

First of all I want to welcome everyone back and hope you all had an excellent summer. The last two months have been incredibly busy. Over the month of June, myself and other members of the Executive team attended numerous Convocations ceremonies representing the SGPS. It was a memorable time of celebration and very rewarding to see our members hard work finally paying off.

In addition, I have been meeting monthly with the former Dean of Student Affairs, John Pierce and in July, our new Dean Ann Tierney. She is thrilled to be in this position and looks forward to working with Graduate and Professional students. I am hoping to invite her to one of our upcoming council meetings to get to know you all.

As well, I have been meeting with our Provost, Bob Silverman more recently to discuss the current labour situations at Queen's. As you are all aware, the SGPS website has links where you can find information and updates as we move forward. A new Provost, Alan Harrison started August 1st and I look forward to meeting with him regularly.

Finally, I have had ongoing meetings with Principal Woolf over the summer discussing the role of Professional and Graduate students at Queen's. Should you have any concerns that you want expressed, please feel free to email me at any time. To conclude, I wish to update our members on some of our ongoing projects.

Student Life Centre (SLC) -Constitution and Operations & Management Agreement

These documents have finally been signed and we are now moving into the next phase of the Student Life Centre. Over the last few months, we have been in discussions with the AMS about the retail spaces in the SLC. Hopefully I will have more news about what retail entities will be taking space in the SLC at our next meeting in September.

Orientation

I encourage all of you to attend the numerous events planned by our social team for Orientation week. This is a great opportunity to meet other Graduate and Professional students at Queen's. The events are fantastic and a good time is promised. Finally, I want to express a quick thank you to our social team for the wonderful activities that they planned over the summer. Keep up the hard work! We have partnered with the School of Graduate Studies for the welcome and Orientation event planned for Sept 6th. We are looking for Graduate student volunteers for a number of key roles-please contact me if you are interested (there may be a little something for you should you wish to volunteer).

Graduate Conference

The SGPS is looking to continue the conference series where Graduate and Professional students share their work with others (Queen's community, Kingston community, Alumni, etc...).

We are looking for interested students to present their work as well as student to help plan these events.

To conclude, I just want o remind you all that there are many committees or clubs available for you to join. I encourage you all to get involved with the SGPS while you're here. The rewards are immeasurable!

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Burford-Grinnell
President-SGPS
president@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Graduate
August 2011

Greetings!

Welcome back! I hope you all had a wonderful summer, wherever it might have taken you! Here are a few things to note for the coming month:

Student Advisors 2011/2012

After a lengthy application and interview process, two new Student Advisors have been added to the team. Please help us in welcoming Lauren McNicol, and Victoria Millious! Shauna Shiels, our Student Advisor from the last academic year, has been successfully rehired in the position of Student Advisor for the coming academic year!

Health, Counselling and Disability Services (HCDS)

We are currently compiling a list of service gaps that our membership has experienced recently. Please spread the word within your respective departments and ask for any feedback to be emailed to me at the below email address! Our goal is to work together with HCDS to find ways to bridge the identified service gaps in order to better meet the needs of our membership!

Academic Affairs Standing Committee (AASC)

I am interested in getting a wide representation on this committee. We are currently lacking representation from the Faculty of Engineering & Applied Sciences, the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Law, the School of Business, the School of Policy Studies, and the School of Urban & Regional Planning. If you are interested in finding out more information about how to join the AASC on short-term projects to do with academic issues that face Queen's graduate students, please feel free to contact me as soon as possible! Please also distribute this message within your respective schools, departments, and faculties!

Information Panel on New Grading System

On Friday, September 9, 2011, the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will be hosting its annual Fall Teaching Development (TD) Day. TD Day is a day-long conference that provides "a unique opportunity for all TAs to meet and learn about new and interesting developments in teaching and learning. A featured guest keynote speaker, in addition to members of the Queen's community, will focus on key aspects of the roles and responsibilities of TAs in undergraduate teaching. This opportunity to get together in a focused environment can be an important step in encouraging effective teaching practices, encouraging further professional development, and enhancing the role TAs play in undergraduate education."¹

An information panel is currently being organized for 3:30 p.m. on TD Day to answer your questions on the new grading system that was implemented on May 1, 2011. Stay tuned for further details about the event to be made available via the SGPS newsletter as they become available! If you or anyone from your respective departments is interested in attending but cannot, please feel free to email me any questions with regards to the grading system and they will be addressed by our panellists!

