

Society of Graduate Students January 26, 2006 Council Meeting

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SOCIETY OF GRADUATE STUDENTS COUNCIL MEETING

January 26, 2006

AGENDA

- 1) Ratification of Agenda
- 2) Announcements
- 3) Faculty of Graduate Studies Representative
- 4) Reception and Ratification of the SOGS Council Minutes for the November Meeting
- 5) Orders of the Day
 - a. Motions arising from the President
 - b. Motions arising from Other Committees
 - c. Other Motions
- 6) Elections
 - a. VP Student Services
 - b. Commissioner for Students with Disabilities
- 7) Executive/Committee/Councillor Reports
 - a. President / BoG, Senate, Bylaws and Constitution, Policy
 - b. VP Academic / Academic Committee, Graduate Student Teaching Awards, WJGR
 - c. VP External / Graduate Student Issues Committee, Equity Issues and Social Justice, CFS, Disabilities
 - d. VP Finance / Finance, Grad Club
 - e. VP Student Services / International Students' Issues, Orientation, Health Plan
 - f. Councillor Reports
- 8) New Business/Open Forum

Orders of the Day

a) **Motions Arising from the President**

b) **Motions Arising from Other Committees**

BIRT SOGS hold a referendum, to determine whether the Society should supports the construction of the Fieldhouse Recreation Centre, which would commit graduate students to an ancillary fee of \$60 a year (with an annual inflation increase of 3%) for the next 30 years.

c) **Other Motions**

SOGS Council Attendance Report November 24, 2005

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Anatomy & Cell Biology	Jay Maxwell	6:15	7:10	no signature
Anthropology	Christine Suck	6:00		no signature
Anthropology	Vacant			
Applied Mathematics	Olga Krakowska	6:00		no signature
Applied Mathematics	Andriy Miransky	6:00	7:00	
Biochemistry	Steven Beasley	6:00		
Biochemistry	Bobby Porteous			Alt. H. Ma
Biochemistry	Kelly Weedmark	6:00		Alt. M. O'Carroll
Biology	Shilpi Goel	6:00		
Biology	Michelle Marcus	6:00		
Biology	Lovesna Sivanantharajah	6:00		
Biomedical Engineering	Kiersten Anas	6:00		
Biomedical Engineering	Vacant			
Board of Governors	Graydon Raymer			
CFS Liaison	Aaron Keeler			
Chemistry	Mark Kuprowski	6:00		
Chemistry	Simone Lam			
Chemistry	Andrew Leduc	6:00		
Chemistry	Andrea Walette	6:00		
Classical Studies	Kate Sisk	6:00	6:30	Alt: J. Richardson (6-6:30)
Comp. Literature	Vacant			
Comp. Literature	Vacant			
Computer Science	Chun Li			
Computer Science	Mohammad Rahman			
Computer Science	Vacant			
Computer Science	Vacant			
Computer Science	Vacant			
CSD	Julia Colangeli	6:00		
CSD	Jennifer Randev	6:00		
CSD	Gina Shin			
Disabilities Commissioner	Vacant			
Earth Sciences	Rebecca MacDonald	6:00		
Earth Sciences	Ian Power			
Economics	Zafrul Siddique			
Economics	Josh Svatek	6:00		
Education	Claudine Bonner	6:10		
Education	Anne Escrader			
Education	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Rajeeb Gautam			

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Engineering Science	Duane Jacques	6:00		
Engineering Science	Kamal Ranaweera	6:00		
Engineering Science	Rango Rodrigo			
Engineering Science	Ervin Sejdic			
Engineering Science	Erik Webber			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
English	Elan Paulson			
English	Vacant			
English	Vacant			
Epidemiology & Biostats	Liat Habinski	6:00		
Epidemiology & Biostats	Sean McIntyre	6:00		
Executive - Grad Club	Marc Lalonde			
Executive - President	Patti Dalton	6:00		
Executive - Speaker	Rebecca Feldman	6:00		
Executive - VP Academic	Vacant			
Executive - VP External	Kamilla Pietrzyk	6:00		
Executive - VP Finance	Jason Cakriglu			
Executive - VP Student Services	Ben Hedley			
Family Medicine	Vacant			
French	Kimberley Bruno	6:00		Alt: C. Sivaraj
French	Christine Knapp	6:00		
Geography	Stephen Carlyle			
Geography	Dan Sandink	6:00		
GTA Union	Elana Geller	6:00		
Hispanic Studies	Vacant			
History	Rollen Lee	6:00		
History	Catherine Rose	6:00		
History	Alex Stubbs			
Journalism	Catherine Moorehead	6:15		
Journalism	Alexandra Slaby	6:15		
Kinesiology	Carly Adams	6:00		
Kinesiology	Natalie Szudy	6:00		Alt: C. Avramidis

