



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

Executive Director Search

The search for a new Executive Director for the SGPS is continuing. We have received several applications to date and will be conducting interviews the week of May 12th– 15th. Our goal is to have the new ED begin training Monday May 26th. Jen Stacey's last scheduled day as ED is June 13th.

SGPS Hiring

Our new hires include: Shauna Shiels, Equity Commissioner (Internal); Cheryl Sutherland, Equity Commissioner (External); and Diala Habib, Social Commissioner. We also will have a new Committee Coordinator this week.

SGSR Dean's Award to SGPS Executives

SGSR Dean Janice Deakin notified the SGPS Executive of her intention to end the annual Dean's Award of \$8,000, which is divided among the Executive as part of their compensation package. After consultation, she reversed herself, and has left open the possibility of altering or expanding the program.

Queen's Centre

The administration has made it clear that Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the Queen's Centre are open for reconsideration. They have suggested scaling down, moving, or eliminating such features as the Field House and Ice Rink. The governance structure of the Centre is also open for negotiation, which continues.

University Council on Athletics

The proposed new Constitution for the UCA is set to take effect in the Fall. Changes include adding an SGPS seat on the Council, which oversees Athletics and Recreation policy at the University.

Social Issues for Graduate Students

The Dean of Student Affairs has struck an ad hoc committee to investigate social issues affecting graduate and professional students, and make policy and service recommendations. As SGPS President, I have been asked to attend, as well as the SGPS Equity Commissioners and Social Commissioner. We are actively seeking input from Council and members at large.

Principal Search Committee

As SGPS President, I will be sitting as a Senate representative on the Search Committee for the next Principal of Queen's.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Welsh

Teaching Assistant and Teaching Fellow Survey

We've developed a short survey to collect information about TA and TF issues that affect our members (see also attached questionnaire). This information will help the SGPS Executive better represent TA/TF concerns to the university administration in the coming year. As an incentive to participate in the 5 minute survey, we're offering a draw for 4 cash prizes of \$100. Please encourage people in your department to participate in the survey. The results of the survey will be posted on the SGPS website in August.

Student Advisor Program

The Student Advisor Program has been running well since the Memorandum of Agreement came into effect in January 2008. Recently, we've begun the process for hiring 2 new student advisors for the 2008/09 academic year. These positions will be advertised soon, and we aim to complete the hiring process by the end of June. Please encourage any members who meet the eligibility requirements for these positions to apply.

In order to raise awareness about the Student Advisor program, we are developing advertisements to run in the summer issues of The Journal and Queen's Gazette.

Teaching Assistant Consultative Committee

At the TA Consultative Committee meeting in April the committee finalized questions for a survey about departmental compliance with provisions in the TA policy. In late-April, the survey was sent to departmental heads and assistants. Results of the survey should be available in August.

Following the meeting, Janice Deakin offered to explore changing the TA compensation structure so that approximately half of the compensation would be in the form of a non-taxable bursary and the other half as regular taxable wages.

Sean Tucker
May 6, 2008

1. New Commissioners have been hired! We are pleased to have aboard:
 - a. DIALA HABIB- Social Commissioner.
 - b. Cheryl Sutherland- External Equity Commisisoner.
 - c. Shauna Shiels- Internal Equity Commissioner.

2. In the matter of the External Equity position. The SGPS has received formal assurances from the Dean of Student Affairs, Jason Laker, that the position will be in large part funded by the DSA Student Initiative Fund. Approximately \$2700 will be provided by the DSA, while the SGPS will provide the other \$500 funding. The DSA made quite clear that this funding was made as a one time commitment and that funding for this particular position would not be provided on an annual basis. Please join me in thanking the DSA for this funding.
3. The SGPS is continuing its search for support staff! Social Coordinators, and Communication Coordinators are still being sought out. The Hiring Committee should also have its decision on the new Committee Coordinator shortly. Please check the website regularly and help spread the word that we are hiring!
4. This summer I will be entertaining and creating proposals for future SGPS space- please contact me if you, or the students you represent have any ideas or concerns that they/you might wish to share.
5. I am looking forward to working with all of you in the coming year! Please contact me at vpjp@sgps.ca if you have any matters you wish to discuss with me!

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Kneen



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President External
May 2008

Solidarity and Campaign Work

Drafted letters on behalf of the executive in support of students at the University of Toronto who have been criminally charged and are subject to university discipline for engaging in political demonstrations on campus; in support of the Laurentian Graduate Students in their ongoing dispute with the administration; in support of the striking TA workers at McGill; and a letter in support of a student at UBC who is legally challenging aspects of the Indian Act. Also, sent card of condolence to family of a Queen's student who recently passed away.

