Dear Council,

In the last month, I have continued to attend different meetings to represent SGPS interests. In the Senate Committee on Academic Development, the Principal made some remarks about Queen’s current Academic plan, and to what extent it is going to be updated. Also, we had a discussion on two new Master’s programs: Master’s of Art in Art Leadership, and Professional Master of Medical Sciences. Also two graduate diploma programs were suggested from the same Faculties: Arts Management Graduate Diploma, and Graduate Diploma in Medical Sciences. These programs were further approved by the Senate during its September meeting.

Senate also approved the establishment of the Robert Gilbert Chair in Geography Faculty of Arts and Sciences. There was a discussion of increasing diversity among the professors, considering an open letter by a Queen’s alumni with regard to professors of color. There was a discussion of imbalance in the sex composition of nominees for Honorary Degrees. SONAD was dissolved, a summary of the review on Canada’s federal funding model for science and research was presented by the VP Research, Dr. Liss.

At Senate Governing and Nomination Committee, we discussed a lack of interest on the faculty side to serve on the Senate committees. At Senate Agenda and Summer Action Committee, we approved the Agenda for the Senate meeting.

I had an interview with Queen’s Gazette to promote SGPS and our role in the Queen’s community. I had a meeting with Dr. Liss about research prominence at Queen’s, how SGPS can advocate for it, the goals of the SGPS and how they impact the work of the office of VP Research. In the light of my discussions with Dr. Liss, I focused my speech to the board of Trustees on the role of research prominence in the University’s world rankings, and how it is potentially impacted by student to faculty ratio, as well as graduate to undergraduate student ratios. I attended a dinner and a lunch with the Trustees, where we discussed the vision for research prominence at the University and its effects on the student learning experience in the light of my speech, the role that the experiences of international students plays at informing the Administration of the University in its decision-making, as well as the decline in the satisfaction of Doctoral students and how it could be related to the results of the SGS report to the Audit and Risk Committee on Student-Supervisor working relationship.

I attended the first consultation session for the Truth and Reconciliation Task Force, where all were welcome to join and discuss the governance and space. I wish to ask the interested members to attend the future meetings themed on student access and support services, faculty and staff recruitment, academic programming and planning, and awareness and climate.

I also attended the Fall Term Break Task Force. The break is intended for first-entry undergraduate students and therefore will not impact the SGPS members as students. Nevertheless, since it will impact many of the TAs, I asked the Task Force to include PSAC local 901 in their consultations. The Task Force will also attend the SGPS Council for consultation, so it will be great if you can have a discussion of this issue among your members.

I’m pleased to say that the new commissioners are now hired and starting their transition period this week, and I wish to specially thank Anna, Andria, and Pam for this. The hiring for the research assistants through the work-study program must be completed by next week.

Thank you.
Please find my updates below:

**Student Advisor Program:**
- Student Advisors have finished their training and all 3 advisors have begun taking on cases.
- Starting on Monday October 10th, the Student Advisor’s office will be open for ‘drop-in’ hours. From ~9am-3pm SGPS members can visit the office (JDUC 031) to speak with one of our empathetic advisors.
- I have been working on creating updated advertisements (posters + more) to place in highly frequented SGPS member areas. I have also been working on creating a more professional and visually appealing social media page for our service.

**Student Mental Health:**
- We received 4 applicants for the ‘Work Study’ mental health researcher position. We are currently in the interviewing stages. The hired applicant will commence their review immediately after signing their contract.

**Networking Opportunities for Graduate Students:**
- The 175 Mentors portal is live! Please follow this link to access it: [https://webapp.queensu.ca/sgs/ask-an-alum/](https://webapp.queensu.ca/sgs/ask-an-alum/)
  - Students can create profiles and subsequently reach out to mentors they are interested in speaking to.
- The School of Graduate Studies is hosting Career Week from Oct 11-14. Their aim is to help graduate students and post-doctorate fellows prepare for a career in or outside of academia. More information can be found here: [http://www.queensu.ca/exph/career-week](http://www.queensu.ca/exph/career-week)
- *The PhD-Community Initiative* has launched. This program focuses on providing graduate students the chance to apply their knowledge from their respective disciplines of study in community betterment projects. There are 5 pilot projects focusing on: (1) Sustainable energy in remote areas, (2) Environmental issue outreach, (3) Musical mentorship for grade schoolers, (4) Countering bullying among youth, and (5) Building Kingston’s ‘night economy’. More information can be found here: [http://www.queensu.ca/exph/phd-community-initiative/current-projects](http://www.queensu.ca/exph/phd-community-initiative/current-projects)

**Other Business:**
- Room 237 will be opening as a multi-purpose student space shortly. Study carrels have been moved into the room and the pool table is being set up. The room was supposed to be open this week but Purtell, the moving company, had delayed moving the pool table because it is currently being stored within the Physical Education Centre which is undergoing renovations.

Regards,

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Sebastian Gorlewski *(vp.graduate@sgps.ca)*
Hello Council Members,

I hope everyone has had a great start to the fall semester and is doing well. Below are the updates on my projects:

**Event Sanctioning**
As you will see at council, Kim Murphy of Risk Management in the Office of the Vice Principal will be coming in to speak about the event sanctioning process, Queen’s ultimate goals, and how the SGPS is involved. This follows one-on-one discussion with her last week where she met with multiple council members to discuss and address their concerns. The conversations were fruitful as they provided insight into Queen’s University’s views as a whole on event sanctioning and will help assist us as we move forward to improving the process and addressing all concerns. I will be looking to merge the Event Sanctioning Committee that was struck in September with one that we look to use alongside Kim Murphy.

