

Dear SGPS Members,

Hope you are well. A few things to discuss for this meeting, but I also ask you to refer to my Council report from a couple of weeks ago for a conceptual discussion of about the SGPS.

1. Senate Reform:

SORC is just about ready to send its recommendations on Senate functions back to Senate. This is an important matter because once the functions of Senate are clarified, the next steps are to work on Senate committees and Senate composition. Both the committee structure and the composition of Senate are important for student matters. Historically, Senate has been responsible for the oversight of many student issues, but these are increasingly being considered the purview of the Dean of Student Affairs. Students will have to decide on which governance / administrative body is best suited to the fulfillment of our needs through this process. Also, the issue of the Education Student Senator and composition more generally is one in which we are deeply invested - and my impression is that the committee will have to decide upon this issue over the course of the coming year. Pending ratification, the next President of the SGPS will take over my position at this committee, so I trust we will continue to be involved in this process over the long term.

2. Rector issue:

I will address this issue verbally, but please refer to the 2 statements already released by the SGPS on the matter.

3. Advancement:

This will probably be my last action as President - asking the department of Advancement and the Provost's office to prioritize SGPS requests when it comes to student awards. In my discussions with the Dean of Student Affairs and VP Advancement, they have both expressed support for the idea of hearing directly from our students. I have asked that this conversation turn into a formal relationship - so our involvement in some new bodies may be required. In any case, I think this latter initiative is actually a way to alleviate at least some of the stress that budgetary cutbacks necessitated through the move towards a balanced budget over the next 4 years will have on graduate and professional students. The SGPS has lobbied for access to the process, we now have to find a way to institutionalize this access and develop policy for Advancement to consider.

Finally - please refer to my report from two weeks ago for the warm and fuzzies ... Something tells me that this will be a serious AGM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jawad Qureshy
President@sgps.ca

It has been a fantastic year, both challenging and rewarding with numerous learning experiences. I was able to get to know many of you and want to thank you all for contributing your time and energy to our student society. It is with some sadness that I turn my role over at the end of the month to Andrea Phillipson however, I find comfort knowing that I will continue to serve you as your President and I look forward to getting to know more SGPS members. With that, a few items to report to on.

STUDENT LIFE CENTRE (SLC)

The majority of my term dealt with negotiating the new governance structure of the SLC. This involved revising and updating the existing JDUC Constitution along with creating an Operations and Management Agreement. It was a long and tedious process with many hours a week spent negotiating with the AMS and the University to ensure that the needs and voices of graduate and professional students are heard. At the time of writing this report, these documents had been approved at our council, and are making their way through the respective University bodies to finalize and subsequently implement (effective May 1, 2011). It is imperative that we continue to maintain our seats on the 'new' SLC committees that are formed over the next year or two as this transition period will be challenging.

CHILDCARE

Unfortunately, I was not able to make much headway with respect to childcare. I am still in the process of trying to arrange for affordable, reliable, accessible childcare for our members. I sat on the Daycare Board this year and am hopeful that these ties can continue to be strengthened as this is an essential service to many of our members.

SPACE

Ongoing requests for space (beginning ten years prior to my term) finally came into fruition. We were able to secure additional much needed office space on the second floor of the JDUC. As well, we now have a social lounge that is used on a daily basis. In fact this year, the SGPS hosted the Sutherland Scholar, Dr. Robert Bullard in our social lounge. As well, the renovations are finally complete and we now have an additional boardroom and workspace next to the social lounge.

Family Initiatives

Working alongside QUIC, the Ban Righ Center and with Karla from Student Affairs, we had a successful Sundae Sunday at An Clachan on Oct 3, 2010. There are additional social events (family friendly) planned for the near future and over the Spring/Summer terms.

FINANCE & SERVICES COMMITTEE

Before I get into specifics, I want to thank my committee members who were incredibly dedicated to the SGPS by contributing their time attending monthly meetings and responding almost immediately to my many emails. You guys are fantastic. Thanks for everything!

Bursaries/Grants-over the year, we were able to grant many requests for funding for events to enrich our members lives including (but not limited to) conferences, cultural events, and several members arranged for various speaker's to come to Queen's.

Emergency Student Aid (ESA)-as tuition increases and funding decreases, we are seeing many ESA's as our members have emergencies arise. This aid has proved to be incredibly beneficial to many of our members over the last year.

Dental Bursary-again, a vital bursary to our members. The committee worked over the year to expand the criteria for this bursary which will be finalized shortly.

Sports Fund—a record number of members accessed this fund over the year to participate in intramurals and a variety of other sporting events including soccer, basketball and volleyball.

In closing, I want to reiterate my appreciation for all of the hard work and dedication from my fellow executive members and my committees-thanks!

Respectfully submitted,
Jillian Burford-Grinnell VP Finance and Services

Queen's has much to celebrate. Over the past year, our University has showcased its leadership in several notable ways, for instance by committing itself to a community-directed academic plan; by approving one of the most comprehensive whistleblower protection mechanisms implemented nation-wide (Queen's Safe Disclosure Policy); by establishing a Copyright Office and transitioning out of the AC license model; and by becoming the 10th Canadian campus to go bottled-water free. In all of these cases, SGPS members-at-large, Executive (past and current), and staff, in collaboration with various student-led groups and other parties, were instrumental in campaigning for these feats to materialize. For supporting these efforts, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to SGPS Executives, staff, Council, and members.

In my term, I aimed to meet two main goals. First, I sought to bring to the forefront matters pertaining to equity and international students' affairs, by ensuring representation on a vast number of committees. To this end, I advocated to promote inclusivity and diversity via representation on: the Senate Educational Equity Committee (SEEC); the Aboriginal Community Consultative Review Process; the Health & Wellness Steering Committee; and the Campus Safety Working Group. Through my work on these committees, it became apparent that there lacked empirical data allowing the identification of our members' specific equity needs, and by extension, of the best measures to address these. Following recommendations and approval from the SEEC, I joined several equity stakeholders to form the Equity Climate Survey Planning Committee, and took on the process of creating and implementing a pilot survey to assess our members' perceptions of inequities at Queen's. The SGPS Equity Climate Survey was later adopted at Council as a project to undertake annually to document perceptions of inequity, how these manifest, and avenues for redress.

I also worked to make living on- and off-campus a less alienating experience for our members through my involvement with: the Queen's-Kingston Relations Committee; and the City-Queen's Student Engagement Working Group; the Senate Residence Committee; and Queen's Community Housing Board. To address a longstanding service gap for community housing residents, I asked that the Housing Board extend its focus beyond administrative and financial concerns to include discussions on community life, which the Board agreed to consider. This allowed me to push for instituting a position somewhat similar to that of the live-in 'don' in residence, to which the Board also consented.

