

Executive Updates - Sept 2020

(5 minutes each)

Report of the President

1. Working with the Graduate College about considerations about the longer winter break, change in spring semester dates

“Because the spring semester is ending on time, the end-of-semester deadlines are not changing (i.e. final exam scheduling and completion). Moving back the application deadline for graduation by two weeks. Now it will be February 11th. Any student who is registered for fall can use that registration through the start of the spring semester. Go through the first day of spring to count for their final exam registration (this won't punish them). Keeping the original end of fall as the deadline for POSC to be completed for final exam as a master's student. Using the original end of fall date for these students (NOT the november end of semester).”

-Review your LOI, your stipend is dependent on this and not the academic calendar.

-Faculty and TAs who participate in administering the ‘winter term’ will be compensated.

2. Myself, Chelsea, Elizabeth, and Amin are on the rapid response team - please reach out to us if you have anything COVID-related you want channeled to the senior administration.

3. Following up to pursue/discuss mandatory fee flexibility.

4. Fall 2020 Legislative Action Days and Advocacy Summit - THIS weekend. Execs will be present (hopefully!).

5. Margaret Ellen White Faculty award - please do advertise this opportunity to honor good mentorship! Due - November 1st?

6. Please join the awards committee, by sending me an email saying you'd like to be a member. We will be reviewing the MEW applications in the fall, and the GPSS award applications in the spring.

Report of the Vice President

I have been working with the Temporary LAS graduate committee and see value in the type of work that can get done this way. Over the next month the rules committee will be working on legislation to formalize individual college committees. To join the rules committee send me an email (gpssvicepres@iastate.edu.)

Report of the Treasurer

Allocations will be extended by two weeks due to low applications. SPREAD THE WORD!

Report of the Senate Information Officer

1. The Canvas Site is being worked on to be a hub for Senate procedures
2. Please continue to check on the website as I am still catching errors too!

- a. **It is on you to know the dates of meetings;** if you have not received information (Webex links, etc.) for them, please contact me.
3. Check out committees! They are often low maintenance and there is always room for more engagement within GPSS and the university :)

Report of the Senate Engagement Officer

Join a Committee, let me know if you need assistance!

Report of the Graduate and Professional Student Conference Officer

Keeping things open for the spring, unsure if we can meet in person. Working towards finding a speaker at the moment.

Report of the Graduate Wellness Officer

1. Updates from the Division of Student Wellness
 - a. The international student circle is up and running! Circle programs are peer-led, activity, and dialogue programs focused on enhancing wellbeing, connection, and belonging. They are facilitated by trained graduate student peer facilitators who lead weekly circle programs on various topics that impact student success and wellbeing. More information here: <https://www.studentwellness.iastate.edu/circle-programs/>
 - b. The student counseling center (SCS) and Student Government are supporting an online self-help tool called Therapy Assistance Online (TAO). The online resources like mindfulness meditation, wellness education, etc. help with stress and anxiety, low mood, etc. More information here: <https://www.counseling.iastate.edu/resources/tao-self-help/>
 - c. There are also some resources available for the Black Lives Matter movement including videos, readings, and education. More information here: <https://www.studentwellness.iastate.edu/black-lives-matter/>
 - d. Campus Health and Wellness data here: <https://www.studentwellness.iastate.edu/campus-health-and-wellness-data/>
2. GPSS is supporting the Green Dot Action month. We will be committing to action items and will use our October meeting's date, 10/26, as our day of action. We are committed to the action of spreading resources and encouraging bystander intervention training. What is Green Dot? A green dot is any choice, behavior,

word or attitude that promotes safety for everyone and communicates utter intolerance for power-based personal violence in our Iowa State University community. A green dot is anything you do to make our community safer. Green dots can be PROACTIVE or REACTIVE.

