning: teaching and learning support services, Queen's quality control processes, rewarding excellent teaching and learning, and the teaching and learning environment. I am on the first sub-group, so will be looking at the Centre for Teaching and Learning, the Learning Commons, and IT as it relates to learning and teaching. If you have any feedback on those services, or vision on they can improve, please let me know!

Elections

Finally, the time has come to choose the next SGPS Executive, along with the Grad Student Senator and the SGPS Trustee. If you, or someone you know, is interested in the rewarding work of being the President of the SGPS, then I

encourage you to contact me. I would love to talk about the position. In general, I hope that anyone who is interested in running for a position steps forward. Why hesitate? Get involved!

Thanks, and cha gheill,

Matt Scribner

President

president@sgps.ca

@SGSPresident

Dear SGPS Council Members and Members-At-Large,

Student Advisor Program

The Student Advisors hold office hours on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. For more detailed information please search here: <http://www.sgps.ca/services/advisors.html> Please contact the Advisors at advisors@sgps.ca if you would like to meet with them.

During a meeting of the SGS Working Group on Targeted Student Support, Associate Deans Den Otter and McAuley eagerly told the group that the SGS finds the Student Advisor Program to be very effective, and that SGS funds would not be taken away from the Program!

FREE Queen's

I encourage you to take part in the upcoming FREE Queen's workshops, which will take place on Wednesday evenings this month (March 6,13 and 20) at the Calvin Park Public Library at 88 Wright Crescent. Workshop topics include: the impact of genetics on health, how to create a digital presence, freedom of speech, effective and compassionate communication for everyday situations, and GPS technology.

There is not cost to attend. For more information please contact FQ Coordinator Shadi at freequeens@sgps.ca or visit the website at <http://www.sgps.ca/events/freequeens.html>.

Times to Completion

Times to completion are addressed in two motions to be presented to and voted on at GSEC (the Graduate Studies Executive Council) on March 14. New expected completion times have been reduced to 2 years for Master's students and 4 years for Ph.D. students. Students who require more time to complete can potentially only access 2 time limit extensions. Terry Bridges (senator@sgps.ca) and myself have compiled a report that we will present to GSEC that discusses the issues with the motions and the complexities of issues surrounding times to completions.

T4/T4A INFORMATION

Your taxes. Your choice.

For many of our members the switch to T4A status is beneficial, but for others, who understand their RAships to be less thesis- and more research(work)-based, the switch may be disadvantageous.

For individuals and groups looking to reclassify under T4 status, there is a way to do so through the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA); please contact me at vpg@sgps.ca for more information.

Further communication with CRA indicates that it is the student who is responsible for their tax status, and CRA officials agree that scholarship-based RAs are difficult to define and could easily fall under T4 status.

Academic Affairs Standing Committee

In February the AASC discussed how to move forward with the approved transcript fee motion from the February Council meeting. Further to that, the AASC continues to investigate the topic of mandatory external scholarship applications and has created an outline for a report, which the Committee expects it will produce this month (March). If you would like to share any comments with the AASC please e-mail academic-c@sgps.ca.

Elections

It's election time at the SGPS! Please visit the website for more information (<http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/election.html>).

Respectfully, Becky Pero, VP Graduate, vpg@sgps.ca

As always, February proved to be a busy month.

Finance & Services, Fees and Referendum:

The Finance & Services Committee adjudicated many DBA's, ESA's, Grants and Club Funding applications. As well, the committee met and discussed the upcoming fee renewals. As you will see on the agenda, there are a number of fees that are being put to referendum as per our B&P. All but two of these fees are just for renewal. I want to draw your attention to the following changes/additions.

The SGPS was presented with a request from the Food Centre to increase the fee by \$0.25 bringing it from \$1 to \$1.25. This is an optional fee.

The SGPS was approached by Loving Spoonful which is a Kingston volunteer-supported charity dedicated to making fresh, healthy, local food available to those in need. Loving Spoonful works to enhance access to healthy food in an empowering, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable manner. The question that will appear on the ballot is for the SGSP to create an optional student activity fee of \$2.00 in support of Loving Spoonful.

Grad Club:

The AGM for the Grad Club has been set for Thursday, MARCH 28 @ 5:30p at the Grad Club. It is this meeting that new board members are nominated and the members vote their new Board of Directors for 2013-2014. I really hope you can make it. If any of you are interested in running for one of the board positions, feel free to email or speak with me if you have any questions. It really is a lot of fun and I have become quite knowledgeable in a variety of areas including licensing and the various aspects involved with running a business.

