



## Graduate Student Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

Friday, April 11, 2008, 3p.m.

Connable Board Room– Bernhard Center

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*Representatives Present:* Rosana Alsaud (Chairperson), Alyssa Kalata (Vice-Chairperson), Kazuhiro Iwamoto (Biological Sciences), David Shoup (History), Deondra Ramsey (Political Science), Moses Mwebembezi (Public Affairs & Administration), Brandi Pritchett (Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology), Katie Smith (Educational Leadership, Research and Technology), Kate Block (Mallinson Institute for Science Education), Dawn Anderson (Interdisciplinary Health Studies), Susan Celestini (Occupational Therapy), Dr. Lewis Pyenson (The Graduate College), Melissa Green (Division of Student Affairs), Danielle Harik (Western Student Association)

*Guests Present:* None.

1. Call to order: 3:03
2. Introductions
3. \*Approval of the Agenda 04/11/08: David moves to approve, seconded by Brandi.
4. \*Approval of Minutes from 03/14/08: David moves to approve, seconded by Brandi.
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Dr. Pyenson reported that this morning the Second Annual Celebration of Research and Creative Activities was held at the Fetzer Center. He stated that there were a large number of poster presentations, thirteen of which received a two-hundred dollar award. He also stated that there were two engaging keynote speakers who spoke at the event. He said that this event will definitely be held again in the future. Dr. Pyenson also reported that this Tuesday, the Graduate College will be holding the Graduate Research and Creative Scholar Award and Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award Ceremonies, at which most graduate student recipients will make a brief presentation about their research or teaching. He stated that this ceremony is always very encouraging, as it highlights some of the best work that is being done at Western Michigan University.
6. Report from the Chair
  - a. Provost Search Advisory Committee: Rosana reported that four candidates for the Provost position will be coming to Western Michigan University's campus. She reported that one of these individuals is currently the dean of the College of Engineering and that all of them are highly qualified and competent in terms of their credentials. She stated that she would like the members of the GSAC to meet with these individuals. She reported that there are meetings scheduled with these individuals on April 18<sup>th</sup>, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and April 24<sup>th</sup>, at which times members of the GSAC can introduce themselves and ask questions. Rosana stated that she will e-mail all members of the GSAC with information about times and locations for these meetings.
  - b. Board of Trustees Meeting, 5/02: Rosana reported that Brandi will be speaking with the Board of Trustees at the next meeting to discuss the SAF increase and SAF redistribution, at which time the Board will decide whether to put these changes in to place. She reported that the time of the meeting will be announced in the near future.
  - c. WSA Elections
    - i. New officers: Rosana welcomed the new President of WSA, Danielle Harik, and also gave congratulations to the new Vice President of WSA, Andrew Crowe. Rosana stated that she has good expectations for future interactions between the GSAC and WSA.
    - ii. SAF increase approved
  - d. NAGPS Membership Upgrade: Rosana reported that the GSAC's request for funds for a lifetime membership in NAGPS was approved by President Dunn. This approval means that that GSAC will no longer need to pay NAGPS annual dues.
  - e. Events
    - i. Mar. 21: Professional Development Day – Fetzer Center: Rosana reported that approximately sixty people attended this event, which included several presentations and a keynote speaker. She stated that the keynote speaker discussed ways to overcome the economic difficulties in the state of Michigan.

- ii. Mar. 29: Bowling, Karaoke, and Game Night – Airway Lanes: Alyssa reported that at least 130 individuals attended this event and seemed to have a wonderful time and that up until the day of the event, there was still a 70 person waitlist. She stated that this would be a nice event to hold in the future, possibly on a larger scale to accommodate all interested individuals.
  - f. Rosana’s Goodbye Address: Rosana briefly highlighted some of her accomplishments over her two years as Chairperson, including increasing member participation, increasing the size of the GSAC membership, increasing the visibility of the GSAC, increasing the number of graduate students participating in GSAC events, strengthening GSAC’s relationship with the University administration, upgrading GSAC’s NAGPS membership, working in conjunction with other schools in Michigan to establish the Michigan Association of Graduate and Professional Students, increasing GSAC’s involvement with NAGPS, and working to increase and restructure the SAF. Rosana stated that serving as Chairperson has been a wonderful learning experience and that she is sad to be leaving.
7. GFAC – *Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa stated that she received no proposals this month, however she noted that there is some money that can still be awarded this fiscal year, due to sweep backs that occurred in February and March.
8. GSAC Treasurer – ***Needs one volunteer!*** (pg. 4): Rosana reported that the GSAC needs a new treasurer. She stated that this position would take only one to two hours a month and although it is fairly simple, it is an incredibly important position. Rosana reported that she will send out an e-mail regarding the position and anyone who is interested can contact her for more information.
9. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils
- i. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa reported that she is currently working on restructuring the GFAC documents, as this needs to take precedence over putting the website in to the Western Michigan University standard template.
  - b. Graduate Research Symposium and Journal (Hilltop Review): *Vacant*
  - c. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Kamleshkumar Suthar*: Rosana reported that he will be reviewing these award applications, which were due on March 15<sup>th</sup>. She stated that we will likely hear an announcement about the winners soon.
  - d. University Councils
    - i. Research Policies Council (2) – *Alyssa Kalata, Greg Laing*: Alyssa reported that the primary topics of discussion at the most recent meeting were the FRACAA and SFSA award programs,
    - ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Rosana Alsaud, Alyssa Kalata*: Rosana reported that the primary topics of discussion were establishing an MBA program at the Battle Creek campus and issues pertaining to accelerated programs at the University.
    - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Priya Srinivasan (Needs One Member)*: Rosana reported that Priya is graduating, so the GSAC will need one member to serve on this Council. She will send out an e-mail to the GSAC membership, asking if anyone is interested in serving.
    - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto*: Kazuhiro reported that a memo that the IEC had put forth regarding including international education as part of the hiring procedures for the University did not pass the Faculty Senate. He also stated that there is new University software available to help international students with taxes. Finally, he noted that the OPT laws have changed and encouraged individuals to whom these laws apply to investigate them further.
  - e. MLK Committee: Not present.
  - f. WSA representative – *Danielle Harik, President*: Danielle reported that she is currently transitioning in to her position and that she has been meeting with Chris Praedel frequently. She also reported that she has been communicated with Alyssa and Brandi and that she and Andrew plan on meeting with them over the summer. She also stated that she is currently in the process of assembling her cabinet.
  - g. CAB representative – *Jacqui Volkmann, President*: Not present.
  - h. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) – ?: Not present.
10. Unfinished Business
- a. Student Assessment Fee (SAF)
    - i. Increase \$12 to \$21
    - ii. Redistribution