To further extend the scope of SGPS representation, I helped to coordinate the Equity Team, expanded this year to include a second International Students' Coordinator position. This responsibility was by far my easiest. Carolyn, Kali, Ivana, Becky, and Amir: your incredible work has earned the accolades of several esteemed bodies, such as the SEEC and the Diversity and Equity Taskforce (DET), and the SGPS is as fortunate as we are proud to have you on board. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

My second goal this year was to promote campaigns that were relevant to our membership, and to do so in a manner desired by our membership. I think we can probably agree that the 'Queen's way' of advocating/campaigning tends not to involve pickets or chants. Nevertheless, campaigns, in their varied forms, make up a vital element of the work of student organizations. Indeed, campaigns are often central to setting agendas, fostering constructive debate, developing innovative ideas, and promoting change. In my involvement with the Senate Library Advisory Subcommittee on Scholarly Communications, the Copyright Working Group, and the Open Access Planning Committee, for instance, I used many CFS campaign materials to promote open access at Queen's, to obtain and disseminate information about Access Copyright, Canadian Copyright law, fair dealing, and Bill C-32. I also worked with the CFS, along with the Polaris Institute and our own Water Access Group to organize Bottled Water Free Day, which we geared towards promoting the bottled water ban, identifying service gaps in public water provision on campus, and denaturalizing the well-sedimented belief that bottled water is a safer and healthier alternative to fountain water.

Beyond this, campaign work also often involves networking with other students whose experiences on their respective campuses are in some way akin to ours, both to learn from their successes and failures, and to share our own. In this regard, attending the meetings of the CFS, including two semi-annual general meetings, one Ontario Executive meeting, and the National Graduate Caucus stand-alone meeting, has proven incredibly

worthwhile. This year, I also broadened the spread of our network to include Kingston City Council by way of making our members' needs more prominent within municipal governance. Last fall, the SGPS had an informal brunch with newly elected City Councilors, who continue to provide us with updates on municipal issues and events by dropping us a line every now and again.

Thus, in many ways, this last year has been positive. By virtue of the opportunities I was afforded through my work with the SGPS, I would say that, in fact, this year has been inspiring. The colours and sounds of Queen's Educational Powwow, the stories shared by Instigate 2010 Anti-Poverty rant-ers, the extraordinary drive of our Human Rights and Equity Officers, the readiness with which our membership, and our organization, has embraced change for the sake of equity and sustainable living, the willingness of student representatives to put their heavy workloads aside to enhance the quality of their peers' experiences – all very moving.

Yet, amidst all this momentum, recent events leave me with a deep sense of consternation. After a year's work advocating with and on behalf of marginalized students; after stressing, countless times, the necessity to recognize minority constituents' needs, despite the fact that these are not necessarily representative of all; after working to dismantle those structures we default to, and which work against the marginalized, such as quantitative measures dictating which people "count"; I am indeed taken aback that the recent controversy surrounding our University Rector has been focused on majority representation, of all things. My concerns are no doubt partly self-serving, seeing as my elected position is primarily dedicated to representing the numerous minority sub-constituencies which make up our membership. Indeed, though I fully recognize the direction of the membership, I admit that these past few weeks have been trying, first, from an equity perspective; and second, because my input as your elected representative on equity has so often been informed by my background as a graduate student in Sociology, leaving my attempts to delineate the two roles largely unsuccessful. I hope to engage in respectful and fruitful dialogue with you on these and other matters, and look forward to exchanging perspectives. On that note, I ask, along with my colleagues, committee members, and concerned students and faculty, that we all contribute to making our campus discussion at the AGM and beyond a safe and inclusive one.

I look forward to another great year with you, and offer you the warmest regards.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Grondin
VP Campaigns & Community Affairs

In lieu of updating Council on my activities over the last week or so, I'll submit my thoughts on the past year and possible directions forward. Over the next few weeks, I will do my best to spend time with the incoming VPG, Irene Karagiorgakis, discussing these topics in greater depth.

- Academic affairs commissioner + student reps on Graduate Councils/Committees

The theme of the VP Graduate's portfolio over the last year could be summarized as graduate academics. This year offered a timely opportunity to explore how academic decisions are made on campus, with input from the SGPS, individual departments, and students at large, since these processes have lately changed with the creation of 7 Graduate Faculty/School Councils and Committees (<http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/forfacultyandstaff/SGSgovernance/council.html>). All of these bodies report to the School of Graduate Studies Executive Council, which has long held two student seats, but such a decentralization of decision-making processes within the SGS now requires greater collaborative effort among students, namely the 14 students who sit on these bodies and the SGPS Executive and Graduate Senator who sit on GSEC. Indeed, many decisions are now made at the level of the individual committees/councils, which then make recommendations to GSEC. At the same time, many issues are examined by each committee simultaneously and then discussed at GSEC (before recommendations are passed to Senate). The formal mechanisms of the new bodies are still being crafted – the Law Committee still has yet to pass its Committee Manual – but most manuals were passed this year, and we had several chances to contribute to this process, and some notable successes along the way, such as: all committees now have at least 2 students (as opposed to 1 in many of the original articulations of the manuals) and each committee will soon adopt a clearer set of policies surrounding academic appeals.

The in-coming VPG might consider two ways of coping with the greater activity around graduate academics:

- hire an academic affairs commissioner to assist advocacy on academic issues, including collaborating with the student reps on the new councils/committees, researching policy changes related to academics, soliciting input from a large and diverse constituency (all SGS members), facilitating graduate interdisciplinary activities and opportunities on campus, and supporting professional student academics, among other possibilities, and
- formalize the nomination process for Student Reps on Graduate Councils/Committees in a way so the students who represent their faculties and schools are elected by these students. The current volunteer/self-nomination format doesn't allow for much publicity of these roles or discussion about them. Our current facilitative role might better serve our members as a role that seeks to empower graduate student groups to elect colleagues to do work on behalf of them, and discuss the issues pertaining to these nominations in public forums.
- ideally, the VPG would also consolidate a list of all the student reps nominated by the SGPS for academic-related bodies and circulate this list among departments & students in September

- Free Queen's

The VP Finances & Services and myself got involved planning this year's Free Queen's classes after some members at large showed interest in the starting the program up again. Our partnership with KEYS (Kingston Employment & Youth Services) worked out quite well as we shared a number of tasks and found many attendees through KEYS. The major difficulty was advertising the classes, certainly, which the SGPS could mitigate by trying to run the program every year with partners in the Kingston area. Running the program on an ongoing basis – as opposed to deciding quite late in the academic year – would give more time for advertising and, over time, build up a stable name for the program. The program certainly draws interest from

the community, but it's difficult to rejuvenate it every other year or so. If the SGPS takes the lead on ensuring the survival of FQ, however, I believe we should do so through a collaborative effort with other groups in the city. As I understand it, the ethic behind the program is community building, so it should be driven and organized by multiple interests, not just ours.

- Student Advisor hiring & training

It's my understanding that the next VPG will need to hire two Advisors to begin in September. I will speak with her about this rather complicated process and pass along some specific advice. Our greatest challenge this year was hiring Advisors before the fall term got well underway. This delay lost the Program two qualified applicants – though we certainly recovered at the end of the process. The in-coming VPG might consider sending out the job call and holding interviews in May (approx.) and hire the Advisors to start in August for training. (This would cost more, but it would certainly bolster the amount of training and job shadowing that can happen.)

We also did a number of new training exercises this year with the help of the Human Rights Office – formal in-take training, Positive Space training, and Anti-Oppression training – which will hopefully continue.