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Kinesiology	Melissa Wiman	6:00		
L&IS-M	Rachel Chan	6:00		
L&IS-M	Melissa Fraser	6:00		Alt. G. Boldt
L&IS-M	Patrick Gamsby	6:00		
L&IS-M	Marta Kupiec			
L&IS-M	Mark MacDonnell	6:00		
L&IS-M	Ryan Madden	6:00	7:00	
L&IS-PhD	Vacant			
Law	Mi Shen			
Mathematics	Dwayne Smith			
Media Studies	Zenia Kish	6:00		
Medical Biophysics	Janet Hendry			
Medical Biophysics	Andrea McNiven			
Medical Biophysics	Jodi Miller			
Medical Biophysics	Matthew Murphy			
Microbiology & Immunology	Kemi Adeyanju			
Microbiology & Immunology	Fred Beasley	6:00		
Microbiology & Immunology	Jason Lehrer			
Music	Brian Arens	6:00		
Music	Vacant			
Music	Vacant			
Neuroscience	Brendan Chapman	6:00		
Neuroscience	Adrian Snihur			
Nursing	Shelley Holland			
Nursing	Lisa Kraw			
Occupational Therapy	Carly Charach			
Occupational Therapy	Heather Gander			
Occupational Therapy	Sara Ann Nicolai	6:00		
Occupational Therapy	Marcy Wood	6:00		
Orthodontics	Vacant			
Pathology	Katie Moisse	6:00	7:10	
Philosophy	Sean Keith			
Philosophy	Jenny Noland	6:00		
Philosophy	Nicholas Ray			
Physical Therapy	Erinn Freeman			
Physical Therapy	Michael Koonar	6:15		
Physical Therapy	Emily Pellegrino			
Physical Therapy	Vacant			
Physics & Astronomy	Vacant			
Physics & Astronomy	Vacant			
Physics & Astronomy	Vacant			
Physiology and Pharm.	James Elsley	6:00		
Physiology and Pharm.	Janet Manias			

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Physiology and Pharm.	Vacant			
Physiology and Pharm.	Vacant			
Physiology and Pharm.	Vacant			
Political Science	Eric Johanssen	6:00		
Political Science	Jason Thistlethwaite	6:00	7:05	
Psychology	Caroline Abu-Ayyash	6:35		
Psychology	Melissa Grigg	6:00		
Psychology	Corey Isaacs			
Psychology	Christopher O'Connor	6:00		
Public Administration	Vacant			
Rehabilitation Sciences	Karla Washington	6:00		
Senate	Naqaa Abbas			
Senate	David Cribbs			
Senate	Jane Morpew			
Senate	Kai Peters			
Sociology	Paul Bakker			
Sociology	Ayesha Williams			
Spanish	Vacant			
Stats & Actuarial Sciences	Vacant			
Theory & Criticism	Kieran Aarons	6:00		Alt. D. Collins
Theory & Criticism	Marten McCallum			
Visual Arts	Leanne Carroll	6:00		

SOGS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 24, 2005

6:10 – 7:10 p.m.

Social Science Centre Room 3028

Speaker: Rebecca Feldman

Ratification of Agenda

- Moved: S. Beasley (Biochemistry)
- Seconded: R. Madden (MLIS)
- Carried

Announcements

- Feldman welcomed all Councillors to the SOGS November Council Meeting. She extended a special welcome to new Councillors and introduced herself as Speaker.
- Quorum for the 2005-2006 year is 30.
- Light refreshments were served.
- This was the last Council meeting for 2005. The next meeting will be January 26th, the room will be confirmed and posted on the SOGS website.
- For those interested in applying for the Joint Sponsorship subsidy, the form on the website requires the complete Acrobat package in order to complete. There will be a Word document added to the site in the next week or so for those who do not have the needed software.
- Winter bus passes will be available around the middle of December. Please check the website for exact date and let your peers know.
- Raquel Rodrigues, our Accounting Manager, is away on medical leave. Although Olga will attempt to get answers to your financial questions, they may not come as quickly as when Raquel is in the office. On that note, the department grant cheques for the summer will be combined with the fall grants and cheques will (hopefully) be available at the January meeting. Notification (and cheques) to successful OSOTF, Out of Province and Grad Club bursary recipients will be out before the Christmas break (hopefully).
- The SOGS office will be closed from noon December 23 – January 8 inclusive.
- The SOGS Staff and Executive wish all Councillors a safe and restful holiday season.
- A reminder was made, that if councillors leave the meeting prior to it being adjourned, they must sign out on the Attendance Sheet. Name tags should be left in the folders at the front. If Councillors leave once the meeting has been adjourned there is no need to sign out.

Faculty of Graduate Studies Representative

- There was no FGS representative.

Reception and Ratification of September 29, 2005 SOGS Council Meeting Minutes

There no changes.

Moved: Wallett (Chemistry)
Seconded: Jacques (Engineering)
Carried

Orders of the Day

- Motions arising from the President:** None
- Motions from other Committees:** None
- Other Motions:** None

Elections

VP Academic:

Duane Jacques was the only candidate. He introduced himself and talked about his vision for the WGRJ.

