



Hello Council,

### **Update on Issues with Conversation**

At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October, multiple students expressed some concern over Conversation, a new online counselling service we are trialing this year. We met with StudentCare (helps us administer and negotiate our health and dental plan and services) who then has had meetings with Dialogue (who runs Conversation). StudentCare is in the process of setting up a meeting with Dialogue, StudentCare, and the SGPS executive in the coming weeks.

I, and the rest of the SGPS Executive, are taking the concerns we heard very seriously, and I will be transparent in our next steps and where we are at in the Winter term when we are considering renewing the service or not.

### **University Council Annual General Meeting**

I attended the Annual General Meeting of the University Council this past weekend. The University Council is one of the three governing bodies of Queen's. It is made up of alumni and acts as mainly an advisory body (it also is involved in hiring the chancellor). I shared the concerns that students have around housing, graduate funding, and the general cost of living issues students are facing. They seemed passionate to help in any way they could, including offering to meet with myself/the SGPS executive to share professional advice, considering donating to student bursaries, and spreading the word for other alumni to donate. If any students want to stay connected to Queen's after they graduate, University Council is a great way to do so.

### **Plans for Potential New Commissioner or Other Support**

The last few weeks I have worked on consultation regarding a potential new commissioner or liaison role in the SGPS. The working title is Black Student Liaison. I have received positive feedback on bringing this role into the SGPS. Part of the reason for looking into this is that we see a lack of specific supports and advocacy for Black students in the SGPS/university and we think hiring a Black student to determine what supports are needed and how we should approach this is the best way to approach this gap. I also want to create a role that could introduce Black students to working for the SGPS, so that they can learn about the organization and may then decide to run for the SGPS executive or work in other roles in the SGPS. I want to make the SGPS a more diverse and inclusive organization as this results in better serving students.

Our current plan is to hire a student to solely research and do consultation work in the winter term around whether this kind of support would be helpful, or if some other type of support is preferred (while I see a liaison role as fitting well, we ultimately want to hear what students think is the best fitting support). Then we are planning to assess at the end of term with this research and consultation student what they suggest we do next. At this time we may do one of a few things: start the hiring of a Black Student Liaison, start the process of creating a different support preferred by students, or give the research and consultation student more time to do their work if they feel they need it.

What I want to know from SGPS Council is what do you think? Do you have any comments or feedback regarding this potential new liaison role, a different approach you might prefer, or feedback on our current plan with our research and consultation student.

Sincerely,  
Beth Langdon  
SGPS President



Hello Council,

I hope everyone is settling into the school year and enjoying the beautiful fall! Below are my updates for the month:

1. Med-Law Games

- We have formed a committee with representatives from the ARC, med school and law school to begin the planning of med-law games. Med-law game are a longstanding Queen's tradition where students from the different professional schools participate in various sporting events. The goal is to foster community between the various professional schools.
- I have met with representatives from the med school, law school and ARC. We plan to meet next week as a group.

2. Commissioner Hiring

- The social commissioner hiring is complete.

3. Provost Hiring

- The executive is participating in the selection of the Vice-Provost. I am meeting with the team this week to discuss candidate selection.

4. Student Health Coverage

- The Executive continues to advocate for improves services from Conversation. We have raised issues with Del and will continue to advocate for improved access to mental health services through the health and dental plan.



Hello Council,

During October, we at the SGPS got our Spooky on with some true fall events. Together with the rest of the Executive, we hosted a Ghost of Queen's Walk (through Haunted Walks), a trip to Pumkinferno, as well as a collaborative pumpkin party together with Yellow House. We also went to the Kingston Grand to see an Indigenous dance performance. All the events were well attended and three of them were sold out. We also have one event coming up so far in November which is a Tour of the Agnes Gallery on November 10<sup>th</sup>, but we are still in the works of planning some additional events.

The last month I also worked further with Devin, our VP Graduate, on the Townhall Series. We have now hosted two townhalls in October (one on Funding, one on Housing) and then one in November on Mental & Physical health. Our last townhall will be hosted virtual on November 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4.30-6pm and will be open to whatever issues students want to discuss. Devin and I are also working on compiling the information into reports to be able to share the outcomes of these townhalls with relevant University and community partners.

During the end of October, we also hired our new Social Commissioner. Please welcome Gabby who just started the position on November 1<sup>st</sup>. During November I will together with Chloe focus on training Gabby and getting her situated in her role.

Overall, I have also spent the last month working on maintaining and building relationships with community and University partners. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, or are interested in getting involved with the SGPS, please don't hesitate to reach me at [vp.community@sgps.ca](mailto:vp.community@sgps.ca).

Sincerely,

Emilia Ganslandt  
Vice President Community, SGPS



Hello everyone!

