



**Graduate Student Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda**

April 3, 2009, 3p.m.

Connable Board of Trustee Room (Bernhard Center – 201)

Representatives Present: Brandi Pritchett (Chairperson), Alyssa Kalata (Vice-Chairperson), Nayane Udawatte (Chemistry), Krystal Bresnahan (Communication), Stephanie Ruhl (Communication), Mohammad Al-Amar (Physics), Katie Smith (Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology), Imad Zyout (Electrical and Computer Engineering), Jesse Thompson (Teaching Assistant Union), Ms. Melissa Green (Division of Student Affairs), Andrew Ladd (Western Student Association)

Guests Present: None.

1. Call to order: 3:05
2. Introductions
3. *Approval of the Agenda 4/03/09: Stephany moves to approve, seconded by Nayane.
4. *Approval of Minutes from 3/13/09: Stephany moves to approve, seconded by Katie.
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Not present.
6. Report from the Chair
 - a. ICES – *Guest Presenter* – Eileen Evans: Eileen reported that the ICES Steering Committee is in the process of enacting a plan to transition to the Instructor and Course Evaluation System (ICES) from a paper format to a web-based format. This transition will have a number of benefits, including increasing the ease of evaluating online courses and EUP courses, decreasing the amount of time needed to compile and distribute the information obtained from ICES, and increasing the amount of time available for classroom instruction at the end of the semester. The transition of ICES to a web-based format is taking place through a three-stage pilot program. The first stage of the pilot program will begin in the College of Education during Summer II 2009, at which time students in this college will use the web-based ICES. The second stage of the pilot program will add the College of Aviation, the College of Business, and the College of Health and Human Services during Fall 2009. The remaining colleges will transition to the web-based ICES system in Spring 2010. Access to the web-based ICES system will be through the GoWMU portal. Students will have two weeks prior to finals to complete instructor and course evaluations during the Fall and Spring semesters and a slightly shorter time frame to complete instructor and course evaluations during the Summer I and Summer II semesters. Students will receive three reminder e-mails at the end of each semester, encouraging them to evaluate their instructors and courses. There will be an option to opt out of providing evaluations. Eileen encouraged students to contact her with any feedback or concerns regarding the proposed online system. Brandi noted that GSAC members are allowed to serve on the ICES Steering Committee. She stated that she and Joel have been attending meetings, but would like to encourage other GSAC members to attend as well.
 - b. Campus Visits – Southwest & Battle Creek: Brandi reported that one of the charges for GSAC this year was to increase outreach to Branch Campuses. This year, GSAC members have visited the Traverse City, Battle Creek, and Southwest Branch Campuses. Brandi stated that she will be visiting the Lansing Branch Campus when she attends WMU Day at the Capital. She also noted that a visit to the Grand Rapids Branch Campus still needs to be planned. Brandi recently visited the Southwest Branch Campus and noted that many of the concerns she heard from students pertained to access to resources. Students at the Southwest Campus indicated that they would like the buildings on campus to be open past 9:00 p.m., so they can utilize the computer lab and other on-campus resources. Alyssa recently visited the Battle Creek Branch Campus and noted that many of her interactions at the campus were with prospective students. She stated that she interacted with one of the administrators at the Battle Creek Branch Campus and communicated to him a number of different ways in which the GSAC and graduate students at the Battle Creek Branch Campus could connect. Brandi encouraged GSAC members to get feedback from students they may know at the Branch Campuses about their experiences and concerns.
 - c. Library Updates: Brandi reported that she met with Michele Behr to discuss the possibility of arranging for graduate students to have continued access to library resources post-graduation. Brandi noted that all WMU students have access to library services for a short period post-graduation, but

that she would like to get this period extended. Michele mentioned that she will talk to the Assistant Dean about this request. Brandi noted that she discussed a number of other issues with Michele as well, including ways to help students become more aware of resources at the library (e.g. textbooks, online books), ways to improve the interlibrary loan system, and the possibility of creating a graduate student advocacy board or an assistantship position for a graduate student interested in improving library services. In the meantime, Michele and Brandi agreed that it would be a good idea to have a focus group about library services once a semester to discuss ways in which library services can be improved. Brandi asked if it would be okay to have either the June or July GSAC meeting at the library and GSAC members agreed that this would be a good idea. Brandi also asked GSAC members for general feedback about library services. Alyssa mentioned that she would like to see increased online journal access.

