

- I. Call to Order at 11:04am EST.
- II. Roll Call
 - A. Absent: Applied Engineering, Sustainability, and Technology, Communication & Information, Computer Sciences, Digital Sciences, History, Mathematics, Modern & Classical Language Studies, Music, Nursing, Public Health, and Theatre & Dance.
- III. Approval of minutes from October 9, 2020
- IV. Dr. Amoaba Gooden, Interim Vice President, Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (agooden@kent.edu)
 - A. Dr. Gooden shared a presentation about the division's efforts to advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Dr. Gooden discussed the differences between Equality and Equity, provided an overview of the division's organizational chart, and provided an overview of diversity related campus resources. You can find the presentation attached to the minutes email.
- V. Dr. Taléa Drummer-Ferrell, Dean of Students (tdrumme1@kent.edu)
 - A. Dr. Drummer-Ferrell shared that the Kent State Emergency Grant is multi-funded, with the majority of the funding coming from the federal CARES funding, which has now been depleted. Applications are high and the university has engaged in some private fundraising. The Emergency Grant is also a priority for Giving Tuesday and for the Advancement office. Students are clearly still affected by this pandemic and the university is working to make sure to replenish the fund and support its students.
 1. Question from TLC: Is there a new application for the Emergency Grant for Spring 2020?
 2. Dr. Drummer-Ferrell: No, the application is ongoing and not determined by semester. Students can apply for the Grant at any time and can also apply multiple times. The only time they cannot apply is if they have an application pending.
 3. Question from Political Science: Is there a separate application for a Technology Grant?
 4. Dr. Drummer-Ferrell: The Emergency Grant encompasses many areas, including Technology. If you have Technology needs, you can still apply to the Emergency Grant.
 5. Question from Political Science: Can international students apply to the grant without violating their status?
 6. Dr. Drummer-Ferrell: Federal funding has several limitations, but as long as international students are enrolled in a degree granting program, they are eligible to receive private funding. If we receive funding that has restrictions associated with it, we will communicate that.
 7. Question from Kyle Reynolds: Are there any updates about the mental health support efforts? Are we hiring more counselors and are there any plans to hire a counselor specifically for graduate students?
 8. Dr. Dummer-Ferrell: Right now we are enhancing our clinicians available to students. We could potentially double the staffing and we are working on the logistics of what that would look like. We hope to have a more

robust roll out in early spring. We are currently working on enhancing our Telehealth Services for students who live out of state as well. We are also extending our After Hours Careline, but are not planning to have separate counselors for specific populations, with the exception of a Sports Psychologist. Our clinicians are willing and able to adjust to specific student needs.

- B. Dr. Drummer-Ferrell also discussed the university's "Know Before You Go" motto and the testing event that is associated with it, which is taking place on November 15th. If you need to get tested, you can go to any US CVS minute clinic or go to the KIVA.

VI. Executive Board Reports

A. **Executive Chair** – Claire Jackman – cjackma2@kent.edu

1. Faculty Senate Updates

- a) Testing information (see above). It takes about 25 minutes or so to get tested.
- b) If you are going home or traveling during break make sure you know your COVID status before you interact with family and friends.
- c) Congratulations to Melody Tankersley for being appointed the Senior Vice President and Provost.
- d) President Diacon shared that the predicted enrollment for next year is down and also discussed other challenges facing Kent State. Some sacrifices were made, but student success is kept at the focus. Extra cuts could occur, but students remain the priority.
- e) Funding from the state for this current fiscal year has not been finalized.
- f) President Diacon also thanked all of the faculty and staff members for working hard and doing their best to support our students.
- g) Another big topic was technology. Kent State is in the contract stage of signing with Canvas as its new learning management system. Our version of Blackboard is totally outdated and the university will now switch to Canvas. Once negotiations are completed, there will be university wide communication and a lot of technical support available. The transition to Canvas will occur gradually (over about one and a half years) and you will likely be able to move content from your Blackboard courses into Canvas so you do not have to start over completely (at the very least for courses from the previous 5 years).
- h) USG reminded the Senate that with classes going completely remote and students potentially traveling to different states, time differences might be challenging.

