

Cameron Keen
11/29 University Council
Student Government Association Update

Good afternoon. My name is Cameron Keen and I serve as the President of the Student Government Association. I wanted to start by saying thank you to everyone in this room that has partnered with us in our efforts. We certainly cannot accomplish what we do alone, and we are so grateful for the support many of you have given as we seek to better our school.

SGA has been hard at work when it comes to improving safety, affordability, and everyday life for the students of UGA.

One project that we are particularly excited about is the UGA mobile app updates that should be ready early next semester. By working with the Health Center, the Dean of Students Office, EITS, and other campus partners, we have compiled wellness resources for students in a way that is clear and comprehensible for any student in need of help, with two new icons coming soon to the homepage. One icon will have 24-HR emergency hotlines readily accessible, and the second icon will display any resource a student could need on our campus, be it related to mental wellness, veteran services, or Student Care and Outreach, in an easy-to-use format

On the topic of the mobile app, we are also excited to announce that you soon will be able to check whether the Tate parking deck is full, with other decks hopefully soon to follow. I know this is a resource that I am sure everyone will enjoy - so make sure you download the UGA app if you haven't already.

Mental wellness is a top priority of our administration. By partnering with the Health Center, Dean of Students office and other on campus organizations, we hosted a summit where student leaders could come together to learn more about resources and messaging around the issue. We also teamed up with other organizations to host a panel on the stigma surrounding mental wellness. We are excited that the coming changes on the mobile app will help students access campus resources related to mental wellness.

This year, we have faced sexual assault head on. At the start of November we hosted It's On Us week, a national campaign aimed at ending sexual assault on college campuses. By partnering with Greek Life, Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention in the Health Center, and UGA Athletics, we encouraged our entire campus to find ways in which they can take a stand against sexual assault. We ended the week with a video on the jumbotron during the South Carolina game reminding students that one rape on campus is too many.

Besides a new display on the UGA app, we have also worked to create a flowchart that makes seeking help on our campus more understandable, to be displayed soon on our website and shared with the student body.

We are continuing to find ways in which textbooks can become more affordable on our campus, working with the Office of the Provost to spearhead a task force focused directly on creating solutions for student affordability. We are also partnering with the University Libraries to focus on Open Educational Resources, or OERs. OERs are free or reduced priced textbooks offered through other mediums besides print.

When it comes to OERs - we need your help. We are trying to make this process as simple as possible for professors. If any of you teach a course, we greatly encourage you to reach out to us or the library to see how you can implement more affordable textbooks in the classroom. And to any students in the room, please come talk to us if you would like guidance and resources for how to start this conversation with one of your professors - particularly if one of your classes uses a custom coursepack.

We firmly believe that students have the right to know where their money is going. That is why we are proud to say that by partnering with the Budget Division in Finance and Administration, we have created updated fact sheets for every mandatory student fee. These are viewable on Athena under the Student Account tab, which we hope students will utilize especially while registering for classes. When it comes to the Special Institutional Fee in particular, we are working on an updated fact sheet detailing how its funds are being allocated to better both the student and academic experience at UGA.

We are excited to partner with the Career Center and Office of Experiential Learning to make internships as accessible as possible. It is our hope that students will be able to count the rigorous work they complete towards the new Experiential Learning requirement by partnering with UGA staff and faculty, a process students can learn all about at an Experiential Learning Fair we will be co-hosting with the Career Center in February.

We believe that increased access to internships will help students, but by specifically focusing on internships within Athens Clarke County, we are focused on bettering relations with our community - a goal of ours since the beginning. Earlier this month we attended the Mayor and Commission breakfast, where SGA members talked with Athens Clarke County police, commissioners, and Mayor Denson on this same note. Topics of discussion included lighting and off campus housing, and we hope to see an increase in lighting in high trafficked areas in the year to come.

SGA also traveled this month to Auburn to participate in Better Relations Day. While it was especially difficult to achieve Better Relations the Monday after the Auburn game, we put on our game faces and had a productive day discussing a variety of ideas from both the Auburn and University of Alabama SGAs to bring back to our own campus.

As we move forward, we will continue to do all that we can to make sure UGA is inclusive and welcoming to all students. Earlier this month we hosted a panel on diversity and inclusion with Dr. Dawn D. Bennett Alexander, Dr. Michelle Howard, Arthur Tripp, and Jason Wallace. The response from members of all years and facets of SGA was extremely inspiring, as our student

leaders learned so much about efforts being made at the administrative level to promote diversity at UGA, and were encouraged time and time again to reach out to leaders from the president to their professors in order to join in the effort.

While the semester is winding down, we are in office until April. We will continue to do all we can to ensure that the next several months are our most productive yet. As we seek to improve safety, affordability and everyday life, we hope you each will join us in our efforts to work on behalf of the student body. Thank you for all that you do, and, as always - Go Dawgs!