**Professional Development**
I am happy to announce that we will be holding Career Development Week in November. I have been in discussion with numerous custom suit makers (both for men and women), Studio Q who will be assisting with headshots and resumes, and multiple career development offices. Stay tuned for secured dates and more information on this week which will provide great opportunity for all graduate and professional students to polish up on their career skills and assets. I also will be looking to begin the workshop series in the coming weeks as our new multi-purpose student space (Room 237) opens shortly, so stay tuned on advertisement for the first workshop and also please email me if you or someone you know would like to hold a workshop seminar of their own as a part of the series!

**Human Resources**
I have been reviewing the ebbs and flow of day-to-day communication and will be looking to provide clear frameworks of communication to be implemented in transition materials. There will also be an HR seminar to be presented to all permanent and transient staff. Finally, I would like to welcome the new Athletics Commissioner (Lindsay Ruiter), Social Commissioner (Yann Grand-Clement), International Commissioner (Chiedza Pasipanodya), and Equity Commissioner (Tahseen Choudhury) to the SGPS!

As always, if you have any questions, feel free to email me at vp.professional@sgps.ca!

Kishan Lakhani
Vice President Professional
(no report)
Dear Council,

It’s been a busy few weeks since our last Council meeting! Excited to see some of the items on my year plan coming to fruition and looking forward to seeing more progress in the next few months. Below is a run-down of some of what I have been working on since last Council meeting. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email at vp.community@sgps.ca.

**O-Week:**
As part of the ongoing process of improving Orientation Week in the coming years, I was involved in creating and promoting an Orientation Exit Survey which some of you may have seen and responded to. The survey has now been closed and I am now looking to create a committee in order to consider how the responses can provide a basis to start planning Orientation Week for next year. If you would like to be involved in the committee, please feel free to contact me via email or approach me after Council.

**Clubs Office:**
The AMS Clubs Manager and I continue to meet regularly to discuss upcoming deadlines and other information pertinent to the merger of the SGPS and AMS Clubs. We are currently going through the ratification of new clubs that have registered with the Clubs Office in the Fall term. The decisions for those clubs should be available in the next few weeks. Another part of our goal, which is to increase awareness of different clubs on campus, has led to the creation of a radio show through CFRC called “Club Sandwich”, which I am currently hosting. The show airs on Tuesdays at 4:30 pm. If you are involved in a club and would like to come on the show, please contact me via email. Similarly, if you have any questions about clubs on campus, don’t hesitate to email or set up a meeting with me.

**Commissioners:**
The last week of September and first week of October were primarily focused on the hiring of new Commissioners. As part of my position as a liaison between the Executive and Commissioners, I was actively involved in the hiring process, which included sitting as part of the hiring panel. The new Commissioners have all been extended their offers for their positions and the next step of the process will be determining the need for Facilitators and going through that hiring process if necessary in the next few weeks.

**Research Assistants:**
Applications closed on September 26th for Research Assistants. This week (the second week of October) will be focused on hiring for those positions.

Sincerely,

Anastasiya Boika
VP Campaigns & Community Affairs
(no report)
(no report submitted)
To the SGPS Membership,

The Queen’s Board of Trustees held its first quarterly meeting of the 2016-17 Academic Calendar year on September 30 and October 1 respectively, and a number of topics concerning graduate and professional students were covered.

**Doctoral Student Experience**
Arguably the most important piece of information as it pertains to the SGPS community was in the strategic report shared in the open session of the Board Meeting by Principal Woolf, who noted that amongst Queen’s doctoral students only 62% rated their academic experience as “very good” or “excellent”. This is below the established target goal of 70%, and is seven points below the 2013 report (69%).

This low level of academic satisfaction should be taken into consideration along with the increased attention on the relationship between graduate student life and mental health. Important factors to consider in this relationship include: the supervisor-supervisee relationship, time-to-completion, the pressure to publish, and constraints imposed by taking on teaching fellowship positions, the latter of which is more likely to affect doctoral students. In his report, the Principal responded to this specific outcome of the progress report by stating:

“Work is underway to understand and reverse this negative trend. Steps taken to date in this regard include the undertaking of preliminary research by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning on factors that influence doctoral student engagement outcomes.”

It should be noted that professional master’s students and research master’s students both currently exceed the 2017 target, as 72% of professional master’s respondents and 77% of research master’s respondents rated their academic experience as either “very good” or “excellent”.

More information about the student engagement update report and the open session is available on the Queen’s Governance Portal: https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=1032.

SGPS President Saba Farbodkia’s oral report to the Board at its Open Session on September 30 also touched on the graduate student to faculty ratio at Queen’s, which is 22:1. This high ratio could represent another contributing factor to the diminished satisfaction of the academic experience amongst doctoral students. Saba’s speech forces us to critically reflect on the balance between enrollment and quality of education for Queen’s students both at the undergraduate and graduate level. Saba’s written report can also be accessed on the Governance Portal at the link above.

**Queen’s Financial Outlook**
From a financial perspective, Queen’s ended the fiscal year on April 30, 2016 with a surplus of $39.5 million, driven by high student enrollment and strategic efforts to limit operational costs. The University is still facing
serious financial challenges, however, most noteworthy of which is (1) the staff pension plan which currently has a solvency deficit of $285 million, and (2) deferred maintenance costs, which currently sits in a $253 million backlog. These are both of concern to the SGPS, whose membership will certainly be interested in how faculty renewal, classroom and campus revitalization, and increasing enrollment numbers (at graduate and undergraduate levels) affects their current experience at Queen’s and their aspirations for continuing in the academic workforce following graduation.

