

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 01/17/23:01**

BIRT SGPS Council adopts the agenda for the January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Council meeting.

Devin Fowlie moves, Aisha Nathoo seconds. No points of discussion on this motion. No dissenting votes; the motion passes unanimously.

## III. Minutes

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### A. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

**MOTION 01/17/23:02**

BIRT SGPS adopts the minutes from the December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Council meeting.

Chloe Stone moves, Lizzie Bygott seconds. No points of discussion on this motion. No dissenting votes; the motion passes unanimously.

## IV. Executive & Speaker Reports

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### A. Executive Reports

#### a. President – Beth Langdon (oral report)

- i. Elections – nomination period for executive roles and student senator role have opened and will be open until January 25<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested, please direct yourself to the SGPS website and/or the newsletter that was sent out via email over the holidays but will be sharing again in the newsletter tomorrow, to gain further information. Beth highlights the requirement of receiving 25 signatures- can be intimidating but is an electronic form so it is quick to fill out. Most people Beth contacted during her nomination period were very helpful and eager to help. If help is needed, please reach out to the position on executive that you are interested in and they can provide further clarification of the role as needed.

- ii. Committee Vacancies in University Senate – the Senate is one of the three governance bodies of the university itself (Board of Trustees – deal with financial matters, Senate – passes academic changes). Everything that goes

to Senate goes through a subcommittee first. If you are a member of one of those committees you'd be sitting and evaluating these issues in a smaller group and determining whether or not they should be passed to Senate. The following link highlights the various vacancies for graduate students: <https://queensuniversity.civicweb.net/Portal/BoardApplication/>. If you are interested, those time commitments are fairly reasonable, so this could be something for you if you're looking for a smaller time commitment.

- iii. Principle Deane Reappointment Feedback – Patrick Deane is looking to stay at Queen's for another term. If you have opinions on that I would highly encourage you to provide that, to ensure that your voice is heard. The feedback is required by January 20<sup>th</sup> and a feedback survey has been passed around to facilitate that discussion. The link can be found here ([https://queensu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cTSyQhPjmVVsp9k](https://queensu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTSyQhPjmVVsp9k)) as well as in the SGPS newsletter for January 18<sup>th</sup>.
- iv. Beth highlights various committee meetings she will be sitting on this semester to provide council members an opportunity to share their ideas surrounding those specific topics so that she can bring them forward:
  1. Director of Student Wellness Services
    - a. Meet monthly; can speak on anyone's behalf anonymously to raise any concerns.
  2. Accommodations at Queen's
    - a. Every other month; this was the first year that the Ventus portal was used. If anyone has feedback on this platform or just accommodations in general, please bring them to Beth so she can share that.
- v. Beth can be reached at: [president@sgps.ca](mailto:president@sgps.ca).
- b. VP Graduate – Devin Fowlie (report attached)
  - i. Made some progress on funding – SGSPA (School of Graduate Studies and Post-Doctoral Affairs) has been having conversations with SGPS and themselves regarding additional funding for students. Typically, funding doesn't actually come from the SGSPA directly but rather from the university which the SGSPA then directs to the necessary places. They do have a small pool of their own funds which are used for administrative purposes which they have re-allocated to try and divert more funding to graduate students. They don't have exact numbers but as of grad council on Monday the number was looking like \$250 per graduate student- doesn't seem like a lot, but the idea is that this would be distributed to departments based on the number of graduate students they have. That pool of funds could then be redistributed to students on the lower end of funding to provide them a more acceptable amount. They can currently do this for 2 years, but every year they do ask the university for more funds so hopefully they can secure more.

- ii. Attended CAGS in November on behalf of the SGPS – Dr. Barber, the new associate dean of teaching and learning, and he has asked to speak with executives regarding the funding report that was generated and distributed to council, SGSPA, and GSEC (Graduate Students Executive Council). People are reading it and want to discuss it and so we will be sure to convey those conversations with council, but it seems that Dr. Barber wants to make meaningful change to funding for graduate students.
- iii. Housing and other report came from the remaining townhalls. Was just distributed to the other executives for approval. Once everyone has a chance to review it, it will be distributed to council.
- iv. Devin can be reached at: [graduate@sgps.ca](mailto:graduate@sgps.ca).
- c. VP Professional – Chloe Stone (no report)
  - i. Events going on throughout the semester- added encouragement to look at the newsletter and social media channels to have as many people attend events as possible.
  - ii. Continuing on with Provost Hiring Committees – much is confidential but just wanted to let the council know that we as the SGPS are sitting in on those meetings.
  - iii. Chloe can be reached at: [professional@sgps.ca](mailto:professional@sgps.ca).
- d. VP Finance and Services – Sandra Wright (no report)
  - i. Financial assistance applications are open and have been over the break- beginning to process them again this week.
  - ii. Focus for this last half of the year will be on reviewing the fee slate and ensuring that fees are representative of the student bodies interests.
  - iii. Working on improving the transparency of the SGPS financial budget, so it's clear how fees are being distributed.
  - iv. Sandra can be reached at: [finance@sgps.ca](mailto:finance@sgps.ca).
- e. VP Community – Emilia Ganslandt (report attached)
  - i. Highlighting the orientation events that Gaby has been working toward - will be in the SGPS newsletter going out tomorrow.
  - ii. Introduces Vina – the new International Student Commissioner.
  - iii. Emilia can be reached at: [community@sgps.ca](mailto:community@sgps.ca).

