



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the President
September 2009

Queen's Centre Opening

The opening of the new Phase 1 Queen's Centre building is delayed. It is not likely to open before late October. In the meantime, the PEC will remain open.

Queen's Centre Costs

The opening of new student facilities in the Queen's Centre will add to the shared costs of the JDUC (shared among the AMS, SGPS, and the University). Those costs have not yet been determined, but should be available soon. Decisions about the budget and governance structure of the Queen's Centre have yet to be finalized by the Queen's Centre Advisory Board, which has met only once to date.

Teaching Fellow (TF) Policies

The University's VP (Academic), Patrick Deane, announced at Senate in the Winter Term that the SGPS would represent TFs in discussions with his office regarding Teaching Fellows. The first order of business will be to collate and codify existing policies regarding Teaching Fellows at Queen's.

If you have questions or concerns regarding Teaching Fellow policies or terms and conditions of employment, please e-mail me at president@sgps.ca.

John Orr Tower Residents' Association

The tenants of John Orr Tower on West Campus, made up primarily of SGPS members and their partners, have established a Residents' Association and are in the process of organizing it. This will facilitate communication among tenants and between tenants and the university regarding matters of mutual concern. The Association's Communications Officer will communicate tenants' concerns to the SGPS, who will then advocate for our members with the university.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Welsh
President



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

Student Advisors Program

We are hiring two new student advisors this year. By the deadline of Friday, August 28th, SGPS office had received a total of 16 applications. The application package was forwarded to the members of Student Advisor Hiring Committee the following Monday for review. Approximately 6 to 8 candidates will be invited for interview between September 9 and 16th. We are very hopeful that two highly qualified student advisors will be hired, trained, and ready to serve our members by the end of September. In addition, student advisor Lisa Brinkly has expressed interest in staying on as student advisor this year. Her re-hiring interview will be conducted during the interview period stated above. I have no doubts on Lisa's ability in successfully completing the re-hiring process.

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. We are still in the process of scheduling suitable office hours for the coming academic year. The new office hours will be advertised in our E-Newsletter, our website, and on the door of the student advisor office. The student advisors can be reached at studentadvisors@sgps.ca.

Resignation

I regret to inform Council that my supervisor has been re-appointed to be the Dean of Science at the University of Windsor; consequently, my lab is moving to U of W during the month of September. As a result, I will be moving to Windsor, ON, in October 2009, as a visiting student from Queen's University, to finish my Ph.D. research at U of W. I request Council to accept my resignation as VP Graduate, effective October 1st, 2009.

Respectively Submitted,

Joellen Lin
Vice President Graduate
vpig@sgps.ca



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Vice President-Campaigns and
Community Affairs
August 2009

The Dog Days of Summer

Greetings once again fellow SGPS members. As like many of you I am sure, the last month has seemingly gone by in a blur. As such, this report will be enticingly short and to the point. Most of the work that has been going on with the office of the VP Campaigns and Community Affairs has focused on the development of the Housing Commission. Mid month a group of us met to form a sub-committee to draft a vision statement. Far from a “toothless” document, our task was and is to set in place the guiding principles and institutional focus of the Housing Authority. We are working diligently to not only foresee potential problems with the physical aspects of the purchase and maintenance of property, but to enshrine appropriate attitudes towards how and why the Authority shall be governed and operated. Succinctly put, we want to set in motion the appropriate methodologies which will ensure the Authority exists to benefit as many of our members and of the Kingston community as it can.

Other items of interest this month were the re-opening of meetings with the Queen’s/Kingston relations committee (of particular concern is campus/city safety-more to follow), and the decision to engage in the UHIP Campaign. Also, a great deal of time and effort by all members of the SGPS has been targeted towards orientation week, the results of which you will be witnessing in the coming weeks.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Osterberg

Budget:

The first reading of the 2009-2010 Budget has been passed in Council's August meeting and is subject to a second reading in September. Our final financial revenue and expenditures of the 2008-2009 fiscal year are currently being prepared and will hopefully be available by the October 2009 Council session.

