



### **Graduate Student Funding Review**

The Graduate Student Funding Advisory Committee is continuing to meet. The direction of the School of Graduate Studies is to eliminate internal QGA funding from all degree programs except for MAs, MScs, and PhDs; to set departmental PhD funding as a fixed ratio of Master's funding (e.g., 1.7 times Master's QGA funding); and to equalize QGA funding levels across all graduate Divisions. However, there is no unanimity with the committee at this point. Feedback from Departments is desired. (Please see item 3 below if you'd like to be involved in these discussions about funding).

### **Graduate and Professional Student Housing**

Several initiatives related to the provision of graduate and professional student housing are being discussed with the University. Among them are: a residential Graduate College; redeveloping, building, or buying more studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments near campus; designating more residence housing for professional students; and developing more graduate family housing (apartments and/or townhouses). Questions and comments are welcomed.

### **School of Graduate Studies and Research—Division Representatives Needed**

Part of the School of Graduate Studies and Research Council consists of a graduate student representative from each of the five divisions within the school. The Council meets monthly for one to two hours discussing/voting on issues and policies concerning the school. Some examples include approval of requirement changes leading to a graduate degree in a certain department, approval of thesis requirements, approval of new courses and programs etc. The SGSR Council is now seeking a graduate student representative from each of the Division II to V. Interested individual please apply to the committee coordinator, Joellen Lin, at [committee@sgps.ca](mailto:committee@sgps.ca), with a few sentences commenting on why you are interested in the position. The SGPS Appointing Committee will start reviewing the application on Wednesday, November 12th, 2008.

Notes:

Divisions of the School of Graduate Studies and Research

Division I-- Life Sciences

Division II— Humanities

Division III— Engineering and Applied Sciences

Division IV— Mathematics and Physical Sciences

Division V— Social Sciences and Professional Schools

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<http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/pg33.html>



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Vice President Internal  
(Professional)  
November, 2008

After the resignation of Sean Tucker, Vice President Internal (Graduate), the SGPS advertised and received several applications for Vice President Internal (Graduate). The results of this committee will be discussed at the council meeting; due to time limitations the interview period occurred after this report was due.

The Professional Student Standing Committee has met again. We discussed several items, such as the Grad Club, the possible development of a ride board on the SGPS website, the striking of a Residence Sub-Committee, and various other items.

This past month I had the privilege of representing the SGPS as a judge at the Andrina McCulloch Public Speaking Competition. The participants were from a wide variety of programs within the university, and the competitors were very skilled and represented themselves very well.

This month a survey will be conducted of SGPS members regarding several aspects of the Grad Club and perhaps some other broader issues about academics, funding, and space. Please let me know if you have any questions you would like included in such a survey, I would appreciate your input by November 20, 2008.

This month, several members of the Executive completed an informal Executive Director Evaluation. Sean, having joined us fairly recently, has received positive reviews and we would like to note that for future reference.

I am still looking for more members to fill the Internal Affairs Committee of the SGPS, please contact me if you are interested.

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



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Mark Rosner - Vice President External  
November 2008

### **Provincial Day of Action**

Several Queen's students participated in the Day of Action. We took transportation to Ottawa and participated in the march with students from Ottawa U, Carleton, Cite Collegiale, and other schools. I also did a radio interview with a local station highlighting the goals of the campaign. While I think the campaign was worthwhile and productive, the disappointing turnout from Queen's leads me to think that different tactics are required to educate and mobilize Queen's students. If you have any ideas or suggestions on how to do this please contact me.

### **Academic Integrity**

The Senate policy on academic integrity in research has passed the subcommittee and has now moved on to the Senate committee where it will most likely be passed soon enough. The SGPS recommendations were for the most part not implemented – and are main points of concern were ignored. The other members of the sub-committee felt that these points of concern could be better addressed by a Senate policy on whistleblowers. Presently, there is no draft document of such a policy or any committee charged to investigate the issue or produce a draft. Nonetheless, I feel this is an issue of importance to graduate and professional students and should be pursued with vigour.

