



## Graduate Student Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

Friday, June 13, 2008, 3p.m.

Connable Room (Bernhard Center)

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*Representatives Present:* Brandi Pritchett (Chairperson), Alyssa Kalata (Vice-Chairperson), Greg Laing (English), David Shoup (History), Mohammad Al-Amar (Physics), Katie Smith (Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology), Joy Bailey (Teaching, Learning, and Educational Studies), Archana Nagarajan (Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering), Dr. Lewis Pyenson (The Graduate College), Melissa Green (Division of Student Affairs), Danielle Harik (Western Student Association)

*Guests Present:* Daniel Seidling (Social Work), Nwaogu George (Economics), Svetlana Stone (Education)

1. Call to order: 3:01
2. Introductions
3. \*Approval of the Agenda 06/13/08: David moves to approve, seconded by Greg.
4. \*Approval of Minutes from 05/09/08: Greg moves to approve, seconded by David.
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Dr. Pyenson stated that he had met recently with Brandi to discuss funding for the GSAC Vice-Chairperson position. According to University policies, SAF funds cannot be used for assistantship compensation. As such, the Graduate College had been paying for the GSAC Vice-Chairperson position in full rather than for half of the position, which was the initially agreed upon arrangement between the Graduate College and the GSAC. Based on his conversation with Brandi, it was agreed upon that the GSAC will be provide funding toward a speaker series to be put on by the Graduate College and the GSAC, focusing primarily on speakers in the area of the Humanities. Over the course of the coming months, Brandi, Alyssa, and Dr. Pyenson will be meet to determine speakers that will be of interest to the graduate student body.
6. Report from the Chair
  - a. Board of Trustees Meeting, 6/13: Brandi reported that she spoke to the Board of Trustees about her goals as GSAC Chairperson for the upcoming year, as well as the draft of the GSAC budget.
  - b. United States Student Association – Vote Coalition: Brandi stated that she was contacted by this organization regarding developing a voting coalition on campus, oriented toward increasing the number of individuals registered to vote. Brandi reported that WSA and PeaceJam have expressed interest in becoming involved on the WMU campus, in addition to a number of schools around the state of Michigan, including University of Michigan (Ann Arbor and Dearborn), Oakland University, Eastern Michigan University, and Saginaw Valley. Brandi stated that there is no cost associated with this level of involvement, although there is the option of paying membership fees. Brandi asked the members of the GSAC to consider whether this is an opportunity we should become further involved with.
  - c. Western Edge – Graduate Student Edition © : Brandi stated that she has been meeting with Dr. Hearit about ways in which the Western Edge can be extended to graduate students.
  - d. NAGPS Membership: Brandi reported that the lifetime NAGPS Membership has been approved and paid for.
  - e. 2008 – 2009 Chair Charges: Brandi stated that she has three primary goals for the upcoming school year. First, she would like to increase the visibility of GSAC on campus. Second, she would like to increase the consistent and active membership of the GSAC. Finally, she would like to better attend to subgroups of students on campus, including international students, non-traditional students, domestic minority students, and students at the WMU branch campuses.
7. GFAC – *Alyssa Kalata (no proposals)*: Alyssa reported that the new fiscal year at WMU will start next month, which will renew the pool of money available through the GFAC. Alyssa asked the members of the GSAC to encourage their departmental RSOs to apply for funds or in the event that their department does not have an RSO, to go through the process of creating an RSO so they are eligible to apply for GFAC funds.
8. GSAC Treasurer: Alyssa stated that she plans on filling the GSAC Treasurer position indefinitely.
9. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils
  - i. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa reported that she is in the process of contacting OIT because the GSAC website is experiencing some problems with server space availability.