MOTION: BIRT the Society of Graduate Students acclaims Duane Jacques as the VP Academic for the 2005-2006 term.

Moved: Beasley (Biochemistry)

Seconded: Dalton (President)

Yes: 41

No: 0

Abstained: 1 (Madden – noted)

VP Student Services:

Katie Woods made it known that she would be interested in running for this position; however, she was not present at this time. A motion was made to move this election to the end of the agenda if the candidate is present.

Moved: C. Suck (Anthropology)

Seconded: R. Lee (History)

Carried

Other elections:

Disabilities Commissioner - there were no candidates

Executive/Committee/Councillor Reports

President:

- Dalton presented her reported.
- She thanked Pietrzyk for her extensive work on the tuition freeze campaign. As well she thanked Sauer and Michael King for his assistance during Raquel's absence.
- **Wiman (Kinesiology):** What is being done about the TA and teaching situation? – (A) Dalton has found that there is a great discrepancy among departments. She has been in discussion with Anthony Church (Kinesiology), as well as with Francis Bauer for advice. Dalton hopes to have a survey to collect more data about graduate student concerns.
- **Kuprowski (Chemistry):** What is the other side of the tuition freeze issue? Why has Brian Dunn (USC President) objected to the referendum? – (A) Dunn has said that fees should be increased according to the cost of living in order to keep the university competitive.
- **Anas (Biomedical Engineering):** Has anything else been done to retain legal council for the graduate students who were affected by the SIN leak? – (A) Dalton has talked to a graduate student in law who has assured her that there is no strong basis for either an individual or class action suit.

VP External & Communications:

- Pietrzyk reported the on how the voting on the tuition freeze referendum took place and the results.
- **Kuprowski (Chemistry):** Was the referendum information without bias? – (A) Pietrzyk doesn't feel there was a bias.

VP Finance:

- Cakiroglu reported that the Food Drive is on at both the Grad Club and the SOGS office.
- Food will be donated to the University food bank.
- The Grad Club will be closed from December 24 – January 2, and will reopen on the 3rd.

VP Student Services:

- Hedley was unable to attend the meeting, but submitted his final report for consideration.

New Business/Open Forum

MOTION: BIRT SOGS ratifies the results of the tuition fees plebiscite.

Moved: K. Pietrzyk

Seconded: R. Madden (MLIS)

Motivation:

The referendum has generated lots of discussion, which is a positive outcome in itself. By ratifying the results, the referendum will be seen as having more influence. Dalton served as a scrutineer.

- **Kuprowski (Chemistry):** How accurate are the results, given that there might have been a bias? – (Dalton) even if there was a bias, the numbers overwhelmingly show that students are for a tuition freeze.
- Friendly amendment to read:
BIRT SOGS recognizes the results of the voluntary tuition fees plebiscite.
Discussion of the validity of results ensued.
Moved: K. Pietrzyk
Seconded: F. Beasley (Microbiology & Immunology)
Yes: 40
No: 5
Abstained: 4 (MacDonnell – noted)
Carried

Election – VP Student Services – no candidates present.

Adjournment

Moved: M. Kuprowski (Chemistry)
Seconded: E. Johansen (Political Science)

- The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm (those who left early will not be counted for department grants).

SOGS EXECUTIVE MEETING
November 14, 2005 12:30 – 2:30 pm
MINUTES

Present: President, Patti Dalton;
VP External, Kamilla Pietrzyk;
VP Finance, Jason Cakiroglu;
VP Student Services, Ben Hedley (conference call)
Office Manager, Olga Sauer

Regrets: Raquel Rodrigues

Recording Secretary: Olga Sauer

1. Ratification of Minutes – Minutes for October 17, 2005 were ratified.

2. Update from President, Patti Dalton

- Dalton continues to work with students who are concerned with the SIN situation.
- Dalton will serve on the search committee for a new Ombudsperson. Francis Bauer, after many years at UWO, will be retiring in April.
- Dalton will be attending the Strategic Planning Committee meeting this week.
- Dalton feels that graduate students are in a good position with regard to Administration because of their desire to stress that UWO is the best experience for graduate students. In the first round table there was considerable concern expressed about problems with supervisors. Although there are some policies and procedures, they are not being followed. This will need continued work and follow-up.
- The Unity Group meets regularly. Dalton plans to bring up the 10 hour rule at a separate meeting with faculty union reps.
- Dalton will look into the inequitable funding between Category I and II students.
- Dalton met with Marty England. He is trying to expand certain services for graduate students which will include providing employment services. He is also looking into accommodations for students with disabilities.
- Provincial money is expected soon. Fifty new faculty members have already been hired. Student-Faculty ratio should go down soon. Dalton feels that administration is sincere about making improvements for graduate students. Federally there are more fellowships for graduate students, but there is still work needed in improving the student loans situation.
- Dalton expressed her thanks for Pietrzyk's hard work in organizing the tuition referendum.

