



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Student Senate

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SENATE

Remarks and Reports

I. Report of the President

- i. Thank you to Senators Heim and Weston for stepping up to attend meetings with the candidates for the Director of Equal Opportunity. Thank you to Senator Dong for stepping up to be part of the Universal Design Task Force. Thank you to Senator Dufresne for stepping up to provide feedback to the Memorial Union about how the Memorial Union can best meet the needs of our constituents.
 - a. You're welcome to update (and encouraged) the Senate on your meetings, or send me a brief report that I can pass along. Your service and time is greatly appreciated by all.
- ii. Candidates for Student Government Leadership will join us at our February meeting to discuss their platforms, briefly. There will be three candidates for President and Vice President.
- iii. I will be attending the Student Government meeting on March 9th. Please let me know if you have any thoughts, concerns, or suggestions that you'd like me to pass along to Student Government. I can do this any time, but this is a chance to meet with the Student Government at a regular meeting, and not just with a member of the executive cabinet.
- iv. I was asked by a person named Sean Park, who organizes fundraisers, if GPSS (or any other student organization) would be interested in having a fundraiser at Whisky River. Treasurer Rakitan did some investigation and found out that fundraising at bars is not allowed by the Student Activities Center. George Micalone was helpful in responding. Thus, I'm going to ignore the invitation and not pass this on to other student organizations (because it isn't allowed).
- v. The Vice President and I met with candidates for SVPSA. All brought forward interesting ideas and I believe each of them can be a strong hire. I hope that you were able to attend the open forum sessions.
- vi. Students from the Student Advisory Committee on the MU Board of Directors (largely SG leadership) are seeking to meet with a variety of student groups, including GPSS, to give a condensed version of the presentation by the consulting firm who is working on the study of how to improve the Memorial Union. It is an impressive presentation. I am trying to obtain the slides to share with the Senate. I would like to send out the slides, and perhaps Interim Director Corey Williamson can be invited to our March meeting to discuss more details and answer any questions about the process. The approximate timeline to completion is 5.5 years.
 - a. The referendum will NOT be ready by February 19th. A new goal of having it take place in April has been set. The fee estimate is not 100% set in stone due to possible fundraising, donations, and Presidential contributions.
 - b. A new Memorial Union website looks very slick and will hopefully be live by the end of March. It is extremely visually pleasing and very user friendly.
- vii. Chapter 9 of the Graduate Student Handbook has been revised by the subcommittee of the Graduate Council. This includes a section for Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities



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1 (attached). Several Senators have written a resolution about this which will be discussed in
2 our meeting on February 29th.

3 a. I am very pleased with the progress of this subcommittee. Debra Marquart, Daniela
4 Dimitrova, and Ann Guddall should receive special acknowledgement for their hard
5 work and efforts with the entire chapter. Specifically, Debra Marquart spearheaded an
6 attempt to link major statements from the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities
7 statement to existing university policy.

8 b. Though this report will be sent out after the February Graduate Council meeting, you
9 can be assured that the URLA chair and I are looking forward to advocating for this.

10 viii. In our last GPSS meeting, we had a discussion about Regent Johnson's vote on the
11 Supplemental International Tuition, her failure to acknowledge what was sent to her during
12 the Regents meeting, and the subsequent censure from Student Government. Regent
13 Johnson provided an explanation by e-mail (attached). This was forwarded to me by one of
14 our Senators-at-Large prior to the January meeting, and I expected that it would be brought
15 up in the discussion. For whatever reason, it was not.

16 a. I think it is important in the interest of fairness – but more importantly, in the interest of
17 future cooperative relationships – to invite Regent Johnson to a GPSS meeting so that
18 we can discuss how to better represent Graduate and Professional Student voices.
19 Regent Johnson expressed interest in coming to our April meeting to do so (see
20 attached).

