



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Athletics & Wellness Commissioner
February 2021

Hello Council,

Throughout the month of January, I been busy planning events for the upcoming months, along with working on re-occurring events!

SGPS Active and Running Clubs

The SGPS Active and Running Clubs continue to grow in membership. We have members sharing routes that are snowplowed and safe, along with winter attire for staying warm and safe while being active outside.

Virtual Cooking with Grammas

SGPS Cooks with Grammas continues again this month on February 17 at 5:00pm-6:30pm. Registration (can be found here) is now open and closes on February 15th, with a cap at 20 participants. The recipe will be released soon. Our January session had reached capacity, with 20 participants registered for the event! We had members joining from various places across Ontario and Canada! It was a wonderful evening connecting with even more peers who are currently not located in Kingston!

Global Grub Cooking Club

In collaboration with Rohit, the International Commissioner, we will be offering a unique opportunity for SGPS members to learn to cook an international dish instructed by a fellow SGPS member! Join us virtually on February 23 @5:30pm-6:30pm ET to learn to make Amritsari Chana. Registration is now open (can be found here). We are offering grocery subsidies for those who need assistance.

As always, please feel free to contact me (athletics@sgps.ca) with any suggestions, questions, or comments about these or other events.

Sincerely,

Madison Danford
Athletics and Wellness Commissioner



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Equity & Diversity Commissioner
February 2021

Dear Council,

I hope the first few weeks of the Winter semester have gone well for everyone!

Throughout January, I have been busy at work, doing equity advocacy at various committees and meetings with the Queen's community and administration. I represented graduate students at various council, sub-council, and senate meetings in the last few weeks. The Built Environment Action Group had its first meeting of the Winter Semester in January, as did UCARE (University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity), the Senate Educational Equity Committee, the Inclusive Community sub-council and Student Recruitment, Support and Success sub-council. Carefully going through the state of the PICARDI recommendations, I am working with other members of these various committees and sub-councils to ensure that meaningful and sustained efforts towards improving equity, diversity, and inclusion are continuing at Queen's.

An important issue that was brought up at several of these meetings is the upcoming Campus Climate Survey. This survey, designed to capture and measure many of the concerns about equity and diversity that have been voiced since last spring, is being finalized. I will widely disseminate this information to all council members when the final details have been released. I have been part of several meetings where the survey was discussed and shared insights to improve a good response rate. In these meetings, I emphasized the need to demonstrate that the survey results will be meaningfully used in bringing about structural change to encourage students' participation. I additionally noted that including student voices in the design and rollout of the survey will be crucial in its success. I will continue this advocacy work within the university.

The Resource Guide Paige (Indigenous Graduate Liaison), Rohit (International Commissioner) and I have been putting together for the Soft Infrastructure working group is coming along well and should be made available to EDII and International Graduate Student Representatives as well as all graduate students soon. Once again, I would like to gently remind everyone on council to circulate the information regarding the creation of EDII and international graduate student representative positions within your respective departments. We will be reaching out to you all soon to provide assistance in this regard.

If you have any suggestions, questions or would like to pitch an idea for an event, please do not hesitate to get in touch at equity@sgps.ca.

All the best,

Fikir (Fifi) Haile
Equity and Diversity Commissioner 2020-2021



Dear Council,

Here is an update on a few of the things I have been working on over this term:

1. Indigenous Reads Talking Circle

We have 5 new members join the circle and are into the first chapter on Why Indigenous Literatures Matter by Daniel Heath Justice. New membership has closed for the rest of term as we are dealing with sensitive and often personal issues. Cultural counsellor of Four Directions has joined in on the conversation to help facilitate a safe and welcoming space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies to speak on such issues.

2. Indigenous Writing Group (SELF IDENTIFIED INDIGENOUS STUDENTS ONLY)

In working with the SAGE/Indigenous Student Advisor at Four Directions, I am facilitating a student-led writing group which will run for twice a month with one of those meetings each month being attended by a professional to answer questions and provide guidance on the writing process with an Indigenous mindset and methodology. If you know of any self-identified Indigenous peers in your departments who would be willing to participate in this activity please give them my contact information, indigenous@sgps.ca.

3. Soft infrastructure working group

I have been working with the SGPS Equity and Diversity Commissioner and International Commissioner on the creation of the soft infrastructure working group. We are currently working on a EDII SGPS resource guide that will assist students in navigating EDII work within their respective departments. If you need any assistance in the creation of an EDII student rep position within your respective departments, please do not hesitate to contact myself at Indigenous@sgps.ca or equity@sgps.ca

If you have any suggestions, ideas, or concerns as they relate to Indigenous matters and happenings at Queen's, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Gichi Miigwech,

Paige Van Tassel

SGPS Indigenous Graduate Liaison

indigenous@sgps.ca



Hello Council and Members!