3. Update from Vice President Academic

- Hoffman resigned after the last executive meeting. There is some interest in this position.

4. Update from Vice President External, Kamilla Pietrzyk

- Pietrzyk reported that she is busy working on the organization of the tuition forum tomorrow at 3 pm in the McKellar Room as well as the awareness even on the concrete beach from 11 am - 3 pm. Greener, Empey, a graduate student and undergraduate student will be speaking at the forum with a follow-up question period. On Wednesday and Thursday of this week, there will be tuition freeze referendum held in various locations from 10-4 pm. There will be a ballot tally party Thursday night, and Friday if needed. Pietrzyk and Dalton will act as scrutineers. Cakiroglu may be available to count ballots.
- Pietrzyk said that Katie Wood is interested in the VP Student Services position. She should be presenting a statement for the council package.

5. Update from Vice President Finance, Jason Cakiroglu

- Cakiroglu is working on a number of Grad Club activities.
- He is still waiting for the cheque from the Faculty Association for faculty memberships.
- The Finance Committee will be scheduled to meet this month. A meeting with Lalonde is scheduled for Tuesday.
- The computers in the Grad Club still need to be hooked up to the printer.

6. Update from Vice President Student Services, Ben Hedley

- Hedley reported he is finishing off his report and will have it ready for the Council Package on Thursday.

7. Miscellaneous

- Sauer reported that the USC offices will be closed from December 22 to January 8 inclusive. She will keep the SOGS office open until noon on the 23rd to ensure students can get bus passes. Council members will be made aware of this and it will be posted on the SOGS website.
- Rodrigues is away on medical leave. She will let us know how her health is progressing.

Meeting Adjourned - 2:30 p.m.

SOGS EXECUTIVE MEETING
December 7, 2005 1:00 – 3:00 pm
MINUTES

Present: President, Patti Dalton
VP Academic, Duane Jacques
VP External, Kamilla Pietrzyk
VP Finance, Jason Cakiroglu
Accounting Manager, Raquel Rodrigues
Office Manager, Olga Sauer

Invited: Grad Club Manager, Marc Lalonde

Recording Secretary: Olga Sauer

1. Ratification of Minutes – Minutes for November 14, 2005 were ratified.

2. Update from Grad Club Manager, Marc Lalonde

- Lalonde informed the Executive that he had met with Cakiroglu and King to look over the financial situation for the first quarter. Everything seems to be on the right track.
- Christmas parties are being heavily booked and good feedback is being received.
- The Grad Club will be closed from December 24 to January 2. They will reopen on January 3 and that week the hours of operation will be 8 am – 7 pm. Regular hours will resume on the January 9.
- Raising the stage will cost more than anticipated, so it has been put on hold for the moment. Tables will be refinished during the closure using in house staff.
- There will be a Santa Brunch buffet on December 18 from 11-2 pm (children \$6.95; adults \$12.95).
- The Christmas party for the SOGS executive and staff and the Grad Club staff will be on December 18 from 4-6. Significant others are invited to attend. Refreshments will be provided by suppliers.
- The Stuck in London lunch will be held on December 25 from 1 – 2:30. It is intended for those graduate students who are alone in London on that day. There will be no charge for the meal, but students are asked to bring non-perishable foods as a donation.
- Lalonde is still waiting for the website to be activated. If Cakiroglu can't get it up and running over the holidays, then we will look into hiring a grad student to complete the task.
- In January Lalonde will be holding a reception for Conference Services and hopes the Executive will be able to attend. Conference Services are looking at sending business to the Grad Club for 50 people or less.
- The art pieces are being enjoyed by most. Management has the right to take down any inappropriate art.

3. Update from President, Patti Dalton

- Dalton thanked Lalonde for his efforts in getting the Grad Club into a sound financial position.
- Dalton welcomed back Rodrigues who has been away on medical leave and is currently working reduced hours. She also thanked Sauer and King for helping out during Rodrigues' absence.
- Dalton handed out a report from the joint committee regarding part time students. She asked that the Executive read it over and give Patti feedback by early January. The report, written by Dr. Vandervoort points out the differences between the different departments.
- Dalton and Pietrzyk will host the second round table meeting Thursday at 4 pm. They hope to give input to the Strategic Planning Task Force with information that comes from these meetings. Some areas of concern include: thesis supervision, and TA workload issues.
- Dalton reported that it seems like Dr. Kreiswirth is avoiding a meeting with SOGS. The next time there is a meeting, Dalton would like as many of the Executives to attend as possible. We are still unable to have access to graduate student emails.

