

- I. Call to Order at 10:01 a.m.
- II. Roll Call
- III. Address from President Warren
  - A. Pres. Warren thanked the Senate for hosting her. She shared that we have been part of the journey of lifting up Graduate Studies and a distinctive part of KSU. She thanked Mark Rhodes for being a strong leader for the GSS and advocate for grad students.
  - B. Pres. Warren has two doctoral degrees. The first one, an EdD, was (in her words) relatively simple because she had a steady stream of income during that time. The second, a PhD in physiology, was a change of pace for her, and she had to take on a lot of debt to do it. The only way she could do all of this was to take on multiple assistantships, up to three at one time--despite this being prohibited by the regulations of her university. When Pres. Warren was a dean of education, several students came to her with the internal problems of their dissertation committees. Because of these experiences, she feels a kind of kinship with the unique struggles grad students.
  - C. She attested that graduate students are indeed more at risk for poor mental health. Perhaps some feelings of helplessness or isolation, or a lack of direction, contribute to this crisis. Your mental health must take precedence over everything else. Therefore, KSU is putting things in place, such as hiring more psychological counselors.
  - D. Pres. Warren personally believes that people do best when they feel connected and supported and when they feel that they have some kind of work-life balance. Space like the study space in Cartwright Hall have been made to facilitate this through a quiet but social space. Such things are beyond seeing a psychologist or therapist, and she hopes that KSU continues to set aside spaces like this. One of the main problems confronting graduate students is their lack of power in relation to faculty.
  - E. Pres. Warren wishes that KSU could pay graduate students what they deserve because the institution could not function without us. The large disparity among the stipends of different programs is not unusual in comparison to other universities. These discrepancies arise because resources available to departments vary greatly. She has suggested doing a centralized review in stipend policies across academic units. However, she emphasized that pay levels in salaries vary across departments for tenure-track faculty, and this is mirrored in the stipend levels for graduate students. She advised to keep in mind that KSU is going through a challenging revenue time (with about 2000 fewer students enrolled this year compared to the previous academic year). In her view, if a minimum stipend level were instituted, this would mean that there will be fewer assistantships as a result of this. Some stopgaps have been put in to patch over shortfalls in funding (e.g., in the DTA budget). Such patches can be found in the future if different lines of the budget are in need of those supplements. The issue over the Recreation Center is somewhat related to mental health. This is still a work in progress, but Pres. Warren and Mark

Rhodes are still trying to fix that.

- F. Comment: Multiple studies indicate that ~18% of grad students suffer major depressive episodes during grad education. The fact that the University President takes times to confront this issue means a lot.
- G. Q: The Writing Commons has been working on reaching out to grad students. Maybe a specific writing center for graduate students would be helpful.
  - 1. Response: Very good idea. Pres. Warren asked Dean Tankersley to remember this idea for future initiatives.
- H. Q: KSU seems to have a strong sense of belongingness, but the announcement of extracurricular events is really geared toward undergraduates. Perhaps improving this could help graduate students feel that sense of interconnection seen among undergraduates.
  - 1. Response: Great suggestion. The main challenges would be, What would be grad students be interested in attending? Back Squirrel Fest seems like an unlikely kind of event for grad students. What about a graduate-student reception night at a basketball game or theater or orchestral performances? Special features like that would help to build community and help graduate students feel less isolated.
  - 2. Follow-up: Graduate students currently have to pay for admission to some on-campus events (e.g., orchestra concerts), whereas undergraduates don't.
  - 3. Response: Pres. Warren worries that graduate students can be easily kept out of sight and out of mind, but problematizing issues like these is a good first step.
- I. Q: International graduate students compose about 40% of the total population. There are currently graduate student-specific activities that are not very multicultural in nature (e.g., Grad Fest), and the multicultural activities are predominantly for undergrads. There should be more such activities targeted at graduate students.
  - 1. Response: Excellent suggestion.
- J. Q: Graduate students are responsible for a substantial amount of the teaching done on the Kent campus. However, there are currently no teaching awards for graduate students, while there are multiple such awards for faculty.
  - 1. Response from Dean Tankersley: Some Academic Units have such awards. She is currently meeting with administrators to develop some kind of structure for making these awards more of a university-wide phenomenon.
  - 2. Response from Pres. Warren: There's no doubt that such things are good for professional development. Great suggestion.
- K. Q: There is currently no SANE nurse on campus or even in Portage County. The closest one is in Akron.
  - 1. Response: Not familiar with what SANE nurses are.
  - 2. Response from Carolyn Good, chair of the Health & Wellness Committee: There is a roadblock from Portage County to getting one of these in Kent.

