



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Representatives  
December Council Meeting 2017

[No reports submitted]



Dear Council,

Whether you're writing exams, grading exams, or finishing end-of-term assignments, December can be a stressful time of year. No matter what's keeping you busy, don't forget to carve out time in your schedule for your own wellbeing. I'll remind you that students on the SGPS Health and Dental Plan have \$500 of coverage for mental health support. Our Student Advisor Program also remains ready and able to support students experiencing academic issues. In any case, you're only days away from a much-deserved break – best of luck with the final stretch! Below are my key updates since the Fall General Meeting.

### **JDUC Redevelopment**

I have been visiting departments over the past week to discuss the JDUC and answer questions that students have about the project. I am pleased by the level of engagement departments have shown, as well as the predominantly positive feedback received to date. If you have not yet set up a time for me to speak with your department, please do so soon (we can schedule something for early in the new year). Separately, I continue to work closely with the AMS and University on a memorandum of understanding that will formalize details of the project, including funding sources and project governance.

### **Electoral Engagement**

It is my view that improving voter turnout and increasing the number of candidates for elected positions is integral to the viability of the Society moving forward. The Committee on Electoral Engagement held a productive meeting that yielded a range of initiatives to address this issue. Among other things, we are hoping to incentivize voting through free coffee, and increase candidates by strengthening promotion of the positions, compensation, and skills gained. If you will remain an SGPS member next academic year, I'd strongly encourage you to learn more about executive-level positions and consider running. We will be holding an information session in January, but I would also be happy to speak privately with anyone who is interested.

### **Principal Woolf**

As you may know by now, Principal Woolf has announced that he is no longer seeking a third term (his current term ends June 30, 2019). This announcement brings an end to the work of the Joint Board/Senate Committee to Review the Principalship, and triggers the formation of a search committee for his successor. On behalf of the SGPS, I want to thank Principal Woolf for his extensive service to Queen's. I look forward to continuing to work with him in the coming months to strengthen the graduate and professional student experience.

### **Town-Gown Relations**

The University has formed a Community Partners Working Group, in conjunction with other initiatives being undertaken simultaneously, to address large-scale parties that have become commonplace on Homecoming (and St. Patrick's Day, among others). In addition to safety concerns for students themselves, these activities put a dangerous strain on police, ambulances, hospitals, firefighters, and other community services. I do not believe that graduate and professional students are the primary culprits of this behavior. However, it is imperative that students recognize they are part of a larger

Kingston community, and that we all bear a responsibility to act as good citizens who help, not hurt, that community.

### **I Love First Peoples Shoebox Drive**

The inaugural shoebox drive for the Kingston chapter of I Love First Peoples has come to a successful end. Due in large part to the efforts of many of you, we collected over sixty shoeboxes at our offices. These packages will now be brought to children in indigenous communities, with the goal of promoting the value of education and addressing absenteeism rates. Thank you for organizing drives in your departments, and making a real contribution to reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

That's all for now – please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam Grotsky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Adam" written in a smaller, more compact script than the last name "Grotsky", which is larger and more prominent.

Adam Grotsky  
President  
Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
[president@sgps.ca](mailto:president@sgps.ca)



Dear council,

Thank you whole heartily for all of your work this semester. You are a wonderful group of student leaders.

My report this month is brief since most of my updates are discussion topics that we will revisit throughout the agenda. Though, I have attached some reminders below from previous reports.

I hope you have a productive and relaxing Holiday break. See you in the new year!

### **Student & Supervisor Relations**

Student and Supervisor Relationships are at the forefront of several issues and concerns we receive from our members. Adam and I are in the process of working through some solutions on how to ease these relationships. We are looking for feedback from you and your departments, so please contact us if you would like to share stories, experiences or suggestions on how to approach this academic issue.

### **Non-traditional Thesis Support**

Queen's University has been implementing several new thesis formats. Some formats include, projects based and creative research and monographs\*. We are looking for feedback from members who may be doing a non-traditional thesis, and some of the support they may need. Some examples may include, creating an interactive website but no access to platforms or funds to host it; creative project but limited funds or limited space/studio to produce work. I foresee this impacting our humanities and social sciences, though any feedback would be greatly appreciated as this is a new idea.

