



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the President
Fall General Meeting 2015

None Submitted



Dear Members,

I hope you have had the opportunity to jump on many fall, crunchy leaves that leave you with the satisfying sound of autumn. Make sure to bundle up as it gets colder outside. Get ready to shovel your driveway. And just remember that if you slip on the ice, somebody saw you.

Student Advisor Program

Over the summer the Student Advisor Program Review Committee identified several recommendations for changes to the Program that would allow it to more effectively serve graduate students.

Since the presentation of these findings, I have had the opportunity to sit down with the Advisors and discuss some of the recommendations from the Committee. They had some great feedback and we will continue to work together to strengthen the Advisor Program.

The Advisors have been working hard promoting the program and were essential in distributing Kingston Transit access wristbands for incoming SGPS members. This was a great opportunity to introduce themselves to many departments across campus and make departments aware that the SGPS Student Advisor Program is a place to direct their students to when they are in need of assistance.

During September, the Student Advisor Program had 11 active cases and 3 inquires into the Program. The Program closed 6 of these cases by the end of September.

During October, the Student Advisor Program had 5 active cases. Four of these cases were new cases that started at the beginning of the month.

Information Technology

In an effort to more effectively manage the time of SGPS employees and staff, the current SGPS information technology structure has been reviewed. An evaluation of the current email, calendar, Wiki, and website was undertaken to ensure the allocation of SGPS resources are as effective as possible.

A switch to Microsoft Exchange/Office 365 is currently being undertaken. It is important that all data integrity is maintained during the switch and that service outages are minimized. Planning and testing is currently underway to help streamline the movement of large amounts of data. Once the switch is complete, SGPS employees will be on the Queen's email system that the rest of the University utilizes.

I would like to thank, Sean Richards, the SGPS Executive Director, for the set up and administration of the email, calendar and WIKI system over the past 10 years. It has been his ingenuity and creative thinking that has allowed SGPS IT to help its members.

Departmental Graduate Student Society Framework

A goal of the executive's is to build a framework for the easy formation of departmental graduate student societies, including potential executive positions, election procedures and guidelines. The framework would include a basic constitution that could be adjusted and adopted by departmental student groups.

Work by the VP Campaigns and Community Affairs has gotten this project off the ground. After a call to interested parties was put out, a pilot is currently underway with the department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering to help facilitate the implementation of a departmental student society.

SGPS Space Review

Much of the current SGPS held space in the Student Life Centre is unused or underused. Dedicated graduate student space is a problem on many campuses across Canada and the effective use of the space we have is required to best serve the SGPS membership. An evaluation of the space is required to make informed decisions about the spaces.

After examining the SGPS held spaces, room switches were made including moving the student advisor office to a more visible location to help advertise the program to members, while still ensuring a private space for meetings. The President's office was moved to a more convenient location beside the rest of the executive offices. And a face lift was undertaken to the executive office for a more professional appearance when hosting members, staff, Queen's Representatives, alumni and professionals.

We are currently undergoing the evaluation of putting a graduate study space into JDUC 237. This would be a space exclusively for SGPS members to work quietly and study, something that is needed on campus.

I have come out of retirement to play inner tube Water polo this semester. While my team continues to dominate the league, there is some fresh new talent coming up. I look forward to competing against everyone in the playoffs. Keep smiling!

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Kellenberger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Mark Kellenberger
Vice President Graduate
vpg@sgps.ca



Dear SGPS Members,

I hope that this general meeting finds you well in your academic, professional, and private lives. It has been a fairly busy year for all of us on the SGPS Executive, and I am happy to report on some of the projects that I have completed, as well as the ones that are still underway:

Human Resources Standing Committee Report

Following a motion passed at May council I chaired the Human Resources Standing Committee to investigate the circumstances surround a series of SGPS personnel changes that occurred within the Student Advisor program during the start of the 2015 calendar year. A call out for membership occurred in June and the committee started its work in earnest the following month. Over the course of several meetings the committee examined official records and emails to review the human resources changes made, and created a report that was delivered in camera at the August Council. Any councilors who would like to see this report in the future will have to visit the SGPS offices to sign a confidentiality report in order to see a restricted copy. The committee determined, in consultation with the SGPS lawyer, that general members will be unable to view the report because it contains sensitive and confidential information about previous employees and staff. However, a list of recommendations for future improvements to SGPS Human Resources policy and procedure was released, and is available to members who wish to know more. Going forward this list of recommendations will guide the ongoing review of the organization's HR structure.

