

Society of Graduate Students February 23, 2006 Council Meeting

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SOCIETY OF GRADUATE STUDENTS COUNCIL MEETING

February 23, 2006

AGENDA

- 1) Ratification of Agenda
- 2) Faculty of Graduate Studies Representative - Drs. M. Kreiswirth and T. Vandervoort
- 3) Announcements
- 4) Reception and Ratification of the SOGS Council Minutes for the January Meeting
- 5) Orders of the Day
 - a. Motions arising from the President
 - b. Motions arising from Other Committees
 - c. Other Motions
- 6) Elections
 - a. CFS Liaison
 - b. Part-time Student Representative
- 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**

Health Plan Committee

BIRT SOGS add occupational therapy coverage (80% of cost refunded, to a maximum of \$500 annually) to the Green Shield Health Plan for the 2006-2007 academic year at the rate of \$0.60/term (\$1.80 per annum) for full time members and \$0.80/term (\$2.40 per annum) for part-time members. (Information in Appendix A)

c) **Other Motions**

SOGS Council Attendance Report January 26, 2006

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Anatomy & Cell Biology	Jay Maxwell	6:00	7:20	
Anthropology	Christine Suck	6:00		
Anthropology	Vacant			
Applied Mathematics	Olga Krakowska	6:00		
Applied Mathematics	Andriy Miransky	6:00		
Biochemistry	Steven Beasley	6:00		
Biochemistry	Bobby Porteous	6:00	8:00	Not counted for grant
Biochemistry	Kelly Weedmark			
Biology	Shilpi Goel	6:00		
Biology	Michelle Marcus	6:00		
Biology	Lovesna Sivanantharajah	6:00	7:20	
Biomedical Engineering	Kiersten Anas			
Biomedical Engineering	Vacant			
Board of Governors	Graydon Raymer			
CFS Liaison	Aaron Keeler			
Chemistry	Mark Kuprowski			
Chemistry	Simone Lam			
Chemistry	Andrew Leduc			
Chemistry	Andrea Walette			
Classical Studies	Kate Sisk	6:00		
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	6:00		
Disabilities Commissioner	Vacant			
Earth Sciences	Rebecca MacDonald	6:00		
Earth Sciences	Kebbie Hughes	6:00		
Economics	Zafrul Siddique			
Economics	Josh Svatek			
Education	Claudine Bonner			
Education	Anne Escrader			
Engineering Science	Vacant			
Education	Vacant			

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Engineering Science	Rajeeb Gautam			
Engineering Science	Kamal Ranaweera			
Engineering Science	Rango Rodrigo			
Engineering Science	Ervin Sejdic	6:00		
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			
Engineering Science	Erik Webber			
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	Duane Jacques	6:00		
Executive - VP External	Kamilla Pietrzyk			
Executive - VP Finance	Jason Cakriglu	6:00		
Executive - VP Student Services	Vacant			
Family Medicine	Vacant			
French	Kimberley Bruno	6:00		
French	Christine Knapp	6:00		
Geography	Stephen Carlyle	6:00		
Geography	Dan Sandink	6:00		
GTA Union	Elana Geller			
Hispanic Studies	Vacant			
History	Rollen Lee	6:00		
History	Catherine Rose	6:00	7:20	
History	Alex Stubbs	6:00	7:10	
Journalism	Catherine Moorehead			
Journalism	Alexandra Slaby			
Kinesiology	Carly Adams	6:00		
Kinesiology	Natalie Szudy	6:00		Alt. L. Fitzgeorge

