



**Council Meeting - Agenda**  
September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021- 5:30pm  
Zoom

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. This land acknowledgement reminds us that rich Indigenous governances still exist, and will go into the future. This should also serve as a reminder that we are benefitting by living on this land that is a traditional territory of indigenous people.



**I. Announcements**

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**II. Adoption of the Agenda**

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**A. Adoption of the Agenda**

**MOTION 09/14/21:01**

BIRT SGPS Council adopt the Agenda for the September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Meeting  
Ross Denny-Jiles moves, Courtney Bannerman seconds. No dissenting votes, passes unanimously.



**III. Minutes**

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**A. Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION 09/14/21:02**

BIRT the SGPS adopt the minutes from the August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Council Meeting  
Jennifer Li moves, Sandra Smeltzer seconds. No dissenting votes, passes unanimously.



**IV. Executive & Speaker Reports**

**A. Executive Reports**

- a. President – Justine Aman (report attached)  
Hope you can hear me. I attached a report, not much changed, one thing about vaccine requirements and form to declare. If you are a staff, you should also submit vaccination status through staff NetID.



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Q (Monica Ayachit): We tried to reach [eventsanction@queensu.ca](mailto:eventsanction@queensu.ca) for our November event, we did not receive a reply. Is that the right contact? Could you provide the right contact for the events?

A: Process has not been made clear for sanctioning of events going forward past orientation. Orientation sanctions remain the same as they are now until the end of the month, so you apply for sanctioning through our website.

A (Courtney Bannerman): A lot of employees involved in sanctioning are no longer involved in that work so you may not be getting a reply. If you are experiencing a lot of lag or no reply, this could possibly be the case.

Q (MA): If we want to do off-campus event, do we need permission?

A: Can't give clear answer, understanding on website is we won't be booking or sanctioning events until November.

Q: Are orientation events still on and can we still do them?

A: If running event for September, please reach out to us at SGPS using sanctioning websites. Our events are going on and Anthony will have more about that in his reports.

A (Anthony Lomax): I might be wrong but you would have to do orientation events in October due to the time, right?

A (Justine Aman): Yes, they need two weeks so you might be able to get something in for the end of the month.

- b. VP Graduate – Rohit Shukla (report attached)  
Thanks, hello everyone. I don't have anything to add on to my report, but you can ask me if you have any questions about it.
- c. VP Professional – Jennifer Li (report attached)  
Emailed to separate Devin by accident, sorry for the delay in sending. Nothing else to add to my report beyond what is there, hired external HR. Please also take a look at year-long report if you have a chance.
- d. VP Finance and Services – Courtney Bannerman (report attached)  
Hi everyone, only one thing to add. Minor changes to bursary guide to make things more clear in light of common mistakes, expediting process to get bursaries. Gave out a lot of bursary money this summer, so if anyone is looking to get bursaries should apply soon because we have caps. Last thing: Budget for SGPS will be presented at fall AGM.
- e. VP Community – Anthony Lomax (report attached)  
Just briefly about a few things, lot going on. Hiring deputy commissioners so moving into the interview phase, just got redacted applications and will be sending to commissioners along with scheduling. Also finished reviewing awards applications and selecting winners, so if you follow us on social media you will see list of award



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winners (link pasted into chat). Big congratulations to all winners. Awards committee will continue meeting to develop more criteria for awards moving on, great discussions in meetings about that. May make recommendations about criteria/names to Council soon. Other than those things...had a meeting with student experiences survey student advisory group. Might remember large university-wide student experiences survey, asked a lot of questions, especially about those with marginalized identities. Also questions about sexual violence, pretty broad but those are the main points. Link to data snapshot is in the chat. Group moving on from reviewing data, adding some lived-experience information by focus group work with students, working on actions and recommendations coming out of the data that has been collected. Would love it if anyone has input on services that the university should create, advocacy work that we can be doing, or any other thoughts. Also if you are marginalized group member and have expertise or might be interested in focus group you can also message me, good to have SGPS strategy on that going forward. You can email me. Already mentioned but we are going ahead with orientation, more details in commissioner reports. Quickly...university is potentially looking into continuing in-person events, asking that they pay some of the cost, fields have to be rented and are not cheap. Currently working with people at university to see what can be done about that. Emilia and I had to go to city council to get noise exemption due to by-law, long complicated process. Feel free to email with questions.

