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**KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
ANNUAL REPORT**

2015 - 2016

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

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Graduate Student Senate
Center for Student Involvement
Room 120 L/M
Kent Student Center Box 18
Kent, OH 44242

(330) 672-0704
gss@kent.edu
www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/gss

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@KSUGSS

The 2015-2016 academic year was one of continued change for the Graduate Student Senate. We saw another major shift in leadership as our faculty advisor, Dr. Kate McNulty, accepted an amazing opportunity to become Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at the California Institute of Technology. Dr. McNulty was always a powerful voice for the Senate and the graduate student body at large; she will be missed.

Apart from this loss, however, the year was one of advancement for the Senate itself. Instituted last year, we completed a successful transition to the newly designed Domestic Travel Award, which will allow for more students to receive awards in the next few years. In addition, because of the changes to the Domestic Travel Award, we were able to increase the budget for each of our other two awards as well as the annual Graduate Research Symposium.

The budget increases for the two awards translated to a larger number of awards for the graduate students of Kent State University. As you will see throughout this report, a number of awards for International Travel as well as Research were given to enhance the potential of our graduate students.

This year saw another record-breaking number of presentations at our 31st annual Graduate Research Symposium, and with this increase came a larger number of presentation awards; over 65 awards were presented to excellent poster and oral presentations this year. In addition, because of the hard work of the Symposium Award Taskforce, made up of a number of graduate students, the award structure was changed for this year's symposium. The amount of each award was increased by 50%, and a new "President's Award" was instituted. The 31st Symposium was our largest yet, and we are very excited to continue that growth in the future.

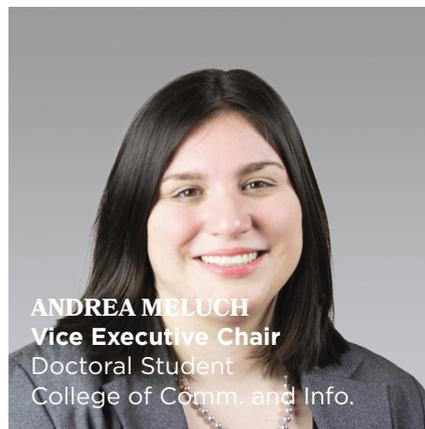
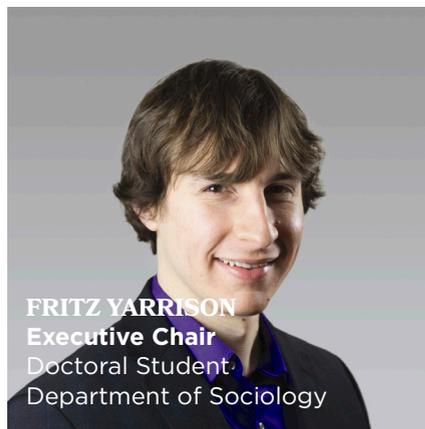
This is the third Annual Report for the Graduate Student Senate, and in the pages that follow you will find information from each Executive Board member summarizing the events and achievements of the Graduate Student Senate for 2015-2016. We hope that you will read through this and see the number of advances we have made this year. We are looking forward to next year, and are excited for the continual growth of the Senate.

To the continued advancement of Graduate Student Senate,



Fritz W. Yarrison
Doctoral Student, Sociology
Executive Chair, 2015-2016

EXECUTIVE BOARD



SENATORS

Educational Policies Committee
Andrea Meluch

Faculty Senate
Andrea Meluch

Intercollegiate Athletics Committee
Andrea Meluch

University Libraries Committee
Andrea Meluch

Public Safety Advisory Committee
Andrea Meluch

Student Health Advisory Committee
Andrea Meluch

Student Media Board
Andrea Meluch

Transportation Advisory Committee
Andrea Meluch

University Diversity Action Council
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Transportation Advisory Committee
Andrea Meluch

University Diversity Action Council
Andrea Meluch

As a graduate student organization, the Graduate Student Senate provides professional development, financial support, community involvement & networking opportunities to advance all graduate students at Kent State University in their academic journey.

The professional responsibilities of an academic can be summarized into three main categories: research, teaching, and service. As Graduate Student Senate (GSS) is the governing body for all graduate students at Kent State University, it represents a service component of graduate training for those individuals who are senators or executive board members. In addition, GSS is charged with providing representation at the university level on a number of committees across Kent State. These positions are wonderful opportunities for professional development in the service aspect of academia. Additionally, the opportunity to participate in committee work at the university level is a privilege. GSS is honored to have committees request graduate student representation. This is a testament to the quality of feedback and perspective graduate students provide while serving on committees.

This year, GSS appointed representatives to nine active committees throughout the university. The Executive Vice Chair is responsible for the coordination of representation. Once appointments are made, the representatives then attend all committee meetings and report back to the Executive Vice Chair and Senate. This allows for information discussed within each committee to be disseminated to the graduate student body through each committee representative. This process provides the most direct and concise method for the distribution of pertinent information to all graduate students at Kent State University.

ACTIVE COMMITTEES WITH GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATION

COMMITTEE NAME	PRIMARY GRADUATE STUDENT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE
Educational Policies Committee	Andrea Meluch
Faculty Senate	Fritz Yarrison
Intercollegiate Athletics Committee	Lorriane Odhiambo
University Libraries Committee	Sophia Adodo
Public Safety Advisory Committee	Mary Kay McElhinny
Student Health Advisory Committee	Prithvirai Nandigrami
Student Media Board	Kristen Traynor
Transportation Advisory Committee	Vivian Hogan
University Diversity Action Council	Mark Rhodes

ADVOCATING FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

SERVING ISSUES

For the 2015 - 2016 academic year. Only one student issue was left from the previous year and was addressed.

During the year prior, students were made aware that the Recreation Center will charge students for using the center during the summer as well as when graduate students are enrolled in part two of their thesis and dissertation credits. The previous Advocacy Chair met with Director of the Recreational Center and spoke on behalf of students, but university policy could not be altered.

This year the Advocacy Chair member was able to look to the community for prices and called to ask about graduate student rates at other gyms available in the area. She was able to secure a discount with Nancy Rice from the Kent Parks and Rec Fitness Center for the summer months. This summer, graduate students have an offer of 3 months of unlimited classes and a gym membership for \$90. This means they get one month for free. During the year, Kent P&R offers a \$10 membership to use their gym and a \$40 month membership for unlimited classes. Please see other price options at their website <http://www.kentparksandrec.com>

SERVING ON THE COMMITTEES

As Advocacy Chair it is important to serve on committees representing the graduate student body and speaking on behalf of graduate students here at the university. For the 2015 - 2016 academic year, the Advocacy Chair served on the Student Affairs Advisory Committee which is a committee with the sole purpose of soliciting feedback from students to aid in policy initiatives and events here at the University related to Student Affairs.

The second duty of the Advocacy Chair is to organize philanthropic and community service events. Past events have included volunteering at local animal shelters, organizing clothing drives for women shelters, and collaborating with other campus organizations (Greek Life; Sociology) to collect food or money to be used in our community.

PHILANTHROPY & COMMUNITY SERVICE

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DOMESTIC TRAVEL AWARD

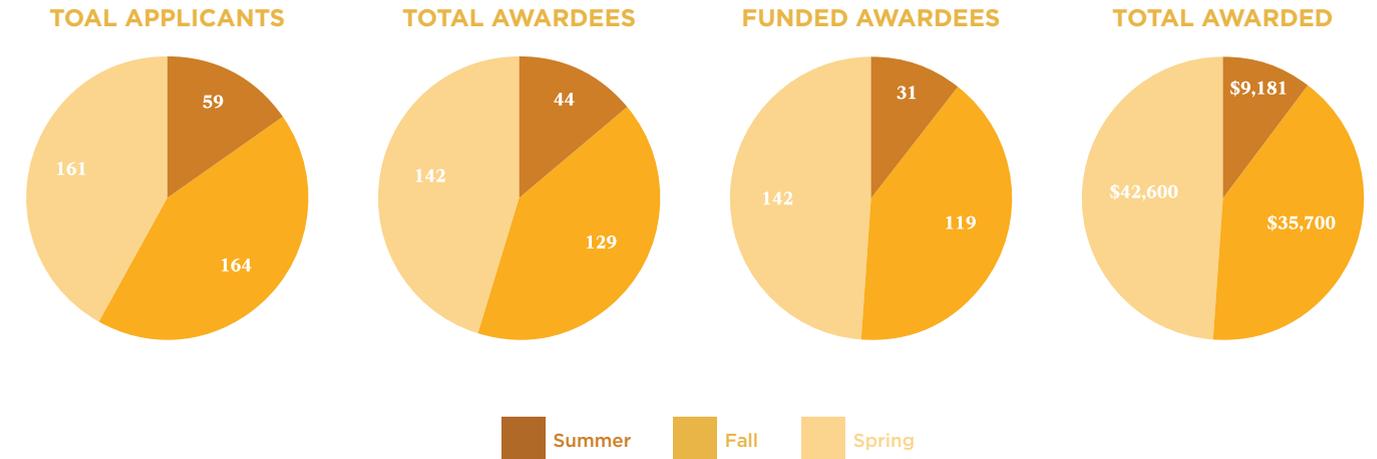
The GSS Domestic Travel Award (DTA) supports research and the professional development of Kent State University graduate students, and is the largest expense in the GSS budget. Due to the increased demand for this award, the DTA Committee was established last year to reevaluate the award, and they provided the GSS senators with several options to better manage and maintain the spirit of the award. In the Spring of 2015, senators voted and the changes took effect beginning Fall 2015. Students who apply for and receive the award are required to present research (oral, poster, or roundtable) and must travel within the continental United States and Canadian Provinces adjacent to the continental US.