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Kinesiology	Melissa Wiman	6:00		Alt. H. Hanson
L&IS-M	Rachel Chan	6:00		
L&IS-M	Melissa Fraser	6:00		
L&IS-M	Alex Karlovski	6:00		
L&IS-M	Shannon McAlorum	6:00		
L&IS-M	Carrie Sherlock	6:00		
L&IS-M	Christina Winter	6:00		
L&IS-PhD	Vacant			
Law	Mi Shen			
Mathematics	Dwayne Smith			
Media Studies	Zenia Kish	6:00		
Medical Biophysics	Janet Hendry			
Medical Biophysics	Andrea McNiven	6:00	7:20	Alt. M. Oliver
Medical Biophysics	Jodi Miller	6:00	7:20	
Medical Biophysics	Matthew Murphy			
Microbiology & Immunology	Kemi Adeyanju	6:00		Alt. K. Mohib
Microbiology & Immunology	Fred Beasley	6:00	7:15	
Microbiology & Immunology	Jason Lehrer			
Music	Brian Arens	6:00		
Music	Anne Boyden	6:00		
Music	Anita Hardeman			
Neuroscience	Brendan Chapman	6:00		
Neuroscience	Adrian Snihur			
Nursing	Shelley Holland			
Nursing	Lisa Kraw			
Occupational Therapy	Carly Charach	6:00		
Occupational Therapy	Heather Gander			
Occupational Therapy	Sara Ann Nicolai	6:00		
Occupational Therapy	Marcy Wood	6:00		
Orthodontics	Vacant			
Pathology	Katie Moisse	6:00		Teresa Sanelli
Philosophy	Sean Keith			
Philosophy	Jenny Noland	6:00		
Philosophy	Nicholas Ray	6:00		
Physical Therapy	Erinn Freeman	6:00	7:15	
Physical Therapy	Michael Koonar	6:00	7:15	
Physical Therapy	Emily Pellegrino	6:00	7:20	
Physical Therapy	Vacant			
Physics & Astronomy	Vacant			
Physics & Astronomy	Vacant			
Physics & Astronomy	Vacant			
Physiology and Pharm.	James Elsley	6:00		
Physiology and Pharm.	Janet Manias	6:00		

Represents (Dept)	Name	IN	OUT	Signature
Physiology and Pharm.	Vacant			
Physiology and Pharm.	Vacant			
Physiology and Pharm.	Vacant			
Political Science	Eric Johanssen			
Political Science	Jason Thistlethwaite	6:00	7:12	
Psychology	Caroline Abu-Ayyash			
Psychology	Melissa Grigg	6:00		
Psychology	Corey Isaacs	6:00		
Psychology	Christopher O'Connor	6:00		
Public Administration	Vacant			
Rehabilitation Sciences	Karla Washington	6:00		
Senate	Naqaa Abbas			
Senate	David Cribbs			
Senate	Jane Morphew			
Senate	Kai Peters			
Sociology	Paul Bakker			
Sociology	Ayesha Williams			
Spanish	Vacant			
Stats & Actuarial Sciences	Vacant			
Theory & Criticism	Kieran Aarons	6:00		
Theory & Criticism	Marten McCallum			
Visual Arts	Leanne Carroll	6:00		

SOGS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 26, 2005

6:10 – 7:25 p.m.

Social Science Centre Room 3028

Speaker: Rebecca Feldman

Correction to motion in Agenda:

Motion to read:

Ratification of Amended Agenda

- Moved: S. Beasley (Biochemistry)
- Seconded: R. Lee (History)
- Carried

Announcements

- Feldman welcomed all Councillors to the SOGS January Council Meeting. A special welcome was extended to new Councillors, who were told that there were new Councillor Packages available at the front.
- Quorum was 30.
- Light refreshments were provided at the meeting.
- Councillors were informed that the **Annual General Meeting** will be on February 16th and the next Council meeting will be February 23th.
- There will be a student services fair on Tuesday, January 31 from 11 – 3.
- A group of Ivey HBA and MBA students (Ivey Connects Consulting; staff advisor is Professor Tima Bansal) is assisting the City of London Strategic Task Force in developing a strategy towards making the City more attractive to students. Currently, they are looking for Western students to participate in focus groups. They are hoping for a cross-section of students from across the Faculties. Timeline for completion of the project is April 2006. Any one interested should email the SOGS office for additional information.
- Department grant cheques were available at the front desk.
- A reminder, that in order for a Councillor's presence be counted toward the department grant, they must sign in with both signature and time. If they leave the Council meeting prior to the meeting being adjourned, they must indicate the **correct time** on the sign out Council Attendance Sheet. If they 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 November 24, 2005 SOGS Council Meeting Minutes

There no changes.

Moved: S. Beasley (Biochemistry)
Seconded: M. Fraser (MLIS)
Carried

Orders of the Day

- a) **Motions arising from the President:** None
- b) **Motions from other Committees:** None
- c) **Other Motions:** None

Elections

VP Student Services:

Liz Kelly presented her platform.

Kadie 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, in order for both candidates to present their platforms.

Moved: O. Krakovska (Applied Mathematics)

Seconded: K. Mohib (Microbiology & Immunology)

Carried

Executive/Committee/Councillor Reports

President:

- Dalton presented her reported.
- During the Round Table discussions, it was decided that aiming for Research Assistant unionization would be beneficial.
- A review of the Part-Time student situation is on going.
- Personnel policy for SOGS staff will be looked into.
- There will be an upcoming meeting between FGS, Dr. Davenport and the SOGS executive.

