

The Society of Graduate and Professional Students recognizes the 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 is also a reminder that we are benefitting by living on this land that is a territory of Indigenous people.

I. Announcements

A. Seeking candidates for the Graduate Student Senator By-Election

Please e-mail senator@sgps.ca if you have any questions about the role, or e-mail elections@sgps.ca if you have any questions about the election process.

B. URGENT: Seeking two volunteers to serve in the Elections and Referenda Appeals Committee

C. E-mail announcement from Matthew Evans sent to student leaders:

Dear student leaders,

After conversations with many of you over the past several weeks, I have decided to start sending you monthly newsletters during the academic year. I intend to keep these as simple, fact-based messages, which can be shared with your respective members.

The main updates from my office are related to Queen’s budget situation, a matter I know is of great importance to students. Moving forward, it is my goal to send you updates on a broad array of initiatives – on budget and beyond – arising from my portfolio.

Thank you for your interest and concern, and I wish you well over the next few weeks.

Updates from the Office of the Provost & Vice-Principal (Academic)

Virtual student Q&A session on university finances

- Students are invited to join Patrick Deane, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Donna Janiec, Vice-Principal (Finance and Administration), and me virtually on Monday, February 12 from 6-7 pm for a student Q&A session on university finances. The Q&A will be moderated by Queen's Rector Owen Crawford-Lem.
- [Please register here to join.](#)

Principal Deane released a message on Friday, January 26th, addressing Queen’s financial challenges. [Read the full statement in the Gazette.](#)

Queen’s Renew Project

- This new initiative, launched last week, will examine Queen’s systems, processes, and the delivery of professional services to ensure the university is structured and operating effectively to deliver on our academic mission. A further goal is to create a working environment where professional services staff, who deliver administrative and support work that bolsters Queen’s teaching and research mission, are well supported with effective tools, systems, and processes.

- In turn, strong processes and systems will advance our teaching and research, and help us to provide an inspired and motivating learning environment with effective support structures for students.
- The Professional Services Working Group, struck by Principal Deane and co-chaired by Vice-Principal Janiec and myself, will lead the Renew Project.
- This project coincides with Queen’s efforts to reach a structurally balanced budget over the next two years. The difficult work to address the deficit continues within the faculties and shared services, and separately, the Renew Project will seek to ensure we can continue to deliver on our academic mission over the long term, well beyond our current financial challenges.
- This work will be supported by international consultancy firm, Nous Group. They have a leading benchmarking tool that compares and assesses how professional services are delivered at universities around the world. The program will help Queen’s to learn from other institutions’ experiences, and identify areas where we are doing well, and where we have opportunities to improve.
- [More information is available on the project website.](#)

Operating Budget Deficit Updates

- A special Senate meeting on the budget was held on January 17th. At this meeting, I explained that the forecast (as projected in December) for the end-of-year deficit had fallen to \$48 million from the forecasted \$63 million at the start of the year. This improvement was largely due to better-than-expected financial performance in shared services units. Unfortunately, the situation in the faculties is \$2.8 million worse than forecast, mainly due to an increase in the projected deficit of Arts and Science (now forecast to be \$37 million).
- At the most recent meeting of Senate last week, I announced that the Faculty of Arts and Science will have one extra year, until 2026-27, to bring its budget into structural balance.
- In addition, Dean Barbara Crow announced that undergraduate classes with less than 10 students will be able to run next year, 2024-25.
- [Updates, along with many FAQs, are posted on the Office of the Provost website.](#)
- [The Faculty of Arts and Science also has a dedicated page on its website for budget deficit updates and FAQs.](#)

II. Adoption of the Agenda

A. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION 24/02/13:01

BIRT SGPS Council adopt the Agenda for the February 13th 2024 Council Meeting.

III. Minutes

A. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

MOTION 24/02/13:02

BIRT SGPS Council adopt the minutes from the January 24th 2024 Council Meeting.

