Faculty of Graduate Students Representative DSU Council Report – April 8, 2020

Internal Relations

• Attended and participated in both Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) and Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) Board and Council meetings

  i. In addition to sitting on DSU Council, I’m apart of the DAGS Executive [Vice President of Student Life/VPSL] and deliver monthly reports for DAGS therein in addition to taking on responsibilities of the DAGS Vice President External/VPE.

• DAGS office hours – Tuesdays – dispensing cheques to constituents whom have been granted bursaries for travel, personal development, and/or community events

  i. Beyond my scheduled hours, I also met with students to discuss prospective grant and bursary options, and general concerns on how student governance may aid and advocate for graduate student interests.

  ii. Council-wise, I also note that graduate student priorities and perspectives differ greatly from those of their undergraduate counterparts.

• Create and co-moderate DAGS Social Media – graphic design, formatting, and statement drafting

  i. Ordered and designed personalized DAGS merchandise which entailed picking up bulk orders and packaging the quantities for distribution

  ii. Social media posts also garnered DAGS significantly wider visibility as graphics were picked up [and accordingly credited to us by] many prominent doctorate comic pages

• Sat on the DAGS Governance Committee alongside graduate students from law, biology, and the DAGS VPFO to go over DAGS bylaws

External Relations

• Attended the Circle of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Students via Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)

  i. Participated in discussions about positionality, Indigeneity, and how to better facilitate accountability and resolution within the institutions in addition to antagonistic colleagues, particularly how student governance spaces perpetuate and exacerbate ongoing disparities. [CFS has taken minutes of these meetings which are available]

  ii. Voted in elections of Indigenous student representatives
• Attended the Canadian Federation of Students-Nova Scotia (CFS-NS) general meeting
  i. Voted in elections for various student representatives
  ii. Sat on the Indigenous students’ subcommittee to discuss motions
  iii. Participated in panel discussions
• Unable to attend the CFS National Graduate Caucus (NGC) due to cancellations and closures associated with COVID-19
  i. However, I have kept in contact with graduate students who were slated to attend since I had previously met many of them at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) last summer and have kept in touch; some of whom have even visited DAGS whilst in Nova Scotia for conferences.
  ii. Maintaining these contacts afforded me many opportunities to connect with graduate students across Canada wherein we brainstormed and discussed shared issues, particularly those surrounding graduate student mental health and dynamics in supervisor-student relationships.
  iii. Graduate students also expressed similar concerns regarding disparities perpetuated within institutional spaces, including student governance spaces; and we discerned a fruitful course of action was to set firm intentions and associate accordingly so as to optimize time as well as output.
• Aided the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) for the current DAGS election
  i. This responsibility is stipulated in the DAGS bylaws as a responsibility for the DAGS VPSL. It involves general promotion, graphic design, and consultations to advertise the election timeline and overall trajectory.
• Co-organized the DAGS COVID-19 Relief Fund with the DAGS Vice President of Financial and Operations (VPFO) and DAGS President
  i. The closure of campus has resulted in much precarity respective to employment and academia for students altogether, and I took part in an initiative to redirect DAGS’ financial aid streams [bursaries for graduate student Travel, Professional Development, and DAGS Societies] into some immediate, accessible aid for students in light of the cancellations which would have reneged the funding for which applicants had previously applied for. This led to creating financial aid of $100 per constituent applicant through a Google Form which I drafted.

**Programming and Events**
• In partnership with the Dalhousie International Students’ Association (DISA), I coordinated the *World Cinema Series* screenings and miniature lectures surrounding the textual significance and context; which involved getting refreshments and reserving theatre spaces within the Rowe Building
  i. Screenings included:
     a. **January 14**th – *Pather Pachali* (1955) directed by Satyajit Ray; India [Postwar Socialism]
     b. **January 28**th – *Weekend* (1967) directed by Jean-Luc Godard; France [French New Wave]
     c. **February 11**th – *Jaws* (1975) directed by Steven Spielberg; USA [Mainstream Post-Classic Hollywood]
March 3rd – *Wadjda* (2012) directed by Haifaa Al Mansour; Saudi Arabia [Middle Eastern Cinema and Dogme 95]

with the final screening—March 17th – *Mafia III* (2017) directed by Haden Blackman and Matthias Worch; USA [VG Cutscenes] being cancelled due the campus closure

- DARGS had an Imposter Syndrome Panel scheduled for Dalhousie’s Mental Health Week in which I was also co-organizing, albeit the DARGS Director of Science and Computer Science led most of that initiative as it was their idea. This panel ended up being cancelled as a result of the campus closure.

**Future Commitments and Events**

- In addition to working with the DARGS Executive, Council, CFS, local community, and graduate students across Canada to foster positive graduate student health, welfare, and advocacy; I will:
  
  i. Further aid with the DARGS election
     a. Provide the requisite transition report for DARGS VPSL
     b. Present an annual report to DARGS Council
  
  ii. Continue to connect with constituents
  
  iii. Follow up with national student issues as they pertain to graduate students and our union

- Continue to co-moderate DARGS Social Media and facilitate constituent engagement