VP Academic

- To date there have been 514 nominations received for the GSTA Awards.
- The Research Forum will be held at the Grad Club on April 3, 4, 10 and 11 in the afternoons. If necessary, a morning session will also be booked. Advertising will begin soon.
- The Joint fund for sponsorship has had four applications to date and have used approximately \$2000. Any money not distributed this year, will be rolled over into next year's fund.
- **K. Aarons (Theory & Criticism):** Would you accept an application without a department budget? – (A) – No, a detailed budget must be submitted in order for the application to be sent to the next stage.

VP External & Communications:

- Pietrzyk is currently at the CFS Ontario Conference and was unable to present her report. Any questions should be directed to her (sogs.external@uwo.ca).

VP Finance:

- Cakiroglu thanked graduate students for their generous support of the food drive. Six boxes of food were collected and taken to the USC food bank.
- Department Grants were made available for pick up at the front desk.
- The Finance Committee has met to discuss subsidies and bursaries.
- A Personnel Policy committee will be convened.
- Tables at the Grad Club were refinished over Christmas.
The Grad Club is a hive of activity: open stage competition; Rick McGee; jug curling tournament; Valentine's Day (with special performance by Grad Club's own Cupid). Cakiroglu also mentioned that on Friday's there will be a buffet at lunch time.
- **Lee (History):** What is the policy for undergraduate functions booking the Grad Club? How often does that occur? – (A) There is no written policy. This doesn't happen very often.
A Fieldhouse referendum will be called for February 14, 20-22. This coincides with the undergraduate presidential elections and referendum.
Discussion:
Currently the fees for the UCC building endowment fund are winding down. In their place, Ryan Dunn, USC President and the UWO Administration want to institute a new fee, for a new building, the Fieldhouse Recreation Facility. The referendum for this will take place during the USC presidential elections (February 20-22). Graduate students (SOGS) were brought into this discussion at a very late date and because of this has very little input into the ongoing discussion.

Beasley (Biochemistry): When will the new fee be instituted? – (A) It will be instituted in the 2008/2009 academic year, if the recreation centre is usable.

Adams (Kinesiology): What are the fees and what will they be for the new structure? – (A) Currently the fee is \$65 per year and the new fee will be \$60.

Sanelli (Pathology): What will happen with the current centre? – (A) they will be making it over into usable space.

Suck (Anthropology): When do undergraduates have to decide? – (A) They will be holding their own referendum during the presidential elections – February 20-22.

Krakovska (Applied Mathematics): Is there any way the current UCC can be used for graduate students? – (A) No, there is no possibility of this happening. If we reject this new proposal, then graduate students would not have a recreation centre, and possibly individuals will have to opt in on their own.

Jacques (VP Academic): Undergraduates also have other fees that don't apply to graduate students which they may or may not have to pay.

Arens (Music): Where can additional information be found about the new recreation centre? – (A) Currently, there is no additional information. At present, all information is very sketchy.

- MOTION Moved (Cakiroglu): **BIRT SOGS holds a separate referendum in order to determine the graduate students' position on the payment of the proposed ancillary fee linked to the new University Fieldhouse Recreation Facility.**

The referendum will be conducted with the provisions that:

- i) SOGS has the right to conduct a separate referendum, and tabulate the results for presentation to the SSC.**
- ii) The results of the referendum are binding; however, SOGS reserves the right to opt out of paying the proposed ancillary fee.**

Moved: Cakiroglu (VP Finance)

Seconded: M. Grigg (Psychology)

Beasley (Biochemistry): Can you clarify what is meant by (ii). – (A) it means we have the right to reject the fee if our constituents reject the question posed by the referendum.

Adams (Kinesiology): Would you please clarify, is this a separate referendum and what if graduate students reject the question. – (A) the referendum question is the same for both the graduate and undergraduate students. Currently, the Executive doesn't have a feel for how our constituents feel about the new venture. This will give us a better understanding of whether graduates want or don't want a new recreation centre and the cost associated with it. – (A-Dalton) Administration will be happy to come and speak to Council. Some fees are expiring and this is a new fee. Some fees have a tendency to become permanent (Thompson arena fee will never expire, according to Administration). This fee is an increased ancillary fee that will tax students for 30 years (increasing each year by 3%). We are holding a separate referendum so that our position will be clear. It is unclear how the majority of our constituents will vote or whether we will be coerced into paying the fees even if the majority do not wish to pay for this new building. This way our members will have a say.

Cakiroglu: Results are binding, but we want our own say.