SGPS/AMS Service Negotiation Agreement:

I have succeeded in assembling a negotiating team regarding our shared services with the AMS and have met with my counterpart, VP Operations Leslie Yunn, to discuss our interests in the agreement. It has been agreed that the first draft of the agreement is to be prepared in late September so that the negotiating teams would be able to reconvene in early October. It was generally agreed that there will be increased visibility and representation in shared services. Also, it was suggested that a new category of fees under the SGPS be introduced to allow for more flexibility in dealing with fee changes.

Housing Committee:

The Housing Committee ratified in Council's August session has been able to provide a bylaws draft and general policies guideline that are available for Councilors to review. We hope to establish a new Housing Authority somewhere between Council's September and October session and have a first reading of fund transfers and needed SGPS amendments in the October Council session.

Bursaries:

The SGPS Executive is looking at the possibility of augmenting and improving our bursaries and Grants. We are currently studying the possibility of introducing a new Maternity Bursary, Childcare Bursary, Conference Travel Bursary, and augmenting our existing bursaries by approximately \$15,000.

Dental Bursary:

I am currently in discussion with the VP Operations of the University to replenish our Dental Bursary on a regular basis. The Dental Bursary reserves currently stand at under \$5,000.

Financial Policy and Services Contingency Plan:

Review of the financial policy and services contingency plan is underway and proposed amendments will be brought before Council in a timely manner. The Finance and Services committee will reconvene in late September to finalize the issues.

Merging with the Grad Club:

President Welsh and I have introduced the idea of merging the SGPS and Grad Club together. A more detailed proposal is currently being prepared to be brought before Council and the Grad Club Board of Directors.

Phonecards:

I have begun investigating the possibility of the sale of inexpensive international phone cards to the membership at the SGPS front desk. A more detailed proposition will be brought before Council in a timely manner.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amir Hossein Nosrat
VP Finance and Services



Society of Graduate and Professional Students
Report of the Social Commissioner
September 2009

Hello All,

This week is Orientation/Welcome back week! We hope to see all of our staff, executives and fellow graduate students out at the events!!!

Feel free to register online at <http://www.sgps.ca/orientation/registration.html> OR come into the SGPS office and register in person!

Orientation Events for 2009

11:00 – 2:00 pm “Welcome back Lunch and Information Fair” (SGS, SGPS, SA)

Be sure to head to the Biosciences Complex for a delicious lunch to go and an opportunity to talk to many people at Queen’s including student career services and our very own Principal. Several services at Queen’s will have booths set up with lots of information. There will also be several senior graduate students present to answer your questions. Campus tours are also available!

6:30 – 10:00 pm 1000 Islands Evening Boat Cruise (\$15/person)

Come out to the exclusive SGPS cruise! Be at the pier ready to board between 6:15 and 6:30. The cruise will give you an excellent tour around the Kingston area and will provide great scenery while you meet other members of the SGPS. Guests are welcome. Delicious appetizers will be served during the cruise. This is a popular event each year! **Family Friendly, Registration Required. *Let us know if you require a babysitter, we will be happy to help you find one.**

Wednesday, September 9th, 2009

1:00 – 4:00 pm Sports Day

Join us for an afternoon of exciting activities! Pick on of the following:

1. Beach volleyball at the Mansion (FREE, patio bar will be available)
2. Rock Climbing at the Boiler Room (\$10/adult, \$5/child, climbing shoes will be provided) * Children’s permission forms are required and will be available at the SGPS office
3. Field day sports (FREE)-Ultimate Frisbee or soccer baseball

Meet at the Union St. entrance of the JDUC and don’t forget to bring proper shoes, clothing and water! **Registration Required**

7:00 – 10:00 pm Speed Meeting at the Grizzly Grill (\$10/person)

Come out to meet other graduate students in a speed meeting fashion that is similar to speed dating minus the romantic agenda. This event has been a huge

success in the past. Appetizers and a free drink of your choice will be provided. We hope you will join us! **Registration Required**

Thursday, September 10th, 2009

8:30-3:30 Registration: New students photo ID student card pick up

Head down to BEWS Gym in the Physical Education Center to register! Last names starting with A-M will be registered between 8:30 – 12:00 pm, letters N-Z will be registered from 12:00 – 3:30 pm.

