

# Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

## State of the Campus

### Ivy Summit 2020

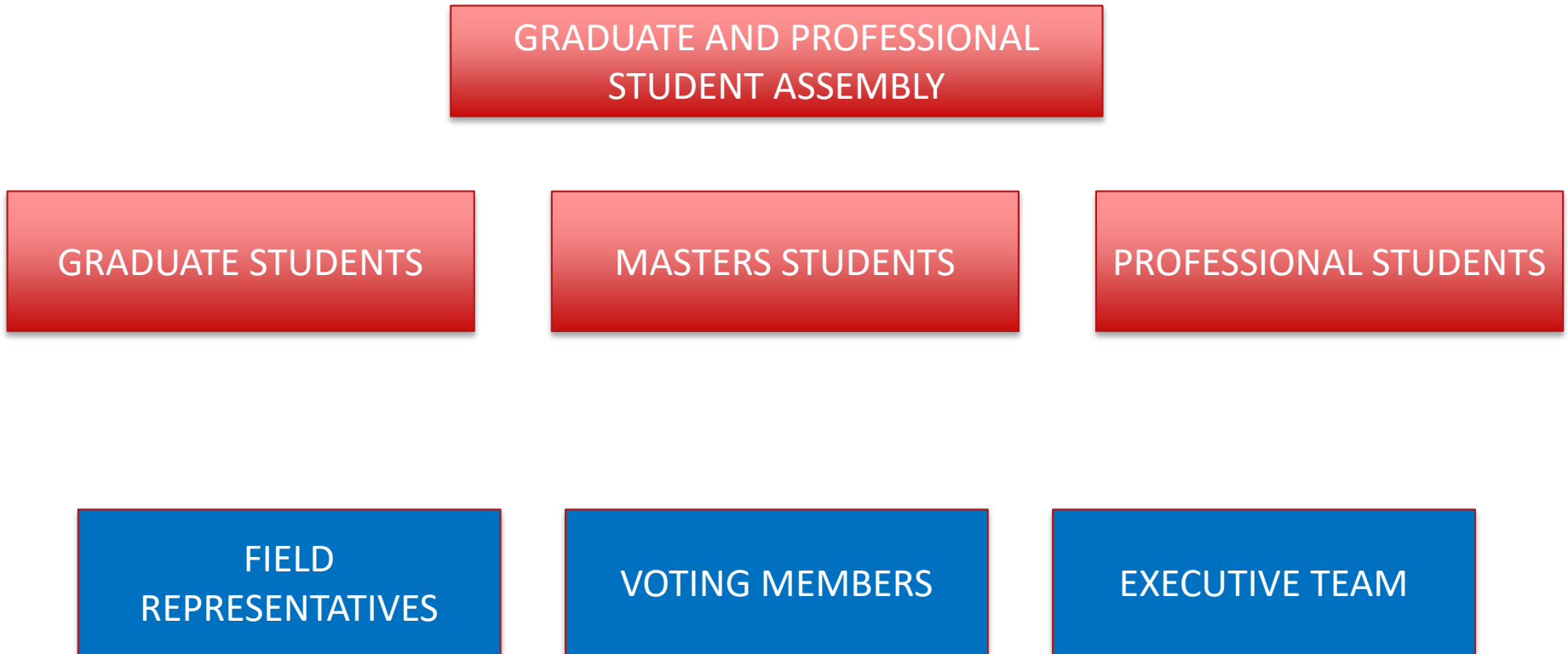
David Dunham, President, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly  
PhD Candidate, German Studies  
[dd567@cornell.edu](mailto:dd567@cornell.edu)



# Overview of Presentation

1. Structure of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA)
2. Overview of Accomplishments
3. The COVID Response & Effects on Graduate Students
4. Future Endeavors and Challenges

