

Education Students' Society

The Education Students' Society (ESS) voted to leave the undergraduate society (AMS) and join the SGPS. After their vote is ratified at the SGPS Annual General Meeting on March 24th, the approximately 700 students in the ESS will become full SGPS members for Fall 2009.

TA Dispute Mechanism

Last month Senate amended policies to establish a new TA dispute mechanism. If a TA is not satisfied with how a dispute has been handled by the course instructor or within the Department, s/he may contact the Coordinator of the Dispute Resolution Mechanisms, Harry Smith (phone: (613) 533-6495; email: drm@queensu.ca). The Coordinator will attempt to mediate and find a resolution. If this is unsuccessful, a University Student Appeal Board (USAB) will be empanelled to hear the case and resolve it. In all cases, SGPS members are encouraged to speak first with an SGPS Student Advisor (studentadvisors@sgps.ca).

Publishing Conflicts with Supervisors

The Steering Committee of the School of Graduate Studies will be undertaking a review of intellectual property policies at Queen's as part of a process to clarify for each Department and Program what the norms and practices around the rights of students to publish their work should be, as well as to establish a dispute resolution mechanism to handle conflicts with supervisors. The SGPS has a seat on the committee.

Safe Disclosure ("Whistleblower Protection") Policy

Queen's Senate has mandated that the Principal establish a committee to draft a safe disclosure, or whistleblower protection, policy to protect students, staff, and faculty. One of the goals is to provide protection to graduate students who are concerned about the potential consequences of reporting illegal or unethical behaviour by their supervisors. The SGPS will have a seat on the committee.

Harassment of Graduate and Professional Students by Faculty

The Faculty Association and the University have agreed that the prohibition on workplace harassment contained within the current Collective Agreement applies equally to faculty harassment of students within the workplace. SGPS members who feel they have been the object of harassment by a faculty member may now bring concerns to the Coordinator of the Dispute Resolution Mechanisms, Harry Smith (phone: (613) 533-6495; email: drm@queensu.ca). If a student wishes to pursue a complaint, a case may be pursued confidentially. SGPS members are encouraged to speak first with an SGPS Student Advisor (studentadvisors@sgps.ca).

Graduate and Professional Housing Needs

The Principal has agreed to establish a working group to investigate the current and future housing needs of graduate and professional students at Queen's. This would include residence spaces, student apartments, family housing, 8 month leases, etc. If you are interested in providing or receiving information regarding the work of this working group, please contact me at president@queens.ca.

ESS (Education Student Society) Referendum

Much of the efforts in January were contributed to ESS referendum campaign on having B. Ed. Students leaving AMS and to be part of the SGPS. We won the referendum in the end of January. We are very excited to have B. Ed. Students joining our continuously growing society.

Student Advisors Program

Student advisors program continue to provide vital services to our members, particularly on helping the students dealing with supervisors and issues on intellectual property. The student advisors have handed in their Fall Term reports, and I will be chairing the Student Advisor Program steering committee to further review the program with the Dean of SGSR and President Jeff Welsh at the end of February. Please encourage (and/or refer) the students in need in your department to our service. The office hours of the student advisors are Monday afternoon 2:30-5:30p.m. (or by appointment). The student advisors can be reached at studentadvisors@sgps.ca.

TA Consultative Committee

I had another transition session with Sean Tucker with focus on TA Consultative Committee agenda. I will start working on a report to the committee on how TAs are allocated and use of TA agreement in the departments at Queen's. The report will be based on the survey results of the Teaching Assistant Consultative Committee Questionnaire on Practices Regarding Teaching Assistant, which was conducted by SGSR in March 2008.

January Orientation for International Students

I had the pleasure to attend the orientation for international students early January, and had the opportunity to introduce SGPS and our services to new students, answer questions and share my Queen's experience with them. It was a very fun afternoon ended with delicious bean soup.