Additional:

I assisted with the preparation of the MOA for the Accent discrimination campaign and preparation of the various employment contracts in relation to our RA and work-study hires. I am in the process of looking at the changes last year's VP Finance & Services made with respect to our internal SGPS fee and well as policy surrounding the current use of some of our fees. As well, I am looking for ways to promote and increase our services. I will provide a more thorough report next month in April.

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell

VP Finance & Services
vpfs@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Executive Assistant
March 2013

Outreach & Campaigns

-Faculty relations: Co-organizing town hall on austerity in post-secondary institutions that will bring together the SGPS, Queen's University Faculty Association (QUFA), the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). Tentative date set for the end of March.

-Office of the Rector: Met with research assistant Ariel Aguilar Gonzalez to talk about the implications for graduate and professional students of Queen's new residence development as it is tied to enrollment strategy.

-Sisters in Spirit/Idle No More Kingston: Attended the memorial commemorating the missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Ontario at Kingston Police headquarters on February 14, 2013. Distributed Sisters in Spirit campaigns materials (postcards, buttons) developed by the Canadian Federation of Students.

-Canadian Federation of Students (CFS): Hosted two representatives of the provincial office of the CFS mid-February. Helped to organize ISIC Express Tabling in the BioScience Atrium.

-Queen's Sustainability Office: Helped with promotion of Greenfest, held March 4-8, 2013.

-We Don't Stop Kingston: Helped with promotion of International Women's Week, March 2-10, 2013.

-Dawn House: Connected with new Dawn House Executive Director after hearing of the emergency shelter's precarious funding situation. Meeting pending.

-Graduate students:

i. T4/T4a: Met with several Science and Engineering graduate students to talk about the hidden implications of having their Research Assistantships switched from a T4 to a T4a. Further outreach to come. Also met with Justin Kerr at Queen's University International Centre (QUIC) to talk about consequences of the switch over for international students and particularly for permanent residence applications. Met with Trina McGarvey at Queen's Human Resources to better understand the tax filing process.

ii. Degree completion times: Helped to disseminate information about the upcoming motions at the March Graduate Studies Executive Council (GSEC) amongst graduate students from various fields and faculties. Our hope was to get the discussion going amongst grads, as we often hear that students are frustrated by the lack of transparency in the decision-making process at Queen's. So far, this strategy seems to have helped to generate very valuable feedback.

Research

-Ombudsperson: Last fall, I was tasked to look into creating a process which members could use to lodge any SGPS-related complaints. The difficulty with this is in identifying a party-neutral ombudsperson to heed to such complaints. Recent talks with the University Secretariat would suggest that the possible creation of an Ombudsperson's Office at Queen's may not provide us with an adequate solution. Research continues.

-Room bookings: Several complaints (some of these our own) of double-bookings within the Student Life Centre (SLC) prompted the Executive to request a report on Room Bookings at Queen's. While the report itself has not yet been drafted, I have compiled a comprehensive overview of the complex room booking systems, which I hope the SGPS can share with our clubs, student groups, and partners. Along with Sean Richards and James McLeod, I also met with representatives of the SLC management team to sort out more recent booking issues. Ongoing issues were mostly due to the SLC's transition between two different booking systems, and seem to have been sorted out. We encourage all our members to let us know if further problems ensue.

Human Resources

-Understanding Each Other: We received 17 strong applications for the research assistantship on accented communication. As of yesterday, the hiring committee was able to offer the position to one of the 3 interviewed candidates.

-StudentSaver Coordinators: Our 2 excellent Coordinators have been hard at work! So far, they have successfully solicited discounts at: Cambodiana; Maru; Phnom Penh; Bombshell Custom Tshirts & Accessories; and Classics Tea Lounge. More discounts (and advertisements) to come!

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Grondin, Executive Assistant, ea@sgps.ca

Hello Council,

I have been working through a number of room booking issues with the Student Life Center Office, and I believe that everything should be running smoothly now that they have transitioned onto their new booking system. They have been very responsive to my concerns. We will be holding the Annual General Meeting in Wallace Hall rather than the McLaughlin Room, which is our usual venue. Having said that, Wallace Hall does have sufficient chairs and tables, so I'm not expecting any issues.