- Dalton informed the Executive that the USC will be conducting a referendum in the new year to increase student fees for a new recreation centre. Concern was expressed that graduate students should not have to pay for an increase in fees, since fees are already paid to the UCC and to the Thompson Recreation & Athletic Centre. Dalton will bring up this concern in her meeting with Kulczycki and Grindrod.
- Dalton asked if there was any interest in having SOGS organize an all candidate debate on post secondary issues. Pietrzyk and Jacques will look into this and the possibility of getting one or more of the party leaders here in January.

4. Update from Vice President Academic, Duane Jacques

- Jacques reported that he met with Raymer and feels quite comfortable with the role. He plans to send out an email in the near future to recruit members to the Academic Committee.
- He will be organizing a meeting of the GSTA Awards committee.
- The Joint Sponsorship fund is experiencing some difficulties. Originally the purpose of this fund was to give money for conference type ventures on campus. In exceptional cases, money might be allocated to individual travel. However, departments are now suggesting their students apply for travel through this fund. When looking into this further, it was discovered that in the past departments were given a dedicated amount to travel; now they are given a single amount of money which is to cover everything, stipends, travel, etc. Departments that didn't do this are now scrambling for travel funds. It was our understanding that money was only to be allocated to conferences organized on campus and not to individual travel. This will have to be looked into more carefully for the next budget.

5. Update from Vice President External, Kamilla Pietrzyk

- Pietrzyk attended a Regional Social Forum meeting. There will be a social event to launch the start of planning for the even in January. She hopes many grad students will participate.
- Over Christmas she will be planning the February day of action and the all candidate debate.
- Pietrzyk mentioned that the USC has tabled a motion to sensor all future referendum. This was not well received and was taken away to be reworded. This would present a problem for SOGS when trying to use the UCC for referendum such as the one which just took place, where the USC and graduate students are not on the same page.

6. Update from Vice President Finance, Jason Cakiroglu

- Cakiroglu reported that outstanding tabs (from 1998) are difficult to recoup. Rodrigues has sent out invoices to those accounts that have been found. The majority of those have come back as having been paid. It is unclear to which accounts the received money was allocated.
- Starting in January 2006, no more tabs are allowed in the Grad Club. Credit cards will have to be used if a tab is to be run. Rodrigues is finding out whether we can use speed codes to aid with internal billings.
- Lalonde has expressed concern about whether he is covered by the SOGS liability policy. As a UWO employee, he should be covered by the University. This will need to be looked into.
- The money in the ATM machine will be lowered in the New Year. The ATM machine was vandalized recently. It is hard to find the necessary parts because it is an old type of machine.

7. Miscellaneous

- Sauer reported that the bus passes should be ready for distribution starting on December 12. Notices will be emailed to Councillors and Grad Secretaries. She requests that all Executives sign up for assisting in the distribution of the passes and reminds everyone that she will not be here on January 10.
- Sauer has researched the cost of a new camera for ISIC pictures. The cost is quite expensive for a new Polaroid type camera. She proposed that a digital camera be used and a new printer be purchased. The printer she has in mind will produce four pictures suitable for ISIC cards. These pictures could be sold for

\$1.00 and in this manner, the cost of the new printer would be recouped and students would have three extra pictures. The cost of the printer is \$250 and supplies (for 100 pictures) will cost about \$40.00.

MOTION:

BIRT SOGS purchases a new photo printer to issue ISIC card pictures to a maximum cost of \$300.

Moved: Dalton

Seconded: Pietrzyk

Carried

- Sauer feels that someone in the office should be trained to handle computer hardware and software problems. She is prepared to donate her time if SOGS will pay for the courses.

MOTION:

BIRT SOGS pays for the Office Manager to attend two PC Support courses at Fanshawe College to a maximum of \$700.

Moved: Dalton

Seconded: Jacques

Carried

Meeting Adjourned - 2:30 p.m.

VP Student Services Election Statements

Councillors

This letter indicates my intent to run for the position of vice-president student services. I am a PhD student in the psychology department. Over the course of my graduate studies I have been involved with SOGS in many ways. I was a SOGS councillor for two years during my master's studies and for the first years of my PhD studies. I have been a member of the SOGS Bylaws and Constitution, Policy, Graduate Student Issues, and Orientation Committees. I have also been a member of SOGS hiring and ad-hoc funding committees, and the chair of the graduate student issues committee. I am familiar with the vice-president student services portfolio and the operations of SOGS, and have a good understanding of the issues that are currently important to graduate students.

Thank you for your consideration,
Liz Kelly

Dear Council,

This is a notification of my intent to run for VP Student Affairs. My commitment to and interest in student government has been longstanding. As an undergraduate at Western I served the Western student body as Communications Officer for the University Students' Council. Under my leadership fell the Westernizer, the undergraduate student handbook, the USC website, and internal and external communications among other responsibilities.

My involvement in the Western community as a whole has equipped me with the experience and knowledge needed to manage the VP Student Services portfolio. As the Assistant Marketing Coordinator for Western Foot Patrol and a Peer Mentor with the Center for New Students I have become intimately familiar with the University governance, programs, and functioning.