Boyden (Music): What will be question be? – (A) The question will be the same as for undergraduate students.

Sanelli (Pathology): Joining a private club outside campus would be more expensive. Currently the facilities are overcrowded and we need larger facilities to accommodate a growing student body.

Motion requires 2/3 majority to pass.

Yes – 53

No – 3

Abstained – 0

Carried

Elections - VP Student Services:

- Kadie Ward presented her platform.
- Liz Kelly presented earlier.
- **M. Grigg (Psychology):** Would you be able to attend meetings? – A – (LK) Yes, My schedule is open. (KW) I will be chronically late, because I have a lab that goes until 7:30 pm on Thursdays.
- **Dalton (President):** Could we have some of your ideas on overall issues.
LK – There needs to be a push to get students interested in joining committees. Getting information out to graduate students is absolutely necessary. Having social and sports functions is important.

KW – it's important to get students involved in city life, to organize events downtown. The health plan opt out will need to be revisited and the website needs to be made more user friendly.

- **MOTION: BIRT SOGS Council ratifies Liz Kelly for the position of VP Student Services of SOGSS from February 1, 2006 to November 30, 2006.**

Moved: Dalton

Seconded: Beasley

Carried

Commissioner for Graduate Students with Disabilities

- M. Fraser (MLIS): presented her platform.

- **MOTION: BIRT SOGS Council acclaims Melissa Fraser for the position of Commissioner for Graduate Students with Disabilities from February 1, 2006 to April 30, 2006.**

Moved: S. Beasley (Biochemistry)

Seconded: C. Winter (MLIS)

Carried

New Business/Open Forum

Adjournment

Moved: K. Washington (Rehabilitation Sciences)

Seconded: B. Aarons (Music)

- The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm (those who left early will not be counted for department grants).

SOGS EXECUTIVE MEETING

January 16, 2006 2:30 – 4:30 pm

MINUTES

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

Invited: Marc Lalonde, Grad Club Manager

Recording Secretary: Olga Sauer

1. **Ratification of Minutes** – Minutes for December 7, 2005 were ratified.

2. **Update from Grad Club Manager, Marc Lalonde**

- Lalonde informed the Executive that the Christmas season was well received. There were many parties; kid's brunch with Santa was a success; bookings are being received for next year. Stuck in London participation was minimal.
- A decision was made not to raise the stage, but to use the large fridge in the back for storage. Tables were refinished during the holidays and new cleaner will be used to ensure that the surface isn't harmed.
- Cakiroglu is working on the website.
- Lalonde is working on a reception for Conference Services. He hopes that the members of the Executive will be able to attend.
- All food costs are going up, but Lalonde is hoping to hold the costs until after this year.
- Brigham will be taking a WSIB course. New staff will be attending training.
- Lalonde is planning a Winter Carnival for February. Sundays at the Grad Club are slow.

3. **Update from President, Patti Dalton**

- Dalton will be looking to re-activate the Personnel Policy Committee, so that they look at SOGS staff benefits. She is currently on the Unity committee which is looking at other employee group benefits on campus. Cakiroglu will pursue this.
- The USC will be holding a referendum to get undergraduate support for a new recreation centre. Cakiroglu will be in contact with the USC and Dalton with Administration to find out what the ramifications might be if graduate students choose not to support this venture. The USC is proposing to fund a new complex, costing \$38 million - \$10 M to come from administration and the rest from undergraduate and graduate students. They will be taking out a mortgage for 30 years and students will be paying about \$60 per year (increased at 3% annually). Dalton reminded the Executive that Thompson arena was to be a short term venture; but now Kulczycki says there is not way the fees can be cancelled, because the arena cannot support itself.
- There is an open position on Senate and one on the Helmuth Prize Committee.
- Dalton asked that as many of the Executive as possible please attend an FGS meeting in early February. If there are any concerns that need to be raised, this would be a good time.
- The GSIC round table will meet after January 23rd. There is a CFS meeting in Markham at the end of January. Pietrzyk and Dalton will attend. It should be a very useful conference.

4. **Update from Vice President Academic, Duane Jacques**

- Jacques has received two requests for the joint funding (Visual Arts and Philosophy). Plans are being made for the Research Forum. It will take place on April 3rd and 4th and 10th and 11th in the afternoons. Jacques asked for input into an appropriate speaker.
- Jacques will be sitting on an appeal hearing.

- Jacques will be meeting with the candidates for Dean of Science.

