I would like to provide updates on the following items.

**Alcohol Policy**

We are still waiting on confirmation from the senior leadership team regarding the status of the policy.

**Students with Children**

If you are a student with a child or know someone who is feel free to get them in contact with me. The school has struck a working group looking to explore what its like to be a student with a child at Queen’s.

---

SGPS President
Jeremy Ambraska
Hello everyone,

Commission work

An amazing team 17 people led by the international commissioner in collaboration with social and equity commissions, worked on the successful implementation of the “Beyond Canada conference”. The conference was a great success with an attendance of over 90 people—This includes speakers, sponsors, and volunteers and general attendees. The international commission is also in process to structure its “International graduate students network”. The idea behind this is that it will include department representatives, who will report to their departments’ Graduate Student Councils (or equivalent body), therefore the International Student Representative does not have to be an SGPS member (although that would be ideal) but they would need to stay abreast of international events and objectives within the SGPS as well as that of other bodies on campus (such as QUIC, SGS, etc.). Moreover, the 7th episode of Beyond Canada is now live – Ghana: An International Research Seminar. In this episode Claudia records an international research seminar in which three international graduate students discuss their research in Ghana. Priscilla Apronti (Geography) talks about renewable energy in Ghana, Joseph Braimah (Geography) discusses elderly care and James Kwateng-Yeboah (Cultural studies) delves into how God became Ghanian. A dynamic and thought provoking conversation with the audience then follows. You can access the audio via this link – https://podcast.cfrc.ca/2020/02/ep-7-beyond-canada-ghana-an-international-research-seminar/

The SGPS is also proud to organise its first ever “SGPS Grad Games” event. This event would be purely athletic and include various games like volleyball, soccer, dodgeball and basketball. It seems to be another highly popular event organised this year with 141 people already registered in 8 teams. The spaces for the event have been booked and all other planning including food, player t-shirts, scheduling etc. are underway.

The Equity commission is conducting its “Intercultural film series”, a collaboration with QUIC World Link program to showcase various films based on specific equity group with the hope of boosting Diversity on campus by having meaningful discussions and sharing knowledge/experiences. The very first one was organised around the “Chinese lunar new year” theme and the next one was around ‘Black history month’ shown at QUIC. The next one is planned for is on Friday March 13 at QUIC for a screening of the Bollywood film "3 Idiots". On Wednesday March 18, documentary, the equity commission has planned another screening & ice-cream social (joint event with law school club Outlaw) for a documentary screening "Of Love and Law" about LGBTQ+ law and activism in Japan. Finally, Monday March 23 has been planned for a speaker event with guest speaker -Hadiya Roderique, author of "Black on Bay Street". Hadiya will be speaking at Queen’s Law on the state of diversity in the legal profession! The event will be held in room 003 in the Law Building on March 23 from 1:00-2:30pm. For future events, the equity committee is also hoping to organise free coffee chat events to increase outreach. The aim is for the equity committee to have conversations with students on equity related issues and how the SGPs can better address them.

The grad community, despite having amazing talents, often lack platforms. So, the social commission has planed “SGPS got talent” showcase event for graduate and professional students on 15th march, right after grad games. The event is currently in its planning stage but registration for performers has started which ends on March 8th. Please feel free to email myself (vp.community@sgps.ca) or the social commissioner (social@sgps.ca) for any feedback or question regarding this. We are also offering reduced price tickets to the theatre event Mush Hole happening at the Isabel Bader next week: Created by award-winning dance artist Santee Smith, The Mush Hole is a powerful and timely performance that uses song, dance and theatre to explore the lives and spirits of children who were forced to attend Ontario’s Mohawk Institute residential school. For information about this event, including where to buy tickets, see https://sgps.ca/event/the-mush-hole/. You have until noon on Thursday to purchase tickets.
The advertisement for Fall-winter 2020-21 commissioners hiring has been rolled out. The four commissioner positions available for the upcoming year are International, athletics and wellness, Equity and diversity and social commission. The pay for incoming commissioners is 6000 dollars for the year. For more information regarding job profiles: refer sgps.ca or email myself at vp.community@sgps.ca.

We have another opportunity for those interested in sitting on an awards committee. As per SGPS policy (specifically all of P.6, which can be found on page 68 & 69) it is time for the Awards Committee to be formed and, as per policy, it is the responsibility of the Social Commissioner to chair this committee. For more information about these and other events, please email me (Anthony) at social@sgps.ca.