I am pleased to report that I have received a query regarding members submitting a motion to the Annual General Meeting, so it will be nice to see some input directly from the membership! I would like to take a moment to remind everyone to please deliver your reports and motions on time. This is especially important as the timeline surrounding publication of the agenda for the AGM differs to that of our regular Council meetings.

On a slightly different note, I am submitting a motion to Council for consideration regarding changing some of the policies surrounding Judicial Committee operations. Specifically, I think that the addition of a tri-pub/Graduate Club ban, plus peer sanctioned workshops, to the available sanctions list will appropriately update our non-academic discipline options, bringing them in line with offerings by the Student Constables and Health, Counselling, and Disability Services. In addition, I would like to report that the lines of communication between Campus Security, the AMS Judicial Affairs, and the SGPS Judicial Board have been improved. Issues surrounding case referrals and timelines for complaint submissions have been clarified, and we have established an excellent working relationship.

I look forward to seeing you all at Council,

Respectfully submitted,

James MacLeod

Speaker
speaker@sgps.ca

Hi everyone: Here's a brief summary of developments in my world since the Feb Council meeting.

Academic Planning Task Force:

We are writing our report on online learning, which we will release later in March for feedback from the Queen's community, and our final report will be presented for the April or May Senate meeting. I hope that the community will find the report balanced and of interest. I believe that there will be a Town hall for undergraduate and graduate students on Mar 12 at 5:30pm (location not determined as yet)—you will be notified when details are confirmed.

February Senate Meeting (Feb 12):

This meeting was definitely livelier than the January one! Senator Morelli asked the Administration for an update on the Blue Lights issue (the malicious triggering of campus Blue Lights). We heard that both students and administration are taking the issue seriously, and Senator Woodhouse (Dean of Applied Science) has asked Queen's people to challenge Applied Science students wearing the Blue Lights jacket bar (and other problematic bars). There was a presentation by David Gordon of Urban and Regional Planning about the campus master plan, and he solicited feedback from Senate on several issues related to the plan. There will be a visioning workshop in April, and an open house in September to update the Queen's community about the plan. The *Queen's Senate Policy on Integrity in Research*, revised by the Senate Advisory Research Committee, was approved (see the Senate agenda for Feb for a listing of the revisions). Changes to Senate meeting procedures, produced by the Senate Operations Review Committee, were approved (again, see the Feb Senate agenda for the changes—one change is that the May Senate meeting will be on a required-only basis. Finally, prompted by the recent suspension of the French Studies graduate program, I introduced a motion from the floor to require that any future suspensions (undergraduate or graduate) be discussed and approved at Senate, until Senate has approved a policy for dealing with suspensions. Amazingly, the motion received the 2/3 majority needed to be placed on the agenda, and even more astoundingly, the motion passed!

The agenda for the March Senate meeting (Mar 19) is not yet available, but can be found closer to the date here:

<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/agendasminutes.html>

Graduate Studies Executive Council (Feb 14):

The two SGS regulations "Time Limits for Completion" and "Extensions of Time Limits" were not discussed at this meeting, but will be put forward for approval at the March meeting (Mar 14). Becky Pero and I have heard many concerns about these regulations from many graduate students across campus, and we have put forward a motion that will be discussed at this Council meeting. I can say that I will not be voting for the regulations. At the meeting, GSEC faculty representatives from Arts & Sciences and Applied Sciences reported on discussions about the new regulations by faculty—several Applied Sciences departments were quite negative, with several concerns presented. Dean Brouwer reported that the French Studies graduate program suspension will be for two years and then reviewed, with discussions ongoing, and that dissertation boot camps will continue on beyond this year.

Mental Health Working Group:

We have not had a meeting since the Jan meeting that I reported on in February; our next meeting is planned for early April. If anyone has suggestions for topics to discuss at our next meeting, I would be happy to hear from you.

Respectfully submitted by

Terry Bridges

Graduate Student Senator
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Hello Everyone,

So, a variety of things happened on the equity commission – front during February.

First of all, preparations for the SGPS-hosted International Woman’s Day movie night are complete. The SGPS will be hosting a movie at QUIC on March 7th at 6:30, which was advertised for largely through the Interval House fliers and posters. We will be serving pizza at the event and the International Commissioner will be giving an introduction to the film, which is focussed on the life of Saartje Baartman. We were able to help Interval House with their preparations for International Women’s Week by printing the fliers for them as well.

