



Hello everyone,

Hoping everyone had a safe and relaxing break.

Divestment

I believe that we had a fantastic debate at the December council meeting regarding whether the SGPS should join QBACC's divestment campaign. We also discussed whether the SGPS itself should divest. As promised, I am hoping to put the motions to a vote at the upcoming meeting.

Elections

Hopefully everyone is aware of the exec elections coming up. I would have that if you consider running for a position within the SGPS executive. If you are not personally considering running, if you know anyone who would make a great exec you should encourage them to run! A goal of this years executive is to ensure that we have a contested election for each position to ensure that students have a real choice at the polls.

SCI

At our last council meeting, I informed everyone that the SCI which had been struck down by the court was being appealed by the provincial government. What this means is that the SCI is not currently operational, but we may see a return of some version of it in the future. We are continuing to work with DSA and AMS to ensure that the SGPS is not caught off guard.

Jeremy



Hello Council

I apologize for the lack of reports in recent meetings and have a few things to bring up this week. I hope everyone had an excellent holiday season and would like to extend a warm welcome to all new students starting this term! this is my last term as the Vice President - Graduate for the Society of Graduate and Professional Students at Queen's University And I cannot thank all of those who have worked with me over the past 18 months enough! For those interested in this position I cannot stress how rewarding my 2 terms have been. you have the ability to make real change that will affect the lives of graduate students for years to come and are really able to serve the community well. any individuals interested in running for the position please do not hesitate to reach out to me And I look forward to transitioning my successor in the coming months. PLEASE RUN FOR MY JOB!

Organizational Changes and Updates

Now to get down to business, this last term will be an exciting term for me. the structural changes to the peer academic advisor program and the establishment of the graduate peer support centre have allowed for students to have multiple access points for peer support in times of crisis. I will be striking our committee to bring forward the by law and policy changes to the society's council for a final vote later this term. This will culminate the work that was started last year and allow the membership to decide what the society's future will look like. For those interested in being on this committee please reach out to myself or Ryan Adlem at vp.professional@sgps.ca who will be co-chairing the committee should you like to join.

JDUC

Next, The John Deutsch University centre redevelopment project is moving forward and I would like to report that we have made some great strides in developing this new building. I will be bringing to council some renderings for individuals to see what our space will look like and provide a brief overview of where the design process is at this moment. we are just about to sign off on the next stage of the buildings development and this will move us forward while we await the university's funding campaign for the building. Again, if you have any questions please feel free to reach out!

Meeting the Dean

Later on this month I will be meeting with the Dean of graduate studies in my final meeting before my successor is elected. topics on that meeting's agenda include international student tuition and the progress of the working group on graduate student tuition. a conversation about unifying orientation week for all graduate programs to allow for more pan-graduate programming to occur. we have received positive feedback from the Dean of arts and science that this can be possible within that faculty in the fall term. I would also like to gain some feedback on what people's thoughts about the fall are regarding the fall reading break and the subsequent changes to orientation week that have occurred because of it. The University is reviewing this policy and I would like to ensure that graduate voices are being heard on the matter.

Alcohol Policy

The last item I have to report on is that the alcohol policy has moved forward to the university's senior leadership team. This final policy draft includes a dry and substance free orientation week for all faculties and all programs starting the last week of August and moving into the 2nd week of September. this means that all programs and apartments and student organizers can be held in

violation of the University student conduct policy should they organise events with alcohol for students during this time. Jeremy and I have been lobbying members of the senior leadership team with hopes that this will result in a change allowing for sanctioned events with alcohol to occur during orientation week. With this new policy all events involving alcohol will require to be sanctioned via the SGPS in order to be covered by the society's insurance and to ensure students are not liable for actions under the code for compliant events.

Wishing everyone a great term and those running for election and fees the best of luck!

Leo



Hello everyone,

A very happy new year!

With the start of the new year, the SGPS has a number of events and activities lined up for you.

