



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of Vice President Graduate
January 2023

Hey everyone,

I am so glad to be back with all of you and I hope that you had a restful winter break. We are approaching the final few months of our terms, so I wanted to provide some broad updates on the status of a few items and what I hope to accomplish as my term comes to a close.

The first is graduate student funding; I came in with this as a priority to fix for our students and the issue only became more important as the crunch of inflation was being seen every day. Unfortunately, the University chose not to provide the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs with additional funds for graduate students, which has made raising the levels of funding challenging. But, I am happy to report that we have had some progress: The SGSPA has put forward a proposal to provide a set amount of money to each department at the university for each graduate student that they have enrolled. Departments could use these funds how they see fit, as long as the funds are ultimately going to increasing the funding for their graduate students. They do not have an exact number as of this report, but my understanding is that this number is coming soon. The last Graduate Studies Executive Council was cancelled, but we are presenting the funding report that you all received to the GSEC meeting which will be taking place on January 19th.

The second thing to discuss is the daycare. I have drafted a letter of support for increasing the daycare's funding and have distributed a link to both the letter and a space for you to sign if you are interested in supporting the letter. Increasing daycare access for graduate students was a primary goal of mine, and I am glad to finally have a bit of traction. I continue to have discussions on how we can have an ongoing voice in the conversation about the daycare, so that we do not have to write these letters every few years.

I set out to provide each of you with a greater understanding of your role as SGPS Council Representatives and I continue to work with Aileen to accomplish this. As we have been working on this document we have quickly realized that there has been more unsaid than we realized. We want to create a comprehensive document that tells you exactly what you can be doing so that you can feel better prepared as a Council Representative and so that you can share with your departments what the role entails. We will share this document with you all as soon as it is available.

As always if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to me at vp.graduate@sgps.ca

Take care,

Devin Fowlie
Vice-President Graduate



Hello Council,

I hope everyone had a restful break and are excited for this new year. Let me take a moment and welcome our new International Commissioner, Vina. We are very excited to have them join us.

As we are approaching the last few months of the term, I wanted to give some updates on the goals I wanted to work on in this position. While some of the goals have had to change due to the changes happening in our community and within our organization, I still think it is useful to reflect back on my original goals.

Objective 1: Advocating for affordable housing and living

This goal has become quite central to my position this year, as well as to many of my colleagues as students continue to struggle with increasing inflation and higher costs of living. So far this year, I have hosted a townhall on housing together with our VP Graduate Devin where students had the opportunity to share their concerns related to housing. The results from this are being compiled into a report by Devin which will be shared with relevant partners on campus. I am also part of a few groups focused on discussing housing issues and I have been bringing up the issue of housing at a multitude of different committee meetings. I have also been in contact with RMC to discuss possibilities of collaborating on campaigns directed at the city focused on housing for students in Kingston.

Objective 2: Improving the working structure and training for commissioners

During the summer I worked very hard in collaboration with Andria, our director, to expand on the training materials given to all new commissioners and Liaisons. We have now recorded almost all training so that they can be done asynchronous as well as synchronous. I also expanded on the topics which were covered during training as well as developed a comprehensive kit of resources for all commissioners and liaisons to assist them in their work. Furthermore, together with the rest of the executive team, I have helped

advocate for better compensation for all SGPS employees which will hopefully help us with retention in these roles in the future. I will continue working on this goal during the next few months and as part of my transition later this semester.

Objective 3: Increasing SGPS presence in Community Affairs

Due to some unforeseen events during this year, I have so far not been able to devote as much time as I would have liked to this goal. However, I have started building a stronger partnership with the Journal (Queen's Student newspaper) as well as CFRC. I have also worked both with Loving Spoonful and the AMS foodbank to get better resources to students experiencing food insecurity. Lastly, I have also been working with RMC about building connections between our institutions and we will be hosting our first social event with them on January 21st at 7pm. For more information on this, check out our social media.

Objective 4: Championing sustainability on campus and in Kingston at large

While I have been able to devote some time to promoting sustainability and working on sustainability projects as part of my role this year, this has so far not been able to be my priority. I hope to be able to devote more time to this over my last 4 months in office.

Objective 5: Make the SGPS more accessible to members and a safe space for students

There are several efforts that the whole SGPS executive team has done on trying to make the SGPS a more approachable and accessible organization. First, we have been hosting office hours which allow students to come in and chat to executive members (who now mostly work remote) in our new office in LaSalle. Second, Devin and I hosted a town hall series over 2 months where students were able to come and voice their concerns on different issues including funding, housing, and mental/physical health. We had positive engagement and feedback from this event.