2. Rock Policy Updates

- a) The group finalized their proposed policy amendments. They will be brought to the Board of Trustees at their next meeting. The amendments were created with students in mind and in strong collaboration with BUS.

3. Student Leadership Advisory Updates

- a) Most of this meeting was about the "Know Before You Go" campaign and how to engage with off-campus students to make sure they also get tested and are staying safe.

- b) More updates on COVID related strategies will be shared at our General Senate meeting in December.
 - 4. RASP Funding Update
 - a) GSS received \$10,000 from RASP, which is less than in previous years, but more than we expected this year. During New Business in this meeting, all Senators can vote where to put this money.
 - 5. Gradfest Reminder
 - a) Gradfest took place at 7pm on November 13th.
- B. **Executive Vice Chair** – Jordyn Stoll – jstoll7@kent.edu
 - 1. Currently, 241 of 250 Fall Book Awards have been awarded.
 - a) Applications have slowed down significantly.
 - b) Update from 11/19/2020: All 250 Fall Book Awards have been awarded. If you are interested in a book award for the spring, please reach out to Jordyn directly.
 - 2. Committee Reports
 - a) **Public Safety Advisory Committee** (Sohini Bhattacharyya; sbhatta6@kent.edu):
 - i) Division of Parking Services and Transit Services: The services are following all the necessary protocols for safe travel in the buses due to COVID. The parking permit sales were more than expected (initially it was thought that fewer people will be on campus for work). They have also arranged for students to park near their resident halls as many parking lots have open space available due to fewer people being on campus at the same time. Everything has worked smoothly so far with positive feedback from students.
 - ii) Division of Police Services: Due to budget cuts, there was a reduction of 2 full-time officers on campus. As of this semester, no student volunteers have been recruited. There are 2 K9 dogs serving the campus, and their expenditure has been raised by gathering funds as donations. No major incident reported so far on campus. Police are trying to attend to phone calls to resolve problems as much as possible in order to avoid contact due to COVID. In case they need to get into resident halls which are quarantined they have PPE kits to use.
 - iii) Division of Emergency and Special Services: No major incidents reported. Reduction in employees due to budget cuts. They are unable to organize events like "Coffee with the cops" due to COVID restrictions but might think of some kind of virtual or socially distant events. Usually if there is any kind of protest on campus, uniformed cops do not show up at the site in the very first place, however, a team closely monitors the event, and if required police are sent to the spot.
 - iv) Select Criminal Investigation Summaries: There has been an increase in cyber-related crimes due to most of the activities shifting to remote mode. Involves hacking and sexual harassment cases. All the cases have been attended to and are taken care of.

- b) **Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee** (Sarah Sternbach; ssternba@kent.edu) : Department of Biological Sciences has added a new graduate course called Foundations of Neuroscience that is available for both MS and PhD students. The department also changed pre-reqs for their microbial ecology course to allow for more flexibility. The remaining changes in chemistry and geology were for undergraduate students.
- c) **University Accessibility Committee** (Caroline Toth; ctoth14@kent.edu) : Decided to postpone all in-person and previously planned events until Spring/ next year. Website was built- www.kent.edu/sas/disability-awareness-month. Short videos were created of people sharing their disability identity called “Virtual Voices of Disability Experience” to promote a sense of belonging. Discussed Kaltura Reach Video Captioning (request based machine captioning). Since March, there have been over 2,000 requests for video captioning. KSU joined in discussion on leveraging buying power with other schools to acquire statewide contracts on LMSs, captioning tools, and other Accessibility related tools/digital accessibility. There is a digital accessibility team.
- d) **Women's Center Action Committee** (Lindsey Nelson; lnelso26@kent.edu) : Professional Development with Dr. Amoaba Gooden: Presentation on decentralizing diversity, equity and inclusion work across campus. Updates about what different sub-committees were doing since we established committees last month.