Human Resources Overhaul

Since taking office I have noticed that the SGPS has effectively worked on an ad hoc basis, addressing issues as they arise. The management style and procedures of any given year has relied heavily on the previous experience and attitudes of the Executive. There are effectively very few policies or clearly outlined procedures, and where there are guidelines for human resources management or other functions they are typically inadequate or inconsistent and difficult to reconcile.

A strong example of this was the previous options for addressing harassment and discrimination. The SGPS holds a general stance against harassment per Policy 3.5 and recognizes the Queen's University Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedure per P.12.1. However, based on records and informal conversations with staff it appears that we have not actively used the university policy in the past. Individuals have mentioned that the university procedure is intimidating and formal, and typically reports have been handled informally and on a case by case basis internally to the SGPS. As such it became apparent that there was a strong need for a formalized policy that included procedures to guide the investigation of a report of a harassment or discrimination. I am happy to report that we implemented a new SGPS-focused policy and procedure that addresses these issues earlier this fall. Going forward it will offer a more accessible means to report issues, with clearly outlined policies to make the process more transparent.

Another area of change has been the SGPS Commissions structure. The previous policies outlining the Commissioner and Coordinator positions were inflexible and outdated, and meant that annual hiring did not reflect the changing needs of the SGPS or empower the Commissioners with the authority to fully pursue new initiatives and ideas. Changes to these policies passed at the special council meeting held at the end of October, and included the removal of the formal Coordinator structure, and a greater emphasis on the Commissions' year plans and self-directed structuring. I am hoping

these changes will help create more flexible SGPS commissions, and empower future Commissioners to take on bigger and greater projects for our community.

Going forward, I plan to form the Human Resources Standing Committee in the coming weeks to task them with looking into the current SGPS policies and practices regarding performance evaluations, discipline, record-keeping, and formal position transitioning and training. I believe a review of these systems is necessary, and hopefully the committee will be able to create some new policies and procedures to be implemented by the end of the academic year. I would like to leave the SGPS with a strong human resources system when I eventually leave office.

Hiring

Earlier in the fall the SGPS hired 6 individuals to fill organizational research positions. These are new positions for the SGPS wherein the selected students will engage in targeted research projects in areas of student interest and wellness, and ultimately produce reports for SGPS use. They will hopefully provide valuable insight into various areas concern, as well as guidelines for improving students' lives and developing effective new policies. We received many strong applications for these new work-study funded researcher roles, and interviewed and selected candidates during the last week of September. Our researchers are already showing incredible promise through their work ethic and the quality of the research they are producing. I have no doubt that their work will be a tremendous benefit to our society.

As I write this report we have also just ended the submission period for applications for the SGPS Commissioner positions. In the coming two weeks we will be interviewing candidates for the roles of Socials Commissioner, Athletics Commissioner, Equity Commissioner, and International Commissioner. Once we have selected individuals for these roles they will then be trained and begin preparing their year plans to be approved by the Executive. Following that I look forward to seeing the initiatives and events they will be providing to our membership.

SGPS Professional Development

Currently there is a range of career and professional support offered by the Queen's University Careers Office, as well as by individual faculties such as the Law School. However, many professional and grad students are not aware of the services that are available to them. In addition, some of these services can be intimidating, or focused into areas that are not relevant to SGPS members. As such the SGPS organized the first SGPS Professional Makeover Week for the first week of October. The services offered to the members during the week included a free professional headshot event, men and women's tailoring events, and special SGPS discounts on business cards at the Print & Copy Centre. This event was broadly successful and we saw nearly 200 students attend the highly popular headshot event, with dozens attending the other services as well. (Note that if you are still waiting on a headshot, please get in touch with me. They have been published, but we had some difficulty with email folks).

Given the success of the event I hope that the SGPS will be able to provide more entry-level resources, and possibly even more advanced info sessions on networking, etiquette, and branding. All of these resources can help current students make connections and pursue their goals, and will helpfully further assist recent graduates with securing employment in their chosen fields.