### **Queen's Housing Working Group**

The University produced a helpful battery of information on where graduate students live in proximity to campus (no breakdown on professional students was provided). Over 40% of graduate students live over 1.5 km from campus. This number increases significantly once the John Orr and An Clachan residences are included. If anyone would like a copy of this information please let me know.

### **Meeting On Transit Issues and Human Rights**

Attended meeting with other campus stakeholders (student, faculty and administration) to address a number of human rights issues that have arisen on Kingston transit. Discussions were had as to whether the University wanted to establish a common portal for complaints regarding Kingston transit and the best way to ensure that the city and transit system take issues of racism and discrimination seriously. No decisions were made and discussions are ongoing.

### **Queen's/City Housing Relations Committee**

The committee met a number of times. A survey conducted of Queen's students regarding housing issues was completed and the results will be distributed once they become public, in the near future. If you would like a copy of the report once it becomes public please contact me at [vpex@sgps.ca](mailto:vpex@sgps.ca)

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Rosner  
VP External



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

### **Operations and Finance Committee Activities**

The Operations and Finance Committee met for the first time for this year on Friday October 31<sup>st</sup>. We discussed the Operations portfolio and objectives of Committee this year and selected lead persons for various goals for Operations this year. Please join me in welcoming and thanking in advance Mohamed Al Guindy, Sam Hetz, Mark Hoidas, Marie-Lise Peter and Gareth Stackhouse as the new spear-headers of Operations projects this year. The Committee will meet on monthly basis to report on progresses and share thoughts.

### **Change to Health and Dental Fee Processing System**

Until this point, the University Registrar has been in charge of removing all fees for students except for the SGPS Health and Dental plan. This system was first employed in order to prevent membership from being left with no health and dental plan at any point of the year, but it has caused us many administrative issues of having to manually opt people out. It has been especially problematical for those who have already left Queen's (withdrawal, graduation and any other type of leave) to end up owing the significant fees to the University when the plan is no longer relevant to them. After much deliberation, the SGPS has decided to change the system so that the University Registrar can remove health and dental fee as well while removing all the other fees for students who are leaving Queen's. I and Sean Richards, the Executive Director, will work with the University Registrar to build a strong infrastructure for this shift and we are hopeful once the system is established, it will minimize the administrative burden on the SGPS exec and staff, as well as our membership.

### **Grants Program and SGPS Initiatives**

This year, the SGPS members have been exceptionally active in promoting various causes and organizing initiatives that are geared toward benefiting our membership and the broader University and City communities. Please stay tuned for the events and other activities organized by our fellow members.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vicky Bae



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the (Social Commissioner)  
November 2008

Hello Everyone,

I want to start off by thanking everyone for coming out to our Oktfest Event last month, it was a great success! We had 61 people turn up at the Amadeus Schnitzel Haus and the staff there was very helpful, we hope to organize more events there in the near future.

At the moment, the social team and I are working on a December Event, we have a few ideas in mind and I will let you know the final details at our next meeting. We are also working on a skiing trip for the New Year. Most likely it will be a day trip with tons of fun, so stay tuned!

I please encourage you to e-mail us at [social@sgps.ca](mailto:social@sgps.ca) with any social ideas you would like to see on or off campus for whatever occasion! We look forward to hearing from you.

Have a wonderful November,

Respectfully Submitted,

Diala Habib  
(Social Commissioner)

#### Council Orientation Guide

- I have worked with the Speaker to update the Council Orientation Guide. I modified the format so it fits better into our brand. I have also updated the information within the guide so it is up-to-date for this year. The guide is available from the Speaker at Council meetings and is also available on our website in the Council section.

#### E-Newsletter

- Last month I mentioned the possibility of putting ads in the E-Newsletter. I received no feedback on this topic, so I am assuming nobody has a problem with it. I am going to move forward with this initiative. I will put a proposal to Council before ads appear in any newsletter.

#### SGPS Computer Network

- I have submitted an application to the Coke Fund for a new mail server and a network backup server. I will have a motion for our next Council meeting asking for money to finish the necessary upgrades to our computer system.