6:00 – 8:00 pm Haunted Walk (\$6/person)

The famous Kingston haunted walk tours will be departing from the Courthouse at 6:00 and will end at the Grad Club. Be sure to come inside the Grad Club after your walk and enjoy a fabulous night of trivia with free food! **Registration Required**

9:00 – 11:00 pm Trivia Night at the Grad Club (FREE)

Come and join us for a night of fun trivia! Win fabulous prizes and enjoy some free food!

Friday, September 4th, 2009

8:30 – 4:30 pm TA Training Day

Head to Bioscience complex room 1101 for registration at 8:30. The Opening Plenary is at 9:00. The day includes keynote plenary talks followed by concurrent sessions. Free lunch and refreshments provided. Registration through CTL required, see SGPS website for details.

9:00 – 5:00 pm Sidewalk Sale

Come down to University Avenue and see all the vendors and student groups. This event attracts over 10, 000 shoppers every year from both the student body and the Kingston community!

6:00 – 10:00 pm Semi-Formal Dinner “Waterfront Soirée” (\$25/person)

Come out and join us for a fabulous dinner on the water at the Confederation Place Hotel in downtown Kingston. We will be offering a delicious buffet, a glass of wine at dinner, as well as a cash bar. See SGPS website for food selection details. After dinner, we'll be heading over to the Grizzly Grill for a fun night of dancing. We look forward to seeing you there! **Registration Required *Let us know if you require a babysitter, we will be happy to help you find one.**

Saturday, September 12th, 2009.

10:00 - 12 pm QUIC Family Information Day. Venue: International Centre, JDUC

This will be a great opportunity for international students with families to network, find out information on health care, schooling for the kids and how your partners can find work in Canada while you are studying. Please bring your family with you! Activities for children and adults are planned.

11:00 am Corn Maze (\$10/adult, \$5/child)

A must try experience for anyone living in Kingston! The trip also includes a hayride from the ferry to the corn maze and a delicious BBQ lunch with dessert (can be taken to go). Meet at the Wolfe Island ferry clock (Ontario and Barrack St) at 11:00. The ferry leaves at 11:30, don't be late! **Family Friendly, Registration Required**

5:00-8:00 pm Bowling Night (\$10/adult, \$5/child)

Be sure to come out and join us for a fun night of bowling at Cloverleaf lanes. Bring your kids, family and friends along. Pizza and non-alcoholic beverages will be served for dinner.

Family Friendly, Registration Required

8:30 pm Grad Club Mixer (FREE)

Come out to the Grad Club to win some prizes and a for night of fun with your fellow graduate students. DJ will be playing great music so be sure to join us! Everyone is welcome!

Sunday, September 13th, 2009.

11:00 – 2:00 pm Picnic at City Park (\$5/adult, Kids are FREE)

Meet us at City Park, near the children's playground for a family afternoon of fun! This will also be a great opportunity for families to meet other families! An assortment of Subway sandwiches will be provided along with non-alcoholic beverages, fruit and snacks. Be sure to bring all other materials needed for picnic. Some sports equipment will be provided. **Family Friendly, Registration Required.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Diala Habib
Social Commissioner

SGPS Computer Network

- We have updated one of the computers in our office. We still need to get more computer hardware for the office. It's not in our budget to do everything at once, so we are replacing items slowly but surely.

SGPS Website

- I am working to incorporate some new things into the SGPS website. I'll report more on these changes in my next report to Council.