One of our ongoing goal is for a more collaborative and structured Fall 2020 orientation, an important project for current (myself) and incoming VP Community. In the initial meeting with the SGS, it was discussed that SGPS will get a time slot within the main SGS orientation held in the first week of September which has been confirmed now. SGS will also work on creating a memo that proposes alternative dates to the departments to conduct departmental orientations which could potentially help students with overlapping orientation sessions. Regular updates will be provided to departments, other stakeholders on campus and SGPS to have better communication this year around orientation plans.

The draft Campus Wellbeing Framework is the result of six months of consultations with students, staff and faculty. It represents the shared, wellbeing vision of more than 1800 Queen’s community members (33% undergraduate students, 17% graduate students, 35% staff and 15% faculty members) who told the project team that campus wellbeing is rooted in a culture of care, inclusion and respect, social connectedness, the places we learn and work, and in the multiple dimensions of personal health. Informed by community feedback, the project team developed a set of guiding principles and four priority areas of focus.

The project team is now seeking feedback on a draft Campus Wellbeing Framework. You can download the draft framework for review and comment on the draft framework on the links provided. 
https://www.queensu.ca/campuswellnessproject/community-review-draft-campus-wellbeing-framework

Uchitta Vashist
Vice President Community
Society of Graduate & Professional Students (SGPS)
Queen’s University
Kingston, Ontario
vp.community@sgps.ca
Members,

The following is the general summary of the bursaries and grants utilization as at Monday, March 2nd 2020

### Bursaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row Labels</th>
<th>Total applicants to date (Total last year)</th>
<th>Total $ Disbursed</th>
<th>Budgeted</th>
<th>Average Bursary (Maximum allowed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>11 (19)</td>
<td>4320.95</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>720.16 (800)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>23 (31)</td>
<td>3,790.50</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
<td>344.59 (450)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>45**(50)</td>
<td>5,400.00</td>
<td>7,500.00*</td>
<td>200.00 (200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports/Activity</td>
<td>18 (49)</td>
<td>1,425.98</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>137.00 (150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>97 (149)</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,937.43</strong></td>
<td><strong>25,000.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row Labels</th>
<th>Total applicants to date (Total last year)</th>
<th>Rejected</th>
<th>Total $ Disbursed</th>
<th>Budgeted</th>
<th>Average Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>847.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Student Council</td>
<td>8 (19)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,820</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
<td>455.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity &amp; Inclusion</td>
<td>6 (6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,500***</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and wellbeing</td>
<td>3****</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4,000.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19 (26)</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,267</strong></td>
<td><strong>29,000.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = I have allocated $2,500 of the Sustainability Grant into the International Student Bursary (ISB)
** = We have already maximized this again with new applicants
*** = This accounts for an allocation of half this fund to the ISB fund
**** = Those have not been disbursed or processed.

### Transitioning new executive

I am currently working with the incoming VPFS on transition and orientation. As part of this, I have created the first draft of the first VPFS Transition Manual Document (“Manual”). The comprehensive Manual is designed to be easily updated and amended by future VPFS.

As always, the Finance Committee is in good standing.

Always happy to take your questions.

Abel Hazon
VPFS
Hi everyone,

A few updates:

**Microsoft Excel Workshops**
On Monday March 9, the introductory and advanced level Microsoft Excel workshops took place. As I am writing this, these events have yet to occur. However, the advanced course quickly became full and the introductory level course is already close to full – it will likely hit capacity soon. These skills-based training courses help prepare students for their future careers. Each workshop is scheduled to be two hours and we have two instructors teaching each course this year for more one-on-one attention. Thank you all for helping advertise these workshops within your departments.

**SGPS Awards**
The SGPS gives out awards annually in order to recognize the exceptional work of its membership and the Queen’s University community. The deadline to nominate someone is Wednesday March 18th at midnight. The awards include the: Student Contribution Award, SGPS Staff Excellence Award, John G. Freeman Faculty Excellence Award, and the SGPS TA/TF Excellence Award. To view the criteria, nomination forms, and past winners go to sgps.ca/sgps-awards.

**Hiring Commissioners**
In the coming weeks, you will see job postings on our social media platforms for the following commissioner positions: Equity & Diversity, International, and Social. Please apply and/or encourage your friends to apply. The salary is $6,000 for the year.

**Hiring Front Desk Staff**
We have already solicited applications for front desk staff and have had many great people apply. We are currently in the process of interviewing for these positions.

**Transitioning**
I am continuing to meet regularly with my successor, John, to ensure that he is ready to take over the role May 1. I recently sent him an extensive written transition document that details the responsibilities within the portfolio of the VP Professional.

