



Graduate Student Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda
Friday, February 8, 2008, 3p.m.
Connable Board Room– Bernhard Center

Representatives Present: Rosana Alsaud (Chair), Alyssa Kalata (Vice-Chair), Kazuhiro Iwamoto (Biological Sciences), Greg Laing (English), David Shoup (History), Deondra Ramsey (Political Science), Aaron Tremblay (Management), Brandi Pritchett (Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology), Kate Block (Mallinson Institute for Science Education), Mustafa Sanver (Computer Science), Susan Celestini (Occupational Therapy), Katherine Wlodarski (Speech Pathology & Audiology), Jamie McCandless (TAU), Dr. Lewis Pyenson (The Graduate College), Melissa Green (Division of Student Affairs), Chris Praedel (Western Student Association)

Guests Present: Grachelle Sherburne (Master of Social Work Student Organization), Lindsey Jolliff (Drive Safe Kalamazoo), Justine Horton (Drive Safe Kalamazoo), Brian Becker (History Graduate Students Organization), Haneen Abubakr (Arab Student Association), Shams Khan (Muslim Students Association), Danielle Harik (PeaceJam Mentors), Jason Olsen (English), Rachel Graf (History Graduate Students Organization), Maria McCandless (TAU)

1. Call to order: 3:03
2. Introductions
3. *Approval of the Agenda 02/08/08: Mustafa moves to approve, seconded by Brandi.
4. *Approval of Minutes from 01/11/08: Aaron moves to approve, seconded by Greg.
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Dr. Pyenson presented a list of speakers that the Graduate College has arranged to have come to WMU during the Spring semester. Three of the speakers will be discussing topics related primarily to science and religion in Asia and one speaker will be focusing on issues pertaining to bioethics. He noted that all individuals who will be speaking are world-renowned scholars. Additional details about the speakers can be found on the Graduate College website. Dr. Pyenson also discussed the number of applications that WMU has received for graduate studies for the Fall 2008 semester and noted that domestic applications have increased and international applications have increased substantially. He stated that it is clear that graduate studies at WMU have a favorable projection around the United States and in the world.
6. Report from the Chair
 - a. Skiing trip – Timber Ridge – Alyssa and Kazuhiro reported that the ski trip went well and that a number of graduate students were excited to ski for the first time. Some concern was expressed that many graduate students did not seem to have knowledge of the event. Rosana stated that the e-mails went out to the GSAC listserv only. It was recommended that individual departmental representatives communicate to their constituents about upcoming GSAC events and it was also recommended that a mass e-mail be sent to all graduate students inviting them to join the GSAC listserv.
 - b. Open Forum with Pres. Dunn (GSAC + WSA) – Rosana reported that the Open Forum was a joint event with GSAC and WSA. She stated that this event provides students with an opportunity to ask questions directly to the President. Alyssa reported that the turnout for the event was good, with approximately 75 individuals in attendance.
 - c. Provost Search Advisory Committee – Rosana reported that she had no update on the Provost Search Committee, other than that they are still receiving nominations for the position.
 - d. Board of Trustees Meeting 2/15 – Rosana stated that the Meeting was cancelled for this past Friday, due to poor weather conditions and that it has been rescheduled for this upcoming Friday.
 - e. Meeting with Pres. Dunn – Rosana reported that she recently met with President Dunn to discuss three primary issues. First, she brought up the request to increase the graduate student printing limit from 500 pages to 1,000 pages. She stated that President Dunn seemed receptive to this request and will look in to it further. Second, Rosana discussed the issue of extending WMU library resources to alumni of the University. President Dunn recommended that Rosana speak first to Jamie Jeremy of the Alumni Association about this request. Finally, Rosana spoke with President Dunn about obtaining the \$10,000 necessary for GSAC to obtain a Legacy Membership with NAGPS. She stated

that President Dunn seemed receptive to the idea, although he requested further information to aid in his decision making process.

