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Take a look at spring on campus!

Mayberry's SGA staff sworn into office



Screenshot by: Krishnan Collins | Editor-in-Chief

Rashad Kirksey swears in SGA President Ellie Mayberry and Vice President Logan Mitchell.

KRISHNAN COLLINS

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Student Government Association President Ellie Mayberry started her term Tuesday after being sworn in by former SGA President Rashad Kirksey. Along with Mayberry, Logan Mitchell was sworn in as vice president and the rest of Mayberry's staff, along with many new senators, were sworn in at the meeting. "I just wanted to say that I'm so excited to have the opportunity to serve in this role," Mayberry said. "If you ever need anything from me, feel free to reach out. We're really excited for what this year has in store and we can't wait to fill some of these open seats today."

Being the first meeting for Mayberry's staff, there were some hiccups during the meeting. "Again, just bear with us as this is our first meeting," Mitchell said. "As you can already tell there are some growing pains but it will get better I promise. My job as vice president is to help the senate in whatever way possible, if you do need any help with anything throughout the year feel free to reach out to me and let me know and I'll do anything I can to help you" The meeting mostly consisted of filling senate seats including the filling of seats for the College of Agriculture, Neil Griffin College of Business, one of the College of Engineering seats, College of Liberal Arts and Communication, College of Sciences and Mathematics,

the military science seat, sophomore senator seats and senior senator seats. Mayberry also talked about SGA's budget. While the salaries for those on staff are already set, the rest of the budget is in percentages. "(The budget) is based off of student fees," Mayberry said. "So that will depend upon the number of students that we have registered next semester as to what exactly our budget is." The budget also included a comparison of this year's budget to last year's budget. "The only real change is a decrease in the amount of the budget that goes toward the bike share program just because we tend to have a lot of excess money left in that category at the end of the school year," Mayberry said.

Student starts petition to bring credit/no credit option back this spring

KRISHNAN COLLINS

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

While Provost Dr. Alan Utter announced the credit/no credit option would not be offered to students this spring semester, one A-State student started a petition to bring the option back to campus.

Sophomore computer science major Christian Huggins started a petition April 8 on change.org to bring CR/NC back this semester. In the petition, Huggins emphasized the effect the pandemic has had on students.

As of Tuesday night, the petition tallied 935 signatures.

"The original decision to start the petition came after I contacted the Provost," Huggins said. "I sent multiple paragraphs explaining really just in general the struggles students endured. In which the response in my opinion was not adequate. So I felt the best way to actually gain more attention for this issue was to start a petition and get some signatures for it."

Huggins said in general he thinks GPA is problematic in the first place. He added it is harmful to students in a pandemic to have a GPA requirement to keep a scholarship.

"They lose their scholarships," Huggins said. "Which ultimately prevents them from continuing to go to college."

Huggins noted the CR/NC option could be used as



Christian Huggins

a GPA booster by students.

"GPA is already problematic, but by adding credit/no credit, people are allowed to pad their GPAs a little bit better for the future for GPA requirements and things of that nature," Huggins said. "These students are actually able to maintain college eligibility."

In the description of Huggins' petition, the sophomore notes during the pandemic, "student burnout, lack of school provided accommodations, and poor school infrastructure are all things that have affected students."

Huggins pointed to slow email response times, professors not attentive to online chats or online calls, not enough office hours and not enough focus on the mental health of students especially when it came to student burnout.

"Professors, while we do admire the dedication to the job, have not been there consistently," Huggins said. "My roommates for example, we all agreed our professors have not been responding to our emails as we would like to. We see some professors with minimum response times of like 24 hours. In which we don't get the answers we need when we need them."

Student feedback surrounding the petition has poured in on the Arkansas State University app and on the comments of the petition.

"A lot of people's main problems are the fact they've always been good students and this semester shows how they're still being impacted," Huggins said. "A lot of them are talking about their positive GPAs before the pandemic and how afterwards they've seen a negative decline in these."

Huggins was informed his petition will be brought before the Faculty Senate Friday.

"I just want to encourage people to sign the petition even if they feel as though they weren't impacted," Huggins said. "There are ultimately people whose futures are at stake here whenever it comes to this implementation. Like we mentioned, financial aid is a big impact whenever it comes to this. It's because of that, we believe everyone should sign this petition whether they were impacted or not."

College of Agriculture hosts annual spring plant sale with safety measures in place

MORGAN EDWARDS

NEWS WRITER

Arkansas State's Agriculture Department hosted its annual plant sale April 8 and April 9.

Both greenhouses at the Agricultural Center were filled with beautiful plants and plenty of excited customers.

Anita Despain, a master gardener from Craighead County, said, "I feel like this is the biggest turnout we have had in a while. More people are getting into gardening because of the pandemic."

The line was wrapped around the greenhouse due to a limited number of people who were allowed to enter the facilities because of social distancing purposes. Masks, hand sanitizer and even gloves were provided at the entrance of the event to protect the safety of those who attended.

Stacey Sloas, an associate professor of physical therapy, expressed her excitement for the



Photo by: Mo Edwards | News Writer

The College of Agriculture hosted its annual plant sale April 8 and April 9. The sale followed COVID-19 guidelines such as the number of people allowed to enter the sale and the use of masks.

event saying, "I like coming here because they have unique plants that you normally would not

be able to find anywhere else." Others in attendance described the event as

important and necessary. Many of the customers anticipated that this event

would be a good event and they brought crates and empty boxes to carry their plants in.

Some even had trouble fitting their purchased greenery in their trunk of their cars.

The event differed from last year's plant sale that COVID-19 heavily affected.

"Last year the event was cancelled due to COVID-19 and we had to order plants using an order form," Sloas said.

The event was well equipped with qualified personnel who served to help people through the process of deciding which plant or plants they would like to purchase.

These helpers had a list of the different types of plants available and even knew which plants were sold out and which were still available.

Student helpers lended a helping hand by carrying plants to customer's cars.

Despain had advice for those who missed the event.

"Come out another day," Despain said. "This is definitely an event that you do not want to miss."