# Structure Of The GPSA

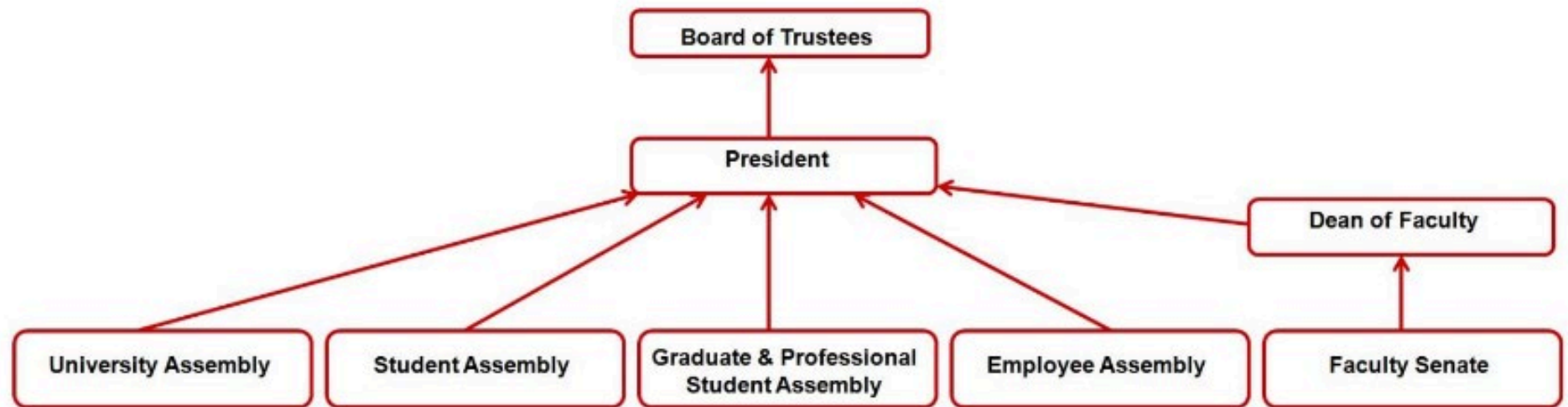


# Structure Of The GPSA

## GPSA Standing Committees:

<i>Committee Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
Appropriations	The “treasurer” of the GPSA. This committee determines the GPSA operational budget and submits it to the voting members of the GPSA for approval during the first business meeting of the GPSA. During GPS Activity Fee setting years, Appropriations makes a recommendation of what the fee should be to the voting members of the GPSA for approval. The committee also maintains, reviews and amends as needed, the funding guidelines of the Finance Commission.
Communications	The Communications Committee maintains the accessible flow of information from the GPSA to the graduate and professional student body and the Cornell community. Communications is also charged with reaching out to student organizations that promote diversity in the Cornell community and encourage their participation in the GPSA. It is recommended that the Communications Committee form a focus group with potential stakeholders to address this charge.
Graduate & Professional Programming Board	The Programming Board organizes events for the entire graduate and professional student community using funds from the GPS Activity Fee. Events include the annual Grad Ball, monthly Grad Nites Out, mixers, coffee hours, fundraising events, and events for graduate and professional students with families.
Executive	This committee consists of the GPSA President, Executive Vice President and the Vice President of Operations. The Counsel to the GPSA serves as a non-voting member. They set the agenda and chair GPSA meetings.
Finance Commission	The “funding arm” of the GPSA. This committee funds over 200 graduate and professional student groups using money from the GPS Activity Fee allocated to the GPSA Financial commission.
Operations & Staffing	This committee consists of all GPSA executives and committee chairs. Operations & Staffing staffs graduate and professional students on GPSA and university committees except for the University Hearing & Review Boards. University Assembly representatives are members of the committee and vote only on staffing University Assembly committees. This committee also reviews the GPSA Charter, Bylaws and funding documents during Charter review years. This committee also ensures that the GPSA functions in an environmentally sustainable way.
Student Advocacy	This committee works to act on issues of stipend levels, mental and physical health, child care, diversity and the general well being of all graduate and professional students. The committee holds one town hall meeting each year (usually in the Spring) in order to solicit feedback from the graduate/professional student community on specific issues. To assist in the committee’s charge in addressing issues of graduate mental health and wellness, it is recommended that the Student Advocacy Committee form a focus group of its members to meet with university administrators, Gannett Health services and the Dean of Students office regularly.

# Structure of the Assemblies



# Instructions for New Members

- Read the *Official Onboarding Guidebook* of the GPSA
- Read the *Graduate and Professional Community Initiative 2020* (GPCI)
- Report to your field about the topics discussed in each meeting.
- Come to each meeting prepared to communicate your field's views to your voting members.
- Join one of the GPSA committees and attend its meetings.

# Accomplishments

- Completion of the Graduate and Professional Community Initiative (GPCI)
- Revisions to the Student Activity Fee
- Improved onboarding of new members
- Initiated collaboration on Student Legal Services clinic
- Building Allyship Series
- Support to Graduate Students in response to COVID-19 pandemic

# The Graduate and Professional Community Initiative (GPCI).

Objective: Outline priorities for the graduate and professional student community. Five-year strategic plan for the Dean of the Graduate School.