**B. Speaker Report**

- a. Speaker – Devin Fowlie (oral report)

Only thing to mention is that we are looking for a deputy speaker, weird time if you are a councilor, but in the next coming days we will distribute more broadly to get more interest. Particularly true as the general meeting approaches. If you know anyone familiar with Council or Robert's Rules, direct them to me. Nothing else to add, happy to take questions.

**C. Approval**

**MOTION 09/14/21:04**

BIRT SGPS Council approve the Executive and Speaker Reports.

Monica Garvie moves, Monica Ayachit seconds. No dissenting votes, passes unanimously.



V.

**Senator, Trustee, Commissioner, Committee & Other Reports**

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- A. Senator Report** – Graduate Student Senator – Emils Matiss (no report)



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**B. Trustee Report** – Graduate Student Trustee – (no report)

**C. Commissioner Reports**

- a. Athletics & Wellness Commissioner – Cassandra Coyle (report attached)  
Not present, no comments. Send email if any questions.
- b. Equity & Diversity Commissioner – Monica Garvie (report attached)  
Want to make one update. In report I talked about UCare and how we on the council for governance and nomination found gaps, made recommendation (faster than expected) and accepted to make new positions and bring additional people in. Going back to applications that we created and another position on UCare. Any questions, send an email.
- c. Indigenous Graduate Liason – Brittany McBeath (report attached)  
Not much to add, but the two events that happen each year the indigenous reads talking circle and indigenous writing group are created, will be sending infographics and information shortly. Writing circle on Monday from 8-noon and reading Friday from 3-4pm. Email questions.
- d. Social Commissioner – Emilia Ganslandt (report attached)  
Not much to update, Cassandra and I have been working hard on orientation. Would be great to see exec or others come to events, all information on sgps.ca. Any questions let me know, email is in my report.  
Q (Jennifer Li): If we are attending, should we register as a student or contact you?  
A: You can register and then also contact me, since registration is good for contact tracing but if you want to contact me that's also great.
- e. International Students' Affairs Commissioner – Sabrina Masud (report attached)  
Nothing new to add, but two initiatives I am taking this year if anyone wants to advise me or join. One thing is committee for international students, should be able to meet once per month and present issues that need to be addressed. Second idea is having newsletter highlighting international student success stories. If anyone wants to join or advise me, please get in touch, my email is in report.

**D. Committee Reports**

**E. Department Reports**

**F. Other Reports**

- a. University Rector – (no report)

**G. Approval**

**MOTION 09/14/21:05**

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

Ross Denny-Jiles moves, Andrew Hall seconds. No dissenting votes, passes unanimously.



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**Question Period and Departmental Issues**

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**Business Arising from the Minutes**

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Anthony Lomax: Monica mentioned Kassandra was away, thanks for that. Kassandra also asked me to pass on that if anyone has athletics events that they want to see run, they can reach out to her. Gets to bigger point...commissioners have outlined year plan in rough draft, hope is that by presenting these reports to council we can get some feedback and engagement from you guys about events or initiatives about things you want to see run so hoping to get some critique or thoughts on how those plans can be improved. Every commissioner wrote a year plan and attached it to their report, so if you have something specific to that commissioner you can reach out to them directly. If having trouble finding their email, you can always reach out to me.



**Main Motions & Discussion**

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**A. Discussion: GPSC**

Rohit Shukla to lead discussion of Graduate Peer Support Centre (GPSC)

Want to have discussion with council about this, suspended GPSC hiring process, evaluating services that we had. Putting together info from the survey to see what students want to have for services. If you have feedback on how you want the GPSC to function feel free to reach out to me through email and suggest something and provide feedback on how you want to see the service. If anyone from exec has any points they can also weigh in.

Justine: Good summary, can also open up for questions from councilors.

Courtney Bannerman: Want to highlight one of other reasons why we suspended GPSC. A lot of money being put into the service per student usage, so not best use of money. If we close GPSC, all fees paid will be refunded to students, in no way will be using the money in another way.

Rohit: We will put to discussion with council once we have the data

Speaker: If questions, reach out to Rohit who is the VP Graduate.



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Beth Langdon: Not familiar with GPSC before this happened. How would I describe it to someone if I were asked about this, don't want to assume if it is the same as the undergraduate support centre.

Justine: Similar in format, peer on staff, can get referral to other community supports. Conceived from research with undergraduate peer support centre, but uptake was not the same at all compared to the undergraduate support centre. However, in its creation the ideas were meant to be similar.

Rohit: Also we have EmpowerME, if anyone wants to use mental health services in the meantime while the GPSC is closed.

