

Dear Councillors,

Hope you are all well. I encourage you to attend this meeting. Despite my original intentions for May, there will be fireworks.

There are four issues to discuss:

1. SGPS Office Space / Graduate and Professional Student Space on Campus
2. Student Life Agreement between Queen's and AMS
3. Academic Planning
4. Budget Cuts

SGPS Office Space / Graduate and Professional Student Space on Campus:

Over the past month, the VP Finance, VP Graduate and I have been involved in discussions with members of our administration about increasing our office space and increasing the social space available to our members on campus. These discussions have led nowhere other than more discussions, but we have realized that the only genuine partners on student life issues that we have for SGPS members within the School of Graduate Studies and Student Affairs are the members of the Grad Life Working Group. They have finally managed, for the first time in over 30 years of the existence of the SGPS, to hire a grand total of one person who is dedicated to the betterment of SGPS members' social lives. This is not a reflection on them, but on the rest of the administrative universe at Queen's that they have to contend with. We salute this small victory, and look forward to working with the members of the Grad Life Working Group and Karla Gouthro – who promises to be the best thing to happen for graduate and professional students within Student Affairs (a department that should be called Undergraduate Student Affairs btw) in years – approximately 30 years.

Student Life Agreement between Queen's and the AMS:

An agreement that slaps SGPS members in the face for not paying \$4.5M has been signed by between the AMS and the Administration. This is the absolute worst development for the integration and student life aspects of graduate and professional students on campus. It is doubly punitive, as it arbitrarily removes our members' voices from the JDUC, where we have had a historic place. It is also catastrophic for the social fabric of Queen's, as it deliberately pits the student life governance interests of our members against the members of the AMS in perpetuity.

I will speak to this issue in detail at the Council meeting itself and there is a letter to the Principal included in the appendices for which there is also a motion on the agenda – please attend Council next week so you can communicate this development effectively to students in your departments.

Academic Plan:

There is too much confusion floating around on this academic planning exercise. As the person with the most access within the SGPS to the decisions that are being made, let me try and clear some of it up. There is merit in an Academic Plan for the University. We need to have a discussion on what kind of University we want to build under a new Principal. Principal Woolf is somewhat unfamiliar with the way others here think, so this is an opportunity to contribute to that process of awareness. Obviously, the planning exercise has not been

consultative in the way that many would like and it has certain conceptual and procedural problems, but it has begun a much-needed conversation that should not stop. More importantly, graduate and professional students on campus have been given the opportunity to contribute once again from outside of their faculty channels. We should use these channels and ensure our academic concerns are addressed concretely. There is an oblique connection to the budget cutting exercise in the sense that there is a limited amount of money, but we have been promised that the Academic Planning exercise is not a veil for budget cuts. We take the Principal at his word on this issue – we will contribute to the process as willing partners and the results will be obvious in a few months.

#### Budget Cuts:

The University has been in a deficit situation recently. This is upsetting to the Board of Trustees – rightly so given their fiduciary responsibilities. The finances of the University have been badly mismanaged – the Queen's Centre is an obvious example. This has meant that they have asked the Principal for a balanced budget in 3 years. The recent news from the Board of Trustees meeting on April 30<sup>th</sup> is that this has been delayed to a balanced budget over a longer timeframe. From our perspective, budget cuts to the academic line on the ledger at Queen's are a terrible idea – but we have received some limited reprieve after much student and faculty unrest. It is beyond me at this particular moment to suggest how exactly this new development will affect SGPS members as I have limited access to many of these planning documents. I am in the process of rectifying this and will be reporting on the issue as my access improves over the year.

In closing, I would just like to say that I hope to see you all present at this particular meeting – on pain of more pain. SGPS members have been abused – we need direction from Council in order to respond in a manner that separates our own personalities from our members' issues.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jawad Qureshy  
President - SGPS  
[president@sqps.ca](mailto:president@sqps.ca)

## SGS Dean

I am still repining to hear Janice Deakin, Associate Vice-Principal and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, will be leaving Queen's this summer. As of August 1, she will become the Vice-President (Academic) and the first Provost at the University of Western Ontario. I wish her all the best as she embarks on a new period in her career, even though this entails a significant loss on the part of graduate studies and students at Queen's.

