



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Student Senate

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SENATE

Remarks and Reports

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I. Report of the President

i. Faculty Conference.

a. On April 26th, the Faculty Senate’s conference will take place. The topic is Ethical Research in the Age of Open Access and promises to have excellent programming. If you are interested in attending, please register with Sherri Angstrom (sangstro@iastate.edu) by April 20th.

ii. This is my last report and last meeting after being involved with GPSS for four years. I was a Senator for two years and member of the executive council for two more. I believe we have seen many positive changes and also identified some areas that need to be improved. Ultimately, I hope that I leave GPSS in a better state than when I came.

a. I acknowledge and thank the rest of the Executive Council for the long hours that were put in to serve students this year. We shared our ideas and communicated openly at our meetings and I was privileged to work with each of you.

b. Over 14 years of collective GPSS experience leaves the Executive Council tonight but I believe that GPSS is in good hands for the future. I especially want to thank Vice President Kleinheksel for providing his input, experience, and guidance many times throughout the year. He asked me to stay involved with GPSS after my first year as a Senator, and I could not imagine having a different Vice President to work with me this year.

c. I also thank the Senators for all of your hard work. I got a lot of fulfillment from working on initiatives and ideas that you brought forward. As I mention below, the activities of GPSS start and end with the Senators.

iii. Accomplishments and Areas of Progress

a. The Senate Representation Issue.

1. The Senate representation issue, which has been a problem for GPSS for several years, has been addressed and a workable solution is in place for the future. Now, Senators represent “academic units”. This means that no graduate or professional student is without Senator representation, so long as the student’s academic unit nominates a Senator. Thank you to CIO Agrawal and the representation committee for their hard work.

b. Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities.

1. On Thursday (April 21st), a year-long process will culminate with the Graduate Council’s vote on changes to Chapter 9 of the Graduate Student Handbook. These changes also include a statement of rights and responsibilities, which GPSS endorsed in February. The statement of rights and responsibilities has transformed into a statement of rights, responsibilities, and best practices for graduate students. It also highlights the grievance process and points to GPSS as a resource to help students navigate that process.



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- 1 2. I am hopeful that it will pass and then be approved by higher university
2 administration. Thank you to URLA Chair Tripathy and the rest of the Chapter 9
3 review subcommittee for working with me on that. Thank you to the Senators who
4 initially brought this idea to us early in the year. GPSS initiatives start and end with
5 the Senators – without those Senators bringing forward their ideas, we would not
6 even be having this conversation.
- 7 c. GPSS Awards.
- 8 1. Thanks to PAG Chair Mantilla Perez and the PAG committee, lotteries were run
9 that awarded 556 PAG applications – and 594 PAGs are expected to be awarded by
10 the end of the year. This means that over 10% of the graduate and professional
11 student body is being served by PAGs.
- 12 2. The PAG committee also updated policies about the Leadership, Research, and
13 Teaching awards. These changes restored meaning to the awards and each award
14 was highly competitive this year. The Margaret Ellen White award and the
15 Wakonse fellowship was also competitive and the PAG committee did a fantastic
16 job at handling these awards, too.
- 17 3. Thanks to Treasurer Rakitan and the Finance committee, about 30 student groups
18 were funded. Again, this highlights the more routine ways that GPSS is here to
19 benefit the student experience.
- 20 d. GPSS Socials.
- 21 1. Several hundred students, friends, partners, spouses, and even children were served
22 with three student socials this year. Thanks to Vice President Kleinheksel and the
23 social’s committee, a rained-out Fall Social was quickly replaced with an indoor
24 option that many attended.
- 25 e. Diversity and Inclusion.
- 26 1. Catalyzed by despicable instances at a campus event, discussions about diversity
27 and inclusion increased. GPSS voiced our support for multicultural students and
28 reaffirmed our support for the principles of campus safety, diversity, education,
29 inclusion, and empowerment. A resolution was drafted and passed thanks to
30 members of what is now LUCHA. This resolution was passed on to university
31 administrators and various media outlets.
- 32 2. Dr. Ogilvie came to a meeting in the Fall semester and demonstrated a sample of a
33 diversity and inclusion workshop along with colleagues from the Graduate College.
34 These workshops began taking place this Spring and plans to continue them in the
35 future are in place. I participated in one of them and will participate in a follow-up
36 meeting with the Psychology department. After talking about this positive
37 experience, a healthy number of Senators expressed interest to facilitate future
38 workshops. These workshops are a small but meaningful step in the right direction.
39 Of course, many more steps are needed on the long journey to diversity and
40 inclusion. The journey continues... (see below).
- 41 f. Fee vs. Tuition.