3. Response from Tim Rose: Right now, the Portage County prosecutor would not accept evidence collected by a SANE nurse hosted on the Kent State campus or really any non-hospital location. This is primarily because of his perception that any evidence collected outside of a hospital setting, even by a SANE nurse, is open to legal challenges (due to the risk of evidence tampering during the process which often takes several hours). However, we are not aware that there are any legal prohibitions to hosting a SANE nurse on campus or having them collect evidence of sexual assault.
4. Response from Pres. Warren: Good feedback. This is a perfect moment to bring this up. Willis Walker is looking at Title IX practice to ensure that KSU is abiding by federal guidelines and best practices for university campuses.

L. Q: Are the budgetary shortfalls here at KSU part of a national problem?

1. Response: There are fewer high-school graduates and fewer such graduates from families that would consider college a viable option. Not all graduate from high-school with proper financial means. A group called Jobs Ohio suggests that in the next two decades, there will be more than 600,000 fewer 15-64 year-olds in Ohio. The Midwest is among the hardest hit areas. The elevating younger demographics are in more diverse areas, such as Miami, Los Angeles, Dallas, etc. There are also fewer international students choosing to study in the USA, with a concomitant growth in those students in other countries like Canada. Pres. Warren was not sure that KSU number will ever stabilize back to 30,000 students.

M. Suggestion: Larger universities tend to garner undergraduates with famous names in different departments. At KSU, we should be investing in undergraduates pedagogically, especially in more service-oriented departments. Knowledge about the Center for Teaching (CTL) and Learning is currently very word-of-mouth among graduate students. They need to be publicized among graduate students with higher teaching loads.

1. Response: So important. Part of isolation comes from feeling unsupported in your teaching. It would be very doable for the CTL to carve out a space for grad students. At Pres. Warren's former institution (Virginia Commonwealth University), there was the option for a certificate in teaching and pedagogy, which was very well received. KSU may be somewhat unique in having such a high proportion of grad students who teach as part of their assistantships.
2. Response from Dean Tankersley: There are options available through GPAD. Ideas for sessions along these lines should be sent to Kyle Reynolds at [kreynol3@kent.edu](mailto:kreynol3@kent.edu).
3. Response from Pres. Warren: KSU is unique among our peer institutions by having so many more graduate-student instructors, TAs, and instructors-of-record. What if KSU required a monthly teaching seminar for graduate students where instructors can share best practices or for some kind of professional development?

- N. Comment: I recently had to go to the Office of Global Education (OGE) for an extension on something. OGE does not appear to have an understanding that graduate needs differ from undergraduates. They don't seem to understand the importance of getting research done within a finite period of time.
1. Response: Good suggestion. Graduate students are at the mercy of their committee with regard to their timeline.
- O. Q: Say a grad student is ABD, teaches classes, and receives a stipend. Is this person an employee or a student?
1. Response from Dean Tankersley: Depends on how this person is hired or onboarded. An ABD student can be hired as adjunct professor, for instance, which can lead to employee status.
  2. Follow-up: So there is a way for a student to enter into employee status even if the work being done would be very similar?
  3. Response from Pres. Warren: This can be negotiated with the department when contracts are drawn up and signed.
- P. Concern: I appreciate the emphasis on mental health and other graduate-student issues. However, founding new centers, making new awards, etc. kind of miss the point. Money is limited, and that rarefied resource should instead be directed to stipends rather than new initiatives like the ones discussed so far today.
1. Response: Grateful for this suggestion. Money is so important, especially for graduate students. Pres. Warren did push back a bit by saying that increases in stipends would likely mean reducing the total number of assistantships available.
- Q. Q: Is there were a way to increase the availability or number scholarships?
1. Response: KSU awards more than \$68M in financial aid, which includes scholarships. Advance officer dedicated to graduate studies may solve the problem that we less frequently see individuals giving scholarships for grad students than for undergraduates. Part of financial dilemma lies with departments because of KSU's RCM model for the budget.
  2. Response from Mark Rhodes: He is having ongoing conversations with Division of Institutional Advancement to fix this problem.
- R. Suggestion: Would be nice to have some kind of resource for graduate students wanting to look outside of academia for employment, maybe through the [Career Exploration and Development Center](#)?
1. Response: Good idea. Pres. Warren asked Dean Tankersley to write down this idea.
- S. BGSA: Lack of diversity. KSU was [awarded fourth leading employer of diverse professors](#). This is something that black graduate students don't see, though. More faculty of color should be hired, specifically in tenure-track positions. This is important for helping students to seek positions like those for themselves.
1. Response: Pres. Warren appreciated this being brought up. In her second year at KSU, she dedicated \$1M to go toward addressing this problem, but it's still not enough. Forbes awards annually top employers of diversity. KSU was named the #1 college and #4 organization in the

