



Graduate Student Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

January 9, 2009, 3p.m.

Connable Board of Trustee Room (Bernhard Center – 201)

Representatives Present: Brandi Pritchett (Chairperson), Alyssa Kalata (Vice-Chairperson), Kazuhiro Iwamoto (Biological Sciences), Nayane Udawatte (Chemistry), Krystal Breshnahan (Communication), Stephanie Ruhl (Communication), Economics (George Nwaogu), Mohammad Al-Amar (Physics), Katie Smith (Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology), Joyce Irvine (Speech Pathology and Audiology), Lewis Pyenson (The Graduate College), Melissa Green (Division of Student Affairs), Andrew Crowe (Western Student Association), Jordan Hochstatter (Campus Activities Board)

Guests Present: Ann Armbruster (Music Therapy), Lothi Benothmone (Computer Science), Darnell Anderson (Communication), Pat Holton (Director of Environmental Safety/Emergency Management)

1. Call to order: 3:03
2. Introductions
3. *Approval of the Agenda 1/09/09: Kazuhiro moves to approve, seconded by Nayane.
4. *Approval of Minutes from 12/12/08: Joyce moves to approve, seconded by Katie.
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Dr. Pyenson reported that two speakers will be coming to WMU's campus during the third and fourth weeks of January. One speaker will be talking about the sun and environmental issues and the other speaker will be discussing satire and literature. Dr. Pyenson asked that any students interested in obtaining posters for these talks to contact him via e-mail. He also noted that light refreshments will be available after both talks. Dr. Pyenson stated that the campus community is also looking forward to a second visit by Jim Gates from the University of Maryland, who will be providing an update about the nuclear accelerator located in Geneva. Dr. Pyenson also noted that in March, three lectures will be given by the three most recently honored Distinguished Faculty Scholars on WMU's campus, from the Physics Department, Mathematics Department, and the Mallinson Institute. He stated that receiving the title of Distinguished Faculty Scholar is the highest honor a professor can receive at WMU. Finally, Dr. Pyenson reported that applications to graduate programs at WMU are up substantially from last year at this time, which shows a strong interest in graduate programs at WMU and speaks to the quality of programs offered at this institution.
6. Report from the Chair
 - a. Special Guest Presentation – Pandemic Flu (Pat Holton): In lieu of a report from the Chair, Pat Holton presented information about WMU's emergency plan in the event of a pandemic flu. Pat reported that WMU has had a committee working for approximately one and a half years on creating an emergency plan to be applied in the event of a pandemic flu. Recently, she sent letters to student leadership groups on campus, requesting to speak at their meetings about this topic. Pat stated that a pandemic flu is a global flu that will spread around the country and the world in a short span of time. She noted that everyone is at risk for contracting a pandemic flu, since it is impossible to determine when and where one will start and because pandemic flues involve new viruses, rather than viruses that people have some established immunity to. Pam reported that there have been three pandemic flues in the past century and it is anticipated that another flu is likely to occur sometime in the near future. The government has asked organizations to create plans for non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as closing schools and isolating infected individuals. WMU is following the government's recommendations in terms of planning, in addition to attempting to prepare for other issues (e.g. closure of the school, payment of employees during an outbreak). Pam would like to receive feedback on the draft Q&A regarding the pandemic flu and encouraged students to contact her with any comments, questions, or concerns. She also encouraged students to get a seasonal flu vaccine, which is available at Sindecuse Health Center.
7. *GFAC – Alyssa Kalata
 - a. Graduate Students of Color: Requested \$725 for event expenses for their Speaker Series Part II. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$725 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
 - b. Stand-Up Comedy Club: Requested \$3,500 for event expenses for a Stand-Up Comedy Workshop. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that the proposal be denied, but that recommendations be

made to the Stand-Up Comedy Club representative as to how the proposal could be improved to increase the likelihood of future funding. Motion to deny funds approved.