- SGS

Our relationship with the School of Graduate Studies was (I'd say) remarkable given the gravity of some of the issues on the table. Our on-going relationship, however, will remain an important ingredient of the work we accomplish on campus. We're essentially partners in serving and advocating for graduate students, but differences in power, administrative support, institutional memory, philosophies, and ideologies consistently encroach and can set us at odds on a number of issues. Because we will always need to work together, agreeing to disagree isn't a sustainable option. In the future we should seek to foster this relationship – even more – so both sides have as full an understanding of the other as possible. This certainly wouldn't erase differences of opinion, but only continual engagement and collaboration will enable productive dialogues to emerge. Over the year our Executive met every month with the SGS – at least once – and I think the next Exec should continue to do so. They might also consider attending the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies with the SGS, working on academic projects (conferences, for instance), and requesting a seat on the hiring committees for associate deans. These staff are integral to the SGS and SGPS relationship – meeting with us each month, attending graduate council meetings, Orientation events, and regularly meeting with Student Advisors and our clients. Finding an applicant who espouses a strong commitment to assisting and advocating for students will certainly help to guarantee a long-term and stable relationship.

- Academic Planning

Although this process may wind up by April, the SGPS Exec would do well to continue to raise graduate-specific concerns to the Task Force. This Executive has made a number of recommendations over the year, in writing and in person, but it would be a shame if these concerns/suggestions are lost when the Plan goes through the final articulation. In general, we believe that an academic plan needs not only to articulate the importance of graduate students at Queen's – to teaching and research – but also needs to answer: What defines Queen's commitment to graduate studies? Our suggestions to Principal Woolf and the Academic Writing Team usually revolved around this question. We believe Queen's needs to carve a niche for itself against the plethora of academic missions statements out there that claim excellence in graduate research. No doubt this is integral, but I'm under the impression it's not enough, nor unique.

- Academic Affairs Standing Committee

With the help of a persuasive president, we revived the AASC group from its "dormant slumber," as the previous VPG Dave Thompson put it a year ago. This group has been a

pleasure to work with and I encourage the next VPG to keep to awake at all costs. I attribute many of the success this year saw in the SGPS's advocacy role to the members of this group. (See Committee report attached for more details.)

- RA policy change and FAQ

The Academic Affairs Committee's FAQ report will be ready for publication when the next VPG steps in, and distributing it widely and strategically (in RA-heavy departments; in September; etc.) should be a priority. The mechanics of the new RA employment option will need to be watched as they develop – only now has the SGS started putting the process down in writing. The most important ingredient in all of this – to my mind – is the guidelines the school will make available to students and faculty, guidelines that spell out the CRA rules and the responsibility of the employer (faculty & school) and the employee.

- HCDS graduate support (trial-run project)

One of our Student Advisors recommendation that the SGSP & SGS seek to fund graduate-specific projects and/or staff through the HCDS. The Advisor noted that the current wait list for graduate students referred to HCDS via an Advisor is several weeks. The goal here may be a Counseling staff specialist in graduate student experiences, but we could at least get a start on this by helping to fund a small project with HCDS next year. This would offer a trail-run, or two, to explore which needs the HCDS could best address. Failing substantial support from the SGPS & SGS, the VPG and Advisor Program might approach the AMS and QUIC to lobby/combine funds for additional counseling staff for the HCDS.

- 901

901 has shown incredible enthusiasm for working with us and our members on like-minded initiatives over the year – Copy Right Access Week, Free Queen's, international student advocacy, Event Horizons workshops, etc. They have also shown willingness to listen to our concerns about the SGPS Health Plan and work to ensure its vitality once a collective agreement is signed. They've also visited our Council on a number of occasions while we have yet to attend a meeting with 901's interim-executive. In short, I believe we need to show greater support for this young group than we have over the last year. If we continue to keep our distance so as to maintain that we are, indeed, two separate groups, our relationship will suffer as time passes. In all of the SGPS's interactions with various groups on campus (administration and AMS included), I have yet to find another example where *distance* and *separation* are prioritized over collaboration. I strongly encouraged the in-coming Executive to critically evaluate its existing relationship with 901.

- Unity Council

My predecessor's out-going report suggested that the SGPS revive the Unity Council. This January, 901 beat us to it. I attended the preliminary meeting but was unable to find agreement among the executive about our presence on this group. As we're a student union and share many concerns with the various employee unions on this Council – child care, administration relationships, advocacy, a commitment to social justice, etc. – I believe our presence is certainly warranted and would go a long way to building some valuable collaborative relationships. I encourage the next Executive to discuss this and see if they can reach a decision.

- Graduate Life Working Group

For reasons our Executive is still unclear about, the GLWG has not called a meeting since the early fall. This is an unfortunate situation as this group is an incredibly valuable resource for the SGPS and all graduate students, bringing together representatives from across the university to

discuss – with no politicized or administrated agenda – graduate student issues as they organically arise. I encourage the next VP Graduate to soon broach this concern with the Dean of Student Affairs to see what needs to be done to revive this body. At one point near the breakdown of meetings, it was suggested that the GLWG somehow become a body affiliated with Senate to give it, so to speak, more teeth. I am unsure whether this is necessary – as many of the projects I have worked on with the GLWG did not seem to require huge administrative or financial support. But more discussion may be necessary.

- Acceptance terms & letters

Our Student Advisors raised a number of questions over the summer regarding the terms of acceptance laid out in SGS and department letters of entry. Over the last two months the SGS re-scripted the SGS template and offered it to graduate departments. Departments, in other words, are under no obligation to use these templates – which clarified some gray areas the Advisors noticed, though they could still be improved. The in-coming VP Graduate should follow up with departments – individually, at GSEC, and through reps on Graduate Faculty Councils/Committees – to persuade departments of the benefit of having certain items spelled out. It will require some work, but it will greatly help to avoid the repetition of some of the cases the Advisors handled over the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Vice-President Graduate
Daniel Moore

When I came into this role, my main goal was to improve our relationship with professional student societies within the SGPS and our reputation with those outside of our organization. To do so, I wanted to address issues that affected our interaction with our professional student constituent societies, improve our advocacy effectiveness and perceived legitimacy, and address priorities and policies within the organization that have a direct impact on the engagement and enfranchisement of our professional student members. On top of working toward this goal, I worked on HR issues in the organization and continued to monitor our relationship with the Grad Club.

Internal Mechanisms

We made a number of great strides this year on this front. First, instituting the proxy mechanism was a big priority for me, and I am pleased we did so. One area of concern was that the issue got very distracted by other members raising (albeit valid) concerns pertaining to their occasional inability to make meetings (which should be, I think, distinguished from systemic barriers to doing so), resulting in a month-long delay in the acceptance of this policy. While understandable in this context, I hope that future Councils bear in mind that some of our constituent groups have very unique needs; not every endeavor to address those needs should have to be made broadly accessible just to be accepted.

I think we also made great progress in improving our relationship with both the ESS and the LSS. On the ESS front, great orientation events and SGPS presence, an active ESS Council, and working together with their members on committees and social events have helped us really cement the relationship between our organizations. We have provided them with support at every opportunity, and in a reciprocal way have even collaborated on events like the Ski Trip, reminding us that our relationships with professional student societies can without a doubt be mutually beneficial.