whole country, but this doesn't mean that this success is evident to students on campus.

IV. Approval of minutes from February 1, 2019

V. Executive Board Reports

A. **Executive Chair** – Mark Rhodes – [mrhode21@kent.edu](mailto:mrhode21@kent.edu)

1. Update about Student Affairs Advisory Group

- All student organizations send their presidents to talk about things at these meeting. The main question at this meeting was, How can student experience be improved outside the classroom? Most of the discussion catered to undergraduate needs. However, one topic which did overlap, led Mark to think that having some type of fellowship like a graduate-student leader forum during the summer or during Graduate Student Orientation could be helpful.

2. Presidential Search Update

- Mark could not share any details about the goings-on of the committee. The committee is still active. Any feedback can be send to Mark via email.

3. Official opening of nominations for GSS Elections

- In order for a person to be considered for one of the Executive Board positions, Mark needs a half-page of description of justification which will be sent to the Senators, along with that person's CV. Nominations and materials are due by 11:59 p.m. on March 29. At that point, Mark will assemble a packet of all of these materials to distribute to the GSS. The nominees will each have two minutes to speak at the April 12 meeting prior to voting.
- Q: Are there criteria that would exclude international students or TAs?
  - Response: No one can exceed 28 hours of work per week logged in the KSU system. For example, you could have a full TAship (20 hours of work) and still be on the board, which is coded as 5 hours of work. This includes summer hours.
  - Response from Dean Tankersley: International students check the stipulations of their visa requirements, regardless of what has been done in the past.

B. **Executive Vice Chair** – Timothy Rose – [trose16@kent.edu](mailto:trose16@kent.edu)

1. [International Travel Award](#) (ITA)

- Tim has enough people on his review committee, but he will gladly have anyone else who might be interested in serving on that committee.
- Tim gently remind constituents that travel outside the United States should submit to the ITA. If a student has not received confirmation at the time of the ITA deadline *but it is likely they will be accepted*, a faculty letter would be sufficient proof.

2. [Committee Representation](#)

- Tim is currently working on filling out full committee-representation list for next Vice Executive Chair.

3. Committee Reports

- Alyx Weaver from the Accessibility Committee: This committee is talking about captioning for powerpoints or other teaching media. Captions are really important for accessibility, and student teachers should probably integrate this into their practice.
- Carolyn Good from the Health & Wellness Committee: They are planning a program tentatively for March 16 about eating healthy and preparing cost-effective meals. They will be sending out information in the near future. There will be only about 25 spots because of space restrictions in the kitchens. They are also working on a self-care workshop for May, which is Mental Health awareness month.

