

- I. Call to Order at 10:04 a.m.
- II. Roll Call
 - A. Absent Senators: Anthropology, Economics, Theater & Dance
 - B. Absent Executives: Finance Chair, Information Services Chair
- III. Approval of minutes from July 10, 2018
- IV. Introductions by the GSS Executive Board
 - A. The Executive Chair gave an overview of the GSS for the sake of the new Senators present. He described the roles and responsibilities of Senators, especially as they are outlined in the Senator Contract. As soon as possible, this document should be signed by the Senator, his or her Department Chair (or equivalent head of the Academic Unit), and his or her Graduate Coordinator.
 - B. All members of the Executive Board introduced themselves, except for the Finance and Information Services Chairs, who were absent. Dean Melody Tankersley also introduced herself, as did Kyle Reynolds (Director of Student Services, Division of Graduate Studies) and Lana Whitehead (Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies and Director of Graduate Student Admissions).
 - C. Each Senator briefly introduced him- or herself.
- V. Kimberly Rufra, Director of [Recreational Services](#)
 - A. Director Rufra thanked the Senate for having her. She emphasized that Recreation Services wants as many people as possible to use the Recreation Center. She applauded the Executive Chair and others for their persistence in gaining more access for Dissertation II graduate students.
 - B. Director Rufra gave an overview of the funding structure for Recreational Services, which is mainly based on enrollment. In particular, a restructuring of student fees in 2008 has led to the recent issues with GSS--namely, that Dissertation II graduate students, and part-time undergraduate students, have not been given access to the Recreation Center despite having some of their General Fee earmarked for Recreation Services.
 - C. In discussion with Vice President Shay Little, Director Rufra has resolved to correct such inequities in the funding structure for Recreation Services over the next academic year. Therefore, a pilot program has been introduced this year for Dissertation II graduate students. Instead of having to pay \$70/semester (as was the case last year), these students will pay \$35/semester.
 - D. Director Rufra solicited the Senate for help in gathering information on other MAC, peer, and aspirational institutions to find a more equitable solution. Anyone interested in working with her on this should contact her at krufra@kent.edu.
 - E. Questions
 1. Do you expect a change for graduate students at the *master's* level who are taking fewer than 6 credit-hours?
 - Rufra: We are trying to put all KSU students in the same situation. We are working toward all students having access if

they have 5 or more credit-hours. We want things to be fair for all students, including how much money each student is paying for access to the Recreation Center.

2. Do you see this going in the same direction as Student Legal Services, where students choose to opt in?
 - Rufra: That is one option to consider, but I would naturally not want to see a situation where we are receiving less funding. Other institutions are exploring models like the one you proposed.
3. The Advocacy Chair encouraged Senators to broadcast this opportunity widely so that this pilot program is a success.
4. The Executive Chair enlisted the help of the Health & Wellness Committee (chaired by Carolyn Good) to help Director Rufra with easing this program and correcting the inequities.

VI. Executive Board Reports

A. **Executive Chair** – Mark Rhodes – mrhode21@kent.edu

1. Temporary University-Wide GSS Committee Representation
 - University Policies Committee
 - This committee will begin meeting this semester to propose changes to [Academic Policies](#). Much of the focus of this committee deals with undergraduates, but Mark would like make sure that any policies that are problematic for graduate students are corrected. Any suggestions for this should be sent to him by email.
 - Dean of University Libraries Search Committee
 - The GSS has put forward three graduate students to sit on the search committee for the next Dean of University Libraries. Only one of them will be chosen, and he or she will be the GSS representative in that group.

B. **Executive Vice Chair** – Timothy Rose – trose16@kent.edu

1. University Committee Representation
 - Tim gave a short overview on graduate student representation on university committees.
 - Tim is now looking for primary representatives for the following committees:
 - University Accessibility Committee
 - University Student Research Council
 - University Council on Technology
 - Student Health Advisory Committee
 - College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee
 - Note: Must be a member of the College of Arts and Sciences

2. International Travel Award (ITA)

- Tim gave a short overview of the [International Travel Award](#) (see the guidelines on the linked webpage).
- Application for the ITA is now open, and it will close on October 15 at 11:59 p.m. The travel dates covered by this award are January 14, 2019 through August 22, 2019.
- Tim is now looking for representatives for the ITA Committee. These committee members are the people who actually review the ITA applications and make the decisions about who receives the awards. It is therefore important for this committee to be well-rounded. In addition, individual people and their Academic Units stand to benefit from participating on this committee because of the knowledge gained from being part of the group.
- Question: Are applicants allowed to sit on the committee?
 - Answer: No. You may not be on the committee if you are in the current pool of applicants.
- Question: How do you decide the composition of the committee?
 - Answer: I look at the Academic Units for those initially volunteer, and if this is a group lacking in a general category (e.g., fine arts, hard sciences), I then reach out to Senators or other groups to correct this bias.
- Question: What is the time commitment for sitting on this committee?
 - Answer: I would estimate a maximum of 7 hours over 2-3 weeks, although it would likely be less for most people.