Full and part-time graduates students whose departments are in good standing the GSS are eligible to receive one DTA per academic year. The award is disbursed at a flat rate of \$300, minus any taxes based on the student's residency status, after successful completion of the reimbursement packet showing proof of presentation and attendance. The number of awards is contingent on the funds allocated for each semester. If there are more applicants than funds allocated, randomization will be used to select awardees. Finally, funding from other sources to attend conferences will no longer be processed through GSS; students will need to make arrangements for those payments.

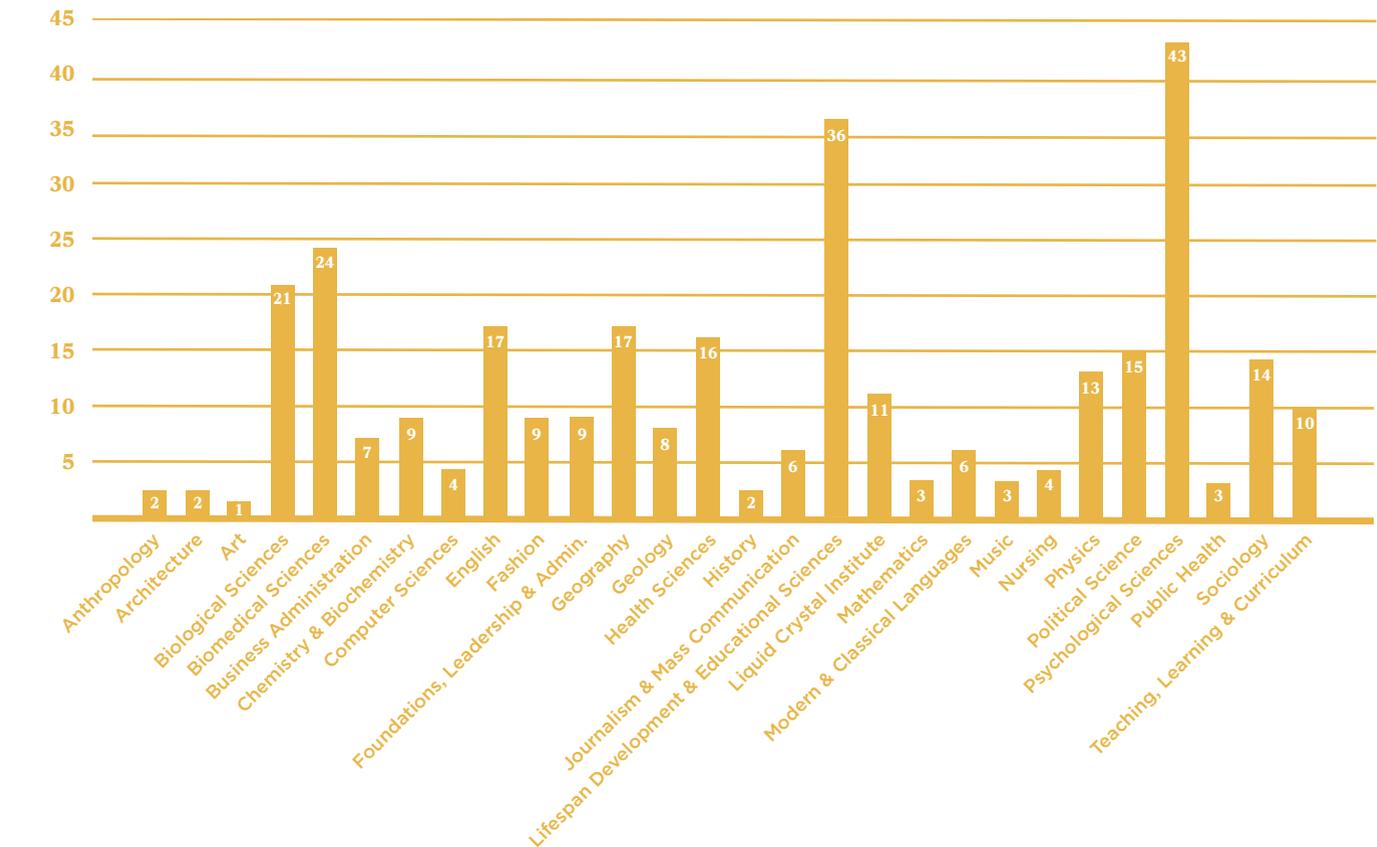
SEMESTER	TOTAL APPLICANTS	TOTAL AWARDEES ²	FUNDED AWARDEES ³	TOTAL AWARDED
Summer ¹	59	44	31	\$9,181.47
Fall	164	129	119	\$35,700.00
Spring	161	142	142	\$42,600.00 ⁴
TOTAL	384	315	292	\$87,481.47