\*While monographs are normal in the sciences, it is very unusual for doctoral students to create a monograph in the social sciences and humanities. Though, this is becoming an option for several social sciences and humanities programs and departments.

If you have any questions about this report, please send me an email at [vp.graduate@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.graduate@sgps.ca).

All the best,

Stéfy

Stéphanie McKnight (Stéfy)  
Vice-President (Graduate)  
SGPS  
[vp.graduate@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.graduate@sgps.ca)



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Vice President Professional  
December Council Meeting 2017

Dear SGPS Council Members,

I hope everyone is having a good end to their first semester. If you have exams at this time, I wish you all the best, if you don't, I wish you all the best with whatever you might have at this time, because it always seems that no matter which department there is something huge that is due in December.

The biggest thing I want to report to the Council is the SGPS Careers Week that is happening next semester. The date is tentative, but right now it looks like it will be happening the week after Reading Week. Again, this is tentative, and prone to change. I have been looking through the calendars and schedules of the various departments to determine when the largest number of SGPS students will be on campus and available to take part in Careers Week. If you know that your department has huge events in this time that would take away from attendance please do not hesitate to let me know so that I can try and arrange for another time that works better, subject to the input from the other departments.

For Careers Week, I am keeping the staples from the past couple years, such as LinkedIn sessions and headshots. However, I am focusing on experiences and skills that students can put on their resumes for job applications. So, I have looked into workshops and seminars that will give out certificates or other recognitions for completion to the students that take part in them. These will be targeted for both graduate and professional students. The other large element I am looking to incorporate is bringing graduates and other professionals who can assist graduate students that maybe are not looking to enter into academia. I want those types of graduate students to get the help they need to enter into the professional sector from the graduate area of school. If there are any other suggestions from the Council on things they wish to see in Careers Week, I am all ears since I want to tailor this Careers Week to the necessities of the students as a whole.

The other large element is continuing with the facilitating of the Law-Med Mixer. I know last time that there were some Council members that expressed interest from their department to socialize with other departments. I would love to hear from you so that I can start the process of connecting the two departments to begin the discussions for possible social events. Please email me if your department is interested so that I can keep a record of the specific departments. Concerning the Law-Med Mixer, it is currently at the point of funding, and we will be going forward with that to get this event funded and ready for the students.

There have been some concerns raised by professional students about exam software being charged every year by the departments. I am raising this with ITSAC to see if there is the possibility of the school purchasing the software and freely delivering it to the students, similar to Microsoft Suite. If there are other departments that have been having the same concerns, I would love to hear from them, as the more departments and students that voice this concern, the more the IT committee will be swayed.

That is more or less the major points that I wanted to bring to everyone's attention. I wish everyone a great Winter Break and enjoy your holidays.

All the best,

Russell Durward

Vice-President Professional  
vp.professional@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Vice President Finance & Services  
December Council Meeting 2017

Dear Council,

As much of the last month has been spent keeping up with the daily tasks of Bursary & Grant Submissions and student inquiries there is not much for me to update you on.

**Finance Committee Refresh**

We are looking for a number of individuals to join the SGPS Finance & Services Standing Committee from January 2018 - May 2018. As a member of this committee you will vote on all Bursary, Grant and Sponsorship applications received by the SGPS. The Committee functions almost entirely through email but in-person meetings may be required on an infrequent and as needed basis. Time commitment is roughly 2-3 hours per month.

The Committee is open to students at large, meaning both council members and non-council members are eligible to be on the Committee.

Please send an email expressing interest or any questions to Lauren Peacock at [vp.finance@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.finance@sgps.ca) by December 13, 2017.

**Upcoming – Year-to-Date Budget Review**

I will be conducting a Budget Review in conjunction with permanent staff in early January to assess Year-to-Date spending and ensure we are within our spending allocations.

That's all for now,

**Lauren Peacock**

VP Finance & Services

Society of Graduate & Professional Students (SGPS)



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the VP Community  
December Council Meeting 2017

Hello Everyone,

Its been 6 whole days since our last meeting so I only have a few quick things to report on.

#### Principles Advisory Committee on Mental Health

This committee met to discuss where we are at with recommendations that came out of the Principles Commission on Student Mental Health. With most of the recommendations being completed or in progress the committee has decided to create another set of recommendations and goals for us to strive towards. I would love to hear some feedback from council and members at large about what the university could be doing differently or better to help support student mental health. I have a few surveys done nationally and within Queen's itself to help me move some recommendations forward but quick notes from members go a long way. The committee will be meeting to come up with these new recommendations in the Winter term.