- b. Graduate Student Survey: Alyssa reported the findings of the Graduate Student Survey and the primary recommendations that she was able to come up with based on the results of the survey. She asked members for feedback about additional suggestions. One member asked Alyssa to create a list of five talking points for those GSAC members who plan on attending their departmental orientations to discuss GSAC and its role at the University. Other members made suggestions about additional feedback mechanisms for graduate students with concerns they would like to bring up to the GSAC, including anonymous comment boxes for concerns located within departments, an online submission form located on the GSAC website, or a blog or discussion forum that could be accessed from the GSAC website. Additionally, members stressed the importance of introducing themselves to their departments at the GSAC representative, either in person or through the use of e-mails sent to their entire department, and also discussed the use of departmental Listservs to communicate information regarding the GSAC. Another member suggested that the GSAC should create form that discusses the specific functions of the various organizations and individuals to whom graduate students can go to express concerns about their experience at the University and how to contact these organizations (e.g. GSAC, TAU, department head, ombudsman). Furthermore, the importance of encouraging graduate departments to create departmental RSOs was discussed. Many members also highlighted the importance of marketing GSAC, through attaching our name to any event with which we are associated and also through the use of promotional materials, such as the GSAC PowerPoint presentation that was created earlier this year. Members echoed the importance of finding out more about branch campuses and increasing contact with students at these campuses. Finally, the importance of administering the same survey to see if these interventions had an impact was discussed. It was noted that this comparison data could be used to inform future decisions made by the GSAC.
- c. Spring events:
  - i. Apr. 11: Research Day: Rosana reported that thirteen graduate students were given two-hundred dollar awards for their work.
  - ii. WMU Day at the Capitol (pg. 5): Rosana stated that she sent a mass e-mail out to all graduate students and approximately nine individuals expressed interest in participating. Rosana noted that the University will pay for the displays created by students. Interested parties can contact Rosana for further information.

11. New Business

- a. \*Approval of the GSAC Constitution: David moves to approve, seconded by Kazuhiro. Motion carried.
- b. \*Approval of the GSAC Bylaws: Dawn moves to approve, seconded by David.

12. General Announcements & Briefs

- a. Announcements for the Good of the Order
  - i. GSOC Reception: Rosana encouraged all members of the GSAC to attend this event.
- b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: May 9, June 13, July 11

11. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”

12. Adjourn: 4:30

\*Items that require a vote from members.

## **GSAC Treasurer**

### **Job Description**

- Follow and work with GSAC yearly budget created by GSAC Chair and Vice Chair.
- Maintain financial files for GSAC and attend required workshop for training purposes with Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SALP) RSO Financial Advisor
  - Will be trained on:
    - University and SALP financial forms
    - GLOW (online financial account system)
    - Reconciling
- Reconcile GSAC financial file once a month
- Create detailed monthly report on GSAC spending

## **WMU Day at the Capitol**

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmuday/>

WMU Day at the Capitol is a first-of-its-kind display of pride and achievement at the Michigan Capitol Building during a daylong event Wednesday, May 28.

Members of the WMU community will meet with lawmakers and have exhibits and displays on the front lawn of the capitol in Lansing.

**Register today** to participate in this WMU celebration with other students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends of the University. Souvenir t-shirts, box lunches and optional bus transportation from WMU to Lansing, all free of charge, will be available for participants who register to attend. **Show your support for WMU and register now for WMU Day at the Capitol.**

### **\*RSO Participation Award\***

(GSAC!)

Students are asked to list all registered student organizations in which they are active members when they register for WMU Day. The RSO with the greatest percentage of its membership in Lansing on WMU Day will receive a **\$300 award** to support the RSO's activities, its scholarship fund or any other purpose it chooses.

## **Schedule**

8:30 a.m.—Buses depart Bernhard Center

10 a.m.—Arrive at Capitol Building, begin set-up of outdoor exhibits, begin scheduled meetings with legislators

noon—Lunch

1 p.m.—Begin Capitol tours

2 p.m.—Reception for legislators

2:30 p.m.—Begin breaking down exhibits

3:15 p.m.—Meet on Capitol steps

3:45 p.m.—Depart Capitol

5 p.m.—Buses arrive at Bernhard Center