

Hello Senators -

In the midst of the University, State, and National suspension of large gatherings, we apologize for the cancellation of our in-person May 1st Senate Meeting. In lieu of the meeting, the Executive Board has put together this document of the information we would have been presenting to you at our April 3rd meeting. Please read through it carefully and reach out if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

We know that this is not the easiest way to communicate information to you, but we hope that it's concise enough for the time being. As we are not meeting in person and unable to hear your questions, comments, or concerns, I truly want to make sure you all know to contact us so we can hear what is going on within your academic units.

Thank you.

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## Executive Board Reports

### **Executive Chair** – Anna Solberg – [asolberg@kent.edu](mailto:asolberg@kent.edu)

1. **Administrative Position:** As was voted on earlier this semester, we are still moving forward with the transition of the Administrative Position from a GA to a part-time position in the office of Student Affairs. There has been an unexpected hindrance in this process due both in part to COVID-19 as well as the continuation and stricter reinforcement of the university hiring freeze (which will now be continuing until further notice). Because of these, Barb Spencer and her assistant will be filling in for us over the summer and the time between now and the end of the hiring freeze (or at least the time when we can submit a request for an exemption). Barb will be the one processing any reimbursements from now on, so any questions regarding these that can't be answered by the board can be directed to her ([bspenc12@kent.edu](mailto:bspenc12@kent.edu)).
2. **Emergency Fund:** I had heard that there were some concerns about the university emergency fund for students being tailored toward undergraduates rather than the whole student body as a whole. I did check with Dr. Drummer-Farrell, and there are precautions in place to make sure that no bias whatsoever goes into the decision process for what students are granted emergency funds.
3. **Faculty Senate Update:** Though the Faculty Senate didn't have many updates, other than holding elections and making a few changes to their own bylaws, they did have quite a few thanks to give. They shared their gratitude for all that has been done by the faculty, staff, and students in this time of change. They are proud of the accomplishments we have all made in such a short period of time, and they want to continue support for students through answering questions, funding, and educational resources during this time of the global pandemic.
4. **Research on Tap:** Though I had started the planning for this, it will have to be postponed until next year. I will be sure to continue the efforts toward this and other graduate events next year as the Advocacy Chair.

**Executive Vice Chair** – Victoria Reynolds – [vreynol1@kent.edu](mailto:vreynol1@kent.edu)

1. International Travel Award -- The ITA Review Committee met on April 2nd to review all applications. There were 29 applications and GSS was able to fully fund 22 applications. Award letters were sent on Monday, April 6.
  - a. If you received an ITA in Fall 2019 or Spring 2020 and your originally planned travel has been disrupted or cancelled due to COVID-19, please consult the Award Message sent regarding changes in reimbursement and how GSS will be addressing individual changes in international travel.
2. Committee Representation -- Thank you to all the Senators who volunteered to serve on a University or GSS-related committee. If you'd like to serve on the same committee for the 2020-2021 academic year, please email me to let me know.

**Finance Chair** – Xin Hong – [xhong1@kent.edu](mailto:xhong1@kent.edu)

1. Summer DTA: Due to university restrictions on travel and in-person meetings through Summer II, we have postponed the Summer DTA application process until further notice. This was originally going to be open as of April 23, 2020 and close on May 14th, 2020, but it will now be unavailable. We will be reassessing this award as we get more news from the university on travel bans or by the end of June/beginning of July. Please keep an eye on your email, social media, and our GSS website for information come that time.

**Advocacy Chair** – Anna Solberg – [asolberg@kent.edu](mailto:asolberg@kent.edu)

1. Research Award Spring 2020: We had received 46 applications for the Spring 2020 Research Award. Out of those, there were 23 people awarded a total of \$39,567. Award letters were sent on Monday, April 6.
  - a. If you received the RA in the last year and your originally planned proposal has been disrupted or cancelled due to COVID-19, please consult the Award Message sent regarding changes in reimbursement and how GSS will be addressing individual changes for this award.
2. RA Extension Requests: After the last in-person meeting and a few questions regarding extension requests - Though this will be used as a tool during the pandemic, it will also be utilized afterward for any and all RA awardees who wish to request an extension of their funding, or who have a small changes to be made to their project. In the situation of COVID-19, due to the potentially large number of requests that will come through, the Executive Board will be the ones to review these requests. However, once business is "back to usual", any of these requests will be reviewed by the acting RA Review Committee.
3. Anyone interested in serving on the Fall Research Award Review Committee, please contact Anna.

**Research Symposium Chair** – Srijana Bhandari – [sbhanda3@kent.edu](mailto:sbhanda3@kent.edu)

1. 2021 Graduate Research Symposium dates and details:  
The 2021 Symposium will be occurring on April 8 and 9, 2021. I will forward all of the reservations from this year to those days in order to ease things for the incoming Programming Chair.

**Information Services Chair** – Grace Murray – [gss.info@gmail.com](mailto:gss.info@gmail.com)

1. Please keep your eyes on social media because we are doing our best to share information about the status of the University and University-related programming. Additionally, we have been trying to share helpful information regarding COVID-19 as

well to keep everyone safe. Please be sure to remind your constituents to be checking social media regularly.

2. If you have published/presented recently, let us know. We'd like to spotlight you on social media. It is a weird time in the world, so it would be great to flood social media with some good news. We know a lot of conferences have been postponed and/or cancelled, but we'd love to be an outlet for you to share all of your hard work!
3. Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@KSUGSS](#))

## Old Business

1. Charter
  - a. The updated GSS Charter was sent on to the Dean of Students and will be added to the Board of Trustees next meeting. However, I am not sure of timing on this now due to the coronavirus outbreak. We will keep you posted when we hear word of it, but for now, assume it's on it's way and will be addressed over the summer.
2. Bylaws
  - a. Liz Aulino and the Committee to Update the Bylaws have been working on the rest of the sections that need updating. Though we were not able to finish this by the end of the semester, we have the hardest part (the awards) done, and we will be sure to tackle the remainder of the Bylaws when we're together again next year. Thank you all for your work on these this year.
  - b. Liz will be hanging up her laptop at the end of the summer as the chair of this committee. Please consider taking her place and finishing what this committee has started this year! Anyone interested, please email Liz ([eaulino@kent.edu](mailto:eaulino@kent.edu)) or Claire ([cjackma2@kent.edu](mailto:cjackma2@kent.edu)).

## New Business

1. No New Business

## Announcements

- A. Grad Fest has been canceled for the remainder of the semester due to COVID-19. Please make sure you stay safe and healthy!

## Adjournment

1. **Executive Chair's Final Remark:** I want to thank you all for your work this year. We have accomplished quite a lot during a year that was faced with many changes and hurdles across the university and the world. I appreciate each and every one of you for your advice, input, questions, and patience throughout the year. It has been such an honor to serve as the Executive Chair this year, and I look forward to continuing our work into the future in a different role. Thank you all.
2. **Transition to the 2020-2021 Executive Board.**
  1. We would like to welcome the new Executive Board of the GSS. We are

sure they will do an excellent job in the coming year, continue to make progress for GSS, and continue to make progress for Kent State University graduate students as a whole.

2. As of **May 1st** at 10:00 am:

Claire Jackman, Executive Chair

Jordyn Stoll, Vice Executive Chair

Maneesh Shukla, Finance Chair

Anna Solberg, Advocacy Chair

Payel Datta, Programming Chair

Maike Amann, Information Services Chair