**Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students Questionnaire
DSU 2019 Elections**

The Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) is the faculty society for Dalhousie’s graduate students. There are currently 3538 graduate students enrolled at Dalhousie across 90 Masters programs and 45 PhD programs. Graduate and professional students have specific needs that have historically overlooked. This questionnaire is to provide an opportunity for all candidates to demonstrate how they plan to address graduate student needs.

Please return completed questionnaires to president@dags.ca. The responses will be posted on our website to share with members. **Please return questionnaires before 5pm on Thursday, March 7th to be read at the DAGS AGM (5:30pm, March 7th)**. Late questionnaires will be posted on the website if received before the campaigning deadline. Motions to endorse candidates and Referenda Questions will be brought forward at the AGM.

Candidate Questions

1. What do you see as the top 3 issues for Dalhousie’s graduate and professional students?
* Teacher Assistants (TAs) get paid approximately $1000 (CAD) a course, profs are $5000 (CAD) a course (and sessional instructions) and I am aware TAs are graduate students who are overwhelmed with work and basically run the course and get little pay out of it.
* Graduate students do not want therapy dogs and free concerts, they need money to live and need to access funding; I am aware a lot of grad students have to go to food banksa lot of the times since the funding only covers tuition and there is no overhead to live.
* There needs to be child care support as a lot of grad students are entering the early stage of building a family, and what they make is not enough for healthy living wages as they are dedicating their time for research.
1. How do you plan to engage graduate students to communicate information and get direct student feedback?

Having a representative at the DSU for graduate societies would be great, but as I know, a lot of things can be lost in translation and one representative cannot represent every graduate program in Dalhousie. As they are still students with needs like every other student, they need to be approached and communicated with as they have particular problems that need particular solutions, when people think of the DSU, they only think of undergraduate students. While graduate students are still apart of the Union, as I have been in contact in with a Biomedical engineering graduate program, I know how to approach and effectively communicate with them because they still need funding to sustain their own societies. The executives of graduate societies are just as easy to contact as executives as undergraduate societies.

1. How would you improve the DSU to better serve graduate students?

I will improve the DSU to better serve graduate students by having them help with decision makings at the DSU, I see that graduate students are leaders; they are highly experienced and educated and know the ins and outs better than undergraduate students. Graduate students have an authority position to the university when professors are not present, to me, I see that the graduate are easily accessible professors as they students, they can relate to problems in the modern era that we face while still being vastly intelligent.

1. How would you ensure graduate students are a priority for decision makers in Government, Dalhousie University, and the DSU?

Pertaining to the last answer, graduate students are the forefront leaders of the university, when making decisions within the government, Dalhousie and the DSU and I would ensure that they are the first people to be contacted, as what affects every undergraduate student equally affects graduate students (i.e. tuition, lack of scholarships/funding, etc.).

1. Is there anything else you want to share with Dalhousie’s graduate and professional students?

As I have been highly exposed to master level studies, by wanting to pursue a Biomedical Masters and taking on two master level courses; I am very knowledgeable with the good and the bad that could come with pursuing a masters. I am currently completing a Senior Year Design Project in my Electrical Engineering degree that relates to a master's thesis and the stress that accompanies it. I am in the early stages of entering the master’s program and I have been warned by professors and TAs of what to do and what not to do. To me, I am a candidate that *knows*.