



Dear Council and Members!

To begin with, I am highly obliged to be new VP Graduate for the SGPS. I look forward to working with you all to represent and advocate for graduate students and I hope to continue the good work that was carried out by Courtney (former VP Graduate). Even though I got less time for transition as I was elected in by-elections, I am confident that I would be able to serve you well as your new VP Graduate.

Graduate Peer Support Centre

I just wanted to update you about our GPSC coordinator hiring process which was my first task in the role. Myself with Courtney, Anthony and Caitlin formed a hiring committee and conducted interviews. Unfortunately, there were some significant concerns with the quality of the candidates we interviewed. A potential solution we came up with, was to extend Caitlin's contract until August (she graduates end of August). She would spend the summer reworking the structure of the GPSC to encourage greater student usage and creating an extensive training package for the new coordinator, as the GPSC will only be open once a week in the summer.

In August we will reopen the job posting and hopefully receive a more experienced and suitable candidate.

That's all for now. I hope my next report, in upcoming meetings, will be more fruitful. In the meantime, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at vp.graduate@sgps.ca.

I'm also looking forward to start this term and share the experience of working with you all.

Best

Rohit Shukla

VP Graduate



Hello everyone!

I am excited to continue my work with the SGPS under the VP Finances and Services role! I would like to welcome our new executive members Jennifer and Rohit, and our new Senator Emils. Here are some updates along with some summer plans:

- 1) **Bus subsidy:** The bus subsidy will be available this year, with the subsidy being administered the same way as last year. The subsidy portal should open in late May; we will alert students when it opens through our social media and other communication lines.
- 2) **2021/2022 Budget:** I am currently working with the new executive and our financial director to set the budget for the 2021/2022 year. The budget will be presented at the Fall AGM.
- 3) **Bursaries and Grants:** I plan to have the bursaries open this summer (most likely opening in early June). Before the bursaries are opened, the Financial Committee needs to be formed. The Financial Committee serves as oversight in the administration of bursaries. I am looking for 5 graduate or professional students to join me on this committee! When you are reading this, a formal application will have been set up but, in the meantime, please feel free to email me at vp.finance@sgps.ca if you are interested.

Last year grants were not opened due to COVID. The money that was usually allocated to grants was either not collected or was shifted into bursaries. At this time, it is unknown if we will be administering grants this year. I will provide an update on this at our August meeting.

Thank you all for listening! I hope you all can enjoy the nice almost summer weather!

Courtney Bannerman

Dear Council,

I'm writing to you energized to continue the work I've been privileged to be a part of, mostly because I'm excited to work with a great Commissioner/Liaison team who we've hired over the past few weeks, and an Executive team we elected a few months ago now.

What I've been working on:

Hiring Committees

The week of April 19-23 we read through a ton of applications and had interviews with 18 candidates for our five Commissioner/Liaison positions. As of Monday, we now have a Commissioner/Liaison team in place for this year. I'm so grateful to have such a qualified and exciting team in place. As Council Reps, I hope you will join me in welcoming our new team, and that you will also make folks in your home units aware of them and their portfolios. We want students to benefit from knowing that these folks work for all students and can be great sources to connect the experiences of different students across the university campus:

- Brittany McBeath – Indigenous Student Liaison – indigenous@sgps.ca
- Monica Garvie – Equity and Diversity Commissioner – equity@sgps.ca
- Sabrina Masud – International Student Affairs Commissioner – international@sgps.ca
- Cassandra Coyle – Athletics and Wellness Commissioner – athletics@sgps.ca
- Emilia Ganslandt – Social Commissioner – social@sgps.ca (for clarity – Emilia is tasked with providing students opportunities to attend different events so they can interact socially; her role is not to highlight or campaign around social causes or initiatives).

I am also currently on the hiring committee for the Graduate Peer Support Centre Coordinator for this year, which you will probably read more about in Rohit's VP Graduate report.