## **B. Speaker Report**

- a. Speaker – Aileen Editha (oral report)
  - i. Meeting with Devin later on this week to continue to create documentation and resources to make council more accessible. Also meeting with other students and council members that have agreed to share their input and insight on what this year has been like for them, what we can do to make council better, and ensure that council members feel comfortable on council representing students from their department.
  - ii. Will have more to report on in February.

- iii. Question within the Zoom chat posed by Tony Hu: “Sandra, how do the surveys to include an organization to the fee referendum list work?”
1. Sandra’s response – I will get back to you on that Tony.
  2. Beth Langdon responds – I may be able to help if I am interpreting Tony’s question properly. Are you asking how people get on the slate of fees for students to vote on in the referendum?
  3. Tony responds – Yes, some of the med students have been circulating one for the Sexual Assault Centre in Kingston and noting that that’s going to potentially be on the slate of fees for the referendum I was just wondering how that logistically works? How many people need to have the form completed to have the fee included and/or how do people get to put things forward- it didn’t seem very clear to me from our website.
  4. Sandra – I haven’t seen that survey, so I don’t think it was run through executive. If you could share the link than I could find more information for you.
  5. Beth – So it’s not run through executive, but we are the ones asking them to get the signatories. If you want a fee from students, say you have never been on the fee slate before – I don’t remember the number off the top of my head, but you need a substantial amount of graduate student signatures to add the fee to the referendum vote. This doesn’t mean that the fee will automatically be applied, but it means that it will be put on a ballot for students to vote whether or not they want it to be included within their student fees. If you already have a fee and you want it to be continued or increased, then you also need to have a certain number of signatories to have that happen.
  6. Aileen comments – Organizations have to reach out to the SGPS elections team and send in their referendum package- including logistical things that they are seeking, ie. why they need the money and how it will be allocated if received. They then need 100 valid SGPS member signatures. The signature count is checked twice a week, on Monday’s and Thursday’s and closer to the end of deadline (January 25<sup>th</sup>) to acquire these 100 signatures, the counts are taken more frequently to update organizations on where they stand. The elections team consists of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Director, and Chief Returning Officer (CRO).
  7. Tony – The voting for those fees happens at the February AGM or?
  8. Beth –The voting happens through the same platform as the executive’s election. I don’t think that it has to come to an AGM. The point of the signatories is to ensure that students aren’t faced with a list of fees that may not even be applicable to them. By

having students sign off in support, they should be things that are impacting students and they think are reasonably priced to support, which then gets the fee on the ballot for students to finally vote on.

- iv. Conversation occurring in the chat with Aisha and Emilia regarding student association election process. Echoing what Emilia mentioned, if it's within your department it may be best to check their by-laws and policies surrounding that as it can vary. But if any further clarification is needed, please feel free to reach out.
- v. Aileen can be reached at: [speaker@sgps.ca](mailto:speaker@sgps.ca).

**C. Approval**

**MOTION 01/17/23:03**

BIRT SGPS Councils approve the Executive and Speaker Reports.

Beth Langdon moves, Devin Fowlie seconds. No points of discussion on this motion. No dissenting votes; the motion passes unanimously.

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

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

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

- a. Take this time to remind everyone what the goal of the Board of Trustees is – primarily the Board deals with things that are relevant externally, such as business matters, to the University or those that are affecting the day-to-day functioning, whereas the Senate is the governance body that is dealing more with academic matters.
- b. Due to Tony's confidentiality requirements within these various meetings, he's unable to disclose many of the conversations and topics that are discussed which is often a report is not provided.
- c. Next public board meeting (meaning that anyone can attend) will be on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. If anyone has questions, comments, concerns you can reach out to Tony at: [trustee@sgps.ca](mailto:trustee@sgps.ca).