#### SGPS Website

- I am investigating the possibility of integrating the health and dental opt-in forms on our website. This would replace the current paper opt-in system that we use.
- I am investigating the possibility of a fully online optional fee opt-out system. The electronic in-office opt-out worked very well this year so I would like to make this system available from our site so people do not have to come to the office to opt-out of optional fees next year.
- I am looking at the possibility of adding a section to our website that would facilitate offering/requesting rides to and from Kingston.
- Is there any interest from our members in adding a marketplace to our website?

Respectfully submitted,  
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Equity Commissioner  
November 2008

Nothing has really changed for my commission in the past couple of weeks, some key things to look for in the future are the initiatives that myself and others have started to collaborate on, such as responding to the Islamophobic, racist and homophobic incidences that have occurred on the campus over the past several months as well as the gendered violence speakers series that I am planning for next semester. Aside from that I am still attending the same committee meetings and there is very little to report on in those regards. Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions: [equityinternal@sgps.ca](mailto:equityinternal@sgps.ca)



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Committee Coordinator  
November 2008

### **SGPS Appointing Standing Committee**

We have started compiling the most up-to-date active membership list of each of the SGPS committees. In addition, we are also compiling a list of graduate student representatives serving on other university committees. These two lists will serve as our guest list for our up coming volunteers appreciation party, which is to be anticipated either at the end of November or beginning of December.

### **Other University Committees**

Queen's Accessibility Committee: Appointing Standing Committee nominated Sarah Ellen Kathleen Smith as the ex. Office member from SGPS. Sarah has accepted the position.

Search Committee (of Centre for Teaching and Learning): Shauna Shiels has resigned from the position. Angela Coderre has agreed to sit on the committee.

Senate Nominating Committee: I will be attending the first meeting of this year on November 7<sup>th</sup>. However, the main item on the agenda is to nominate three students to sit on the Orientation Activities Review Board for Orientation Week 2009. All 5 applicants are undergraduate students.

### School of Graduate Studies and Research Council:

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Respectfully Submitted,  
Joellen Lin  
Committee Coordinator



Society of Graduate and Professional Students  
Report of the Rector  
November 2008

*Senate Committee on Non-Academic Discipline (SONAD):* At our first meet, SONAD reviewed and accepted the AMS report on non-academic discipline cases seen in 2007-2008. This will be a less hectic year than last year was for SONAD (when the committee dealt with revisions of the Code of Conduct), but it should still be quite interesting as we review the committee's mandate and composition.

*Convocations:* Several hundred students, most of them from the School of Graduate Studies, graduated last Thursday and Friday, and honorary degrees were awarded to Hassina Sherjan, Kevin Lynch, Ed Clark and Ed Benson. Dr. David Dodge was formally installed as Chancellor ("just like a washing machine gets installed," to borrow his words). Dr. Sherjan, in particular, received a standing ovation from the assembly in Grant Hall. She spoke about her contributions towards providing education to Afghan women who were deprived of this opportunity during the regime of the Taliban received a standing ovation.

*Exams Sub-Committee of the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP):* We met this week and discussed provision of accommodations to students registered with HCDS during midterms (currently the Registrar's Office only administers computer accommodations during midterm season; instructors are responsible for any other accommodation). We also reviewed academic integrity and student behaviour related incidents during last April's exam period.

*Senate Committee on Academic Development (SCAD):* Jeff will probably talk more about this, but the committee met and approved a new graduate program (a joint MA in Economics and JD). We also discussed issues relating to governance of the School of Graduate Studies and Research (SGSR), which will be an ongoing discussion over the next couple of meetings. The review of SGSR governance has been underway for a few years now, and it looks to be concluded this year.

*Principal Search Committee:* The committee's work is well underway.

As always, I am eager to hear your thoughts, questions and comments via phone, email or a visit to my office.

Respectfully submitted,  
Leora Jackson ([rector@queensu.ca](mailto:rector@queensu.ca))