



Graduate Student Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

December 12, 2008, 3p.m.

Walwood Commons – Walwood Hall (East Campus – Lot 1)

Representatives Present: Brandi L. Pritchett (Chairperson), Alyssa H. Kalata (Vice-Chairperson), Nayane Udawatte (Chemistry), Krystal Bresnahan (Communication), Stephanie Ruhl (Communication), John Kusku (Mathematics and Statistics), Phyllis Haugabook (Science Studies), Elizabeth Bradshaw (Sociology), Joe Johnson (Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology), Katie Smith (Educational Leadership, Research, & Technology), Svetlana Stone (Educational Leadership, Research, & Technology), Stephany Coffman-Wolph (Computer Science), Imad Zyout (Electrical & Computer Engineering), Dana Henry (Speech Pathology & Audiology), Danielle Harik (Western Student Association)

Guests Present: None.

1. Call to order: 3:00
2. Introductions
3. *Approval of the Agenda 12/12/08: Stephany moves to approve, seconded by Dana.
4. *Approval of Minutes from 11/14/08: Stephany moves to approve, seconded by Nayane.
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Not present.
6. Report from the Chair
 - a. Board of Trustees Meeting: Brandi reported that today was the final Board of Trustees Meeting of the year. She stated that President Dunn received his evaluation and compensation renewal at today's meeting. She reported that President Dunn was given a three percent raise, but that he opted to donate this three percent raise to a student scholarship fund at WMU. Brandi also stated that Board of Trustees Meetings are open to GSAC members and encouraged members to attend the Board of Trustees Meeting in February.
 - b. Extended University Programs Outreach: Brandi stated that one of the charges for GSAC this year was to work on outreach to branch campuses. Brandi reported that she met with Dr. Johnson, who is the Dean of the EUP, to discuss the experiences that GSAC has had in reaching out to branch campuses. Brandi relayed that he stated that he would be supportive of further efforts of the GSAC to reach out to branch campuses and offered to provide some financial support in this endeavor. Brandi reported that he also stated he would like to work with the GSAC on further assessment of the needs of students attending classes at branch campuses.
 - c. Meeting w/ Dr. Dunn: Brandi reported that she feels that administration has done a better job communicating with the graduate student community this year, although she stated that she still feels as though the needs of graduate students need to be explicitly raised in meetings more frequently. She spoke with President Dunn about suggestions he has for increasing graduate student representation and visibility on campus, and he suggested that graduate students should attend the Board of Trustees Meetings and engage in community service activities. Brandi asked whether graduate students feel as though they are receiving enough recognition for their research and academic endeavors and also asked that GSAC members start coming to GSAC meetings with more departmental reports and student concerns.
7. *GFAC – Alyssa Kalata
 - a. Graduate Student and Professionals in Student Affairs: Requested \$500 for operational expenses. The GSPSA proposal was tabled until the January GFAC meeting because no representative from the GSPSA attended the GFAC meeting to present their proposal.
 - b. International Programs Council: Requested \$2,500 in event expenses for the 20th Annual International Festival 2009. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$2,500 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
8. GSAC Treasurer – Alyssa Kalata: Alyssa reported that the GSAC budget is on target for the year.
9. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils
 - i. Web Committee – Alyssa Kalata: Alyssa stated that an employee of the Graduate College will be trying to help transfer the GSAC website over to the WMU template. She also thanked Stephany for helping to move the location of the counter on the GSAC main page.
 - ii. Public Relations Committee (3) – Kazuhiro Iwamoto, Svetlana Stone, Krystal Bresnahan: Krystal reported that the PRC has encountered a number of difficulties in planning the Spring semester social event. She stated that they had originally wanted to plan a skating event at Lawson Ice Arena, however this is not an option until March because the WMU hockey team is

using the facilities. The PRC had also wanted to hold an event at the Laughing Post, however this venue has recently closed. The PRC is still considering a tubing outing at Timber Ridge. GSAC members also suggested looking in to renting the State Theater for a movie night and having a roller skating event. Alyssa encouraged GSAC members to send suggestions for events to members of the PRC.

- a. Graduate Research and Publication Committee (4) – *Vacant*: No updates.
- b. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee: Brandi reported that the GSAC needs one member to serve on this Committee in March and asked anyone who is interested to contact her. She stated that service on this Committee is fairly brief (approximately a one month commitment) and involves reading a number of proposals and providing feedback. Dana stated that she may be interested in volunteering for this position.
- c. University Councils & Committees
 - i. Research Policies Council (2) - *Greg Laing, Tammy DeRoo*: Not present.
 - ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Brandi Pritchett, Alyssa Kalata*: Brandi reported that this month, a number of accelerated degree programs were proposed, but all votes were tabled because of a variety of issues requiring clarification. Brandi also stated that an ad hoc committee intended to address differences in perspectives about accelerated programs between the Graduate Studies Council and Undergraduate Studies Council met this week to discuss these issues.
 - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Katie Smith*: Katie smith reported that the CPFC met recently to discuss the Master Plan for WMU. She stated that open forums have been held to discuss the Master Plan and issues the University should be investigating. She reported that one large change to the Master Plan will involve sustainability. Katie also stated that a Sustainability Council has been put together to assemble a report to present to President Dunn. This report will be available online at www.wmich.edu/sustainability. Katie also noted that the CPFC is assembling a Transportation Committee and needs a graduate student representative to serve on this Committee starting in January or February. Finally, Katie reported that the East Campus Task Force has actively been investigating options for East Campus, including conducting a nationwide search for organizations, companies, or groups who might be interested in redeveloping East Campus. She noted that any proposed changes to East Campus would have to be consistent with the University’s goals and mission.
 - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto*: Not present. Brandi reported that Kazuhiro provided a statement about updates from IEC. He reported that the IEC is creating a survey designed to address issues regarding recruitment and retention of international students. He stated that if any graduate students have feedback regarding these issues, to please send him an e-mail.
 - v. President’s University Sustainability Committee (1) – *David Shoup, Daniel Seidling*: Not present.
 - vi. University Accreditation Committee (8) – *Brandi Pritchett* (steering), Svetlanta Stone (Student Learning), Phyllis Pennock (Mission & Integrity), Greg Laing (Preparing for the Future), Stephany Coffman-Wolph (Acquisition, Discovery, Application) **Need 2 Members!**: No updates. Brandi reported that two subcommittees still need graduate student representatives and that these representatives do not need to be members of the GSAC.
- d. MLK Committee: No updates.
- e. WSA representative – *Danielle Harik, President*: Danielle reported that undergraduate students at WMU are putting together at Elite Task Force where students return to their high schools, meet with their favorite teachers, and talk to high school students about attending college. Danielle also noted that WSA recently attended a Student Association of Michigan meeting, where SAM standards were discussed. She stated that WMU is doing well with most of the standards, but needs improvement in a few areas. Danielle reported that WSA has also been doing a lot of Western Wednesday events, which have been very successful. Finally, Danielle mentioned that WSA is excited to continue to collaborate with GSAC next semester. Brandi mentioned that it would be nice if at least one GSAC member could attend at least one WSA meeting a month (every Wednesday at 4:15 p.m.), since the GSAC would like to show WSA the same support they have shown us, in addition to the fact that WSA is intended to represent the entire student body at WMU.

- f. CAB representative – David VanDeusen, *President*: Not present.
 - g. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) – Jamie McCandless: Not present.
10. Unfinished Business
- a. Communication: Brandi mentioned that a number of different additional methods the GSAC can use to communicate with graduate students have been discussed, including the use of blogs or a Wiki. It was decided that Alyssa is going to try to put together a blog template and that the new Vice-Chairperson will take over the blog project and conduct a trial run.
 - b. Student Union: Brandi reported that there were recently open forum discussions about plans for the Bernhard Center as a student union. Brandi stated that she attended one of these open forum discussions and that a number of important issues were discussed, including privacy and offices. Brandi asked whether GSAC members think would be beneficial for the GSAC to have an office in the Bernhard Center. Krystal stated that she thinks it is a good idea for the GSAC to have availability on the main campus. Brandi agreed and stated that she thinks it would be best to have partial time in the Bernhard Center and a primary office located in the Graduate College.
 - c. Upcoming Events (pg. 4): See list.
11. New Business
- a. Anti-Racism Event: Brandi asked the GSAC membership what this year’s Anti-Racism Event should entail. She stated that the prior Anti-Racism event involved MC Serch and faculty members, who sat on a panel and talked about a variety of issues, primarily focused on issues of race in the media. Krystal mentioned that an event was recently held with faculty members from the Communication and Anthropology departments that involved small focus group discussions on race, as well as a larger presentation by an Anthropology faculty member. She said that this event was successfully promoted through offering extra credit opportunities. It was suggested that the GSAC also partner with other student organizations, such as the GSOC, MSA, ASA, or PSA for this event.
 - b. Looking for the new AK! (pg. 5): Brandi stated that any interested students should apply for this position. It is a two-year appointment.
 - c. Departmental Reports ☺: John reported that Games Day occurred in the Math Department today and that Games Day typically occurs once a month.
12. Student Concerns (open floor): None.
13. General Announcements & Briefs: The Welcome Festival at WMU is occurring on the 9th of January in the 2nd floor East and West Ballrooms of the Bernhard Center. The Welcome Festival is like a smaller version of the Bronco Bash. There will be two panels held, one at 10:00 a.m. and one at noon. Danielle reported that this will be the last GSAC meeting she will be attending, but that Andrew Crowe will be attending future meetings in her place.
- a. Announcements for the Good of the Order
 - b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: Jan. 9th, Feb. 13th, March 13th
14. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”
15. Adjorn: 3:45
- * Items that require a vote of members

FYI: EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Check out THE GRADUATE COLLEGE web site for upcoming events - <http://www.wmich.edu/grad/>
 - FREE Parenting Course through Capstone Family Support Center. Call 269.926.1979
 - 2009 World Congress on Computer Science and Information Engineering (CSIE 2009)
March 31 - April 2, 2009
Los Angeles/Anaheim, USA
<http://world-research-institutes.org/conferences/CSIE/2009>
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GSAC Opportunities

The 2009 Midwest Regional Conference will be hosted by the University of Notre Dame, March 19-21, 2009 ** Who wants to go and represent GSAC?

Security Camera Committee – Beginning Jan. 2009

Winter Social Event – Jan. 23rd

Anti-Racism/Multicultural Event – Jan. 29th

GSAC/WSA Speaker Collaboration – December (Feb.26th)
Firoozeh Dumas (pg. 7-8)

GSAC/WSA Forum w/ Dr. Dunn – Feb. 19th?

GSAC Forum – March 11th

2nd Annual Graduate Student Summit – March 14th

Bowling/Karaoke Night – March 28th (6:30pm – 9:30pm)

Graduate Assistantship Appointment Available **GSAC Vice-Chairperson**

The Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) is soliciting applications for its Vice-Chairperson position for the 2009 – 2011 academic years. The GSAC Vice-Chairperson will receive a potentially renewable, full-time (20 hours per week) assistantship for fall, winter, spring, and summer terms. Applicants must be able to commit to holding this position for two (2) years.

Duties include:

- Assessing and advocating for graduate student needs at Western Michigan University
- Organizing and chairing GFAC (Graduate Financial Allocation Committee) meetings
- Managing the GSAC budget
- Maintaining and the GSAC website
- Acting as GSAC Secretary (e.g. taking meeting minutes)
- Assisting the GSAC Chairperson in organizing GSAC events
- Serving on at least one University Council or Committee
- Assisting the GSAC Chairperson in other GSAC-related endeavors
- Substituting for the GSAC Chairperson on an as-needed basis and attending agreed upon events and conferences.

Benefits include:

- Tuition remission according to appointment category
- Annual salary and stipend:
 - \$ 19,746 (Doctoral Associate)
 - \$ 15,993 (Graduate Assistant)

Deadline for application submission: January 15, 2009

Additional information can be found at the GSAC website: www.wmich.edu/gsac.

Interested individuals may apply by submitting a resume, cover letter, and three (3) letters of recommendation to:

Brandi Pritchett, GSAC Chairperson
Graduate Student Advisory Committee
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Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5242