

Hello Graduate Students,

I hope your spring semester is progressing well as we move closer to the second half of the term. I continue to be inspired by the dedication, resilience, and ambition that define our graduate student community at KSU.



As we look ahead to the coming weeks, we are excited to recognize and support your hard work through several upcoming initiatives. Graduate Student Appreciation Week will take place March 30-April 3, offering a series of events designed to celebrate your contributions and strengthen our graduate community.

We are also hosting 3MT Bootcamps to help prepare participants for the Three Minute Thesis competition on April 2. These workshops are designed to build confidence, refine communication skills, and support you as you share your research with a broader audience.

The Graduate College is deeply committed to fostering your success and ensuring you have the resources you need to thrive. I look forward to the accomplishments and milestones this season will bring for each of you.

Warmly,



Herman "Gene" Ray
Associate Dean for Graduate Student Success

KSU Grad Student Advances Hormone Biology Research

As a master's student in Kennesaw State University's Integrative Biology (MSIB) program, April Ford is taking a fresh approach to discovering what role certain proteins play in an organism's development.



By examining when and how hormone receptors interact with these proteins, she is contributing important insights that could shape our understanding of biological development, puberty, and even steroid-driven cancers.

Steroid hormones like estrogen and testosterone are known to be key players in development, but this project takes on a new approach to an old question: how do certain proteins work alongside them to control their effect?

Read the full article on the [Graduate College's News page](#).



Annual Day of Service Registration Open

Join Kennesaw State as we serve our community and make a difference at the annual [Day of Service](#)! The event takes place on March 28, 2026, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. [Registration is open now](#).

Interested in more information about the Day of Service? E-mail dayofservice@kennesaw.edu.

Want to share news from your program or give a shout out to a student who is doing amazing research? Let us know! Send your story idea to Tracy Gaudlip in the Graduate College at tgaudlip@kennesaw.edu.



Share Your Story in *Behind the Feathers*

Are you working on campus as a GRA, GTA, or GPA? Student Affairs wants to highlight **you** in a new feature series called *Behind the Feathers*, a showcase designed to celebrate the meaningful, interesting, and often behind-the-scenes work graduate students contribute to KSU.

Graduate assistants play a huge role in shaping the student experience, supporting academic departments, advancing research, and keeping campus life moving along. Behind the Feathers aims to spotlight these roles by sharing personal stories, unique responsibilities, and the impact graduate students make every day.

If you'd like to be featured, Student Affairs invites you to complete the [Student Feature Form](#). It only takes a few minutes and helps the team learn more about you, your position, and your department.

This is a great opportunity to build your professional visibility, represent your department, and inspire other Owls who may be exploring similar paths.



Can You Explain Your Thesis or Dissertation in 3 Minutes?

The Graduate College will be hosting their 12th annual 3MT Competition on Thursday, April 2, 2026 during Graduate Student Appreciation Week.

The Three Minute Thesis is a research communication competition developed by [The University of Queensland](#).

The exercise develops academic, presentation, and research communication skills and supports the development of students' capacities to effectively explain their research in a language appropriate to an intelligent but non-specialist audience.

Master's and Doctoral students have three minutes to present a compelling oration on their thesis or dissertation topic and its significance.

Who's Eligible?

- Currently enrolled master's and doctoral students at KSU who have key results in their presentation;
- Thesis or dissertation should be mostly complete

[Learn more about the 3MT Competition and how to register.](#)

See the events listing on page 3 for 3MT Bootcamp Workshop opportunities

Ph.D. Student Wins Best Poster



Ph.D. in data science and analytics student **Brandi Jones** won the best poster award in the Statistical Methods section at the American

Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting and Expo in November of 2025. The momentum continues for Brandi this semester as she will be giving an oral presentation at one of the largest pediatric conferences, Pediatric Academic Societies (PAS), in April.

Ph.D. Students Publish Manuscript

Congratulations to Ph.D. students in data science and analytics students, **Brandi Jones** and **Thalia Pacheco** for co-authoring a newly published manuscript, *Association between Infant Birth Size Classification and Development of Morbidities in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: A Cohort Study*.