That is all for now. I would like to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable rest of the summer and I look forward to seeing you all at our next council meeting in September!

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Karagiorgakis
VP Graduate
vpg@sgps.ca

¹ Information retrieved from http://www.queensu.ca/ctl/community/students/td_day.html. For more information about TD Day, please visit the website.

Grad Club

It has been a busy summer at the Grad Club. The efforts of the Board of Directors have been aimed at ensuring that preparations are in place for the upcoming school year. A few of the specific initiatives involve the acquisition and implementation of a new ATM machine, the continued use of improved security measures, ensuring that government regulations in the areas of health and safety are continually followed, continued development of policy, procedures and guidelines to satisfy requirements in regulated areas. I have been working closely with the Board to draft updated employment contracts that will ensure the continued strength of the Club's relationships with its employees and further ensure that legislative requirements are met while limiting exposure to the Club that can result from lack of planning and proper guidelines in these important areas. Our goal remains to retain the best possible talent at an economical cost point such that patrons will be provided with the highest possible services for reasonable prices. Meeting regularly with the Board has been a key commitment of the SGPS President and Vice President of Professional students throughout the summer months and will remain a priority in to the school year. We anticipate organizing orientation events at the Club as a key way to introduce incoming students to the amenities available there with the hopes of creating a quality relationship at the beginning of many SGPS member's stay at Queen's. The Club's biggest challenges currently come in the form of competition from other local food service establishments and the rising cost of food and services along with a corresponding drop in the level of drink consumption from students. I along with the President and Board of Directors invite students to make the Grad Club their destination of choice more often when it comes to location to spend time enjoying drinks and food with friends. This will help ensure that the Club remains a profitable on campus destination for years to come. If you or your classmates have any concerns with the level and quality of services you have or are receiving at the club, please feel free to address these comments to myself and I will ensure that they are heard and addressed. Additionally any comments as to how we may improve things at the Club to better meet your needs would be similarly appreciated.

Orientation Events

I have been busily coordinating across continents events between the law 2013 orientation and this year's SGPS orientation. We have successfully arranged to have an SGPS booth at part of the law club day. I believe that this will provide the SGPS an opportunity to introduce itself, programs, services etc. to incoming law students and forge a relationship early on in their three (3) year stay with the SGPS. It is our hope that this will encourage a more open and effective relationship between the SGPS and the law school. Indeed the presence of our current president amongst this year's incoming class along with my presence should help to encourage a strong foundation of openness between two groups which have been far too separate in years past. We as an executive feel that there are ample synergies that each may benefit from. It is our hope that through the continuous combination of social events throughout the course of this year beginning in orientation will allow both groups to reap these expected benefits. I would like to offer a special thanks to our current president and social committee members for their hard work on this initiative to date and for their anticipated efforts in the months ahead.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Campaigns & Community Affairs
August 2011

Welcome back!

Amidst all the activity on campus related to labour action at the moment, I am reticent to admit that the summer months have been rather quiet on the campaigns side at the SGPS – though I have no doubt that orientation and the various committees which are about to resume will swiftly take care of that.

To date, there has been no direct response from VIA Rail to our members' complaints regarding the abolished student travel discount. However, we were informed that our members can benefit from several regular 'adult' discounts, such as employee or corporate discounts if you are a worker at Queen's (for instance a TA or a TF), advanced purchase discounts, and 'express deals,' which vary weekly. VIA has also stated that its discount packages are reviewed on an ongoing basis, and that they are open to reconsidering their value proposition. This said, and seeing as our ISIC cards will continue to be accepted until December 31st of this calendar year, I encourage everyone to continue sending in complaints. The CFS has been slow to produce its promised official petition campaign. As such, I call on each Councilor to spearhead their own departmental petition, and to drop it off at the SGPS office (or to email it to me) anytime before October 1st, so that we can send the Human Resources department our collective complaints with time spared for VIA to reverse its decision before our discount expires. I also encourage our members to equip themselves with a new ISIC card during orientation (or at any other time), regardless of what the future holds, with a reminder that VIA is not the only service to provide cardholders with discounts.