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

1. [Domestic Travel Award](#) (DTA)

- All complete applications were awarded. There were 190 total DTA applications. While the required \$94,360 exceeded the DTA budget, Xin and the Executive Board were able to transfer funds to fill this deficit.
- Xin noted some Academic Units that were consistently high performers in the DTA: Psychological Sciences (43 this Spring, 37 last Spring), Geography (15 this semester), and English (13 this semester)
- Xin also listed some departments notable for their increased efforts to apply for the DTA: Liquid Crystal Institute (2 last year to 10 this year), and Philosophy (increasing from 0 to 3 DTAs).
- She also noted some departments where no DTA applications were received this semester: History, Modern & Classical Language Studies, and Theater & Dance. Xin is very interested in knowing some ways that the GSS can better serve these Academic Units. Suggestions by email would be welcome.

2. [Special Contingency Award](#) (SCA)

- For this round, the following people were awarded funding:
  - Manasi Agrawal from biomedical Sciences was awarded \$530 for attending workshop in Cincinnati.
  - Alex Yaw from biomedical Sciences was awarded \$395 for conference travel to Israel
  - Rachel Steele from Health Sciences was awarded \$310 for conference travel to Cincinnati.
  - Erica Hoosic from Art was awarded \$265 for conference travel to Germany.
- The new SCA application opened today (March 1) and will close on March 22 at 11:59 p.m.
- The SCA committee would love to have more volunteers, as

they meet monthly to decide the outcomes of each SCA round. Anyone interested should contact Xin by email.

3. Budget update (see Appendix A)

- Xin went over the handout she gave to the whole Senate.
- Q: Why has no additional funding been given to the ITA in this budget proposal?
  - Response from Tim Rose: Currently, the ITA has a lot more than has been historically in this budget. With all projections, Tim expects to be able to fund all quality applications. He perceives no need for more funds in this budget line.
- Q: Can students submit more than one application for the DTA or the ITA?
  - Response: Students can receive one DTA every semester. If a student wants to attend more than one conference, they can submit multiple apps, but they would only receive one.
  - Response from Tim Rose: Students can only *receive* one per academic year. An applicant can submit more than one app, but only one would be able to be awarded.
- Motion to approve the budget proposal as written by Public Health, second by Sociology
  - Vote passed unanimously with no abstentions.

D. **Advocacy Chair** – Mitch Powers – [mpower16@kent.edu](mailto:mpower16@kent.edu)

1. [Research Award](#) (RA) application is open until March 4 at 11:59 p.m.

- Q: What should the application focus on?
  - A: Applicants should contact Mitch by email with these queries. There is a hard page limit at four pages for the body of the proposal. Applicants should focus on methods just enough to explain *simply* what they are doing, but they should not dwell on the methods because the proposal needs to be understandable to a general audience. The impact on graduate student is paramount in the eyes of the committee.
- Q: How important is the IRB or IACUC approval?
  - A: We can't fund research that needs institutional review but does not yet have this certification. Extensions may be possible if the applicant contacts Mitch, but only in extenuating circumstances. People in those positions should contact Mitch by email.

2. Call for volunteers to serve on RA review committee

- Mitch has a balanced committee assembled. Anyone else wanting to participate should contact him by email.

3. Update about [NAGPS Legislative Action Days](#) (LAD)

- Will have more information at the April GSS General Meeting.

E. **Research Symposium Chair** – Danielle French – [dfrenc12@kent.edu](mailto:dfrenc12@kent.edu)

1. Statistics for the registration for the [Graduate Research Symposium](#)

- After removing the duplicates and incomplete registration submissions, we have 88 oral presentations (~22 sessions), 9 oral sessions, 117 posters, and 4 performances. Last year, we had 16 oral sessions, 143 posters, 6 artist exhibits, 10 performances. In terms of oral presentations/sessions, we are good, but posters, arts, and performances are significantly lower this year.
  - Q: For people who submitted their own sessions, who will be the chair?
    - A: The person who submitted the application will be the chair. If things need to be switched around, people should talk to Danielle over email.
2. Schedule revision for the Symposium
    - For the keynote address, the start time was originally at 7:00 p.m. on April 5 in Cartwright Hall, but it will now be at 6:00 p.m. on the same day.
  3. Call for *immediate* volunteers for the Symposium committee
    - Danielle has only two volunteers for her committee, but she needs more. Anyone interested should reach out to her *ASAP*. These volunteers are *essential* for the success of the Symposium.

