

Orientation

Our Social Committee has done a spectacular job organizing a number of events for Orientation Week. This includes, for the first time, a new Graduate Orientation with a resource fair and campus tours. As this event is new, we would appreciate any feedback you may have or receive from others.

Graduate Residence

Graduate Residence, atop the JDUC, is slated to be demolished next summer as part of the Queen's Centre project. Currently, there is no established plan to replace it. However, the University has agreed in principle to its replacement, and we are in the process of identifying possibilities for a new Graduate Residence.

SGPS Space

Due to the recent expansion in the number of SGPS commissioners and support staff, SGPS programming and services, and the overall growth in the graduate and professional student population, our current office space in the JDUC is no longer sufficient. As outlined in last year's Strategic Plan, our members have also indicated their desire for more defined Graduate Student social space on campus. Therefore, in conjunction with on-going negotiations over the redesigning of Queen's Centre Phases II and III, we are in the process of identifying a new, interim location for the SGPS until such time as the Queen's Centre is complete. As part of this process, we intend to establish an ad hoc SGPS Space Committee to provide input to the SGPS Executive. Interested SGPS Councilors are encouraged to join the Committee.

Sustainability Projects

In addition to our on-going efforts to adopt more environmentally friendly practices in the SGPS, we have established a new Sustainability Standing Committee. The Committee will: suggest better internal practices; work with the AMS and university sustainability officers to improve campus sustainability; and work with the AMS and the university to develop a system for funding student projects. Interested SGPS members should contact our Committee Coordinator, Joellen Lin, at committee@sgps.ca or our Executive Director, Sean Richards, at info@sgps.ca.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Welsh
President



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice-President Academic Affairs
September 2008

TA Consultative Committee

The TA Consultative Committee will meet in early October at which time committee members will discuss the results from a survey of TA employment practices across departments. In August, I expressed concern to the committee's chair, David Rappaport, about the mandate and role of the committee during the current TA and TF union organizing campaign. Specifically, I am concerned that any recommendations made by the TA Consultative Committee related to changing TA wages, TA terms of employment, and/or TA working conditions could be interpreted as promises/undue influence and thus possibly contrary to the Ontario Labour Relations Act.

Teaching Assistant and Teaching Fellow Survey

We have prepared a report summarizing the results of the recent TA/TF survey. You can find a copy of this report at <http://www.sgps.ca/events/downloads/TA-TF-Report.pdf>. All SGPS members are encouraged to read the report.

Student Advisor Program

In early September the Student Advisor Program hiring committee will review applications for one vacant student advisor position. We hope to hire for this position by the third week of September.

Sean Tucker
September 2, 2008

- ¶ I have concluded my unpaid leave of absence for the summer and I am back working with the SGPS. This report will briefly summarize some of the larger initiatives that I expect to undertake this month.
1. Human Resources: The SGPS is in need of reform to its human resources policies in order to continue on as a more effective organization. I will be focussing three main staffing areas: 1) the front desk staff, 2) the commissioners and coordinators, and 3) the executive. The purpose of this reporting will be to effectively highlight and minimize problem areas, ensure an effective transition for all positions, and to encourage policies which have worked in the past.
 2. Relationships with other student groups. I will working on strategies to improve relationships between the SGPS and other student societies that fall within our membership. The object of this is to ensure that our members are able to interact with other departments as well as to provide services to our membership.
 3. I will be sitting on the Graduate Club Committee in order to strengthen our relationship and to advocate for the wishes of our membership with regards to this club. If you have any suggestions, please forward them along to me, I would be happy to raise them on the agenda.
 4. Striking of the Professional Students Standing Committee- I will be looking for new members to sit on this committee so that we might bring forth issues of professional students in an effective manner.
 5. I will be assisting Jeff Welsh in the upcoming space discussions to speak of concerns regarding office space and residence space for our membership.
 6. Office Hours: I will be holding a regular set of office hours this fall, to be announced next week. In the meantime, please feel free to email me if there is anything you would like to discuss.

Please give our social team, our Executive Director, and our front desk staff congratulations, they have all been working very hard over the orientation week to help our members settle in at Queen's.

