



Agenda

September 10th, 2019 - 5:30pm
McLaughlin Room, JDUC

Meeting called to order at 5:32 pm.

The Society of Graduate and Professional Students recognizes the traditional and ancestral territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Nations on whose lands we gather on today.

Meeting overview for new members: Meetings that need to be ratified, VP Community election hoping to start tomorrow, Announcements



Adoption of the Agenda

A. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION 19/09/08:1

BIRT SGPS Council adopt the Agenda for the September 10th, 2019 Council Meeting.

Moved: Ghani,

Seconded: President (Jeremy)

Unanimous pass



Minutes

A. BIRT the SGPS adopt the minutes from August 27th, 2019 Council Meeting.

Moved: Mandeep

Seconded: Mike

Passes unanimously



Executive & Speaker Reports

A. Executive Reports

- a. President – Jeremy Ambraska (oral report)
- b. VP Graduate – Leo Erlikhman (oral report)
- c. VP Professional – Ryan Adlem (no report)



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- d. VP Finance & Services – Abel Hazon (no report)
- e. VP Community – vacant (no report)

B. Speaker Report

- a. Speaker – Laura Culleton (no report)

C. Approval

BIRT SGPS Council approve the Executive and Speaker Reports.

MOTION 19/09/08:2

Jeremy:

- *We are trying to resolve the lack of food at council issue*
- *We want to thank the commissioners for a successful orientation week*
- *One last event is a boat cruise this Saturday – come join and bring your friends!*
- *Jeremy is reaching out to presidents of faculty societies (e.g. the LSS) to touch base and try to resolve a number of issues with the Student Choice Initiative (SCI) re: eligibility for members and voting (e.g. senators etc.)*
- *Update on membership fees: so far 11.8% of students have opted out, and we will not know final numbers until mid-october*
 - o *To be eligible for council, you need to have an SGPS membership, and therefore you need to pay the fee*
- *If you made a mistake, there will be an appeals process in October*

Leo:

- *The university is in the process of crafting a new on- and off-campus alcohol policy which would extend the purview of the university*
- *Right now, alcohol on and off campus is covered under the Student Code of Conduct*
- *At this time, most of our objectives have been resolved via Leo and Jeremy*
- *At this moment, it is possible that all orientation week activities may become dry, which includes graduate student events*
- *Leo has been told that all heads were consulted, but there seem to be some discrepancies with this. If you have concerns, please bring it up in the discussion later.*

- *The Graduate Peer Support Center requires a memorandum of understanding with the University for oversight on the services. The memo will be to clearly dictate our scope under the university in terms of delivering this service.*



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- *The Center has already been cleared by our insurance*
- *Hope to have it open soon: probably this month, possibly not by Sept 16 (the original deadline)*
- *If we do miss the deadline, it will be to ensure that we have proper levels of oversight etc.*

Ryan is away this week

Abel:

- *Nothing to say*
- *Happy to take questions regarding bursaries, grants, etc.*

VP Community is vacant

Laura (Speaker):

- *Nothing to report*

Move: Ghani

Seconded: Jeremy

Passes Unanimously



IV. Senator, Trustee, Commissioner, Committee & Other Reports

- A. Senator Report** – Graduate Student Senator – Courtney Bannerman (no report)
- B. Trustee Report** – Graduate Student Trustee – Leena Yahia (no report)
- C. Commissioner Reports**
 - a. Athletics Commissioner – Larkin Davenport Huyer (no report)
 - b. Equity & Diversity Commissioner – Penny Zhang (no report)
 - c. International Students Affairs Commissioner – Claudia Hirtenfelder (report attached)
 - d. Social Commissioner – Anthony Lomax (oral report)
- D. Committee Reports**



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E. Department Reports

F. Other Reports

- a. University Rector – Alex da Silva (no report)
- b. Chief Returning Officer – <Position Vacant> (no report)
- c. Supervisor - Uchitta Vashist (report attached)

G. Approval

MOTION 19/09/08:3

BIRT SGPS Council approve the Senator, Trustee, Commissioner, Committee & Other Reports.