If you are wondering what is taking the CFS so long to send us their petition to VIA, I asked the National Chairperson the same question. Her answer was that the petition campaign was put temporarily on hold in order to prioritize more time-sensitive campaigns, which I am sure my colleagues who attended the National General Meeting last May will be able to tell you more about. I will make sure to enquire into the matter further at the upcoming CFS Ontario Annual General Meeting, scheduled this month, on August 18th to the 21st. As for the sub-entity of the CFS known as the National Graduate Caucus, their Executive is currently working to develop a poster campaign to promote mental health and safety on university campuses, which is timely given both the push for mental health advocacy at Queen's over the last few months, and the fact that our Principal hopes to leverage his Commission on Mental Health for funding this fall (as stipulated in his letter to the Chair of Queen's Board of Trustees over the summer and referenced in an article which recently appeared in MacLean's on Campus <http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education/2011/07/28/queens-quality-compromised-wrote-president-in-leaked-letter/>). If you and your colleagues feel mental health and safety are important, there are several ways you can get involved: 1) ask me for a poster to put up in your department – I will send the CFS our order over the next few weeks; 2) look for possibilities to get involved: for instance, you might consider the position of Health & Occupational Safety Officer for the TA/TF Union, PSAC 901. Or, you might ask your department about any health and safety committee you could join, either as a departmental representative, or as a student-at-large; 3) get informed – ask your department what policies exist which guarantee your occupational health and safety, be it physical, mental, or other. Another place to start might be to contact the SGPS (i.e. send us/me an email!), and we will answer you to the best of our

knowledge, or ask others who know more on your behalf. If there are lapses in existing policy (for instance, did you know that Queen's health and safety policy does not account for occupational stress?), my job is to advocate for a remedy.

Though I have more to say about the work of the National Graduate Caucus, I will briefly digress by going back to the Principal's letter which I referenced above. Said-letter, addressed as I mentioned to Mr. William Young, Chair of Queen's Board of Trustees, was leaked to certain labour activists, faculty, and students, posted as a 'note' on Facebook, and then widely circulated and discussed in various media outlets. If you have not already familiarized yourselves with its content, I encourage you to do so by reading "QUEEN'S STUDENTS PLEASE READ: Letter from Principal Woolf inadvertently sent to Canadian Union of Public Employees" on Facebook. A candid divulgence of our top administrator's financial priorities and strategies, the letter has already elicited strong reactions from students, faculty, and alumni, from our own campus and others'. As your representative and campaigns leader, I would like to hear your feedback on the content of the letter, and on any action you feel the SGPS should take in response to it.

In keeping with the theme of financial strategies, you may have heard that Queen's signed partnership agreements with small- and medium-sized business last June to allow the corporate sector to work in collaboration with Queen's researchers on new product ideas. While this is certainly good news for local businesses seeking to expand, the new agreements also raise potential challenges to research integrity and high-quality research, particularly for our colleagues in engineering and life sciences, highlighted as chief research partners. That 'innovation' at Queen's seems increasingly to be defined (not to mention rewarded) in accordance with research market value raises further questions as to the comparable standing of our members whose research interests compete with commercial incentives. Having said this, the National Graduate Caucus is currently compiling research on the growing academic-industrial complex and its effects on graduate student research. As we prepare for a new academic year, I continue to look for your input on possible campaigns. Should this be a campaign which you feel relevant to your work and ours, ... you know the drill.

As a final note, representatives of the CFS, including those hailing from the National Graduate Caucus, have been meeting with the three federal granting agencies (NSERC, SSHRC AND CIHR) over the summer to discuss the Tri-Council's regulations governing stipends paid to students from grants. A few weeks ago, the Tri-Council announced that all such regulations will, as of this year, be removed. Whereas, before, the granting agencies placed restrictions on the amount a grantholder could be given as a stipend, such restrictions have now been removed. The Tri-Council's new policy now allows for bursary top-ups from departments and/or supervisors, without placing limits on the minimum/maximum dollar-value for stipends.

I look forward to seeing you next week!

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Grondin
VP CCA



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the VP Finance & Services
August 2011

Welcome back and welcome to new representatives! I hope you've had a restful and/or productive summer, whichever it was you needed, and that you're ready for a busy year on SGPS Council.

