

I. Call to Order at 11:02am

II. Roll Call

- A. Absent: Aeronautics, Architecture, Communication and Information, Computer Sciences, Digital Science, History, Lifespan Development, Music, Nursing, Philosophy, and Sociology.

III. Approval of minutes from November 13th, 2020

- A. Motion from Political Science, second from Psychological Sciences. No discussion. Minutes were approved.

IV. President Todd Diacon

- A. President Diacon started by thanking the Senate and the Senators for all of the work they have been doing this semester. He then provided an overview of how the Fall semester turned out. He expressed his gratitude for the College of Public Health, where several key individuals were instrumental in developing a strong plan for Kent State.
- B. President Diacon explained that the university originally only tested symptomatic individuals, due to limited testing supplies. However, by early October more testing supplies became available and the university was able to offer testing to asymptomatic individuals as well as provide sample testing. To President Diacon's knowledge, there were no incidents of transmissions in classrooms, which seems to be a nationwide trend.
- C. For the Spring semester, the university plans to test all residential students as they move back to campus and then twice per week throughout the semester. Additionally, sample testing will be conducted for all on-campus employees and for off-campus students taking face-to-face classes. The level of the sample testing will be adjusted to the county positivity rate (which is currently around 8%).
- D. President Diacon does not have a lot of information about vaccinations yet. The Public Health Authority has asked KSU to make the Field house available, which the university will do. As of right now, university leadership does not know when vaccines will arrive.
- E. Looking towards the Spring, the university's primary concern is regular testing and they have stocked a lot of tests to ensure that this will continue to go smoothly.
- F. Questions:
 - 1. Claire: How is the university's budget doing? Should we expect more cuts?

- a. President Diacon explained that the budget for the fiscal year 2021 has unfolded the way the university expected it to. The biggest surprise has been the decline in revenues in Residence Services and Dining. The university budgeted for about 70% occupancy and ended up having 48% occupancy in the Fall and 30% in the Spring. This results in a deficit of about \$10 Million. While this was unexpected, President Diacon is confident that the university's conservative spending in other areas will help balance this out. The reduction in occupancy occurred after many classes announced that they would be completely remote. As of right now, President Diacon does not foresee more cuts in this fiscal year, which runs through June 30th, 2021.
2. Biological Sciences: Will graduate students be selected for the random testing if they are not taking classes, but are Teaching Assistants?
 - a. President Diacon will confirm, but graduate students should also be in the testing group.
3. Biomedical Sciences: Would the Field house be used to provide vaccinations to students and staff of the university or would it be used for all residents of Portage county?
 - a. President Diacon explained that it will not be up to the university to determine who gets vaccinations first. Vaccinations will likely not be widely available in the summer, but once the university knows more, they will communicate it.
4. Political Science: Will the travel restriction be lifted for next semester?
 - a. President Diacon directed graduate students to connect with the Provost, as they will make that decision. Note: Claire will ask Provost Dr. Melody Tankersley the next time they connect.
5. Public Health: We are excited to be a part of this and appreciate your shoutout!
 - a. President Diacon again emphasized how grateful the university is to have a College of Public Health. Additionally, President Diacon expressed his gratitude for the two co-chairs of Kent State's pandemic response team: Associate Provost Dr. van Dulmen and Associate Vice President of Student Affairs Julie Volcheck.

V. Executive Board Reports

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

1. Faculty Senate Meeting Updates

- a. The most recent Faculty Senate Meeting took place on 12/14/2020. They discussed the educational policy subcommittees (Academic Policy, Academic Calendars, Transfer Credit, Fiscal Impact Statement, and International Partnerships and Collaborations) and the work they will be doing.

- b. Thank you to everyone who expressed interest in serving on the Search Committee for the Dean of the College of the Arts as well as Nursing. The graduate student perspective is very valuable during this search process!
2. GSS Spring Meetings
- a. Friday, February 5
 - b. Friday, March 5
 - c. Friday, April 2
 - d. Friday, May 7
 - e. All meetings will take place from 11am-1pm.
 - f. **Reminder:** Having an alternate Senator is really important to make sure that you are represented at the Senate meetings and remain in good standing. This ensures that your Academic Unit is eligible for GSS funding and also allows you to advocate for your constituents. If you are graduating and can no longer serve as a Senator, please email us at gss.info@gmail.com and let us know who will be taking over for you.
3. Final GradFest of the semester on 12/11/2020.

