

It is best to start with thanking Vicky, who has been a wealth of information and who has been kind enough to take time out to meet with me and acquaint me with the position as much as possible. All the errors I make henceforth will be my own, but most of the progress made by my position for our memberships' needs will be because of the hard work done that has already been done.

Let me also say that this Council is particularly fortunate in having a team such as this - there has been a lot of work that has already been done by the incoming executives in order to familiarize themselves with the issues pertinent to their portfolios, so you will find them more knowledgeable and on-the-ball than most people would be at this early stage. For this extra effort they have made, they have my gratitude as a student and my admiration as President.

Impressions to date:

My first impressions of the SGPS and our place in the administrative complex have solidified since the election to the extent that I think that some concrete conclusions can be drawn.

External Issues:

1. Role of SGPS in wider Queen's Complex -

While we as an organization have had a place in governance decisions across campus for many years, we have not always been able to use this voice effectively. This is true at the BOT, Senate and other campus groups such as the AMS. We will try to make this voice more effective over this year and have already started an inventory and delegation process.

Internal Issues:

1. Exec Relations -

Executives have complained in the past about having to struggle against other executives in order to get their initiatives through at the exec level. This will be less of a concern this year - we have a group that has similar views on some issues, but more importantly - has the ability to disagree without being disagreeable.

2. Council -

Council has witnessed past attrition in the exec and council-members have perhaps held back their input and participation. The present exec has a different attitude and style so we would like to make Council a more dynamic and involved body through the committees. It is these committees that are meant to steer council, not the exec, so we are seeking committee members and will be asking for your involvement over the year.

3. Services -

Our membership is under-served. This situation will be alleviated over the year. Previous execs have left us with the financial wherewithal and possible options. To add to this, we have ideas of our own - so failure to expand and improve services is not an option over the year.

Strategic Minefields:

There are also some areas where I would not like to see the SGPS getting involved in any deep sense. Intensive involvement in these issues will lead to a dilution of our services and diversion from our focus so I will try and avoid these as much as possible. These will be included in my verbal report.

In closing, I encourage you to attend this meeting. I have met many departmental / faculty reps already, but am looking forward to meeting the rest of Council and working with you over the next year.

Firstly, I want to thank my predecessor, Dave Thompson, for helping me transition into this multifaceted and occasionally intimidating role. I learned much from him and he didn't learn a thing from me, which means we stayed on topic.

Post-Vote & "VP Graduate" Renovation

In policy and practice, issues surrounding graduate TAs and TFs have taken up a large number of the VP Graduate's working hours. For this reason at the very least I warmly welcome the formation of a TA and TF union on campus. The March 23rd vote represents a clear decision on the part of TAs and TFs to actively participate in discussions and decision-making processes regarding their employment, relieving much of the traditional burden on the VP Graduate to advocate for this large and diverse employee group. While I will seek to maintain open communication lines between the VP Graduate and the new union, especially during the coming year, I am also eager to see how my position will evolve in the wake of unionization. Increasing and bolstering the services the SGPS provides has been a theme for some time, and I believe the VP Graduate will now have more time and energy to devote to service-orientated projects and initiatives.

Climate Survey

One such initiative is the "Queen's University Graduate and Professional Student Climate Survey." The idea for this survey originated some time ago within the SGPS and I am pleased to see it progressing, included on the May agenda for the Senate Educational Equity Committee. The survey will seek input and responses from graduate and professional students on issues pertaining to discrimination, harassment, and accommodation, with the end-goal of deciding what kinds of services and training opportunities the SGS, the SGPS and the Equity Office may provide on campus in the future.

Student Advisors

I met with one of our Student Advisors last month to begin discussing where this partner program between the School of Graduate Studies and the SGPS can go from here. My official transition meeting with all three Advisors and the previous VP Graduate is scheduled for later this week (April 5 – 9).

SSHRC

As some of you may have heard, last month the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) published a "Briefing on SSHRC's Renewed Program Architecture" (http://sshrc.ca/site/whatsnew-quoi_neuf/Program_Architecture_Consultation_e.pdf). The document proposes significant changes to ways SSHRC will adjudicate applications as well as the measures it will use to evaluate new scholars. (Take special note: the application date for Research Grants may leap forward to September 15.) I encourage all Council members from departments who apply for SSHRC funding to peruse this document and familiarize themselves with the proposed changes; if they pass at SSHRC's June Council, some changes will come into effect as early as September 2010.

Amazingly, the deadline for responding to the March-published briefing was March 31st. I submitted a query to SSHRC (April 6) asking if this deadline is forgivable and received an automated reply, stating "the feedback received will be considered in further refinement of the program design." If you or your departments have suggestions and wish to submit them, hopefully they will be taken into consideration. I am including in Council's appendix the initial suggestions and critiques posed by the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA).