- f. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) – Jamie McCandless – Jamie reported that TAU had their Spring General Membership Meeting and that the budget was presented and approved. Dues rates were also approved, with no change from last year. He stated that issues regarding parking tags and appointment letters are currently being discussed.
7. GFAC – *Alyssa Kalata* – Alyssa mentioned that GFAC will run out of allocation money at this meeting and apologized to all of the RSOs present for being unable to fund their requests in full. Kazuhiro asked if procedural changes should be made in GFAC to prevent money for allocations from running out and suggested the possibility of splitting the allocation budget in to two semesters or of increasing the amount of funds allocated. Alyssa noted that on July 1st, additional funds will become available for allocations.
 - a. *Proposals (pg. 5):
 - i. Drive Safe Kalamazoo – Drive Safe Kalamazoo requested \$2,000 for food and beverages for their upcoming Annual Gala, which helps to raise funds for operational expenses for the following year and allows Drive Safe Kalamazoo to thank their sponsors, members, and the community. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$200 be approved for advertising, \$50 be approved for newspaper expenses, and \$50 be approved for food. Motion to approve passed.
 - ii. PeaceJam Mentors – PeaceJam Mentors requested \$2,500 to pay the speaker fee to bring Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi to campus to speak. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$750 be approved to help pay for this speaker fee. Motion to approve passed.
 - iii. Master of Social Work Student Organization – The Master of Social Work Student Organization requested \$500 for operational expenses and \$2,500 for a Hooding and Pinning Ceremony, which will be a graduation ceremony for all Social Work students. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$100 be approved for meeting expenses (under organizational expenses) and that \$100 for advertising be approved for the Hooding and Pinning Ceremony. Motion to approve passed.
 - iv. History Graduate Student Organization – The History Graduate Student Organization requested \$2,630 to bring Dr. Steven Epstein to campus to speak. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$100 be approved for a lunch for graduate students with Dr. Epstein and that \$500 be approved to help cover his speaker fee. Motion to approve passed.
 - v. Muslim Student Association – The Muslim Student Association requested \$481.21 toward a camera and two-way radio system for an upcoming event being put on in conjunction with the Arab Student Association. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that no funds be approved for this request. Motion to approve the denial of funds passed.
 - vi. Arab Student Association – The Arab Student Association requested \$2,500 to bring Dr. Mukhtar Curtis to campus to speak. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$500 be approved to help cover his speaker fee. Motion to approve passed.
8. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils
 - a. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata* – Alyssa reported that she sought extra mentoring regarding transferring the GSAC website to the WMU templates. She stated that the mentoring was helpful, although she still had a number of questions about the transfer to the template. Alyssa raised the possibility of paying someone a lump sum to move the website over to the template, although GSAC members proposed that Alyssa check with OIT to see if they can assist with the transfer. Greg also stated that he knows some individuals who may be able to help Alyssa and offered to send her their contact information.
 - b. Graduate Research Symposium and Journal (Hilltop Review) – *Vacant* – No updates.
 - c. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Aaron Tremblay* – No update.
 - d. University Councils
 - i. Research Policies Council (2) – *Alyssa Kalata, Greg Laing* – Greg stated that the Council met with President Dunn during the last meeting. Discussion was focused primarily on the status of research at the University and how to increase research at the University. Greg also noted that April 11th is Research and Creative Activities Day and stated that individuals can become involved through receiving a departmental nomination. He stated that the subcommittee is still working on establishing criteria for judging presentations and encouraged GSAC members to provide him specifically with feedback about what criteria should be used to judge creative