- a. Proactive Green Dots: Little things you do to make it less likely that violence, or a red dot, will ever happen. This could include you having a conversation with a friend about your stance against violence, wearing green dot gear, or posting an update on social media that violence is not acceptable in the Cyclone community.
 - b. Reactive Green Dots: The choices you make in response to a situation that you think could be harmful to another or might eventually lead to something harmful. This could include you stepping in when you notice something not quite right in the student neighborhood, walking a friend home when they've had too much to drink to be sure they make it home safely, or telling a friend to back off when you know the other person is not interested. Reactive green dots come in the form of the 3D's: Direct, Distract, and Delegate. A direct green dot occurs when you handle the situation with confrontation. Distracting is changing the conversation and the energy of the interaction by distracting them with something else (dancing, a problem, food, bathroom break, etc). Delegating is finding someone else who you feel will be more successful in fixing the problem (bartender, other friends, Public Safety, etc).
 - c. Everyone can find a Green Dot that works well for them. Because creating a safer campus and a culture that doesn't tolerate power-based personal violence is dependent on everyone playing a part. More information here: <https://www.studentwellness.iastate.edu/green-dot-action-month/>
3. Social connection in the time of COVID-19. It's important to take care of your mental health. More information here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
 4. The last email sent by CELT on 9/24 included some great information from the director of SCS!
 5. Physical health is really important now too. Even if you do not feel comfortable working out in our on-campus rec centers (e.g., Lied or State), you can access remote exercise classes on Instagram! <https://www.recservices.iastate.edu/fitness/classes/>
 6. If you are in need of food, the SHOP (food pantry on campus) is located in Beyer hall this semester with plans to expand soon! More information here: <http://www.theshop.stuorg.iastate.edu/>

7. Burnout! Signs and symptoms here:
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/high-octane-women/201311/the-tell-tale-signs-burnout-do-you-have-them>
8. Finally, join the Wellness Committee! Send an email to gpsswellness@iastate.edu that you are interested in joining and we can find the best time for all of us to meet about twice a month.

Report of Student Government Senators

1. As you have seen in our agenda, the Student Government Senate has passed a COVID resolution which we will do a first read today. I hope you all are willing to discuss any concerns, praise, or questions you may have!
2. The Student Senate has also passed a bill that will create a Campus Affairs Committee, if you or any of your constituents are interested please be on the lookout for an application to be a student-at-large hopefully coming out soon!
3. If you have any ideas about how you want us to present information, please let us know!
4. We are looking into ways in which we can better serve you, our constituents, at Student Government. Suggestions on gathering information? (i.e. DropBox, surveys, emails)

Report from LAS Caucus

- 1) Summary:
 - a) Dean Hogben shared that the university prefers to operate through elected representatives, hence this committee is drawn from LAS GPSS Senators. If this does not work, then alternatives can be explored.
 - b) Key items to address in this meeting, including:
 - i) Communication challenges experienced by LAS graduate students and university administration
 - ii) Potential role for graduate students in university policy-making
 - iii) How this committee might look and operate moving forward
 - iv) Trends we're seeing among our constituents
 - v) Planning for a future meeting
 - c) In terms of communication challenges we raised, we discussed recent communication issues as perceived by graduate students. The LAS Deans will take this into consideration for communications moving forward.
 - d) It was decided that this LAS Senate committee can be a communication bridge between the graduate students and administration to ensure that there isn't any more miscommunication.
 - e) We also discussed ways graduate students can provide effective input on college and university decisions, including through this committee and as well as being part of LAS Working Groups that Dean Hogben had mentioned.

- f) In regards to trends that we're seeing among our constituents, we discussed the varied response to online learning in labs across LAS. Ensuring effective student input in future decision making is a goal of this committee to ensure that the wide variance does not occur again.
 - g) For teaching assistants who have had trouble switching course modalities, contact Dean Hogben or Graduate College Associate Dean Carolyn Cutrona for assistance.
- 2) Actions decided:
- a) Dean Hogben committed to taking the bullet points of graduate student concerns collected by the committee members to the LAS Dean's team. Those points are:
 - i) TAs and RAs are experiencing increased workloads above contracted hours
 - ii) This increased workload is having an effect on their academic performance, research, and time to graduate
 - iii) Graduate students aren't all receiving the same communications
 - iv) Survey fatigue
 - v) Policies around workload and course/lab delivery modes are not being implemented consistently
 - b) Establishment of this committee, with Caroliena as the current chair.
 - c) Abesh appointed as a graduate student representative to the LAS Laboratory Science Working Group.
 - d) Caroliena appointed as graduate student representative to LAS Graduate Student Working Group, Allison as second when needed.
- 3) Actions forward:
- a) As mentioned, Dean Hogben will follow up with the dean's team on graduate student concerns raised.
 - b) Dean Hogben will also convene the Laboratory Science Working Group and the Graduate Student Working Group to start addressing the problems and concerns we've encountered in the fall to ensure that they do not continue or get worse in the spring.
 - c) Explore the idea of college caucuses in GPSS meetings (GPSS Senators/Exec).
 - d) Meet again in a month for updates (tentative date October 20th from 1-2pm; Caroliena to organize meeting).