C. Finance Chair – Xin Hong – xhong1@kent.edu

1. Because Xin was absent, the Executive Chair (Mark Rhodes) gave her report.
2. Proposal for the Academic Year 2018-2019 budget
 - Mark passed out the proposed budget; if anyone would like to view this draft, they should contact the Finance Chair by email (xhong1@kent.edu). As of this meeting, the GSS has no approved budget because the numbers for graduate-student enrollment have not been finalized, and the GSS's budget is based on this number. This budget proposal has been made by the Finance, Executive, and Administrative Services Chairs with input from the rest of the Executive Board. We need to approve an ad hoc budget for the Domestic Travel Award (DTA) and the first round of the Special Contingency Award (SCA) in order to have money to give those applicants because the deadlines for those have already passed.
 - Mark requested a motion to budget \$56,000 to fund up to 127 DTA applicants this semester.

- Question: You estimated \$440 for each DTA. Will tax be deducted from that?
 - Answer: Yes, and those taxes will depend on whether you are a domestic or international student. This is because it is a scholarship, and these rates (for international students) will depend on specific treaties between the U.S. and students' home countries. This same issue applies to all other GSS awards.
 - Motion by Biomedical Sciences; second by Sociology
 - Discussion
 - Question: When would the lottery system be used to decide awards?
 - Answer: This would happen only if the number of complete applications exceeds the 127 for which we are budgeting.
 - The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.
 - Mark requested a motion to budget \$1,500 for the first Special Contingency Award application window of this academic year.
 - Motion by Philosophy; second by Mathematics
 - Discussion
 - Question: What if the entire \$1,500 is not used for a given application window? Could it be given to another award category?
 - Answer: The Executive Board decided to allow the unused money to roll over into the next SCA application window, however any shifting of funds from one award to another would have to be approved by the Senate before becoming official.
 - Question: If someone does not receive a DTA because they were excluded by the lottery system, would those be grounds to apply for an SCA?
 - Answer: Yes.
 - Question: The amount being budgeted (i.e., \$1,500 per application window) cannot change based on the number of applicants, correct?
 - Answer: Yes.
 - The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.
3. Awards modifications suggested by the Awards Subcommittee (see Appendix A)
- A list of suggested changes to the SCA and DTA was prepared

by this committee and distributed to the Senate. Mark pointed out that this committee is not currently very balanced and called for more diverse membership on it.

- Question: Would a conference being announced after a DTA deadline be sufficient grounds to apply for an SCA?
 - Answer: Yes, as long as that can be proved by the applicant.
 - The goal of this committee is to have an official proposal for the Senate by the next General Meeting. These suggestions are preliminary and therefore not binding.
4. [Domestic Travel Award \(DTA\)](#)
- For those not taking classes over the summer, there will be a delayed reimbursement for those awardees who only enroll the subsequent Fall.
 - Question: What do you mean by “taking classes”?
 - Answer: This means that you have some credit-hours on your schedule. Dissertation or Thesis hours satisfy this condition.
 - The Administrative Services Chair gave a brief overview of this issue for the sake of clarity.
 - Question: Would Ontario count for a DTA or an ITA?
 - Answer: Because that Canadian province is adjacent to the contiguous U.S., it would be eligible for a DTA.
5. [Special Contingency Award \(SCA\)](#)
- The Executive Chair escorted the SCA applicants outside the meeting room while the Executive Vice Chair gave a brief overview of the SCA (see the guidelines on the linked webpage).
 - The following candidates gave presentations requesting the respective amounts of funding:
 - Nicolle Simonovic (Psychological Sciences): \$1000 to travel to a conference in Israel.
 - Louisa Catalano (Mathematics): \$500 to enroll in a mini-course specifically about her research area in Newfoundland, Canada.
 - The Executive Chair collected the SCA adjudication materials from each Senator and thanked the applicants for their presentations. Decisions will be sent to Nicolle and Louisa via email by Xin.
 - Nicolle Simonovic has been awarded \$1009 based on Senators’ votes.
 - Louis Catalano has been awarded \$491 based on Senators’ votes.
 - The next SCA application deadline is September 14, 2018 at 11:59 p.m.

