



Hey Everyone,

As my final council of the year I want to start by thanking everyone for a great year. As I ride into the sunset, I will surely miss the great work all of you and the SGPS do, but I am confident that the organization is in great hands as we dive into unprecedented times for student organizations. Just a few quick updates.

Student Choice Initiative

We have received the final policy directive from the provincial government, and it is very similar to what we thought it would look like. The most fundamental change will be the optional nature of the Society fee itself. In other words, the SGPS Society Fee which was previously mandatory that ensured everyone in an eligible program was an SGPS member, will now become optional. This means if students opt-out of the Society Fee they will not be considered SGPS Members. This means those individuals will not be able to use the services and programs not assessed as mandatory. For example, non-SGPS members will not be able to access our Grants and Bursaries, they will not be able to attend subsidized programming such as workshops, social events, and other SGPS run events. However, services offered through the SGPS that fall under the enumerated categories will continue to be mandatory and accessible to all students. For example, the Student Advisor program will continue to be a mandatory fee under the category of Academic Advising. This service will remain accessible by all graduate and professional students.

Switch to Student Care as our Insurance Provider

As many of you know our current contract with our insurance provider, Student VIP, expires at the end of August. After running an extensive process and meeting with multiple providers the Executive has chosen to select StudentCare as our new provider. StudentCare is the largest student-plan provider in Canada and has represented the AMS for several years. Their dedicated staff will make a real difference in the way our members interact with the plan, and their extensive knowledge of the industry will help to stabilize our health plan to ensure the most affordable premiums moving forward.

That's all for now, I want to thank everyone again for a great year!

President
Tyler Morrison



Hello Council,

Congratulations on the end of another academic year at Queen's University. For those of you that are graduating this summer I wish you all the best in your future endeavors. I would like to thank all of my fellow executive team members, the SGPS commissioners and deputy commissioners, our front desk staff, permanent staff and the student advisor team for all of their hard work this past year. While the new student choice initiative and funding cuts from the province will provide challenges this upcoming year I am confident our new team will be able to take them in stride.

Graduate Peer Support Centre

Hiring is now underway for our new Graduate Peer Support Centre (pending GM approval) and I look forward to working with our new coordinators and volunteers to chart out a future for our new service. Volunteer hiring will have another round in the fall term with the service looking to begin its pilot phase this summer. We will be constantly evaluating the GPSC this year to ensure that we are best serving our students.

Graduate Student Success Working Group

There are two more meetings of the Graduate Student Success Working Group and we will be producing a report in the summer that will bring forward what we hope to be substantial changes to graduate student life. Topic over the past few meetings have included; communications for graduate students; new student orientation; training; research opportunities; supervisory relationships; professional development and; wellness. I expect that we will gain new policies on many of these points that will allow for a better graduate student experience at Queen's.

Arts and Science Strategic Plan

The strategic plan for the faculty is now finished pending approval at faculty board later this month. The plan is centered around four themes: **Strengthening our Research Prominence; Enrich the Student Experience; Support Our People and; Transform our Spaces**. Each point has numerous recommendations and measures that will be posted online in a digital platform to hold the faculty accountable to making real changes. Some highlights are plans to create more programming to promote graduate and post-doctoral student research; review graduate student space utilization and allocation; work on training for graduate supervision for faculty; coordinate communications and more! I would like to thank the members of the working group and particularly Dean Crow in her leadership to finalizing this plan.

Council Re-Structure

In Today's package we have the council restructure motion to be considered by you all today. Over the course of this year and numerous consultations we bring forward a motion that will bring change to our governing body. I hope that we have a lively discussion about this and that your constituents read the package and bring forward questions on why this change is necessary.

Thank you all for a wonderful year I look forward to the next one.

Leo



Dear Council,

As my term comes to a close, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank everyone for what has been a great two years.

I know Ryan is excited to take over the VP Professional role and I look forward to continuing transition with him over the final weeks of my term.