Student Activity Fees

The 2011/2012 student activity fees are available for viewing at <http://www.sgps.ca/info/fees.html>

Health & Dental Plans

We've finalized our negotiations with our carrier for the upcoming insurance year. I'm pleased to announce that we are able to offer health and dental plans at the same cost to our members as last year. In addition, we've managed to add a few new health benefits. We've broadened birth control options by including intrauterine devices (IUDs). We've also negotiated more extended health benefits: athletic therapy, occupational therapy, and counselling services will now be covered at the same rate as the current extended health benefits. The counseling is especially important for members' spouses and dependents who are unable to access Queen's Health Counselling and Disability Services (HCDS). Full details will be available on our website by September.

As always, members with equivalent alternative coverage can opt-out of the SGPS plans between September 12 and September 23. Please find details at <http://www.sgps.ca/health/opt.html>

The University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) for international students only provides basic coverage for medical services such as doctor and hospital visits, so all members who have UHIP must also have the SGPS health and dental plans or an equivalent alternative. We are working with the Queen's University International Centre (QUIC) to clarify our messaging to international students and provide a comprehensive view in the differences between these insurance plans.

Finance & Services Committee

The committee met this summer to discuss gaps we've found in the SGPS Policies regarding the bursaries and grants that we adjudicate. We've developed new policies and modified existing policies that we will present to Council at the September meeting.

Financial Aid 101

Navigating the funding terrain can be incredibly stressful when members are already strained due to financial difficulties. SGPS representatives are attending a Financial Aid 101 workshop with Student Awards on August 9. The goal is for SGPS front desk staff, Student Advisors, and executive to be able to direct members to the financial resources available to them, both on- and off-campus. We appreciate your input on how to get this information to students, whether that be by adding a section to the SGPS website, sending out reminders in our e-newsletter, holding information sessions, etc. Please contact me with suggestions at vpfs@sgps.ca

Getting Involved

One of my goals for this year is to try to increase member involvement with the SGPS. One message that is really important to share is that graduate and professional students—all of us—are the SGPS. The society is not just the staff in the office, the executive, the commissioners or the Council members; the society is the entire membership. We are working to revamp the “Get Involved” section of the website to advertise the university-wide committees, councils, and boards that allow SGPS involvement and to clarify who holds each of those positions. We will be looking to you throughout the year to join committees and to encourage members of your departments to do so. We need to ensure that the interests of graduate and professional students are represented at every level at Queen’s. Let’s all get involved in making the decisions that affect us!

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Phillipson
SGPS VP Finance & Services



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Speaker
August 2011

Hello Council,

Deputy Speaker

I have recently hired my Deputy Speaker for the year, so you will notice a new face sitting up at the front table. James MacLeod will be an excellent addition to the team, so make sure you make him feel welcome. As a procedural thing, James must be ratified by Council, so I would ask that you make sure to do so.

Guide to Council

At the September Council Meeting, at the beginning of the meeting, I will be giving a presentation to familiarize new Council members with the workings of council, and it will also serve as a refresher for all of the seasoned veterans. Additionally, it will give me a chance to lay out some of my expectations from all of you. More details will follow, but please ensure that you are on time for that important presentation.

Updated Council List

As we start up another academic year, there is likely going to be some change over in the SGPS Department Reps, so we just want to make sure that we have all of the correct information for our representatives, so that we can make sure everyone knows everything they need to know. If there are changes to these things, please let James know (deputyspeaker@sgps.ca), and he will keep the list of Councilors up to date.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Rapos
SGPS Speaker

May Senate

- The Senate Library Committee presented a sobering annual report in light of practices that render acquisitions and staff positions dispensable items in the operating budget. The report notes that since 1995/96 staff positions have decreased from 180 to 120, and are expected to decrease by 10 more next year, largely because the Library cannot weather across-the-board cuts like some departments may with increases to tuition. “Consequently,” the report continues, “this funding model will mean further staff reductions and in essence the dismantling of the Library system over time.” The report also observes:

“The acquisitions budget is static. Notwithstanding the cost benefits to Queen’s University Library by purchasing through membership in consortia, the purchasing value of the acquisitions budget decreases by approximately 5% each year because of increased licensing costs. Over time this trend will lead to a narrowing of the collection as more specialized books and electronic journals are dropped.”

http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/May25_11/SLCRpt.pdf
- Senator Morelli asked the Principal and Provost to comment on the administration’s efforts to see the province provide “quality” rather than “capital funding” to post-secondary institutions, and on the size of capital projects line in the budget compared to the reported deficit. Sen. Morelli’s questions – and the brief written responses provided to Senate – can be found here,
http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/May25_11/SLCRpt.pdf

Administration Staffing

- Mr. Dean McKeown will take over Dr. Brenda Brouwer as Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost on August 15th, 2011.
- Martha Whitehead was appointed University Librarian in July, after filling the same position under a temporary term.
- Alan Harrison will take over from Bob Silverman as Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), August 1st, 2011.