5. Update from Vice President External, Kamilla Pietrzyk

- Pietrzyk invited the Executive to attend a Regional Social Forum outreach session on February 2. There will be a launch party downtown in the evening.
- The February Days of Action will take place some time this term at Chris Bentley's office.
- Pietrzyk will be missing the council meeting as she will be in Toronto attending the CFS-Ontario conference. CFS is asking for a small donation to offset the costs of advertising supplies.
- MOTION: BIRT SOGS donate \$150 to the Vote for a Change campaign. Money will be taken from the VP Executive budget.
Seconded: Dalton
Unanimous
- There will be a meeting of the National Graduate Caucus in Winnipeg, March 3-5.

6. Update from Vice President Finance, Jason Cakiroglu

- Cakiroglu reported that he has been trying to get accurate information on the new recreation centre. Jacques will be attending a meeting tomorrow, where hopefully more information will be received at that time.
- Cakiroglu is working on the Grad Club website. There are no bar tabs allowed at the Grad Club. There was some discussion on hiring only graduate students for front house staff for a period of no more than two years.
- Cakiroglu and Rodrigues are working on the budget. The AGM will take place on February 16th and the budget should be posted on the website on February 9th.
- Cakiroglu is working on a contract for Mike King's services.

7. Miscellaneous

- Sauer mentioned that there is a candidate for VP Student Services and one for the Disabilities Commissioner position.
- Sauer reminded everyone that Council reports were due today for publication on Thursday.

Meeting Adjourned - 4:30 p.m.



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

Hello Councillors

Provincial Funding and Issues of concern re. Minister Bentley

We expect an announcement imminently from Minister Bentley regarding an increase in tuition fees across the province and possible full deregulation of tuition fees. In every forum within the scope of SOGS representation, we have been assertive about our contention that an increase in tuition fees is going to diminish accessibility to post secondary education even further and also will exacerbate student debt load and hardship. Although 220 million dollars has been allocated to the University of Western Ontario for new graduate student spaces, we continue to be concerned about the lack of specific information about when those funds will be forthcoming. It has now been nearly one year since the last provincial budget and it bears repeating that the centerpiece of that budget was increased funding for post secondary institutions. In several recent meetings with administration, the same concern was voiced, including by the President, Paul Davenport. Obviously, the university administration needs to know the details of funding allocations and timelines in order to plan the next fiscal year; at this point, they cannot do so with confidence.

Additionally, at a lobby session in October, we submitted a series of written questions to the Minister and were assured that written responses would be forthcoming. I recently called the Minister's office, requesting another lobby session and the status of the written responses. I was informed that the Minister was booked for the next two months and that they were not booking for April; basically, we are being denied access to what is a mainstay of the democratic process. Further, at an address to the Faculty Association of UWO, the Minister refused to answer questions. The Minister has also taken to walking out of lobby sessions when the questions become too uncomfortable. Councillors may have noted the general unrest with a variety of groups regarding the provincial government. For example, the college teachers are taking strike votes across the province since they, too, are dissatisfied with the lack of responsiveness of Minister Bentley.

The VP External will be reporting on the Canadian Federation of Students' conference in January and the proposed plan of action formulated at that conference. It is extremely important that SOGS members both support and participate in this plan to ensure that this provincial government remains accountable.

Relations with the Faculty of Graduate Studies

At a recent meeting with FGS, the SOGS executive presented questions regarding information about the provincial government funding allocations and timelines; the faculty/student ratio; student space; and funding targeted for disadvantaged groups. The Dean indicated again a lack of information from the provincial government with respect to allocations and timelines. He spoke to the need for adequate human resources for graduate students including increased faculty/student ratios. He also presented a brief of a draft academic plan by FGS regarding the plans for improving graduate students' experience at UWO. A detailed report of this was submitted as part of the President's report for the annual meeting.

One of our key items in the meeting was a proposal for a joint committee regarding the planning for changes to graduate student programs with broader graduate student representation. My point was that the administration has been largely undertaking the planning to this point in the absence of graduate student participation and input. In addition to the significant changes being undertaken, we would like an opportunity for detailed discussion of the following issues:

- a. graduate student services across the university
- b. identification of gaps re. student debt load and consideration for further financial assistance

- c. revising the thesis supervision policy and process
- d. improvements to graduate student spaces and the visual/cultural aspects of campus life
- e. improved means of addressing difficulties/dispute resolution
- f. consideration of part time graduate student issues such as the need for fair funding and consideration of the diversity of student circumstances; the need for increased flexibility regarding change of status for full time students in the thesis writing stage; ensuring inclusion in primary aspects of university life and community
- g. consideration of the tuition fee structure for the post residency stage (when graduate students are the thesis writing stage of their program)
- h. teaching assistant workload and related issues