8. GSAC Treasurer – Alyssa Kalata: Alyssa reported that the GSAC is on track in terms of the 2008 – 2009 budget.
9. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils
 - a. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa reported that James Kison, an employee of the Graduate College, is working to help GSAC switch our website over to the WMU template.
 - b. Public Relations Committee (3) – Kazuhiro Iwamoto, Svetlana Stone, Krystal Bresnahan: Brandi reported that the PRC has set the Winter Social Event for Friday, January 23rd from 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. at Rollerworld on Stadium Drive. A description of the event, titled “Spring Social Skate Date,” will be available on the GSAC website and circulated via the GSAC listserv shortly.
 - c. Graduate Research and Publication Committee (4) – *Vacant*: No updates.
 - d. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Kamleshkumar Suthar*: Brandi reported that Kamlesh will be serving on the March Selection Committee on behalf of the GSAC.
 - e. University Councils & Committees
 - i. Research Policies Council (2) - *Greg Laing, Needs 1 member!*: Brandi reported that the GSAC needs one additional member to serve on this council, which meets once monthly. Please contact her if you are interested in serving.
 - ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Brandi Pritchett, Alyssa Kalata*: Brandi reported that the GSC has not met yet this month, but that the ad hoc committee examining accelerated degree program issues met this morning. She stated that progress has been made toward agreement between the USC and GSC about accelerated degree program issues and that she’ll have a more detailed report next month.
 - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Needs 1 member!*: Brandi reported that the GSAC needs one member to serve on this council. The council’s next meeting is this coming Tuesday.
 - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto*: Kazuhiro reported that he is creating a survey to assess issues pertaining to recruitment and retention of international students. He is looking for suggestions for questions to ask in the survey. Alyssa suggested that Kazuhiro talk to Dr. Di Pierro about the survey she conducted regarding similar issues. Dr. Pyenson elaborated on the nature of the survey and agreed to provide Kazuhiro with a copy of the report based on the results of that survey. GSAC members brainstormed other topics for Kazuhiro to assess as part of the survey, including location of WMU, advising issues, burnout, and supports for underrepresented groups. Andrew agreed to bring up the survey during the WSA cabinet meeting next week to get additional ideas of potential questions.
 - v. President’s University Sustainability Committee (1) – *David Shoup, Daniel Seidling*: No updates.
 - 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) **NEEDS 2 MEMBERS!**: Brandi stated that two members are still needed to fill vacancies on two subcommittees (Acquisition, Discovery, and Application and Engagement and Service). She reported that these subcommittees meet once monthly. Brandi stated that the Steering Subcommittee is meeting next week and she will provide a report at the next GSAC meeting.
 - f. MLK Committee: Brandi reported that MLK Celebration Events begin this Sunday and go through the end of March. She provided a few copies of the MLK Events Calendar to GSAC members.
 - g. WSA representative – *Andrew Crowe, Vice-President*: Andrew reported that WSA had its first meeting after break, at which Dr. Dunn spoke and at which cabinet members provided their goals for this semester. Brandi stated that we would like to have a GSAC member present at each WSA meeting, if possible, and asked GSAC members to consider attending. She stated it is particularly important that GSAC is represented at WSA meetings since WSA is the student government on campus and has the right to pass resolutions.
 - h. CAB representative – *Jordan Hochstetter*: Jordan reported that this semester CAB will be putting on a number of events, including bringing comedian Nick Swartson to campus. He also stated that CAB is

trying to bring a musician to campus and is collaborating with Students for Sustainable Earth and the International Programs Council on the Resuseaball and International Festival events.

i. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) – Jamie McCandless: Not present.

10. Unfinished Business

a. WSA Senator: Mentioned under WSA report.

b. Looking for the new AK!!!! (pg. 5): Brandi reported that the deadline for the GSAC Vice-Chairperson position has been extended to January 16th. She also stated that a few GSAC members are needed to sit on the GSAC Vice-Chairperson Search Committee.

c. Upcoming Events (pg. 4): Brandi encouraged GSAC members to look on the Graduate College website for additional information regarding events occurring on campus and awards that graduate students can apply for. Mohammad reported that the NAGPS Midwest Regional Conference is occurring on March 19th through 21st. Brandi stated that GSAC can pay for a few members to attend this conference and asked members to contact her if interested in attending. Mohammad also noted that the Midwest Regional Coordinator is resigning from her position after the conference and asked GSAC members to contact him if they are interested in applying for the position. Brandi mentioned that the Neighborhood Watch Committee is looking for individuals in the Arcadia and Knollwood communities to help with neighborhood watches. She also asked GSAC members if they have any concerns about safety on campus. Krystal noted that students can obtain escorts on campus by calling 387-RIDE. Kazuhiro asked if any data was available on vehicle break-ins on campus and Dr. Pyenson encouraged him to refer to the WMU website for this information. Brandi noted that a few other events are taking place on campus. She stated that the Graduate College and the GSAC are collaborating on a workshop about financial management. She also noted that the GSAC has a number of upcoming events, including an anti-racism/multicultural event, a talk with award-winning author Firoozeh Dumas (on February 26th), and a Forum with President Dunn. The GSAC will also need approximately three members to attend the Second Annual Michigan Graduate Student Summit, which is being hosted by WMU this year and is a collaboration between the Graduate College and the GSAC.