Long Term Planning Meeting for Queen's Campus Bookstore

The meeting this year focused on the pros and cons of the purchasing and the usage of digital course materials, and how we can implement digital learning on campus.

Respectively Submitted,

Joellen Lin
Vice President Internal (Graduate)



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President Internal
(Professional)
February 2009

1. Council's Hiring Committee will be meeting with and interviewing candidates for the Equity Commissioner position during the week of February 1-7. Details will be provided at Council, including the name of a successful candidate, should a suitable candidate be found.
2. The Executive year is nearly complete and transition efforts have been underway for sometime. This includes meeting with groups under the Professional portion of the SGPS. Would representatives from the School of Policy Studies, Theology, School of Rehabilitation Therapy, and the School of Urban and Regional Planning please contact me (vpip@sgps.ca) for a meeting regarding transitions and changes required for the coming year?
3. I have been aiding Victoria Bae on some developments concerning the Health and Dental Plan. Namely, I have been making new contacts to determine policy alternatives we may need to discuss.
4. The Education Students Society's referendum results affirmed their decision to join the SGPS. Though I am sure this will be dealt with extensively in other reports, I would like to extend congratulations to all who made efforts in this campaign. Further, I would like to invite the commentary of Council regarding the upcoming Education Students' Commissioner Position which will be developed.
5. The SGPS Bylaws and Policies are being reviewed- if you have anything that you would like changed please let me know and I will present it to the committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie Kneen
Vice President Internal (Professional)
vpip@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President External
January 2009

CFS Ontario AGM – Markham January 22-25th

Attended the Annual General Meeting of the CFS in Markham with other members of the executive. I attended the policy section of the AGM as well as the plenary sessions. Some of the issues discussed at the Grad Caucus had to do with Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright Reform and disparities in funding and scholarships amongst graduate students. The larger meeting focused on issues arising from labour action on campuses in Ontario and campaigns on lowering tuition fees and the task force on campus racism.

City Relations

Kingston is currently consulting the SGPS and AMS with regards to the introduction of a Green Bin System. The planned roll-out for this is this March/April. Please submit comments or concerns to me.

SONAD

SONAD is currently altering its structure and mission in the aftermath of last year's changes to the Code of Conduct. Please submit any questions or concerns to me or if you have further questions regarding SONAD's proposed changes.

Tuition Fee Action Meeting

The working group on Tuition Fees met and finalized some goals for Council's consideration. Please see the appendix and subsequent motion for more detail.

Province Wide Task Force on Racism

CFS has organized a province wide task force to examine racism on University campuses. There will be a hearing at Queen's on March 3rd to hear from students, faculty and staff about how they experience racism. The location for the event is yet to be decided. I hope to have advertising materials ready for Council. Please inform your departments about the task force. There is a website (noracism.ca) that you can visit and please feel free to contact me for more information. Please also refer to the appendix for more information.

IP Speaker Series

Two of the three speakers I approached won't be able to participate unfortunately, but we still have one speaker who has agreed to speak sometime in March on this issue. There is also the possibility of the National Film Board, through the CFS, of bringing a film on open-source software and intellectual property rights to Queen's. Hopefully, the details will be finalized this week. Please contact me if you'd like more information or to be receive updates on the time and location.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Rosner
vpex@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President Operations
February 2009

Operations and Finance Committee Activities

The Operations and Finance Committee met again on January 28th. We have started the process of restructuring the financial programs and will be continuing to work on this project until the end of February. Feel free to send us feedback until that time and we will try our best to reflect member feedback. These will be presented to Council by the March Annual General Meeting.

Another project the Committee has initiated is establishing a shared service agreement for all services that the SGPS financially partners in, such as the Grad Club and many AMS services. It is my hope that this project will be wrapped up between this year's SGPS and AMS executive.