Representation with the Canadian Federations of Students (CFS)

I have volunteered to be the SGPS Executive representative to the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). In this capacity I went to a CFS National conference in June to attend informational workshops, the meetings of the Graduate Caucus, and to vote on CFS policy, campaigns, and other motions. In August I also attended a meeting of CFS Ontario in Toronto where we discussed issues related to the federal campaign and the province's many academic institutions. These major CFS events present an opportunity for us to share best practices with other university, and to pool our resources in the pursuit of larger nation-wide causes.

Representatives from the CFS also attended our September Council meeting to present their findings from the *Not In the Syllabus* survey and report, which addressed conditions in graduate programs and research environments across Canada. The SGPS Executive has been raising some of these issues since the start of our term in office, but we were very happy to see the national organization producing further materials on these important issues. Right now there is no perfect answer to the problems that graduate students face, but we can begin to work towards a solution by raising the profile of these issues and starting discussions with administrators and colleagues.

Overall I am very happy with the progress we have made so far, though I believe that there is plenty of work to be completed. The SGPS is an organization with tremendous potential to help its members and improve the community. This potential has been hindered over the years by a tradition of slap-dash solutions and an acceptance of the status quo. I hope that by the time our Executive has completed its term the SGPS will be a more transparent and productive place for our employees and members alike.

If you have any questions about our work, or suggestions to make about how to improve things for our members please feel free to get in touch with any of the Executive. I always welcome emails at vpp@sgps.ca and am happy to arrange short meetings to chat in person.

Cha Gheill,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Asfar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Asfar

Vice-President Professional

vpp@sgps.ca



Dear SGPS Members,

It is now over 6 months into our term as the SGPS Executive and so far it has been a very exciting year. The SGPS Executive has found itself very busy trying to complete our projects as well as sort out all of the challenges involved with implementation. Below is an update on the progress of my projects for this year:

Finance and Services Committee

The Finance and Services Committee has been working very hard this year. We now have 10 active members sitting on the committee. We have had two very productive meetings to discuss the financial activities of the SGPS and we will be having monthly meetings until the end of my term.

During our September meeting, we discussed as a team how we will evaluate bursaries and grants. Everyone was made aware of the by-laws and policy surrounding each bursary and grant. Further, we discussed what changes we might want to implement to the program going forward. The Committee also discussed how we would handle late opt-outs.

During our October meeting, I presented a choice of three new auditors to the committee so that they could choose one as a recommendation to council. We also discussed the hiring of a Finance Director as an addition to our permanent staff and what that position would look like.

Bursaries and Grants are a huge part of the work that the committee focuses on. We have been continuously communicating by email about all applications to determine which applicants will receive funding from us.

Budget

The implementation of the new budget has so far been successful. The increase in the budget line for bursaries and grants and the combination of all grants and bursaries into this line has ensured that we are on target with our monthly spending.

We have recently received a sum of money from Coke that will be added to our general bursaries and grants budget line.

We have been on target so far with the rest of the budget. Spending for Orientation was on target and so have been all our other expenses. I plan to ensure that we carry on this way for the rest of the year.

Bursaries and Grants

Over this past weekend, we received a donation of \$4,500 from a Class of 2013 Alumni to be used towards our dental bursary. This is almost a 1/6 increase in the total amount that we have to offer for dental bursaries. The alumni, who wishes to remain anonymous, was very thankful for having been able to use the bursary when he was a student. We are very happy that we were able to help him in the past and are more than thrilled with his contribution. He hopes that this contribution will help other students who cannot afford to have dental procedures completed.

The Online Bursary System that I had proposed is 80% complete. We are currently restructuring all of our IT and as a result, we will not be able to implement the completed system until this is finished. I hope that we can have the system implemented for the start of the Winter Term. For members who wish to apply for bursaries and grants, please continue to fill out the form online and submit either by email to frontdesk@sgps.ca or in person to our office in the JDUC.

In terms of bursaries, we have currently assisted 19 members with Emergency Student Aid, 2 members with a Dental Bursary, and 9 members with an International Bursary since September 1st. In terms of grants, we have provided 1 club with funding, 5 sports groups with funding and 11 groups with funding. Some groups that we have provided grants to include: QIAA's Snowden Lecture, Rosa Bruno-Jofre Symposium in Education, Gender Studies Graduate Symposium, Rehabilitation Career Fair, ScholarShare, CanPrevent Conference, Chancellor Dunning Trust Lecture Series: The Screening Room, and more. Please do not hesitate to apply for a bursary/grant if you have a financial need.

