



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the President
December 2008

Education Students' Society Referendum

The Education Students' Society will be holding a referendum in January on whether or not to secede from the AMS and join the SGPS. Currently Master's and doctoral students in Education are SGPS members, but not BEd. students.

Tuition Fee Increases

Tuition fees will be increased again beginning in Fall 2009. The new fees may be found at http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/senate/Nov27_08/TuitFees.pdf. Current projections are that fees will increase a further 8% in 2010/11 and 7% in 2011/12 for new students, with smaller increases for continuing students.

Whistleblowers' Protection Policy

The Senate Operations' Review Committee has been directed by Senate to discuss how to proceed with developing a policy to protect whistleblowers at Queen's, including students and RAs. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to president@sgps.ca.

Anti-Harassment Policy

The Office of the VP (Academic), the university's Dispute Resolution Officer, and the President of the Faculty Association have agreed that the provisions of the anti-harassment policy contained within the new faculty collective agreement apply equally to faculty harassment of students. Details of the policy and complaint process will be made available to students and faculty.

Senate Representation

The Senate Operations Review Committee will be reviewing the composition of the university Senate next term. This is an opportunity to increase graduate and professional student representation, particularly given the tremendous increase in our numbers over the last five years.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President Internal (Graduate)
December, 2008

Vice President Internal (Graduate) Transition with Sean Tucker

I have met with Sean Tucker to go over student advisor program, and will be meeting with the advisors on December 3rd. The Student Advisor Steering Committee meeting (between SGPS and SGSR) is postponed to February, 2009. One to two more transition sessions with Sean Tucker focusing on business with SGSR and TA Consultative Committee are anticipated in January, 2009.

TA Consultative Committee

The TA Consultative Committee met on November 19th, 2008 and discussed two items:

A. Common undergraduate and graduate TA rate with an honorarium for graduate students.

Due to the complexity of the tax law, the committee agreed that no statement should be made until more information is available.

B. Enforcement of the Departmental TA Policy

Currently, not all the departments have TA policy in place for reference. The committee recognized the importance of having an up-to-date TA policy that is unique to each individual department to serve as a guild for both TAs and the course instructors. In July 2007, a memorandum from Janice Deakin's office was sent to all departments requesting a department specific document covering the following issues effecting TAs:

- Eligibility and allocation of TAs within the Department
- Responsibility of TAs and the Faculty involved in TA supervision
- TA workload
- Conflict of interest statement (TA – undergraduate relationship)
- Grievance Procedures

However, departments responded that either there appeared no need for one or no human resources to prepare for one. The committee will convey again in January, 2009, to discuss the feasibility of recommending mandatory departmental TA policy to the Senate.

SGPS Appointing Standing Committee

This past month, Mark and I were actively planning the SGPS Volunteers and Council Appreciation Party:

Date: Tuesday, December, 9th, 2008

Time: 7:00p.m.

Place: Grizzly Grill (up stairs). 395 Princess Street.

Details: Free food will be provided with one free drink! (Councils and the volunteers will receive their free drink tickets when they check in at the restaurant.) This event is open to all SGPS members, everyone welcome!

To help us better estimate the amount of food to order, please RSVP to social@sgps.ca confirming your acceptance of our invitation and the number of guests who will be attending the event with you.

Hope to see you all there! And, a big thanks to Diala and the social team for all their helps!

Even though I have officially step down from my post as the committee coordinator since November council meeting, I have and will continue to check and response to e-mails in the committee@sqps.ca mail box until the new committee coordinator is haired.

Other University Committees

School of Graduate Studies and Research Council:

New Division Reps:

Division II: Carolyn Hoessler; Division III: Usman Mushtaq

The SGSR Council is still looking for graduate student representative from Division IV and V. The Council meets monthly for one to two hours discussing/voting on issues and policies concerning the school. Some examples include approval of requirement changes leading to a graduate degree in a certain department, approval of thesis requirements, approval of new courses and programs etc. Interested graduate students can contact me at vpig@sqps.ca.

Notes:

Division IV and V of SGSR consist of the following departments:

Division IV—Mathematics and Physical Sciences

Departments:

Chemistry, Computing and Information Science, Geography, Geological Sciences and Geological Engineering, Mathematics and Statistics, Physics, Engineering Physics and Astronomy

Division V— Social Sciences and Professional Schools

Departments:

Economics, Geography, Industrial Relations, Kinesiology and Health Studies, Law, Management, Policy Studies, Political Studies, Sociology, Urban and Regional Planning

Respectfully Submitted,

Joellen Lin

Vice President Internal (Graduate)