**Queen’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Task Force**

The Provost and VP (Academic) Benoit Antoine-Bacon reported that the Queen’s TRC Task Force released its preliminary report, which can be found on the Provost’s website here ([http://queensu.ca/provost/committees-and-reports/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-task-force](http://queensu.ca/provost/committees-and-reports/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-task-force)). The Task Force is responsible for the following:

- Prepare a comprehensive inventory of existing Queen’s initiatives that are relevant to the TRC’s calls to action;
- Develop a set of recommendations that respond to the calls to action pertinent to Queen’s, building, as appropriate, on the existing initiatives;
- Make recommendations regarding the integration of Indigenous knowledge into existing courses and programs across Queen’s University;
- Recommend strategies, programs and services at Queen’s University that support the recruitment, admission, transition, retention, and graduation of Aboriginal students;
- Recommend strategies at Queen’s University that support the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal faculty and staff; and
- Recommend initiatives that could be undertaken to enhance the cultural climate at Queen’s University for Aboriginal students, staff, and faculty, including intercultural programming for non-Aboriginal students, staff and faculty.

Importantly, the Queen’s TRC Task Force is holding open sessions on the following dates for input regarding the above objectives:

**October 20, 2016, 4:30-6:00pm, McLaughlin Room, John Deutsch University Centre**

**November 7, 2016, noon-1:30pm, Room 202, Robert Sutherland Hall**

**November 7, 2016, 3:30-5:00pm, Room 202, Robert Sutherland Hall**

**November 23, 2016, 4:00-5:30pm, Isabel Bader Centre for Performing Arts**

Please RSVP via trctaskforce@queensu.ca with the sessions you will be attending, or you can submit comments via email to trctaskforce@queensu.ca.

**Next Meeting: December 2 and 3**

The next Board of Trustees Meeting is scheduled for December 2 and 3. If you have any questions or concerns relating to Queen’s University or that pertain specifically to the Board, don’t hesitate to shoot me an e-mail at trustee@sgps.ca.

Cheers,
Adam
Dear Council,

I would like to begin by reporting on our successful Orientation Week held earlier in September. On September 8th, the Athletics Commission organized the Sport’s Day as part of the Orientation Week agenda. I am pleased to report that our event was a huge success and I would like to thank everyone who came out and supported. We had about 25 students show up along with 10 volunteers.

For those of you who did not keep up with this event, the Summer Activities Facilitator and myself organized an Adaptive Sport’s Day. Our aim was to provide students with a platform to meet new people, interact with one another and check out the ARC facilities and have fun while engaging with the adapted sport community in Kingston. Our wonderful volunteers came in and shared their journeys into adapted sport and they taught us how to compete in both wheelchair basketball and sitting volleyball. We worked closely with the folks over at the ARC to ensure we had the equipment and facilities ready to accommodate our session. Some of the volunteers brought in their equipment and held an informative session on the different strategies and uses of adaptive sporting equipment.

With the start of another school year comes the bitter sweet nearing end of my tenure as Athletics Commissioner. Throughout the term of my contract, I have experienced many positive changes within the SGPS and its structure surrounding the work we as commissioners have done and are able to do. I am happy to have been a part of some ground work that will surely pave the way for our future commissioners to properly organize, plan and grow future SGPS events while maintaining a strong relationship with effective communication between the commissioners, the staff and the executive. I hope that we can continue to see increased participation and meaningful events that provide our student body with a platform to interact with one another.

I would like to thank all of those SGPS members who applied for the commissioner openings. I am confident in what our future commissioner will bring to this society. I have been involved with preparing a transition manual for the incoming Athletic Commissioner that outlines the steps needed to prepare for the position and effectively carry out the role.

I would like to extend a final thank you to all of those SGPS members, executive, and staff that I have met during my tenure here as well as those members that came out to our events during the course of the year. I have no doubt that we can continue to grow our numbers and represent the interests of our society. Even though my time is officially nearing an end, I am still endorsing an open door policy and I would be more than happy to speak with any of you about SGPS related matters. Once again thank you and I wish you all a successful school year!

Regards,
Dominic Kucharski
Athletics Commissioner
athletics@sgps.ca
(no report submitted)
(no report submitted)
(no report submitted)
Dear Assembly,

I hope you are all enjoying the fall weather. Please find time to enjoy the beautiful colours that will be taking place on our campus in the weeks ahead.

Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees was this past weekend. A few highlights from it are:

- Principal Woolf had started the work around addressing Sexual Violence and Assault on campus with the Bystander Intervention Training Sessions administered by a trained team of undergraduate and graduate student leaders.
- Provost Benoit-Antoine Bacon expressed his excitement to be working for Queen’s and willingness to continue to help shape the university for the future.
- I touched on student financial aid in my speech. AMS President Lively emphasized the importance of prioritizing financial accessibility, experiential learning opportunities, and study spaces on campus. President Saba Farbodkia talked about student-faculty ratios and the undergraduate and graduate ratio at Queen’s.
- The Board received a presentation by Janet Dancey, Director of the Canadian Cancer Trials Group.

ASIST Training

On September 24-25, I received ASIST training with Peer Support Centre (PSC) shift leaders and executives, Carolyn, Lea, and Lyn. ASIST training provides participants with applied suicide intervention skills.