Going forward, my hope is to implement a sponsorship program, whereby the SGPS will provide greater funding to groups that need it but in return these groups will recognize the SGPS for its contribution. The goal is to get the SGPS's name out there so other groups know that they can receive funding and resources from the SGPS. It would also be an opportunity for the SGPS to promote our services to our membership.

Health and Dental Plan

Our Health and Dental Plan has finally been implemented for new students. Everyone should now have received their refund if they have opted-out and if you have not opted-out than you will be able to get reimbursed for some of your health and/or dental expenses. Please visit: <https://www.studentvip.ca/sgps/> to make a claim.

We have had some issues with students opting out of the AMS plan while being SGPS members. I have been in contact with the AMS to figure out how this could have possibly happened. The AMS has agreed to implement a system that will not allow SGPS members to opt-out of their plan from their end. The AMS and SGPS in following years are going to try and coordinate opt-out deadlines to make it easier for both memberships.

Audits

I am excited to say that KPMG has been elected by SGPS Council to perform our 2014 and 2015 audits. They will be starting the audit process on November 23 and hope to have both audits completed for the beginning of January 2016. This will mean that we will finally be caught up on our audits. I will be presenting both completed audits at the Annual GM in February. At this time, the membership will have to decide if they would like to keep KPMG as our auditor going forward.

Restructuring

One of the executive's big projects this year is the internal restructuring of the organization. We are currently in the process of hiring commissioners. As part of my part is this process, I am focused on hiring a new member to permanent staff team: a Finance Director. This person will be solely responsible for all day to day financial happenings of the SGPS instead of 3 permanent staff members. They will be responsible for our health and dental plan, all day to day accounting, assisting with audits and more. I have currently been working on the job description for the position. I will be meeting with one of Queen's resources to discuss the description and hope to have it posted the following week. The Finance Director will be hired in early January.

Overall, I am very happy with the progress that the executive has made so far this year. We have been working hard to implement our projects and we will continue to do so throughout our term.

If you have any questions about my work or the work of the executive, please do not hesitate to contact me. We are always looking for feedback, suggestions and ideas to help make the SGPS a more productive and fun place for both our members and staff alike.

Until next time,

*Christina
Huber*

Christina Huber
Vice President Finance and Services
vpfs@sgps.ca



Dear Council,

In something of a change from my usual reports, I'm going to firstly outline my progress with the items in my year plan, as well as how close to completion they are, and then deal with how the rest of the year has been shaping up.

Items Specific to my Year Plan:

More Equitable & Accessible Campus Community [Mostly Complete]

In order to foster a more equitable and accessible campus community, I specifically focused upon the issue of student access to childcare, student funding for childcare, and a bursary designed around the equity of those who identify within the Trans* community.

1) The Queen's Daycare Board, an entity upon which I sit, was able to renegotiate with the university the opening of a second site at An Clachan - and all it took was a straight seventeen months of late nights, grey hairs, and fraught negotiations!

2) Working alongside the VP Finance & Service Christina, I have also implemented a SGPS Emergency Childcare Bursary in the sum of \$20,000. It will be determined much in the same manner as our regular member ESAs, and will greatly expand the ability of this organization to assist students, guardians, and parents who are finding themselves in difficult times.

3) Working alongside the AMS' Social Issues Commissioner (SIC) Alex Chung, we are attempting to meet with several important stakeholders, including the Human Rights Office, and consulting with the Transgender Policy Group (TGP) in order to bring about a bursary or fund so that those who identify as being in the campus Trans* population may have their needs, whether medical, therapeutic, spiritual, or otherwise, partially covered while travelling to cities able to assist them, like Toronto, or Ottawa. Likewise, I am hoping that the funds might also be used for licensing, certifying, or training Kingston-based healthcare professionals, potentially eliminating the need for students to make these trips out of Kingston altogether. Early feedback has been exceptionally positive, and work on this topic is ongoing.

SGPS Parenting/Breastfeeding Room [Mostly Complete]

One of the unused storage rooms has been converted into a fully stocked and accessible parenting room for the benefit of the campus community. I have mostly concluded the discussions with our lawyers about liability and signage, and all that remains is for our friends within the Student Life Centre (SLC) to finalize the administration of keys. I went with the SLC, as this will ensure that access is a) safely and centrally administered; and b) open until midnight - well beyond the ability of our own offices to remain open during a weekday. Further, we have arranged for them to provide basic maintenance of the area as well.