1. This past month I have been researching and gathering information to send out Requests for Proposals from various insurance brokers. The purpose of this is to attempt to negotiate a lower rate for our student members in the 2009-2010 school year. We hope to start receiving proposals in the New Year so that if a change will benefit our membership we will be able to negotiate in February or March.
2. The Hiring Committee must be struck to hire a new Committee Coordinator. This committee will meet the two candidates for an interview from December 10-15. Please meet me after council if you are interested.
3. Employee evaluations. This year we have several position which must be evaluated. This gives us the opportunity to assess performance and to recommend whether or not the discretionary honorarium should be granted. I would appreciate at least one council members input into the process. Evaluations will be taking place in January, please forward your name if you are interested.
4. Bylaw and Policy Committee. I will begin redrafts of certain personnel policies of the SGPS over the Winter Break, please join the committee as soon as possible. I would like to send around drafts via email once they are complete.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jamie Kneen



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Vice President External
December 2008

CFS National AGM (Ottawa)

Attended the National AGM of CFS in Ottawa this past weekend. Some of the motions that were considered pertained to changes to tax policy for post-docs, changes to the federation's membership rules, a continuation of the drop fees campaign, changes to the Federation's campaigns preparation policy as well as consideration of a position in support of the changes going on in Ottawa presently. The meeting was a good opportunity to connect with other graduate schools and member schools generally.

Journal

The Journal's Board of Directors is conducting a mid year review of its function and role as well as its mandate. As well, there was discussion of whether or not the Board could develop a multi-year strategic plan to direct its efforts. If you have any comments or suggestions for the Journal Board, please contact me.

Kingston Housing

The Housing Committee met several times this past month to discuss items such as snow removal, the adequacy of transit services, crime prevention services for students over the holidays, a meeting with representative of the Whig Standard to discuss advertising and partnership possibilities and the production of a report on Queen's student use of and satisfaction with city services.

SONAD

I'm preparing a submission for SONAD on last year's Judicial Committee's activity. If you have any info on what transpired last year, if anything, please contact me. Also, SONAD will conduct a review of its mandate this year after having passed last year's changes to the Code of Conduct. If you have any suggestions or comments, please pass them along.

IP, Copyright and Whistleblower

I'm planning to organize a speaker series on the issues of intellectual property and copyright and its implications for students in the post-secondary sector next semester, perhaps in conjunction with some of the other actors on campus (AMS; LSS; etc.). Please let me know if you have any suggestions or comments. I am also starting to compile a list of all IP related documents at Queen's. Please contact me if you are interested in helping in this project or would like a completed list.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Rosner
VP External



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President Operations
December 2008

Seasons greetings, members of the SGPS Council.

This month, the Operations and Finance Committee met again. We have had a brief discussion of items that fall under the Operations portfolio. With the term end fast approaching, most of our activities will be on a hold and will be resumed in January.

It is my hope to continue and expand the SGPS dental bursary system. Although the former Vice Principal Operation and Finances who provided the initial funding for this program, has stepped down from his office, I am hopeful we will be able to reach our goal by actively working with the acting and/or the new VP OF. If you have any concerns or suggestions from your personal experience regarding this program, please feel free to address them to me so I can take them into consideration when I meet with University administration. Any feedback is welcome.

Have yourselves fun, safe and happy holidays,

Vicky Bae
Vice President Operations



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the (Social Commissioner)
December 2008

Hello All

I don't have too much to update you on this month. By the time you get this report we would have hosted a SGPS free movie night on Sunday, December 7th, which I hope will be a great success. I would like to thank Jeff Downie from Athletics and Recreation and Colette Steer from the School of Graduate Studies for their help in organizing this event. Of course I want to also thank the SGPS executive members for their support and our fabulous social team for their hard work.

For the upcoming year we are hoping to plan a mixer with the education students, a ski trip as well as a Super Bowl Party night. I would like to thank Sean Richards for that great idea!

So please stay tuned for upcoming events.

Feel free to e-mail me at social@sgps.ca if you have any social events you would like to see happen in the New Year.

Happy Holidays

Respectfully Submitted,
Diala Habib



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Communications Commissioner
November 2008

SGPS Computer Network

- I requested \$2325.97 of funding from the Cold Beverage Exclusivity Fund to help offset the cost of some computer network upgrades that are necessary for the SGPS office. The committee that oversees the fund decided to give us \$1700. Please see the appendices for the application that was submitted.
- The SGPS network requires a new mail server as well as a new network backup server. We also require a number of external hard drives to ensure we have offsite backups in case of massive network failure. I have submitted a motion to Council to allocate funds to pay for this necessary work. The requested money from Council would be used in conjunction with the exclusivity fund to pay for the network upgrades.

SGPS Website

- I continue to work on upgrades to the infrastructure of our website to ensure our members always have access to up-to-date information.
- I continue to work on the online Health and Dental opt-in system.