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1. The Supplemental International Tuition issue prompted healthy discussion within GPSS and between GPSS and university administration. University administration also had discussion with various other student organizations. Within GPSS, these discussions prompted Senators to become more actively involved and we (collectively) learned about the differences between student fees and student tuition. I think this also allowed the Senate (collectively) to become more educated about the Resource Management Model that determines how tuition dollars are used.
2. A more engaged Senate is always a good thing. Further, these discussions prepared GPSS to be ready to discuss the potential fee increases related to the Memorial Union going forward. We have had representation from the Memorial Union come to our meetings and we learned that the fee increase may be substantial. GPSS will be important in future discussions, and will likely influence graduate and professional students when the referendum is to be voted on. Now, GPSS is more equipped to handle these discussions.
- g. Iowa State Daily Coverage.
 1. Thanks in large part to Rakiah Bonjour, GPSS has had more detailed coverage this year than in years past. This has been very helpful for increasing awareness about our programming. There were articles about the socials, the GPSRC, and our meetings.
 2. In the future, there will likely be an article about the parental leave policy which will help raise awareness about this important resource for parents in graduate school that Vice President Kleinheksel was instrumental in starting.
 3. Along with e-mails and communication directly from the Senators or the Executive Council, the Iowa State Daily's coverage helps graduate and professional students at large stay in touch with our activities.
- h. Health Center
 1. While more distally related, the Special Student Fee and Tuition Committee convened in the summer. The Treasurer and I had many discussions about the Thielen Student Health Center with the rest of the committee. Ultimately, the committee decided to increase fees to improve the health services available to students. This allowed to the hiring of improved staff (quantity and quality). Next year, the Student and Scholars Health Insurance Program will allow some referrals to McFarland Clinic. This will allow some services to be available to students in evening hours. President-Elect Lawana likely has more information about this now and more information will be available in the future as he attends the May University Budget Advisory Committee.
 2. <http://www.inside.iastate.edu/article/2016/04/14/sship>
- iv. Areas in Need of Continuing Improvement and Attention
 - a. Diversity and Inclusion.
 1. Multicultural Center and the Memorial Union.
 1. Earlier this year, we reached out to Senators and several student groups to ask about the Multicultural Center and how the Memorial Union can be improved to



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1 meet Multicultural Student needs, in terms of both programming and space. The
2 response rate was small, short, and generally illustrated what the Multicultural
3 Center does effectively now rather than what it could do.

- 4 2. However, as the Memorial Union changes, GPSS is still here to lend a voice and
5 input. This outreach can still be continued in the future and the President of
6 GPSS has a seat on the Memorial Union Board of Directors. If there are ideas
7 about how the Memorial Union can be improved, hopefully they will be shared
8 with the future President.

9 2. Student Ownership.

- 10 1. Students have begun to take ownership of this issue, and it will need to be
11 continue. It starts and ends with us. We as students need to educate each other
12 and allow one another to feel welcome and included. As mentioned several
13 times in our meetings, GPSS is here to help. Senators need to bring ideas and
14 the Executive Council can help facilitate. This body starts and ends with the
15 Senators. I believe I speak for all Executive Council members when I say that
16 we are here to help, and I believe the Senators would agree that GPSS is here to
17 help. Let us know how.

18 b. Complete Senate.

- 19 1. Attendance at Senate meetings was great and seemed to be better than in the
20 previous few years that I have been involved with GPSS. However, several
21 departments and programs did not have any Senators representing them. Now,
22 Senators represent academic units. It is the prerogative of the academic units to
23 nominate or elect Senators, but we hope that 100% of the Senate seats are filled.
24 Senators receive many communications that can be passed onto constituents. We do
25 not want graduate and professional students missing out on important developments
26 or activities.

27 c. Constituent Communication.

- 28 1. Over the year, it has become clear that many Senators do not pass along GPSS
29 communication to constituents. The Executive Council has had several experiences
30 with students telling us that they did not know about certain activities or events that
31 were forwarded on to the Senate. This is an area that can be improved in the future,
32 so that students do not miss out on activities like socials, PAG applications,
33 allocations applications, the research conference, professional development
34 seminars, etc.