**C. Commissioner Reports**

- a. Athletics & Wellness Commissioner – Clare Gaherty (report attached)
  - i. Wanted to highlight that next week Wednesday there is a graduate student only free yoga class in the ARC. If the link to sign up isn't already available, it will be soon. It will run from 4:30-5:30 and it's an intro yoga class so it is available for anyone- no experience needed!
  - ii. If you enjoy the classes that are running in the ARC – as going forward the SGPS is looking to run one free class a month, you can purchase a pass to do unlimited group fitness at the ARC for \$85 for the semester.
  - iii. Clare can be reached at: [athletics@sgps.ca](mailto:athletics@sgps.ca).
- b. Equity & Diversity Commissioner – Jane Mao (report attached)

- i. Question from Sarah Waldron: “I represent the BGSC (Biology Graduate Student Council) and I had some concerns raised in my last meeting regarding the soft infrastructure meetings. I know you gave a reasoning in your report as to why they’re on pause, however I heard from our EDI rep and others that it was a really great support group for other EDI individuals, and I know you’re waiting for the bursary to come out, but I was just wondering if you had a timeline for when they’ll start back up again that I could report back to my council or whether the meetings could occur regardless of whether the bursary or deputy have been appointed yet?”
  - 1. Jane responds – That’s a great question. Yes, I am waiting for the bursary but also there will be a new opening for the deputy equity commissioner. But if folks want a meeting – I just didn’t want anyone to be unpaid for their labour especially because these are marginalized people that come to these meetings, I want them to be compensated. But if folks want a meeting, we can do that. The soft infrastructure meetings were pioneered by Monica who was my predecessor, which created a network for graduate EDI.
  - 2. Sara replies – Yes, she said she was still getting some questions as people still associated her with the program. People were really interested and found them very helpful.
  - 3. Jane – I will contact some folks to see how the bursary is going but knowing that people want to get this started even if it is unpaid, I will definitely try to get these started. This is great information, thank you for sharing!
- ii. Jane can be reached at: [equity@sgps.ca](mailto:equity@sgps.ca).
- c. Indigenous Graduate Liason – Noah Favel (no report)
- d. International Students’ Affairs Commissioner – *Position vacant*
  - i. Vina Li – new international commissioner; provides a brief introduction.
- e. Social Commissioner – Gabby Torretto (report attached)

**D. Committee Reports**

**E. Department Reports**

**F. Other Reports**

- a. University Rector – Owen Crawford-Lem (no report)

**G. Approval**

**MOTION 01/17/23:04**

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

Beth Langdon moves, Devin Fowlie seconds. No points of discussion on this motion. No dissenting votes; the motion passes unanimously.

**VI. Question Period and Departmental Issues**

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## VII. Business Arising from the Minutes

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## VIII. Main Motions & Discussion

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### **A. Approval of Salary Increases**

**MOTION 01/17/23:05**

BIRT SGPS Council approves the increase of Executive, Student Advisor, and Commissioner salaries per the attached table, reflecting an increase of 27%, 15%, and 27%, respectively and consistent with the Bank of Canada's Inflation calculator which calculates the CPI increase from 2011 – 2022 at 27% and 2018-2022 at 15%.

BIFRT that SGPS Council approve the salary increases effective February 1, 2023.

1. Aileen prefaces – This is a redo of what was brought forward in the December council.
2. Devin speaks to the motion.
  - a. The gist is that there are a few different roles in which the salaries haven't changed since 2011 – apart from the student advisors. These salary raises will come into effect as of February 1<sup>st</sup> as with inflation, we are aiming to ensure that those that come into these roles next and those that are currently in them, are compensated appropriately (wanted to also advertise these roles in the current election with the adjusted pay). Salaries are reflective of CPI increases.
  - b. Modification relative to last time this was brought to council is regarding the student advisors wage adjustment as the previous calculation was incorrect. The table below displays how those differences are reflected in the final revised salaries.
  - c. Finally, there are some modifications to the Bylaws (B.10 and B.7) which reflect the stipends and honoraria. In B.10, the stipends specified in the following subsection (B10.1) are adjusted every 2years to reflect the average CPI increase over those years. With the idea that future executives don't have to come back years later to account for CPI changes. This would apply to all stipends in B10.1.
  - d. Tony has a question: "Just curious if the current SGPS fees are already pegged to inflation – like money we get from students, is that pegged to inflation?"
    - i. Emilia responds – We are allowed to but we are currently not.
    - ii. Beth comments – We haven't adjusted it given what students have to pay, but there is room within the budget to adjust for these salary increases without increasing the student fee at this time.
    - iii. Tony – More a question towards long-term financial sustainability. You can imagine a situation where, if the executive salaries are pegged to inflation but the student fee that goes towards those aren't, then that could cause issues. But it's good to know there is some flexibility.
    - iv. Emilia – Yea we have the ability to adjust.