11. New Business

a. WELCOME BACK – Hilltop Review: Brandi reported that she would really like to revitalize this component of the GSAC because there has been interest in doing so. She stated that the Hilltop Review had been inactive because of difficulties finding an editor. She asked members to contact her if they are interested in helping with the Hilltop Review.

b. Departmental Outreach Email Template (pg. 6): Brandi stated that this is a sample template of an e-mail that GSAC members can send to their departments in order to introduce themselves. She encouraged GSAC members to use this template, after modifying it as they see fit.

c. Departmental Reports ☺: Mohammad reported that the Physics department has new equipment. Nayane reported that there was a ventilation problem in Haenicke Hall over break and that maintenance was slow in fixing the problem. Ann reported that the Music Therapy program recently celebrated their fiftieth anniversary by inviting a prominent keynote speaker to campus and holding an all-day conference. She stated that WMU's Music Therapy program is one of the oldest in the nation.

12. Student Concerns (open floor): Mohammad expressed concern about the quality of the student insurance at WMU. Alyssa encouraged Mohammad to discuss this issue with a TAU representative. Kazuhiro asked who he should contact regarding traffic problems near Haenicke Hall. Alyssa suggested that he contact the Campus Planning and Finance Council.

13. General Announcements & Briefs

a. Announcements for the Good of the Order

b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: Feb. 13th, March 13th

11. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”

12. Adjorn: 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/>
 - 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>
 - American Society for Engineering Education - ASEE Spring 2009 Northeast Conference April 3-4, 2009 @ University of Bridgeport <http://www.asee2009online.org>
 - Gwen Frostic Environmental Studies Seminar Series: Dr. Ken Deffeyes Jan. 13, 2009 at 7:00 pm in the Fetzer Center.
 - “How to Get Published in Peer Reviewed Journals, A Writer’s Workshop” Jan. 27, 2009 in room 1010 of the College of Health and Human Services from 9-11 am. Register on-line at 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
 - MLK Celebration Events from Jan. 11 – March 28, 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 Skating Social – Jan. 23rd at Rollerworld (7491 Stadium Dr. Kalamazoo, MI 49009)

Grad College/GSAC Collaboration - “Financial management for Graduate Students: How to Maximize your Dollars” - Feb. 5 from 2-4pm in the Fetzer Center.

Anti-Racism/Multicultural Event – TBA

GSAC/WSA Speaker Collaboration – Feb.26th in the North Ballroom of the Bernhard Center Firoozeh Dumas

GSAC/WSA Forum w/ Dr. Dunn – TBA

GSAC Forum – March 11th

2nd Annual Graduate Student Summit – March 14th

Bowling/Karaoke Night – March 28th

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 16, 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
260 West Walwood Hall
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5242

DEPARTMENTAL RECRUITMENT & INFORMATION EMAIL

Hi Everyone,

Allow me to introduce myself. I am (*name*) and I currently serve as your departmental representative for the Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC). The GSAC is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate's Graduate Studies Council. It serves as a liaison between the administration, faculty, staff of WMU and graduate students. **GSAC helps to advocate for graduate students with regard to University issues such as the recent increase in graduate student print pages from 500 to 750 per semester in all campus OIT labs.** *This victory came as a result of your feedback and GSAC advocacy efforts.* GSAC also advocates for graduate student needs on a state and national level, helps connect graduate students to resources within the University, and to each other. We provide opportunities and events that are relevant to the graduate student community and give funding to registered student organizations (RSOs). RSOs can request funds for up to \$500/year for operational expenses and up to \$2500/year for event expenses.

GSAC consists of Brandi Pritchett (chairperson) and Alyssa Kalata (vice-chairperson). We also have graduate student reps from each department.

GSAC allows up to five reps for each department, so if you are interested in joining, feel free to come to the next meeting which is this Friday, the 9th at 3pm in the Board of Trust Connable Room (201) in the Bernhard Center.

GSAC has a website that contains all sorts of information: <http://www.wmich.edu/gsac>. You can also contact Brandi or Alyssa at 387-8207 if you simply want to share concerns, suggestions, or departmental and graduate student achievements. They also hold office hours every Monday from 10 am – Noon at the Graduate College located in Walwood Hall on east campus. Of course, feel free to contact me by email with any questions. Keep on the look out for emails, flyers or other information that will be posted relating to events or info. that will be of interest to you. Also, I strongly encourage you to check out the Graduate College website at www.wmich.edu/grad.

Thank you and I look forward to meeting you!