Thank you all, I look forward to being back and to the year ahead,

Jamie Kneen
Vice President Internal Affairs
vpip@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Vice President Campaigns & Community
Relations
September 2008

City / Queen's Housing Committees

The University has yet to form an official plan to respond to an idea floated by the City of instituting a system of rental licensing, but there are a number of problems that have been noted with such a system. Also, we have acquired information regarding city services and how to access those services for distribution during orientation.

Journal Board

All is well at J-Board – but I plan to bring up the issue of graduate content in the Journal. If you have any ideas on what that content should look like please let me know.

Provincial Day of Action

Planning continues – have met with OPIRG and others. Still soliciting support from external organizations and will request academic amnesty from University Senate for the Day (Nov. 5th). Also, if you are interested in participating in the campaign or the campaigns and community relations committee please contact me.

Changes to Provincial Mining Legislation

Attended the consultation hearings in Kingston surrounding changes to Mining Legislation. The CFS has formed a position on this issue which I think we ought to support as well. While the consultation process was a good idea in principle, concerns remain that the government will rush through changes to the legislation as well as ignore the numerous criticisms of the present bill which were voiced at the consultation hearings.

Ontario AGM in Markham

Attended the Ontario OGM at the beginning of last month. Notable issues discussed were changes to the Copyright Act, the Provincial Day of Action, the Activist Assembly at the end of September as well as recent challenges to Human Rights Commissions and the consequences of those challenges for students in the University Context. Please contact me if you would like to discuss any of these, or other issues, broached at the meeting.

Academic Integrity

Changes are being made to the University's Policy on Academic Integrity. If you have concerns over the status of whistleblowers or the proper attribution of research done by research assistants please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Rosner



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President Finance and
Services
September 2008

August has passed and Orientation week is here – welcome new and returning members of Council!

Budget

The annual operational budget for the year 2008-2009 is now complete. It passed the first reading in the last Council meeting and will be moved to second reading. Please see Appendix for the budget and a budget walkthrough. It will be revisited in January 2009.

Operations Standing Committee

Many of the Committee members will be leaving Queen's and the Committee in the month of September. If you are interested in joining the Committee, please contact Joellen Lin, our Committee Coordinator.

Other Business

I will now begin the discussion on revising policies and guidelines for various financial support programs at the SGPS with the Executive as well as the Operations and Finance Committee. I also plan to begin lobbying the various bodies of the University administration on issues that I feel are relevant to the financial rights of our members. Some of my priorities are lobbying for conference expenses and continuation and expansion of the dental bursaries. More will follow on these projects throughout this year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Bae
Vice President Finance and Services



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissionaire
September 2008

I hope everyone had a great summer. I do not have too much to update you on at the moment, however I do want to say my social committee and I have been working hard all summer to prepare for Orientation week. Everything is in order as we have some great events planned out starting Tuesday, September 2nd; we hope to see all of you out this week.

I want to thank my wonderful social committee for all their hard work in helping prepare for the next seven days. I also want to thank Sean Richards, the SGPS council and staff for all their support and guidance. We are anticipating a week jammed packed with lots of fun and entertainment. Be sure to come out and join us!

Respectfully submitted,

Diala Habib
Social Commissionaire

Orientation Guide

- I have received a lot of positive feedback about our Orientation Week Survival Guide. So far I have not received any constructive criticism. If anyone has any suggestions, I am very interested to hear your thoughts.

Council Guide

- I will be working with our new Speaker to update the Council Orientation Guide. Our plan is to have this document ready for the October meeting of Council.

SGPS Website

- I completely updated the health and dental section of the SGPS website. I tried to make the most important information obvious and easy to access. I added a section on travel insurance to inform our members about our travel insurance plan. I have a few more updates to complete to the health and dental section of the website.

E-Newsletter

- I made an effort to promote our E-Newsletter to various groups and organizations around campus in hopes that they would better use the newsletter to promote events to our members. A lot of new groups are interested in using the newsletter to communicate to our members. I continue to strive to improve the relevance of the newsletter and to include a large diversity of information for our members.

New Kind of Brochures

- Instead of updating our current General Information Brochure and Student Advisor Brochure, I decided to create booklets instead. I think the format of booklets is more professional and has better aesthetics as compared to 2-fold brochures. The general info booklet contains a brief overview of the SGPS and the services we provide. The Student Advisor booklet contains information about what the Advisors do and how they can help our members. Both of these booklets are available at our office. We are also using the booklets to promote the SGPS and Student Advisors at the various orientation events we have planned.