Regarding disability awareness month, the Equity Standing Committee decided to reduce the scale that I had been thinking we should do when the SGPS had a focused ‘Disability Awareness Month Coordinator’. We are going to focus on the last week of March, hosting posters in either Stauffer library or another convenient venue. I have about 8 posters confirmed so far. Anne-Marie Grondin suggested that we do a button-making workshop as well, so that will also be part of the plan. The Equity Standing Committee will be meeting again this week to discuss these plans further.

I attended an Academic Affairs meeting this week and discussed the idea for a simplified version of accessibility accommodations and how they should be handled. I am hoping to see a simple form that explains how accessibility accommodations should be handled according to SGS, Human Rights, Ontario legislation, Queen’s legislation and the Disability Services Office. It turns out that one of the groups I am a part of, the Accommodation Committee, is working on this very issue. I have not been able to attend either of the two meetings to date because they have been scheduled during my class hours (of which I have an obscene amount this term!). I was assured that the next meeting would be scheduled according to my schedule so that I could take part.

Tian Lu, our Equity Coordinator, brought a bursary issue to the Senate for Educational Equity Committee meeting recently. The issue is around the use of OSAP as a means to determine graduate student “need” when it comes to bursaries. There are a number of reasons why students do collect OSAP and we feel that using OSAP loans as the determining factor in awarding bursaries is not a fair approach. We also talked about this issue with Academic Affairs and will be arranging to speak with SGPS executive shortly to determine our next steps.

I met with Victoria, the Student Advisor, to discuss issues around supervisor-supervisee relations at Queen’s. We came up with a few good ideas and will be arranging a sub-committee to talk more about these issues and what we can do address them within the next few weeks.

There are, of course, a million other peripheral things which are bound to materialize shortly, but that’s where things stand at this particular moment.

Have a lovely day!

Robin Westland

Equity Commissioner
equity@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members,

Further updates on the Accent Discrimination Project: we've almost completed the hiring process. We had 17 applicants and interviewed three very strong candidates. We're waiting to sign the contract and brief the chosen candidate who will start work the week of March the 11th.

By the time of the Council meeting, we will have held a film night as part of International Women's Week.

Holly met with Student Affairs on Tuesday the 26th of Feb in order to propose that the soon-to-be re-formed Graduate Student Life Advisory Group re-envisage orientation week for international students (and graduate and professional students in particular). I've included the proposal as part of the appendices, should you be interested in looking at it. Note that it's a speculative document, not an actual plan, but it gives you an idea of what orientation could look like.

Student Affairs were very receptive, and seemed interested in giving this to the Advisory Group when it does form. Student Affairs would also be interested in hearing more about graduates' orientation experience to help inform this project. So, I'll repeat my request from last month, and thank you very much for the valuable feedback that I've had already. We're looking for feedback from international graduate students regarding both a) their experience of Queen's orientation for international students and b) their sense of the existence of a network of both support and information required by international students. This is with a view to asking Student Affairs to work with the SGPS, QUIC, and other organizations on campus to improve both these aspects of international student life at Queen's. Please ask any international students in your department to e-mail or arrange a meeting with either the Commissioner or the Co-ordinator if they have any thoughts in this regard - we'd like as much feedback as we can get!

Kris has been attending Information Services and Technology Students Advisory Committee meetings and QUIC Council meetings.

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

Warm Regards,

The SGPS International Team

Holly McIndoe
International Student Affairs Commissioner
international@sgps.ca

Kris Singh
International Student Affairs Coordinator
isc@sgps.ca

Dear SGPS Council Members,

Following is a summary of what I have done during the month of February.

In February, I attended the SEEC meeting and represented the problem of the assessment of Queen's General Bursary.
First Issue: The assessment of QGB is against some culture of not being in debt (Yaser's Problem)

Results from SEEC members:

1. The Chair and most members thought those students should go to the Human Rights Office to schedule an appointment and discuss about their culture thing.
2. Appeal! Most of the members believed that the only way to help the student to possibly get the QGB would be appeal to the Student Awards Office before the appeal deadline.

