

- I. Call to Order: 11:03am
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of September 3, 2014 Minutes - Approved
- IV. Executive Board Reports

A. **Executive Chair** – Alexandria Lesak – alesak@kent.edu

1. Faculty Senate Report – September Meeting
 - a. President Warren address Faculty Senate and discussed five of her main goals for the University: the student-first focus of the university including more collaboration between departments, an increased regional focus of the university, a sustainable and viable future, more philanthropy and the future and importance of athletics.
 - b. Announced the new curriculum software: CuricuNet
 - c. Faculty and Professional Development Center will officially change its name to the Center for Teaching and Learning in Spring 2015.
2. Administrative Assistant Chair Update
 - a. We are currently conducting interviews, but are still accepting applications and we will have a decision by the next meeting.
3. President Warren Speaking at November 5th meeting
 - a. President Warren will be joining us as part of her Listening Tour. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Senate. President Warren contacted us and is looking forward to sharing information with us as well as listening to graduate students. We encourage all senators and alternate senators to attend next month's meeting.
4. Fashion School Graduate Program
 - a. The Fashion School has recently added a graduate program and since they are a separate school and college they will have an additional senator to represent them.
5. Kent Student Center Office Hours
 - a. Each of the executive board members will be holding office hours beginning next week (Monday, October 6th) in our newly remodeled offices in the Kent Student Center, 120 L-M.
 - b. Schedule:
 - i. Monday 10:00am-12:00pm – Gordon Cromley
 - ii. Monday 1:00-3:00pm – Mark Rhodes
 - iii. Tuesday 1:00-3:00pm – Alex Lesak
 - iv. Wednesday 1:30-2:30 – Andrea Meluch
 - v. Thursday 11:00-12:00 – Fritz Yarrison
 - vi. Thursday 2:30-3:30 – Scout McCully

B. **Executive Vice Chair** – Fritz Yarrison – fyarriso@kent.edu

1. Committee Representation

- a. We are still in need a representative for the [Public Safety Advisory Committee](#).
 - b. Overall, thank you for filling all other positions for our committees. We now have representatives on 12 committees across the university.
 - c. If you are interested in serving on any of the committees that have been filled contact Fritz about serving as an alternate or as a possible future replacement.
2. Committee Reports - UDAC
- a. Review of annual report
 - i. Launched Equity Action Plan
 - ii. Launched DEI Education/Training Labs: Cultural Competency scenario videos which were co-sponsored by GSO
 - iii. Developed a Diversity in Research module for CITI Training
 - iv. Completed African American, Latino American, Native American student focus groups with a focus on retention
 - v. Launched the Office of Sexual and Relationship Violence Support Services

C. Finance Chair - Gordon Cromley – gcromle2@kent.edu

1. Domestic Travel Award Update
 - a. The '13-'14 Expense Budget was over \$340,800.30. \$248,648.96 (73%) went out to student awards.
 - b. The '14-'15 Expense Budget has dropped to \$230,330.88
 - c. Working with new budget we have attempted to maintain our similar goals while still trying to serve the 5000+ graduate students in the best possible way.
 - i. Focus on the Symposium
 - ii. Continuing with our same operating expenses
 - iii. Activity fund is \$5,000 as a requirement for being a student organization
 - iv. Leadership fund expenses dropped this year because of a loss of our GA. To put in perspective how much work is expected out of the Administrative Chair – one reimbursement packet takes on average 45 minutes. Last year, we awarded 545 Domestic Travel Awards alone, multiplying that by 45 minutes to an hour a piece, it is a large time commitment. When the Research and International Travel Awards are included, processing awards alone necessitates 10 hours a week for the entire fiscal year. What remains in the Leadership fund is used to provide small stipends to the board.
 - d. The general fund includes operating expenses as well as the Domestic Travel Award.
 - e. Last fall, we awarded \$47,000 in the Domestic Travel Award. To stay consistent with that it was decided to allocate \$50,000 to the Domestic Travel Award this fall.

f. Last Spring we awarded about \$63,000. We want to keep the understanding that we are only in the first of three periods for students to be eligible for the Domestic Travel Award; therefore, we needed to allocate enough funds for students who wish to travel in the Spring and Summer.

g. For the Fall Domestic Travel Award there was a sharp increase in applicants. If we funded each Fall DTA applicants we would end up funding over \$85,000. In order to remain within a functioning Operating Expenses budget we decided to award 142 applicants on a first-come-first-serve basis for a total of \$50,000.

Q. The average award last year was about \$268. Why wasn't this year's DTA budget calculated based on this number - which would have given us a better idea of the number and amount of Domestic Travel Awards?

A. These numbers are based on information from last year. In recent semesters, the reimbursement average has been increasing and in the current applications, students provided proposed expenses. From that information, we were able to determine that most students who applied were going to receive the full \$350.