Congratulations!!

I would like to start this report with a positive news that On January 27th, the International PhD Student Community at Queen's received with joy the statement from the School of Graduate Studies regarding the new tuition scheme that will come into effect as of September 2021, which equalizes tuition fees for International and Domestic PhD students. I would like to congratulate International Student Working Group (ISWG) members, Claudia Hirtenfelder (Previous International Commissioner), SGPS executives and PSAC-901 for their commitment towards International students. Despite facing so many obstacles their perseverance finally paid off. This is a historical moment for us especially during this pandemic, where most international students are finding themselves in financial stress more than ever. Moreover, this news will bring a sense of relief to International PhD students amid this challenging time in keeping pace with their work. A big thank you to all the people, clubs, departments who were associated to this process and made this possible. I would also like to thank Dean SGS, Dr. Fahim Quadir for his commitment towards international students.

Beyond Boundaries Conference

I am organizing a panel discussion workshop at the conference in collaboration with Career Services. We at the SGPS feel that graduate and professional students could really benefit from the experiences of our rich alumni and faculty. To that end, we were hoping some of them might be interested in sharing their professional expertise by participating in a **"Campus to Career: panel discussion on Effective Networking"** during our second annual SGPS Scholarship Beyond Boundaries Conference occurring from March 20-21st, 2021. The panel will deal specifically with transitioning from student to professional life. The event will focus on various fields of interest and are designed to provide students with an opportunity to connect with experienced panel; gain insight into areas of interest to them and get advice from professionals currently working in the field.

Global Grub Cooking Club

In collaboration with Madison, the Athletics and Wellness Commissioner, we are bringing the world right into your kitchen with an exciting cooking event for SGPS members to learn to cook an International cuisine instructed by a fellow SGPS member! Join us virtually on February 23 @5:30pm-6:30pm ET to learn to make "Amrirsari Chana". Registration is now open ([here](#)). We are offering grocery subsidies for those who need assistance.

Support Advocacy

I am having monthly meeting with the Director of QUIC to get a regular update on International students. I am also having monthly meetings with Vice Provost International in order to discuss concerns and enhance International student experience on campus. If you have any issue/concern/suggestions which you want me to bring to these people, please reach out to me. I am also committed to supporting the needs of clubs/groups who are advocating on behalf of international students. If you know of any advocacy groups/clubs directed at/for international students, who needs our support please let me know. I have been in touch with ISWG and PSAC 901 through their monthly meetings and remain available for any conversations regarding international students and their advocacy. 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. Please spread the word among your department who have not joined the group yet, to join the group.

Soft Infrastructure Working Group

I am collaborating with the SGPS Equity and Diversity Commissioner and Indigenous Graduate Liaison on finalizing EDII SGPS resource guide, which would be available for all council members soon. The resource will help students in assess EDII work within their respective departments. We would be reaching to council members just to get update on creation of an EDII student representative position within their respective department. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any queries related to that, we would be happy to help in this process. I am always open to any comments, questions, or suggestions. Please feel free to contact me at international@sgps.ca

Best,

Rohit Shukla

International Students Affairs Commissioner



Hello Council,

I hope you are all doing well, we hosted two events in January (Show and Tell: Loom Beading, and Soap Felting) which went very well. With over 32 registrants for Loom Beading we had to limit participants and due to the popularity and success of the event will be having another round of Loom Beading in February.

“Show and Tell” Loom Beading (no cost)

Join us this February (date TBD) for another session of the “Show and Tell” series which brings together graduate and professional students to share their unique knowledge and skills. This session called “Loom Beading” will involve an Indigenous Graduate worker sharing their knowledge, own beading practice, and guide us through a loom beading exercise. The event is open to all SGPS members who identify as Indigenous as well as allies. Participants will be sent art kits prior to the event and will get to engage in some loom beading during the event.

Upcoming Events

In March we hope to host a “Show and Tell” that is nature/hiking/ birds themed, where we meet at a conservation site and hike on easy trails (1-2m wide fine gravel) and feed the birds (mostly finches, sparrows, chickadees), led by a nature/hiking/bird connoisseur. In addition, we hope to host a Paint Nite involving watercolour painting a birch tree winter wonderland (participants free to paint something else).

These events will all be incentivized by offering a free art kit/materials, or gift cards for a door prize draw/games.

Please feel free to contact me at social@sgps.ca if you have any feedback, questions, concerns, or want to be involved in future events as a speaker/ co-facilitator or volunteer.

Warmly,

Kel Martin

Social Commissioner