D. **Advocacy Chair** – Mitchell Powers – mpower16@kent.edu

1. [Research Award \(RA\)](#)
 - Mitch gave a short overview of the Research Award
 - Application for the RA is now open, and it will close on October 15 at 11:59 p.m.
 - Mitch is now looking for representatives for the RA Committee. These committee members are the people who actually review the RA applications and make the decisions about who receives the awards. It is therefore important for this committee to be well-rounded. In addition, individual people and their Academic Units stand to benefit from participating on this committee because of the knowledge gained from being part of the group.
 - Question: Are there any dates for when RA funds must be used?
 - Answer: You have one calendar year to spend these funds after you receive notification of your award.
2. [National Association of Graduate-Professional Students \(NAGPS\)](#)
 - Our delegates for the NAGPS Legislative Action Days (LAD) are Carolyn Good and Greta Babakhanova. We eagerly await a report from them at the next meeting.
 - Now looking for a Spring Delegation. Contact Mitch if you, or your constituents, are interested.
3. Op-Ed writing
 - Anyone interested in writing short (i.e., 500 words) opinion pieces about subjects of interest to graduate students is encouraged to contact Mitch for further details. Until other writers volunteer, Mitch will pursue a campaign of coffee-related op-eds.
4. [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) for GAs
 - The maximum income for a single person household is \$1307/month (\$15684/year) before taxes. Those with incomes at or below that are encouraged to apply either online (<https://benefits.ohio.gov>) or in person at Portage County office of Jobs and Family Services ([449 S Meridian St., Ravenna, OH](#)).
 - Those with stipends in excess of \$1307/month who wish to apply are encouraged to do so in person. Not that "all student financial assistance, including grants, scholarships, fellowships, educational loans on which payment is deferred, work study, veterans' educational benefits and the like...shall be excluded from consideration as income for SNAP purposes" per OAC 5101:4-4-13(C)(1)(r).
 - Anyone applying, either rejected or accepted, is encouraged to contact Mitch to help build our understanding of "best practices".

- E. **Research Symposium Chair** – Danielle French – dfrenc12@kent.edu
1. Danielle brought promotional cards to the meeting and distributed them among the Senators. She implored Senators to take many of these and distribute them among their constituents.
 2. “Our Communities of Research: the 34th Annual Graduate Research Symposium” will be on April 4-5, 2019.
 - Registration deadline is January 31, 2019.
 - Both panel and individual registration available.
 - We will offer oral presentation, poster presentation, and fine arts performance/reading options.
 3. Find out more about this and previous symposia at <https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/research-symposium>.
- F. **Info Services Chair** – Morgan Chaney – gss.info@gmail.com
1. Publicizing graduate student articles
 - Morgan is continuing his initiative from last year to share links for articles (or equivalent accomplishments) of graduate students on the GSS social media pages.
 - Morgan requested that Senators, or their constituents, send him links to publications and other accomplishments.
 2. Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@KSUGSS](#))

V. Old Business

VI. New Business

VII. Announcements

- A. [Dissertation Boot Camp](#) will be September 14-16 in the KSU Library. Registration for this is closed, but the next event will be on October 5-7. Registration is required and costs \$40, but these costs cover a stainless steel coffee mug and several catered meals over that weekend. Those interested can find out more or register at the page linked above.
- B. [Graduate Professional and Academic Development](#) (GPAD) workshops are starting on September 24. Facilitated by university faculty, administrators, and teaching fellows, GPAD workshops include topics such as developing a teaching philosophy, conducting respectful classroom conversations, self-care and wellness, searching for grant funding opportunities, and using LinkedIn on the job search. Registration is required for these as well.
- C. There will be no Grad Fest this week because we had one the week before classes started.

VIII. Adjournment at 11:52 a.m.

- A. Motion by History; second by Communication & Information

Appendix A: GSS SCA/DTA MODIFICATIONS SUGGESTED BY THE AWARDS SUBCOMMITTEE

SPECIAL CONTINGENCY AWARD

Who is eligible?

- Full and part-time graduate students whose departments are in good standing with GSS.
- Students are eligible to receive one (1) Special Contingency Award during their graduate career at Kent State University.
- Students whose travel does not fall within the purview of the other GSS awards (Domestic Travel Award, International Travel Award, and Research Award) can apply.
- Passing the deadlines of other awards cannot be the only reason for application.

What does this award fund?

- This fund covers the costs associated with the active dissemination of one's primary graduate work that does not fall within the purview of the other GSS travel awards (Domestic Travel Award, International Travel Award, and Research Award). The fund may be used for expenses that are related, but not limited, to attending a trainee program/conference/workshop/skill training program.
- The award can only fund expenses that occur after the application deadline.

How much does this award fund?

- The amount depends on the student's budget up to \$1,500.
- Final amount will be determined by GSS senators.
- Funding will be based on availability of funds, and will be first-come, first-served.

DOMESTIC TRAVEL AWARD

- A third person from the Executive Board will review applications submitted by the Finance and Administrative Chairs. The Executive Chair would be preferably the third review person.