¹ Used last year's selection process and reimbursed rate
² Student eligible for the award
³ Students who successfully submitted reimbursement packet
⁴ Total awarded derived from total number of awardees

DOMESTIC TRAVEL AWARD CHARTS



DEPARTMENT BREAKDOWN OF AWARDS



INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AWARD

The International Travel Award (ITA) is a competitive award that provides financial assistance for international networking, research, and professional development by Kent State graduate students. The ITA promotes development of Kent State University's graduate students, supports diversity through exposure to foreign cultures, and extends Kent State University's recognition on an international level. The ITA funds up to \$1,500 of student-incurred travel expenses outside of the continental United States (U.S.) and Canadian provinces and territories not adjacent to the U.S. The International Travel Award is offered fall, spring, and summer of each academic year. Full- and part-time graduate students whose departments are in good standing with GSS are eligible for the ITA.

UPDATE

The Senate voted in Spring 2015 to update the to expand ITA destination coverage to U.S. territories outside of the continental U.S., Hawaii, Alaska, Mexico, and non-adjacent Canadian provinces. This expanded went into effect in Summer 2015.

STATISTICS

AMOUNT AWARDED
SUMMER 2015-SPRING 2016

\$15,000

NUMBER OF
STUDENTS AWARDED

12

COUNTRIES
VISITED

8

SEMESTER	TOTAL APPLICANTS	FUNDED APPLICANTS	TOTAL AWARDED
Summer 2015	19	4	\$6,000
Fall 2015	8	3	\$3,000
Spring 2016	16	5	\$6,000

AWARDS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Architecture

Cathleen Matuzak

Business Administration

Rouhollah Shirzehhagh

Chemistry & Biochemistry

Randall Breckon, Vivian Hogan

Educational Psychology

Colleen Dragovich

Geography

Megan Hornyak, Mark Rhodes

Health Sciences

Sara Harper

Journalism and Mass Communication

Maja Bajac-Carter, Andrea Meluch (Chair)

Liquid Crystal Institute

Andrii Varanytsia

Modern and Classical Language Studies

Michael Joseph

Music

Samuel Boateng

Nursing

Sureeporn Swannaosod

Sociology

Megan Novisky, Jonathan Overton, Brianna Turgeon

Physics

Prithviraj

Psychological Sciences

Scout McCully

AWARDEES

Biomedical Sciences

Jennifer Sensor

Chemistry and Biochemistry

Chiran Ghimire, Pramila Poudyel Ghimire

English

Shazia Nasir

Health Sciences

Kimberly Kobzowicz, Leen Nahouli

Modern and Classical Language Studies

Andrew Fernando

Political Sciences

Yeo Jung Yoon

Psychological Science

Haylee DeLuca, Kathryn Wissman, Amanda Zamary

Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum

Erika Gallion

All graduate students are invited to serve on the review committee for the International Travel Award each semester. This commitment includes reviewing each blinded application based on an established rubric. Upon assessing all applications, the review committee convenes to discuss the applications and ultimately determine which applications receive the International Travel Award.

We would like to thank each graduate student who served on the International Travel Award committee this past academic year. We are so appreciative of your time and dedication to this process.

RESEARCH AWARD

SERVING ISSUES

This award funds up to \$2,000 of research related expenses. The Research Award is offered fall and spring of each academic year. Full and part-time graduate students whose departments are in good standing with GSS are eligible for the Research Award. The Research Award can be used for data collection, analysis, and equipment. It cannot be used for travel to conferences, as other award categories fulfill that need, nor can it be used to refund departments.

In the past year, many improvements have been made to the Research Award process:

- The Guidelines were re-written twice and include an FAQ section and a more detailed explanation on how to successfully blind materials.
- It also includes more information regarding: recommendation letters, IACUC approval and the use of dead tissue, a detailed explanation of when is the best time to apply, the enforcement of PDF format and the inclusion of an Excel budget explaining the critical nature of each expense, and the enforcement of stricter guidelines with relation to the proposal document which will now be 2-4 pages long plus one reference or work cited page.