I also quickly wanted to give an update on the much-anticipated online booking system for Student Wellness Services. I asked about this at the committee and SWS director Jennifer Dods guaranteed me that this was still a large priority and they are in the works of creating the business case for the development of such a platform. The business case should be ready by the New Year and the platform is hopefully going to be launched along side the new SWS facility in the innovation and wellness center.

#### Health and Dental Plan Year End Meeting

The Executive met with our insurance broker (Student VIP) to discuss the year end report (Sept 2016 – August 2017). We continue to prioritize stability of the plan year over year to ensure prices remain low while coverage remaining as extensive as possible. As always feedback from members about the plan is encouraged since we will be sitting down in the New Year with our provider to review the plan and make any changes needed for next year. It is also worth noting that we are on contract with Student VIP for one more year after the current year we are in.

#### Orientation Week Review

As I have said in the past I am gearing up to make this review team and I would very much appreciate you sending me the contact info of the individuals who organize your departments Orientation week.

Thank You,

VP Community  
Tyler Morrison



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Council Speaker  
December Council Meeting 2017

Oral report to be presented at Council.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Graduate Student Senator  
December Council Meeting 2017

See confidential document attached for report.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Trustee  
December Council Meeting 2017

Hi Council,

The next Board of Trustees meeting is this weekend, December 15-16. I will present a written report to council for its January meeting.

If you have any questions/feedback for me to bring to the board and/or administration, please feel free to e-mail me.

Thanks,  
Adam  
trustee@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Athletics Commissioner  
December Council Meeting 2017

Dear Council,

This semester has flown by and was filled with diverse and fun events which included: sports hours, run and social events, a yoga class, several cooking workshops, intramural teams, an SHRC event, and a skating event. I started a Health and Wellness Committee and also sit on the University Council on Athletics and Recreation (UCAR) as well as the UCAR Budget Committee. This semester I have created partnerships with Queen's Health Promotion, Queen's Healthy Cooking Club, Queen's Peer Health Educators, and the Sexual Health Resource Center.

Next semester will build on some of the initiatives started this semester including: intramural teams (volleyball and dodge ball), more floor hockey sports hour events, a moonlit snowshoe, another skating event, monthly cooking workshops, monthly SHRC talks/workshops, a wheelchair basketball event, ongoing sports hours, and a continuation of the health tips written for the SGPS newsletter.

I am happy to take any suggestions or comments about future and past SGPS athletics and wellness events as well as general questions or comments about athletics and physical activity for graduate students. I can be reached at [athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:athletics@sgps.ca).

Sincerely,

Lindsay Ruiter

Athletics and Wellness Commissioner, SGPS



Dear Council,

I hope everyone is having a wonderful end to their semesters! I am incredibly excited to begin developing and promoting events for the winter semester, and will be beginning this process in early January. If anyone has any ideas for events or initiatives, or would like to create a space for collaboration, please let me know as I would be more than happy to incorporate ideas!

### **Winter 2018 Events**

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I have submitted my plan for Winter 2018 programming, and if approved, will include events regarding a call for indigenous artwork, various seminars and workshops regarding equity and diversity concepts, and a conference at the end of the semester! Stay tuned for updates as they come about next semester.

### **Equity Commissioner Office Hours**

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I have weekly office hours available for individuals to come and chat with me about equity issues, or anything else on your mind, in a confidential space. If you would like to meet in person, please feel free to send me an e-mail, and I will be sure to accommodate your request!

### **Questions, Comments, Concerns**

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Finally, if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or thoughts that you would like to share with me, please feel free to reach out to me at [equity@sgps.ca](mailto:equity@sgps.ca) !

I hope you all have a much needed rest during our winter break, and I look forward to seeing you all in January!

