

SGPS Elections

Please take note of the following dates. The elections are a very important time of year for the SGPS and all the members. Your vote is very important. You are not just electing the next executive, but are also voting on fees that will be paid by students next year. Please take a few minutes and cast your vote!!

February 25th, 2008 – All-candidates debate at the Grad Club – 5:00 p.m.

February 27th and 28th, 2008 – ELECTION DAYS

Polling Station Locations:

- Botterell Hall
- Biosciences Atrium
- Mac-Corry,
- MacDonald Hall
- West Campus - Education Grad Lounge
- JDUC - Lower Ceilidh

Poll Clerks

The Chief Returning Officer is looking for poll clerks to help with the SGPS election. The work involves sitting at a polling station and facilitating the casting of votes by SGPS members. Between voters you are permitted to watch movies, read a book, do your work, etc. Pay is \$10 per hour. Please contact the CRO if you are interested (cro@sgps.ca). This is a great way to help the SGPS and make a little spending money!!

VP External meets with the MPP

The VP External recently met with local MPP Mr. John Gerretsen on behalf of graduate and professional students at Queen's to raise awareness of the society's work as well as outline some of the important issues currently facing both graduate and professional students. The agenda included such items as the realities and effects of expanding graduate enrollment and programs, the impact of the commercialization of research, as well as the current health insurance challenges facing international students. We spoke at length about the impact of these items on students within our membership and how the minister and provincial government can affect change. We left Mr. Gerretsen with informational materials as well as a report produced by members of our standing committees. Mr. Gerretsen expressed interest in hearing further about the graduate and professional experience at Queen's and bringing our issues forward for discussion amongst his cabinet colleagues in Toronto. He expressed particular concern for the decrease in quality of graduate programs as a potential result of graduate expansion initiatives as well as current trends in faculty student ratios, and the lack of full-time professor hiring. We look forward to a continued dialogue with Mr. Gerretsen as well as his help in communicating our concerns at the provincial level.

Student Advisor MOA

Dear Graduate and Professional Students

The Society of Graduate and Professional Students has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) pertaining to the administration of the Student Advisor program with the School of Graduate Studies and Research. The MOA provides long-term, predictable funding for the program, and preserves the independence of the program from other university bodies.

Student Advisors are trained in conflict resolution and equity issues, and confidentiality is guaranteed. If you are in need of advice or representation with regards to academic or non-academic matters, or would like to learn more about the resources available to the graduate and professional students, both within Queen's or the Kingston community, do not hesitate to contact the student advisors at studentadvisors@sgps.ca. For more information about the program or the MOA, contact Arash Farzam-Kia at president@sgps.ca.

Rector

Dear SGPS community,

The current Rector, Johsa Manzanilla, is stepping down from her post after serving the traditional two of her three-year term. **The elected Rector position is now open to all graduate and undergraduate students within the University.** The SGPS strongly encourages Graduate and Professional students to run for this position, which is the Third Officer within the University after the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor/Principal. As you will see from the description of the role of Rector, this position requires someone who is knowledgeable about graduate and undergraduate issues. Graduate and professional students are in the position to serve both student bodies as they have experienced both systems of education, and historically graduate students have held the position of Rector.

Role of Rector

The Rector serves as the representative of all undergraduate and graduate students of Queen's University to the university in matters pertaining to education at Queen's. The Rector acts to support and mentor student representation and to enhance the broader learning environment. Serving on university governing bodies, including the Board of Trustees and Senate, and on numerous committees, the Rector voices student concerns and promotes educational excellence. The Rector also acts as an advisor to and advocate for students in grievance procedures. As well, the Rector promotes scholarly dialogue amongst students - notably through public speaker forums on topical issues. Additionally, the role involves many ceremonial functions, including convocations and conferring of awards.

The application procedure

There is no application process for the Rector position. The Rector is elected by all students, both graduate and undergraduate. Nomination period is now open. Nomination packages may be picked up from the SGPS Office and require 675 signatures to be completed by the end of the nomination period on February 27th.

Important dates

Feb 1th – Nomination period starts

Feb 27th – Nomination period ends, all candidates meeting that evening

Feb 28th – AMS Assembly and validation day

Feb 29th – Campaigning begins

March 9th – Campaigning closes

March 10th – Voting Day 1

March 11th – Voting Day 2

March 13th – First new assembly – new Rector as well

Additional information

For more information, please visit the Rector website at <http://www.queensu.ca/rector>.

Additional questions can be directed to the SGPS at info@sgps.ca or Johsa Manzanilla, Rector, at rector@queensu.ca.

SGPS Council Highlights

Here is a summary of the February 12th 2008 SGPS Council meeting.

The meeting began with several presentations from groups hoping to have questions approved by Council to appear on the ballot of the upcoming SGPS referendum. There was also a presentation by Peter West-Oram, the VP Operations, regarding the SGPS audit and revised budget.

As usual, various reports were presented, and these, along with the meeting agenda and previous meetings' minutes, can be found online at www.sgps.ca/council/documents.html.

The majority of motions dealt with approval of questions for the referendum ballot. All were passed unanimously. The revised budget and auditor's report were approved, as was the resignation of the antiThesis editors.

The next SGPS Council meeting will be held on March 11th, 2008 in the McLaughlin Room of the JDUC. Please feel free to attend.

The SGPS Annual General Meeting (AGM) is being held on March 25th, 2008 in the McLaughlin Room of the JDUC. At this meeting, several important issues are dealt with, and all SGPS members have a vote. Please plan to attend. If you can't be there, you are entitled to a proxy vote. Please contact speaker@sgps.ca for more information.

SGPS Formal

Joy Supper Club has been book for an exclusive SGPS Formal Event on Thursday, April 3rd 2008. There are a lot more details to come! If you have any theme ideas for this formal, please send them to the Social Commissioner (social@sgps.ca). We would love to hear your ideas so **please** take a moment to e-mail if you have any ideas at all.