- activities. Rosana noted that the money given by GSAC toward this event will fund the meal involved with the event.
- ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Rosana Alsaud, Alyssa Kalata* – Rosana stated that the application process was discussed briefly at this meeting and that extensive discussion occurred regarding the criteria for Research and Creative Scholar Awards and Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Awards. Rosana reported that concern was expressed at the Council meeting both about what the criteria for the awards are and whether these criteria are clearly delineated. Dr. Pyenson and Aaron stated that the criteria are clear, although there are many aspects involved in submitting a high-quality proposal. Rosana stated that it is important to further clarify the criteria.
 - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Priya Srinivasan* – Priya stated that President Dunn will be present at the next meeting to answer questions and gather information. She stated that she would like to take a couple questions with her to the Campus Planning and Finance Council for next meeting. She also reported that there will be a Traffic Issue Subcommittee that will be created, which will address some of the issues that were discussed during the previous GSAC meeting.
 - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto* – Kazuhiro reported that international student enrollment is up and that University is doing very well in terms of numbers. Kazuhiro also discussed the Capital Campaign and the possibility and importance of targeting international alumni for donations.
 - e. MLK Committee – No update.
 - f. WMU Day at the Capitol – **NEED PEOPLE TO GO!** Rosana stated that she has been contacted by Greg Rosine, who would like names of individuals who are able to attend by February 14th. The event will occur on May 28th (a Wednesday) and will involve many student organizations and individual students from WMU going to the capital to discuss WMU with state legislators. The event will also focus on research that is going on at WMU and it is the hope of the event organizers that graduate students will make poster presentations about their research. Rosana stated that funding may be available for graduate students to help pay for their presentation, lunch, and a t-shirt. These presentations will hopefully help demonstrate that WMU is a good research University who can compete with the other major research institutions in the state of Michigan. Finally, Rosana noted that the organization that brings the most number of students to the event will receive \$300. Rosana will come up with a promotional e-mail to alert graduate students about this opportunity.
 - g. WSA representative – *Chris Praedel* - Chris stated that a program called 100 Points of Pride is currently going on and can be accessed from the WMU webpage. For the program any student, faculty, staff, or alumnus can list reasons why they are proud of WMU. The submissions will be pared down to the top 100 Points of Pride by a committee that will meet sometime in the next couple of weeks. Chris stated that he would like a graduate student to serve on the committee. Chris also reported that the Polar Plunge is occurring on February 23rd at approximately 10:00 a.m. and that he, President Dunn, and Katie Rollert are all planning on jumping. He stated that this event will show WMU is committed to philanthropy, as all proceeds go to the Special Olympics. He reported that it will cost \$50 to jump, but for that money, jumpers will get a free t-shirt, hot cocoa, snacks, and access to hot tubs and a heating room. Chris stated that individuals interested in participating should contact either him or Katie Rollert to get on the list of jumpers. At the meeting, Kazuhiro, Susan, Rosana, and Dr. Pyenson all volunteered to jump.
9. Unfinished Business
- a. Graduate Student Survey – Alyssa reported that the Graduate Student Survey has been closed as of January 31st. She stated that over 600 graduate students completed the survey, which assessed graduate student needs and desires at the University. Alyssa reported that she is in the process of analyzing and summarizing the data. The representatives from TAU indicated they would like a copy of the final report created from the data. Alyssa stated that she would provide a report to all interested parties, as long as doing so is okay based on HSIRB policies.
 - b. GSAC member t-shirts – *Susan Celestini* – Susan stated that the order is still in process because difficulties were encountered in terms of the GSAC logo.
 - c. Spring events:
 - i. Mar. 21: Professional Development Day – Fetzer Center – Rosana reported that planning for Professional Development Day is coming along well.

- a. Keynote: Keith W. Cooley, Director, Dept. of Labor & Economic Growth – Rosana stated that the keynote speech will start the Professional Development Day event.
- b. Luncheon will be sponsored by alumni association – Rosana noted that the Alumni Association is trying to make an effort to reach out to the graduate student community.
- ii. Mar. 29: Bowling, Karaoke, and Game Night – Airway Lanes (pg. 6) – Rosana stated that we are starting to promote the event and that a description of the event can be read on page six.
- iii. Apr. 11: Research Day (pg. 7) – Rosana stated that planning for Research and Creative Activities Day is also moving along. More information about this event can be found on page seven.