On the LSS side, I have tried to cement communication ties with their society. The LSS has historically been quite good at bringing forward its concerns about SGPS initiatives, but what seems to be lacking is a solid foundation of communication regarding issues facing LSS members, as well as their perspectives on broader university issues, etc., that the SGPS can then advocate for going forward. It often falls to the VPP, then, to provide tokenistic law student feedback on general issues in the law school, a role that is complicated by the fact that the VPP's involvement in the SGPS somewhat distances them from the day-to-day goings-on of the law school. With that in mind, this year I have worked to maintain a stronger relationship with the LSS President, meeting regularly to ensure communication both ways was occurring. This has been particularly crucial given the less active participation the LSS SGPS reps have demonstrated this year, unlike previous years. I have also been working towards establishing a connection between permanent staff in our respective organizations, hoping to entrench an ongoing, non-partisan reciprocal communication mechanism that should allow for more effective communication of such issues in the future.

Advocacy

We successfully advocated on behalf of our professional student members on a number of occasions this year. First, issues regarding the ESS Secession and fees have largely been addressed, although the constant threat of the Board of Trustees suddenly changing their mind one year remains, and discussions to create an agreement with the AMS regarding secession policies to avoid such issues in the future are ongoing. Second, we have made great strides on shifting the way the University Administration thinks of professional students, and in particular their understanding of the role and needs of those students in the broader university community, as evidenced by discussions with the Principal. Outside of these specific issues, we have also seen rather successful advocacy on broader university issues, such as the SLC Agreement, which other members of the Executive have conducted.

What is just as important as these tangible gains, however, is the way in which our Executive has conducted itself in these discussions. As an organization that has a problematic reputation of fanaticism that has left a legacy many of us struggle against, I truly believe we have emerged this year as a reasonable, serious player

that is interested in principled negotiations on issues and that is open to reasonable compromise where appropriate. Both our success and how we got there speak to this being the case.

This is a step that cannot be understated in repairing our reputation both broadly and within the professional student community. Not only that, but every reasoned negotiation we successfully complete gives us more legitimacy and clout in future negotiations. When we are taken seriously, listened to carefully and thought of as a group that makes solid, well-reasoned arguments based to further our members' interests, we become increasingly able to further those interests. I applaud this year's executive for their hard work in this regard, for their willingness to listen to my nagging reminders on this issue and the commendable job they have done in carrying out these goals. I cannot emphasize enough how important it will be for next year's executive to continue in this direction if we are truly interested in serving our professional student members.

Priorities and Policies

On a related note, one nagging issue that seems to remain involves some of our priorities and policies as an organization. This is purely impressionistic, but I was struck this year by the conflicting understandings our members seem to have of our organization. I think this may tie in to the fact that parts of our mandate as described in our bylaws and policies may no longer reflect precisely what our members expect of our organization. In particular, I think it is currently very unclear precisely what role political action has in our organization.

This has long been a source of contention among professional students, and is reflected in both the LSS Report on its relationship with the SGPS as well as discussions I've had with other professional students, both in and outside of the SGPS. The issue came up on numerous occasions in my term, at both the Executive and Council level. I strongly urge the organization going forward to reconsider these issues, as well as other relics in our bylaws that give us a mandate or tie our hands in particular ways that we may no longer find as valuable as we once did.

Luckily, we have taken some steps that will be crucial to accomplishing this. First, we have created the Strategic Planning Committee, an excellent mechanism for receiving member feedback on the organization. Unfortunately, questions regarding advocacy and the role of the SGPS are difficult to word and so were not included in the current survey (despite my requests). Despite this difficulty, however, this is something that we simply must solicit feedback from our membership on in the future. To consider only the service side of our organization is to ignore a very crucial part of what we do and to fail to evaluate whether we continue to serve our membership adequately and appropriately in that regard.

Second, I will be honest in saying that I think some of our confusion comes from our membership in the CFS and the uncertainty regarding exactly what that means for us as a result. As a highly political organization, they do influence us in quite a significant way, and often influence the actions or initiatives of our executive. While I accept that this is likely an inevitable part of our membership in their organization, I think a re-assessment of our mandate and priorities will also assist in stemming that tide somewhat (if that is what our members desire.) During my term I have explored how we might engage with them a bit more productively as an organization, particularly our professional constituency. Discussions with the CFS have led to the possibility of the creation of a Professional Student Caucus within the CFS, where professional student constituencies could meet and discuss their specific interests and priorities. As there is currently no such mechanism for engagement and input from professional students specifically, this should be something that future Executives strongly consider. However, such a move would also require the support of our professional student constituent societies, and so ongoing dialogue with these societies will be an integral part of continuing to improve our ability to serve them.

Finally, many of the above steps taken and concerns raised are corroborated by the LSS Report on the SGPS (and to a lesser extent, the Aesculapian Society's Report on the AMS). In addition to addressing the concerns raised in this report through the above steps, I have written a response to the Report, discussing the concerns it raises and highlighting the steps we are taking to address many of such concerns.

Conclusion on Professional Students

On the whole, I think there have been far more W's than L's in our track record this year when it comes to dealing with professional students. I really can't emphasize enough how much I hope that my successor (and

his successor, and so on) continues to encourage future Executives to remain principled and reasonable in our negotiations and responses to conflict and other issues. I'm so proud of what we've done this year and can't wait to see how the organization continues to build on that work, making the SGPS an even more viable option for professional student societies throughout the university.

Human Resources

There have been a ton of HR issues this year. One change that added far more work to my plate than I would have anticipated was the hiring of RAs within our organization, as I was generally responsible for overseeing their work distribution and performance. I have mixed feelings on how this worked out, in particular due to the confusion over precisely what projects we wished to have them pursue, when we wanted them pursued and for how long. I think we could make very effective use of them in the future if we made a few changes: having a more clearly defined mechanism for dealing with them; not hiring them until we had a clearly defined project for them to at least start on (this may mean hiring some and then adding more as time progresses; the delay between their start date and their first project was often problematic); a willingness of people who would like to use RAs to either meaningfully oversee the work and supervise what is being done or to give more responsibility to the VPP to do so (I ended up not having the opportunity to even really communicate with one RA at all and not really knowing what they were doing only to later find out they were woefully underperforming and being unable to do anything about it because of the limited interaction I had had with them), etc.

On the committee side, we have also made some HR policy changes, and continue to do so with regard to evaluation, hiring and discipline. One thing I've noticed in particular however is the difficult situation we are placed in when issues involve an executive member. As it stands, we must either publicly impugn or impeach them, as we have no other recourse available. This is incredibly problematic. If the members of the executive are lovely people, they may be very disinclined to publicly criticize each other, and in the interim all we can do is just ask the person to do better. With that in mind, the HR Committee has developed some disciplinary processes to put in place, in lieu of the contract model proposed last year. This kind of step is way overdue, in my opinion. The HR Committee has also written some memos for use in advocating on some issues, which seem very effective. The relevant policy changes, etc., will come before Council in April.