Questions arose from the meeting:

1. Why not taking debt can be considered as a culture? – In the meeting, I explained by the Asian country cases where people avoided all types of loans including using VISA card. Then they kept asking: why this can be considered as a culture? I could not answer this question anymore, as they didn't "trust" me. So I need help from SGPS Executives and members to gather evidence/proof. I will collect those evidences/proofs in March, and then bring them to the SEEC meeting to show the truth.
2. Should not this to be considered as individual faith?
3. What SGPS wanted them to do? – When they fully understood the complaint for QGB, they asked me: what you want us to do? Apparently, they didn't know how to help us. So, in March, I plan to talk to more Grad/Professional students regarding this issue and have a clear plan of what results we expect. In next SEEC meeting, I will ask SEEC members to do several things for us rather than they take initiatives to help us.

Actions they will take:

1. One of the ladies wrote all the details about the QGB and she promised that she will talk to people working at University Registrar. She also made her notes into sections of culture, individual faith; international students cannot apply for loans, difference between undergrad and grad students.

Second Issue: The assessment of QGB is completely different for undergrad students and grad students

On the official QGB website, it says that for undergrad students, they have to have certain amount of loans to be considered for QGB. For Grad/professional students, even if they have maximum amount of OSAP/line of credits, they still would be denied for QGB unless they are in debt for many year.

Results and Answers from SEEC members:

1. Totally fair and reasonable! One of the members said that Grad students have more funding available than undergrad student. Then I argued with the facts that undergrad students can work full time for the whole summer and part-time during the two semesters, based on that I doubt undergrad student have less funding sources than grad students do.
2. One of the members from Human Right Office said, for grad students, they can also have a summer job as long as the total-yearly-hour does not go over 510 hours. I really questioned this statement, as most of the departments do not allow grad students to work over 10 hours per week.

What I will do for the next SEEC meeting:

I will go and discuss with the people in the University Registrar and confirm with the question "whether grad students can work as many hours as they want per week with the yearly hour less than 510 hours". If this statement is not true, argument should be continued in the SEEC meeting.

In February, I tried my best to talk to a lot Grad student who applied for QGB in the past years or this year. Based on the conversation, I realized two facts regarding QGB. First of all, some grad students mentioned that, about 4 years ago, the amount for QGB was around \$3000+; however recent years the amount dropped to be around \$1400. There were no reasons/explanations given by the school for the amount change. Secondly, for all the permanent residents and

Canadian citizens, their QGB got denied if they didn't have loans. A few international students, without loans, received the QGB, as they are not allowed to apply for OSAP. Therefore, we can conclude that OSAP is exclusively a mean test for all the permanent residents and Canadian citizens, but not for international students.

I also attended the meeting for Equity Standing Committee and helped Robin to organize the Disability Awareness Month. More meetings will be held in March and detailed planning will happen.

If you have any thoughts/inputs/comments regarding the QGB issues or can help me answer the questions from SEEC members, please feel free to contact me.

Finally, I really appreciate Robin's help!

Respectfully Submitted,

Tian Lu

Equity Coordinator
equityco@sgps.ca

Greetings Council,

Elections and Referenda

WHEN THIS REPORT IS FIRST PUBLISHED, IT WILL STILL NOT BE TOO LATE TO SUBMIT A NOMINATION FOR ANY OF THE POSITIONS UP FOR ELECTION, SO I ENCOURAGE ANYONE INTERESTED TO GET INVOLVED AND SUBMIT A NOMINATION. THE DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS MONDAY MARCH 11, 2013 AT 4PM

As a reminder, the timeline for this year's election and referendum will be as follows:

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

As of writing this report, the nomination period is underway; I will have an update on the state of nominations for my oral report at the actual Council Meeting, detailing the Candidates in each category (as well as any extensions to nominations, if needed).

In terms of the referendum, there are a number of fees up for renewal, two up for increase, and one new fee establishment, all of which Council will be voting on whether or not these questions will go to referendum. An important note is that these groups have all submitted required documentation to the Finance and Services Committee, as well as me, and SGPS Policy states that provided this documentation is appropriately submitted, Council is encouraged to approve the fee questions for referendum. I would like to state that I have reviewed all of these submissions, and based on my opinion, each group has met their requirements, and I encourage you to approve these questions for referendum. However if you have any concerns with any particular group's question, feel free to raise your concerns when we are discussing these questions.

As always, if you have any questions for me at all about elections or referenda, please contact me. Also, I have a Twitter Account which I will be spreading elections information through during the election, so I would appreciate a few more followers, retweets, and help getting the account more visible. You can follow me at @SGPS_CRO for interesting elections info!

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Rapos

Chief Returning Officer
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