C. **Finance Chair** – Maneesh Shukla – mshukla@kent.edu

- 1. DTA update: Fall reimbursement is complete for all 28 applicants (\$5,129).
- 2. SCA update:
 - a) One award in September (\$1,500).
 - b) No applications in October.
 - c) A few new applications for November.
- 3. Allocation of RASP funding options overview

D. **Advocacy Chair** – Anna Solberg – asolberg@kent.edu

- 1. Research Award
 - a) 29 Total Applications
 - i) 17 Awardees (\$31,258)
Some applications were not able to be considered because some award criteria (such as proper blinding procedures) were not met. Anna will rework the blinding criteria to make it more clear.
 - ii) \$53,742 for Spring 2021 RAs
We typically see a larger number of RA applications in the summer.
 - iii) Anna is working to get the new awards, alongside some remaining awards, out in the form of our new upfront payment.
- 2. Anti-Racism Graduate Subcommittee
 - a) The Graduate and Doctoral student subcommittee has now met

and will continue to meet bi-weekly. If there is anything you would like the committee to know or if you think anything in particular should be discussed, let Anna know.

b) Question from English: Can graduate students serve on the committee?

i) Unfortunately not at this time. The subcommittee is set, and was specifically picked by Anna and the other co-chair. However, Anna is always open to hearing what others may think or any input they would like to have with the topic of anti-racism for grad students.

3. Claire and Anna have met with Dr. Tankersley and Dr. Van Dulmen to potentially form a committee across the university to discuss minimum stipends as well as equality across GA positions throughout the university (workload, expectations,...). This has been approved and will likely get started next semester. The planning for this committee has just started, but the plan is to have several graduate students across departments and colleges represented.

E. Research Symposium Chair – Payel Datta – pdatta1@kent.edu

1. The virtual Symposium will be taking place on Microsoft Teams, due to several technological advantages.

2. Our website will be updated by the end of the month and symposium registration will likely open early January.

3. Starting next semester, Payel wants to have regular meetings with Senators to discuss more details.

a) Question from Biomedical Sciences: Should folks email you if they want to be a judge? And can you still be a judge/volunteer if you are participating in the symposium?

i) You will likely be able to volunteer during certain parts of the Symposium while you are not presenting.

ii) Typically, judges are faculty and staff members across campus, not students.

F. Info Services Chair – Maike Amann – gss.info@gmail.com

1. If you have published/presented recently, let us know. We'd like to spotlight you on social media.

2. If you are reaching out to us, please make sure to use the gss.info@gmail.com email address.

3. Make sure to let me know about any senator changes in your department!

4. Join us for Gradfest tonight!

5. Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@KSUGSS](#))

V. Old Business

A. None.

VI. New Business

A. Organizational Funding Request - Fashion

1. The Fashion program just started a few years ago and only has about 10 students in it right now. Fashion requested \$50 for a social event so that second year cohort members can connect to the first year students and share advice and insight. Motion: first from Geology, second by English.

No discussion. Unanimous vote, organization funding was approved.

B. Allocation of the RASP funding

1. Question from Geology: Can we wait to allocate this funding until we know what happens with the software award?
 - a) Claire: Yes, you just need to motion to bring this issue to the table so that the allocation of the RASP funding can be postponed.
2. Motion to allocate the RASP funding to research oriented awards by Psychological Sciences, second from Geology.
3. Motion to table the allocation from Psychological Sciences, second from Anthropology. No discussion. Unanimous vote, motion passes. Allocation of the \$10,000 from RASP is tabled.