F. **Info Services Chair** – Morgan Chaney – [gss.info@gmail.com](mailto:gss.info@gmail.com)

1. Call for volunteers for the Student Technology Panel, organized by the [Division of Information Technology](#)
2. Gathering information on server usage by KSU graduate students
  - Morgan needs to know about **how many graduate students** currently use, or have a need to use, resources on the KSU computing cluster. He also needs to know **what sort of work** these students are doing.
  - Please send Morgan this information by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, March 7.
3. If anyone has any recent publications or if anything else noteworthy is happening around your departments (e.g., events, awards), they should send them to Morgan by email. He will share them on the GSS social media.
4. Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@KSUGSS](#))

V. **New Business**

A. **Organizational Funding Requests**

1. English is requesting \$50 to host a Symposium on April 12 from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
  - Motion to accept this request by Philosophy, seconded by Lifespan Development & Educational Sciences
    - Passed unanimously, no abstentions
2. Philosophy is requesting \$50 to host a grad-student conference on 3/9.
  - Motion to accept by Geology, second by Chemistry &



## Biochemistry

- Passed unanimously, no abstentions

### VI. Announcements

- A. Look for an email soon for the Senator Census
- B. Dissertation Boot Camps are scheduled for the dates below, and [registration is also required](#). These events cost \$40 per attendee, and the cost covers all meals and a stainless steel travel mug.
  1. March 15-17, 2019 (*currently full*)
  2. April 26-28, 2019
- C. [GPAD workshops](#) will be on the first weekend in March.
- D. Graduate Student Appreciation Week will be the week of the Graduate Research Symposium. This will include an awards banquet, which is still being planned, and it will honor GSS Senators among those recognized at this event.
- E. Grad Fest will be held on Friday, March 1 (i.e., today), at Dominick's in downtown Kent from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.
  1. Mark polled the Senators for their opinions on three options for April's Grad Fest. Bowling won.
- F. The remaining Fall General Meetings will be on the following dates:
  1. April 12, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. in the Kent Student Center, Room 306
  2. May 3, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. in the Kent Student Center, Room 310
- G. Nomination for the Graduate Trustee are now open until 5:00 p.m. on March 8. Anyone interested in knowing more about this position is welcome to contact Jessica Peck, the current Student Trustee, at [jpeck12@kent.edu](mailto:jpeck12@kent.edu).
  1. Q: What was the application and interview process like?
    - A: One letter of rec from a faculty, one from outside KSU about character references, and a CV. Interviews will occur on April 10. Governor DeWine makes the final decision for the Student Trustee after a phone interview with his office.

### VII. Adjournment at 12:02

- A. Motion by Communication & Information, seconded by Chemistry & Biochemistry

Appendix A: Proposed budget increases for AY 2018-2019

INDEX	ORIGINAL BUDGET AY 18 – 19	INCREASE REQUESTS	UPDATED BUDGET AY 18 – 19
<b>Research Grant (220613)</b> Research Awards	\$ 81,000.00	\$ 30,000.00 <sup>1</sup>	\$ 111,000.00
<b>General Operating (220614)</b> Domestic Travel Award	\$ 248,596.07 \$ 198,000.00	\$ 10,000 <sup>2</sup>	\$ 263,596.07 \$ 208,000.00
Operating Expenses	\$ 28,000.00		\$ 28,000.00
Special Contingency Award	\$ 13,500.00		\$ 13,500.00
Flex Fund	\$ 4,096.07	\$ 5,000 <sup>3</sup>	\$ 9,096.07
NAGPS	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 5,000.00
<b>Activity</b>	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 5,000.00
<b>Student Leadership (220616)</b> Executive board	\$ 25,000.00		\$ 25,000.00
<b>Research Symposium (220617)</b>	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 10,000	\$ 41,000.00
<b>International Travel Grant (220618)</b> ITA Awards	\$ 49,500.00		\$ 49,500.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 440,096.07	\$55,000.00	\$ 495,096.07

<sup>1</sup> Additional 15 full awards.

<sup>2</sup> \$5,360 from Summer was taken to fund more Spring. With additional \$10,000, Summer can fund up to 89 full awards.

<sup>3</sup> Technology Committee: \$2,000. Health & Wellness Committee: \$3,000