While all of the above points were raised at the recent meeting between the SOGS executive and the FGS representatives, it was noted that much more discussion was required on these issues. The teaching assistant matters were addressed in general terms with careful planning prior to the meeting with the GTA union President. Martin Kreiswirth raised the concern over stepping across union parameters and the collective bargaining process. We assured him that all of our points had been fully discussed with the GTA union and that their executive is in agreement in principle with the formation of a joint committee. Certainly examining the so called ten hour rule; the cases and complaints about teaching assistant issues from many members; the lack of consistency across departments and faculties with respect to the ten hour rule; and the faculty piece in these difficulties need further discussion. Martin Kreiswirth responded this week and suggested an initial ad hoc committee be formed; I agreed to this idea and have contacted the President of the GTA union. Please forward any suggestions and/or concerns regarding graduate student issues to me for consideration in this process.

One important immediate gain from that meeting was that the SOGS office now has the ability to mass email its entire membership. This has been pursued prior to my mandate. We will continue to lobby FGS on the aforementioned items.

Strategic Planning Task Force

The areas of focus for the report were identified and are the following:

1. developing the best student experience at a research intensive university
2. public accountability
3. development of human resources and improvements for all members of the UWO community i.e., Faculty, staff, students, alumni
4. a significant focus on the graduate student experience and development of services and academic programs
5. a focus on an engaged learning approach/development of pedagogy
6. cross university initiatives and interdisciplinary
7. a long term plan for the campus; improving visuals and spaces
8. UWO and the broader community

GTA Union Liaison Work

I was invited to speak at a meeting of the GTA stewards and the executive on February 8 and did so. I addressed the need for solidarity between the GTA and SOGS and informed them of the February day of action on tuition fee increases, as well as updating them on the current news from the provincial government outlined earlier in this report. SOGS and the GTA will continue to work together on issues of mutual concern.

Committee Work

Please contact Olga regarding in your interest in participation in any of our committees. We need your energy, talent and input! Welcome to our newest executive member Liz Kelly and as ever, thanks to our office staff, Raquel and Olga, for their considerable work.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patti Dalton



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

Dear Councilors,

I have a few brief items to report at this month's council meeting:

- The submission deadline for the SOGS 125th Anniversary Scholarship is Tuesday, February 28th @ 4:00pm. The Academic Committee shall award four scholarships of \$1250.00 each. Two scholarships will be awarded to Master's students and two scholarships to PhD students. In order to apply for the scholarship, the applicant must be a member of the society. Additionally, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that he or she receives less in funding from the university and other academic sources (scholarships and bursaries already expected) than he or she pays in tuition fees. The applicant will be required to release their financial information from the university to be made available to the Academic Committee.
- We are still looking for volunteers to for the Academic Committee and Editorial Board of the WJGR. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact me at sogs.academic@uwo.ca. Anyone wanting to submit material to the WRF or the WJGR should check the SOGS website for details.
- The Senate recently (Jan.20/06) updated the university's policy on the administration of examinations. Included in this document are the responsibilities of the proctor(s). SOGS members are encouraged to read the policy so that they are aware of their responsibilities when proctoring. The policy can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/admin.pdf
- The UWO chapter of the Society of Economic Geologists is hosting the William S. Fyfe Short Course on Sustainability and Resource Management March 3-4, 2006. Those interested in participating should visit the website (www.uwo.ca/earth/sustainability) for details.

Sincerely,

Duane Jacques

VP Academic



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

Dear Councillors,

This past month was quite busy in terms of my portfolio. I attended my first general meeting of the Canadian Federation of Students, where I learned a lot about the Ontario student movement, and got to strategize with some truly amazing students from all across the province. Also, I've continued to help with coordinating the Regional Social Forum. Please read more about both of these activities below.

CFS General Meeting and Campaign to Reduce Tuition Fees

Patti Dalton and I attended the CFS meeting in Markham from January 26th to the 29th. The most significant part of the meeting involved discussion of strategy in the face of the government's decision not to renew the current tuition fee freeze, and to increase fees in September 2006. Given the overwhelming amount of student debt and the fact that Ontario post-secondary students already pay the second highest tuition in Canada, Ontario members of the Federation have been working very hard on campaigning and lobbying the Ontario government to extend the tuition fee freeze.