Thematic areas:

1. Graduate and Professional Student Center
2. Mental Health and Well-being
3. Diversity and Exclusion
4. International Students
5. Transportation
6. Students with Families
7. Housing
8. Sense of Community

Organized a Town Hall meeting to give students the opportunity to engage with the document.

# 2020-2022 Student Activity Fee

Our Appropriations Committee recommended that the Student Activity Fee be set at \$86.00, to be distributed as follows:

Byline Funded Organizations	Allocation
Athletics and Physical Education	\$7.72
Big Red Barn	\$13.28
Cornell University Emergency Medical Services	\$2.20
Cornell Cinema	\$9.00
Risk Management: Club Insurance	\$5.50
Cornell Concert Commission	\$5.76
Cornell University Programming Board	\$3.00
Graduate and Professional Student Programming Board	\$3.00
Graduate and Professional Student Assembly	\$4.90
International Students Union	\$1.62
GPSA Finance Commission	\$30.02
Total	\$86.00

# Internal Projects

Vice President of Operations, Victoria Kasonde, drafted an **onboarding document** that will allow new members to not only understand how the GPSA functions but also empower them with the necessary tools to be a more active and engaged member.

Collaborated with the Student Assembly in order to develop a **Student Legal Services** clinic and the **Students Helping Students Fund: Graduate Edition**.

**Created the Building Allyship Series** in which students, faculty, and staff were able to learn and discuss the fundamentals of allyship in a series of workshops.

# Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Two key resolutions:

1. Resolution 10: Donation from the GPSA in Support of the Access Fund to Support Graduate and Professional Students in Need Related to COVID-19 Pandemic.
2. Resolution 13: Additional Donation from the GPSA to the Access Fund to Support Graduate and Professional Students in Need Related to COVID-19 Pandemic.

Ensured that a total of sixty thousand dollars was donated to the Access Fund.

The Graduate School matched our original donation of fifty thousand dollars.

To support Cornell through the early stages of COVID, the Executive Committee extended its terms of office until October, after which new leaders were elected.

# Cornell's In-Person Reopening (Review)

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, President Martha Pollack announced that Cornell would reopen in the fall with blend of in-person and virtual instruction.

Decision based on the research of Peter Frazier. Argument: 2-10 times more students could be infected in a semester entirely online than in person.

Surveys: Many students planned to return to campus anyway, even if the semester were online.

Conditions:

1. Asymptomatic surveillance must be frequent.
2. Sufficient quarantine capacity must be available.

Issues for graduate students:

- Access to testing sites
- International graduate student funding if not in US?
- Graduate teaching assistants' input in courses being in-person or virtual.

# The "Daily Check"

## Welcome David Dunham

Each of us has a part to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19. All students must complete the Daily Check every day (including weekends). Faculty, staff, and guests with approval to be on the Cornell campus or in a Cornell-related facility must complete the Daily Check prior to arrival each day.

### Testing Frequency

- **Your testing frequency is:**  
Once per week.
- **Your assigned testing days are:** Wednesday

### Your upcoming tests

- Wednesday 2020-10-14
- Wednesday 2020-10-21

#### Scheduling Your Test:

Link will appear in your banner on your assigned test day. Drop-ins/walk-ups are not acceptable. Visit [surveillance testing](#) for more info on this process.

### Testing Changes

Use the links below to request a change to your assigned testing days and to submit travel dates if you will be away from campus.

[↻ Change Your Assigned Testing Day\(s\)](#)

[↻ Submit Travel Days](#)

### Fall 2020 Location

Our records indicate you are living in Ithaca, therefore, you are required to do the Daily Check every day (including weekends) and surveillance testing as directed by the Daily Check.

[↻ Change Your Location](#)

### Daily Check

Click here to complete your Daily Check.

[↻ Daily Check](#)

# Future Endeavors and Challenges

:

- Incentivize participation in GPSA committees.
- Implementing the priorities outlined in the GPCI.
- Challenges of further reopening or continuing the status quo in the spring semester.
  - Issue of accessibility of surveillance testing locations.
  - Support for graduate teaching assistants with families.
  - How to continue to support grad students in social distancing?
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion.
  - Ensure inclusion of grad & professional students on Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC).
  - Diversity in GPSA appointments
- Supporting international students considering visa restrictions.
- Mental health
  - Efficiency and sufficiency of telehealth?
- Career development for academic and alt-ac pathways.
  - Careers Beyond Academia program