Truth and Reconciliation Consultations

The Truth and Reconciliation task force has started their campus wide consultations “for community discussion and feedback, and will inform the university’s process of addressing calls to action set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.” (Queen’s Gazette) There will be 5 consultations focused on the following topics:
- Governance and Strategic Planning; Space and Place
- Student Access, Transition, and Student Support Services
- Indigenous Faculty/Staff Recruitment and Indigenous Research
- Academic Programming and Academic Planning
- Awareness and Climate.

The next consultation will be taking place on October 20th from 4:30-6:00pm in McLaughlin Room, JDUC. For more information about the consultations and to confirm attendance, you can reach out to trctaskforce@queensu.ca

Homecoming and Richardson Stadium Jacket Slam

Homecoming is now officially less than 2 weeks away! This is going to be an exciting time for campus. I have been working diligently in order to create a Rector’s Reunion this year. There has also been a big focus from both students and staff from the administration to ensure that we maintain student health and safety during the football game. There has been great initiative taken by EngSoc, Queen’s Bands, and ResSoc in order to
evolve traditions, and to also engage our alumni moving forward. As such, I am looking forward to what lies ahead.

**Ontario University Fair**
Undergraduate Trustee Li and I attended the OUF in our roles as student leaders in order to encourage students to apply to Queen’s University. There were a few questions about the university, but mostly students just asked about getting a viewbook for more information about the school.

Princeps Servesque Es

Cam Yung
35th Rector of Queen’s University
(no report submitted)
Introduction

Over the past several months, the Finance and Services Committee has worked hard to fulfill its mandate of creating a new and improved student activity fee policy. This draft policy was approved by the Finance and Services committee at its last meeting in September after three separate drafts and extensive debate. The end result is a balanced one—a policy that accounts for both the new university rules as well as the unique concerns of the graduate and professional student community.

Below is our complete report along with the new policies drafted by the committee. Where necessary, I’ve included comments that expand on committee deliberation and explanations of how we came to rest on a certain point.

Part 1: Project Scope and Background

A. Background on the Project

As many of you know, the Finance and Services Committee has been tasked by SGPS Council to review the SGPS student activity fee policy and create a complete proposal to bring it in line with university and membership concerns.

Several months ago, my predecessor, Christina Huber, created a draft policy to do just that. When the policy was introduced at Council however, it received negative feedback because of a lack of communication to justify the changes and apprehension over certain provisions, namely the ineligibility of charities to seek opt-out funding. In the end, the policy failed to pass at Council, and, at the Annual General Meeting, this committee was tasked with reviewing the system to produce a better plan for review in August.

Our job was to take the policy back to the drawing board and produce a plan that incorporates the best of the first proposal and the concerns raised by council. There are many things that the draft document got right, and a number that it got wrong. What follows is the end product of that process, a new student fee policy that balances university rules with the unique programming needs of graduate students.

B. Scope of the Committee’s Work

The task was very straightforward, to produce a draft student activity fee protocol broken into six parts for review by Council. They are:

1. Eligibility of Groups to Receive Fees
2. Classification of Mandatory vs. Optional Fees
3. Reporting Obligations for Fee Recipients
4. Suspension and Cancellation Process for Fees
5. Appeals Process for suspended/cancelled Fees
6. Alignment of the SGPS Policy with the University Student Activity Fees Policy (though this is more of a catch-all and not an individual section of the policy)

The draft policy proposed in April can be broken down into each of these categories (though 4 and 5 are the same process and 6 isn’t really a policy section more of a compliance objective), which I have done later in this document.

Part 2: Important Background Information

A. Student Fees at Queen’s

The SGPS, like other student unions in Canada, collects fees from its members in order to fund a variety of clubs, organizations, capital projects and university services. Student fees are approved by a referendum, and are managed by the SGPS, but it’s the
University Board of Directors that control the collection and ultimate approval of fees. As such, regardless of the system we choose to oversee our own fees, it still needs to be congruent with the rules set out with the board.

B. Board Protocol

At the university board meeting in May, the BOD passed a document that outlined the categories of fees and standards required for a fee to be eligible for inclusion on the fee slate. Some of these conditions include:

1. Student fees may only be established for non-academic services designed to enhance student life and living on the Queen’s campus or in support of student contributions to university capital projects
2. Fees must be approved through a referendum and by the board of trustees
3. Fees, except those that fund an essential service, must be regularly reviewed by students
4. There must be a cancelation and suspension process for student fees

The committee found, after talking to the university, that these requirements were to be interpreted broadly. Enhancing student life, according to the board—meant simply that students had voted to approve the student fee through a referendum.

The protocol also outlines the different categories of student fee. They are:

1. Mandatory-Reviewable Fees: fees that are paid by all and undergo review by students periodically
2. Mandatory-Non-Reviewable Fees: fees that are paid by all students and are not subject to review (think capital projects and the SGPS fee)
3. Optional-Reviewable Fees: fees that all students may opt-out of that undergo periodic review

The committee found that these categories were totally consistent with our existing fee structure. In many ways, the board protocol communicated the differences between fees much more effectively than the existing SGPS policy.

C. Overall Policy Goals

In improving the existing system, the SGPS identified three broad policy goals:

1. Accountability

As the collector of student money, held in trust for approved groups, it is vital that the SGPS can verify that student dollars are spent in a manner that is consistent with the mandate those groups have put to students. Groups should go through a yearly review process to ensure that student fees are being used in a manner consistent with the stated purpose of each fee.

2. Fairness

In the interest of preventing abuse of power from the executive and preserving fairness and consistency across different student groups, the rules should have a clear set of procedures for the review, suspension, appeal and cancellation of fees. There should be strict controls on the powers of the VPFS and the SGPS executive to prevent the unilateral cancellation of fees without council/committee oversight. The previous policy was hilariously lopsided in the powers it gave the VPFS.