UHIP

Participated in a teleconference meeting regarding the status of the CFS's UHIP campaign. Items discussed including updating the website, media outreach, the preparation of a petition for circulation, the status of premiums for the upcoming year and also received a report back from a conference at York University.

Lobby Days – April 28th – May 1st

Participated in the CFS organized Lobby Days at Queen's Park. Met with nearly ten MPP's from different parties, met with several staff members of MPP's and also met with representative from the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO). At all meetings I helped

highlight the five priorities identified by the Federation: 1) Tuition and student debt reduction; 2) the elimination of illegal ancillary fees; 3) restoring international students to OHIP; 4) the creation of a province wide system of credit transfer; 5) the use of principles of environmental sustainability in all capital projects. Also, issues germane to graduate students, such as grad funding, the quantity of OGS scholarships available, graduate student space on campus and the commercialization of research were discussed. Overall, while no particular commitments emerged, I feel a message was communicated to all aspects of government and a dialogue was opened.

Ontario Executive Meeting – May 2-4, 2008

Attended the three day orientation session/meeting of the Ontario Executive of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) in Toronto. Items discussed included the history of the CFS, the various services offered by the Federation including the health and dental benefits, the handbook service and Travel CUTS, as well as reports from past meetings and the executive. Items also discussed were the upcoming AGM in Ottawa at the end of May as well as upcoming campaigns for the summer and the new school year. In particular, much discussion was devoted to planning a province wide 'Activist Assembly' on September 26th and 27th and a Fall Day of Action which will occur on Wednesday November 5th across Ontario. If anyone is interested in participating in these events, or any other activity, please do not hesitate to contact me.



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

Operations and Financial Standing Committee:

Currently, the Committee consists of VP Ops; President; VP External; and three SGPS members, one of whom will be away in the summer and will return in Fall, and another who will leave at the end of the summer. I am looking for additional members, ideally up to 4 general SGPS members and one Equity officer. Such will be communicated to the new Committee Coordinator.

Dental Bursary:

The program has seen a decent success, considering the fact that this is our first year of offering the program. With more active promotion, the program will see a greater success next year.

Financial Need and Conference Grants:

As discussed in the Council 2 meeting ago, these programs have been discontinued and the membership has been notified. The last set of applications has been reviewed, decisions have been made and imbursements have been distributed.

Annual Budget:

It appears that there should be a few changes made to the structure of the SGPS Budget. Some lines will be merged with others and some will be renamed. There will also be

some changes to the amounts allocated to some lines. It will be made available by the next Council meeting in August.



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of Biology Department Representative
Richard Morrow
May 2008

The graduate body of the biology department has recently succeeded in establishing an internal student society whereby students are welcome to express their views on aspects of graduate life, in an organized and open student forum. The Biology Graduate Committee of the Whole was established to fill the need for a scheduled departmental structure for graduate students to openly discuss relevant issues before their peers and elected internal and external society representatives (such as the SGPS). For more information on the structure and direction of the organization please see: <http://biology.queensu.ca/~bigcow/About%20Us.html>

Following the referendum for the establishment of the society (75.8% voter turnout 116 yes, 0 no) the inaugural meeting was held to discuss immediately relevant issues. Members present organized and conducted an election for positions representing the interests of the biology graduate student body. I am honoured to have been re-elected to the position of Biology SGPS representative and look forward to continuing strong relations with the SGPS council and executive in furthering the interests of biology students.

Regarding the issues brought to my attention this month: There is concern among students that the new system of email addresses, a combination of numbers and letters before '@queensu.ca' is a significant downgrade from the lastname-firstinitial system previously in place. Several biology students have highlighted that networking at conferences and abroad are not helped with an alpha-numeric system and are asking if other departments share this concern. With significant cut-backs in the biology department the task of orienting new biology graduate students is made even more challenging. The biology graduate student body is appealing to the SGPS executive and council for suggestions for external sources of funding for social events for the department. Furthermore, several concerns have been raised about the prospect of funding for biology students who have gone over their allotted time for internal funding. This in combination with suggestions that biology graduates will no longer be eligible for TA-ships when over their time frame, this raises further concerns. Again, students are appealing to the SGPS executive and members of council.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Morrow
Biology Department Council Representative
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