Communications

- I have been in contact with a number of organizations around campus to discuss better promotions through the SGPS. My goal is to be able to advertise relevant events and information to the SGPS membership.
- I have been working with the Social Team to advertise some upcoming events and to help in the planning stages of future events.
- I am working to generate a booklet outlining the benefits of membership in the SGPS.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Report of the Rector

I imagine you will have already heard much of this news by the time you receive this package, but nonetheless, here it is! My apologies for my absence from Council for this coming meeting, but I will be out of the country next week.

Homecoming Announcement: Tom Williams announced his decision to suspend Fall Homecoming, effective immediately, for a period of at least two years. A Homecoming of sorts will be held in May of 2009 and 2010, including the Tricolour Guard Dinner (one of my favourite Homecoming events) and the continuation of the newly launched Queen's MiniU event. If you have questions about this process, its implications, or any of the changes, just ask.

Changes in Administration: The departures of two of the five Vice-Principals were announced on November 26. David Mitchell, VP Advancement, will be leaving Queen's at the end of 2008 to take up a post leading the Public Policy Forum in Ottawa. David has been at Queen's for fifteen months and has been working on planning an upcoming Campaign for Queen's. Sean Conway, formerly Special Advisor to the Principal, will be acting in David's role in an interim capacity. He is also a former cabinet minister and was a long-time MPP in the Ontario Legislature. Andrew Simpson, VP Operations and Finance, has also resigned, effective immediately. Andrew's time at Queen's has been marked by many capital projects and land acquisitions, including the renovation of University Avenue, the acquisition of the old Prison for Women near West Campus, the opening of Innovation Park, and the beginnings of a new Performing Arts Centre at the University. Andrew's role will be filled in the interim by Bill Bryck, a Chartered Accountant with over thirty years of experience in business and project management.

SONAD (Senate Committee on Non-Academic Discipline): Reviewed the Residence Discipline Report for 2007/2008.

Queen's Centre: Plans for the continuation of the Queen's Centre beyond Phase 1 are underway. A request is being made at the Board meeting this Friday evening for continued planning funds to enable the architects to finalize the revised Phase 2/3 plan, which has now been sectioned into components: arena (to be built on West Campus), fieldhouse, new student life building, and JDUC renovations.

QUASR (Queen's University Administrative Systems Replacement): The project planning continues. A request for funding will be placed at the December Board of Trustees meeting. As a reminder, QUASR involves the replacement of Queen's human resources, financial and student database and management systems (including

QCARD), which date back to the 1980's. It will be implemented over the next four or five years.

Board of Trustees: The Board will be meeting on Friday evening, December 5. If you are interested, the bulk of the meeting is an open session and it begins at 7 pm. The agenda includes approval of planning funds for a few capital projects, approval of a new code of conduct for Trustees, and approval of a revised tuition fee slate for 2009-2010. The issue of tuition fees will, in my opinion, only continue to grow after next year as the Reaching Higher framework comes to an end and the economy continues to struggle. The Saturday morning theme session of the Board will focus on Human Resources at Queen's, an especially relevant topic given the shifting in upper administration and the ongoing unionization drives on campus. As well, each of the Rector, AMS and SGPS Presidents submit reports with the Board agenda. My report focuses on campus racism over the last two months. It is available online (www.queensu.ca/rector, and click on Documents and Resources) and I will be giving an oral report during the meeting itself.

Other News: Senate met last week and approved a new MA/JD program in Economics and Law, amongst other motions. They also voted to endorse the QUMSA (Queen's University Muslim Student's Association) Hate-Free Campus campaign. A member of QUMSA spoke to Senate and made a moving, passionate and important speech about the experiences of many Muslim students on this campus this past semester.

As always, I welcome your questions, comments and concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Leora

rector@queensu.ca; 613-533-2733



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the International Student Standing
Committee
December 2008

International Graduate Students Career Workshops

Following the plan of cooperating with Career Services to establish workshops for International Graduate Students, the committee:

1. Passed out the messages via different ways to invite International Graduate Students for their contribution on the topics of the workshops
2. Collected all the questions
3. Contacted both QUIC and Career Services and had several discussions on the forms and contents of the workshops
4. Tried to contact alumni for the possibility of inviting them for a talk based on their experience of job searching as international students

Results:

1. The Career Service is working on an opening discussion with International Students and a general workshop in December
2. Starting from the coming year, a series of workshops will be held at Career Services. The format will either be workshops for graduate students with sections related to International Students, or a few workshops targeted specifically for International Students. More details will be provided in January.

Christmas Movie: A Christmas Story

To celebrate the New Year, the committee is inviting everyone for a Popcorn&Movie this coming Sunday (Dec. 7th, 2:30-4:30pm) at International Centre. It is open to everyone and there's no charge, popcorn and beverage will be provided. Welcome to the event with your friends and family members.

Respectfully submitted,

Miao Li (international@sgps.ca)
Chair, SGPS International Student Standing Committee