Our President and I have offered to take Deakin out for a farewell appreciation lunch, and I am in the process of gather together a list of her major accomplishments during her term as SGS Dean. I hope to present this commendable inventory at Council orally or at Council's August session.

## Student Advisors

On April 20 I met with all three Student Advisors and we had a tremendously fruitful discussion:

1. Advertising: A survey conduct two years ago by the SGPS revealed that of those members who responded only half knew the Student Advisor Program existed. Since then, advertising the program to our members at large has been an on-going project for the VP Graduate and Advisors. The SAs and I came up with a number of initiatives, some new and some old needing to be pursued, to increase awareness of the Program. We hope to create a logo for the Program to increase recognition of the program on campus; we plan to include semi-regular updates in the SGPS Newsletter on the steps we've taken to respond to issues SAs have dealt with (as we did last month on the policy change regarding dissertation publication on QSpace), but while still always guaranteeing the confidentiality of our clients; and, we would like to see SA posters, at times, more visible on campus. Also, as part of this advertising effort, we ask Councilors to let their constituents understand that **it is important for students to seek out SA advice sooner rather than later** if they plan on doing so. Some issues become difficult to resolve after a certain amount of time passes since the incident or concern first arose.
2. Our Student Advisor Usman Mushtaq once again went above and beyond our expectations. He diligently drafted a transition manual for future Advisors, outlining the Principles of the Program, useful resources and contacts, communication responsibilities, training expectations and opportunities, and much more. I am currently providing feedback along with the other two Advisors.
3. We are also providing feedback on the Program's Client Survey. After students meet with their Advisor(s) they are encouraged to fill out this survey in order to assess the Program's effectiveness and provide feedback on the Advisor(s) that may help the VP Graduate conduct annual evaluations. We will shortly post this survey on the SA website. **Please let graduates in your departments know the survey is available and ask them to fill it out (it's very short) if they recently made use of the Advisor Program.** I will conduct evaluations this month and schedule a Student Advisor Steering Committee meeting soon; having a few surveys would be very useful.
4. The SGS suggested last month that the Student Advisors may find some of the intercultural training courses offered through the QUIC very helpful. I am looking into using these courses as training opportunities for future Advisors.
5. Seeing as there are a number of themes the Advisors help clients with on a regular basis, Usman Mushtaq offered to create a FAQ page for the SA website. This will increase the service the SA Program offers by making available some initial advice to help direct students and publicizing basic information about common concerns.
6. **Advisors will be available over the summer by appointment only;** regular office hours will resume in the Fall.

## **TA Consultative Committee**

This committee met for the first time last month since the TA/TF union vote. The committee chair, David Rappaport, assured the committee that the University will not take any action that will or that might be interpreted as contravening legislation in Ontario Labour Relations Act, 1995 prohibiting any changes to working conditions during collective bargaining. (c. 1 Sched. A. s. 16 and 43).

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_95l01\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_95l01_e.htm)

The committee has created a brief questionnaire which has been in the making for some time. The concern it seeks to address is to what extent departments employing TAs follow Senate policy ensuring TAs sign Teaching Assistant Agreement forms:

[http://www.queensu.ca/ctl/community/students/files/Teaching\\_Assistant\\_Agreement.pdf](http://www.queensu.ca/ctl/community/students/files/Teaching_Assistant_Agreement.pdf)

As the previous VP Graduate noted at March Council, the TA Consultative Committee already knows a number of departments do not have TAs sign these Agreement forms. The questionnaire intends to determine which departments fail to do so and why.

## **SGPS Awards**

Councilors will find in the agenda a motion regarding an appreciation dinner for successful SGPS Award nominations. Nominations for these awards (TA/TF Excellence Award, Student Contribution Award, and the Administration/Staff Appreciation Award) may be downloaded from our website: <http://www.sgps.ca/events/awards.html>. **Please advertise these nominations broadly.** Our next Newsletter will contain more information.