Besides working on the goals that I had set in August; I have also been working on situations that have arisen. During this year we had our social commissioner leave the organization right before orientation, so I had to take on the main organizational role for both orientation and October events. Also, we were unable to hire an Indigenous Liaison in May, so we also did hire again in August and more recently I have been part of hiring our new social commissioner and International Commissioner. I have also been working with our President, Beth, on a new research assistant position which will help us better assess how to better support Black students within the SGPS. I have also worked with the commissioners, our VP Sandra, and Beth on a honoraria program which will allow us to give honoraria to members of our

committees. More details on this will be shared shortly. Overall, it has been a busy first 8 months and I am looking forward to continuing to serve the SGPS membership for the next four months.

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.

Sincerely,

Emilia Ganslandt
Vice President Community, SGPS



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Athletics and Wellness Commissioner
January 2023

Happy New Years!

This month we have SGPS Yoga at the Athletics and Recreation Centre. This is a free all-levels yoga class where you can learn the foundations of yoga and find opportunities to challenge yourself in new ways! The class will take place on January 25th from 4:30-5:30 pm in the athletics and recreation center. This event is exclusive for grad students and the sign-up link is on the sgps.ca events page (sgps.ca/events).

Similar to the beginning of the school year, I am planning an Instagram giveaway to hopefully increase the traffic on our Instagram/social media. This is still in the works but follow our Instagram for your chance to win!

There are group classes each month so look out for next month's class which will be Zumba on February 15th! Have a great month! If anyone has any questions or suggestions, again, feel free to reach out athletics@sgps.ca

Best,

Clare Gaherty
Athletics and Wellness commissioner
Athletics@sgps.ca



Hello Council Members,

I hope everyone had a lovely and restful winter break. I'm so excited to start the next semester! 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.

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 events for the new year
 - b. The get-to-know-me interview with the Yellow House is now published on their website and sent through their newsletter, hoping to increase SGPS visibility
3. Mask Mandate
 - a. Myself and other student leaders and faculty have met with Stephanie Simpson, Associate Vice Principal (Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion) to discuss the importance of a mask mandate on student physical and mental health.
 - b. Our ideas are currently being brought to the Dean, aligning with other University's mandates and practices.
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. VP Community Emilia and I will be working to hire a Deputy in the new year in hopes of implementing this initiative.
5. Name Pronunciation Project
 - a. There is currently a software available that the school has opted into. I'm doing more research about it and how it can be integrated, the pros/cons, and more.
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, have met and are ready to work!

- c. Soft Infrastructure Network – paused until Student Activism Bursary is live and a Deputy is hired
- 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

Equity and Diversity Commissioner

Society of Graduate and Professional Students



Hello Everyone,

I hope everyone had a restful holiday break! This month, we are launching our Winter Orientation events for incoming graduate and professional students, which I am very excited for! Here is the break down for January as well as opportunities for SGPS members to help out! If you have any questions or would like to volunteer at one of the Orientation events, please do not hesitate to contact me at social@sgps.ca or via Slack!

January 17th, 7pm-9:30pm – Trivia Night at the Grad Club

- Free Orientation event open to all Grad and Professional Queen's students (expected attendance: 80)
- Eventbrite page launched on January 10th where students can reserve their spot
 - o January 12th: 49/80 spots reserved
- Catered by the Grad Club
- Prizes available for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams/individuals

If there are any SGPS members who are available to volunteer at the event (help with Trivia, checking tickets at the door etc.), please email/Slack me! Even if you won't be able to stay for the whole time, it would be a big help!

January 24th, 8:30pm-10:30pm – Movie Night at the Screening Room

- The movie that we will be screening is "Knives Out"
 - o Successfully received a license from ACF to show the movie
- Tickets will be sold for \$5 (to ensure attendance at the event)
 - o Theatre capacity (The Roxy): 50

I don't expect we would need many volunteers for this event, however if you are available to help out, let me know!

January 31st, 5pm-7:30pm – Board Games + Hot Chocolate at the Queen's Centre (ARC)

- Booked Rm 505 through the Student Life Centre
- Family-friendly event (Students welcome to bring friends and family)
 - o Expected attendance: ~30
- Catered by CoGro (Cookies and Muffins); CoGro will also be providing cake vouchers and a tote bag as sponsorship items

If you have any board games /card games you would be willing to lend for this event, that would be very much appreciated! Feel free to email me or Slack me if you have any we can borrow. As well, if you're available during this time to help set up food and board games, please let me know!

Future projects

- I am brainstorming midterm/exam season or year-end events aimed to help Grad and Professional students relax during stressful points during the semester

That's all for now, thanks everyone!

Gabby Torretto (she/her)

SGPS Social Commissioner

Society of Graduate and Professional Students

social@sgps.ca