Teaching Complex Space – Building Committee

- Since May, I’ve sat on the committee responsible for steering the planning process for a new building on campus dedicated to undergraduate teaching. The committee chair, Jonathan Rose, has done much to ensure that the committee moves carefully through these early stages and has facilitated a number of workshops comprised of faculty, students, the Registrar, Faculty of Arts & Science, and the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Nothing is solidified yet, but the architect firm hired by the University will present designs for the new space based on the committee’s deliberations to the Sept. Senate Campus Planning Committee. A few highlights/observations thus far:
 - the committee has been told on several occasions that building will not commence until the project is fully funded by private donor and provincial capital funds; the committee is drafting plans in the hope that the University will prove more successful in garnering funds with a concrete designs in place

- so far the committee has resisted pressure from the Registrar and Administration for a very large first-year lecture auditoriums (700+ seats), seeing no pedagogical rationale for such a space
- the complex will include approx. 10 20-seat seminar rooms in order to augment well-equipped tutorial space on campus
- the designs also feature innovative spaces for large classes based on “blended” learning models, the pedagogical value of which seems to remain uncertain, as the report below attests

“Blended Learning” and Academic Planning

Senator Jones, and member of the Senator Academic Planning Task Force, submitted a substantial report on virtualization and blended learning to Senate and the Queen’s community at large on the “Real Academic Planning Blog”,

<http://realacademicplanning.wordpress.com/2011/07/29/mark-jones-on-virtualization-at-queens-and-beyond-29-july-2011/#more-715>

I encourage Councilors to peruse the report as they can since it certainly speaks to the academic planning exercise and the future directions of teaching on campus. As Sen. Jones observes, Queen’s and the province are seriously investigating the normalization of online learning as a cost-effective supplement to first-year curricula that have long been delivered in-class. (Some curricula are potentially replaceable by e-learning.) At Queen’s this has been recently termed “blended learning” (see <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/undergraduate/technology-in-teaching-and-learning/current-practices-and-initiatives>), where some course material is done in-class, or in-person with students or faculty, and some online off-campus.

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel Moore



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
August 2011

Hello All,

The SGPS is excited to inform you of the great events that we're going to be holding for our Orientation Week. Our events range from a variety of purely social, athletic and healthy living events. We hope to see everyone come out and interact with the diverse community that is our SGPS members.

Tuesday September 6th, 2011

9:00 - 11:00 Information Fair (free)

Be sure to head to the Biosciences Atrium to pick-up information on services at Queen's and in Kingston. Get free food and a campus tour, too!

1:00 - 5:00 Queen's Amazing Race (free)

This competition will involve solving riddles that will lead you all across campus and the greater campus area. Complete a challenge in order to attain your next clue and progress to the next stage. Awesome prizes for the first 3 teams to complete the race! Participants will be matched up in teams. Get to know other SGPS members and become familiarized with hot spots on campus and the surrounding area. Starts in JDUC Room 237.

8:00 - 1:00 SGPS Mixer (free)

Come out to the Grad Club to win some prizes, meet your fellow SGPS members and enjoy great DJ music. Everyone is welcome!

Wednesday September 7th, 2011

12:30 - 4:30 Sports Day

Join us for an afternoon of exciting activities! Pick one of: 1. Rock Climbing at the Boiler Room (\$10/person - \$5/*child) 2. Beach Volleyball @ The Mansion (FREE!) 3. Field Sports (FREE!) – Ultimate Frisbee or Soccer Meet at the SGPS Office (Room 021, JDUC)

6:00 - 10:00 1000 Islands Boat Cruise (\$15/person)

Come out to the exclusive SGPS cruise! Be at the pier ready to board by 6:00. Take in the sights and sounds of Kingston while you mingle with other members of the SGPS. Guests are welcome. Delicious appetizers will be served during the cruise. This is a popular event each year!