To begin, I want to introduce and extend a warm welcome to the new Equity Team at the SGPS made up of Dana Wesley, Equity Commissioner, and Carolyn Prouse, Equity Coordinator. Dana and Carolyn began their term the first week of May equipped with several sets of ideas, some of which are already in the works! I want to congratulate them, along with all other candidates who applied for both positions and who, truth be told, made hiring decisions somewhat difficult by virtue of the fact that they were all incredibly strong applicants. The sizeable number of applications we received speaks, I think, to a recognition of the gaps in equity at Queen's, and a willingness to redress these; for this, I want express my sincere gratitude to everyone who applied.

Of course, every new beginning comes with some other beginning's end. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the outgoing Equity Commissioner, Sophia Virani, and to Lara Szabo Greisman, outgoing Equity Coordinator for their investment of time and energy this past year, and for their continued help with the incoming team's transition.

Further, I am pleased to report that Ivana Zelenika has agreed to carry on in her role of Sustainability Coordinator for the next year. Welcome back! As for the position of International Student Coordinator, our quest continues. We will be posting a new call for applications on the SGPS website in early May. I ask that all Councilors help us fill this important position by making its vacancy abundantly visible.

### **Equity**

Former SGPS Equity Commissioner and current Student Advisor Usman Mushtaq will be presenting an approved draft of his proposed Equity Climate Survey to the Senate Educational Equity Committee (SEEC) this Thursday, May 6. It is hoped that the survey, crafted in collaboration with Catherine Issacs (Equity Office), Susan Anderson (Queen's University International Centre), Dr. Audrey Kobayashi (Geography), and Dr. Adnan Husain (Director of the Diversity and Equity Taskforce), will find support at SEEC as a tool to: identify which equity-seeking student groups at Queen's are most disenfranchised; to target emerging issues which the SGPS (along with other Queen's resources) can tackle; and to track progress in addressing gaps in equity.

In other news, the members of the SGPS Equity Committee have finished drafting the Committee's policy mandate. Outgoing Equity Coordinator Lara Szabo Greisman has submitted a report to this effect along with the draft of the mandate for you to peruse and provide feedback before ratification at the next Council meeting in August.

### **City of Kingston and Queen's Improving Relations Committee**

I sat on my first Town-Gown committee at City Hall last month, where issues such as student recycling efforts, the student spring-term move out, and fall orientation were discussed, mostly as they pertained to undergraduate students. The city is continuing in its quest to brainstorm solutions to threats to women's safety on and around campus grounds, and are currently contemplating several crime prevention strategies through environmental design (such as providing more lighting in certain areas). While the committee had, at an earlier date, considered implementing more Blue Lights, this project has been all but abandoned for lack of demonstrable effectiveness and available resources (including financial resources).

### **Canadian Federation of Students**

I will be attending the Semi-Annual National General Meeting of the CFS May 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> in Ottawa along with our VP Finance and Services, Jillian Burford-Grinnell. In the interim, I welcome your own and your constituent groups' questions, concerns and opinions about motions that are on the table for the upcoming meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Grondin  
VP Campaigns & Community Affairs

Hello Council Members!

It has been a busy month as the term winded down and we head into the Spring/Summer months. The Executive members have been busy hiring and we are now beginning to start planning for sporting and social events. Be sure to watch for exciting news and events planned in the next few months.

#### SGPS Space Requests

As you are all aware, we have been trying for quite some time now to obtain additional space for the SGPS. As of the time of this report, nothing has been decided however there is a meeting to further discuss 'the space needs of the SGPS' set for Friday. Given the new information on the governance of the JDUC-Student Life Center, it seems that all negotiations that Amir initiated and I have been working on are at a bit of a halt. I will provide an information update at the Council meeting.

#### Finance and Services Committee

The Finance and Services Committee met and briefly discussed the existing policy in relation to both the Emergency Student Aid and dental Bursaries. We are in the process of making some revisions to the actual forms and hope to further clarify the policies for both bursaries. Any new members to the Committee are welcome.

#### Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee had an initial meeting and provided feedback on the recent developments in regards to the newly signed 'Framework Agreement' between the AMS and the University administration. The Committee will looking to establish some long term goals in relation to how the SGPS wants to develop as a society, what services it wants to provide as well as answer the almost famous question, 'what next'?

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell  
VP Finance and Services

## Senate – April 22

### *Tuition Fees*

[http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Apr22\\_10/Tuition.pdf](http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Apr22_10/Tuition.pdf)

Following SGS Dean Janice Deakin's request that tuition for domestic graduate students should be frozen, the proposed increase for the 2010-11 academic year is 4 percent for new and returning students (as opposed to the 8 and 4 percent schedule that has been in place for the past couple years), and a 0 percent increase for 2011-12. This applies for Master's and Doctoral candidates but **not** students enrolled in the School of Policy Studies (8-4, 4-4), the School of Urban and Regional Planning (8-4, 8-4), or the School of Rehabilitation Therapy (4-4, 8-4). This is mainly due to the fact that increased tuition fees reduce the real value of funding packages available to graduate students outside of these Schools.

### *Questions*

[http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Apr22\\_10/Question.pdf](http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Apr22_10/Question.pdf)

Question by Senator K. Wiener:

“On April 6, the Queen's Native Students Association (QNSA) released a statement raising concerns about serious and ongoing problems at the Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre (FDASC). These problems have included the lack of a Director or Acting Director in the Centre, a complement of only two staff members, and a unilateral hiring and firing process coming out of the office of Student Affairs. This has led to a large decline in the use of the Centre by Aboriginal students. In addition, Aboriginal students have expressed feelings of alienation from an Aboriginal Council dominated by non-Aboriginal university staff.

- 1) Would the Dean of Student Affairs please explain why the position of Director has been left vacant for almost two years, and why FDASC was run out of Student Affairs rather than a Director being appointed on an interim basis?
- 2) Will the University be exploring structural changes to the format of Aboriginal Council and to governing bodies regarding Aboriginal representation?”

The written response can be found in the relevant Senate document (follow the URL).

## Senate Operations Review Committee (SORC)

[http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Apr22\\_10/SORCRpt.pdf](http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Apr22_10/SORCRpt.pdf)

Unfortunately the SORC meeting initially scheduled for May 5 was cancelled. As a final task for the academic year, SORC proposed four guiding questions for Senate's consideration that will drive the Committee's work in 2010-11.

1. If a guiding principle is that Senate is a participatory as opposed to a representative body, then how should Senate ensure this principle is upheld?
2. In 1967, Senate agreed that the upper limit of Senate should be set and maintained at 50 members. Current Senate membership is 71. What size of Senate would be conducive to achieving the "Functions of the Senate" as amended in 1982?
3. Should Senate maintain, as its guiding principle, proportionate Composition as directed by Senate in 1996? Those proportions are as follows:
  - Faculty members never be less than 54%;
  - Ex-officio members never be more than 19%;
  - Student members never be less than 23%
  - Staff members never be less than 4%
4. Should student and faculty participation continue to be based on a full-time enrolment formula, with faculty numbers reflecting variations caused by interdisciplinary education?

This follows a broader movement to restructure both the Board of Trustees and the overall senior governing structure of the University. **It is my recommendation that Senate and Senate membership should be both representative and participatory. I urge the SGPS Executive and future Graduate Senator to support this model.** There are indeed benefits that may result from the restructuring process but the outcome should a) reflect the importance of a growing graduate student body, b) maintain a minimum number of Law and Theological senators, and c) ensure that Senate as a whole welcomes and requires participation and discussion.

## University Council – May 1, 2010

Two main issues dominated the University Council agenda: the Principal's Academic planning proposal and the Queen's University Governance structure. There were fruitful discussions in the break out sessions regarding what Councilors thought about the *Where Next?* document, specifically the ten proposals contained within it. Councilors also debated suggested institutional priorities, which centered on Energy and the Environment, International Development, Canadian Public Service, and Global Human Health. I emphasized

the importance of requiring the Principal to offer specific comments about the ten proposals, in particular the criteria used to determine what Queen's considers areas of "Research Excellence" and the extent and meaning of "virtualization". A planning process of this magnitude is certainly a worthy endeavour, but as members of the University community and SGPS representatives, it will be important for our organization to ensure that the Principal to clearly describes what changes he wants to see happen, the methods of implementing these transformations, and, most importantly, the motives behind the proposed restructuring.