I will also be compiling the dental bursary report to the Office of Vice Principal Operations and Finances. This is a project that had been planned to be completed before December 2008, but it had been temporarily put on hold with the resignation of the former Vice Principal Simpson. It is my hope to continue and expand this program in the upcoming year.

In December and January meetings, Council has given approval for the SGPS executive to propose a halved mandatory fee for BEd students. Now that the BEd students have officially become the members of the SGPS, I will begin negotiating the fee reduction with all parties. A member of the Committee, as well as the SGPS President, will work with me jointly on this project. All changes will be presented to Council by the March Annual General Meeting.

The Committee has also been active in processing of various applications as well as reviewing the financial documents for the referenda for the upcoming election.

Finally, the issue of conference funding will be discussed with various bodies within the University including the SGS and various Vice Principals' offices. A Committee member will work jointly with me on this, and your feedback will be welcome.

Health and Dental Plan

As it will be discussed later tonight, the SGPS has officially begun a search for a different, better insurance broker and carrier. Allies at the Canadian Federation of Students will lend us expert feedback on the proposal reviews by potential brokers and/or carriers. Also, Council's input will be reflected and details will be available in time for the March Annual General Meeting.

Exposure and Publicity

If you are planning an event, look into booking the lower floor (Lower Celiedh) of JDUC. Depending on the nature of the event and the setup, it may be free or come at a low charge and an excellent opportunity to maximize the exposure.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicky Bae



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the International Student Standing
Committee
February 2009

International Graduate Students Career Workshops

The committee has been talking with Career Services and QUIC about the details of the workshops, please find below the newest updates:

North American Job Search for International Students in Graduate & Professional School

A workshop series offered by Career Services in partnership with QUIC

Tues Feb 24, 2009

Topic: Introduction to Career Services and International Experience

Get an introduction to Career Services including the variety of services and resources available to grad students. Then learn how to identify and market the benefits of your international experience.

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Location: Gordon Hall, Career Services, 325A

Presenter: Whitney Babcock

Limited enrolment: 25

Sign-up through Career Services Website <http://careers.queensu.ca> on myCareer

Fri February 27, 2009

Topic: Finding Work in North America

Find out what resources are available to you as you look for work in North America. Learn about and practice one of the most critical skills of the job search - Networking.

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Location: Gordon Hall, Career Services, 325A

Presenter: Whitney Babcock

Limited enrolment: 25

Sign-up through Career Services Website <http://careers.queensu.ca> on myCareer

Wed March 4, 2009

Topic: Work Permits and Worker Rights

Have all of your questions answered about the work permit application process and learn about your rights in the Canadian workplace.

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Location: QUIC, 2nd Floor, JDUC

Presenter: Susan Anderson and Whitney Babcock

Limited enrolment: 25

Sign-up through Career Services Website <http://careers.queensu.ca> on myCareer

Fri March 6, 2009

Topic: Transitioning to the Canadian Workplace

Learn about the Canadian workplace including what you need to know and what to do to prepare yourself for a successful transition.

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Location: QUIC, 2nd Floor, JDUC

Presenter: Susan Anderson and Whitney Babcock

Limited enrolment: 25

Sign-up through Career Services Website <http://careers.queensu.ca> on myCareer

Tues March 10, 2009

Topic: International Alumni working in N. America: Case Examples

Find out what international alumni have to say about working in North America including their experiences with job search and tips to consider as you prepare for the workplace.

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Location: QUIC, 2nd Floor, JDUC

Presenter: Susan Anderson

Limited enrolment: 25

Sign-up through Career Services Website <http://careers.queensu.ca> on myCareer

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions related to the workshops, please email to our committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Miao Li (international@sgps.ca)

Chair, SGPS International Student Standing Committee



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
February 2009

Hello Everyone

Today I will just update you on the two events we have coming up.

Spread the Love Event is a mixer we are holding on Thursday February 5th with the Law and Medical School students at Ale House. Half of the proceeds will be donated to Dignitas International, an organization aimed at promoting HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness. Feel free to go to www.dignitasinternational.com for more information. We hope it will be a successful event and we thank you ahead of time for all your effort in supporting this important cause.