Grad Club

Our relationship with the Grad Club certainly seems stronger this year. We've seen really enthusiastic involvement by some of our members, as well as increased overlap between our two organizations. I encourage our members to attend the AGM on March 31, and to consider running for a position on the Board of Directors. There are as usual a number of issues facing the Grad Club, including a need for repairs (which should be done by Queen's but they are dragging their heels as usual with such expenditures), budgeting (budgeting something that seems like a business as a not-for-profit is a delicate balance!), etc. But there are also a lot of really great things that are occurring! The recent purchase of video cameras to improve security (they have already proved very helpful) and the new sound system are great steps towards improving the atmosphere there. A strategic planning process is also underway and hopefully will have results even by the time that our AGM occurs.

Conclusions on Everything

Coming into this role, I had expected to find it exhausting and exasperating to be the only professional student on our executive; this couldn't have been further from the truth. When I speak about professional student interests and needs, the other members of the Executive have been incredibly receptive, actively engaging with the issues and working to reach solutions that will best serve all of our members. One cannot hope to effectively serve a part of our membership without the support and encouragement of the rest of the Executive, and I couldn't have asked for a better team to work with on these goals this year. I hope this cooperative and supportive attitude continues forward, and that our organization continues to meet the needs of our professional students without polarizing them from their graduate student counterparts. I commend everyone on a job extremely well done, and wish the incoming exec the best of luck on continuing down this path.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shaughnessy Hawkins

Dear Councilors,

Institutionalizing Equity into SGPS Policy:

One of my major goals this year was to try to institutionalize equitable principles into the very structure of the Society of Graduate and Professional Students. Fortunately the executive and Council have been very amenable to my recommendations and I've been able to implement important equity-related measures. This year we have had two sessions of SGPS-relevant anti-oppression training conducted by Stephanie Simpson and Jean Pfliederer of the Human Rights Office. With the assistance of Council, I was able to put this mandatory equity training into policy. Now, all SGPS employees and executive are required to take this training every year. Our executive Director also agreed that it would be conducive to have someone from the Equity Team sit on the Social Committee; this is to ensure that all SGPS activities and events are accessible to a variety of interests and abilities. Again with Council's help I was able to establish the Equity Commissioner and/or Equity Coordinator's attendance on Social Committee as part of SGPS policy. Finally, to ensure that various policies of the Executive are equitable, and for the Executive to ask equity-related questions, I have been sitting in on one Executive meeting per month. Ideally this practice will continue with the Exec-Elect, so that equity will continue to be addressed in all facets of SGPS work.

The Academic Plan

Another of my major goals for this year was to have equity-related concerns addressed in the university's upcoming Academic Plan. One of my first tasks was to write the equity section of the SGPS response to the Principal's 'Where Next' document. Unfortunately, most of these recommendations were ignored by the Academic Writing Team in their 'Imagining the Future' document. Since Senate established the Academic Plan Task Force (SAPTF), however, we have engaged in conversations with SGPS member and SAPTF Senator Iain Reeve about our concerns with the academic plan. Specifically, the Equity Coordinator and I have spoken to Iain about challenging the traditional culture of whiteness at Queen's, ensuring all proposed classroom and web technologies are accessible, and making a commitment to 'internationalization' by investing in the resources necessary to support new international students (such as the Equity Office, the Queen's University International Centre, and Health, Counseling and Disability Services). I was also involved in having the Senate Educational Equity Committee (SEEC) agree to draft a document for the SAPTF.

Events

This year the SGPS Equity Team has had a presence at a number of different events. Former Equity Commissioner and current Assistant Professor Dana Olwan and I organized a new session for Teaching Development Day at the beginning of the year. The session was entitled 'Anti-Oppressive Pedagogies and Liberatory Practices' and was well received by those in attendance. I also helped organize an SGPS presence at the 2010 Educational Pow Wow, as well as designed a display for International Women's Day with Equity Coordinator Kalanthe Khaiat and SGPS Research Assistant Gayathri Vijay.

Accent Discrimination Campaign

Equity's biggest campaign this year has been the Accent Discrimination Campaign, endorsed by SGPS Council. We are working in collaboration with the Human Rights Office, PSAC Local 901 (TA/TF Union), and various SGPS employees. The campaign is an attempt to engage in productive dialogue with Queen's University students in order to target accent-based discrimination on campus. The research phase involves gathering scholarly info, as well as soliciting anecdotes from Queen's University students, faculty and staff. We will also be holding focus groups with those who have experienced discrimination on campus. The second phase is the campaign phase, which will include posters and an interactive website. Due to the sensitive nature of this project we have decided to go through the General Research Ethics Board. Because this process is long and arduous, the campaign itself will take place over two years, with 'implementation' happening over the summer and the 2011/2012 academic year.

Committee Work

This year I have sat on a number of different committees as the equity representative for SGPS. It seems as though in the recent past some of these committees haven't had graduate or professional student presence, and therefore this year has been primarily about building relationships and establishing a strong voice for students. The Council on Employment Equity has accomplished a number of significant goals this year, in spite of the University's transition to a new VP, Caroline Davis. The CEE sent a letter in support of the Gender Neutral Washroom Policy on campus which is now waiting to be rubber-stamped by VP Davis and then Campus Planning is ready to move on it. We have also spent much time updating and amending the Queen's University Employment Equity Plan. The Government has started reviewing universities from West to East, and we will be ready with our employment equity numbers soon. This committee has also tried to arrange for equity-related data to be collected from staff in their exit surveys, and is also in the process of implementing a new Employment Equity Award. Finally, the committee is sending out a memo to all union bargaining units, offering the Equity Office as a resource for employment equity concerns.

I have also spent a lot of time this year working with Queen's Accessibility Committee. Because there is currently no Accessibility Coordinator (a position that has now been vacant for a year), this committee has been fairly frustrated at not being as 'effective' as in years past. However, we did submit a proposal to the federal government to renovate MacArthur Hall on West Campus to make it more accessible to Queen's members and the general community. I have also gathered information from this committee in order to assist in paying Four Directions the money it was owed for accessibility renovations. We have written memos to support easier timetabling for those who need accessible classrooms, and we have had a presence at the Disability Awareness Resource Fair organized by AMS Accessibility Queen's. I am also a member of the Steve Cutway Award Standing Committee, which will present an award at the end of March/beginning of April to a person who has contributed significantly to making Queen's more accessible. I was able to help convince this Committee, and the larger QAC, that students should be included in this award, so the nomination criteria has been changed for this and subsequent years.

Finally, I have sat on the SGPS Strategic Planning Committee and have attempted to include equity-related questions in the survey that the SPC is sending out. I also sat on the Student Advisor Hiring Committee, to ensure an equitable process and that incoming student advisors would be able to address equity concerns, I sat as the SGPS representative on the Queen's Staff Award Committee, and have attended two Canadian Federation of Students meetings.