December 2019

2019 ended with some great winter events, we had hot chocolate, cookies and dogs, all at one place, organized by the Athletics and Social commissions. The international commission also featured academic student speakers, talking about their research on India and Ghana. Finally, the equity commission saw great interest from students who joined the SGPS Equity committee, that meets biweekly to discuss on various ideas to make Campus and Graduate student life more equitable. The committee is also involved in “equity consultation”, publicized on SGPS’s social media with the aim to have equity conversations with students as well as various stakeholders on campus.

January 2020

With the first day of school, the **2020-21 Executive election period** has started with full swing. This year, our community goal is not only to get more graduate and professional students running for executive position but also, more specifically, **encouraging equity seeking groups to join SGPS and get a more diverse executive team**. For this, the Equity commissioner, along with the equity committee, has organized **“Election Information booths”** on various targeted locations on campus such as QUIC (International center), McCory hall, JDUC and ARC. All election material and packages would be available on the booths, starting Thursday January 9th till Monday January 13th.

The social commission has lined up a series of fun activities, already published on our social media, starting with a tour of **“The Agnes”**. Social would also be hosting the popular **“Isabel Bader Center Concert Series”** with discounted prices for Graduate students in February.

The international commission would continue with the **“International Research Seminars”**, the first this term will be on the 20th from 5-7 at QUIC. We have three speakers: Canan Sahin (Political Studies), Hilal Hara (Geography), and Gaye Onuerer (Sociology) who will talk about their research on Turkey including research on Syrian Refugees, Youth and Precarity, and Academics working on Peace Advocacy. It promises to be an excellent conversation and there will be some cookies and coffee too. Other than that, five episodes of the **international podcasts** have been successfully released and Episode 6 will be released later this month.

Major activities coming up this term

The Equity commission is also back with the **“Diversity and Inclusivity film festival”**, previously conducted by the international commission for the last two school years. This would, again, be in collaboration with QUIC World Link program, and will showcase various films based on specific equity group with the hope of boosting Diversity on campus by having meaningful discussions and sharing knowledge/experiences. (Details yet to be released)

Beside the regular monthly social event, the social commission is also hoping to organize the SGPS’s yearly **“Winterlude trip”** to Ottawa in early February. This event is very popular and usually sells out, so our hope would be for the same this year. (Details yet to be released).

A team of 17 people is working on the successful implementation of the **“Beyond Canada conference”**. This month the team hopes to finalize the details of the social events, catering, posters, and workshops so that they are able to finalize the conference program early next month. You can see the updated draft of the program on the SGPS website. Speakers, Volunteers, Sponsors, and Keynotes have until the 20th of January to register and pay their conference fees. Thereafter, once we have been able to gauge final numbers, we will open-up registration for attendees.

The Athletics and wellness commission is on his way to organise the first ever **“SGPS Grad Games”** event. This event would be purely athletic and include various “in demand” games. The spaces for the event have been booked and we will start registration for teams very soon. If you have any question or suggestion regarding the same, now would be the time to email either myself at vp.community@sgps.ca or the athletics commissioner at athletics@sgps.ca .(More details yet to be released).



Dear Council,

Happy New Year!

The Committee have been working on promoting SGPS elections this past week. We are hoping to have a diverse range of candidates for each position and have been working towards encouraging students from underrepresented groups to run for SGPS elections. We hope that this year we will be able to have a full slate of candidates and have some more representation and perspectives in the running. Because the schedule of elections have been moved up a month from previous years, the timeline was tight. We hope that we've been able to reach a wide range of students.

I've also been working towards building up an equity network for this Commission. We are meeting with equity groups/representatives across the university and student groups. If your department has any equity representation we'd love to speak with them and build up this network across the university.

We are partnering with QUIC to host DIFF – four days spread across this semester for screening movies featuring diverse films. Our first film is this January 24 and the theme will be Lunar New Year. The event will be at 5:30pm and food will be provided – please join us! It's free and open to all.

Please look out for an open talk meeting at the Grad Club happening sometime later this month/early next month. This is an opportunity for us to discuss anything related to equity at the university in a safe and non-judgmental space. It's also an opportunity to meet with peers and share perspectives.