Graduate Student Societies [Ongoing]

Earlier this year I recognized that one of the best means of giving students a voice experienced in the matters of their department would be to encourage the development of Graduate Departmental Societies (GDS). The benefits of such an arrangement are many, as these may serve as collectives whereby grad students might find support, friendship, and assistance with the issues and topics unique to their own department; and secondly, such societies are often warmly supported by faculty, and at times are invited to the table during departmental meetings, giving grads a much-needed voice on important matters

I have drafted template-constitution and consulted with a few preexisting societies and as of the writing of this report, have further communicated this plan via social media, in-person conversations, the SGS newsletter, and other resources available to me. My hope is that we will be able to arrange meetings for the interested, offer education, and then help these new societies hold their first elections. Too, we will be coordinating with many of the new societies' in order to offer them our institutional experience and logistical assistance where needed.

Graduate Research Positions [Ongoing]

There is an entire raft of issues of interest to students that, for various reasons, have been overlooked in past years. Recognizing this, the SGPS has hired from our own community a team of researchers to investigate accessible childcare around the campus, alternate fees for near-completion grads, better supports for international students, and an institutional history of the SGPS to name a few. Not only are our seven research assistants making wonderful progress, but this methodology enables us to address many topics of interest to our membership while at the same time affording our researching members valuable experience and resources. I believe that Michael Scott referred to this as a win-win situation.

Drop & Shop [Ongoing]

In partnership with Student Community Relations (SCR), last year Drop & Shop not only diverted significant resources from a landfill, but also raised the profile of our organization in addition to some funds for our community partners. As part of our debrief, Joan of SCR is interested in running the event again this year and plans are already underway to incorporate, and benefit a wider array of our community partners, in addition to fine-tuning some of the logistics involved.

Items Specific to my Portfolio:

Provost Advisory Committee on Mental Health and the Health & Wellness Steering Committee

Both of these went quite well as we wrapped up the academic year. Up for discussion were the changes to our advisor program and also the direction that we'd like to take things over the summer. The committees had some helpful suggestions as to what types of training that they felt could really assist our membership vis-a-vis the Student Advisors. Further, I made mention of the role that the university could play in better supporting the mental health and wellness of our membership in the new academic year.

Student Wellness, Health, and Safety Working Group

As this group has outlived its original mandate, we're seeking to tie up all of the loose ends and to adequately find locations for what remains. This past meeting we discuss student events and clubs, insofar as bringing them under one inclusive framework. Myself, and the AMS representative raised some concerns that should the university conduct an environmental scan and implement its own directives, they might overrule the preexistent policy that the AMS and the SGPS regarding clubs and events. My thoughts are that despite the AMS having more of either, this still is something that we as fellow students should keep our eyes on, and seek where possible to assist.

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Working Group

Having produced a draft for campus stakeholders and the administration at the end of last year, this group enjoyed a well-deserved rest. Over the summer, we met a few times primarily as a wrap-up of how things went between the consultations between stakeholders, and some time was spent in session to plan for the fall. I spoke with Arig (Assistant Dean Student Life and Learning) from Student Affairs and made the case that our advisors might benefit from being included in the proposed Bringing in the Bystander, and First Responder training that may be happening in late August and at the start of the new academic year.

As part of my continued work with this group, a few others and myself were asked to help out with an educational initiative for incoming students, "Train the Trainer Sexual Violence Bystander Intervention Program." Working alongside former director of the SHRC, Doulton Wiltshire, we co-presented a talk on consent and bystander culture for undergraduate student leaders, being residence dons, folks working in the AMS, and others positioned similarly in the student community. Although presenting in front of more than three hundred was nerve-wracking, I was really pleased to see so many undergrads taking this pressing issue so seriously.

Finally, there was a large conference in the fall, Campus to Campus - Cultivating Consent Culture, and in order to defray the costs for some of our members and attendees from the SHRC, I have agreed to funding some of their travel costs to this important event. Working in concert with OPIRG, the SHRC will return with information valuable to the development of a more equitable consent culture on our campus, furthering both local initiatives and empowering member research.