21 b. In our January meeting, at least one of the comments made was unprofessional, and
22 decorum was not kept for a brief period of time. Please keep in mind that GPSS is a
23 professional organization, and professional behavior is to be expected. It is generally
24 helpful to act with professionalism and respect toward our guests, and doing otherwise
25 reflects negatively upon GPSS. Disagreements, concerns, and criticisms are certainly
26 welcome and won't be censored, but personal attacks and inappropriate remarks should
27 be avoided.

28 1. Please keep in mind that, although Regent Johnson is a student and a peer, she is
29 also a Regent. If she does decide to join us, we should treat her respectfully just as
30 we treat every other guest.

31 II. Report of the Vice President

32 i. Rules committee has reviewed the By-Laws and Constitution. Thanks to the representation
33 committee for their careful input on resolving the senate representation issues in the
34 constitution. Drafts have been shared with the senate and their corresponding bills will be
35 debated tonight. Two additional amendments have been proposed and will be discussed as
36 part of those debates. The amendments have been attached separately.

37 ii. Spring social has been scheduled to be close to the GPSRC as it has been in years past. It
38 will be Friday, April 15th @ 6:30-8:30pm in Perfect Games. It would be ideal to advertise
39 this alongside the GPSRC as much as we can to try to get the maximum number of
40 attendees.



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- 1 iii. Social Committee has planned a March Social for Thursday, March 3rd @ Es Tas. Please
- 2 invite all graduate and professional students. Flyer is attached. RSVP:
- 3 <http://goo.gl/forms/7aRb4EfQ6R>
- 4 iv. Six pieces of Senate legislation were submitted. The Rules Committee found them
- 5 favorable (compliant with our governing documents.)
- 6 v. As a reminder, any senator may join the Rules Committee and Social Committee by
- 7 emailing gpssvicepresident@iastate.edu.
- 8 vi. Please forward any suggested speakers for Open Forum to gpssvicepresident@iastate.edu
- 9 III. Report of the Treasurer
- 10 i. Review of spring-cycle Regular Allocations requests
- 11 ii. FY 2017 Budget
- 12 iii. FC findings for Senate Bill S16-07
- 13 iv. Interested in serving as next year's Treasurer? Let me know!
- 14 IV. Report of the Chief Information Officer
- 15 i. Added the link to the list of department contacts to PAG FAQs
- 16 a. <http://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/directory/>
- 17 ii. Blackboard organization framework in works
- 18 iii. GPSRC web-pages updated
- 19 iv. Nominations received so far:
- 20 a. President: George Weston, Vivek Lawana
- 21 b. Vice-President: Fabian Campbell
- 22 c. Conference Chair: Akshit Peer
- 23 V. Report of the University Relations and Legislative Affairs Chair
- 24 i.
- 25 VI. Report of the Professional Advancement Grant Chair
- 26 i. Distribution of PAGs in accordance with the PAG policy on March 2015.
- 27 a. Four students cancelled their January grants giving \$720.00 to the month of March
- 28 2016.
- 29 b. One student cancelled his February grant giving \$180.00 extra to the month of March
- 30 2016.
- 31 c. Total money available on March 2016: \$15,258.74
- 32 d. March applications:
- 33 1. Submissions Total: 106
- 34 2. Approved Priority 1: 68
- 35 3. Approved Priority 2: 16
- 36 4. Denied: 22
- 37 5. *Lottery performed on February 15th at 5:17 pm in presence of Senator Armando
- 38 Figueroa.
- 39 6. Leftover money that went to the month of April 2016: \$138.74.