Beyond the Western community I believe the experience I have gained and relationships I have created in the London community will be to the benefit of all our members. As a member of the London Chamber of Commerce I have been a long time advocate of supporting students on a municipal and provincial level. Furthermore, my employment with marketing agencies and publication companies has prepared me for the responsibilities of the VP Student Services Portfolio – most notably the handbook and the website.

In summary, I believe I can make a difference as VP Student Services and contribute to increasing awareness about SOGS, our services and programs.

Sincerely,

Kadie Ward

Commissioner for Graduate Students with Disabilities Statement

My name is Melissa Fraser and I am a Masters of Library and Information Science student. I would like to serve the graduate community at Western by becoming the Commissioner for Graduate Students with Disabilities because of an experience that I went through this past semester. On November 2nd I was hit by a car at Wonderland Road North at Sarnia. I was very fortunate as I only suffered from bruising, some muscular injuries, and a broken foot as a result of this accident, but being stuck in a cast for 10 weeks as a result of that broke opened my eyes to some of the challenges that students with disabilities must face everyday on campus. I would like to use my experience to help those with permanent disabilities and those who are temporarily inconvenienced by either an accident or a medical condition here at Western. If you grant me this position I have two projects that I hope to bring immediately. The first is to ensure that accurate and current information is available for graduate students who want to know the policies of their graduate department. The second is to undertake an unofficial survey of the Western student population either through a newspaper article or through email to assess opinion on the existing services for students with disabilities.



President
January 2006 Report to Council
Patti Dalton (sogs.president@uwo.ca)
<<http://www.uwo.ca/sogs/>>

1. Federal Election

Councillors are urged to consider the Canadian Federation of Students' ranking of party platforms for the federal election. The CFS report card provides an overview and analysis of the postsecondary education platforms of the major national parties. Their evaluation of focused on the parties' proposals for federal funding, tuition fees, student financial assistance, research and development, and overall vision for the federal government's role in supporting Canada's postsecondary education system. The New Democratic Party was ranked A-, the Liberal Party posted a B- and the Conservative Party was failed.

Congratulations to the GTA/PSAC organization of a successful all candidates' debate. As well, Steve Maynard, a UWO student, has acquitted himself extremely effectively as the London North Centre candidate. Graduate and undergraduate UWO students have been prominent during the federal election campaigns in London. This speaks to the overall importance of the student movement here.

No matter which Party takes government, I will continue to advocate and to work in unity with other organizations to ensure graduate students' issues and concerns are addressed.

2. December Roundtable Meeting

Thank you to all graduate students who have participated in the roundtable meetings thus far. Everyone is welcome to provide their input and perspectives. A primary topic for discussion has been the working conditions and lack of fair and consistent policy with respect to the so called ten hour rule. Some key issues cited:

- a. TA overtime work under the collective agreement is supposed to be compensated
- b. TAs have been told to alter documentation if over 140 hours total have been completed
- c. No clear policy regarding allocation/assignments for TAs and uneven privileges being granted
- d. Hiring of 'graders' who are paid less than TAs
- e. TAs teaching sessionals.

Another area of concern has been the thesis supervision process. Difficulties have been observed in terms of accountability of supervisors and lack of clear policy and procedures in the event of difficulties. Due to the influence and power of faculty members, these problems for graduate students are highly sensitive. Further feedback about this issue is appreciated.

3. Part time Graduate Student Review Committee

The final report will be submitted to the Dean of FGS for consideration. Key points from the report include:

- a. recognition of the diversity of programs and graduate student needs
- b. difficulties specific to part time students such as lack of funding which is only available to full time students; no merit based scholarships to recognize the scholarly achievements of part time students; the scheduling of graduate seminars and other academic activities i.e. during the day time only; many programs do not offer a part time option and thus are exclusionary; current FGS documents and policies clearly promote full time Doctoral programs while tending to ignore part time issues; University planning and exit surveys seem to largely ignore the presence and contribution of part time students; part time students are discounted in government calculations of funding for universities
- c. FGS is urged to view requests for changing the status of full time students to part time registration with more flexibility. The FGS office is currently perceived by some students, supervisors and

- graduate chairs as being too focused on the concept that maintaining continuous, full time student enrolment will promote timely degree completion
- d. Tuition fee structures do not address the number of courses taken in a given term (or not taken) nor the student's progression through the program. Further, there is no adjustment for graduate students who are in the post residency stage and completing a thesis

4. Proposed Student Recreation Centre

The SOGS President and the VP Finance attended a meeting with Gitta Kulczycki and Susan Grindrod regarding this proposal. The administration has stated that this centre would not result in increased ancillary fees for graduate students and that it will be a 'replacement fee' since a previous ancillary fee will be expiring in spring of 2006. We are not convinced that this is the case. Jason will endeavor to ascertain all the relevant numbers; we will have discussion at council; and members will have an opportunity for input through a planned on line referendum.

5. I recommended to the Executive that the provisions for SOGS employee sick leave, holidays and compassionate leave need to be reviewed; there was agreement that these provisions do not suffice as currently stated in the personnel policy. Please contact Olga if you are interested in serving on the personnel policy committee.
6. The Executive will meet with President Davenport and the FGS Dean on February 2. We continue to press for the ability to mass email all our members. Please speak with or email any of the executive members with issues/concerns you consider to important.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Dalton



Vice President Academic
January 2006 Report to Council
Duane Jacques (sogs.academic@uwo.ca)
<<http://www.uwo.ca/sogs/>>

Dear Councilors,

I hope all of you had an enjoyable holiday break. For my first report to council I'd like to address the following:

- 1) I am pleased to report that there was significant participation in the nominations for GSTA awards. As of the deadline (December 7, 2005) for nominations for fall term courses, 514 nominations were submitted. Nominations for full term courses remain open and nominations for winter term courses are now open. I'd like to thank the GSTA Committee and former VP Academic, Graydon Raymer, for their hard work in setting up the nomination process for this year.
- 2) The Western Research Forum has been scheduled for April 3rd, 4th, 10th, and 11th from 1-5pm. The presentations will be held in the Conference room facility in the Grad Club. The conference room proved to be an excellent venue last year. Advertising for this event will begin within the week and details will be included regarding the process for submission of Abstracts.
- 3) The Joint Fund for Graduate Research and Dissemination has recently approved funding support for two more events that are of benefit to UWO graduate students. The Visual Arts "How Soon is Now?" conference has been awarded \$700 and the Philosophy of Mind, Language and Cognitive Science conference has been awarded \$300. There is still approximately \$4000 remaining in the fund for this year. If any SOGS members are organizing research based events, they are encouraged to apply for grants from this fund

Duane Jacques
VP Academic



**Vice President External and Communication
January 2006 Report to Council
Kamilla Pietrzyk (sogs.external@uwo.ca)
<<http://www.uwo.ca/sogs/>>**

Dear Councillors,

I hope you've all had a joyful and restful holiday! Now it's time to get back to work, and for me, that means political organizing.

First of all, as you know, I have been involved with helping to coordinate the Regional Social Forum, which will take place this summer. Last year's premiere Forum attracted many segments of the Western academic community, including graduate students. Any graduate student with an interest in contemporary social, economic, or political issues would find the Forum a highly informative event – not to mention that all the workshops and activities take place in a fabulous, camp-like setting of Scouts Canada Grounds, just a few minutes from Masonville mall! As one participant put it, it's a great “outdoors university”.

The RSF organizing committee is planning to have a Launch Party to engage the wider London community – that includes Western students! -- on February 2nd. Details have not yet been finalized, but posters will soon appear around town and on campus, so watch out for those, and hopefully we'll see you at the party! There will be some short and fun presentations on last year's forum, not to mention yummy organic snacks!

Apart from the Forum, I will attend the Canadian Federation of Students semi-annual assembly from January 26 to 29th. As such, I will miss this month's council meeting, for which I apologize. I will return armed with many fresh insights into student issues, and will thus be able to better fulfill my position as VP External for SOGS.

Last but not least, it's election time in just a few short days, and there are educational materials from CFS in the SOGS office that you are all welcome to distribute to your constituents. These materials aim to inform students about the various parties' stance on post-secondary education (funding!), and generally strive to inspire youth to just come out and vote (which I hope all of you will find the time to do!).

See you all next month!

Cheers,

Kamilla Pietrzyk



Vice President Finance
January 2006 Report to Council
Jason Cakiroglu (sogs.finance@uwo.ca)
<<http://www.uwo.ca/sogs/>>

Hope everyone had a fantastic holiday break!!

A big thanks to everyone who contributed to the holiday food drive! It was a great success as we raised over 6 medium size boxes of food. The USC food bank has extended a great thanks to SOGS for supporting the university food drive.

The Grad Club had a successful holiday season, with positive profits the month of December. Christmas at the Grad Club was well received as nearly 100 people attended the buffet, with gifts in abundance given out by St. Lalonde. Many party organizers were most impressed with the fine food & service offered during the holiday season, as bookings for next year's holiday season are already underway. Our hats are off to Marc Lalonde and Mark Brigham for delivering many excellent holiday events to all our customers.

The Grad Committee will be meeting on Wednesday February 6th at 10am. The past year budget will be reviewed, and a draft of the 2006-2007 budget will be assessed. Anyone interested in joining the Grad Club committee should contact the SOGS office: sogs@uwo.ca.

Fieldhouse Recreation Centre Update

The USC is spearheading the construction of the new "Fieldhouse" Recreation Centre to open in 2008, which is proposed to be an awesome replacement of the current recreation centre in the UCC. The new centre will cost 33.9 million for initial phase one of the building construction. The University has agreed to pay 10.2 million dollars towards the new centre, with the remaining 23.7 million to be funded by students.