C. Ideas for a new award (e.g. Software support)

1. Jordyn suggested that it could be helpful to allocate money to an award tailored to software support, as several students have reached out to Jordyn about needing to purchase software. While you can apply to the SCA, you can only apply to that award once and if the software you need costs \$200 it might not make sense to apply to the SCA.
 - a) Question from Psychological Sciences: Could software purchases be included in the RA?
 - i) Anna: Yes, it can be included in the RA, but you can only apply for this award once per year and we do not have another RA application open until January, which means folks would not get their money until March or so.
 - b) Question from Claire: Kyle, could we adjust an existing award or would we need to create an entirely new award?
 - i) Kyle: We need to double check, we might be able to make it a part of the existing book award index.
 - ii) Jordyn: My only concern is that the book award can only be used once per year, so anyone who has already applied to the award would now not be able to apply for software.
 - c) Comment from the School or Art: A lot of software can now be downloaded through the university so could students use that, instead of having money allocated to software support? If that does not work, we should make a new award so that folks have access to software.
 - i) Jordyn: You are correct, a lot of software is available through the university, but some departments have unique needs.
 - ii) Architecture: The computers at the school do have a lot of licenses, but lots of students cannot come to school as often as they used to, which might be the problem.
 - d) Comment from Fashion: The software support is a great idea, because we definitely see a need for that in our program. Some softwares might be free to download on campus, but not off campus or wherever students live.
 - i) Jordyn: I could work up some guidelines for this award to replace the current book award.
 - ii) Note: You can find out more about which software you can download for free [here](#).
 - e) Claire: Thank you all for your great ideas and input. If we do move

ahead with this kind of award, it will likely not happen until the spring. If you are currently experiencing issues, I would suggest reaching out to IT and get remote desktop set up, which could help.

- f) Question from Psychological Sciences: Is it difficult to create a new award for the software support?
 - i) Claire: It is a bit challenging to create a new index, but if we are able to keep it under the same book award index it should not be too difficult to do.
- g) Jordyn: We will keep it at this for now, but if you have other ideas or suggestions, let me know.
- h) Question from TLC: Students are required to submit a post-award survey after they have purchased books, but what happens for students if the money has gone directly to cover their outstanding bills and they were not able to buy books with the award money?
 - i) Claire: Unfortunately, this situation cannot be fixed for awards that have already been awarded, but we are working really hard to make sure that in the future most GSS awards will not go towards paying your outstanding balance.
 - ii) Kyle: The university is working on an exception for funds that are used for travel and research so that those funds are not used towards students' outstanding balance. This is not fully in place yet, but will hopefully come soon. Unfortunately, exceptions for book awards or software are unlikely.
 - iii) Jordyn: Students whose award went towards outstanding balances in the bursar account should reach out to me. The survey deadline can be extended so that receipts can be submitted later. We will be very flexible.
- i) Question from Political Science: Is there a way to allocate funds for international students over the summer?
 - i) Anna: I am not sure that is possible. Funding might exist on a departmental basis, but a lot of GA positions are only for the academic year, which can be challenging for many students, especially for international students.
 - ii) Kyle: Since GSS is primarily funded through student fees, it is difficult to allocate financial support to help individual students (it works for awards, because there is a competitive application process). Setting up a fund to support the payment of bills or anything like that will not be an option, but it could be possible to set up a merit based award, although it would be very challenging to do.
 - iii) Claire: GSS funds cannot be used to pay someone's paycheck, it has to go towards something related to your career or research. However, the new Graduate Assistantship review committee is planning to talk about the possibility of graduate students getting paid during Fall, Spring, and Summer, instead of just Fall and Spring. We hope to address this in the future.
 - iv) Anna: I would recommend talking to your department as

well to see if they have any additional funding opportunities or paid work you can engage in over the summer. You can also look into applying for a University Fellowship.

- j) If you are interested in helping Jordyn plan what the software award might look like, reach out to her and let her know!

VII. Announcements

- A. None.

VIII. Thoughts/Concerns

- A. The new academic year has started and COVID-19 has caused us to make many changes across the university. If there are any important thoughts or concerns you want to share with the senate, please take this opportunity to share them.

- B. No thoughts/concerns were shared.

IX. Adjournment

- A. Motion to adjourn by Political Science, second from Architecture. Unanimous vote, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:44pm.