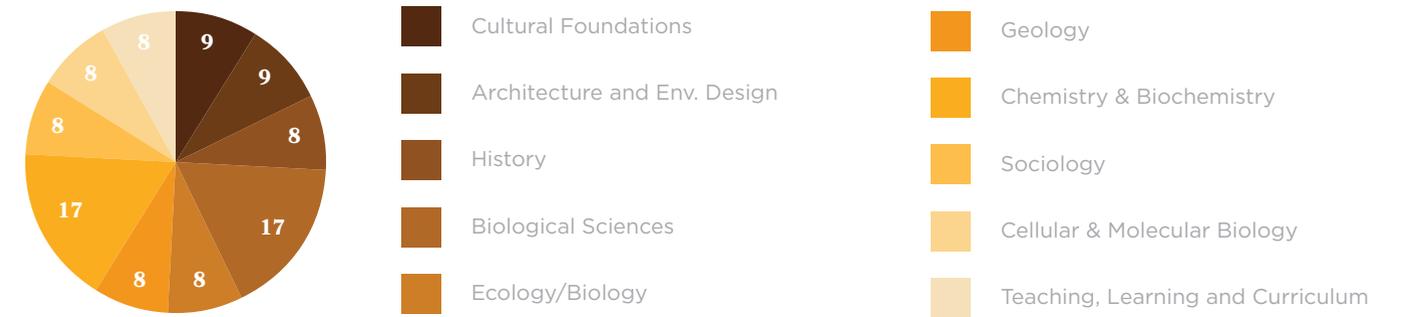


SEMESTER	TOTAL APPLICANTS	MET COMMITTEE REVIEW	FUNDED	AWARDED
Fall 2015	36	15	6	\$10,002.42
Spring 2015	45	23	14	\$18,000.00
TOTAL	81	38	20	\$28,002.42

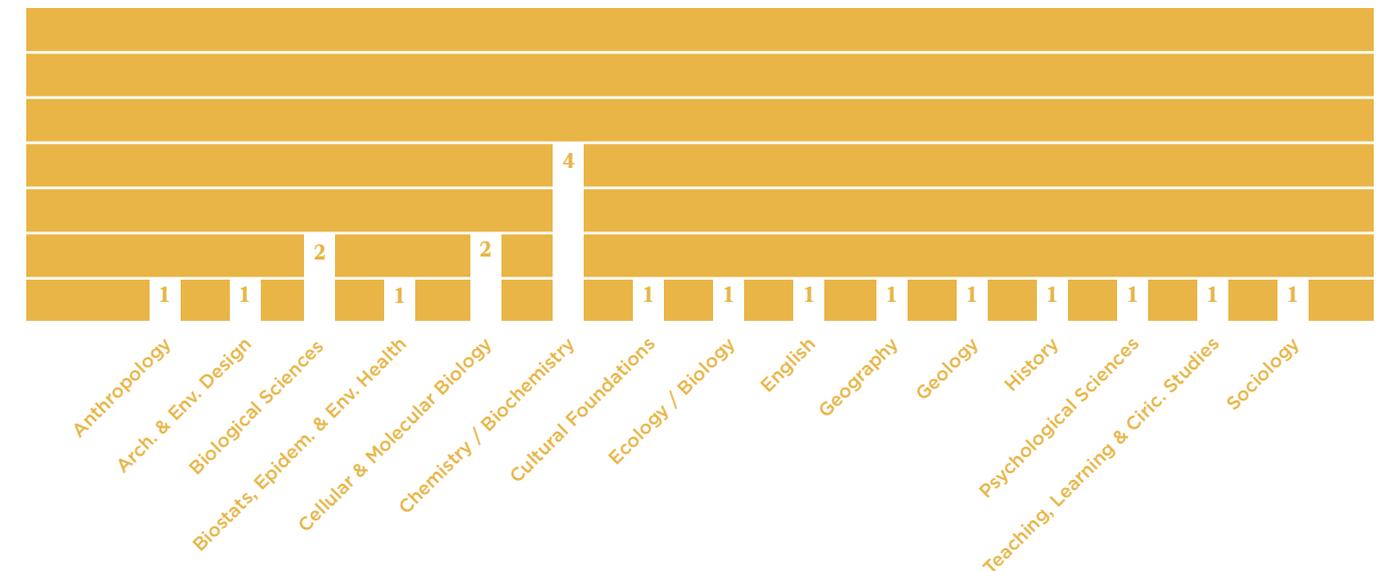
DEPARTMENTS AWARDED FULL FUNDING 2015-2016