Ryan Adlem  
Vice President Professional
Dear Council,

Apologies for missing the council meeting for the month of February as I have been asked to sit on Aboriginal Council which is held tri-annually in October, February, and April. For the month of February, I have been in meetings with various organizations throughout campus to understand how I as an Indigenous graduate student can best serve the needs of the indigenous student community on campus. Below are a few of the projects that I will begin working on with various organizations on campus including Four Directions, AMS, QNSA, and Center for Teaching and Learning

1. **Indigenizing spaces on Campus**

   AMS and Office of Indigenous Initiatives have begun discussions on creating two student murals in the ARC which will represent indigenous socio-cultural student life at Queen’s University. There is the hope of having one mural entirely done by a student and the other mural a collaboration with a well-established artist who would be willing to use this mural as a mentorship opportunity for emerging indigenous student artists.

2. **Pow Wow Working Group**

   In meetings with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, AMS Deputy Social Commissioners, Queen’s Native Student Association, and Four Directions there is a growing need from the indigenous student population to re-establish the Queen’s Pow Wow. Due to the immense work involved in organizing a pow wow and the high budget needed, this will need to be a collaborative effort with multiple stakeholders on campus and off campus.

3. **“Quick Questions, Simple Answers”**

   The Center for Teaching and Learning and SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement) will be holding a Q&A session at Four Direction Indigenous Student Center on March 17th, 2020 from 1:30-3pm which will be an informal discussion on TA and TF professional development. This will be a session that is available to all students, indigenous and non-indigenous students.

Other events that could be in the works with various organizations could include organizing a speaker series with the Center for Teaching and Learning and Four Directions Indigenous Student Center. This speaker series could work in tandem with a weekly reading group on decolonizing methodologies/indigenizing the academy. This project is still in the works with SAGE and supportive non-indigenous allies on campus.
As fellow students and members of the SGPS, I would be happy to hear your suggestions, concerns, or input on how I can be of service to the indigenous student community on campus based on your previous personal experiences.

Chi Miigwech,

Paige Van Tassel
SGPS Indigenous Graduate Liaison
indigenous@sgps.ca
Dear Council,

A huge thanks to everyone who came to the SGPS conference and especially to Claudia who worked tirelessly on planning the conference and getting as many sponsors and panels as it did.

The SGPS & QUIC film festival will be screening the Bollywood film “3 Idiots” on March 13, 2020. We have an additional film event on April 3. We hope you will join us on these two days at 5:30pm at the QUIC!

There will be a SGPS & Outlaw (Law school club) film screening and ice-cream social event at the Law Building room 211 on March 18 at 7:00pm. The film planned is “Of Love and Law” – a documentary on the LGBTQ+ law and activism in Japan.

SGPS Equity will also be sponsoring the event: A Fireside Chat with Hadiya Roderique in Conversation with Professor Ashwini Vasanthakumar at the law school. The event will be on the state of diversity in the legal profession and will take place on March 23 from 1:00-2:30pm. Please look out for the post on our SGPS social media pages.

There is an upcoming Built Environmental Action Group (BEAG) meeting with a presentation on Neurodiversity on March 17 at 2:30 in Richardson Hall room 340. This event is open to everyone. It would be a great opportunity to learn more about BEAG and neurodiversity.

The University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity (UCARE) has open seats on sub-committees and the main committee. Please consider applying for a seat on these committees as they do great work on addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion concerns and initiatives at a university-wide level and on a policy level. The next public UCARE meeting is March 30 at 5pm in Robert Sutherland room 202.

From the last Sexual Violence Prevention Task Force meeting, the results of the Student Voices on Sexual Violence Survey were posted on the Council of Ontario Universities website today (please see link). Please ensure share these results and the information of the available support services to your constituents.

There is an upcoming event from the Human Rights Office, SVPRC, and Athletics. The event is: Brock McGillis Public Talk – How does locker room culture prevent athletes from being their authentic selves? The description and registration link for the event is below:

Brock McGillis is the first professional male hockey player to openly come out as gay. During this event, Brock will share his journey as an LGBTQ+ professional athlete and will address specific strategies to foster inclusivity, self-care and empowerment, and to mitigate gender-based violence in sports.

To register, please visit: https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/brock-mcgillis-public-talk-tickets-97151692327?aff=ebdssbdestsearch

There will be an upcoming Mental Health Working Group meeting that I plan to attend. If you have any questions or concerns about mental health please send them to me so I can bring them up at the meeting.

I’ve also been working towards building up an equity network for this Commission. Thank you to those who have reached out and sent emails! If you’ve attended this council meeting/read this report, please send me an email or forward me your faculty council’s email as I would like to reach out to them to discuss equity spaces within the departments!
As always, I am open to any comments, concerns, questions, or suggestions. Please feel free to contact me at equity@sgps.ca.