IV. Executive & Speaker Reports

A. Executive Reports

- a. President – Devin Fowlie (report attached)
- b. VP Graduate – Steacy Coombs (report attached)
- c. VP Professional – Maya Kawale (report attached)
- d. VP Finance and Services – Gaby Fekete (oral report)
- e. VP Community – Tony Hu (report attached)

B. Speaker Report

- a. Speaker – Aileen Editha (no report)

C. Approval

MOTION 24/02/13:03

BIRT SGPS Council approve the Executive and Speaker Reports.

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

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

B. Trustee Report – Graduate Student Trustee – Kana Ogawa (no report)

C. Commissioner Reports

- a. Athletics & Wellness Commissioner – Meghan Mendelin (report attached)
- b. Equity & Diversity Commissioner – Sangeetha Saravanan (oral report)
- c. Indigenous Graduate Liaison – *position vacant*
- d. International Students’ Affairs Commissioner – Vina Li (report attached)
- e. Social Commissioner – Gabby Toretto (oral report)

D. Committee Reports

E. Department Reports

F. Other Reports

- a. University Rector – *position vacant* (no report)

G. Approval

MOTION 24/02/13:04

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

VI. Question Period and Departmental Issues

VII. Business Arising from the Minutes

Budgetary explanation from the SGPS Executive will be provided in March council meeting.

VIII. Main Motions & Discussion

A. Ratification of Executive Election and Fee Referendum Results MOTION 24/02/13:05

BIRT 2023-2024 SGPS Council ratify the certified results of the 2024-2025 SGPS Executive Elections and Student Fee Referendum as provided.

See: Appendix A – 2024-25 Election and Referendum Results, attached.

Motion raised and presented by Council Speaker, Aileen Editha

B. Ratification of Proposed By-Election Timeline MOTION 24/02/13:06

Motion raised and presented by Deputy Speaker, Katie Zutautas.

Day(s)	Day(s) of the Week	Event
Day 1 : Feb 27 th	TUES	Nominations Open
Day 7: Mar 4 th	MON	Nominations Close (at 4:00PM)
Day 8: Mar 5 th	TUES	All Candidates Meeting (TBA; will only be held if needed)
Day 9: Mar 6 th	WED	Campaign Period Begins (at 12:00AM)
Day 11: Mar 8 th	FRI	All Candidates' Debate (TBA)
Day 14: Mar 11 th	MON	Campaign Period Ends (at 11:59PM)
Day 15, 16: Mar 12 th , 13 th	TUES, WED	Voting Days

C. Motion to approve continuance of the Student Life Centre Fee MOTION 24/02/13:07

BIRT, in the event that the fee increase referendum is unsuccessful, SGPS Council approves that the Student Life Centre fee as it currently stands and is implemented (indexed annually to CPI) will remain in effect.

Motion raised and presented by Deputy Speaker, Katie Zutautas.

D. Motion to expand Activity Assistance Subsidy budget MOTION 24/02/13:08

BIRT SGPS Council approve the proposed \$2000 budget increase for the Activity Assistance Subsidy (from \$3000 to \$5000).

Motion raised and presented by Vice President Finance and Services, Gaby Fekete.

E. Motion approving the formation of the ERAC

MOTION 24/02/13:09

The Elections and Referenda Appeals Committee is formed to help settle disputes, participate in investigations, and/or address potential appeals from candidates and referenda groups. The committee consists of the Council Speaker and two SGPS Council Representatives, who must not be SGPS Executives or staff.

BIRT SGPS Council approve the formation of the Elections and Referenda Appeals Committee, comprised of [Volunteer 1 name] and [Volunteer 2 name].

Motion raised and presented by Council Speaker, Aileen Editha.

F. Discussion: Ensuring timely updates about upcoming (rather than past) events

Discussion raised and led by Jake Morrow, Council Representative (English)

IX. Other Business

X. Notices of Motion & Announcements

XI. Adjournment

Adjournment

MOTION 24/02/13:10

BIRT this meeting of SGPS Council be adjourned.