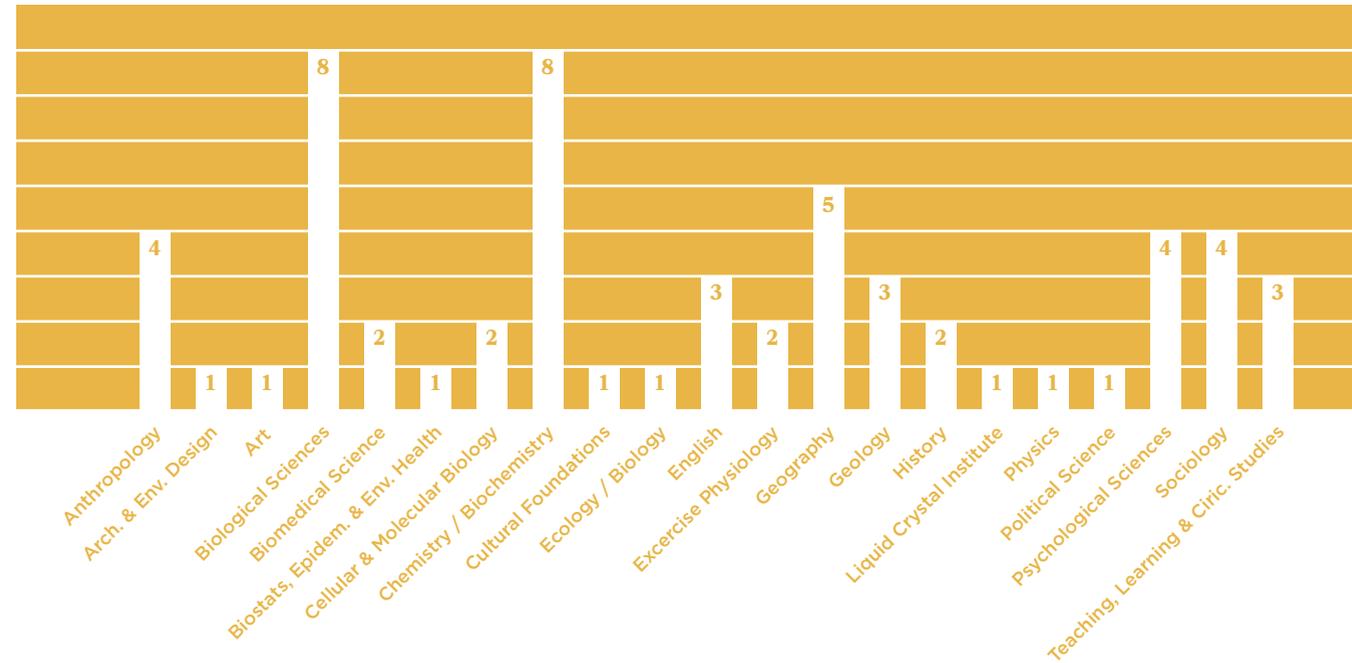
DEPARTMENTS AWARDED PARTIAL FUNDING 2015-2016



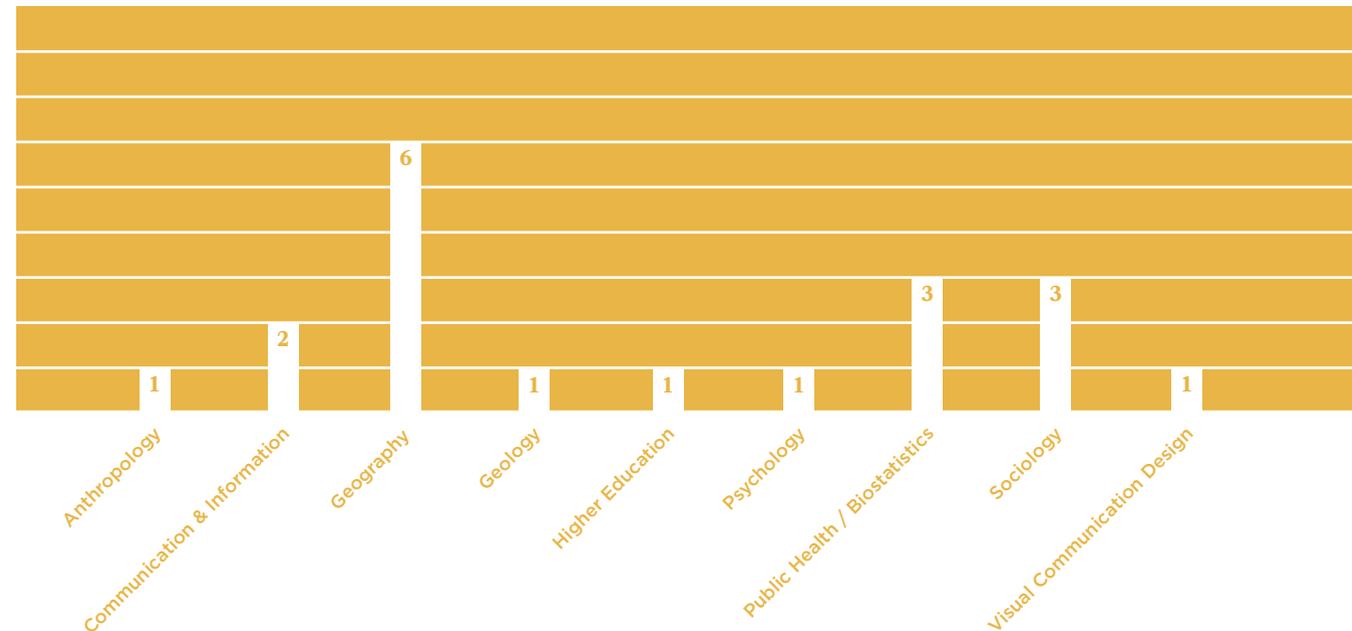
AWARDEES FOR THE RESEARCH AWARD 2015-2016 BASED ON DEPT