Best regards,

Penny Zhang
Equity and Diversity Commissioner 2019-2020
Hello everyone,

Happy March! Here is a brief update of my going-ons:

1. **Beyond Canada Podcast**

   Episode 7 was released last week. Instead of an interview this episode is the recording of the Ghana International research Seminar that was hosted in December 2019. Episode 8 will be the recording of the Turkey Seminar. 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).

2. **Beyond Boundaries Conference**

   The conference was a smashing success! In the end we had 92 people register to attend. It was two days filled with incredible conversation and several graduate students have since contacted me to say that it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of their graduate studies. Yay! In the end we had 45 panel presenters, 23 sponsors, and 7 keynote speakers. We raised $1450 in cash and over $5,000 in kind donations from sponsors and managed to supplement that with $1200 in ticket sales. The SGPS Commissioners provided $3300 and the exec gave $500 too.

   Our conference was also done as environmentally sustainably as possible by having a vegan menu and no disposable cups or cutlery – we even made our programs matt as you cannot recycle glossy programs. I highly recommend Old farm Fine Foods for your catering needs and to consider planning your events in line with Queen’s Vegan Pledge Month. Please think about how your events impact the world.

   I am hoping to stay on as International Commissioner next year and if I do I hope to continue this same conference theme so that it becomes a flagship event for the SGPS. A huge thank you to the team of 16 volunteers including Penny and Anthony who made the conference the success that it was. The volunteers really made the event run smoothly and had such positive outlook on being involved that I hope many of them will be keen to be part of the organizing committee next year too. Penny ensured the smooth functioning of the workshops – The Swing, publishing and unconscious bias workshops were the most enjoyed and Anthony ran the dance party which ran until the early hours of Sunday morning. What champions!

   Photos and recordings from the conference will be available soon.

3. **International Student Graduate Network**

   This will be my main goal for March and April and I will give you more updates regarding this next month.
4. 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. They are continuing their work toward helping international students who are facing precarity due to high fees.

5. Continue Conversations

I remain committed to speaking to people on campus about international graduate students. This includes my monthly meetings at QUIC. At last month’s meetings we discussed the Coronavirus and measures being taken in order to ensure that international students are not targeted. QUIC ran a speaking session with students and is exploring other ways in which to mitigate fear and poor behavior relating to the virus.

February was jam-packed with conference organization but this month I hope to focus more on the structural dimensions of international students needs. If you would like to discuss this in any way please drop me a line and we can meet up.

Kindest regards,
Claudia Hirtenfelder
international@sgps.ca
Dear Council,

On February 29-March 1 we had our first annual Scholarship Beyond Boundaries Conference which I was happy to be a part of. Claudia did so much work as the lead organizer for this amazing event and deserves high commendation. It was great to have amazing conversations with faculty, students, and other community members this weekend that were generative for my own research, inspired ideas for possible events for next year, and will hopefully lead to further discussions over coffee. I think that we created an event here that should become annual, and one that if done again next year will see even more participation across the university.

The conference event that I organized was called “Leapday Night 2020” and featured two local DJs (LA Foster and Rimka Puri) along with Shamik Bilgi, a Vancouver-based DJ and beatboxer. The event was very successful and had a really good turnout. This was also an opportunity for SGPS to partner with Tone Deaf, a local sound festival. Hopefully this will lead to some more entertaining and enriching event partnerships in the future.

I would also like to thank Old Farm Fine Foods here in my report. Organizing food with Nancy and her team was a pleasure for me from start to finish, and I highly recommend them as a great local small business. They provided us with delicious vegan food and went above and beyond, providing us with many things before we even asked for them.

SGPS’ Got Talent is happening on the evening of March 15 in conjunction with Grad Games! We have a great list of performers and displays lined up, including bands, classical Indian dancers, magicians, and comedians, as well as a few artists displaying their work. If you would like to be involved, or know people who might be interested, the signup sheet is at [https://sgps.ca/sgpsgt/](https://sgps.ca/sgpsgt/). Please forward these to people in your programs/departments, and definitely come out to support fellow students!

Award applications are still open! SGPS has an award for Student Contribution, Staff Excellence, Faculty Excellence, and Teaching Assistant/Teaching Fellow. The deadline for applications is March 18, and the application form can be found on our website at [https://sgps.ca/sgps-awards/](https://sgps.ca/sgps-awards/). If you would like to serve on the awards committee, I would love to have you! Please email me at social@sgps.ca.

On March 28 we will be going to Maple Madness at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. We will feed chickadees, see how maple trees are tapped, and eat pancakes. Should be a great study break, hope to see everyone there! We will meet at the JDUC at 8:30am.

Thanks,

Anthony