- v. Beth – In the future, maybe it is the case that we need to increase the fee but it’s not something we’re currently at risk for.
- vi. Aileen – I did ask this question last month and Andria responded that there are deeper pockets that can be dipped into without jeopardizing the financial stability of the SGPS more generally. Aileen references some of the December Meeting minutes to highlight where those financial savings have come from within the SGPS (reallocating of funds due to COVID reducing events, reduction in student advisor numbers) and worse case the student fee could be increased but currently we are in a position where that is not necessary.

Shamus Tobin moves, Beth Langdon seconds. No points of discussion on this motion. No dissenting votes; the motion passes unanimously.

Position	Current Salary	CPI Increase Since Last Change	Difference	Revised Salaries
President	\$15,500.00	27%	\$4,185	\$19,500.00
Vice Presidents	\$12,000.00	27%	\$3,240	\$15,500.00
Student Advisors	\$6,000.00	15% (2018)	\$900	\$6,900.00
Commissioners	\$6,000.00	27%	\$1,620	\$7,500.00

This is the first reading of this bylaw amendment. The second reading will take place at February council which will be a special General Meeting for this change to be effective retroactively to February 1, 2023.

**B. Approval of Modifications to Bylaws B.10 and B.7**

**MOTION 01/17/23:06**

BIRT SGPS Council approves the following modifications to Bylaws B.10 and B.7.

Annika Fuernsinn moves, Beth Langdon seconds. No points of discussion on this motion. No dissenting votes; the motion passes unanimously.

**B.10 Stipends and Honoraria**

- a. SGPS Executive, Officers of Council and Commissioners, Liaisons, and Deputy Commissioners will receive stipends as stipulated in the Bylaws.
- b. This policy shall only be changed by a vote requiring Simple Majority at a General Meeting.

c. Stipends as specified in B.10.1 shall be adjusted every two (2) years to reflect the average Consumer Price Index change over that period.

e.d. This policy will be revised as necessary at each General Meeting to reflect changes in stipends occurring each year and any possible changes in honoraria.

### **B.10.1 Stipends**

a. Stipends are paid monthly, with the total amount paid over the term of responsibility being as follows:

- (1) President ~~\$15,500.00~~ \$19,500.00
- (2) Vice Presidents ~~\$12,000.00~~ \$15,500.00
- (3) Student Advisors ~~\$6,000.00~~ \$6,900.00
- (4) Commissioners ~~\$6,000.00~~ \$7,500.00
- (5) Liaisons \$6,000.00
- (6) Deputy Commissioners \$1,500.00
- (7) Speaker \$4,000.00
- (8) Deputy Speaker \$2,000.00
- (9) Chief Returning Officer \$1,000.00

### **B.7 Permanent and Professional Support Staff**

a. The following positions constitute the Permanent Staff [Permanent Staff]:

(1) the SGPS may employ an Executive Director who shall be a full-time permanent employee. The SGPS shall have a contract with the Executive Director, which shall be negotiated by the Executive and reviewed by a lawyer specializing in Human Resources.

b. The following positions constitute Professional Support Staff [Professional Support Staff]:

(1) the SGPS must employ financial professionals including a bookkeeper, a Chartered Professional Accountant, and an auditor in order to ensure the financial operations of the organization. These professionals will work with the Executive Director and the Vice-President Finance and Services.

(2) the SGPS must employ human resources professionals including a Human Resources Consultant and a lawyer specializing in Human Resources in order to ensure that the SGPS is operating in a legal and appropriate manner towards its employees. These professionals will work with the Executive Director and the Vice-President Professional.

(3) the SGPS must seek advice from either general legal counsel or a lawyer specializing in a particular area when expertise must be sought dealing with issues under their purview.

c. The SGPS shall employ an adequate number of permanent full-time employees and professional support staff to ensure and safeguard the continuous operation of the SGPS.



- d. SGPS salaried permanent staff shall have their salaries adjusted every two (2) years to reflect the average Consumer Price Index change over that period.

## IX. Other Business

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## X. Notices of Motion & Announcements

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## XI. Adjournment

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### **Adjournment**

**MOTION 01/17/23:07**

BIRT this meeting of SGPS Council be adjourned.

Sarah Waldron moves, Chloe Stone seconds. No points of discussion on this motion. No dissenting votes; the motion passes unanimously.