SGPS Day Ski Trip

Planning for a ski trip is in the works. SEPP'S can accommodate a maximum of 55 people at once. **So first come, first serve!**

Although these details have not been completely finalized here they are:

Date: Sunday March 1st, 2009

Place: Meeting at SEPP'S Skis and Snowboards, 13 Montreal St.

Skiing/snowboarding at Calabogie Ski Resort, Calabogie, Ontario

Price: \$ 57.75 per person

This price includes ski lift ticket, bus ride there and back.

- an additional \$39.15 if you choose to rent ski or snowboarding equipment from SEPP'S
- SGPS will most likely be subsidizing a lunch for you at the resort.

Stay Tuned for more social events!

Respectfully Submitted,

Diala Habib
Social Commissioner

SGPS Computer Network

- We have purchased the 2 new servers (e-mail and backup) for the SGPS Office. We are currently in the process of setting up the software on these systems. We will be migrating to the new servers soon. Please see the appendices for the invoices for the 2 new servers. The final budget for this process will be available once the new servers are running.

SGPS Website

- I am in the process of adding 2 new sections to the SGPS website.
- One of the sections is specifically for the Front Desk staff. The FD section will help organize the jobs done by the FD staff.
- The second section will be a much-improved FAQ for our membership. The section will answer many common questions we get at the SGPS.

E-Newsletter

- The E-Newsletter has continued to grow in popularity over the last 29 issues. It is consistently being read by over 1/3 of our membership. I am actively looking to improve the newsletter to include other items of interest to SGPS members. If you have ideas, or would like to write for the newsletter, please contact me.

Communications

- The International Photo Contest details are now available on our website at the following URL: <http://www.sgps.ca/quicphotocontest>
- I am working on promotional material for mailings that will go out to ESS students.
- I am very happy to report that the colour laser printer that we purchased for the office has paid for itself. We have been able to print many brochures, posters, tickets etc in office. Had we printed these materials outside the office, they would have cost us more than the printer. The printer still has a lot of toner left, so we will continue to save a lot of money by printing in-office. It is also worth mentioning that the quality and speed of the print jobs is much improved now that we have control over the entire printing process.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Dear Council,

I have a standing appointment from 5:30-6:30 so I will unfortunately be absent from the first hour of our meeting. However, here is my update:

- The ESS Referendum process has been completed, as you likely know. The SGPS will be gaining 650-odd members next fall, and I am sure Jeff will address this in his report.
- I had three full days of meetings with various campus constituents as a member of the assessment panel for the Intergroup Facilitators program. We are meeting for a further day and a half this week to complete our report. Thanks those of you who took an interest in the program and made a submission to the panel.
- I have helped to facilitate four student focus groups as part of the Diversity, Anti-Racism and Equity Committee that has been struck by the Principal and VP Academic. The goal of these focus groups is to listen to the experiences of students, faculty and staff on campus with respect to the climate of Queen's on the topics of diversity and equity, in an attempt to be a part of a process that works towards solutions to some campus issues. We have also been holding open hearings, where any person who wishes to share their perspectives and experiences with the committee can do so. Following that, there will be two open town hall sessions. I encourage you to be a part of this process and to participate in it if you feel comfortable doing so. There are ads in the Journal and the Gazette, as well as on the VP Academic websites detailing all the ways to contribute to the process. The panel will be submitting a report with its findings and some recommendations, hopefully in early March.
- SCAP Sub-Committee on Exams met last week, as did Queen's Centre Communications Committee and SONAD. Also coming up is the Tricolour Award nominations and selection committee, where I hope some of you will be able to participate. I'll keep you posted on this.
- I'd be happy to answer any questions or receive your comments.

Leora Jackson

rector@queensu.ca; 613-533-2733