Academic Affairs Standing Committee

Along with some of my fellow execs, I would like send out a call for committee members. The VP Graduate chairs the Academic Affairs Standing Committee, which unfortunately went un-staffed during the previous VP Graduate's term, despite his best efforts. If you want to get involved in short-term projects regarding academic issues facing graduate students on campus, please get in touch (vpq@sgps.ca).

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel Moore

Hiring

Hiring is underway, and by the time of the meeting we will likely be in the process of setting up interviews, etc. At least one application for each position has been received, which is nice.

Grad Club

The AGM was on March 30th, and went well. There seems to be a renewed spirit of camaraderie, and in addition to myself sitting on the board as the SGPS Rep, next year we will also have our VPFS sitting on the board as one of the graduate student directors. This should really help to strengthen our ties with the organization, as well as facilitate communication.

ESS Issues

A number of the exec continue to work on some of the issues currently facing the newest part of our membership. Look for a more concrete update on this in May.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaughnessy Hawkins

Greetings!

With only a week under my belt as the new VP CCA, my report to Council will be short – but auspicious!

Sustainability

Thanks to the hard work of my predecessor and all those involved in the bottled water free/renewal of Coke's exclusivity campaign, Principal Woolf has announced our campus will be bottled water free within the next 5 years, upon termination of Queen's contract with Coca-Cola.

Additionally, an official letter crafted by QBAC (Queen's Backing Action on Climate Change) was signed this week by new SGPS President Jawad Qureshy, Sustainability Coordinator Ivana Zelenika and incoming Rector Nick Day, inciting Principal Woolf to commit to the solar energy initiative in writing and to initiate dialogue amongst parties.

Committees

We are accepting applications for various equity positions (Equity Coordinator, Equity Commissioner and International Student Coordinator) until Friday, April 9th 2010. We are looking to hire for several other positions as well. For details, please consult: [HYPERLINK "http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/jobs.html"](http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/jobs.html)

Furthermore, I am looking for volunteers to sit on the SGPS Campaigns & Community Affairs Standing Committee (more info at [HYPERLINK "http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/committees.html"](http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/committees.html)), and would ask representatives of various departments to advertise this opportunity widely. Specifically, if members of your respective departments are interested in fighting for equity and for childcare, advocating against poverty, and committing to making our practices more sustainable, encourage them to get on board! This year promises to be an exciting one.

Canadian Federation of Students

I met with Graham Cox, researcher for the national office of the CFS, in March to be briefed about the latest campaigns and research initiatives undertaken at the national level. I will be meeting with Frederico Carvajal, Eastern fieldworker for CFS-Ontario on April 12, 2010 in Ottawa to initiate discussions around the two latest reports on the Task Force on Campus Racism as well as the upcoming National Day of Action (in November).

And speaking of advocacy against tuition hikes, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities announced on Monday March 29th that tuition increases will remain capped at a five per cent limit for the next two years. Still, CFS reports that, for students enrolled in four-year programs, this translates into close to \$30,000 of debt upon completion of their degrees, thus further widening the gap between fees paid by Ontario students and students studying everywhere else in Canada.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne-Marie Grondin
VP Campaigns & Community Affairs

Hello to all!

The transition into my position went fairly well and I am looking forward to the upcoming year for a variety of reasons. I am hoping that the SGPS will increase its visibility across campus including the sponsorship of more social events. As you are aware, the SGPS currently sponsors events like Trivia night at the Grad Club. April brings a month full of exciting events, like the SGPS semi-formal which I hope to see all of you at allowing us to socialize a little less formally.

Official Business:

APRIL FEE RENEWALS:

Two fee renewals will be before council at the April meeting: the Grad Club fee and the QUIAA.

COMMITTEE CALL-OUT

The finance and services committee is looking for volunteers to be committee members. It would be greatly appreciated if council members could advertise this widely in their respective departments. More information can be found at <http://www.sgps.ca/jobs/committees.html>. As well, the strategic planning committee is looking for committee members. Tasks this year will include checking into the feasibility of various projects as proposed by SGPs members, as well as long term goal setting for the future. These two committees will be tasked with preparing a feasible budget based on the \$90,000 that the SGPS can safely invest in any opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell
VP Finance and Services

Senate

http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/agendas/Mar25_10.pdf

Question Submitted by Senator Notash:

What is the University doing to help faculties and units to implement the new Senate Educational Equity Policy approved by Senate Nov. 26, 2009?

The guiding principles, implementation procedure and accountability of the Educational Equity Policy are available from the following URL

<http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/policies/EDEQ2009.html>.

VP Academic Patrick Deane provided an oral response. The implementation of the Senate Educational Equity Policy will involve an integration of Academic Planning and an emphasis on the value of equity and diversity. Adnan Husain will be tasked with ensuring that this process unfolds as planned.