Overall, this has been a very fruitful year and I think we have been able to establish mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of equitable principles in the SGPS and on various university committees.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Prouse, Equity Commissioner

This report highlights some of the work that was done under the umbrella of communications for the SGPS over the past year. If you would like to learn about all of the work done within communications this past year, I encourage you to look at other reports that were submitted to regular SGPS Council meetings, which can be found at: <http://www.sgps.ca/council/documents.html>

SGPS Computer Network

- I have done a considerable amount of work on the security of the SGPS network. The network is now simultaneously more secure while allow better access.
- I have upgraded the servers (mail, wiki, files, web). The upgrades have been software based, giving us more features and better ways to interact as we do our work.
- I have been incrementally working on improved backup solutions for all of our computers. We are not yet in the perfect place in terms of backups, but we are improving significantly. Over the next few months, we should be in a state where catastrophic hardware failure will not cause us to lose any data.
- We replaced our old black and white copier with a new full colour scanning/copying/printing machine. This has allowed us to save a great deal of money with respect to colour printing and also allows us to offer printing services to the membership.
- I did significant infrastructure work to extend our network to our new office space. This presented serious challenges, which have all been dealt with.
- I added mailing list abilities for all of our committees. This makes it very easy for committee chairs to communicate with the membership of the committee.

SGPS Website

- I worked to re-write the code of our website so it will load more quickly, take less bandwidth (especially on cellular data grids) and be more efficient to update. Code is now HTML5 compliant.
- I have worked extensively on the wikis of our website, with a particular focus on transition. Our transition wiki is very useful to bring new staff/exec people up to speed on important aspects of the SGPS. The transition wiki is a companion to the rest of our transition processes.
- I have added a number of audio-visual tutorials to our wikis.
- I have re-worked the code of our website so it works with all popular access devices including computers, smartphones and tablets.
- I have worked to prepare a backup webserver in case of a main server failure.
- I have started Facebook and Twitter accounts to help us communicate with our members.
- I have renewed our secure socket layer (SSL) certificates on our mail and wiki server. This ensures we have secure access to e-mail and wiki content when outside the office.
- I upgraded the software on both our webserver and mail/wiki server to improve access and maintain the highest level of security possible.

Communications

- I have been able to allow our elections to be held online. I investigated a number of possibilities. The final solution was to keep our online election within Queen's. This means that we do not need to send any personal information external to Queen's.
- I am working with various sub-societies to allow them to have online elections through the same election project that I completed for the SGPS. Typically, with about 3 weeks notice, we can host an election for any sub-society that wants one.
- I worked to have our optional fee opt-outs done online this past year. The system worked very well and we will continue to allow our members to opt-out of optional fees via the internet.
- I reworked all of our job description documents, which we post when we are filling a position.
- I am in the process of programming our website so we can accept online bursary applications.
- I have produced the yearly Orientation Week Survival Guide and the yearly SGPS Dayplanner/Agenda.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Dear Council Members:

Learning about the SGPS and the Queen's community has been quite an exciting experience for me. The past seven months have been spent learning my duties and role as Executive Assistant. At times it has been quite a learning curve but I can assure you that I am settling in quite comfortably. The time has flown by so quickly and it is hard to imagine that spring is almost here!

What you will find below is a summary of what has been accomplished in my role as Executive Assistant since I was hired in August.

August

- Front Desk training
- We were in the process of accepting applications for a Front Desk person, so I filled in once per week until one was hired in early September
- Helped to organize printing of the Orientation Week booklets
- Arranged Orientation Talks with the different departments and faculties on campus to introduce incoming graduate & professional students to the SGPS
- Started processing health and dental opt-ins for the 2010-2011 benefit year

September

- Conducted Front Desk position interviews with the Executive Director and helped with training
- Organized Orientation Week event ticket sales and payment
- Continued to help out at the front desk during peak times
- Prepared for, received and processed manual activity fee opt-outs
- Took over scheduling weekly Executive meetings

October

- Started scheduling the Executive Director's meetings in iCal
- Verified and looked for discrepancies between our Graduate Assistant contact lists
- Started compiling and verifying internal SGPS and external University committee lists
- Compiled a list of the Education Students' Society names, titles and emails for the Executive Director
- Created and maintained an inventory list of office supplies
- Maintained and cleaned up SGPS committee member lists
- Updated various SGPS committee mailing lists to reflect new members
- Received training on the newsletter
- Took over the task of creating and formatting ads for the newsletter

November

- Researched and compiled contact information for University Administrative departments
- Started preliminary training in Simply Accounting
- Scheduled and attended Anti-Oppression training
- Investigated the procedures for removing our old photocopier
- Continued dealing with health and dental issues and making sure opt-ins were added to the insurance plan
- Continued processing health and dental opt-outs

December

- Worked with the Executive Director on the reconciliation of the health and dental plan
- Prepared the necessary documents to send to our insurance broker to update the health and dental plan
- Researched swag for the SGPS – purchase costs, printing costs, etc.
- Scheduled and organized the details surrounding the Conflict Resolution Training
- Looked into prices and where to purchase poster paper for the office
- Addressed and sent out letters and cheques to all of the organizations that receive activity fees
- Organized front desk schedule for next term

January

- Started processing January health and dental opt-ins
- Continued to organize and plan the Conflict Resolution Training
- Looked into new accounting software for the office
- Attended the SGPS Mystery Event
- Arranged the room booking for the NGC
- Attended the two day Conflict Resolution Training
- Answered incoming e-mail questions from students
- Researched answers to SGPS election FAQs
- Attended an HR Committee meeting
- Completed the Queen's customer service training

February

- Addressed and sent out letters and cheques to all of the organizations that receive activity fees
- Continued investigating the procedures for removing our old photocopier
- Continued processing health and dental opt-ins and opt-outs
- Received and reviewed Front Desk applications
- Printed posters for the Equity team
- Organized SGPS ski trip ticket sales and payments
- Created online LSS equity survey

March

- Updated SGPS committee member lists and e-mail lists
- Researched vacant Senate committee seats
- Started updating external committee documents
- Updated SGPS Executive committee lists

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Asselstine – ea@sgps.ca

I was appointed Chief Returning Officer 2nd week of August 2010. I had meeting in late August-early September with Sean Richards and Jawad Qureshy regarding educational student society (ESS) elections and to activate my SGPS email. In this meeting, elections of the Educational student senator and graduate student senator were also discussed.

The original timeline for the ESS elections called for nomination packages to be submitted in accordance with the ESS constitution by September 10th and to have the ESS elections completed by September 17, 2010 before most educational students leave for placements September 30th, 2010. However, there was a very low initial nomination turn-out so I extended nominations by 1 week as outlined in the ESS constitution. This pushed the elections to September 27 & 28. They were still completed by the September 30th, 2010 deadline.

The Graduate senator position was also vacant in early September, and due to the limited time available, the graduate student senator was appointed by the SGPS council at the next meeting.

SGPS general elections & referenda were held March 2-3, 2011. This is the first time (to my knowledge) that online ballots were allowed to be cast and we received 449 ballots (436 online, 13 paper, ~ 10% of the SGPS eligible voters). All candidates were affirmed and only referenda questions regarding the funding increase for the CFRC radio and Queen's journal were defeated. We only had 1 nominee for each position up for election despite the nomination period being extended by 1 week as per SGPS by-laws and policies. The timing between the affirmation of the election dates & referenda questions by council, the need for the extension of the nomination period, dramatically reduced the campaign period to only 3 business days. The combination of the March 7th hard deadline for election results outlined by the SGPS bylaws and policies and no nominee running against an opponent led to the cancellation of the traditional all candidates' debate.