3. Feasibility of Funding Charities and Third Party Organizations

The original motion tasking the committee to review the fee policy included a specific instruction to investigate the feasibility of maintaining funding for charitable and organizations that engage in issue advocacy in the Queen’s and Kingston community. This specific goal was discussed by the committee and we feel that the policy as presented herein fulfills the desire of our membership to support charities and other third party organizations while maintaining a robust mechanism to ensure that student fees are responsibly and transparently utilized.

Part 3: Proposed Student Fee Changes

A. Classification of Mandatory vs. Optional Fees

Background
These are the rules designed to separate different ‘classes’ of student fees in a manner consistent with the board protocol. Important SGPS and university fees are mandatory, while fees for other student groups or organizations are optional. The Committee felt that this section was very straightforward.

**Policy Goals of this Section**

Essentially, clarity over which groups are entitled to have which fees. The character of the organization/project determines the fee options available. The SGPS fee for funding the AMS service, Walkhome, for instance, would be a mandatory University and AMS Fee that would go to referendum every three years. A fee for the Queen’s International Affairs Association (QIAA), a popular club for some of our members, would have an optional fee that would be reviewed every three years as well.

**Differences from the Existing Policy**

Negligible. The language used to delineate different categories of fees is much easier to understand. The old system gave fees a ‘class’ name using a few letters of the alphabet—this is a little easier to understand.

**Proposed Section**

**P.1.2.1 Definitions**

a. "Opt-out": Where a member can elect not to pay an optional fee.
b. "Opt-out period": The times when a member may elect not to pay an optional fee as found in the Queen’s Guide to Registration and Fees.
c. "Student Activity Fee": Member payments for non-academic or non-tuition related items that are designed to enhance student life.
d. "Material Change": A change that would be reasonably expected to have an effect on the SGPS or SGPS members.

**P.1.2.2 General**

a. From time to time, the SGPS shall establish, increase or cancel Student Activity Fees ("Fee"), paid by members, related directly to the upkeep and maintenance of campus student life and the SGPS at large.
b. The SGPS may only establish a new Fee, or increase an existing fee, if there has been an open, honest, and fair referendum on the establishment, or increase, of that Fee.
c. The payment expectation for a given Fee is either:
   a. Mandatory, in which all members must pay the fee, or
   b. Optional, where members have a choice to Opt-out of the fee during the designated opt-out period.
d. There are four types of Student Activity Fees:
   a. **SGPS Fees**, which are mandatory fees strictly limited to the upkeep and operation of the SGPS, SGPS programming, faculty specific programming, and capital projects
   b. **University and AMS Fees**, which are mandatory fees limited to the upkeep and operation of registered Queen’s University ("University") and Alma Mater Society ("AMS") services used by members of the SGPS.
   c. **Club Fees**, which are optional fees used to provide funding to ratified clubs under the AMS/SGPS Joint Club Office
   d. **External Fees**, which are optional fees used to provide funding to organizations external to the SGPS, Queen’s University, or the AMS.

**B. Eligibility of Groups to receive Student Fees**

**Background**

Generally, this section outlines how groups/projects fall within each of the fee categories and provide restrictions on what fees can be used for. This was a controversial section when it was originally proposed because it made charities and issue-advocacy groups ineligible for funding. The new policy does away with a number of these restrictions—ultimately it’s up to student to decide what to fund through a referendum.

**Policy Goals of the Section**

Mostly to create principled divisions between categories of student fees and ensure that student fees are spent in a matter consistent with member’s wishes and the SGPS mandate. This would be consistent with the university board protocol on student fees.
Differences from the Existing Policy

The old system did not have principled reasons to classify a fee as a mandatory or optional fee—it depended completely on the forms the group filled out and whether or not they won the referendum. This led to the weird situation where you would have optional SGPS fees that funded important services along with mandatory fees that funded niche clubs. Fees for political parties and groups that have salaried employees are no longer eligible under our system.

Proposed Changes

P.1.2.3 Eligibility

a. Only eligible groups are entitled to establish or receive a Fee.
b. The eligibility of a group to receive a Fee is determined by the Finance and Services Committee (“Committee”) and is assessed each year for both prospective Fees and pre-existing Fees.
c. A group that satisfies each of the following requirements, as outlined in the following Subsections P.1.2.3.c.a, and P.1.2.3.c.b, affirmed with a 2/3 majority of the Committee shall be deemed to be eligible:

   a. The group shall satisfy each of the requirements for any of the following categories of fees:
      i. A group’s Fee is an eligible SGPS Fee if:
         1. The fee is proposed by the SGPS Executive to the Committee, and
         2. The fee is for the purpose of either:
            a. The SGPS Society Fee;
            b. The funding of a single SGPS service;
            c. The funding of a single SGPS fund;
            d. The funding of a member Faculty or Departmental Society;
            e. The funding of the SGPS Health and Dental Plan;
            f. The funding of a membership to a provincial or national student advocacy body; and,
            g. The funding of a single capital project.
      ii. A group’s Fee is an eligible University and AMS Fee if:
         1. The group proposing the fee is either Queen’s University or the AMS;
         2. The fee is for the purpose of funding a service or body controlled by either Queen’s University or the AMS;
         3. There is no duplication between the service offered and an existing SGPS program, office, commission, or service; and,
         4. The dollar value of the Fee is demonstrably connected to the benefit of the service to SGPS members.
      iii. A group’s Fee is an eligible Club Fee if:
         1. The group proposing the fee is a ratified club under the Joint SGPS/AMS Clubs Office;
         2. The club proposing the fee does not:
            a. Engage in partisan advocacy for a political party; or,
            b. Fund a salary of an employee.
               i. For the purposes of this section, ‘salary’ means compensation for fulfilling the terms of employment calculated on a set, yearly amount.
         3. The club for which the fee is for is inclusive of all SGPS members and all SGPS members shall be eligible to be involved in the group or receive benefit from the group’s activities; and,
         4. The dollar value of the fee is demonstrably connected to the benefit of the service to SGPS members.
      iv. A group’s Fee is an eligible External Fee if:
         1. The group proposing the fee is an organization external to control by the SGPS, Queen’s University or the AMS;
         2. The organization proposing the fee does not:
            a. Engage in partisan advocacy for a political party; or,
            b. Fund a salary of an employee.
               i. For the purposes of this section, ‘salary’ means compensation for fulfilling the terms of employment calculated on a set, yearly amount.
         1. The organization for which the fee is for is inclusive of all SGPS members and all SGPS members shall be eligible to be involved in the group or receive benefit from the group’s activities; and,
2. The dollar value of the fee is demonstrably connected to the benefit of the service to SGPS members.

   b. The following conditions further restrict eligibility:
      i. No athletic team is eligible to receive a Fee;
      ii. No SGPS, AMS or University committee is eligible to receive a Fee;
      iii. No group shall be eligible for more than one Fee;
      iv. No group, except for the SGPS itself, shall be eligible to obtain a fee for the purposes of a single, one-time capital purchase;
      v. Fees must be used overwhelmingly for the purpose to which a group has applied for their creation;
      vi. Fees must overwhelmingly be used within the year they are collected; and,
      vii. No commercial or otherwise for-profit group or organization may be eligible for a Fee.

d. The Fee from an eligible group shall be classified for the purposes of ratification as either an SGPS Fee, University and AMS Fee, Club Fee, or External Fee according to the category satisfied in meeting its eligibility requirements.

e. Where a group does not meet eligibility requirements as determined by the Committee, the VP Finance & Services shall notify the group with reasons for the decision and offer the group forty-eight (48) hours to amend and resubmit its fee proposal for reconsideration by the Committee.
   a. This shall not permit any group from extending a deadline for elections or referendums as set out by the SGPS CRO.

C. The Referendum Process

Background

Outlines the process for putting fees to referendum, review and timelines. The proposed process is largely the same from the previous policy—only with more clarity and the creation of a nomination package that would be sent to SGPS members to allow them to evaluate groups before the vote.

Policy Goals of the Section

The key thing here is having very clear rules and timelines for approving fees so that fairness is maintained between groups. Generally, the rules should be pretty rigid so the SGPS has to provide a consistent playing field for referendum campaigns.

Differences from the Existing Policy

Largely the same, but we’ve dropped the requirements to get onto the ballot, but raised the standards of succeeding at referendum. Fees still go for review every three years, but now require a 2/3 majority. The committee felt that this requirement would ensure that fees enjoyed wide support before they were added to every member’s bill. This is also a built-in safety mechanism to prevent the passing of dubious capital projects (namely the Queen’s Centre spending scandal of the early 2010s) and the diversion of university fees for specific services into operating revenues. The policy also creates an application package for groups that is made available to members so they can make informed votes during the referendum.

Proposed Changes

P.1.2.4 Establishing, Increasing and Renewing Student Activity Fees
   a. A referendum on a Fee is required in order to:
      a. Establish a new Fee; or,
      b. Increase the dollar value of an existing Fee.
   b. All Fees, except those Fees outlined in P.1.2.4.d (Special Rules for SGPS Fees), must be passed by a 2/3 referendum vote held at the same time and on the same system as the annual SGPS executive election as outlined in B.10:
      a. A fee that fails to achieve the requisite 2/3 majority results in a referendum is cancelled, with any uncollected or withheld funding reallocated to the SGPS Bursaries and Grants Program.
      b. For further clarification, the length of the campaign, validation and nomination period are subject to the regulation of the SGPS Chief Returning Officer (“CRO”).
c. **Expire of University and AMS Fees, Club Fees, and External Fees** – Fees deemed to be “University and AMS Fees”, “Club Fees”, or “External Fees” under P.1.2.3.d shall expire after three (3) academic years following a successful referendum result.
   a. During any academic year of a Fee’s collection, the group may apply under either P.1.2.4.e or P.1.2.4.f to establish a new Fee or increase an existing Fee for the next three (3) academic years following that referendum.
   b. For further clarity, should a group with an existing student fee apply under either P.1.2.4.e or P.1.2.4.f, to establish a new Fee or increase an existing Fee, but fail to achieve the required votes in a referendum, the existing Fee shall continue uninterrupted until the conclusion of the original three (3) academic years.

d. **Special Rules for SGPS Fees** - Fees deemed to be “SGPS Fees” under P.1.2.3.d shall have unique rules that govern the expiry of Fees, establishment of new Fees, and increases in existing Fees.
   a. **Non-Expiration of SGPS Fees** – SGPS Fees shall not expire and shall not be subject to renewal by referendum.
   b. **Establishment of New SGPS Fees** – The process for establishing a new SGPS Fee shall require a 2/3 referendum vote as outlined in P.1.2.4.b and follow the ratification procedures as set out by P.1.2.4.e.
   c. **Increases to Existing SGPS Fees** – The VP Finance and Services may unilaterally increase the amount for an existing SGPS Fee on the coming year’s fee slate only if:
      i. The increased fee is either:
         1. The SGPS Society Fee and the increase is less than or equal to five per cent (5%);
         2. For the purpose of funding the SGPS Health and Dental Plan; or,
         3. For the purpose of funding membership to a provincial or national student advocacy group and the increase is less than or equal to five per cent (5%).
      ii. All other increases to existing SGPS Fees not enumerated under the conditions set by P.1.2.4.d.c.i shall require a 2/3 referendum vote as outlined in P.1.2.4.b and follow the ratification procedures as set out by P.1.2.4.f.

e. **Establishing New Student Activity Fees** - For a new Fee to go to referendum, the Fee and its recipient shall satisfy each of the following conditions:
   a. The group must be an eligible group as designated under P.1.2.3;
   b. The group shall submit a Fee Proposal Package to the Committee no later than the last day of the nomination period as set by the CRO under P.9.
      i. This package, created to assist in the Committee’s determination of eligibility, shall contain:
         1. A written description of the group or organization seeking the Fee and specific purpose for which the Fee revenue will be used;
         2. A detailed budget and financial information that clearly indicates how the fee will be spent;
         a. For further clarification, registered charities and non-profit organizations shall include their most up-to-date annual report and audited financial statements.
         3. A petition that specifies the Fee to be established and bears the signatures of at least 7.5% of ordinary Society members, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in B.10 and P.9, delivered to the CRO;
         4. A detailed report answering the following questions:
            a. Why is your group seeking a Fee?
            b. What direct benefit will SGPS members derive from granting your group a Fee?
            c. How is the dollar value of the Fee related to the benefit you are proposing to provide?
            d. When was your group established?
            e. If you have collected a Fee in the past, what initiatives and/or opportunities have you provided the Queen’s Community with the collected funds?
      5. Answers to any other questions as prescribed by the Committee included in the nomination package.
   c. Upon completion of the requirements as laid out in Subsections P.1.2.4.e.a and P.1.2.4.e.b, Council shall require a majority vote to add the Fee to the referendum ballot.

e. **Increasing a Pre-Existing Student Activity Fee** - For a currently established Fee to be increased at referendum, the Fee and its recipient group shall satisfy each of the following conditions:
   a. The group must be an eligible group as designated under P.1.2.3;
   b. The group shall submit a Fee Proposal Package to the Committee no later than the last week of January of a given academic year.
      i. This package, created to assist in the Committee’s determination of eligibility, shall contain:
         1. A written description of the group or organization seeking the Fee and specific purpose for which the Fee revenue will be used. This description shall not exceed 500 words.
         2. A detailed budget and financial information that clearly indicates how the fee will be spent;
a. For further clarification, third-party organizations to the SGPS, AMS or Queen’s University shall include their most up-to-date annual report and audited financial statements.

3. A petition that specifies the Fee to be established and bears the signatures of at least 10% of ordinary Society members, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in B.10 and P.9, delivered to the CRO;

4. A detailed report answering the following questions:
   a. Why is your group seeking a Fee increase? What circumstances have changed to necessitate a change in your Fee?
   b. What direct benefit have SGPS members derived from your Fee?
   c. Is there any added benefit SGPS members will receive as a result of an increase in your Fee?
   d. When was your group established?
   e. What initiatives and/or opportunities have you provided the Queen’s Community with the funds collected? Will these initiatives change with the increase to your Fee? If so, how will they change?
   
   c. Upon completion of the requirements as laid out in Subsections P.1.2.4.f.a and P.1.2.4.f.b, Council shall require a majority vote to add the Fee to the referendum ballot.

  g. Cooling off period – A group may only apply for an activity fee twice out of every three (3) academic years.
     a. This period is waivable upon a majority vote of the Committee.

   h. All sections of the Fee Proposal Package that do not include sensitive personal information shall be made publicly available to society members for review during the referendum period.

D. Reporting Obligations

Background

Outlines the process for groups with existing fees to submit updates on the use of student dollars.

Policy Goals of the Section

Rules need to balance the need for accountability for student dollars with accessibility for groups to provide information for the committee’s review. More sophisticated parties have a higher burden of demonstrating what they have been doing with student money.

Differences from the Existing Policy

Groups that receive a fee must now file a report each year on their activities with the SGPS. This is to ensure that groups are spending student fees in a manner consistent with the purpose they originally applied for the fee under.

Proposed Changes

P.1.2.5 Continuous Reporting Obligations, Cancellation and Reallocation of Fees

a. Continuous Reporting Obligations - All eligible groups who obtain a Fee through the SGPS must comply with the continuous reporting obligations in order to continue to receive disbursements of that Fee. Failure to submit the required documents by the prescribed deadline or refusal to submit complete information will result in the suspension of the fee according to P.1.2.5.d.