It is very disappointing indeed that this month (February 2006), the Ontario Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Chris Bentley is widely expected to announce tuition fee increases. Working together with both graduate and undergraduate students, I am currently engaged in organizing a "response team," committed to staging a protest at Mr. Bentley's London constituency office within 24 hours following his announcement. This protest will serve to provide the public, via local media, with a crucial and timely student reaction to the announcement.

Additionally, a larger protest is being planned for February 24th, again in front of Mr. Bentley's office. This demonstration will feature several prominent speakers, including graduate students, and members of both the Western and the larger London community. If you would like to help with organizing this protest, or would simply like to get more information about it, please get in touch <sogs.external@uwo.ca>

Both of these actions are part of the larger struggle making waves across Ontario right now, as students are escalating their common effort against higher tuition fees. In the event that the government continues to turn a deaf ear to student demands, at the August CFS general meeting members of the Federation will consider employing the tactic of a general student strike. A motion to this effect was passed at the January CFS general meeting in Markham.

Regional Social Forum

I have been actively involved in coordinating the 2006 Regional Social Forum. A localized version of the global social movement called the World Social Forum, which took place this year in three separate countries, the RSF aims to provide an open meeting space to London area-based progressives to exchange knowledge, skills and experiences regarding working for positive social change.

This year's RSF, currently in planning stages, will take place from June 1st to the 4th on Scouts Canada campground (close to Masonville Mall). It will feature a number of prominent social justice keynote speakers, discussion panels, workshops, as well as social activities -- and of course, the camping option. Last year's RSF was organized primarily by students, and attended mostly by students as well. The RSF is truly an amazing (and free of cost!) "outdoors university" and I would like to encourage you all to either get involved or register as a participant. For more information, please visit www.regionalsocialforum.ca. Or come to our next general meeting: Wednesday, February 21st, at Huron College, Rm. W 108. ALL ARE WELCOME!!

Sincerely,
Kamilla Pietrzyk



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

Dear Councillors,

February has been a busy month, in preparation for the Annual General Meeting. The 2006/2007 SOGS budget has been completed, and the 2006/2007 Grad Club budget is currently in draft. Both SOGS and the Grad Club have potential for greater revenues this year, which will contribute to paying down the bank loan and increase the quantity and value of bursaries given out by the society.

The Grad Club Committee will be meeting sometime early in March to review the 2006/2007 budget proposal. At the last committee meeting, suggestions were made to transform the Grad Club boardroom to accommodate a new pool table, darts, and possibly foosball table.

The Grad Club website is now up and running. If anyone has any suggestions, or anything they would like to add to the website, please contact me directly.

The Finance Committee met this past month to review the proposed 2006/2007 SOGS budget. The budget passed through the committee, with changes occurring mainly to bursary line items. At the next Finance committee meeting, we will look at the proposed 2006/2007 Grad Club Budget.

The new recreation centre referendum kicked-off on valentines with a 24-hour on-line advance poll. Complete referendum results will be reviewed at the February Council meeting. Quorum for the referendum is 10% of the graduate student population. In April of 2007, the UWO expansion fee, currently at \$65.49, will expire. Should graduate students vote in favor of the proposed recreation centre, an ancillary fee of \$60 increasing at 3% per year will be levied until the mortgage retires in April 2038.

In a recent meeting with Susan Grindrod, Gitta Kulczycki, and Rick Campbell, renovations at Bayfield Hall for were discussed. The proposed renovation will begin in April 2007, and run for 12 to 14 months. The Bayfield Hall residences are over 40 year old, and house approximately 500 of our graduate students. The renovation is for the maintenance of the main sewer system, mechanical system, and repair of the hot water supply. The building will also have all new kitchens (exhaust), bathrooms, cable, phone, and res-net following the renovations. Tenants are being notified far in advance of the renovation project to help make relocating easier. Administration will be speaking with local housing groups to make sure enough affordable housing is available for students who are affected by the renovation project. The University will pay for the Bayfield Hall renovation project through monies that have been budgeted for such renovation projects.

All the best,

Jason Cakiroglu



**Vice President Student Services
February 2006 Report to Council
Liz Kelly (sogs.services@uwo.ca)
<<http://www.uwo.ca/sogs/>>**

The Vice President Student Services ensures representation of graduate student interests and concerns with student service and sports programming related bodies at UWO, oversees the promotion of SOGS and Grad Club sponsored social and athletic events, and regularly up-dates the SOGS web site and bulletin boards. The Vice President Student Services serves as the official liaison to three SOGS committees (Health Plan, Orientation, and International Students) and to SOGS members who represent graduate students on the student service related committees within the university community.