Graduate Student Appreciation Week!

Kennesaw State University celebrates its graduate students annually during the first week of April. This is the week the Graduate College recognizes the impact and contributions graduate students make every day, and to show our appreciation, we are hosting several special events:

Kickoff Events

- **March 30, 4-6 p.m.**
Carmichael Student Center in front of the University Rooms
Kennesaw Campus
- **March 30, 4:30-6:30 p.m.**
Atrium "J" Building lobby
Marietta Campus

Wine and Cheese Reception

- **April 1, 7-9 p.m.**
Convocation Center
Superior Plumbing Hospitality Suite (Room CC3026)
[Register to attend the Wine and Cheese Reception.](#)

3MT Competition

Come cheer on the brilliant competitors in this year's Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition and vote for your favorite!

- **April 2, 5:30-7 p.m.**
Prillaman Health Sciences Building, HS1105
Kennesaw Campus

Game Night

Enjoy a variety of games and snacks with your peers.

- **April 3, 4-6:30 p.m.**
Stingers Dining Hall, Executive Dining Room
Marietta Campus

Summer Assistantship Deadlines

Hiring Opens	March 12
Hiring Closes	May 1st
Student must Process with HR	June 4th
Contract Dates	June 1 - July 31

Spring 2026 Dissertation Defense Announcements

The following dissertation defenses were submitted at the time of publication. For the most up-to-date listing, please visit the Events Calendar on the Graduate College website.

Patrick Leahy

Candidate for Doctor of Education
Bagwell College of Education
March 24, 2026, 4:15 p.m.
Bagwell Education Building Room 415

Jennifer Givens

Candidate for Doctor of Education
Bagwell College of Education
March 25, 2026, 1:30 p.m.
Microsoft Teams
Meeting ID: 236 174 692 000 49
Passcode: xE6rz62b

Commencement Dates and Times by College

May 12, 2026

7 p.m. Bagwell College of Education

May 13, 2026

7 p.m. Coles College of Business

May 14, 2026

10 a.m. Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences

May 15, 2026

10 a.m. College of Computing and Software Engineering
3 p.m. Southern Polytechnic College of Engineering and Engineering Technology



Upcoming Events

3MT Bootcamps

Students in programs with a thesis or dissertation are invited to join us in one of our workshops on mastering 3MT slide design, public speaking, and presenting research in just three minutes to a non-specialist audience.

- **March 5, 4:30-6 p.m.**
[Marietta Campus Registration](#)
- **March 16, 4-6:30 p.m.**
[Kennesaw Campus Registration](#)
- **March 18, 6-7:30 p.m.**
[Virtual Registration](#)

Grad Pad Connection: A Roommate Mixer

Grad Students are invited to join this event hosted by Wellbeing@KSU for Roommate Bingo, Speed Friending, and more.

- **Tuesday, March 17, 2026**
4:30 - 7 p.m.
Prillaman Hall, Room HS1001

Please complete this [Matching Survey](#) by Monday, March 2, 2026. If you have questions or need additional information, please email: studentaffairs@kennesaw.edu.

How to Format Your Dissertation/Thesis

This workshop will focus on the template requirements and how to ensure that your submitted manuscript is accepted in time for your graduation.

- **March 19, 5-6 p.m.**
Virtual: Microsoft Teams
[Formatting workshop registration and log in](#)

Deadline to Register for the 3MT Competition

- **March 23, 5 p.m.**
[Learn more about the 3MT Competition and how to register.](#)

Graduate Student Appreciation Week Kickoffs

- **March 30, 4-6 p.m.**
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Career Planning

Government & Non-Profit Fair

March 3 • 12 - 2 p.m.
Siegel Student Rec Center
Kennesaw Campus

Part-Time Employment Fair

March 26 • 12 - 2 p.m.
Siegel Student Rec Center
Kennesaw Campus

For more information, locations, and to register for events, visit the [Events Calendar](#) on our website or scan the QR code.



Send your program's events to Tracy Gaudlip in the Graduate College at tgaudlip@kennesaw.edu and we will publish it in our next issue.