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- 1 e. Please encourage students to apply for PAG if they plan to attend conferences on April
2 2016. The deadline is March 15th 2016.
- 3 ii. I wrote a report about the procedure and criteria followed by the PAG Committee regarding
4 the evaluation of the 32 applications of the Margaret Ellen White Graduate Faculty Award.
5 The report was sent to the Rules Committee and it is attached to the report. The main
6 points of the report are:
 - 7 a. Criteria of evaluation was established after the award deadline to avoid the Committee
8 members could disclose this information to students in their home departments.
 - 9 b. Criteria was established per each question of the form provided by the Graduate College.
 - 10 c. A scale from 0 to 5 was established to score the applications being 0 the lowest and 5
11 the highest score.
 - 12 d. Each member of the committee was randomly given one question, and was responsible
13 for evaluating only that particular question among the 32 applications. This was done in
14 order to avoid bias from the answer of other questions that could make the members to
15 give more weight to certain application instead of others.
 - 16 e. Members of the committee did not evaluate applications coming from their department.
17 All those evaluations were in conflict of interest and were evaluated by the PAG Chair.
 - 18 f. Members of the committee sent their scores in a private e-mail to the PAG chair to
19 avoid that other members see their evaluations and avoid bias of other members.
- 20 iii. Additional information has been provided from Senators George Weston and Senator
21 Fabian Campbell, both Senators at Large, regarding the Margaret Ellen White Graduate
22 Faculty Award. During an extraordinary meeting we discussed the following topics:
 - 23 a. Concerns about the way the award was evaluated by the PAG Committee.
 - 24 b. Concerns about the high percentage of recommended professors that came from
25 Departments of the PAG Committee Members.
 - 26 c. Suggestions to improve the evaluation process of the award in order to minimize bias
27 coming from the PAG Committee members.
 - 28 d. Suggestions to be presented to the Graduate College to clarify unknown topics related
29 to the award.
 - 30 e. The outcomes of the meeting were:
 - 31 1. It was seen that although the PAG Committee tried to avoid bias from different
32 sources, other sources of bias were not avoided. Possible bias could be incorporated
33 by giving the members of the committee all the information filled in the
34 applications. This information could have been created an unconscious bias that
35 could lead members of the Committee to give higher scores to certain professors if
36 they know the Senators that endorsed some applications, especially those coming
37 from the members of the PAG Committee.
 - 38 2. The suggestions that were given by the Senators in agreement with the PAG Chair
39 are the following ones:
 - 40 1. Leave the information of the Nominee's names, department, nominator, and
41 Senator that endorsed the application unknown (blanked or removed) for the
42 evaluation of the applications by the members of the PAG Committee.



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- 1 2. Randomize the candidates from any alphabetic order and give to the Committee
- 2 members the information of the candidates changing their names. For example,
- 3 use the name “Candidate 1”, “Candidate 2”, etc. instead of the real name of the
- 4 professor. Use this format in the score sheet. The only person that will know
- 5 what application belong to each professor will be the PAG Chair.
- 6 3. Print the questions to be evaluated and give a hard copy to the person
- 7 responsible for the evaluation. Avoid the use of electronic copies of the
- 8 applications.
- 9 3. The suggestions that came from Senators Weston and Campbell regarding the
- 10 application form were the following:
- 11 1. Word limit on each question.
- 12 2. Clarification of the format. It was suggested to include a sentence saying that “if
- 13 the answers are not provided in the established format, they will not be
- 14 considered”. Some students answered the questions in a letter format and some
- 15 others answered the questions one by one. The letter format could force each
- 16 committee member to read the entire letter looking for the answer of their
- 17 particular question and, therefore, they will receive more information about
- 18 those professors. This could introduce bias to the evaluation system.
- 19 iv. The PAG Committee and the Finance Committee had a joint meeting on January 28th at
- 20 5:10 pm to talk about including the Research, Teaching and Leadership Awards in the 2017
- 21 budget, and provided input about how to give money to PAG from the Surplus. We talked
- 22 about the option of giving some money to the students that receive the Research, Teaching
- 23 and Leadership Awards of this year and a bill will be sent to use money form Special
- 24 allocations for this award.
- 25 v. The GPSS Research, Teaching, and Leadership Awards were announced. We will provide
- 26 only 5 awards per category to make the award more competitive. Also Wakonse conference
- 27 was announced by CELT, GPSS will select also five students to attend to the conference.
- 28 We are looking for Senators interested in joining the PAG Committee and help us to
- 29 evaluate the awards.
- 30 VII. Report of the Graduate and Professional Student Research Conference Chair
- 31 i. 6 Workshops confirmed + 1 for undergrads workshop
- 32 ii. Email is sent out to all deans and provost for funding.
- 33 iii. The tentative schedule of the conference is ready (see it in the end of report).
- 34 iv. Dr. Jorge Cham’s trip is fixed and is on COL list.
- 35 v. Dr. Kling will be finalizing her talk title soon, I will ask COL to add that too.
- 36 vi. Catering is finalized for the conference.
- 37 vii. Went to faculty senate to promote the event.
- 38 viii. The registration and abstract submission is now open. (Thanks a lot CIO Bharat!)
- 39 a. Please forward emails to graduate students and encourage them to participate.
- 40 ix. New addition to GPSRC- Impactful innovations.
- 41 x. TaR will also have their poster competition during GPSRC.
- 42 xi. Attended the MU feasibility study report meeting. Here are the updates-