SOGS Health Plan Committee

On August 4, 2005 the Health Plan Committee received a written request from Christine Guptill (PhD Candidate, Rehabilitation Sciences) that occupational therapy (OT) be added to the services covered by the SOGS Green Shield Health Plan. The committee recently reviewed the information supporting the request and obtained quotes regarding cost and coverage from Green Shield. The committee recommended that the decision to add OT should be made by SOGS council. A motion to this effect is included in this month's council package and Christine's letter to SOGS and supporting information can be found at the end of this report.

The Health Plan Committee will be meeting regularly (usually at the beginning of the second month of each term) to make recommendations regarding the administration of the health plan. The Health Plan Committee is always accepting new members. If you are interested in sitting on this committee please forward your name and contact information to sogs.services@uwo.ca.

SOGS Orientation Committee

The Orientation Committee produces the SOGS handbook / day planner and councillor orientation packages, and arranges presentations and hosts social events for new students and councillors. The SOGS is currently seeking members for the committee and a volunteer to act as the committee chair / Orientation Commissioner for 2006. If you are interested in joining this committee or acting as the chair, your name and contact information can be submitted to sogs.services@uwo.ca.

Handbook / Day Planner

Discussion of the 2006-2007 handbook / day planner is the first task currently on the Orientation Committee's agenda. Please take a look at your handbook / day planner and forward any ideas for improvements for consideration by the Orientation Committee to sogs.services@uwo.ca.

Sports Events

If anyone is getting a group together for a campus recreation team and seeking additional graduate student members, feel free to drop-off an information/sign-up list for display in the SOGS office. Alternatively, if anyone is interested in organizing athletic events for graduate students (such as a seasonal league or one-day tournament) suggestions can be forwarded to sogs.services@uwo.ca and will be considered by the Orientation Committee.

SOGS International Students' Committee

The International Students' Committee is responsible for assessing particular needs of international students, disseminating relevant information, and advocating on behalf of such students with the administration as necessary. The SOGS is currently seeking members for the committee and a volunteer to act as the committee chair / International Students Commissioner for 2006. If you are interested in getting involved with this committee, your name and contact information can be submitted to sogs.services@uwo.ca.

SOGS Web Site

The overall appearance of the SOGS web site was overhauled in 2005. Some changes to the layout and format are still being made, and information is being up-dated continually. Suggestions about the clarity of the

web site are always appreciated, as improvements will be on going. More importantly, however, is the content of the web site. If there is any information you would like to see added requests can be sent to sogs.services@uwo.ca.

Graduate Student Representation on Sports and Student Service Committees

Graduate student representatives serve on numerous sports and student service related committees within the university community. The SOGS is in the process of up-dating its files regarding graduate student representation on student service and sports related bodies at UWO. If you currently represent graduate students on such a committee please forward your name and contact information to sogs.services@uwo.ca.

Appendix A

Appendix A – Health Plan Committee OT Submission

Dear SOGS

I have recently learned that occupational therapy (OT) is not an insured service under the SOGS Extended Health Plan, and I encourage you to expand your coverage to include OT.

Occupational therapy is a recognized, evidence-based health service that can reduce the costs of injuries and illness for insurers. By assisting people to become self-sufficient following illness or injury and working with returning to their daily activities as soon as possible, occupational therapists play a key role in reducing costly long-term disability claims.

Occupational therapy is a long-standing, regulated health profession dating back to the First World War and is recognized by both federal and provincial governments. The motor vehicle insurance industry has long recognized the contributions of this profession as an essential service in assisting members to return to employment and activities of daily living. The Canada Revenue Agency accepts occupational therapy as a tax-deductible medical expense and recognizes occupational therapists as authorizers for disability tax credits. Most provinces also recognize occupational therapists as mental health competency assessors. Canadian occupational therapists are regulated, university trained health professionals. Provincial regulatory associations require occupational therapists to maintain current skills, knowledge and public accountability.

Occupational therapists examine health from a broad perspective —considering medical, psychological, and social factors— and are an important part of any comprehensive health management team. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to explore how occupational therapy can enhance the SOGS insurance services. In the meantime, I encourage you to visit Canada's occupational therapy resource site at www.otworks.ca to learn more about the many benefits of occupational therapy. I have also enclosed some information about the occupational therapy advantage for your perusal.

Sincerely,

Christine Guptill, BMus, BSc, MS(OT) OT Reg. (Ont.)
Registered Occupational Therapist (Ontario)
PhD Candidate, Rehabilitation Sciences



**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**