

### **Non-Tuition Student Fees**

After discussions with the university and the AMS (including the ESS President), agreement was reached that ESS members would pay the full SGPS fees for Athletics & Recreation and the Health, Counseling and Disability Centre for 2009-10, after which reduced fees based on the B.Ed. program timetable would be introduced. This is in keeping with an agreement in principle that university services should be given a transition year to adapt to a loss in student fee revenue as a result of reduced rates.

Similarly, we have been asked to make a one-time contribution from our financial reserves to cover the projected losses next year to student-run services that receive mandatory student fee money as a result of the agreed ESS fee rates. This would include three categories (with amounts requested in parentheses):

- 1) Shared AMS/SGPS-supported services that are AMS-run:
  - Campus Accessibility Fund (\$1024.50)
  - Walk Home Service (\$4719.53)
  - CFRC radio (\$1290.87)
  - The Journal (\$1195.25)
  
- 2) Other shared AMS/SGPS-supported services:
  - Campus Observation Room (\$273.20)
  - Legal Aid (\$1536.75)
  - Sexual Assault Crisis Centre (\$252.71)
  - Telephone Aid Line Kingston (\$423.46)
  - Work Bursary Program (\$1632.37)
  
- 3) Services that receive AMS fees, but for which there is no SGPS fee:
  - After Hours Medical Clinic (\$2561.25)
  - Queen's Bands (\$2390.50)
  - Queen's First Aid Unit (\$2390.50)
  - Golden Words (\$1366.00)
  - Sexual Health Resource Centre (\$580.55)
  - Student Constables (\$5443.51)

Each item will be considered individually, to allow for questions and discussion about the nature of the fee recipients and financial implications for them. Any approved funds would NOT come out of budgeted items, but would be drawn from SGPS financial reserves. This would be for 2009-10 ONLY.

### **Changes to the Governance Structure of the School of Graduate Studies**

The School of Graduate Studies will have a new governance structure beginning officially July 1, 2009. The changes are outlined in an Appendix to this month's Council package.

Jeff Welsh, President



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Vice President Graduate  
May, 2009

### **Student Advisors Program**

The annual program evaluation process is still ongoing. Any council member who has experience(s) working directly with the student advisor(s) and wishes to comment on his/her performances or the SA program in general, please provide your feed back using the student advisor program evaluation form attached and return it to the SGPS office by May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Your feedback is a valuable source for the improvement of the program to better serve our members. Student advisors program provides vital services to our members, particularly on helping the students dealing with issues on supervisor conflicts, authorship of papers and ownership of the data or upper-year student funding. Please encourage (and/or refer) the students in need in your department to our service. The office hours of the student advisors are Monday afternoon 2:30-5:30p.m. (or by appointment). The student advisors can be reached at [studentadvisors@sgps.ca](mailto:studentadvisors@sgps.ca).

### **TA Consultative Committee**

The April meeting was cancelled. Next meeting time has not been set yet.

### **Health Sciences Education Award Committee**

The Health Science Education Award is the highest recognition within the Faculty of Health Sciences on teaching excellence and innovation in teaching methods that, together, bring a significant impact on Health Sciences education at Queen's. Three candidates stand out from applicant pool. After much discussion, the committee had chosen Dr. Thomas Massey, the head of Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology as the recipient of the 2009 Award for his efforts in the establishment of the new " Drug Development and Human Toxicology Stream" for the Life Science program, which starts September 2009.

### **SGPS Staff Equity Training**

Thanks to our Equity Commissioner Usmen for organizing the equity training with focus on hiring equity. It was attended by the SGPS executives, student advisor and the commissioners.

Respectively Submitted,

Joellen Lin  
Vice President Graduate  
vpig@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the VP of Finance and Services  
May 2009

Dear Members of Council,

As the new VP Finance and Services, I would like to express my solidarity with the council and the SGPS executive team. I look forward to perform my responsibilities to the fullest of my potential and hope to have a successful tenure for the following year. I would also like to thank the executive members as well as Ms. Vicky Bae, the former VP of Finance and Services for helping me adjust to this new position.

Since starting my term on Friday, I have been working closely with Ms. Bae to transition the responsibilities, functions, and lines of communication regarding the post in an orderly manner. I will be meeting with the Finance Committee for the first time on Wednesday May 6, 2009, to introduce and acquaint myself with members of the committee. As they are very crucial in maintaining the role of the SGPS and of its policies, I hope to use this meeting to listen to their suggestions and to build a strong foundation of cooperation for the year to come.

I am also working with Ms. Bae and other executive members to discuss possible policy proposals and budget alterations to better serve the SGPS and that of its membership. In particular, I would like to initiate discussions on the possibility of generating additional revenue to enhance our financial flexibility and subsequently our services. These preliminary discussions will be taking place in the Executive Board and Finance Committee meetings and will be brought before Council in the event that a particularly attractive idea does take shape. If Council members or any individuals within the membership have ideas or would like to help in implementing existing ideas, their input is strongly welcomed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amir Nosrat  
VP Finance and Services

At the April 23 session of Senate the Principal addressed the dire financial situation facing Queen's University in the years ahead. As we've been told, the monetary shortfall can be largely attributed to the significant drop in value of the University's endowment fund and stagnating government funding. While the federal and provincial governments have including post-secondary education spending in what has come to be known as a "stimulus package" much of this money is scheduled for infrastructure-related projects and cannot be spent at the discretion of individual institutions. The silver lining on an otherwise dark cloud is that during the 2009-10 academic year Queen's has received a \$1 million operating relief injection that must be spent during the course of that time. These funds are being targeted at a limited number of areas, such as library acquisitions (\$100,000), and the VP Academic, Patrick Deane, will vet all proposals for program spending. But this is the extent of optimism in Principal William's address.