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- 1 a. Hotel remodeling in place as result long pending discussion
- 2 b. Multicultural space expansion- expansions in NE region of MU

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4 **Fifth floor & Sixth office**

5 Dining office, legal services, MU offices, etc.

6 **Fourth floor**

7 ISSO, Study abroad, Shared meeting room

8 **Third floor**

9 Students' floor

10 **Second floor**

11 Moving Post office to old hotel desk

12 Multicultural center expansion

13 **First floor**

14 Sitting and kitchen expansion (addition of more than 200 seats)

15 Addition-Dining retail area

16 Take out browsing library

17 **Ground floor**

18 Addition of dining seating/ add stairs

19 Expanding underground bowling alley

20 → Over 5 years plan altogether.

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3rd GPSRC Schedule-

Time	Event	Speaker(s)	Location
8:00 AM	Registration Starts		Great Hall Lobby
8.30-9.30 AM	Oral Presentation (Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4)		3505, 3534, 3558, 3219
9.00-10.00 AM	"Improving your professional speaking skills: why it matters and how to do it"	Dr. Mark Gleason	Campanile Room
9.00-10.00 AM	<i>For undergrads-</i> "Choosing and Applying to Graduate Schools"	Thelma Harding	Gold Room
9.00-10.00 AM	"Managing your monthly budget in grad student salary"	Loan office	Cardinal Room
10:10-11:00 AM	Workshop on Linked-In	Karin Lawton-Dunn	Campanile Room
10.00-11.00AM	Speed interviews	CCE	South Ballroom
9.45-10:45 AM	Oral Presentations (Sessions 5, 6, 7, 8)		3505, 3534, 3558, 3219
11:00-11:50 PM	Lunch Break		Oak Room
10.30-11.50AM	Poster session/		Great Hall



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	Impactful innovations		
12:00-1:00 PM	Keynote Address:	Dr. Kling	Sun Room
1:15-2:15 PM	Oral Presentation (Sessions 9, 10, 11, 12)		3505, 3534, 3558, 3219
1.30-2.30 PM	“Drafting a Research Statement”	Karen Bovermyer/ Dr. Wolfgang Kliemann	Campanile Room
2.30-3.30 PM	“Writing a better proposal”	CCE	Cardinal Room
3.00-4.00 PM	<i>For international students-</i> “From F1 visa to H1 visa and beyond”	ISSO	Durham Great Hall
2.30-3.30 PM	Oral Presentation (Sessions 13, 14, 15, 16)		3505, 3534, 3558, 3219
4.00-5.00PM	3-minute thesis		Cardinal Room
5.00-6.00 PM	Dinner Break/Award		South Ballroom
6.00-7.30 PM	Closing Speaker- “Power of procrastination”	Dr. Jorge Cham	Durham Great Hall