Nothing to report from Senator nor Trustee

Claudia:

- *Similar report to August because the first few points are important*
- *We are trying to achieve a soft infrastructure rE: International Students.*
 - o *Trying to get more international students into graduate student councils*
 - o *Claudia encourages you to speak about getting more grad students into council*
 - o *Reasons include that at the national level, grad students have different experiences*
- *Soft infrastructure may include:*
 - o *every grad council having a point-person for international student (hoping to achieve this year)*
 - o *if someone already does this, please send their names to Claudia*
 - o *if you are in the process of doing so, please also let her know*
- *Claudia and Anthony are hosting a conference with the theme “Beyond Boundaries”*
 - o *These would include geographical and cultural boundaries*
 - o *A call for papers will be out next month*
 - o *Call for Sponsorships and Speakers is out this month*
 - o *We really want this to be a collaborative process:*
 - *Collette from SGS and Grad Chat is helping out*
 - o *A Sponsor could also sponsor a theme for a panel*
 - *E.g. Someone with a cool project in a department could sponsor a panel discussion on that topic*
 - *Sponsorships would be a cash donation or a small gift*
 - o *For more information, send any of the Commissioners an email!*



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- *In Oct/Nov/Dec, Claudia will organize 3 seminars centered on specific geographic locations from around the world*
 - o *If you have any ideas for locations or possible good candidates for this, let Claudia know!*

Anthony:

- *Orientation went really well*
 - o *Most events sold 90-95% of tickets*
 - o *It was overall a good time and great people*
 - o *Thanks to everyone who showed up and volunteered*
 - o *Thanks to the SGPS staff and exec members for help*
- *Sept 27 Lennox and Addington dark sky viewing with laser tour*
 - o *Infor and tickets on the SGPS website*

Penny:

- *Two workshops coming up:*
 - o *Sept 12th at 4:30 (with Equity office at Queens on equity and inclusion)*
 - *Tailored at SGPS leadership positions*
 - o *Sept 17th at 4:30 (bystander intervention training)*

Uchitta (summer supervisor)

- *We would like to know more about the visibility of our SGPS events, i.e. how much we reach out to grad students*
 - o *There are many posts up on social media each week, but for those who have not liked the SGPS pages, we don't know if they are getting the messages or not*
 - o *Please send an email to supervisor@sgps.ca if you have any information to help (Note: please now copy the VP Community at vp.community@sgps.ca as the supervisor position will be terminated upon the election being finished)*

Approval of reports:

Moved: Ghani

Seconded: Mike

Passes Unanimously



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NOTE: The following sections were proceeded in in this order during the meeting:

VII. Main motions

IX. Announcements

V. Question period & discussions

I will keep the minutes in the appropriate sections (so it is not exactly linear in time) because there is no overlap and this method of presentation will make it consistent with the meeting template.



Question Period & Departmental Issues

Discussion regarding alcohol policy

Leo:

- *We now essentially have a public position to the University:*
- *The SGPS has formally written to the university because this stage of the consultations are almost done*
- *Essentially over the last 1.5 year, the University has been trying to change their alcohol policies. The University has not been transparent on what studies they are referencing for reasons for changing.*
- *Our event sanctioning protocol is very robust, and so we have avoided a lot of regulation issues*
- *Overall, the idea is to move the needle to more responsible drinking and away from a “party school”*
- *Our sanctioning process will allow us to have some leeway, but as a note to the departments, we have a 1-year grace period before you must sanction your events through the SGPS.*
- ***From now on, you (including department events) should be going through the SGPS sanctioning for insurance and liability reasons***

- *The concept of graduate orientation is also included in this policy*



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- *We believe that we have the most inclusive orientation week on campus (e.g. including events for children and non-children, dry and wet events, etc.)*
- *The University believes they should extend the dry week from undergrad to university-wide. This would require no alcohol or substance use full stop.*
- *We have been meeting with the Grad Club and others who may be affected. For example, Orientation Week Trivia at the Grad Club would not be allowed, nor would department socials, etc.*
- *We and the AMS agree that undergrad orientation week should be dry, but the graduate orientation should have the option for wet events so long as there are also other non-drinking events*
- *It is our position that the grad orientation is often learning about lab groups, and technical/academic orientation; we believe it is a student right to also have social events during orientation week*
- *Any thoughts? Do you agree?*

Q: Should we share this info with our departments?