Food Bank

Closer to the community, I again worked alongside a small but effective team of graduates and professionals who volunteered at the AMS/SGPS Food Bank over the summer. Due to their selfless efforts this valuable service was allowed to remain open over the summer months at full operational capacity. Not only a great opportunity, we also made valuable inroads with our friends at the AMS. If you are interested in volunteering, don't hesitate to contact me.

We also successfully lobbied the Principal's office to consider the Food Bank as a point of donation for the Principal's Annual Barbeque. This was successful and we managed to completely a bin in less than three hours! My assessment is that as we were able to get the President to consider us, rather than an off-campus charity as they usually do was nothing less than a coup and we should take great effort to try to ensure that he chooses our Food Bank in the coming years for many reasons, primary of which being that it is a great avenue to make the issue more known to his office.

Camp Outlook

Especially considering their unusual hours we have finally managed to offer SGPS membership to Camp Outlook, the second former AMS club to join us, alongside the SHRC. I extend them warm congratulations, and offer many thanks to all of the hard work of their director Zoe, and our Executive Director Sean.

Student Services Strategic Planning Exercise

I met with key stakeholders from around the campus including Student Affairs, the SGS, and Career Services to have a discussion around the services that students will need in the years ahead of us; topics included enrolment trends, data graphing, educational trends and emergent issues. It went well but Queens' participation in surveys has fallen by half in the past few years. I suggested to Chris Conway (Director, Institutional Research) that a central repository for surveys be created to offset "question fatigue," which was one of the leading causes of attrition and he was exceptionally receptive to such an idea. Moreover, I had some brief yet beneficial discussions about gaining the raw data from some key surveys, including the 2013 National College Health Assessment data, for the benefit of our own internal research and ongoing projects.

Orientation Week(s)

O-Week basically took up most of my September, but I was happy to meet and greet so many of the new grads and professional students. I personally got to welcome several hundred over the span of a few days, I get the idea that they enjoyed it (and our swag bags) almost as much as I did.

Federal Election

My ongoing discussions for an all candidates' debate has bore fruit, and I'm quite pleased to announce that the SGPS is partnering with the AMS in order to bring you an MP Candidate's Debate for Kingston & the Islands. The event was hosted by students from the Political Studies Department on 15 October 2015, at 7PM in Grant Hall and was well attended. Myself, and a few of the other executive were there and we saw many of our membership in attendance as well. Attendees submitted questions to a ballot box, while those following online via twitter will be able to tweet questions to the moderator, Queen's own Dr. Kyle Hanniman.

The Canadian Federation of Students & Mental Health

The executive met with representatives of the CFS, who presented the results of a mental health survey that they had undertaken. The results were not good and have encouraged the executive to investigate specific avenues that may offset some of the less beneficial aspects of grad and professional life.

It All Adds Up

Another exciting initiative that I've been involved in is Queen's Career Services "It All Adds Up," a student-centric

information campaign where students share the little successes and often overlooked aspects of their lives that lead to their successes. Basically, the idea is for students to take a more holistic, mindful view of themselves to recognize that they're likely already quite hard-working, in order to ease anxiety or struggles over mental wellbeing. Starting with the idea that students feel overworked, directionless, and pressured to always "perform," this campaign seeks to remind them that even those small, or even academically unrelated things that they do for themselves "add up" to eventual success and happiness.

In order to offset the large number of undergraduates participating, I'm hoping that some of our members will get involved, be able to say a few things, and have their pictures taken for the benefit of other grads and professionals, or even future ones.

Committees Pertaining to the Student Advisors

Myself and other members of the executive at the direction of council undertook significant investigative research surrounding the events of early 2015.

If my council report appears a tad shorter than it normally would, that is because I personally spent over 50 hours researching this task and I am under the impression that each of the other executive behaved similarly. To put that into better context, that is roughly one full month of the time I dedicate to my position.

While I am pleased to carry out the will of council, I was disappointed that after giving the executive such a weighty and serious task, very few councilors and only a handful of members from our community actually became involved. Folksy idioms let us know that many hands make for light work - had more people come out, the executive would have been freer to engage with the positions that we were elected to.