What a beautiful October! Not much from me this month, but we are starting our Strava up again! From now until November 25<sup>th</sup>, if you join our SGPS strava group (<https://sgps.ca/strava>) and log one activity, whether it's a run, walk, bike etc., you will be entered to win a gift card to grocery basket! Take advantage of this gorgeous fall weather and get outside!

Stay tuned for some potential upcoming fitness classes! And again, if you have anything in terms of athletics that you want to see in the future, shoot me an email [athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:athletics@sgps.ca)

Best,

Clare Gaherty  
Athletics and Wellness commissioner  
[Athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:Athletics@sgps.ca)



Hello Council Members,

As we get settled for the school year, here is a summary of what I have done for the past month. If you have any questions on any of the materials presented here, please do not hesitate to contact me at [equity@sgps.ca](mailto:equity@sgps.ca).

This is the first semester of the role:

1. Student health coverage
  - a. Currently, there are gaps within our insurance for graduate students as to what and what is not covered. I understand that we must strike a cost-benefit balance, and I am working to ensure that this analysis prioritizes the medical health needs of marginalized students. We are at our budding stages as to how to help for future years.
  - b. VP Community Emilia and I are in the budding phase of looking at redistributing roll-over funds to collaborate with the Gender Affirming Assistance Project on a gender affirming care bursary.
2. Collaborations
  - a. There are some really great collaborations that we are doing with the Yellow House. We are currently prepping for a coffee house, and we are in the editing stages of a get-to-know-me interview with the Yellow House and it'll get sent out through their newsletter for increasing SGPS visibility. It's been edited and is in its final stages for publishing
3. Hiring Boards
  - a. There are currently numerous departments undergoing hiring, some of which, have been inequitable. I have sat on numerous hiring committee boards and meetings to ensure that there are no immediate inequitable practices. In addition to this reactive approach, I am working on proactive and sustainable approaches to equitable hiring practices and collaborating with other equity positions on campus.
4. Student Activism Bursary
  - a. The division of labour, particularly emotional labour of equity, diversity, and inclusion work, typically falls on marginalized students. I am working with VP Community and the President of SGPS to see if we can create a bursary akin to the bursary from the AMS for students that pay marginalized students for their labour.
  - b. For this month, after checking in with the VP community, this is going to be part of a larger project so that we can put together an honorarium for student labour, which will be commence soon once tax lawyers have been consulted.
5. Name Pronunciation Project
  - a. A person's name can be a core part of someone's identity. Unfortunately, a lot of racialized names get mispronounced. Whether intended or not, these mispronunciations can be felt as microaggressions. As such, the Psychology's EDI committee has created this project, where all faculty and staff will have the phenetic pronunciation and audio recording of their name being pronounced integrated on their department staff directory.
  - b. I am scaling this project to be university wide. Currently, this is about to go live within the Faculty of Education, and other departments are getting on board too!
6. Committee Commitment
  - a. Public Service Alliance of Canada DCL 901 (PSAC 901) – still currently working on a mask mandate
  - b. Provost's Action Group for Gender and Sexual Diversity (PAGGAS) – Invited to its student subgroup, SAGGAS
  - c. Soft Infrastructure Network – paused until Student Activism Bursary is live
  - d. Built Environment Advisory Group – some wonderful discussions about how to increase bathroom accessibility were discussed and are going to begin construction soon.

- e. University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity (UCARE) – overviewing historical racist and anti-racist timeline brochure, very exciting!
- f. Steering Committee related to review of CSES response to Hate Crimes – overviewing dispatch response
- g. Senate Educational Equity Committee – just starting back up again, reviewed the goals and objectives for the year.

Best,

Jane Mao BScH, SXGD Certificate, M.Ed Candidate  
[equity@sgps.ca](mailto:equity@sgps.ca)  
Equity and Diversity Commissioner  
Society of Graduate and Professional Students



#### Traditional Indigenous Food Dinner

This month, I am organizing a traditional Indigenous food dinner, and I am organizing a movie screening. The traditional food dinner is planned to be organized with 4D. The dinner will feature traditional Indigenous foods such as bison, salmon, elk, and bannock. We are planning to secure an elder for the dinner to talk about the cultural importance of traditional Indigenous food. The event will be for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students but attendance of Indigenous students will be prioritized. I am thinking before Christmas break or the week after break will be the date for the event.

#### Movie screening

The movie screening will feature either "Indian Horse" or "Angry Inuk" and my short documentary "Spirit of the Bison". A class in first year at the law school is required to watch "Indian Horse", and I am considering selecting that movie to increase attendance at the event. The location or date has not been set yet, but we are thinking it will be hosted at the Screening Room in January.