A:

- *YES!*
- *Public consultation will be by email only*
- *We (SGPS exec) will craft email templates to vocalize that we are adults*
- *We will host a public town hall with the AMS*

Q: How difficult would it be for individual events to get sanctioned

A:

- *Our sanctioning process is fair: sober contacts, locations, and a way to get people home*
- *We agree with the university that events where the sole purpose is to “get wasted” (e.g. a night events at Stages) would not be sanctioned*

Q: I am confused about why graduate students, who are for the most if not overwhelmingly majority are far above the age of majority

A:



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- *Peak harm [from alcohol / partying] is at 19 and drops over the age of 22. This is from 14-year data, Ontario population wide [from Leo]*
- *The University believes this policy will be more inclusive*

Q: Do they [the University] have any stats about grad orientation being bad for the image?

A:

- *We have a small events over the sample period of individual misconduct, but they were not large-profit*

Q: For the Grad Club Trivia example: No alcohol whatsoever?

A:

- *Our pub operators are taking the other side of this policy, which is drink limits at restaurants*

Q: Is this a matter of where the money is being spent?

A:

- *No, any event that is associated with the University would cover*

Q: Follow-up: If we as a cohort made a group that went out, would we face repercussions?

A:

- *If NAM [Non-Academic Discipline] has a complaint, it would be held against the organizer*
- *We think this should be a Level 1 misconduct, but the University thinks it should be Level 2*

Q: Don't you think Secret Events will just start

A: Yes, this is our argument

A: What about International Students who have not been told about the policy



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A: If the event was communicated among themselves as “grad students in Chem go to Ale for Orientation Week,” then yes, it would still could

Leo: The following are all still applicable under NAM during O-Week

- *All members*
- *On property or off campus*
- *Sanctioned activities*
- *Students, alumni guests, members*
- ***The leaders can be held if essentially in any way they did not actively prevent the event, and they should reasonably should have known about it***

- *The University is in agreement that our sanctioning policy, for the most part, is fine—maybe some changes like no hard liquor from drink tickets.*

Q: This comes off as very patronizing for grad students. Things that I have heard from new grad students is that there can be a lack of community. My concern is that it may ruin a sense of community for those students who do not have social networks.

A: Yes, we think adults should have a choice

Q: if the event was wet, and we did not apply for SGPS sanctioning, but the department helps distribute info to the event—

A: Yes

- *Essentially tenured faculty can do whatever they want to do, but student leaders cannot*
- *The university is trying to avoid people going to tenured Prof's houses and sleeping over etc.*
- *We are trying to bring people into the sanctioning process because it is seen by us and the university as a good system*
- *Outside of orientation week, there are small changes for the sanctioning process*



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Q: How would this even be policed?

A:

- *We did not get to bring our enforcement issue to the [table]*
- *We have successfully split the committee*
- *Enforcement would be: if there is a complaint (or something is picked up from the University's standard monitoring mechanism on social media), it is a complaint-driven system*
- *[i.e. complaints brought to NAM or found on social media would be processed]*

Q: For an event like formal, is that still the same?

A:

- *Yes, for the most part sanctioned events will be the same*
- *Overall, we have been much luckier than the pub operators, and we are working with the Grad club to help them: because we have no skin in the game, we have more leverage to help them*

Q: Can the SGPS sanction department events?