10. New Business

- a. International students driver’s licenses issue (pg. 8-9) – Rosana mentioned that this issue came up just this week and that new legislation makes it such that anyone who is not a permanent Michigan resident or United States resident will not be able to obtain a driver’s license. She stated that upon hearing this news, she immediately contacted President Dunn, who stated that the lobbying team at WMU is already addressing the issue. Rosana also contacted NAGPS regarding the matter. She stated that the ACLU is also looking in to this issue. Rosana stated that she will keep GSAC members informed of any updates.
- b. GSAC Treasurer (pg. 10) – *Needs one volunteer* - Rosana stated that because of changes in Student Affairs, GSAC will now be responsible for reconciling our own books. She reported that this position will only take approximately one hour a month of work. She stated that interested individuals do not need any background or experience as a treasurer and will be trained for the position by Katie Smith. Aaron volunteered for the position and it was agreed by the membership that he would serve as the treasurer of GSAC.

11. General Announcements & Briefs

- a. Announcements for the Good of the Order - Brandi stated that she is trying to address financial issues to allow graduate students to attend the National Black Graduate Student Association conference. She stated that the deadline for presenting is February 10th, although she is working with someone at the organization to get the deadline extended for WMU graduate students. She asked that individuals interested in presenting contact her for more information. Brandi also mentioned that ten members of GSOC will be going to the University of Michigan to network with other organizations for graduate students of color and that twelve members of GSOC will be attending the International Mentorship Association Conference in April. Rosana then discussed whether the deadline for applications for the GSAC Chairperson position should be extended, as only three applications for the position had been received. Some members expressed support of keeping the current deadline, although other members expressed concern about the low number of applications. A motion was made to maintain the current deadline and the motion passed.
- b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: March 14, April 11, May 9

11. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”

12. Adjourn: 4:40

*Items that require a vote from members.

GFAC Proposals

Drive Safe Kalamazoo

Requesting \$2,000 for food and beverages for their upcoming Annual Gala, which recognizes sponsors, members, and the Kalamazoo community. The Annual Gala is open to the entire WMU population and Kalamazoo community.

PeaceJam Mentors

Requesting \$2,500 to bring Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi to speak at WMU. They expect 1,000 people to attend the event, based on the number of people who attended the previous year's event.

Master Social Work Student Organization

Requesting \$2,500 for a Hooding and Pinning Ceremony, which is a more personal graduation for the social work students. They expect 400 to 450 people to attend the event.

History Graduate Student Organization

Requesting \$2,630 for a lecture being given by Dr. Steven Epstein at the Fetzer Center about capitalism and the medieval economy. The event is open to anyone who would like to attend.

Muslim Students Association

Requesting \$481.21 for a lecture being given by Dr. Mukhtar Curtis. They expect 450 people to attend the event.

Arab Student Association

Requesting \$2,500 for a lecture being given by Dr. Mukhtar Curtis. This lecture is a joint venture between MSA and ASA.

Bowling and Karaoke Night at Airway Lanes

Come join your fellow graduate students for a night of fun at Airway Lanes! We'll be there on **March 29th, 2008 from 9:30 p.m. until 12:30 a.m.!**

This event will include: unlimited cosmic bowling, karaoke, laser tag, bumper car rides, billiards, shuffleboard, and a limited number of game tokens to enjoy in the arcade. Bring your appetite too, because pizza, tacos, snacks, and pop will also be provided! Family members are welcome to attend this event.

Be sure to RSVP early, because capacity is limited to 150 people. To RSVP, please send your name and the names of any family members who plan on attending to gsac@wmich.edu with the subject line "Bowling Night RSVP".