Important Dates

- Health and Dental Opt-In Period – September 1 until September 30, 2008
 - Done at the SGPS Office during regular office hours. Cash or cheque payments only.
 - Single opt-in for those students not automatically assessed the health and dental fee (all full time, on-campus students are automatically assessed).
 - Couple and Family opt-in.
- Health and Dental Opt-Out – Sept. 8 until September 19, 2008 (no exceptions)
 - This is done online via this URL: <http://www.studentplans.ca>
 - Only those students who have comparable coverage may opt-out
- Optional Fee Opt-Out – September 8 until September 19, 2008 (no exceptions)
 - This is done at the SGPS Office during regular office hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Equity Commissioner- Internal Report
September 2008

Much of what I have been working on over the past month is an extension from last month. I have continued to attend the meetings for the committees that I am apart of. I have however been dedicating a lot of my time to accessibility on campus, in the broad sense of the term. Specifically, I have had two meetings with City of Kingston employees to address the lights located at the corner of University and Union to see if they can be switched to beeping lights as well as discuss whether lights could be installed at the corner of Stuart and University for greater accessibility.

I have also worked this month on collaborative projects with the AMS' Social Issues Commissioner Kavita Bissoondial to bridge the gap between issues that are faced by undergraduate, graduate and professional students.

This month has also served as a month to do research for the collaborative project that Cheryl Sutherland, the equity commissioner-external, and myself will be working on for the upcoming year.

The Robert Sutherland committee, of which I am a committee member representing the SGPS, for the selection of the Robert Sutherland Visitorship 2008-2009 has received nominations and has been ranking the nominees in preparation for our next meeting.

In Solidarity,
Shauna Shiels



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Equity Commissioner-External
September 2008

Month of August:

- met with Carolyn, and Kavita (AMS) to further discussions about accessibility issues on campus. Will meet again end of Aug./beginning of September.
- (away for 2 weeks holiday)
- met with Jeff to discuss New Faculty Orientation day.
- Invited by Student Affairs and attended the "Leadership for Diversity" training workshop, conducted by the National Coalition Building Institute-Canada. This workshop consisted of two full days of training.
- received initial feedback from my department (Geography) ethics committee in regards to the Women's Campus Safety Fund project. Made revisions to my application and can now go ahead and submit the ethics application to GREB.
- connected with Karla Gouthro about the possibility of organizing events for graduate students at the Outreach Centre on Aberdeen St. We will pursue this discussion further in September.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Sutherland



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the (Committee Coordinator)
September 2008

SGPS Appointing Standing Committee

Start working on updating the SGPS Committee webpage on the SGPS website by introducing myself to various committee chairs and learning the current projects about the committees. During August, I focused on the SGPS Social Standing Committee, SGPS Campaigns and Community Relations Standing Committee, and SGPS International Student Standing Committee.

Queen's Day Care Board

I attended the 1st Board meeting of the 08-09 year. Due to under funding in some areas of the programs and facility, the Board is considering to be put on the optional opt-out list of SGPS Optional Fees. No decision has been made in that regard during the August meeting.

Since the Board meeting time is also on the second Tuesday of the month (starting at 6:30p.m.); before finding a volunteer to sit on the Board, I am considering the option of alternating between the Board meeting and the council meeting with exception of important motion and/or issue raised that needed to be address and discussed. This being said, Queen's Day Care Board is still seeking a graduate or professional student representative to sit on the Board.

Other University Committees

Queen's Accessibility Committee: Matthew Shuster's acceptance is confirmed.

Queen's University Food Committee: Cheryl Sutherland agreed to sit on the committee.

Cold Beverage Exclusivity Steering Committee: Jeff Welsh agreed to sit on the committee.

Search Committee (of Centre of Teaching and Learning): Shauna Shiels agreed to sit on the committee

Curriculum Committee of Faculty of Arts and Science: members of the SGPS Appointing Standing Committee nominated Sayema Rawof for the position (acceptance not confirmed).

Respectfully Submitted,

Joellen Lin
Committee Coordinator