Anthony Lomax: Want to make it clear that the service is suspended and looking into whether it should continue or not. That decision will come to council once we know more from the data, would not recommend promoting the service because it is not currently happening.

**B. Discussion: Funding Packages**

Anthony Lomax to lead discussion of funding packages

This was just an opportunity to create some space if folks in this meeting have found, had questions, heard concerns around funding packages. For background, having a few international students coming to us. PhD tuition for international lowered this year, some students bringing up issues about funding. For one department that is more funding coming from the supervisor, some have had increases in TA or RA responsibilities. We have had discussions with PSAC Local 901 as well, discussed that while international students experience marginalization the way we want to approach this issue is more universal (e.g., they don't match inflation). Whether funding packages offer enough money, quite broad topic, departments handle things different ways, lot of things in the mix. While hoping to go to PSAC with concerted effort, would love to hear from you guys about how you would want to see that improved. Very specific and local, happy to have discussion now.

Sandra Smeltzer: No issue to rise about funding, but putting something in place about when you have to find out about funding package. Some students did not hear until week before classes how much they would receive.

Sabrina Masud: Hearing similar things, I'm facing same thing. General consensus is that there is more work being added to students' ledger. For me, I have to work to access all



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funding which I did not have to do before. Adds pressure of doing extra work and means you cannot finish program on time because from 5<sup>th</sup> year you don't know where your funding will come from which have Visa and work permit issues.

Andrew Hall: Speaking on behalf of psychology department, encountering similar issue. A lot of us still don't know what our packages are, the status. Hearing we want more transparency in the process, new chair, program chair, and graduate program administrator. Even if the information was "I don't know, contact this person" would be more transparent. So improving who approves our package, what goes into it, when it is in the hands of Faculty of Arts and Science. Also haven't gotten into courses, causing holds on student accounts, which further holds up funding. That quickly jogs through the problems in psych, don't know how others experiences are.

Emils Matiss: In CNS, similar issues where funding packages are shared with us a few weeks into the term. If you are in Canada that might be okay, but if you are international you might not have the money to front costs with moving in and such. We have pushed for a monthly stipend because it is not always distributed in an easy to manage way. Also hopeful of increasing stipend amounts, not hopeful because CNS has high stipends, but still have not changed in two decades.

Emilia Anslandt: Not speaking on behalf of a department, but not just inflation it is also how house prices have increased as well. Something to think and be cautious about in this discussion as well.

Caroline Bonta: With geography and planning, I'm on planning side. We have had luck meeting with geography side with asking questions about where information comes from, when we will hear about the money, etc. but they take place over Zoom and some are hesitant to reach out. We have put out a document to clarify because human geography and physical geography get paid differently. Planning side also has questions about funding and less clarity. This year, geography side increased minimum funding allotment but I look at my funding package and it's running out because of COVID and I don't have more time. So they offered me a TAship that I can't take because I will be away, so it is superficial. But, we have made some progress and gotten clarity but there is a long way to go.

Rohit: To add on, most of your questions about funding should approach graduate program administrator to get more information, breakdown, etc. If you think it is still unclear, communication gap, you can reach out to me or Anthony or both of us and we can move on from here.



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Anthony: Thanks everybody this is great, main points are transparency, what role does the university play, what role does department play, etc. Along the lines of inflation maybe there is room to negotiate for university guidelines to send to departments about these things. Not sure if that resonates, but that's one possible direction to go.

Emils: One thing we are doing at CNS is sending survey to students to get their financial needs like what their living situation is like, what their living expenses are, and so on. If we did this in a coordinated way we might have more room to advocate and get clarity on this.

Speaker: Good discussion to this point, don't want to let it go too long, diversity of experiences and hopefully have had the chance to voice your opinion. Failing the department, you can reach out to Anthony or Rohit and Emils has offered his email in the chat as well. So, for future discussions and questions you can reach out to them.

Anthony: Relevant to GPSC, Rohit Revvie and I met about forming a coalition for mental health. Mental health is currently on the bargaining table for the union, both us and the union agree that we need more mental health opportunities on campus and we are planning to do more work with the union to that point.



**Other Business**

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**Notices of Motion & Announcements**

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**Adjournment**

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**Adjournment**

**MOTION 09/14/21:08**

BIRT this meeting of SGPS Council be adjourned.  
Sandra Smeltzer moves, Monica Ayachit seconds. No dissenting votes, passes unanimously.