b. A group’s continuous reporting obligations will be subject to any of the following standards congruent with the classification of the fee under P.1.2.3.d.
   a. SGPS Fee continuous reporting obligations shall consist of:
      i. Adhering to the SGPS By-Laws and Financial Policy disclosure obligations.
   b. University and AMS Fee continuous reporting obligations shall consist of:
      i. An annual report containing:
         1. Usage and participation statistics for the service or body by Society members;
         2. Financial information on how the fee was spent for that year; and,
         3. A list of any Material Changes (as defined by P1.2.1.e) to the group receiving the Fee.
4. A letter from the group naming the executive team or coordinator along with their contact information;

c. **Clubs Fee** continued reporting obligations shall consist of:
   i. A letter from the Joint AMS/SGPS Club Office certifying the ratification for the coming academic year;
   ii. An annual report which contains:
      1. A summary of the club’s activities over the past year demonstrating how it involved SGPS members and a description of how the fee has been used;
      2. A description how the club’s activities perform a unique service or create a unique space not provided by existing SGPS, AMS, university or other fee-funded services
      3. A letter from the group naming the executive team along with their contact information;
      4. Annual financial statements/bank statements for the previous year;
      5. A budget for the previous year; and
      6. Any other financial information as to verify that disbursed Fees were used for their intended purpose.
   iii. A proposed club budget for the coming year; and,
   iv. Any other information as requested by the Committee to aid in the determination of the Fee’s continued eligibility.

d. **External Fee** continued reporting obligations shall consist of:
   i. An annual report which contains:
      1. A summary of the organization’s activities over the past year demonstrating how it involved SGPS members and a description of how the fee has been used;
      2. A description how the club’s activities perform a unique service or create a unique space not provided by existing SGPS, AMS, university or other fee-funded services
      3. A letter from the group naming the executive team, board of directors, or leadership team along with their contact information;
      4. Financial information depending on the sophistication of the group:
         a. **Registered charities and non-profit organizations** - The most up-to-date annual report and audited financial statements.
         b. **All other organizations** - Annual financial statements/bank statements for the previous year.
   ii. A proposed budget for the coming year; and,
   iii. Any other information as requested by the Committee to aid in the determination of the Fee’s continued eligibility.

c. All Groups required to report materials including annual reports, financial statements, yearly budgets, etc. under P.1.2.5.b to the Committee must do so no later than March 1st of each year.

E. **Suspension and Cancellation**

**Background**

This outlines the process for suspending, cancelling and appealing fees under the system. The previous policy was hilariously lopsided, with the VPFS able to unilaterally suspend Fees without notice and no firm boundaries for what was the effect of suspension vs. cancellation overall. There’s a lot that is good to work off of here, but we’ll need to come together as a committee to find something everyone can be happy with.

**Policy Goals of the Section**

This procedure needs to be incredibly rigid to prevent the abuse of discretionary powers by the VPFS. There should be clear rules for timelines, appeals, notice to groups, and the effect of suspension vs. cancellation. It is vital that we prevent situations like the unilateral cancellation of the KCAP fee from occurring again.

**Differences from the Existing Policy**

Significantly less discretion afforded to the VPFS in the cancellation and suspension of Fees. Council and the Committee now control both processes—which eliminates unilateral decision-making which has gotten the SGPS into trouble in the past. Provides for an appeal mechanism so that groups have ample time to correct mistakes or misuses before their fee is cancelled.
Proposed Changes

Note that this continues off of the previous section

d. **Suspension of Fee by the Committee** - A Fee shall be deemed suspended if:
   a. A group receiving a Fee no longer fulfills the eligibility requirements for that Fee as set out in P.1.2.2 and P.1.2.3; and/or
   b. A group is not complying with the continuous obligation requirements as set out in P.1.2.4.

e. If a Fee is suspended by the Committee, the group will be notified by the VP Finance and Services of the suspension immediately. All best efforts shall be made to contact the group facing suspension.

f. The VPFS shall report to Council on the issuing of a suspension at the next Council meeting.

g. A group with a Fee suspended shall not receive any future or outstanding disbursements of the Fee in question, however, the fee shall continue to be collected by the SGPS until such suspension is lifted or the fee is cancelled per this section.

h. The VP Finance and Services shall call a meeting of the Committee within 30 days of the suspension and invite the suspended group to the meeting to discuss the reason(s) for suspension.

i. **Removing Suspension** – Once the group has been provided with the reason(s) for suspension and how it can re-instate its Fee at the Committee, the group will be given 60 days to bring itself in compliance with P.1.2 unless they have received an express extension from the VPFS.
   a. If a group corrects the reason for suspension, the Committee shall meet to review the group’s progress and shall reinstate the fee upon a majority vote.

j. If a group does not correct the reason for suspension within the 60-day period, the Committee shall make a report to Council that is to be presented at the next council meeting providing for:
   a. The name of the group;
   b. The classification of the fee for that group;
   c. The reason(s) for suspension;
   d. The current status with respect to correcting the reason(s) for suspension; and,
   e. A recommendation to council on how to proceed.

k. **Permanent Cancellation** – If the Committee recommends final cancellation of the fee, a motion shall be brought forward to Council by the VPFS seeking cancellation of the fee.
   a. Cancellation of a fee is only permitted when recommended by the Finances and Services Committee, and requires a majority vote of Council.
   b. Only Fees that are suspended may be cancelled.

l. **Cancellation of Fee by Group** – If a group requests to no longer receive a Fee, the VP Finance and Services may immediately cancel the Fee and provide a letter at the next council meeting to council outlining why the Fee was cancelled.
   a. Cancelled Fees shall be removed from the University Fee Slate at the earliest possible time and the SGPS shall neither collect nor disburse all monies related to the cancelled fee.

m. **Reallocation of Fees** – If a Fee is cancelled and there are remaining, undisbursed funds, those funds will be permanently withheld from that group and reallocated to the SGPS Grants and Bursary Program for that given fiscal year.

n. **Mistake in Cancellation** – If a Fee that is neither suspended nor cancelled is removed from the University Fee Slate (and is thus not collected for the year), the SGPS shall disburse a reasonable amount calculated on the basis of the dollar value of the fee and the average opt-out rate for that fees in that year.