Community Outreach

This is something that I have continued from last year. I submitted a letter to the entirety of our community partners as a means of gauging where they see us, themselves, and our shared relationship over the coming year. I felt that this outreach was important, as due to various reasons such as federal or provincial cuts, or a lack of staffing opportunities, some partners may have been feeling vulnerable but had little means of addressing such sentiment. While only a few letters have returned thus far, I am confident that by the fall term, we will have a far greater understanding and appreciation for the hard work that all of our allied community partners engage in and a more informed idea how we might foster better relations with them.

AMS Equity Caucus

I have become involved in this effort lead by their Social Issues Commissioner in order to pool valuable knowledge and resources around the campus pertaining to equity. During the introductory meeting, I met many respective campus leaders interested in accessibility, mental health, gender diversity, and other issues that are of interest to our membership. I will naturally keep you informed as developments occur.

If anyone has any interest in joining or serving on this caucus, please let me know.

Queen's Thrive!

I've been working with members of Queen's Human Resources on a campus-wide initiative called Thrive, a movement that is concerned with better mental health and the wellbeing of students. I was originally attracted to this effort via my own interests in stress reduction, and over the course of several meetings I realized that the best way to ensure that grad students were included in the scope of this movement was for myself to become a facilitator, holding a seminar and informal session on stress within the academy. I've gotten a lot of positive feedback thus far and have been well supported by Human Resources. I am hopeful by the time that you are reading this I'll be able to speak more fully about my involvement, and what I've learned from this process for future years.

Queen's Graduate Jackets

I have been assisting some grads who've been hard at work developing jackets to recognize and raise the profile of grads on campus. They have been hard at work developing some prototypes, and I am hopeful that by December council, this

wonderful addition to grad culture and campus life will be ready to be unveiled.

Items Specific to my Life:

On 20 October 2015 my wife and I became parents, and although my daughter Winnie arrived a few months earlier than she was supposed to, she's doing well and we could honestly not be happier. And yes, your VP Campaigns & Community Affairs did feel that this was an appropriate medium to wander into schmaltzy nature of new parenthood.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Financial Report
Fall General Meeting 2015

An oral update will be provided at the General Meeting, along with handouts.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Graduate Student Senator
Fall General Meeting 2015

Hello Members of the SGPS,

Since my last General Meeting Report, Senate has met five times:

- March 31, 2015
 - o Agenda: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=701>
- April 28, 2015
 - o Agenda: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=725>
- May 26, 2015
 - o Agenda: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=753>
- September 8, 2015
 - o Closed Session Meeting
- September 29, 2015
 - o Agenda: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=804>
- November 3, 2015
 - o Agenda: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=836>

Over the course of these meetings, the following items of relevance to SGPS Members have occurred:

- A Graduate Diploma, Master of Science, and PhD in Aging and Health was approved
 - o <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/57026/SCAD%20U%20Aging%20and%20Health%20Diploma,%20MSc,%20PhD.pdf?handle=3A4099BC61E14E94B3FC7112E6D0A41B>
- A Combined BCom/JD program was approved
 - o <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/59281/SCAD%20F%20Combined%20BCom%20JD.pdf?handle=6C7E4634A1744C5293639347BB03286C>
- Senate approved that Exams may now be held on Sundays
 - o <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/59442/SCAP%20F%20Examinations%20on%20Sunday.pdf?handle=7CF5609062474891A626585A915B9024>
- Senate created three Faculty at large Senator positions to allow for more inclusivity at Senate of Faculty
 - o <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/67345/GNC%20-%20Senate%20Composition%20Report.pdf?handle=9C76E54ED5444E80AC8E2D4EDB7034FA>
- The three programs in Theology in the School of Religion were closed due to declining interest. Interestingly enough, the Theological College was one of the first offerings at Queen's University.
 - o <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/document/69939/SCAD%20Closure%20of%20Theology%20Programs.pdf?handle=D83085FF0A174068BBD5DF708280B32A>

For full details, please feel free to check out my Council Reports, found in the report packages:

- April - <http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/april2015/Reports%20April%202015.pdf>
- May - <http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/may2015/Reports%20May%202015.pdf>
- August - <http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/august2015/Reports%20August%202015.pdf>
- September - <http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/september2015/Reports%20September%202015.pdf>
- October - <http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/october2015/Reports%20October%202015.pdf>
- November - <http://www.sgps.ca/council/downloads/november2015/Reports%20November%202015.pdf>

Respectfully submitted,
Eric Rapos
Graduate Student Senator
senator@sgps.ca



Hello Members of the SGPS,

Council Changes

Since taking over the office of Speaker again for a second (non-consecutive) term, I have undertaken quite a few tasks in order to clean up the image of SGPS Council, namely the redesign of all publications of Council to match with the new SGPS visual identity. These changes, while largely cosmetic also serve to ensure the documents are readable and follow a common theme. Additionally, I redesigned the Council Tent Cards, in order to make the names of Council members easy to see, and also providing them with a “cheat sheet” on the rules of order for the meetings.