B. Executive Vice Chair – Jordyn Stoll – jstoll7@kent.edu

1. Committee Reports

- a. University Accessibility Committee (Tiah Wingate; twingate@kent.edu): November was Disability Awareness month, so the efforts taken during the month (including disability is diversity training) was reviewed. Also, of note, there will now be a permanent Disability Awareness tab on the SAS webpage. Also discussed the upcoming 2021 university climate study, the importance of race as a focus, but also the need to keep those with disabilities a focus (they were a major focus of the 2016 study). Capital requests are coming for approval to continue to address ADA compliance (i.e. bathroom stalls) in facilities across campus. Discussion of the need to explore ways to insure the accessibility of digital material universally with faculty created content and web content in general (via faculty supports as well as consequences for not meeting accessibility).
- b. Arts & Sciences College Curriculum Committee (Sara Sternbach; ssternba@kent.edu): Pan-African studies will be establishing a new graduate minor in Race, Gender, and Social Justice; Biology is establishing a new statistics course and career/professional skills course for MA & PhD students, and is changing the MA to allow for concentrations
- c. Climate Steering Committee: If you are interested in testing the climate survey before it goes out to the entire campus community, please contact me!

2. Spring Award Committee
 - a. We have formed a committee to create guidelines for an award for the Spring semester to replace the Book Award/ITA, since the travel ban will likely not be lifted. As a result, we want to create a new award to make sure we can support graduate students with the leftover funds. If you want to participate in this process, please email Jordyn or gss.info@gmail.com.

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

1. SCA update for November and Fall 2020
 - a. We approved 4 applicants for the fall semester. Total amount approved: \$4,165. We allocated \$30,000 to this award and the remainder of this allocation will roll over to the Spring semester.
2. DTA application for Spring 2021
 - a. We have \$36,000 left which will roll over to the Spring semester DTA.
 - b. Spring DTA application will open on January 10, 2021 and close on February 1, 2021.
3. SCA for Fall 2020 is now closed and will open for the Spring semester on January 18, 2021.
4. Question:
 - a. English: If someone participates in more than one conference can that still be covered with one DTA application?
 - i. Maneesh explained that students can apply for one DTA per semester, but the executive board can have a conversation about how to navigate this.
 - ii. Note: After reviewing the bylaws, we have decided that you need to submit multiple applications if you are planning to use DTA money for multiple conferences/events. You can review the bylaws [here](#). Also, remember that the DTA is not limited to conference registration - it can also be used for professional development activities!

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

1. Research Award Updates
 - a. Spring Application Opens: January 18, 2021
 - b. Spring Application Deadline: March 8, 2021
 - c. Due to the change to an upfront award system, we have made some changes to the application. Please make sure you are reading everything really closely to ensure that your application is complete. If you have any questions, please reach out to us.
2. Anti-Racism Task Force Updates
 - a. A town hall was held on 12/10/2020. You can read more about Kent State's Anti-Racism efforts [here](#).

- b. During the town hall, each committee shared updates and insights. The graduate student committee has been focusing on both anti-black racism and racist incidents targeting international students. You can find a list of updates from the subcommittee [here](#).
- c. If you have questions, concerns, or things you want to share, please let Anna know.
- 3. Minimum Stipend/Graduate Student Expectations Committee Update
 - a. The committee will start next semester. The committee wants to make sure that as many students as possible are represented. More information to come next semester.
- 4. Question:
 - a. Psychological Sciences: If an individual does not use all of the award money they were given, do they have to give it back?
 - i. Anna will add some guidance about this to the website. The board usually approaches this on a case by case basis and as long as you are addressing the discrepancy in the post award survey we can often work with you. Communication throughout this process is really important so we can make sure that the students are following through on what they said they were going to do and how they are using their money.
 - ii. Claire emphasized that we trust that students are putting their award money to good use and Jordyn added that the post award survey allows you to explain if an award was not able to meet your needs. Filling out the survey allows us to make sure that the awards meet students' needs.

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

- 1. The tentative Symposium 2021 schedule has been added to our [website](#).
- 2. You can sign up to present [here](#). The deadline to sign up is January 31, 2021.
- 3. Tentative dates for Spring Meetings for the 2021 Symposium:
 - a. January 29, 11am
 - b. February 26, 11am
 - c. March 12, 11am
 - d. March 26, 11am
 - e. Ideally, all Senators should attend these meetings so you can have input in the Symposium, let us know what your department/constituents needs are, and get important updates for your constituents. If you cannot attend however, we understand. Look out for an email from Payel in the near future about this.

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

1. If you have published/presented recently or have other fun things to share with the graduate student body, let us know. We'd like to spotlight you on social media.
2. Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@KSUGSS](#))

V. Old Business

- A. Motion to allocate RASP funding (\$10K) to research-oriented awards. No motion. This item remains in Old Business.

VI. New Business

- A. Motion to amend the GSS Bylaws to reflect that Applied Engineering, Sustainability, and Technology has been renamed Aeronautics and Engineering.
- B. Motion from Psychological Sciences, second from English. No discussion. Motion passes.

VII. Announcements

- A. No announcements.

VIII. Thoughts/Concerns

- A. Thank you for a successful semester and for all of the hard work you put into your role as Senators and as graduate students in general. We look forward to the new year and what else this Senate can accomplish!

IX. Adjournment

- A. Motion from Anthropology, second from Political Science. No discussion. Meeting adjourned at 12:03pm.