In the next three years all academic and administrative units will experience a 15 percent budget cut (5 percent per year), with looming future deficits being reduced by decreasing spending. Sadly, the University's response to how an already cash-strapped operation can cope with deeper cutbacks is lackluster at best. The so-called "Web 2.0" information technologies have been identified as a means of dealing with expanding undergraduate and graduate enrollment, despite any concrete or a realistic comprehension of how these innovations can sustain a quality level of education in any capacity. But the most concerning element of the Principal's plan is a malicious identification of staff and faculty as chief culprits that are allegedly prohibiting a solution to financial problems, or rather Queen's inability to deal with shortfalls in a satisfactory way. In other words, Williams has accused the stalled discussions with faculty (read QUFA) and their unwillingness to undermine their negotiated settlement with the University as a leading factor in the pending financial crisis. As a result, Williams has threatened staff with layoffs in 2010-11 if an agreement – satisfactory in the eyes of the Board of Trustees – cannot be reached. Less is said about a number of other factors, such as: 1) QUFA's negotiated wage increases correspond to an expanding workload, 2) the various investment committees' poor financial choices, and 3) the obvious physical expansion that has proven to be financially onerous and unsustainable. While the University is keen on retiring staff and faculty positions and reigning in existing wages levels, less is said about whether or not upper-administrative positions will either be retired or wages reduced.

Other items of note include:

1. In Patrick Deane's "Interim Report on Tuition", it was noted that the provincial government will shortly issue a new student tuition framework, which currently regulates caps on increases.
2. Diane Kelly, the University's chief legal counsel, responded to the question asked by President Welsh about the power and authority of Deans, with respect to their capacity to make administrative decisions. The *Royal Charter* that governs Queen's is vague about this issue, as was Kelly, but simply recognizes that Deans make decisions *in consultation with faculty boards*, but may make economic decisions unilaterally when circumstance demands. This remains a concern, especially in the midst of cuts, since those who suffer from financial decisions should be involved with the decision making process. The Principal followed that we must all assume that consultation is collegial and in line with the "Queen's tradition".
3. Senator Radcliff (outgoing AMS President) attempted to present a motion from the floor challenging the Chair's ruling that individual committee nominees cannot be discussed on the floor. This was a result of an objection against a candidate positioned to sit on SONAD. The vote to overrule the Chair's decision was rejected 20 to 16 (I voted to overrule). The Nominating Committee's recommendation was approved.

The next Senate meeting will take place September 25, 2009.

As the Graduate Student Senator I intend to closely follow policies and goals developed by Council and the SGPS Executive in order to better represent the graduate student membership. In the past Senators have been rather distant from this level of decision-making, something I hope to overcome since it is imperative to expand participation in student government.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Stevens

#### Handbook

- The 2009 / 2010 SGPS Handbook has been submitted for printing. I was able to solicit a good number of ads, which will offset the cost of the handbook. I re-worked a lot of the text in the book and added a lot to the resources section of the book. We will have copies of this book, for new and returning students, in September.

#### Computer Network

- I am in the final testing stage of our network migration. I only have a few more accounts to add and test. I am still planning to move to the new mail server in May. The new file server is already in use.

#### Orientation Week Guide

- I am starting to work on the O-Guide for next year. If you have any feedback or suggestions for this year's guide, please get in contact with me.

#### SGPS Website

- I have been working on a number of upgrades to the SGPS website. Most of the work involves back-end code, which is not obvious to visitors of the site. The work I am doing allows easier and faster upgrades to the site. The work will also allow people to update the site who are not familiar with HTML code. Work on the SGPS website is ongoing.

#### SGPS and Student Advisor Booklets

- I am in the process of updating the booklets for the SGPS (general information) and Student Advisors. Any suggestions or feedback is welcome.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

### **Equity Coordinator**

A new Equity Coordinator, Lara Greisman, has been hired for the summer. If the position is successful, she'd like to continue her work through next year.

She plans on working on several projects:

- Pushing for human rights/internationalization training for faculty through SGS to deal with the high rate of intl. students facing supervisory difficulties
- Anti-oppression training for undergraduate students in residences through Student Affairs
- Planning a SGPS performers/activists series for the next academic year
- Creating a phonebook/directory/encyclopedia of all activist/social justice-oriented initiatives/groups/organization in Kingston and at Queen's

She will be reporting to Council through my reports so that Council can stay informed of the success of this new position.

### **SGS Equity Study**

The Graduate School will be looking at data related to graduate students and applicants as the first step in a process to determine if there are any equity-related issues that need addressing (e.g., under-represented populations within certain – or all – disciplines; funding discrepancies, time to completion discrepancies, etc). I hope to compile a report based on SGPS Student Advisor data on equity issues that the student advisors see on a daily basis. This report should either support data found by the Graduate School or point them in useful directions. This is especially important because a new "employment equity" report being compiled by the Equity Office does not include TAs, RAs, or grad students in general.

Respectfully submitted,  
Usman Mushtaq