The referendum question "Should the SGPS increase a Class A Mandatory Fee (not indexed to inflation) from \$3.75 to \$4.77 (an increase of \$1.02 per student) for CFRC Radio?" will go to a bi-election as per SGPS policy P.7.1.4 on March 28 & 29th 2011. This bi-election will determine if the fee will increase, stay the same, or be eliminated.

Due to the low paper ballot voter turn out, I suggested to council that the bi-election be done using the online voting mechanism. During the March council meeting, concern was raised regarding the SGPS P.7.1.4 policy. The concern was regarding that the bi-election questions as dictated by this policy creates a bias for the "increase" option to pass even though it was originally voted down. Some councilors have suggested that if the increase option is voted down in the original referendum question, it should be removed from the bi-election question. I would recommend that council review and debate whether or not to change SGPS policy P.7.1.4.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Mikhail Kellawan,
Chief Returning Officer

Dear SGPS Council,

The key theme of the university's Trustees and administration this past year has been the financial situation of the university. The university faces structural deficits in its operating budget and its pension plan. Funding from government and fees remains flat or nearly flat while costs, primarily wages, continue to increase. This reality has dominated the mind of the Board this year and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

The Board has also seen significant strategic renewal. It has committed itself to cutting its size nearly in half to more effectively oversee the financial affairs of the university. The Board and Senate have formed a joint committee – the ominously entitled University Planning Committee – to provide more regular operational guidance to the administration.

The year ahead promises continued change at the university as it struggles to cope with its fiscal reality. Student engagement at all levels will be key to ensure that changes to programs and services take into account the on-the-ground experiences of graduate and professional students. I encourage all SGPS members to become involved with the governance of Queen's. If you would like to know how to do so, please contact me at benjamin.grant@queensu.ca.

Have a good 2011!

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Grant
Board of Trustees, Student Trustee

Dear SGPS Council,

The Strategic Planning Committee's primary purpose is to produce a 2 year strategic plan for the SGPS. In order to accomplish this, the Committee has, over the past year, solicited input from many of the SGPS's volunteers and staff. Moving forward, the next step is to canvas the membership on what should be the priorities of the SGPS over the next two years.

We asked that Councillors participate in a pilot survey. We want to thank all council members who completed to pilot and provided helpful feedback, which we have incorporated into the survey. The finished survey should be launching March 15th 2011 and collecting data for a couple weeks. We will be exploring multiple avenues to launch this survey including the SGPS newsletter. The current plan is to collect data for a minimum of two weeks and maybe an additional week to try to increase the response rate. Also, there are going to be 10 prizes of 25 dollars to randomly selected SGPS members who complete the survey.

We are asking council member to complete the survey and to encourage their constituents to complete the survey. This survey will be analyzed to develop recommendations to the SGPS regarding what SGPS members are satisfied with, what could be improved, and what they would like to see happen. *It is vital that there is as much participation as possible.*

Have a good 2011!

Respectfully submitted,
Ben Grant and Nora Zwingerman
Co-chairs of the Strategic Planning Committee

Hello Council,

It has not been long since our last report, but we will take this time to give the 20,000 foot view of the goings on so far this year, and of course, an update on the conference, after all, it's all we have really had to report for most of the year, I bet you are all wondering how it went!

The conference went off without any major hitches, and ran quite smoothly. All of our events happened as planned, and we had a consistent turnout to each of them. Although we would have liked to have seen an overall larger turnout, we can proudly call this year's Queen's Graduate Computing Society Conference a success!

That being said it is soon going to be time for us to begin thinking about next year's conference, including possible dates and new ideas. This year was a great learning experience, and we feel that things can only look up in the future for the QGCSC!

Outside of the conference, things have been pretty slow going, keeping to our regular events. The twice weekly coffee break is still going strong, and always promises interesting conversation, and the occasional treat. Our movies nights will be continuing again, so we are always looking for ideas for films to show.

Now that we have a little time, we plan to look at our current existing constitution and aim to improve and tidy it, for it to reflect the changes that have been occurring to our young society. After a few years, it is time to develop to suit our needs, and this involves a constitutional review. Work began on this in the fall, and was set aside to focus on the conference, but has been picked up and will continue full speed ahead, so look for updates on that in our April report.

As always if you have any questions about the goings on of the GCS, please feel free to contact either of us, or check out our website.

Eric Rapos and Layan Nahlawi
SGPS Relations Officers
Graduate Computing Society
<http://sites.cs.queensu.ca/gcs/main/>

This committee met early in March already, but I hope to schedule a final meeting before I transition out as chair. We will finish up with the RA FAQ and begin work on progress report concerns, which I'm confident the next VPG can take over.

This committee has served our graduate student membership extremely well over the last year. We were lucky to find many curious, thoughtful, and dedicated members to sit on this committee, in many cases all the way since August. They certainly deserve recognition from Council for all their work:

Andrea Phillipson – Kinesiology; Jessica Hickey – Pathology; Roxanne Razavi – Biology; Nathalie Ouellette – Physics; Sarah Waurechen – History; Andrew Purssell – Microbiology; Charan Rainford - Policy Studies
Hazem Ahmed – Computing; Marie-Josée Perrier - Kinesiology

I hope some stay with the group while the chair transitions, as that would promise some institutional memory and keep the ball rolling on ongoing projects. In my new role as Graduate Senator I hope to serve on this committee as a member – chair's permission pending – a responsibility we might consider formalizing to ensure our Senators are in this very important loop.

Future of the AASC

This group has been such a success I think it we should keep it in mind as we consider its future. The incoming Exec and VPG may have a chance over the summer to reorganize the membership over the coming year, as some members may leave over the summer. Whether they see the group remaining a volunteer committee (drawn from Council or the membership) or would like to see a more strategic membership is the looming question.

Originally, I had in mind something quite different than what emerged: composing the membership from the student representatives on the Graduate Faculty Councils & Committees, which would include professional graduate students. I strongly believe such a group is needed to facilitate better communication among our members on issues pertaining to graduate academics. Indeed, the SGPS currently doesn't have a group made up of academic representatives from home departments – something like the DSC model in the AMS. A gathering of these students would quickly enhance our communication lines with departments and present a coordinated effort to address campus-wide graduate issues while also ensuring a full spectrum of participation and representation. This year, however, these Councils & Committees were still in the midst of organizing themselves, and we were unable to contact/invite a number of student reps. (Three members of the AASC are Graduate Council/Committee reps.)

If the next Exec heads down this road, however, we could lose the baby with the bath water: the group might lose the motivation and drive that comes from volunteers who eagerly wish to serve on the committee, and it may confine the group to handling only the issues on the tables of the Graduate Councils. The AASC's chair and members are free right now to initiate projects they believe are relevant – progress reports, RA employment, grading transition, withdrawal policies, etc. I think we've had success on all of the projects we've brought to the Graduate Councils and the SGS. Indeed, the AASC is in the position to initiate discussion about graduate academics on campus rather than simply react to faculty and administrative agendas – though it certainly can do both.

Ideally, the AASC group would remain flexible in its membership and the SGPS would create a special committee made up of Graduate Council/Committee representatives – a group that would essential assist these representatives in responding to issues brought forward by the SGS at Grad Councils.