QUPC

Senate approved SORC's revised blueprint for the Queen's University Planning Committee (see Appendix A). The Board of Trustees must now review and approve the recommendations before the QUPC is formally established. Senator Christie proposed a friendly amendment that would have added additional student, faculty, and staff senators to the QUPC. I supported the motion and voted in favor of her suggestions. Unfortunately several students and faculty disagreed with what I thought was a sensible proposal, and the amendment failed.

Working Group to Review the Harassment/Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedure

Deadline for feedback: April 30, 2010.

Following Keith Norton's report *Review of the Harassment/Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedure of Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario* to Senate in November 2007, the Senate appointed a Working Group to review his recommendations and to make changes to the existing policy and procedure. The Working Group has attempted to respond to Mr. Norton's recommendations respecting the *Policy and Procedure's* clarity, scope, applicability, fairness and due process.

The Working Group considered current legislation and case law in addition to the recommendations prepared by Mr. Keith Norton, which can be found at

http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Jan24_08/Norton.pdf.

The Working Group has drafted a revised policy entitled *Human Rights Policy and Procedure: Harassment, Discrimination, and Accommodation* for review and comment by the Senate and the Queen's University community. The draft policy can be found at

http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Mar25_10/plcydrft.pdf.

SGPS Computer Network

- I have been working on the various computers in our office. The computers required work in order to ensure they are ready for the new Executive.
- I have worked on the mail and wiki server in order to allow for mobile device connections (such as smart-phones).
- I'm working to install and configure server modules that allow for various settings to be changed by end users (preferences, password updates, email vacation messages, etc).

SGPS Website

- I have been working on a backup web server. My goal is to have a backup computer that can be plugged-in should the main webserver fail. This means we should never experience extended periods where our main website is not accessible.
- I have continued to create audio-visual tutorials for our wiki.

Communications

- I have spent most of my time working on the agenda/dayplanner for the 2010/2011 year. I have continued working on the content and working to secure ad spots with various groups on and off campus. I'm also finalizing the advertisements for the SGPS as well as the cover art.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Steve Cutway Accessibility Award

The Queen's Accessibility Committee and the AMS Accessibility Queen's received 8 nominations and selected Helen Connop in the Faculty of Law and Michele Chittenden in the Adaptive Technology Centre as this year's recipients.

Principal Woolf presented the Award last Friday, April 9 at 1:30 pm. The Equity Committee on behalf of the SGPS would like to extend congratulations and thank them for their extended efforts over the past years.

Queer Grad Students and Allies

A second SPOKEN WORD workshop will be taking place on APRIL 19th from 3-5pm in a TBA location in the J-duc. Back by popular demand, this workshop is a way to fuse rhythm, poetry and your concerns in your words into a dynamic piece of performative poetry. The workshop includes a discussion on gender and social experiences in academia, techniques and tips for potent writing as well as the opportunity to perform your piece at the Mayworks festival in early May. This workshop is open to female identified individuals, it is free of charge and refreshments will be provided. Please confirm your interest with Lara at Equityco@sgps.ca asap.

Interested non female identified individuals are also asked to contact the email above.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the QGSA and/or receiving updates, please email qgsa.club@gmail.com or megsouthee@gmail.com

Council on Employment Equity

The council on employment equity presented the proposal for gender neutral washrooms at Queen's, by Jean Pfeleiderer on behalf of the Transgender/Transsexual Policy Group at the last meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sophia Virani

Trash to Art media coverage

Our March 1st Trash to Art event was well received and also well publicized by the Gazette and the Kingston Whigstandard. (For more details see our March report). As the Earth Hour approached I was contacted by the Kingston's Chum radio station 98.9 The Drive for a quick interview about the project as it pertained very much to the sustainability stories they were looking for. Myself and a fellow Sustainability Committee member Michael McHugh were interviewed on Tuesday March 23rd which aired on morning of Thursday March 24th. Given the success of this year's project we are already planning a similar Trash/Art exhibit with a message to bring awareness to e-Waste on campus for the following year.

Solar PV Project

In collaboration with the incoming AMS student governments, the QBAC (Queen's Backing Action on Climate Change), Main Campus Residence Council and the incoming SGPS President, the solar pv group which I am part of, has drafted a proposal for Principal Woolf outlining the project details and calling for:

1. The results of the feasibility study by Physical Plant Services be publicly disclosed by April 30,2010.
2. Principal Woolf announce and commit to a time line for the decision making process by April 30, 2010.
3. Principal Woolf issue a statement of Support for Solar Panels at Queen's and commit to examining all potential financing options.

Earth Day Activities

We are in the process of organizing a "lights off" project/ campaign for the Earth Day with an intent to bring awareness to un-necessary lighting in classrooms on campus. We plan on picking one building and doing a light audit and a calculation into the environmental and economic costs for that night and what it translates to per month or semester.

We would also like to organize a badminton pick-up game in the BioSciences court for the month of April – perhaps for lunch time or an early afternoon to act as a study de-stresser. More details on both of these to come!

Respectfully Submitted,

Ivana Zelenika