The current "UCC expansion fund" ancillary fee of \$65.49 (annual) will expire in 2007, as well as the expiry of the UCC expansion mortgage fee of \$15.83 in 2007, and finally the expiry of the UCC lower floor renovation fee of \$19.36 in 2008. Should graduate students agree to support the new recreation centre, a fee of \$60 a year (with an annual increase due to inflation of 3%) will be added to ancillary fees for 30 years. Should graduate students not support the new Fieldhouse Recreation Centre, then the possibility of a "pay as you go" option may be provided. In short, if the majority of grad students refuse to support the recreation centre, then those wishing to use the facility will have to pay a much greater premium for its use.

This recreation centre will contain 6 gyms, fitness and weight areas, a 50 meter pool, some multi purpose space, two classrooms and offices and will be connected to the Thompson Recreation Arena Centre which will contain the current rink and running track.

A Summary of Postsecondary Education Positions taken by the Major Federal Parties During the 2006 Election Campaign – from The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

Liberals

In last November's economic and fiscal update, the Liberals announced a \$1 billion trust fund to improve and modernize infrastructure at postsecondary institutions & committed \$2.75 billion over five years to improve student financial assistance. \$550 million of the \$2.75 billion will be used to expand the Canada Access Grant for low income Canadians for four years of study. Part of the \$2.75 billion will be used to lower interest rates on student loans in consultation with the provinces and students. The November update also proposed to invest \$150 million over five years to improve access to international education.

Proposed funding for indirect costs of research will rise to \$510 million per year. A new 50/50 Plan under which the federal government will pay for half of an undergraduate's tuition in their first and graduating years

costing \$600 million a year once fully implemented. In 2005, \$ 500 million was committed for Aboriginal postsecondary education.

In and Fiscal Update, the Liberals committed an additional \$210 million over the next five years to support a 50-per-cent increase in the number of Canada Graduate Scholarships. Furthermore, the Liberals committed to increase the annual budgets of the granting councils by \$85 million, starting in 2006–07.

Conservatives

The Conservatives propose to create an independent Canada Education and Training Transfer. The transfer will be funded at a base level and increased annually according to inflation and demographic growth. Furthermore, Conservatives propose to continue to fund the indirect costs of research, and would look forward to discussing an increase in funding.

A tax credit of up to \$500 to help cover the costs of textbooks will be issued. Conservatives will be working cooperatively with the provinces to increase family income thresholds for student loan eligibility and provide an exemption for the first \$10,000 of student scholarship or bursary income from taxation. The Conservatives will continue to fund research through the granting councils and will work toward improving the percentage of GDP invested in research and development at Canada's Universities.

NDP

The NDP propose to create a separate transfer for higher education and restore over \$4 billion in postsecondary funding from cuts made in 1990's. They are committed to an increase in funding for research, but made no specific commitments on indirect costs. NDP propose to improve student financial aid by investing in a long term financial grants program & overhaul the Canada Student Loans Program to improve accessibility and reduce student debt.

They are committed to a long term federal grant system that includes special grants for underrepresented groups, especially Aboriginal youth. The NDP will work with the provinces and territories to ensure stable, long term funding to build the infrastructure necessary to educate 25 percent more graduate students over the next four years. The NDP are committed to an increase in funding for university research. The NDP state they are committed to innovation and investment in all areas of education including improvements in infrastructure funding.

The Bloc

The fiscal imbalance is the major issue & with more tax points to the provinces, the Bloc believes they could adequately fund postsecondary education. The Canada Social Transfer should be increased over the next four years to an additional \$4.7 billion a year by year four, but they have no plans for a dedicated transfer for PSE. The Bloc states that monies the Federal government wishes to spend on student aid should go directly to the provinces, as they are the experts in this area.

Graduate students are an area of provincial jurisdiction and the Bloc believe that any federal funding for graduate students should be given directly to the provinces. The Bloc believes the best way to fund university research and research infrastructure is through transfers to the provinces.

For more information, please refer to http://www.aucc.ca/election/election_campaign/index_e.html.

Hope everyone enjoys the rest of this unusually warm winter!

-Jason Cakiroglu



**Society of Graduate Students
Alternate Councillor/Proxy Form**

The purpose of this form is:

Alternate Councillor Designation

or

Proxy Designation

First and last names of Issuer (please print)

Student No.

Department, unit, or constituency of Issuer

E-mail address of Issuer

Duration of leave (dates)

Only applicable to Alternate Councillors

Alternate Councillor/Proxy Voter

First and last name (please print)

Student No.

Department, unit, or constituency (for verification purposes of Alternate Councillors)

E-mail address

Authorization

Signature of Issuer

Signature of Recipient

Date

RECEIVED (FOR OFFICE USE ONLY)

**Please return completed form to the SOGS office before the next meeting of Council.
Room 260, University Community Centre • Fax: (519) 661-3374**