



DAGS

Dalhousie Association
of Graduate Students

President's Report – Jan 1st, 2019 – April 23rd, 2019

Kaitlyne Lowe – President@dags.ca

Internal

- We are in the process of updating our contact list for the 2019/2020 year! Please email office@dags.ca with your society's contact.
- Board meetings were held weekly on Thursdays (once a month being a Council meeting)
- We are comprising training resources and a session on Treasurer training, as well as transition training for the incoming Board
- We are looking to run a DAGS strategy planning session on January 31st, help us plan out the coming term!
- Council Meetings were held monthly
- Regular meetings were held with DSU executives and staff
- One meeting was held with the Dalhousie Association of Agricultural Graduate Students, and we hope that this relationship can continue in the coming year
- Renovations on the new space have been completed. Focus is primarily on selling some remaining items from the Muse
- A successful Annual General Meeting was held on March 7th passing By-Law Amendments.
- Committee positions will be opening for the next year and will be seeking members. Email office@dags.ca with interest!
 - o Committees Include:
 - Student Life
 - Academic
 - Administration
 - Governance (Strategic Planning)

- The new Office Coordinator, Shauna, has been hired and will be in the office Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am – 5pm.
- Weekly Office Hours we held on Fridays from 11am – 1pm.

External Relations (University/ DSU/ CFS)

- Transition meetings with the incoming DSU executive are being organized
- Two meetings were held with the dean of engineering. Key focuses include:
 - o Establishing and ongoing relationship with the dean’s office and Dalhousie Engineering Graduate Society
 - o “Drop-in” TA space was organized for exam time to alleviate office pressures
 - o Raise awareness about student concerns and approaches to address concerns
 - o Identify event/programming opportunities
- DAGS had a strong presence for Fall orientation (including FMGSS BBQ event, Orientation BBQ and University Club Reception, and Boat Cruise).
- For the first time, DAGS organized programming for winter orientation (Dean’s Office meet and Greet, Coffee Giveaway, Skating, Study and Snacks, Pizza Social). We hope these initiatives will continue for winter term next year!
- There is support to have a DAGS Brightspace. We are hoping to have it in place in May.
- DAGS will continue to play a role in the ongoing updates to the FGS website
- DAGS has had representation at every Faculty of Graduate Studies Council meeting this academic year, as well as the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- There are weekly contributions to the Faculty newsletter (*Submissions are sent weekly on Wednesday evenings. Should anyone desire to submit to the Faculty newsletter, please submit updates to president@dags.ca). At the same time, submissions are made to the FGS social media coordinator if there is anything you want shared on through FGS social media channels.
- We have set up monthly meetings with the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) to identify common advocacy areas. We are looking to keep this relationship going for the new academic year.
- Attended 2 Provincial Organizing meetings with the CFS and the CFS-NS General Meeting
- Two meetings were held with the president’s office to communicate graduate student issues
 - o Mental health supports
 - o Tuition and differential fees
 - o Graduate supervisor-student relations
 - o Food insecurity of graduate students
- The next Government Round Table will be May 23rd.
 - o A Roundtable was held on February 28th

- And MOU meeting was held on March 4th
- Advocacy from DAGS and FGS has resulted in the creation of a Provost fellow specifically for the graduate student experience (e.g. graduate supervisor student relations)
- The differential fee has been waived for incoming PhD students, however more pressure is needed to expand this to current PhD students and Masters students.
- Met with Provost and VP Finance on University Budget Proposal voicing student concerns on tuition and differential fee increases
- Met with Ombudsperson Office external reviewer to communicate feedback on the office before a new Ombudsperson is hired.
- DAGS will continue to be part of the Women in Research Committee of the University
- Mental Health advocacy has been a paramount issue as we have been advocating for a Graduate Student Mental Health Strategy at Dalhousie
- DAGS has participated in the Mental Health Commission of Canada Post-Secondary Standard Consultations. Please see their website for more information and the opportunity to submit feedback:
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/what-we-do/children-and-youth/students-standard>. This standard will be used as a guide for all post-secondary institutions and it is vital that there is criteria specifically for graduate students!
- Primarily lead by the VP External, DAGS worked with DSU to advocate against the tuition and differential fee increases.

Services

- Please submit event details for us to promote.
<http://www.dags.ca/postgraduateevents.html> has the link to submit event details to be uploaded on our website and shared on social media!
- We have introduced a new Grants policy, HR policy, Elections Policy, and Bookings Policy
- The Office space is bookable! Email Office@dags.ca

Programming and Events

- To keep up to date on events- <http://www.dags.ca/post-graduate-events.html>. These events include any invites we receive!
- For job opportunities, see: <http://www.dags.ca/job-opportunities.html>
- and volunteer opportunities, see: <http://www.dags.ca/volunteer-opportunities.html>
- Events hosted this term:
 - Winter orientation events
 - Dean's Office Meet and Greet
 - Coffee Giveaway in the Tupper
 - Skating at the Emera Oval
 - Study and Snacks in the Grad Pad-
 - Pizza Social in the Troom

- Lunch and Learns
 - CUPE 3912
 - Conflict Resolution with HRES
- Mental Health Week
 - Two Town Halls (Sexton and Studley)
 - 2 Workshops with Health and Wellness
 - Mental Health 101
 - Stress, Coping, and Resilience as a Graduate Student
 - Faculty of Medicine Programs
 - Mindfulness Meditation
 - Yoga
- Dalhousie Graduate Student Conference and reception at the International Centre
 - The inaugural conference was a success! There is interest from the university and FGS to make it an annual event
- Graduate Student Appreciation Night – April 4th
 - We had around 40 students attend graduate student appreciation night!