Respectfully submitted,
AASC Chair - VP Graduate
Daniel Moore

Dear SGPS Council and Members at Large,

A few items for your awareness at the annual general meeting:

1. Branding Process: I've participated in a series of meetings and presentations from the advancement committee as they undertake the process of re-branding Queen's University. The results of the branding exercises are extremely promising and show solid ideas for the image of Queen's. I encourage anyone who is interested in this topic to contact the office of Advancement.
2. Board of Trustees March 4 2011: The March 2011 Board of Trustees meeting contained several items of interest to grad students. The Senate academic planning task force chair, Peter Taylor, gave a presentation on their work to date, outlining the pillars they have established for their approach to academic planning. Reeve is the grad student representative on the task force and I continue to consult with him to remain aware of the academic planning process as it pertains to grad students.
Under the leadership of VP research Dr. Liss, the Board saw presentations from leading researchers at Queen's including a graduate student in Political Studies. This was a positive thing for Grad students because it helps student representatives argue for a greater focus on research at the level of University policy and academic planning.
The main point of contentious debate for students at this Board meeting was the AMS operations and management agreement over the Queen's Center. Students lobbied extensively on this throughout the Board meeting, and the implications and risks of AMS management over the Queen's Center were discussed at committee meetings. The management agreement is to carry forward immediately on the understanding that the AMS will resolve the issue of outstanding undergraduate capital contributions.
3. The Queen's University Planning Committee continues to discuss key budget pressures, enrolment planning, academic planning, and other planning considerations for the University. As the student representative on this committee, I raise student perspectives on the discussion topics as necessary.
4. Water Access Group – in recent months, I have been a participant in the Water Access Group (a coalition of campus groups working towards increased awareness of municipal water services on campus and other water-related issues). I was recently asked to assume a coordinating role in that group, and have been managing communications between the various participants. The focal point so far has been Bottled Water Free day, which just passed on March 10th. The Water Access Group helped coordinate several efforts, including campus awareness campaigns and communications with Administrators.
5. I have been working closely with campus groups such as Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights on a range of activist issues to do with social justice and Academic dialogue.
6. I continue to participate in campus activities, groups and events relating to academic topics and dialogue on campus. For example, in the last few weeks I have attended a lecture by esteemed scholar Norman Finkelstein, a lecture by leading Canadian activist Maude Barlowe, a rally in solidarity with the Egyptian revolution, and a teach-in on the Egyptian revolution, and a poetry reading for Israeli Apartheid Week.
7. I met recently with Judith Brown from Alumni relations to discuss the possibility of using the Rector office to better connect alumni communities with student campus life and activism. This talk generated some promising ideas, such as linking a feed of campus goings-on in the alumni websites and newsletters.

8. Meetings of the Senate Committee on Non-Academic Discipline and Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (exam subcommittee) are coming up – will report on their activities.

6. Tricolour Awards: The Agnes Benidickson Tricolour Award selection process for 2011 has begun. I chair the selection committee, which will meet with nominees, review nominations packages, and make a decision. Winners will be announced in early April.

Best,

Nick Day

Rector

Equity Coordinator Report – AGM 2011

Dear Council Members,

The following is a list of the events/projects I have been involved in this year as SGPS Equity Coordinator; in the process, it provides a sense of the organizations the Equity Team collaborates with at Queen's and in Kingston. I would happy to address any questions and/or discussion regarding any of these, at the AGM, via email or in a face-to-face meeting; please feel free to get in touch with me at equityco@sgps.ca.

- Persons Day (October 18th): re-mounting of the poster display developed by previous Equity Coordinator Lara Szabo-Greisman, along with a short presentation contextualizing Persons Day's significance.
- (Equity) Event Calendar: working with Sean to develop a centralized calendar of events – initially limited to equity-related ones, but then expanded to include events planned within the SGPS, especially by the Social Committee; hopefully will be developed in technical terms, so that it can be a project continued by future Equity Coordinators.
- Response to Academic Planning: Carolyn and I have been meeting with each other and with stakeholders (including the Rector and Graduate Student Senator) throughout the year to address the lack of attention to equity issues we perceived in both "Where Next?" and "Imagining the Future," and ensure that these would be considered in upcoming academic planning meetings and strategy-development.
- Social Committee: working with members of the Social Committee to develop a variety of activities accessible and welcoming (in all senses) to the SGPS membership.
- Equity Committee: developed by Lara Szabo-Greisman, and implemented by Carolyn and me to the best of our ability this year; there is a lot of potential for making this a more effective body in years to come – not so much in structure, but in logistical organization, which should be outlined and agreed upon early in the academic year.
- Understanding Each Other: Accented Communication At Queen's (accent discrimination research/action campaign): collaborative project between the SGPS (as represented by the Equity Team), PSAC Local 901 and the Human Rights Office; 2 stages of research being conducted in order to develop a set of strategic recommendations to make Queen's a safer, more welcoming space to people speaking all forms of English in working and learning settings. Currently pending final GREB approval.
- Sexual Violence Action Network: network of anti-violence organizations at Queen's and in the Kingston community (including SGPS Equity, AMS Social Issues Commission, Sexual Assault Centre Kingston, Levanna Gender Advocacy Centre), meeting semi-regularly to coordinate anti-violence action and resistance against rape culture.
- December 6th Memorial & Vigil (National Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women): ceremony to honour the memory of the 14 victims of the Ecole Polytechnique massacre, as well as of all women in Canada killed in acts of misogynistic violence, and to emphasise the need to recognise and resist any cultural/interpersonal arrangement which tolerates violence against women.
- SGPS Employee Anti-Oppression Training: organized for all SGPS employees by Carolyn, and now part of the Equity Commissioner's portfolio; I co-facilitated the Positive Space half of the training.

- Accessibility Queen's Fund Transfer to Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre: advocated on behalf of FDASC to see the transfer of \$10 000 in promised funding for accessibility renovations from AQ to FDASC actually take place.
- The Vagina Monologues & Re-Vulva-Lutions: worked as part of the production team with the Women's Empowerment Committee for this project – technically outside my Equity Coordinator duties, but in a way that promoted collaboration between WEC and the SGPS to create promotional materials for the show.
- International Women's Week 2011: sat on the general planning committee for IWW, and on the Community Fair and Fundraiser subcommittees, alongside representatives from organizations including Kingston Interval House, Sexual Assault Centre Kingston, Dawn House Women's Shelter Immigrant Services Kingston and Area, Education on Gender Issues (SIC). Coordinated printing promotional materials and renting sound equipment for the Fair and Fundraiser
- (Dis)Ability Awareness Month: working in coalition with accessibility-promoting organizations at Queen's (including the Queen's Equity Office, Accessibility Queen's, Queen's Accessibility Committee, Disability Services and the AMS Social Issues Commission) to organize and coordinate logistics for events throughout March. I will also be part of a post-mortem meeting at which a more concrete strategic plan for collaborative planning will be developed for DAM *2012*.

I apologise if I am leaving anything out on that list – if I do remember more worth mentioning between now and the AGM, I will add to my report when it's my turn to speak. I will also share any updates I have regarding any of the ongoing projects listed at that time.

Hope you're enjoying sunshine being back in our lives as much as I am!

Respectfully submitted,

Kalanthe Khaiat
Equity Coordinator