STUDENTS AND THEIR DEPT. THAT RECEIVED FUNDING 2013-2016



EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERSHIP 2013-2016 BASED ON DEPT



AWARDEES

FALL 2015

Architecture

Cathleen Matuzak

Business Administration

Rouhollah Shirzehhagh

Chemistry & Biochemistry

Randall Breckon, Vivian Hogan

Educational Psychology

Colleen Dragovich

Geography

Megan Hornyak, Mark Rhodes

Health Sciences

Sara Harper

COMITTEE MEMBERS

FALL 2015 & SPRING 2016

Architecture

Cathleen Matuzak

Business Administration

Rouhollah Shirzehhagh

Chemistry & Biochemistry

Randall Breckon, Vivian Hogan

Educational Psychology

Colleen Dragovich

Geography

Megan Hornyak, Mark Rhodes

Health Sciences

Sara Harper

Chemistry & Biochemistry

Randall Breckon, Vivian Hogan

Educational Psychology

Colleen Dragovich

SPRING 2016

Architecture

Cathleen Matuzak

Business Administration

Rouhollah Shirzehhagh

Chemistry & Biochemistry

Randall Breckon, Vivian Hogan

Educational Psychology

Colleen Dragovich

Geography

Megan Hornyak, Mark Rhodes

Health Sciences

Sara Harper

Chemistry & Biochemistry

Randall Breckon, Vivian Hogan

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Colleen Dragovich

Geography

Megan Hornyak, Mark Rhodes

Health Sciences

Sara Harper

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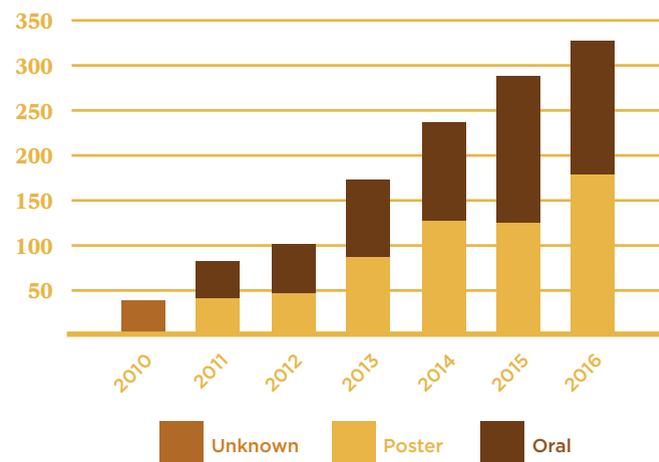


GRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Proudly hosted by the Kent State University Graduate Student Senate, the Graduate Research Symposium is a springtime event that features oral and poster presentations by graduate students from a wide variety of disciplines. This year, 100 faculty and graduate students served as judges for groups of presentations sharing similar themes or representing common areas of study. The symposium concluded with an awards luncheon which featured a keynote address by Dr. Paul E. DiCorleto, KSU's Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs, after which awards were given to exemplary presenters.

The multidisciplinary nature of the Symposium is one of the key features of the event. We are dedicated to fostering and supporting the multidisciplinary nature of the event, welcoming all forms of scholarship, from empirical research to works of art. As part and parcel of this diversity, we have seen explosive growth in the number of presenters at the Graduate Research Symposium. More than eight times the number of students presented at the 2016 Symposium than in 2010!

PRESENTATIONS BY TYPE



OUTSTANDING PRESENTATION AWARDEES 2016

Applied Engineering, Sustainability & Technology
Sreenivasa Reddy Ambati
Aliaa Maar

Anthropology
Michelle Bebber
Andrew Kramer
Andy Martinez
Andrew Skrinyer

Architecture & Environmental Design
Abby Baker
Christian Ford
Zachary Forney
Hanich Haji Molana
Caleb Heller
Rachel Kirkwood
Forrest Paige
Taylor Pfeffenberger

Art
Sarah Bartram

Biological Science
Binaya Adhikari
Suranjana Goswami
Leah Kershner
Raissa Mendonca

Biomedical Science
Asaad Aladlaan
Spencer Andrei
Rebecca Curry
Fouad Moussa

Business Administration
Catherine Hessick

Chemistry & Biochemistry
Pramila Ghimire
Sangeetha Selvam
Yi You

Communication & Information
Bill Kelvin

Computer Science
Naser Al Madi
Nahla Abid

English
Leanna Lostoski

Fashion
Gordo Stumpo

Foundations, Leaderships & Administration
Erika Gallion
Kate Klonowski
Neete Saha