Several Councilors mentioned in passing the SKHS-motivated petition that was submitted the evening before at the Board of Trustees meeting. While I disagree with some of the claims contained within the petition, I believe that there was confusion about what initiated the opposition movement. Despite the charges, resistance to the Faculty responses and the academic planning in general was prompted by the lack of transparency and consultation, not ignorance or a lack of vision. There is also justifiable concern that academic restructuring is largely a response to the economic fear and uncertainty that was voiced by Daniel Woolf shortly after taking over the role of Principal.

### **Final Recommendations**

- 1) Over the next four months the SGPS Executive should take on the task of developing its own response to the Principal's *Where Next?* vision statement as well as provide feedback on the individual faculty responses.
- 2) SGPS Council and the Executive need to follow up on the status of the Safe Disclosure Policy that was developed by the Principal's Ad Hoc Committee to Draft a Safe Disclosure Policy, of which I was a member.
- 3) Ensure that the SGPS fills the Senate position on SORC.
- 4) The Graduate Senator should meet frequently with other SGPS Senators and the Senate Student Caucus.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Stevens



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Equity Committee Mandate  
May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010

### **Aims of the Committee**

The Equity Committee has been meeting monthly in order to consolidate information on the activities, initiatives as well as University policies relating to Equity currently taking place. In an effort to increase awareness of the work being done by members of the Equity team as well as communicate and collaborate on those issues, the Equity Committee has prepared a mandate as well as an operating model for the 2010/2011 term to propose to Council.

### **Creation of the Mandate**

The mandate was created by the Daniel Moore (VP Graduate), Meg Southee (Queer Grad Students and Allies club), Carolyn You (Accessibility Representative), Jillian Burford-Grinnel (Mature Student Rep), Sophia Virani (Equity Commissioner), Usman Mushtaq (Student Advisor), Anne-Marie Grondin (VPCCA) and Lara Szabo Greisman (Equity Coordinator). Its purpose is to provide a space to discuss and respond to the equity concerns of SGPS members, to research and anticipate university policies and activities in order to address them proactively from equity perspectives as well as to voice and advocate for equity as it relates to graduate and professional students.

### **Members of the Committee**

The monthly meetings of the Committee will be organized by the Equity Commissioner and Coordinator who will facilitate and contribute to the meetings. In total, nine representatives from different Equity related groups on campus will attend the monthly meetings and will host an open forum bimonthly, so as to gain insight from the larger student body about human rights and equity concerns. The nine regular members will be representatives from the Queer Students and Allies club, the Queen's Coalition against Racial and Ethnic Discrimination, the Queen's Native Students Association, the International Student Coordinator, The Equity Commissioner, the Equity Coordinator, a mature student representative, a representative from the Student Advisors and an Accessibility representative.

### **Communication Mechanisms**

Minutes will be taken at meetings and the Equity Commissioner will include the activities of the Equity Committee in their reports to Council. Issues brought up with the Equity Committee may be brought to Council via the Equity Commissioner who will collaborate with the Equity Coordinator and the VP of Campaigns and Community Affairs.

### **Open Forums**

The open forums will be organized by the Equity Commissioner and Coordinator every two months. The goal of the forums is to bring members of the community into the

discussion relating to Equity issues on campus. All grad and professional students are welcome to contribute to these forums.

Thank you for considering the submission of this motion,

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Szabo Greisman  
Outgoing Equity Coordinator

### SGPS Computer Network

- I have worked on the calendar server so it better integrates multiple calendars.
- I updated all computers in the office with special software to allow better integration with our servers.
- I continue to work on additional modules on the servers to allow secure access to new features from outside the office.

### SGPS Website

- I continue to work on a backup web server. My goal is to have a backup computer that can be plugged-in should the main webserver fail. This means we should never experience extended periods where our main website is not accessible.
- I have continued to create audio-visual tutorials for our wiki.
- I have been working on transition sections of our wiki to strengthen our ability to transition from one person to another in the various positions at the office.