35 d. Student Government Graduate Senators / Senators at Large

- 36 1. Initial discussions and ideas have been passed around, but tangible progress needs
37 to be made regarding tuition scholarships for Senators at Large. These Senators
38 dedicate several hours each week on Wednesdays, along with several hours on one
39 Monday per month. These hours are spent serving students. Like Executive Council
40 Members, Senators at Large work many hours in an effort to improve the lives and
41 well-being of students. Unlike Executive Council Members, Senators at Large do
42 not receive a small but helpful tuition scholarship. It is worth continuing discussion



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- 1 about a tuition scholarship for Senators at Large to help ensure quality
2 representation. We have been lucky in the past several years to have quality
3 representation, but we have not always been so fortunate and may not be so
4 fortunate years in the future.
- 5 e. GPSS Blackboard and LinkedIn Pages
- 6 1. GPSS has expanded to Blackboard and LinkedIn, but our Blackboard and LinkedIn
7 pages are underutilized. In the future, GPSS can spend time thinking about how to
8 use these tools or whether or not to use them.
- 9 v. Graduate Council Updates
- 10 a. The Graduate Student Statement of Rights and Responsibilities passed in principle by
11 the Graduate Council. What this means is that it will circulate to the University Counsel
12 and likely the Provost's and President's Office before returning to the Graduate Council
13 for further review and comment. There is nothing in particular that the Council would
14 like to change. However, there are some parts that would benefit from reorganization.
15 The Council is supportive of the statement overall.
- 16 b. Once it passes through the Graduate Council for a final time, it will go to the Office of
17 the Provost and the Office of the President for final approval. After their approval, it
18 becomes part of the handbook.
- 19 c. Other changes to Chapter 9 of the handbook were voted on affirmatively. You can see
20 the Chap. 9 Handbook Edits and Chap 9 Rights & Responsibilities documents here:
21 1. <http://www.grad-council.iastate.edu/meeting-minutes>
- 22 d. I consider this to be my most significant accomplishment as GPSS President. It did take
23 a lot of time and effort to listen to concerns and feedback and make continual revisions
24 to create a passable document. I want to thank outgoing URLA Chair Tripathy for his
25 hard work on this, as well as the Senators involved. I want to also thank Daniela
26 Dimitrova, Debra Marquart, Ann Guddall, and various members of the Graduate
27 Council for their support and feedback. I am also grateful to Deans Holger, Ogilvie, and
28 Graves for their helpful feedback as well as outgoing Graduate Council Chair Dr.
29 Kenneth Moore for his support and ensuring that this was voted on.
- 30 1. President-elect Lawana will ensure that this is seen through to fruition and continue
31 the efforts to incorporate this into the Graduate Handbook. He will be joined by the
32 nominees of incoming URLA Chair Belding, and possibly URLA Chair Belding
33 himself.
- 34 2. Thank you to President- and URLA Chair-elect Lawana and Belding for attending
35 the Council meeting and introducing yourselves.
- 36 vi. Memorial Union Board of Directors Updates
- 37 a. I'm also attaching the meeting agenda and reports from the Memorial Union Board of
38 Directors, which you can read through at your leisure. I'd like to highlight a couple of
39 key points.
- 40 1. The next step in the Feasibility Study, which was discussed in our March GPSS
41 meeting, is to finalize the report. The best case scenario is that a referendum will be
42 voted on in the Fall semester. No fee will be enacted without approval from the



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1 Special Student “Tuition” and Fee committee. The GPSS President and Treasurer sit
2 on this committee. This fee would be discussed there in the Summer of 2017 if a
3 referendum is voted on during the next academic year (2016-2017).

- 4 2. The Board also reached out to different multicultural groups on campus and
5 obtained more complete feedback. Overall, the Student Union does an excellent job.
6 However, The Multicultural Center is relatively unknown to students and can
7 benefit from increased marketing about their services and programming. In addition,
8 attention to safe space is warranted as some students do not feel comfortable
9 speaking in their native language in common areas of the Union. Further, some
10 students do not feel comfortable practicing their worship practices in the Chapel.
- 11 3. There should also be more intentional collaboration with the Multicultural Student
12 Affairs Office, and increased efforts to have programming from the M-shop that
13 highlights diversity or meets diverse interests (e.g., R&B, Hip Hop, and focus on
14 heritage months).
- 15 4. This is an ongoing process, and President-elect Lawana is now Vice President of the
16 Board of Directors and will be actively involved with the Student Advisory
17 Committee. Thus, he will be able to ensure that these efforts are continued and these
18 suggestions begin to be implemented.

19 vii. Other

- 20 a. President-elect Lawana joined me at the above meetings as well as meetings with the
21 Provost and Dean Holger. Monthly meetings are now scheduled. Vivek has my contact
22 information and I won’t disappear if some information or input is needed, but I consider
23 the Presidential transition to be complete and Vivek Lawana is ready for his new role.