7. *GFAC – *Alyssa Kalata*
 - a. Anthropology Student Union: Requested \$2,500.00 for their 3rd Annual Margaret Mead Traveling Film Festival event. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$2,500.00 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
 - b. Anthropology Graduate Collective: Requested \$1,980.00 for their 3rd Annual Margaret Mead Traveling Film Festival event. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$1,980.00 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
8. GSAC Treasurer – *Alyssa Kalata*: No updates.
9. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils
 - i. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata*: No updates.
 - ii. Public Relations Committee (3) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto, Svetlana Stone, Krystal Bresnahan*:
The PRC has finished its duties for the year, so there are no further updates at this time.
 - a. Graduate Research and Publication Committee (4) – *Vacant*
 - b. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Kamleshkumar Suthar*: Not present.
 - c. University Councils & Committees
 - i. Research Policies Council (2) – *Greg Laing, Needs 1 member!*: Not present.
 - ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Brandi Pritchett, Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa reported that the sole item on the GSC’s agenda this month was the Teaching Effectiveness and Research and Creative Activities Awards. The winners of the awards were determined at the meeting and these individuals have been notified.
 - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Needs 1 member!*: Brandi stated that this Council is still in need of a graduate student representative.
 - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto*: Not present.
 - v. President’s University Sustainability Committee (1) – *David Shoup, Daniel Seidling*
 - vi. University Accreditation Committee (8) – *Brandi Pritchett* (steering), *Svetlanta Stone* (Student Learning), *Phyllis Haugabook* (Mission & Integrity), *Greg Laing* (Preparing for the Future), *Stephany Coffman-Wolph* (Acquisition, Discovery, Application), *John Kusku* (Acquisition, Discovery, Application) **NEEDS 1 MORE MEMBER!**: Brandi stated that in the Fall semester, this Committee will likely become very busy. She reported that the Committee is still in the initial planning stages and that assessments from individual departments are being compiled. She noted that the Acquisition, Discovery, and Application Committee still needs a graduate student representative and that if we don’t have a representative on that committee, the graduate student voice at WMU is not being heard.
 - vii. ICES Online Communications Plan Committee – *Joel Raveloharimisy*: Not present.
 - viii. East Campus Task Force – *Joel Raveloharimisy*: Not present.
 - d. MLK Committee
 - e. WSA representative/Senator – *Andrew Crowe, Vice-President/John Kusku, GSAC Senator*: Andrew Ladd reported that he is acting as the President of WSA for the next couple of weeks, due to some problems with the WSA election. He noted that WSA hopes to have a new president by the end of the school year. He noted that right now, WSA’s main objective is to stay in contact with groups on campus, while the election issues are being resolved. He stated that over the summer, WSA’s e-board will meet to plan for the upcoming year.
 - f. CAB representative – *David VanDeusen, President*: Not present.

- g. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) – Jesse Thompson: Jesse stated that he is proud to announce that the contract was settled on Tuesday. TAU will vote on the ratification of the contract next Thursday and then it will go to the Board of Trustees meeting for ratification, after which it will be signed. Jesse also noted that a TAU member will serve on future committees designed to select health insurance companies for student health insurance.

10. Unfinished Business

- a. Midwest NAGPS Conference: Mohammad stated that he attended this year's Midwest NAGPS Conference at Notre Dame University. He reported that guests from Teach for America and students from Illinois and Indiana presented information about their work. He noted that NAGPS is looking for a school to hold next year's Midwest conference, as well as looking for a Chairperson for the Midwest Region. Brandi reported that WMU made a bid to host next year's conference after Brandi had confirmed that the Graduate College will provide financial and administrative support for the event. She noted that this would be an excellent way for GSAC and WMU to highlight advocacy on a state and national level. Other institutions have made bids to hold the conference as well. She stated that she will know the outcome of the bid in approximately one month.

