

July 23, 2020

Dear Ohio State Graduate Students,

As you know, the university has announced plans to resume on-campus teaching and activities next month, in alignment with the start of the autumn 2020 semester. We recognize and understand there is high interest and concern about the safety, health, and wellbeing of our campus community as we prepare to transition back to campus in a few short weeks. As we embark on a new academic year, we wish to take this opportunity to welcome you all back to Ohio State, and thank each of you for your continued patience, commitment, creativity, innovation, and collective dedication to Ohio State during the past few months as we all adapted to unforeseen circumstances.

While this announcement is momentous, we recognize this decision has not been well received by everyone. Our efforts to fight for the needs of graduate students does not end with this [impending] return to campus. We are aware there are many unanswered questions still lingering and we are consistently working to gather answers for you and ensure that the graduate student voice is heard. CGS will continue to advocate and engage the extraordinary talents and resources of our university as we navigate this transition. We are thankful for the leadership and support of Dr. Melissa Shivers, Vice President for Student Life, and Dr. Alicia Bertone, Dean of the Graduate School during this time. And on August 24, we will graciously welcome Ohio State's 16th President, Dr. Kristina Johnson to campus. We are excited to bring graduate education to the forefront of Ohio State in continued partnership with university leadership.

We wish to use this opportunity to share with you some updates and precautions for the new year. As we look ahead and pursue new ways to engage with our community and our research and take on the challenges facing our world today, the health, safety, and wellbeing of our campus community remains our highest priority. A successful autumn semester will require us all to work together to control the spread of COVID-19 by adhering to the necessary practices and protocols that have been put in place. We recognize that this autumn will look and feel very different from prior semesters and we will all have to adjust to new ways of navigating campus under the restrictions prompted by the pandemic. In doing our part, CGS has moved all autumn 2020 meetings and activities to a virtual format.

Whether on-campus or not, every one of us needs to fully commit to protecting ourselves, our families, our friends, our colleagues, and our community as a whole. We all play a key role in managing the spread of COVID-19. Some strongly recommended actions include:

- Self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms
- Daily temperature checks
- Wearing face masks/coverings in public settings
- Frequent hand washing (or use of hand-sanitizer when soap and water are not available)
- Practicing social distancing at all times

- Self-isolating if you suspect you may have been exposed to COVID-19
- Avoiding large gatherings of people

In addition to those safety practices, the university has announced additional plans to ensure a safe and clean campus such as [enhanced cleaning protocols](#), furniture rearrangement, [new building signage](#), and much more, to ensure all campus spaces and activities support the health, safety, and wellbeing of our campus community. More details are available on the Office of Student Life [website](#) and Ohio State's Safe and Healthy Buckeyes [website](#).

Equity and Racial Justice Task Force & Ad Hoc Governance Review Committee

CGS has established two internal ad hoc committees to examine organizational operations. The [Equity and Racial Justice Committee](#) is tasked with investigating and reviewing current CGS and university procedures, policies, and practices in order to foster an equitable, diverse, and inclusive Ohio State community. The [Governance Review Committee](#) is tasked with reviewing and revising all CGS governance documents, procedures, policies, and practices to inspire transparency and increase CGS' ability to effectively and efficiently advocate on behalf of all graduate students at Ohio State.

Engaged Scholar Grant

CGS has partnered with the Office of Outreach and Engagement and the Office of Student Life to establish a new grant program to support graduate students undertaking community-engaged research and/or projects addressing specific community needs or problems, in collaboration with a community partner. Graduate students may apply for grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,500 during the 2020-2021 academic year.

On behalf of CGS, we send our love and support to all of you and encourage you to take care of yourselves during these stressful times. This is an extraordinary moment in history, and it requires each of us to treat one another with the utmost respect, care, and compassion. Please remember, CGS continues to fiercely support and advocate for all Ohio State graduate students and know you can reach out to us at any time by email at cgs@osu.edu.

To stay up to date on CGS, please follow us on social media. [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

Stay safe and #MaskUpBuckeyes,

DaVonti' D. Haynes, MSW

Vice President, Council of Graduate Students
PhD student, College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Sarah Light

Secretary, Council of Graduate Students
PhD candidate, Neuroscience Graduate Program, College of Medicine

Jack Brandl

Chief of Staff, Council of Graduate Students
MSW student, College of Social Work



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COUNCIL OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Resources:

- [Student Legal Services](#)
- [Counseling and Consultation Services](#)
- [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Together As Buckeye COVID-19 Emergency Grant Fund](#)
- [Graduate Students COVID-19 Concerns Report](#)
- [Ohio State Official COVID-19 News and Updates](#)
- [Office of Student Life Return to Campus Game Plan](#)
- [Safe and Healthy Buckeyes](#)
- [CGS Grants for Graduate Students](#)
- [Teaching for Student Success Town Halls](#)
- [Graduate School COVID-19 Match Funding](#)
- [Graduate School Time to Degree Extension](#)
- [2020 Graduate Compensation Benefits Committee Recommendations](#)