Airway Lanes
5626 Portage Road
Portage, MI, 49002
<http://www.airway-lanes.com/>

**2nd Annual
RESEARCH & CREATIVE ACTIVITIES DAY
Friday, April 11, 2008
Fetzer Center**

The Research Policies Council along with the Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC), Graduate Studies Council, the Office of the Vice President for Research and the Graduate College are pleased to announce the 2nd Annual Celebration of Research and Creative Activities!

The day will include morning poster and display sessions highlighting the work of both graduate students and faculty. The morning session will be followed by keynote talks given by University Emerging Scholars and an awards ceremony to recognize the outstanding graduate student posters and displays.

We invite chairs and graduate directors to nominate up to two doctoral students per program to present their work as a poster or static display at this event. Nominations should be sent to Walt Worthy (walter.worthy@wmich.edu; 387-8282) by Thursday February 28, and include the student's name, department or program, title of the work to be presented and mentor's name. Details concerning schedule, poster/display format and judging criteria will be forthcoming.

We are excited about being able to once again showcase some of the graduate student and faculty outstanding research and creative works ongoing on campus and hope that you will be able to take part in this celebration.



Feb. 7, 2008

No License for You

The battle over driver's licenses for illegal immigrants has ended up complicating life in Michigan for foreign students with visas that give them complete legal rights to be in the United States.

An opinion by Michigan's attorney general prompted the secretary of state to stop issuing new licenses to undocumented and temporary residents. (The latter group includes people in Michigan on student visas.) The decision followed the increased political attention the license issue has received ever since Sen. Hillary Clinton's debate answers last year appeared contradictory on the issue.

In Michigan, meanwhile, Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land's interpretation of the opinion prompted an immediate outcry from businesses and universities concerned that the law had snagged a particular target: international students and workers residing on temporary but legal visas.

The result is that thousands of Michigan's students from foreign countries have potentially been left without the right to obtain a license, disproportionately affecting graduate students who live off-campus and rely on cars to travel to and from class. Sensing the need for a quick fix, Land has already pressed for a "package of bills before the legislature," according to a spokeswoman. The bills passed the state Senate on Wednesday and are expected to be taken up in the House of Representatives today.

"[Attorney General Mike Cox's] opinion very clearly stated that we could not issue a Michigan driver's license to those that were not here permanently and legally," the spokeswoman said. Land's office remains optimistic that the fix will pass both houses, she added: "It's very clear that we need a change in state law to be able to accommodate these individuals."

In the 2006-07 academic year, 21,143 foreign students were enrolled at colleges in Michigan — mostly from India and China, followed by Canada, South Korea and Taiwan, according to Institute of International Education statistics. At Western Michigan University, which had 1,391 international students that year, the law has already begun to have an effect. Peter Li, the immigration and policy research officer at the university's Haenicke Institute for Global Education, said one foreign student had recently bought a car but couldn't obtain a license to drive it with. "Life just turned upside down for some of them," Li said.

In most cases, students who live in Michigan on temporary visas can legally drive using licenses from their home countries. But those who don't already have their licenses, or whose foreign licenses have expired, [won't under current law be able to obtain a new one from the state](#). Foreign students who received their licenses before the decision affecting temporary residents, however, can legally keep and renew them.

As soon as the change in enforcement became apparent, business and educational leaders began an intense lobbying effort aimed at a quick fix in the law. Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm endorsed changing the law, noting that almost 400,000 businesspeople, students and their families lived in the state on temporary visas in 2006.

“I feel like some of the impact from the wave of emotion towards illegal immigration is spilling over into legal immigration as well,” said Gautham Pandiyan, a graduate student in molecular biology at Duke University and the chair of the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students’ International Student Concerns Committee. The group is preparing for its annual legislative action day in Washington today, and driver’s licenses for foreign citizens will be high on the list of concerns, he said.

— [Andy Guess](#)

*The original story and user comments can be viewed online at
<http://insidehighered.com/news/2008/02/07/michigan>.*

© Copyright 2008 *Inside Higher Ed*

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