- b. Hilltop Review: Brandi reported that the committee working on the Hilltop Review met this week. She stated that it was decided that there will be no electronic Spring edition of the journal and instead they just plan on releasing a standard edition of the Hilltop Review in the Fall. The deadline for journal submissions is September 18th, 2009 and the expected publication date of the journal is in the middle to end of the Fall semester. Brandi encouraged GSAC members to spread the word about the Hilltop Review in their departments.

- c. 2nd Annual Graduate Student Summit – Establishment of MAGPS! ☺: Alyssa explained the primary purposes of the MAGPS and stated that we are now looking for individuals to fill positions on the committees of the MAGPS. Please contact Brandi or Alyssa for further information.

- d. Spring Leg. Action Day: Mohammad reported that he went to Washington, D.C. with Lothi to speak with legislators about a number of different issues that impact graduate students, including issues pertaining to student loans, international student visas, and support for spouses of graduate students. Brandi stated that individuals who are interested in attending the next LAD in September should contact her for further information.

- e. Fall GSAC Leadership Retreat – Old Business: Brandi would like to hold a retreat in August or September for GSAC members only, focusing on team building and brainstorming ideas for the GSAC. The event will likely occur at the Seasons facility and will either be an all-day event or an overnight event. Brandi will be e-mailing GSAC members about this opportunity shortly.

- f. Upcoming Events (pg. 4): No updates.

11. New Business

- a. Graduate Student Survey: Brandi reported that the survey is a major source of feedback for the GSAC and encouraged everyone to take it. Alyssa stated that survey takes approximately fifteen minutes to complete and should be ready by next week.

- b. 3rd Annual Celebration of Research and Creative Activities: Brandi reported that judges are needed for this event, which will occur on April 10th, 2009. Kazuhiro volunteered to serve as a judge.

- c. Summer Agenda: Brandi reported that there is a small amount of money left in the budget to do a picnic and possibly a community service event over the summer. She will be e-mailing GSAC members for suggestions of places to hold the picnic. Some suggestions at the meeting included Milham Park and the Celery Flats.

- d. Departmental Reports ☺: Zach reported that appointment letters are late in the HPER department. Nayane reported that there are some issues in the Chemistry department with TA positions being awarded only to students from Michigan.

12. Student Concerns (open floor): None.

13. General Announcements & Briefs

- a. Announcements for the Good of the Order: None.
- b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: May 8th, June 12th, July 10th

14. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”

15. Adjourn: 4:24

* Items that require a vote of members

FYI: EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Check out THE GRADUATE COLLEGE web site for upcoming events and funding opportunities - <http://www.wmich.edu/grad/>
 - American Educational Research Association is looking for a liaison. Contact Marcus Lee Johnson at johns769@unlv.nevada.edu if you are interested. For additional info. about the association visit www.aera.net.
 - Neighborhood Watch Committee – Arcadia or Knollwood Neighborhoods
 - Freedom School Summer Employment – This is a signature Children’s Defense Fund program that emphasizes literacy and social justice for young people ages 5-18. Core principles include; literacy, social justice, intergenerational leadership development, parental involvement, and mental health and wellness. This summer opportunity will run from June 29-July 31 from 8-3pm at New Life Fellowship Church. They need assistant site coordinators. Contact Demarra Gardner for more info. at demarradonielle@yahoo.com or 269.337.1601.
 - Garden Internships – Applications are due by April 18th. Contact Heather for more info. at heather@fairfoodmarket.org or 269.492.1270. Also check out the website at www.fairfoodmatters.org There are other job opportunities available at this site.
 - International Association of Online Engineering – University of Bridgeport from June 22-25, 2009. For more info. visit <http://www.rev2009bridgeport.org>
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GSAC Opportunities

WMU Day at the Capitol – May 27, 2009. On-line registration for attendance begins on April 6th. Contact Donna Marks for additional info. at donna.marks@wmich.edu

Security Camera Committee – Beginning Jan. 2009

WSA Senator – Attend one WSA meeting per month and voice your graduate student opinion. Meetings are held every week beginning at 4:15pm in room 157 of the Bernhard Center.

Committee to Develop Leadership in Diversity, Social Justice and Inclusion (LDSI). If you are interested please contact Dr. Yvette Hyter at yvette.hyter@wmich.edu