I am always open to any comments, questions, or suggestions and welcome any ideas for collaborative events. Please feel free to contact me at equity@sgps.ca.

Best regards,

Penny Zhang
Equity and Diversity Commissioner 2019-2020



Hello everyone,

Firstly, a very happy new year. I hope you all got some rest over the break.

As this is the first report for the Winter Semester, I will briefly outline what my goals are for this semester. In a nutshell, I hope to:

1. Release 4 more podcast episodes on [Beyond Canada](#)
2. Host 4 more international research seminars at QUIC
3. Lead the organization and successful execution of the Scholarship Beyond Boundaries Conference
4. Continue to develop the International Student Graduate Network
5. Continue to support International Student Advocacy
6. Continue to be part of conversations pertaining to international student affairs

I will now briefly give an overview of developments pertaining to each of these.

1. Beyond Canada Podcast

Five episodes have been successfully released and Episode 6 will be released later this month. I speak to Sean Marrs about espionage and the archives, unpacking some of the great work that he has been doing on France. If you or anyone you know is doing international research and/or collaborations and would like to be interviewed for the podcast, please feel free to get in touch (international@sgps.ca). I am currently developing posters to advertise these opportunities too.

2. International Research Seminars at QUIC

The January International research Seminar will be on the 20th from 5-7 at QUIC. We have three speakers: Canan Sahin (Political Studies), Hilal Hara (Geography), and Gaye Onuerer (Sociology) who will talk about their [research on Turkey](#) including research on Syrian Refugees, Youth and Precarity, and Academics working on Peace Advocacy. It promises to be an excellent conversation and I encourage you to join. There will be some cookies and coffee too.

I am waiting to confirm the dates and times with QUIC for the Seminars in February, March, and April. I would like to do the seminars on Nigeria, Costa Rica, and France. If you know of anyone doing research on these countries please ask them to get in touch with me (international@sgps.ca)

3. Beyond Boundaries Conference

We have a team of 17 people working on the successful implementation of this conference and I am happy to report that planning is moving ahead smoothly. This month we hope to finalize the details of the social events, catering, posters, and workshops so that we are able to finalize the conference program early next month. You can see the updated draft of the program on the [SGPS website](#).

Speakers, Volunteers, Sponsors, and Keynotes have until the 20th of January to register and pay their conference fees. Thereafter, once we have been able to gauge final numbers, we will open-up registration for attendees. Will keep you posted.

4. International Student Graduate Network

For the next two months my primary focus will be the conference. However, I am continuing to work on this network and this will be my primary goal in March and April. The more people we have in the network before the summer, the better, as we can then ensure that International Student Representatives are elected at the start of the new academic year. Once again, please send me the details of your International Student Representatives from your respective departments. (international@sgps.ca).

5. Support Advocacy

I remain committed to supporting the needs to groups who are advocating on behalf of international students. So far, this has primarily been the International Student Working Group. I have been attending their monthly meetings and they have invited me to join them at a meeting on the 10th of January with Principal Dean whereby they will discuss their group's agenda directly with him. If you know of any other advocacy groups directed at/for international students, please let me know.

6. Continue Conversations

In December I had a fantastic conversation with Matt Jalink, the Global Oncology Program Manager, about opportunities for future collaboration and conversations regarding international graduate students and collaborations. I also now have a monthly meeting with the Director of QUIC and I am in regular conversation with other groups and platforms on campus, such as Ban Righ and PSAC901, who have different mandates but who also have some that pertain to international students. I am doing my best to stay abreast of any developments in this regard. If you have any information that you think is important for international graduate students please let me know. Also, if there are any events or workshops that you think will serve the community I would be happy to share them via the [SGPS – International Student Affairs Facebook Group](#). If you haven't already, please feel free to join the group.

I am excited for this semester and I look forward to working with and learning from all of you.

Kindest regards,
Claudia Hirtenfelder
international@sgps.ca