

TA Dispute Resolution Mechanism

Recently, the university's Dispute Resolutions Officer confirmed that the only existing formal mechanism for TA disputes – a USAB appeal – has been baseless since 2005, when a Senate motion to amend the USAB policy to be consistent with the TA dispute resolution policy was tabled due to faculty nervousness and university intransigence regarding who the employer is in a TA contract (i.e., course instructor or the university). This means, in effect, that there is currently no formal mechanism to appeal TA disputes. Now the university has agreed that they are the employer, and the motion to amend USAB will be lifted from the table for a vote at Senate on January 29th.

Graduate Student Funding Review

The review of QGA funding policy was completed in December. Although the report is not yet completed, the recommendations that will go forward include: retaining QGA funding for students in LLM, MA, MAC, MEd, MES, MIR, MPA, MPL, MSc and PhD programs; not providing QGA funding to students in MEng, MN-NP, MSc-PT and MSc-OT programs; retaining the current QGA allocation ratio for Masters and Doctoral students; and initiating a regular review of QGA allocations to Divisions.

Athletics and Recreation Fee

Athletics and Recreation is facing significant budget shortfalls beginning next year. They are seeking student fee increases. The athletics fee for SGPS members hasn't changed for 10 years. Athletics will be sending someone to explain to Council what different fee increases, or no increase, would mean for programming services. Any fee increase would have to be approved by referendum.



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

December has been a relatively quiet month for me as my dear grandpa pass away unexpectedly on December 5th, 2008. Busy with the funeral and memorial service, much of the planed VPIG worked for December is postponed to January 2009. As the President of a local senior citizen association for the past two years, my grandpa was a real inspiration for me to work with SGPS. I know that his spirit will always be with me.

Student Advisors Program

I have met with the student advisors early December. Fall Term reports from the advisors are due January 31st, 2009. Student advisors are trained to help SGPS members dealing with a wide range of issues during their time at Queen's. Please encourage (and/or refer) the students in need in your department to our service. The student advisors can be reached at studentadvisors@sgps.ca. We are currently thinking of ways to increase student's awareness of this program. We have posters and magnets distributed around the campus in the beginning of the school year; the service is also constantly advertised on our SGPS-eNewsletter. Any other suggestions welcome.

TA Consultative Committee

Due to a conflict with the Internal Academic Review Committee meeting, President Jeff Welsh has agreed to attend the January meeting of the TA Consultative Committee meeting for me.

Committee Coordinator Transition

Much of the effort in the end of November and early December 2008 was to organize the SGPS Volunteers and Council Appreciation Party. I apologized for not be able to be at the party; for those who attended, I hoped that you had a great time. At the time when this report is due, I have not yet followed up on the hiring of the new Committee Coordinator. A brief oral report on the status of the transition will be presented during council meeting.

Respectively Submitted,

Joellen Lin
Vice President Internal (Graduate)



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

Plans for the New Semester:

1. By-law and Policy Committee: this committee will be meeting in the new semester starting quite soon. I will be reporting draft copies of proposed changes to the current by-laws and policies at these meetings, and hopefully some of the changes will be accepted by the committee and brought forward to Council to vote on the changes.
2. Personnel Policies: a big part of the changes that I will be making to the bylaws will be dealing with the personnel policies, which govern the relationship between the SGPS and its employees. The policies in this respect are in need of a major update to fit the changes that have been made in the organization.
3. Employee Evaluations: In order to make accurate recommendations to Council regarding the performance of employees, I will be undertaking an evaluation of commissioners and coordinators this month.
4. Health and Dental: We are still working toward making more connections and receiving proposals for alternative care coverage for our membership. This is being done with a mind to reduce the cost of coverage to our membership.
5. Office Hours for the Winter Semester: 2:30-3:30 Tuesdays, 1:30-2:30 Thursdays.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jamie Kneen



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

Housing

The City of Kingston completed a survey on Queen's students housing needs. The report is attached. The city is also in the process of considering the implementation of a licensing system for landlords in Kingston, either only for the 'student village' or ghetto or for all of Kingston. Finally, the new Queen's centre will potentially retain the graduate student residence. If you have input on any of these issues – student housing and city services; landlord licensing; or what should change or not change about grad res – please contact me.

TA Hours

I contacted Janice Deakin regarding the discussion we had last council meeting about TA hours. I have attached her response. I will go over her response in my comments – please let me know if there are any issues that are unresolved.

IP and Copyright

I have contacted a number of different potential speakers for a speaker series on intellectual property and copyright reform and how these issues affect (graduate and professional) students. If you have any suggestions for speakers, for the format of the series or would like to help organize the events please contact me.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Rosner



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

Welcome back for another term with the SGPS!

Please find the attached revised operational budget of 2008-2009 and explanations. I will be happy to answer any questions, so please feel free to come with questions about the budget.

The Operations and Finance Committee will resume its function.

Respectfully Submitted,
Vicky Bae



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

Hello Everyone,

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday!

I just wanted to let you know our SGPS movie night at the Physical Education Center (PEC) was a great success considering the weather conditions that night. We collected many food items that were donated to the Kingston Food Bank. I want to thank Jeff Downie from the PEC, Colette Steer from the School of Graduate Studies, executives from the SGPS and our social team for all their help in organizing the event.

Some graduate students that attended the event asked if we could hold a movie night every month. We thought it would be a good idea if we do so perhaps at a different venue. We're thinking of calling it **Charity Cinemas**. Grad students would donate either canned food items to the food bank or monetary donations for a different charity every month. I would love to know what you all think of this idea and stay tuned for more details.

Another social event we are planning is a one day ski trip. Once we work out the exact details I will be sure to inform your departments. We'll definitely be promoting the event, so please keep your eyes peeled for flyers, posters e-mails etc!

Please let me know what kind of social events you would like to see in the New Year. E-mail me your ideas at social@sgps.ca

Respectfully Submitted,

Diala Habib
Social Commissioner



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Communications Commissioner
January 2009

SGPS Computer Network

- I am in the process of buying the new hardware and getting the new mail and file servers setup. I am working with a computer expert, who will be doing much of the setup for the new servers. I hope to have both systems working by my next report. I will keep you updated. I should also be able to provide a finalized budget for the work in my next report.

SGPS Website

- I will be updating the back-end of the SGPS website once the new mail and file servers are in place. The new servers will allow me to keep the website more up-to-date, particularly with respect to the Council section of the site.

Communications

- I am working with the Queen's International Centre to organize and promote a photo contest with an international focus. I will provide complete details as soon as we have worked them out.
- I will be working on promotional material for the SGPS Student Advisors in an effort to better promote the program. Any ideas you may have are more than welcome.
- I am currently in the process of updating the information that is presented in the SGPS dayplanner. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for next year's planner.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca