

**Graduate Student Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Friday, December 7, 2007, 3 PM.

Connable Board Room – Bernhard Center

---

1. Call to order: 3:00 PM.
2. Introductions
3. \*Approval of the Agenda 12/07/07: motion to approve by two different members
4. \*Approval of Minutes from 11/09/07 (pgs. 2-4): motion to approve by two different members
5. Report from Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: not present
6. Report from the Chair
  - a. Provost Search Advisory Committee: Rosana discussed that the job description write-up for the Provost position has been completed. Currently, a website is being created to display this job description for potential candidates. It is being done in conjunction with a consulting firm. Members spoke to Rosana after the meeting offering their knowledge/willingness to help in creating this website.
  - b. GSAC report to Office of Student Conduct: Rosana reported that a graduate student had been reported to the Office of Student Conduct for sending a rude message containing profanity over the internet. The office took measures to freeze the student's account and offered him a chance to apologize. The student wrote a letter apologizing for his behavior, which resulted in the office unfreezing the student's records allowing him to graduate.
  - c. Board of Trustees Meeting 12/14: Rosana stated that if any person ever wants to speak out at one of these meetings we can; it does not need to be Rosana who represents GSAC at these meetings. A member from the CECP department who attended the recent meeting reported that it was a good learning experience and it went well.
  - d. FREE TICKETS – *Odds Bodkin's Story Blast* (pg. 7): Rosana first read a letter to the members regarding the offer of the free tickets to the members of GSAC. She then passed around the 20 free tickets in an envelope encouraging the members to take one or two tickets each if they were interested in going.
  - e. NAGPS National Conference – 11/15 – 11/18, Austin, TX (*Rosana Alsaud, Alyssa Kalata, Aaron Tremblay*): Although Alyssa and Aaron were not present, Rosana was able to report on their experiences at the National Conference. She stated that 55 schools were represented and the conference went well overall. She stated that it was a good way to network with other GSAC organizations from all over the United States. The interesting thing that Rosana found from attending was that the issues and problems discussed were about the same at every school represented. She also reported on a great program that Texas offers their students which prepares them to be teaching aids as well as future faculty. Rosana received a unanimous agreement that this was an important issue that should be brought up with our own Graduate College. Rosana plans to discuss this program with the Graduate College in the near future.
  - f. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) (*Jason Trowbridge*): not present

7. WMU Day at the Capitol (*Greg Rosine, Senior Vice President for Advancement and Legislative Affairs – pg.6*): Greg reported that legislatures do not know what universities do in the state of Michigan and how they are different from one another. He said that WMU is trying to break through the clutter of redefining ourselves and breaking away from our directional name; having a WMU day at the Capitol will help us to achieve these things. He is speaking about the event now, even though it will be held on 05/28/08, because he wants to get people committed to the cause now. He stated that he is talking with discreet groups of students and asking each group to pledge a definite number of students to go that day. He wants the day to be filled with interactive seeing/touching/feeling things that represent WMU.
8. GFAC (*Alyssa Kalata*)
  - a. \*Proposals (separate GFAC handout):
    - i. Student Music Therapists' Association: Alyssa was not in attendance, but Rosana reported a request for funds in the amount of \$500.00, \$300.00 for presenters and \$200.00 for food. A first motion to provide funds in full was provided, followed by a second motion to provide funds in full. Finally, all present motioned to provide funds in full.
    - ii. The Voices of WMU Gospel Choir: Alyssa was not in attendance, but Rosana reported a request for funds which included fees for room rental and musicians. GFAC recommends that we fund the proposal in full in the amount of \$1402.50. A first motion to provide funds in full was provided, followed by a second motion to provide funds in full. Finally, all present motioned to provide funds in full.
9. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils:
  - a. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata* – NEEDS new members, charge:
    - i. Review content of current website: Rosana reported that Alyssa would like to have a group of members to help her review the current content of the website because it is sub-par and needs to be updated.
    - ii. Transition to new design (WMU Template): GSAC wishes to keep the Western Michigan Homepage style and template, but make the page specific to GSAC. A member suggested having a link on the webpage to click on which would direct the browser to names, pictures, and contact information of the heads and members of GSAC so students in each department know who to talk to when they want to bring up important issues.
  - b. Public Relations – *Folashade Ogunleye*: not present
  - c. Graduate Research Symposium and Journal (Hilttop Review) – *Vacant*: not discussed
  - d. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Aaron Tremblay*: Rosana stated that a report will be given in January regarding funding for travel and research grants.
  - e. University Councils
    - i. Research Policies Council: not present
    - ii. Graduate Studies Council: not present
    - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council: not present

- iv. International Education Council: Rosana reported that Dr. Dunn wants more international students here so the council is currently trying to internationalize WMU's campus. There is nothing to report in this area however.
  - f. MLK Committee – *Sherly Johnson*: Rosana reported that the Committee was given \$500, but Sherly was not present to report any news.
  - g. WMU Day at the Capitol – *Thon Moses* (pg. 7): already discussed in detail earlier in the meeting.
  - h. Rebuilding the Bernhard Center – *Padmapriya Srinivasan*: Rosana reported that nothing has been done with this issue and that it not being taken as a priority currently.
  - i. WSA representative – *Chris Praedel*: not present
- 10. Unfinished Business:
  - a. Western Edge Task Force: Rosana reported that several ideas were presented such as setting department milestones, and once these milestones are reached the students are rewarded. Secondly, students might be encouraged to publish more often. The Task Force liked these ideas, but they want more. Rosana then opened the meeting for discussion and suggestions for new ideas. Ideas such as a flat rate for all graduate students, improving campus housing for graduate students, waving remaining credits not covered by an assistantship, as well as a better communication system for when courses are offered so it makes planning easier for graduate students. Another member suggested a mentorship component for graduate students, especially because some graduate programs don't even offer advisors! Rosana stated that she will be bringing Mary DiPiero to the next meeting because she has a lot of information about retention rates for WMU graduates, and she may be able to help us with ideas for the Western Edge Program.
  - b. Graduate Student Survey: Rosana reported that the survey will be sent out and be available to complete for the remaining part of December and the whole month of January. Incentives to complete this include three \$25 gift certificates as well as t-shirts. One of the members suggested going through the Division of Student Affairs the next time surveys are developed because the format was incorrect this year and needs to be fixed in the future.
- 11. New Business
  - a. \*GSAC Chair – job description (pg. 6): Rosana reported that the job description will be posted on Bronco Jobs, GSAC's website, and the Graduate College homepage. She voiced that she needed a group of volunteers for the selection committee from GSAC. These volunteers would come up with a set of interview questions for potential candidates as well as a final recommendation for a Chair for next year. Susan Salistinee and Alissa Bailey both volunteered. Rosana discussed in detail her responsibilities as Chair, and encouraged members to let their peers know and make sure whoever applies knows that it is a 2-year commitment.
  - b. Ideas to increase member participation: An open discussion regarding this topic lead to several good ideas. One member suggested that Rosana email all members of GSAC saying that they must attend 2 meetings per semester in order

to be considered a member. Another member suggested that members receive some sort of official commitment document with a signature and GSAC logo, instead of an informal email. Another member suggested that a banner be put up in each department with that department's GSAC members displayed. Another member suggested having official GSAC shirts for all members.

- c. Current requests from graduate students:
  - i. \*Increase 500 page limit at computer labs: all members agreed that this was an important issue for Rosana to pursue. Members suggested raising the page limit to 1000 or having rollover pages.
  - ii. \*Extend library resources to alumni: a member suggested that this could even be an incentive for Western Edge and all agreed that this was also an important issue for Rosana to pursue.
- d. Letter from Debbie Stabenow (pg.6): Kazuhiro reported on the letter from Debbie saying the bill was going to be in front of the President and passed soon. He also suggested that Debbie is a wonderful resource for higher education, and to go to her with any concerns in this area.

#### 12. General Announcements & Briefs

- a. Announcements for the Good of the Order: A member from the CECF department reported on a Veterans Program that is in the making. Its purpose is to aid WMU Veterans returning with PTSD in getting back on track. The program also trains students to treat Veterans showing symptoms of PTSD. The member reported that, once in place, the program will provide 6-8 assistantships. He said that this program will hopefully be nationally recognized.
- b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: January 11, February 8

#### 13. General Discussion "The State of Graduate Schools"

14. Adjourn: 5:04 pm