There are no specific updates to the VP Professional portfolio, as the SGPS as a whole has been very busy over these past couple of weeks working to adjust our fees to fit into the new Student Choice Initiative, which is addressed in the President's report.

Sincerely,

Lauren Peacock

VP Professional

Society of Graduate & Professional Students (SGPS)



Council,

I hope everyone is doing well in this very busy time of the year. My updates are two folds. The first concerns the status of the bursaries and grants application. We have fully dispersed the Activity Bursary, Dental Bursary, and International Student Bursary and as such, the application portal has been updated to reflect this.

Update Regarding Ancillary Fees & Provincial Government “*Student Choice*” Mandate

The second update is with regards to the ancillary fee guidelines update that we received from the Ontario Government. Our prior speculative understanding that the SGPS fee will have to be broken down into two fees was correct. We are currently working with the administration, who are tasked with compliance of the Provincial Mandate, to reach an agreement on what our mandatory student fee will look like. What we currently know is that it will be a small percentage of the current \$100. One of the major challenges that we are currently facing is budgeting for the next fiscal year. Since we are unable to determine the exact number of SGPS members we will have next year, it is difficult to budget for line-items and projects. We have a rough idea of how many students opt-out of our optional fees and can draw an inference to project how many members we can expect to have for the 2019-2020 academic year. Nonetheless, we are anticipating a loss in monies collected by the SGPS which may have an adverse impact on vital SGPS services.

Happy to take your questions and best of luck on your upcoming exams and papers.

Abel Hazon
VPFS



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Campaigns & Community Affairs
April 2019

Dear SGPS Council,

Sadly, this is my last report to council as my term is coming to an end this month. I want to begin by voicing my appreciation for the commissioners and deputy commissioners over this past year. Catrina, Larkin, Atul and Beatrice have done a lot of hard work going to committee meetings, organizing events, and fostering community here among Queen's graduate and professional students. Their deputies - Tina, Fifi, Devon, Uchitta and Katie - have been much needed supports throughout the year. It's been an absolute pleasure working with all of them!

It is unfortunate that the VP Community position will be vacant once I go, but I encourage all of you to consider running for this executive position this fall, or even the new Supervisor position that has opened up for this summer that will work closely with the newly hired commissioners. It's truly been a rewarding experience this past year, and I'm happy to meet with students curious about the VP Community role to tell you more about the position (email me at isabelluce@gmail.com). Throughout this past year I have managed a team of nine students, had the opportunity to meet hundreds of incredible graduate students, created webinars with the School of Graduate Studies to introduce new students to Queen's, organized Orientation Week, repurposed the largely empty room that was JDUC 237 and created the SGPS Lounge (sourced all the lovely furniture that's currently in there), attended numerous meetings throughout the year where I learned so much about how Queen's is governed, and I've been able to lead a few initiatives that have been very close to my heart including the United Way winter donation drive. Being VP Community gave me the opportunity to work closer with The United Way, introduced me to CFRC as a board member, let me sit on hiring committees for Queen's faculty, allowed me to help advocate for the safety of graduate students crossing Sir John A. Macdonald Boulevard, and lead the organizing committee of the Queen's University International Women's Conference.

I've been working with the current commissioners to line up a few events for this month and the month of May, so that the transition between outgoing and incoming commissioners goes as smoothly as possible. Keep an eye out for new events. I also want to say that I've enjoyed serving you, the SGPS council, this past year and I wish you all the best over the summer months and throughout the next school year!

Sincerely,

Isabel Luce
SGPS VP Community



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Council Speaker
April 2019

Oral Report to be delivered.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Graduate Student Senator
April 2019

No report provided.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Trustee
April 2019

No report provided.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Athletics Commissioner
April 2019

No report provided.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Equity & Diversity Commissioner
April 2019

No report provided.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the International Student's Affairs Commissioner
April 2019

No report provided.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
April 2019

No report provided.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the University Rector
April 2019

No report provided.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Chief Returning Officer
April 2019

Position Vacant.