E-Newsletter

- I am working to finalize details regarding ads in the E-Newsletters. Putting ads in the newsletter will give us the opportunity generate some extra revenue to put towards the SGPS operating budget. If you have any comments or concerns, please let me know.

Communications

- The dayplanner/agenda for the 2009/2010 academic year has been completed. Copies of the dayplanner are available for pickup at the SGPS Office.
- The Welcome Week Guide for 2009/2010 has been completed. I have received a lot of positive feedback. If you have any suggestions for next year, please let me know.
- There are still some spots available for Orientation Week events. You can sign up on the SGPS website: <http://www.sgps.ca/orientation/registration.html>
- I have been working on the optional fee opt-out system. Last year, the system worked well. I have adapted the system for our needs for the coming opt-out period.
- I will be working to move our bursary applications online. Members will be able to complete the entire application process via the internet. Hopefully this will be ready before next term.
- I have prepared the SGPS poster boards for orientation events. We'll have the boards at various places, including the SGPS/SGS/SA orientation event at BioSci.
- I have updated our general information brochure and distributed it campus-wide. On a side note, the colour laser printer has reduced our printing price from over \$1 per double-sided colour page to under \$0.08.
- The student activity fee document has been updated for the 2009/2010 academic year and has been posted on the SGPS website: <http://www.sgps.ca/info/fees.html>
- I prepared a welcome to document for the ESS students. <http://www.sgps.ca/ess/>
- I have been working to promote SGPS Orientation talks to all member departments /schools/faculties. The SGPS would like the opportunity to speak to students during orientation week. We would appreciate it if you could check with your coordinator to ensure we have scheduled a time to speak (we only need 5 minutes).

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Richards - info@sgps.ca

Social Resources Handbook

The Equity Coordinator has been working on a social resources handbook for students pointing out resources on and off campus especially for students from historically marginalized groups. We hope to be passing these handbooks out during orientation week and at places like the Human Rights Office.

Islamic History Month

The SGPS will be co-sponsoring Islamic History Month in Kingston. There will be academic speakers coming to talk about various topics related to Islam in October among other events. This will be a chance for the SGPS to connect with the Muslim community on and off campus.

Abdelrazik Talk

Abousfian Abdelrazik was, according to documents released by the Department of Foreign Affairs, jailed on the recommendation of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) while on a visit to Sudan. He was finally allowed to come back to Canada after years of alleged torture and abuse. Now he is attempting to clear his name from the UN 1267 list. He will be coming to Kingston on October 5 to speak about his experiences and SGPS along with the AKA Social Centre will be sponsoring the event.

Student/Advisor Conflict Dispute Resolution

The SGPS Student Advisors have noted that the lack of clearness and standardization among departments of student/advisor dispute resolution procedure is problematic. Although there is a dispute resolution officer here at the University, many students are not directed to that office nor are they aware of its existence until Student Advisors direct them there. It is my hope to push SGSR to clear and standardize the resolution procedures among departments and to advertise the dispute resolution officer as a possible solution to grad student/supervisor difficulties.

Queerorientation

The SGPS will be co-sponsoring an event during Queerorientation week with EQUIP. As part of our plan to support and attract Queer grad students, we will be co-sponsoring a BBQ at the Grad Club on September 17 from 5:30 to 8:30pm.

QUIC International Family Orientation

The SGPS is co-sponsoring a session oriented towards international students with families on September 12 from 9.30am to 11.30am. The even will be an opportunity to get information on the topics of: children's educational services, accessing the health care system and learning more about employment in Canada.

Respectfully Submitted,
Usman Mushtaq

There is not much to report since our last Council meeting. School is beginning again and I will be attending some Orientation events in my capacity as Rector as well as other University committee meetings. The advisory committee to the Principal on the appointment of a new VP Advancement will be meeting next week, and I will also be attending a planning committee meeting for a dedication celebration of the newly named Robert Sutherland Hall, to be held in early October.