Warmest Regards,

Rosie Petrides  
Equity & Diversity Commissioner, SGPS



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the International Student's Affairs Commissioner  
December Council Meeting 2017

Dear Council,

Season's Greetings,

The month of November was fruitful in terms of three successful events (Grizzly Grill Social event on Nov 17; Workshop on "Work on/off campus for international students" on Nov 22, 2017; and SGPS "International Trivia Night" at Grad Club on November 30) with almost full capacity. The workshop on "Work on/off campus for international students" was organized on Nov 22, 2017 in collaboration with QUIC, Career Services, and SGS Student's Awards. We had resource persons from QUIC, Career Services, and SGS Student's Awards to provide information of different resources on campus/off campus for part-time work. The survey done by Career Services revealed that over 85% of those attending received new information of resources that they did not know if before. In an email post-event, Career Services recognized SGPS's International Commission for filling gaps in knowledge between students and university programs.

In addition to this, we, in collaboration with Martyna and Colette, organized "Social for international/domestic students at Grizzly Grill" on Nov 17 evening and "SGPS International Trivia Night" at Grad Club on November 30. Both the events were successful and we had more than 50 SGPS members showed up for both. We also participated in SGPS Health and Wellness Committee meeting on Nov 13 to see how we could improve the mental and physical health of SGPS members.

We (Khulud and myself) had several meetings with QUIC Facilitating staff to plan the workshop and social events in partnership so that it is win-win situation for everyone. The Holiday Social for Graduate Students is a cozy event for students to come and de-stress during finals. The event is planned for international students recognizing that many of them don't go home during the holidays to participate in festivities. The event will have hot chocolate, sweet treats, games and movie and is open to families as well to allow for everyone to have a good time.

Another goal we have set for our team is to promote our social media platforms through our event. At our Work on/off Campus workshop, students showed inclination to sign up through email to be informed about the Facebook Group where we post information about our events and such. Furthermore, we also make announcements at events to 'find' us on Facebook and join our group. In a couple of months, we will be able to report on the success of such strategies. SGPS International Students' Affairs Standing Committee (ISAC) second meeting was conducted with focus on the event planning for November-December month events and ISAC policy document revision.

Adam introduced us (Rosie and myself) to Vanessa, Queens Diversity and Inclusion coordinator. We had a meeting last week with her regarding the possible events in mutual collaboration with each. We hope to propose a big event on these lines in collaboration in Winter term.

We look forward to interacting with you all at the various events that will be hosted throughout the year. As always, we welcome any suggestions or comments, my email address is [international@sgps.ca](mailto:international@sgps.ca)

Best wishes for the semester,

Atul Jaiswal and Khulud Baig  
**International Student Affairs Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner**  
**2017-2018**



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Social Commissioner  
December Council Meeting 2017

Dear Council,

I have been away on placement for the month of November, however, I was lucky to have my Deputy Commissioner (Colette) step up to run our successful social events.

**Pool Night at the Grizzly Grill**

On Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, the SGPS organized a pool night at the Grizzly Grill. We had reserved a couple of pool tables and ordered some appetizers so that graduate students can come out and meet other graduate students while enjoying their Friday night. I was told that, in addition to some of our SGPS staff who came out for the event, we had around forty-five students in total come out! We received positive feedback from many of our students and overall, it was a very successful event. As a result of this, we are hoping to plan a second, similar event for our students next semester.

**Grad Club Trivia: International Theme**

On Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, the SGPS ran an “International-themed” trivia night. The Social Commissioners worked closely with the International Commissioners to come up with themes of questions that pertained to certain cultures. The winners of trivia received a gift basket that was full of SGPS swag and gift cards. Overall, it was also a very successful event and students reported to have a lot of fun. Some feedback that we received from the students was that, rather than asking questions from specific themes of cultures, it would be a good idea to randomize the questions even more to pertain to all parts of the world – good to know for next time!

**Upcoming Events:**

Due to the business of December and finals season, the Social Commissioners have once again teamed up with the International Commissioners to collaborate on a holiday movie/board games/appetizers event on Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm. Stay tuned for more information on this event – we will be promoting it very soon.

As always, I am happy to take suggestions and feedback in regards to future and past social events. I can be reached at [social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca).

I hope that everyone has a wonderful holiday season and happy new year. See you in January!

Sincerely,

Martyna Kamela  
Social Commissioner, SGPS



OFFICE OF THE RECTOR  
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON

Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the University Rector  
December Council Meeting 2017

[No report submitted]



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Chief Returning Officer  
December Council Meeting 2017

Oral report to be presented.