24 II. Report of the Vice President

- 25 i. Rules committee reviewed two pieces of legislation (S16-10 and S16-11). Both were found
26 favorable.
- 27 ii. Our April 15th social at Perfect Games was quite successful. Thank you to everyone for
28 your contributions! Appetizers were available at the beginning and then pizza/soda
29 throughout the evening for students, families, and friends. We reserved 12 bowling lanes
30 and both pool tables for two hours. In total about \$1758 (tip included) was spent for this
31 well attended event.
- 32 iii. Transition meetings are being held with incoming Vice-president and I hope for a smooth
33 transition.
- 34 iv. As a reminder, any senator may join the Rules Committee and Social Committee by
35 emailing gpssvicepresident@iastate.edu.
- 36 v. Please forward any suggested speakers for Open Forum to gpssvicepresident@iastate.edu

37 III. Report of the Treasurer

- 38 i. TEAC Business, Finance and Research Subcommittee update
- 39 ii. Special Allocations bill for GGSO - favorable
- 40 iii. Special Allocations bill for NREM GSO
- 41 iv. Special Allocations bill for Society for Neuroscience



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- 1 v. Changes to Allocations Guidelines
- 2 IV. Report of the Chief Information Officer
- 3 i. Transitioning with incoming CIO and outgoing VP.
- 4 ii. From meeting with Marcia McDowell and Jonathan Compton of Enrollment Services (ES)
- 5 on Student Government (SG) elections:
- 6 a. The original dataset sent from ES to SG Election Commission (EC) did not contain
- 7 classification year so EC had no way to separate undergraduates and
- 8 graduates/professional. The ballots were based only on primary college.
- 9 b. The second dataset was sent to EC on request from GPSS contained classification year.
- 10 iii. Questions on SG elections:
- 11 a. Should graduate students vote for Graduate Senators and also Senators for their
- 12 primary college?
- 13 b. Should graduate/professional students vote for Senators of:
- 14 1. United Residents of Off-Campus Constituency Council?
- 15 2. Schilletter and University Village Council?
- 16 iv. Senate structure calculation for 2016-2017 is attached which also contains the instructions
- 17 on arrangement of the data. This PDF will be emailed to department contacts and will also
- 18 be available for them to access on Senator verification form.
- 19 V. Report of the University Relations and Legislative Affairs Chair
- 20 i.
- 21 VI. Report of the Professional Advancement Grant Chair
- 22 i. Distribution of PAGs in accordance with the PAG policy for May 2016.
- 23 a. Six students cancelled their March/April grants giving \$1,080.00 to the month of May
- 24 2016.
- 25 b. Total money available on May 2016: \$10,073.
- 26 c. May applications:
- 27 1. Submissions Total: 43
- 28 2. Approved Priority 1: 27
- 29 3. Approved Priority 2: 14
- 30 4. Denied: 2
- 31 5. *Money available to fund every priority 2 student.
- 32 6. Leftover money that went to the month of June 2016: \$2,693.74.
- 33 ii. PAG final number for the 2015-2016 academic year. Data of conferences occurring until
- 34 May 31st 2016.
- 35

Description	Count	%
Total Applications Received	830	
Total Applications Awarded	556	67
Total Denied/Cancelled	274	33

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From the Awarded:	Count	%
Approved Priority 1	491	88
Approved Priority 2	65	12

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From the Denied	Count	%	Observations
Denied Priority 1	65	24	44 late submission & 21 cancellations
Denied Priority 2	209	76	

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3 a. We expect to close the year giving 594 PAGs, assuming all the money of June will be
 4 given away and no money will be transferred to July 2016.

5 iii. Accomplishments during the academic year:

6 a. We awarded 100% of priority one students that submitted the application on time.

7 b. We presented real data of PAG to the Senate for first time.

8 c. We received the highest number of applications for the Margaret Ellen White Faculty
 9 Award. In total 32 applications from 24 departments.

10 d. We had an official meeting with the Graduate College to share the criteria, procedure,
 11 and suggestions related to the Margaret Ellen White Faculty Award. The next PAG
 12 chair and PAG Committee must work to incorporate the suggested changes in the form
 13 and information of the webpage once the Graduate College made decisions about these
 14 changes.

15 e. We received the highest number of applications for the GPSS Awards and Wakonse
 16 Fellowship with a total of 85 applications.

17 f. With support of the finance committee funded the 2016 GPSS teaching, research and
 18 leadership award recipients with \$200 to each awardee. Total 15 awards: 5 per
 19 category.

20 g. It was possible to include the GPSS awards as an item to the GPSS budget, which
 21 warrantee funds for future years. Thanks to the finance and PAG committees for this
 22 achievement.

23 h. In agreement with the Finance Committee we were able to provide a unique extra fund
 24 of \$3,000 to November 2016 and \$3,000 to March 2017. Those are the months with
 25 higher number of applications received this academic year.