Commissioner Debrief

Last week, we had our last meeting with the 2020-2021 Commissioner/Liaison Team. We had a good discussion around what they thought worked well and what they thought could be improved based on our work together last year. I'll write some points that came out of that discussion here:

- There seemed to be consensus around the benefit of hiring Deputies for each Commissioner/Liaison this year. This is beneficial in multiple ways: especially for the Indigenous, International, and Equity roles that involve anti-oppression work more of a support system; it offers more labour hours for each portfolio; it allows the Commissioner/Liaison and their deputy flexibility to divide the work of their portfolio according to their strengths; it creates great opportunities for students with less experience to gain experience, and more jobs for our members who need them; and it is more realistic in terms of the huge scope of many of the Commissioner/Liaison portfolios.
- There was a lot of discussion around the Year Plan that we created in May last year. Instead of completing the year plan in the first month, folks thought it would be better to revisit the plan throughout the year (especially again in September after Orientation). I think the Year Plan this year will be a looser process. We can use Microsoft Teams as a shared events calendar and provide updates about events, campaigns, etc. in that space. The Year Plan can focus on our major goals for the year and can be revisited throughout the year.
- There is a need to increase the transparency/accountability between the executive and the commissioner team. I am working with the rest of the exec to ensure commissioners are invited to at least two of our executive

meetings per month. I'm hoping this will create more opportunities for dialogue, especially on issues that relate to the Commissioners' and Liaison's portfolios.

Commissioner Training

We have our first training meeting for the 2021-2022 Commissioner/Liaison team scheduled on Thursday, May 6, and I've been working hard to put together a training schedule for the next month or two. Some topics that will be covered include event planning, advocacy work, understanding the university and the SGPS structure, anti-oppression training as mandated by the Bylaws and Policies, and history/context of the SGPS. My focus will remain on ways the team can collaborate with each other and partner with other organizations on campus and in the Katarokwi region.

CFS Meeting

The Ontario Executive of the Canadian Federation of Students is meeting Monday, May 10 and Tuesday, May 11. If there are specific ways in which you would like me to advocate for student issues at the provincial and federal level, please reach out to me any time. The CFS connects us to student governments across the province and country, and I'm the SGPS representative at their meetings. If you would like to hear more about the CFS and the campaigns it runs, or if you have ideas for campaign work that we should look into (at the CFS or local level), please let me know. The CFS is also supporting the #PivotTheGradClock Campaign with a letter that is being distributed to other student governments. For more information about that campaign (which petitions Queen's admin to provide one year guaranteed funding to all grad students whose work was impacted by COVID, click [here](#) and consider signing! Please also distribute this through your networks.

Campus Security External Review

Coming up on May 20, I have a meeting with two external reviewers who are collecting feedback about campus security. I am currently planning to focus on two main issues:

- The Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Final Report asked that the Human Rights and Equity Office (HREO) be given "much more financial support as well as an expanded capacity to actively intervene in conflicts and sanction those found of wrongdoing." I recently brought this up at a meeting of the Inclusive Community UCARE Sub-Council, and found out this isn't a priority currently. I think that funds should go to HREO in order to hire people, do research, talk to stakeholders, and consider developing a different model that is more restorative/repairative.
- Another point I plan to bring up (though this isn't directly a concern of Campus Security) is that the University has not been responsive in terms of supplying Individualized Emergency Response Plans for members with disabilities in case of fire or other security issues. More funds need to be given to Environmental Health and Safety in order to ensure that students, faculty, staff, and other community members are safe while on campus.

Commissioner Titles

I'm considering shifting the language that is currently used in job titles for our Commissioners:

- Indigenous *Student* Liaison instead of Indigenous *Graduate* Liaison – this is more inclusive of professional students
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Commissioner – "inclusion" is, I believe, an important dimension to the work of this portfolio. It focuses on welcoming and respecting all members and ensuring we can all participate, both within our work at the SGPS and in our advocacy work with University admin.
- Social *Events* Commissioner – I'm suggesting the addition of "Events" here to remove the unnecessary lack of clarity around this position, which is about creating social spaces for students, and not about addressing social issues related to anti-oppression work. The AMS has a Social *Initiatives* position, which further exacerbates the confusion about this role's purpose.

Commissioner Roles

Over the summer, I will continue to examine ways in which Commissioners and Liaisons might be given more freedom and power within their roles. Specifically, I would like to consider if it might be possible to make Commissioners voting

members of Council. I would also like to ensure that Commissioners/Liaisons have adequate job security, standardized performance feedback through a template or form, and that the way to report any issues is made clear.

Meetings with various campus groups

Over the next month, I hope to meet with a variety of equity-seeking student groups on campus. My goal is that this will lead to more intentional relationships with these groups. If you are involved in any groups on campus that you think I should meet with, I'd be happy to hear from you.

As always, I'm happy to hear from anyone with suggestions, concerns, or questions. Feel free to reach me via email: vp.community@sgps.ca.

Thanks for all your continued efforts!

Anthony Lomax