A:

- ***We should be taking these events in***
- *Our policy is that if you want harm reduction, we want to bring these events in*
- *We are working with Andria [SGSP Director] and the University to have an "event bank" which would have alternative activities or languages to help groups navigate the system easily*

Jeremy Comment:

- *From the tone here, I think it is important that we take the public consultation here properly*
- *Our opinions are:*
 - o *This does not improve safety*
 - o *It encourages unsafe events*
 - o *It is Patronizing*
- *I think the University is trying to do this behind the scene to avoid liability, and not actually to improve [??]*

Leo:



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- *Inclusivity is at the apex of the society [SGPS] as a whole*
- *We will also be bringing this to the Dean [of the SGS]*

Q: So just to be clear, this is any graduate event, and we can be held liable to the University even off-campus?

A:

- *What you are asking is a code question:*
 - o *If you are having a tequila at a bar, no problem*
 - o *If a general person could assume that this is an event, then problem*
- *Level 1 at NAM is where we prefer this to be*
 - o *This is already in our sanctioning process for restorative justice at Level 1, which can limit or eliminate the ability for them [the organizer] to sanction future events*
- *At Level 2 [what the University wants], two administrators and a random student at large would be brought together, and it can result in an academic sanction*

Q: I am very confused: if after our EGSS meeting, and we go to an "event," would we be in violation?

A:

- *It is a case-by-case, ambiguous system*
- *Most students are unaware of the code of conduct*
- *One of the recommendations I will have for the future is education about the code of conduct because everyone has to sign it*
- *So to be clear, generally the above would not be a problem*

OTHER QUESTIONS / TOPICS

Q: [From ECE department] Our rents have increased but it seems like the funding has stalled or decreased

Leo:



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- *Funding is under review at the graduate level*
- *Last year, when the SCI initiative was announced, it was said that we would not have any graduate student funding be cut*
- *We are now reviewing as the Grad student success working group report (final draft was approved and is coming to Council soon)*
- *The competitiveness of the process and the funding: our evaluation is that we are competitive but not peak competitive*
- *The Dean of graduate studies is now looking at it*
- *The report will go to the Board, but probably for a year from now as this stuff takes a while*

Q: [Rehab Society]: If you opt out of the SGPS fees, we were wondering if a Rehab Society student who pays the rehab fee but not the SGPS fee can also sanction events

Jeremy:

- *So for context, the ability to join a club as the SGPS pays student dollars to the AMS to get access to their clubs office*
- *This is separate from the Society fee.*
- *However, if you are involved in event sanctioning, you will have to pay to have access because it is a non-mandatory activity and uses SGPS resources*
- *This just means that the individuals doing the sanctioning process must pay SGPS fees*
- *We have made the case that event sanctioning was a safety issue, but this fight was lost with the University and so we cannot charge all students for this, so we have taken the position that it is a time-consuming part of the SGPS.*

Leo:

- *Also, insurance would not cover it*

Q-Follow-up:

- *If an incident does occur at a sanctioned event, what is the process of incident reporting?*

Leo:

- *The registered sober contact would file a report with Andria in the SGPS*
- *If there is an incident or harm occurring, our insurance would want to know the max amount of detail. If it were severe we would inform the University.*
- ***[Please] Be forthcoming with incidents to that we can be prepared***
- *The sober contact is also the person who can give an accurate overview of what happened*



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Q: Student opt-out for the new health sciences rep: should we say you must be an SGPS member to apply?

A: Yes. We already have that a person who pays the fees is a member, so no changes needed now [to policy]

Q: So people actually going to these events don't need to be members?

A: No, we do not require that. Moving forward, there may be a difference in price for members and non-member, but for now we just need a member for the insurance and sanctioning process

Q: Chem Eng has health and dental insurance concerns: Some students have written saying there was an increase in the fee but the coverage for dental and vision is going down (1000→850, 70 for optometrist, 200→150 for eyeglasses). We are concerned about the increase in fee and lower coverage and the three-year lock-in

A: Those are all correct.