Geography
Erika Smith
Kathryn Hannum

Health Science
Curtis Fennell

Liquid Crystal Institute
Andrii Varanystia

Lifespan Development & Educational Sciences
Colleen Dragovich
Erin Goodridge
Kimberly Travers

Mathematics
Mark Bissler
Lisa Hendrixson

Modern & Classical Languages
Bahreh Gharehgozlou

Music
Kristin Coen-Mishlan

Philosophy
Ryan Marx

Physics
Colin McGinty

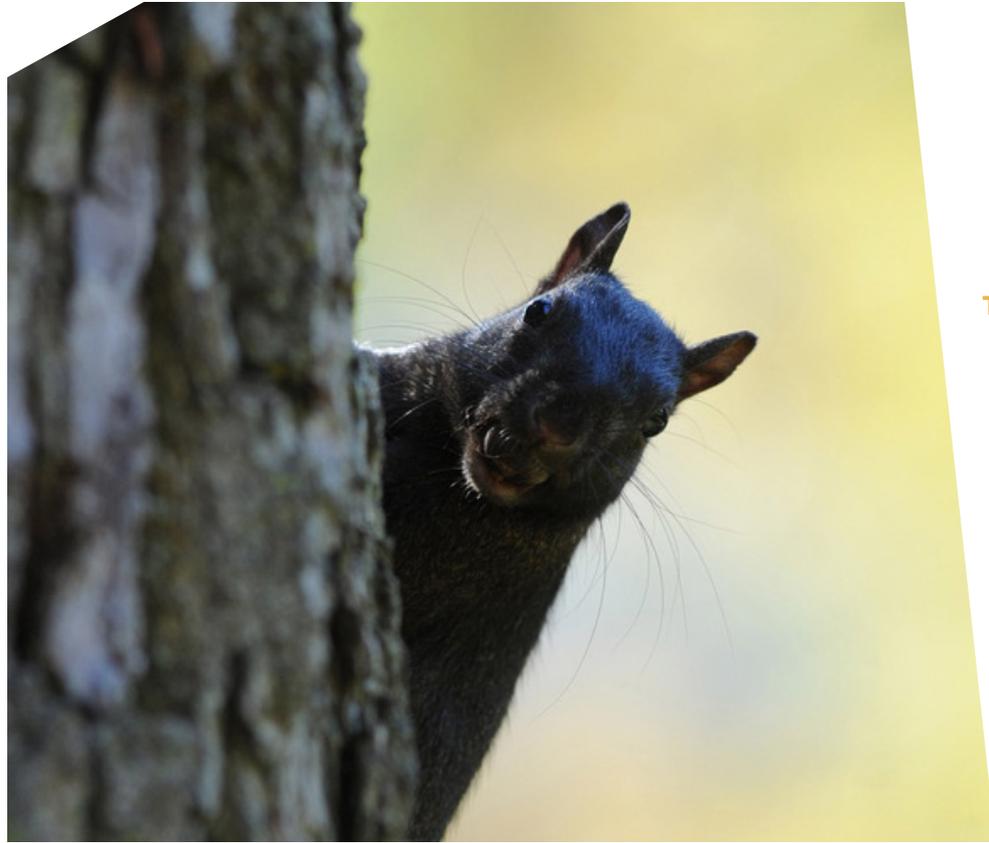
Podiatric Medicine
Emily Zulauf

Political Science
Kristen Traynor

Psychological Science
Shaima Almahmoud
Michael Baranski
Haylee DeLuca
Angela Junglen
Mansi Mehta
Dana Pugh
Brian Smith
Kathryn Wissman

Public Health
Lauren Birmingham
Jenna Brinker
Lorriane Odhiambo

Visual Communication Design
Leigh Hughes
Jordan Kauffman
Alan Walker



TWITTER FOLLOWERS

APRIL 2014 84

APRIL 2015 180

APRIL 2016 319

FACEBOOK LIKES

APRIL 2014 377

APRIL 2015 506

APRIL 2016 653

GRADFEST & SOCIAL MEDIA

GSS hosts monthly social events called GradFest which enable students to have fun and network with other graduate students from across campus. Each GradFest is held in a downtown establishment where GSS provides pizza and a raffle of prizes of Kent State University gear such as mugs, shirts and a coveted large stuffed black squirrel. The seven GradFests held during the 2015-2016 year were hosted at 157 Lounge, Dominick's, and Zephyr Pub.

To boost communication and foster a more connected social environment, GSS can be found on both Facebook and Twitter. Both social media platforms are used to announce meetings and important deadlines, but also share photographs and exciting news from the Senate, the University, or elsewhere. Twitter was particularly utilized during this year's Symposium, as the hashtag #KSUGradResearch connected presenters and audience members alike. Furthermore, we encourage all recipients of our awards to tag us on social media as they travel around the country and world for conferences and research.

FIND US!

TWITTER

@KSUGSS

<https://twitter.com/KSUGSS>

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/KentStateGSS/>