26 iv. The PAG Committee members worked really hard and made an outstanding job this year:
 27 Martha Ibore, Nadia Jaramillo Cherez, Neeva Benipal, Armando Figueroa, Juan
 28 Duchimaza, and Muhammed Welamgabe.

29 v. Especial thanks for the support received from Senators Anna Prisacari and Darlene Sanchez
 30 in the evaluations of the GPSS Awards and Wakonse Fellowship.

31 vi. Thank you to the GPSS Executive Council for all the support received, the advices, and the
 32 discussions.

33 vii. Especial thanks to the Senators for a good year, full of good work, good job communicating
 34 to their constituents about professional advancement grants and awards.

35 VII. Report of the Graduate and Professional Student Research Conference Chair



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- 1 i. The 3rd Graduate and Professional Students' Research Conference went successful.
- 2 ii. 472 total registered attendees
- 3 a. 416- Graduate Students
- 4 b. 12- Undergraduates
- 5 c. 15- Faculty/Staff
- 6 d. 29- Post Docs
- 7 iii. We had 9 workshops, 2 keynote talks and movie screening.
- 8 iv. There were 60 oral presenters, 85 poster poster presenters, 4 impactful innovations and 10
- 9 3MT presenters.
- 10 v. Gladly there were no food leftovers or other logistic issues. Things we learned will be
- 11 passed on to next chair.
- 12 vi. List of winners-
- 13 a. Poster Competition
- 14 1. Muhammad F. Ahmad Ridzuan (Geological and Atmospheric Sciences)
- 15 2. Linkai Li (Aerospace Engineering)
- 16 3. Bhavika B. Patel (Neuroscience)
- 17 4. Dharmin Rokad (Biomedical Sciences)
- 18 b. Oral Competition
- 19 1. Rashid Suleiman (Agricultural & Biosystems Engineering)
- 20 2. Jacob Pleasants (Education)
- 21 3. Chase Meusel (Industrial & Manufacturing Systems Engr)
- 22 4. Ellen Nightingale (Civil, Construction & Environmental Eng)
- 23 5. Trong Duc Nguyen (Electrical and Computer Engineering)
- 24 c. Impactful Innovations Competition
- 25 1. John Hsieh (Animal Science)
- 26 2. Jennifer Chang (Genetics/Development & Cell Biology)
- 27 d. 3-minute thesis competition
- 28 1. First Prize- Anna A. Prisacari (Human Computer Interaction)
- 29 2. Second Prize- John Hsieh (Animal Science)
- 30 3. People's Choice- Yan Ni (Electrical and Computer Engineering)
- 31 vii. Total 10 raffle prizes were given to attendees including a Fitbit Charge HR.
- 32 viii. I must thank all 9 members of my judging, planning and PR subcommittees for their
- 33 extreme hard work and commitment. Team included, Planning subcommittee: Sen.
- 34 Goankar, Sen. Surana, Sen. Prisacari and Ms. Chinwendu Ozoh; PR subcommittee: CIO
- 35 Agrawal, Sen. Birla; Judging subcommittee: Sen. Birla, Dr. Efthimia Papastravos and Dr.
- 36 Nuwan De Silva (ISU PDA).
- 37 ix. Survey will be sent out this week. Please forward it to your constituents.
- 38 x. 4th GPSRC will be on April 12th, 2017 (Wednesday). Mark your calendars!!
- 39 xi. As my new position, I have been attending several meetings with President Zenko as part of
- 40 my transition. Here is the update from university budget advisory committee-
- 41 a. There is an expected increase in revenue with increase in expenses



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- 1 b. The increase in international students fee will be used for them. All deans have been
- 2 asked to do show their plans. We will know more in next meeting (sometimes in May).
- 3 c. There will be 5.6% increase in graduate students' stipend across university. The
- 4 minimum is increase by \$100 to \$1900.00 per month.
- 5 d. The change in insurance provider. After a long debate and discussion it is changed to
- 6 Wellmark by SSHIP. This will be for all international students and graduate assistants.
- 7 Better service at fairly cheaper price. Effective from August 1, 2016.
- 8 xii. Accomplishment during past year.
- 9 a. All of the above.
- 10 b. Been part of task force committee organized by graduate college.
- 11 c. Organized the structured format for the GPSRC.
- 12 d. Purchased few items for GPSRC which will be useful in future.
- 13 e. Learned a lot as being the part of such well-versed team. Thank you all for your
- 14 support!
- 15 f. Thank you all senators for electing me and please contact me with any suggestions and
- 16 comments.