Additionally, the reimbursement rate has been steady rising. In Fall of last year, we actually reimbursed only 67% of the awardees. The summer rate this year was more like 87% and likely even higher than that as we have not finalized all of those reimbursement. Once we were made aware of the budget shortfall, in keeping with our bylaws, we did not have enough time to construct a solution and have it ratified by the senate in time to implement it for the Fall DTA. Instead, we voiced our concern at the September meeting and called for volunteers to discuss the future of the Domestic Travel Award that would generate a structured and long-term solution. We were limited by our bylaws as to how to address the large influx of applications for the fall DTA. We are funding more this fall than we did last fall (\$47,000 to \$50,000).

Q: I respect the fact that the board did not have funds, how can you advertise a non-competitive travel grant, and change it into a competitive award? What basis did you choose awardees?

A: We did not know until after the deadline that there were significantly more applications this year.

We have in the past explained to apply as early as possible because we don't know how the award will play out. We can't award everyone and have a very limited budget for the spring and summer; it would be fiscally irresponsible.

h. The Executive Board defended its decision as being within the structure of the bylaws for GSS. The funds are not available this year to fund every applicant. The bylaws read "Priority will be given to students based on 1) availability of funds..." which was interpreted as a first-come-first-serve based on the funds allocated to the DTA for that semester (in this case \$50,000). The availability of funds clause is also present in all official GSS promotional materials.

i. If the Domestic Travel Award would be made truly non-competitive, whereas each graduate student would automatically

receive funding, GSS's budget would have to be in excess of 2 million dollars.

j. Concern remained from some senators. Other senators suggested that the decision has been made and that any conclusions would not be implemented until the spring semester at the earliest.

k. Motion was made to continue with the meeting as scheduled – Motion: Art; Seconded: Lifespan Development and Educational Sciences

C. Advocacy Chair – Andrea Meluch – ameluch1@kent.edu

1. Fall Research Awards

a. Thank you to the committee members who spent their time blindly reviewing the Research Awards

b. We funded two awards completely and four partially

c. 41 applications were submitted, which was the highest ever for a Fall semester. Last Fall there were 25 applications

d. Only 18 applications were reviewed by the board.

e. Applications were automatically rejected for the following reasons:

i. Incomplete applications

ii. Not blinding the application

f. Some applications were not funded by the committee for the following reasons:

i. Not writing to a general audience

ii. Not clarifying the necessity of funding

iii. Unclear budgets

g. All non-funded applicants are welcome to apply again for the Spring Research Award. If you are concerned about your application please contact Andrea with any questions.

h. [GPAD workshops](#) are starting next week and there will be a grant writing workshop in addition to many other great events.

2. Women's Center Goods Drive

a. We will be working with the Women's Center pantry collecting non-perishable items. There is a specific need for goods for moms on campus. Items would include diapers, wipes, juice boxes, after school snacks, etc. We will be collecting them by the November GradFest. We recommend placing a box in each of your departments.

3. Graduate Studies-GSS Athletics Social

a. Women's Volleyball Game October 25th Sat. 7:00pm in the MAC. The event will be in a private room, there will be free food, and this is a family friendly event so feel free to bring partners, spouses, or children.

4. Rec. Center Updates

a. There has been a concern about rec center funding for grad students on Dissertation II and Thesis II. Andrea has contacted local university rec centers and there are some that fund all full time grad students. This could possibly be brought up next month when Dr. Warren visits.

- i. There was concern from the floor about first contacting chairs, deans, and the rec center itself before we ask Dr. Warren.

D. Research Symposium Chair – Scout McCully – smccull5@kent.edu

1. 30th Annual Graduate Research Symposium (April 3, 2015)
 - Q. Will awardees of the Research and International Travel Award still have to register?
 - A. Yes

E. Information Services Chair – Mark Rhodes – mrhode21@kent.edu

1. Senator Updates
 - a. Please email Mark mrhode21@kent.edu or gss.info@gmail.com with any senator or alternate senator updates or if you are not receiving emails.
2. Social Media
 - a. Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@ksugss](#)) for news! Let GSS know about any new social media accounts your programs or organizations are forming or if there are any events you would like GSS to share. Tweet your successful GSS funded travel and research [@ksugss](#) and we'll Retweet you.

V. New Business

A. Gordon, in a non-voting position, will continue to chair a graduate student committee to discuss the policies of the Domestic Travel Award with the goal of creating a solution to propose to the senate for discussion and ratification by the December meeting. Anyone interested in joining the committee please email Gordon gcromle2@kent.edu

VI. Old Business

VII. Announcements

- A. Next General Senate Meeting: Wednesday, November 5th from 11:00am – 1:00pm
 1. Please be on time since President Warren will begin speaking at 11:00am
- B. General Senate Meetings – Fall 2014
 1. Wednesday, November 5th from 11:00am – 1:00pm KSC 3rd floor Ballroom Balcony.
 2. Wednesday, December 3rd from 11:00am – 1:00pm KSC Room 317
- C. GradFest: Friday, October 3rd from 6:00pm-8:00pm – The Zephyr Pub

VIII. Adjournment 12:22pm – Motion: Political Science; Seconded: Applied Engineering, Sustainability, and Technology