### Communications

- I have spent most of my time working on the agenda/dayplanner for the 2010/2011 year. I have completed the handbook files for the year and have submitted them to the printers. I suspect there will be a few necessary modifications as the printers look over the ads. The handbooks are due to be here in mid-August.
- I have been working to transition new hires into their positions specifically with respect to communications (e-mail, wikis, calendars).

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

The equity committee decided to come up with an Equity Committee Mandate in order to provide the new, incoming equity commissioner and equity coordinator with more structure and support. This will make the transition for the incoming representatives easier as well. One of the primary objectives to be fulfilled by the mandate is to provide some ground work for what has been established in the present year and how it might continue. The mandate also attempts to establish direct and consistent communication lines between all groups and members associated with equity, the SGPS executive and the rest of the SGPS members.

A transition day for the new coordinator and commissioner is also being organized by the outgoing coordinator and me. A full day of transition will get them introduced to the appropriate people and members involved with equity on campus. Also, it will help us provide them with a list of present equity issues that may be taken on as potential projects to be worked on in the upcoming year.

## **SGPS Equity Committee Mandate**

### **1. Overall Mandate**

The Equity Committee aims to

- 1.1. Provide a space to discuss and respond to the equity concerns of SGPS members
- 1.2. Research and Anticipate university policies and activities in order to address them early from equity perspectives
- 1.3. Voice and Advocate for equity-related concerns

### **2. Composition**

The Equity Committee Membership shall be composed of

- SGPS Equity Commissioner
- SGPS Equity Coordinator

As well as specific representatives from the graduate and professional student body including **but not limited to** representatives from

- Queen's Coalition against Racial and Ethnic Discrimination (QCRED)
- Queen's Grad Students and Allies Club (QGSA)
- Queen's Native Students Association (QNSA)
- Accessibility representative
- International Student Representative (may be from SGPS council)
- Mature Student Representative (may be from to SGPS council)
- SGPS Student Advisor Representative

### **3. Regular Activities**

#### **3.1 Equity Committee Meetings:**

- Equity Committee Meetings are intended as a primary means by which the committee fulfills its mandate
- The Equity Committee shall meet monthly
- Meetings shall be organized and facilitated by the SGPS Equity Commissioner and the SGPS Equity Coordinator
- All members shall have equal standing at meetings (voting rights, decision making, time to talk, items brought to the committee etc)
- The minimum number of people required to go forward with a meeting (i.e. Quorum) shall be five members

### 3.2 Open Forums on Equity:

- Open forums shall be organized bimonthly (every two months)
- Open forums are intended as a direct line of communication between SGPS members and their representatives

### 3.3 Additional communications:

In an effort to fulfill its mandate, the Equity Committee will maintain regular communication through council meetings, monthly council reports as well as in person meetings with the following groups:

- SGPS Student Advisors
- SGPS Executive

### **Positive Space Committee**

The positive space committee is getting started with the final version of the accessibility map for Queen's main campus. The positive space brochure of accessible businesses in and around Kingston is also being updated in order to provide up to date information. The committee is looking for facilitators to lead the positive space information sessions. Anyone interested may contact Jean Pfleiderer (HRO) [pfleider@queensu.ca](mailto:pfleider@queensu.ca)

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Verani



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Speaker  
May 2010

### **Transition Meeting**

On 21 April 2010, I met with Mark Rosner, outgoing speaker, for our transition meeting. We went over all the requirements of council, expectations for the position, bylaws, outstanding issues, etc. I am confident I will be able to live up to the high standard that Mark has set in his time in this position.

### **Deputy Speaker**

I have chosen a Deputy Speaker, Morgan Craig-Broadwith. She is currently the Secretary for the SKHS Grad Council which has similar duties as the Deputy Speaker. I believe she is the perfect candidate for the position on council: she will provide leadership, organization and humour to our group. She is extremely hard working, meticulously diligent and will be a welcome addition to the SGPS Council.

That is all,

Michael Bravo  
Speaker