I thought that I would use the text of this report to provide you with some information about my Rector responsibilities, as it may be the first Council meeting for some, and I may have always just been “that girl who doesn’t vote at Council” for others. I was elected by students to serve as Rector and third officer of the University in March 2008. The aspects of the role are threefold:

1. Representative of and advocate for students – I am a member of the Board of Trustees (and three Board committees), and I also sit on a number of University committees, including hiring panels for administrators. I am also serving as Chair of the Senate Committee on Non-Academic Discipline. In addition to these roles, I sit as an ex-officio non-voting member of several student government bodies, including SGPS Council and AMS Assembly. On all of these committees, it is my role to represent and advocate on behalf of Queen’s students. I do not belong to any particular student government but can serve as a bridge between them.
2. Resource for students – My office is in the JDUC, room 142. Students can stop by to ask questions about where to go, how to find things, what services are provided where and by whom, and how to file grievances or work through appeal processes. While I don’t have all the answers, I can nearly always refer you to the right place
3. Ceremonial responsibilities – I attend lots of alumni events and dinners as a representative of Queen’s, and I also preside at Convocation ceremonies along with the Principal and the Chancellor.

In addition to these responsibilities, I participate in other events and sometimes co-sponsor events or pursue initiatives together with other groups.

I am always happy to answer any questions you might have about my role or any of the topics in my report. My email is rector@queensu.ca and phone is 613-533-2733.

Respectfully submitted,

Leora Jackson

Report of the Trustee to SGPS Council

September 8, 2009

New Principal

Daniel Woolf has taken over for Tom Williams, whose term ended August 30. The Board of Trustees approved Dr. Woolf's nomination earlier this year and he has had the benefit of spending the summer months at Queen's to get settled and ease the transition. Principal Woolf sent an email last Tuesday to all members of the Queen's community in which he outlined some of his goals for the next five years and I recommend that students look at it. Of particular note to graduate students is the Academic Plan that Principal Woolf will be working on with Deans, Vice-Principals and Department Heads over the next few months. Hopefully we will have opportunities to hear more about this through our respective schools and departments, but as representatives, don't be afraid to raise issues at SGPS Council if they are important enough to be brought to Senate, the Board or the Principal directly.

University financial situation

Queen's received some significant funding over the summer from government and benefactors for a number of projects, including the Performing Arts Centre. These are good signs, but the University will continue to face financial challenges over the next few years as it pays for its recent major projects like the Queen's Centre and as the economy is still recovering. The University will be looking for ways to keep operating costs down without adversely affecting quality. I recommend that Council continue to evaluate student priorities for this year in light of the difficult financial situation. Principal Woolf has said that he wants to hear students' concerns, so I think we will at least have a friendly ear even if we can't get everything we want.

New University Protocol for fee disputes when constituent groups secede from AMS or SGPS

Earlier this year, a dispute arose between the AMS and the SGPS regarding payment of ESS student fees following the ESS's secession from the AMS to join the SGPS. Vice-Principal Deane mediated the discussions between the different groups but it took some time to reach an agreement. As a result, the Board had to delay approval of student fee payment schemes by a few months. Vice-Principal Deane is working on a protocol that all groups can agree to so that similar disputes can be avoided or resolved more efficiently in the future.

Governance Structure Review

Queen's has a very old governance structure consisting roughly of the Board of Trustees, Senate, and University Council. At the annual meeting in May, several councillors expressed concerns that University Council's role needed to be better defined so that it could play a more meaningful role in governance matters. David Pattenden (Board of Trustees) was asked to form a committee to examine Queen's current governance structure with a view to reforms over the long term. I look forward to hearing more about this at the next Board meeting in October.

My contact information

If you have any questions or concerns regarding issues at the Board level, please contact me at alfonso.nocilla@gmail.com.

In addition, meeting dates, agendas and minutes of the Board of Trustees can be found at <http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/trustees/>.

Alfonso Nocilla

Graduate and Professional Student Trustee