- ii. Public Relations Committee – *Needs 3 volunteers (pg.5)*: Brandi reported that at the last meeting, Kazuhiro suggested reactivating this committee to help with recruiting members, increasing visibility, and planning events. Brandi stated that she will bring a description of the committee to the next meeting and encouraged GSAC members to consider volunteering for a position of the committee.
  - b. Graduate Research Symposium and Journal (Hilltop Review) – *Vacant*: No report.
  - c. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Kamleshkumar Suthar*: Not present. Dr. Pyenson noted that for these awards the first deadlines are in September and as such, he encouraged graduate students to start planning to apply now. He also noted that there are three application cycles each academic year.
  - d. University Councils
    - i. Research Policies Council (2) – *Alyssa Kalata, Greg Laing*: Greg stated that the RPC finished creating and revising the Support for Faculty Scholars application materials. He also reported that extensive discussion occurred regarding the possibility for out-of-state graduate students funded on research grants to be assessed in-state tuition rates. He stated that the RPC had assembled information regarding what other schools do in the state of Michigan in an attempt to understand whether this system could be made possible. Dr. Pyenson noted that one suggestion that was made was to create a competitive fund that professors with outside grants could apply to utilize to complement the money being used to cover assistantships for out-of-state students. Alyssa noted that the plan is for RPC to work in conjunction with the GSC and the IEC to possibly draft an MOA regarding this matter. Alyssa stated that any changes in this area would be of significant benefit to graduate students.
    - ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Brandi Pritchett, Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa stated that the primary point of discussion at the meeting was how classes should be labeled and counted for accelerated degree programs at Western Michigan University. She reported that one possibility that was raised was for undergraduates involved in accelerated degree programs to be allowed to register for 6000 level classes at the undergraduate level and then waive these classes when these students begin their graduate level work. Dr. Pyenson noted that one advantage of these accelerated degree programs is that they provide an incentive for talented undergraduates to remain at the university to continue their graduate work.
    - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Needs One Member*: Vacant. Alyssa stated that this council is concerned with buildings on campus, roads on campus, and other aspects of the physical infrastructure of the university. Alyssa noted that more information about the council can be found on the Faculty Senate website.
    - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto*: Not present. Brandi stated that she had communicated with Kazuhiro and that he had no significant updates from this council.
  - e. MLK Committee: No updates.
  - f. WSA representative – *Danielle Harik, President*: Danielle stated that she just returned from Egypt and is in the process of getting everything set up for the upcoming school year. She stated that WSA will be having a retreat in July. She also mentioned WSA’s involvement with the USSA.
  - g. CAB representative – *David VanDeusen, President*: Not present.
  - h. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU): Not present.
10. Unfinished Business
- a. Provost Search Advisory Committee: Brandi stated that Rosana served on this committee and as a result of their work, Dr. Green was selected will start serving as Provost on August 1<sup>st</sup>. Brandi stated that she will be arranging a formal meeting with him in the near future.
  - b. Print Increase: Brandi reported that the last time that she spoke with President Dunn, potentially increasing the printing cap for graduate students to 1,000 pages sounded promising. She stated that she is meeting with President Dunn on June 26<sup>th</sup> and she will bring this issue up with him again at this time. Daniel noted that at the Health and Human Services building, graduate students have to use copy cards to print rather than being able to use their copy limit. Brandi and Alyssa agreed to investigate this matter further.
11. \* New Business – Katie proposed two changes to the dates listed on the budget, to accurately reflect the fiscal year for which the budget was created. The GSAC budget for the 2008/2009 school year was approved by the GSAC membership.
- a. NEW Budget (WEW!)

- i. CommUniverCity: Brandi noted that this event has been historically well attended with a long waitlist, so as such the new budget includes a plan to increase the number of tickets available by 100 tickets (to 750 tickets).
- ii. Fall/Winter Events: Alyssa briefly discussed the tentative plan for events for the Fall and Spring semesters, including some new events that had not previously been included in the budget.
- iii. Lobbying Efforts/Travel – Branch Campus Outreach: Brandi reported that this portion of the budget was increased slightly to accommodate visits to the WMU branch campuses.
- iv. Professional Dev. – GSAC Retreat: Brandi stated that this year, professional development opportunities will encompass both what the general graduate student body wants, as well as a special professional development opportunity/retreat for GSAC members. Members suggested a few venues for this retreat, including a bowling alley, a park with a barbeque available for use, and Binder Park Zoo.
- v. GSAC & Grad College Speaker Series: Brandi mentioned that Dr. Pyenson spoke about this earlier and that this series is different than the big speaker that the GSAC hopes to bring to WMU during the Fall semester. She stated that the speaker series will probably be more discipline specific in nature.
- vi. Support to Student Programming: Brandi reported that under the proposed GSAC budget, support to RSOs will increase by approximately \$10,000. She mentioned that discussion occurred about whether the cap on funding should be raised, but that the outcome of that discussion was that rather than raising the cap, the GSAC would like to see a more diverse group of RSOs apply for funding. Katie mentioned that the process for becoming an RSO is fairly easy and encouraged departments without RSOs to go to the SALP website ([www.salp.wmich.edu](http://www.salp.wmich.edu)) to learn more about creating an RSO.

12. Student Concerns (Open Floor): Joy suggested that in future meetings the full names of organizations be used (rather than acronyms), so that new members could learn what the acronyms stand for. Further discussion also occurred regarding the development of a graduate student version of the Western Edge. Katie suggested creating a committee to investigate ideas about the graduate student version of the Western Edge. She proposed that members of this committee could contact individual departments regarding their major departmental milestones. In addition to the proposed \$500 incentive, Katie mentioned it might also be nice to maintain the same rental rates for graduate students living in campus housing.

13. General Announcements & Briefs

- a. Announcements for the Good of the Order: Greg mentioned that Dr. Larry Schlock will be conducting a workshop on academic publishing at KRESA on July 15<sup>th</sup> through July 18<sup>th</sup>. The cost of the workshop is \$35. Interested parties should e-mail [klaing@kresa.org](mailto:klaing@kresa.org) for further information. Joy mentioned that an anti-racism workshop is coming up June 20<sup>th</sup> through June 22<sup>nd</sup> at Douglass Community Center. She stated that this workshop is a prerequisite for a ten day workshop on race that will be occurring in July in preparation for the Race Exhibit coming to Kalamazoo in 2010.
- b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: July 11, Aug. 8, Sep. 12th

11. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”

- a. Future Events

12. Adjourn: 4:27

\*Items that require a vote from members.