Thursday September 8th, 2011

8:30 - 3:30 Student Card Registration (new students only)

Last names starting with A-M will be registered for student cards between 8:30 – 12:00, letters N-Z will be registered from 12:00 – 3:30.

6:00 - 8:00 Haunted Walk (\$6/person)

The famous Kingston haunted walk tours will depart from the Courthouse at 6:00 and will end at the Grad Club. Come inside the Grad Club after your walk and enjoy a fabulous night of trivia with free food!

8:30 - 11:00 SGPS Trivia Night (free)

Come and join us for a Grad Club tradition! Win fabulous prizes and enjoy some free food! Registration Required

Friday September 9th, 2011

8:30 - 4:30 Sidewalk Sale

Come down to University Avenue and see all the vendors and student groups. This event attracts over 10,000 shoppers every year from both the student body and the Kingston community.

8:30 - 4:30 TD Day

Head to Biosciences Complex for Teaching Development Day registration at 8:30. The Opening Plenary is at 9:30. The day includes keynote talks followed by concurrent training sessions. Free lunch and refreshments provided. Registration through CTL required, see SGPS website for details.

6:00 - 10:30 Semi-Formal (\$25/person)

Come out and join us for a fabulous dinner on the water at the Confederation Place Hotel. We will be offering a delicious buffet, a glass of wine at dinner and a cash bar. After dinner, we'll be heading to Zappa's Lounge to dance the night away!

Saturday September 10th, 2011

10:00 Corn Maze (\$10/adult - \$5/*child)

A Kingston tradition! The trip also includes a hayride from the ferry to the corn maze and a delicious BBQ lunch with dessert (can be taken to go). Meet at the Wolfe Island Ferry Dock (Ontario and Barrack St) at 10:00. The ferry leaves at 10:30 sharp, don't be late!

4:00 - 5:30 Bowling (\$10/adult - \$5/*child)

Be sure to come out and join us for a fun night of bowling at Cloverleaf Lanes. Bring your partner, family and friends along. Pizza and non- alcoholic beverages will be served.

7:00 - 10:30 Speed Meeting (\$10/person)

Come out to the Grizzly Grill to meet other SGPS members in a speed meeting fashion that is similar to speed dating minus the romantic agenda. This event is very popular. Appetizers and a drink included.

Sunday September 11th, 2011

1:00 - 3:30 Family Day BBQ (\$5/adult - \$0/*child)

Meet at the Grad Club for a fun-filled family BBQ party. An afternoon filled with activities and games for your kids to enjoy. We'll have numerous prizes, water balloons, piñatas, a delicious

BBQ and almost everything we can think of. We would love for you to come out with your family to meet fellow SGPS members and an afternoon that your kids are sure to remember.

Lastly, the social team would love to hear your feedback regarding the types of events we're running and ways we can make them more appealing to our SGPS members. If you have any general inquiries or feedback don't hesitate to contact us at social@sgps.ca.

Respectfully Submitted,

Abdullahi Abunafeesa
Social Commissioner
(social@sgps.ca)

SGPS Computer Network

- I finished setup work for network installations in our new upstairs offices.
- I have added important patches to our servers to ensure they are secure.
- I continue to work on the proposal for our off-site backup system. We hope to get this working in September.
- I have tweaked our spam filter on the mail server to reduce the amount of spam received to our e-mail inboxes.
- I have written some new code that allows our wiki server to complete searches more quickly and efficiently.
- I am investigating the new OS X Lion Server to see what benefits may be available. I am also trying to make sure a transition would be smooth should we decide to upgrade. More research and testing is required before anything further happens.
- I needed to re-work our network infrastructure due to changes made on the main Queen's network.
- I am working to refurbish some of our older computers so they can go back to work for our staff. The older computers require some cleanup and a some inexpensive hardware upgrades.
- I am working to allow each computer in the office to keep differential backups on the main server. Some more infrastructure work is needed before this is in working condition.

SGPS Website

- I am working on the Council and Get Involved sections of our website to make them more informative and welcoming.
- We are working to add new information about UHIP so international students find it easier to understand the difference between our GreenShield coverage and UHIP.
- I have written new scripts to prepare for off-site backup of our website. The scripts automatically generate a backups of the website but do so only incrementally so each subsequent backup is efficient in terms of data size. Once per month the entire website is prepared for backup just in case any data corruption is ever to occur.