- *Our old plan was undervalued; for example, people using the dental plan with the JDUC dentist coming in increased the number of people*
- *Also, with OHIP+ being reduced, we have to cover more*
- *We also switched because we [the SGPS] had to do a lot of work helping students with filing with the previous provider*
- *The goal in negotiation was to try to get the lowest rate and the most benefit*
- *We have locked in the current rate to be able to evaluate our profile of what we need over the next few years*
- *For the dentist specifically, if you go to a dental-network office you can get a discount. This was the best way we could make the plan work*

Q:

- *When do the conversations start for a new plan after this?*

Jeremy:

- *Probably at the end of Year 2*

Q-Follow-up: but for new ideas, e.g. the cost of a family plan for international students having to pay upfront while moving to a new country



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Leo: what specific ideas?

Q-Follow-up: like looking at the timing of the fees, or other stuff which I don't have off the top of my head. Basically, is there a way that we can send ideas to someone?

Jeremy: We are working with a broker and they are transitioning with us. The balance was difficult, we were trying to strike the best balance that we can between those accessing the plan and those we can use.

Leo: Example with our broker: when we started, we had no transition from the previous people, so StudentCare transitioned us (the exec), they become the best institutional memory for the plan for us. The previous person would not be able to give us the costs or expectations for new ideas, which was hard for us.

Q: [question was not recorded]

Jeremy:

- *There was a technical error they tried to send an email but IT fluffed it as a phishing attempt*
- *We have material in the office ready to go and we are going to try to resend the email*
- *We are trying to reach out and communicate with the stakeholders involved*
- *We are hoping that in 3 years this will reduce our impact. We know this is not as nice for a 1-year master's student but it is for the long-term*

Abel:

- *StudentCare has also been helping the AMS for the last 15 years, so they are invested in the Queen's community*

No further questions



Business Arising from the Minutes



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Main Motions & Discussion

A. Ratification of Council Meetings

MOTION 19/09/09:4

BIRT the SGPS ratify the following 2019 SGPS Council Meeting Dates and Report Due Dates:

Reports Due	Council Meeting
September 3 2019	September 10 2019
October 1 2019	October 8 2019
November 5 2019	November 12 2019
November 19 2019 (General Meeting)	November 26 2019 (General Meeting)
December 3 2019	December 10 2019
January 7 2020	January 14 2020
February 4 2020	February 11 2020
March 3 2020	March 10 2020
March 24 2020 (General Meeting)	March 31 2020 (General Meeting)
April 7 2020	April 14 2020
May 5 2020	May 12 2020

Moved: Courtney

Seconded: Ghani

Passes unanimously

B. Ratification of Voting Timeline for Vice-President Community

MOTION 19/09/08:5

BIRT the SGPS ratify the following voting schedule:

Day	Day(s) of the Week	Event
0	Tuesday	Council Calls By-Election



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1	Wednesday	Nominations Open
7	Tuesday	Nominations Close (at 4:00pm)
8	Wednesday	Campaign Period Begins (at 12:00am)
14	Tuesday	Campaign Period Ends (11:59pm)
15/16	Wednesday/Thursday	Voting Days

*Nominations would open September 11th

An updated schedule is shown on the screen to council to reflect the additional requirement for a council e-vote to ratify the ballot question the night that Nominations close (Day 7).

Moved: Courtney

Seconded: Mandeep

Jeremy:

- *This timeline means we can get the election done by the end of the month before the fee opt-out period is done*
- *We have had 4-5 emails of interest already*
- *I think it is important logistically for us to get this done*
- *Regarding voting, moving forwards only SGPS members will be allowed to vote, but for now we don't have a final list of members, and we will not have one until mid-October. Therefore, we will be allowing every grad student the opportunity to vote on this matter. We are hoping that this will improve engagement and it also makes the logistical side of things easier to deal with*

Passes Unanimously



Other Business



Notices of Motion & Announcements



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A. Announcement from VP Professional

There is a vacancy for a student-at-large on the Academic Integrity Roundtable. If anyone is interested, please contact Ryan Adlem at vp.professional@sgps.ca for additional information.

The above was stated.



Adjournment

B. Adjournment

MOTION 19/09/08:6

BIRT this meeting of SGPS Council be adjourned.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:40 pm.