Other changes have included a yearly attendance tracking to help keep track of council member attendance, which is useful for enforcing attendance rules – if a member of Council misses three meetings, they must vacate their position so that another member of the department can step in to actively represent the department. This tracking has made it possible to facilitate this process.

Non-Academic Discipline/Misconduct

As many of you may be aware, there have been some changes into the Non-Academic Discipline system at Queen’s – starting with it now being referred to as Non-Academic Misconduct.

While the changes do not have a huge impact on the SGPS system, as we handle an average of one case per year in recent years, it is still important to be aware of the changes.

The first major change is that there is an interim protocol currently in place while an Advisory Committee investigates best practices moving forward. In the interim period, all issues will be directed through a central intake office, rather than being reported to me directly. The central intake office will direct any issues to the appropriate non-academic misconduct system (AMS, SGPS, A&R, Residence, University (Provost)).

I highly encourage you to read the report attached to this agenda from the Advisory Committee and provide feedback to the Committee undertaking this task. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Rapos
Council Speaker
speaker@sgps.ca



Hello Members of the SGPS,

I am pleased to provide an update on the year so far. As many of you may be aware, some changes were undertaken to the “NAD” (now known as non-academic misconduct “NAM”). Non-academic discipline was first raised as an issue when an external audit was performed by PricewaterhouseCoopers – It is worth noting that the subject of the audit was not how the NAD system worked, but rather an audit of internal controls and an assessment of Queen’s risk and exposures. On the basis of this report, the Audit and Risk committee initiated a review of our system by Harriet Lewis, legal counsel and secretary at York University. Upon conclusion of the review, Audit and Risk recommended to the Board that an advisory committee be struck to make recommendations surrounding changes to the NAM.

While the advisory committee drafts recommendations for the NAM framework, the Board elected to implement an interim protocol whereby all NAM referrals will now filter through a Central Intake Office which will refer cases to the appropriate body on campus. The Central Intake Office adds a layer of tracking cases across the university, as previously residence, athletics and recreation, the AMS, and the SGPS independently operated their own systems. The addition of tracking of cases across the university will allow the Central Intake Office to identify risky patterns of behavior with the goal of providing intervention and support where appropriate. The Lewis report can be found here:

http://www.queensu.ca/principal/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.opvcwww/files/files/Lewis-Report_Redacted-FULL.pdf

Changing the structure of a historic system such as NAD at Queen’s is not something that the trustees took lightly. I am pleased to report that trustees are supportive of development of a NAM system that retains student involvement, and are actively engaged in this issue as it unfolds.

On another note, on November 6th, 2015 the Principal’s Advisory Committee on Divestment concluded their activities and delivered a report to the Investment committee of the Board of Trustees. The advisory committee did not recommend divesting Queen’s pooled endowment and investment funds from fossil fuels. The advisory committee was struck to address a petition received by Queen’s Backing Action on Climate Change (QBACC) with arguments centered around divestment based on social injury. The advisory committee notes that divestment is not necessarily an effective tool in addressing climate change. The full report can be viewed here:

<http://www.queensu.ca/principal/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.opvcwww/files/files/QU-Advisory-Committee-on-Divestment.pdf>

At the time of writing this report, I am scheduled to attend the next Board meeting on December 4th and 5th, 2015. I will be providing an update on this meeting in the next Council report.

Respectfully submitted,

James MacLeod

Trustee
trustee@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Equity & Diversity Commissioner
Fall General Meeting 2015

None Submitted



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the International Student's Affairs Commissioner
Fall General Meeting 2015

Position Vacant



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
Fall General Meeting 2015

None Submitted



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the University Rector
Fall General Meeting 2015

None Submitted



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Chief Returning Officer
Fall General Meeting 2015

None Submitted