Communications

- We expect the agenda/dayplanner to be delivered to the office in the next few weeks.
- I am in the testing phase for the optional fee opt-out process.
- I am working on new mailing lists for international students, education students, law students, mature students and more. This will allow us to target specific messages when that is warranted.
- The Orientation Week Survival Guide has been sent to the printers. I expect the booklet to be delivered via snail mail in the next week (or 2 maximum).
- The Orientation section of the SGPS website will be updated by the end of the week. Ticket sales for Orientation will begin at that time. All details about the events as well as other important details (optional fee opt-outs, health/dental opt-outs, etc)
- I am preparing the tri-fold for the upcoming events during September.
- I am updating our brochures for the upcoming events during September.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Equity Team
August 2011

Hello Council and Members,

Aliya Kassam, Equity Coordinator and myself are please to provide our first report from our new positions.

We were happy to have attended the “meet and greet” for both the AMS and QUIC, which allowed us to put faces to the names of the individuals we will be working with this coming year.

Aliya has been busy this summer as follows:

- Sat on the Student Advisor Hiring Committee.
- Attended meetings of the AGSD (Accommodating Graduate Students with Disabilities) Task Force.
- Met with the Robert Sutherland Award committee to discuss nominations.

My summer included:

- Attending the Canadian Federation of Students Skills Training weekend.
- Attended meetings with Queen’s Accessibility Committee and the Committee on Employment Equity.

We are in the process of planning Anti Oppression training and Positive Space training for August 16 and 17 and Aliya has volunteered to run the Anti Oppression training session at the Teaching Development Day for Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows on September 9.

Our next steps before September are to meet with the Equity Office and Human Rights Office personnel to align our work and make ourselves known to them.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Amirault
Equity Commissioner



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the International Student Affairs
Commissioner
August 2011

Dear Speaker, SGPS Executive, Departmental Representatives, and Members

The past several months have provided me, as well as the International Coordinator, with the opportunity to strategize for the upcoming academic year.

We are currently working on:

- Developing a document that clearly outlines the concept of UHIP for international students
- Coordinating the Cultural Engagement Group for international and domestic graduate and professional students, in association with QUIC
- Initiating a grievance with Kingston Transit about summer schedule changes as they relate to routes that primarily support Queen's students
- Obtaining International Representative(s) to sit on the SGPS Council
- Advancing preparations for an accent discrimination campaign

Upcoming:

- We will support the Social Team with Orientation events geared toward international students
- Drop-in sessions at QUIC, led by SGPS members, to engage international graduate and professional students as needed
- Fostering relationships via University-led orientation events and activities
- Commencing International Students' Standing Committee meetings, as well as supporting Equity and Campaigns and Community Affairs meetings

Any questions or concerns can be addressed following this meeting or by e-mailing international@sgps.ca.

Kind regards,
Rebecca Pero



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Sustainability Coordinator
August 2011

Several things to report:

Queen's Bike Shop Update: Re-Cycle

Re-cycle, a student run community bike shop initiated in partnership with AMS and SGPS (though the full operational duties will be managed by the AMS), is still awaiting the green light to officially move in to the space allocated in the MacGillvery Brown and begin set-up. Initially we waited on ASUS to move out – a process which took several months longer than anticipated. Then, after ASUS finally freed up the space mold was discovered on the walls in the room. University is fixing the problem at the moment and the room is expected to be cleared momentarily. As everyone involved in the project slowly returns to Kingston we are hoping to still have the shop operational by September.

AMS Sustainability Changes

The AMS Sustainability office has gone through some changes: the role of the sustainability coordinator has been expanded and now features a sustainability commissioner. The incoming commissioner is Adam diSimine.

Queen's Solar Project

Negotiations over the Queen's solar PV project contract with the Johnson Controls have finally been resolved with all the preliminary work concluded. Latest news indicate that Queen's has submitted applications to the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) that would allow for the installation of following wattage: Victoria Hall (75 kilowatts), An Clachan (250 kilowatts), Duncan McArthur Hall (500 kilowatts), the Queen's Centre (200 kilowatts), and the Queen's University Biological Station (QUBS) (10,000 kilowatts). The total energy produced would be enough to provide power to about 1,100 homes per year.