



Graduate Student Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

March 13, 2009, 3p.m.

Connable Board of Trustee Room (Bernhard Center – 201)

Members Present: Brandi Pritchett (Chairperson), Alyssa Kalata (Vice-Chairperson), Kazuhiro Iwamoto (Biological Sciences), Krystal Bresnahan (Communication), Greg Laing (English), Jamie McCandless (History), Joel Raveloharimisy (Political Science), Mohammad Al-Amar (Physics), Franco Silva (Management), Benito Hall (Marketing), Alicia Austin (Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology), Katie Smith (Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology), Katya Gallegos (Teaching, Learning, and Educational Studies), Zach Sullivan (Health, Physical Education, and Recreation), Lothi Benothmone (Computer Science), Stephany Coffman-Wolph (Computer Science), Jesse Thompson (Teaching Assistant Union), Ms. Melissa Green (Division of Student Affairs)

Guests Present: Michael Parker (The Voices of WMU Gospel Choir), Cheri Lozon (Statistics), Kristy Niblock (Sociology)

1. Call to order: 3:17
2. Introductions
3. *Approval of the Agenda 3/13/09: Kazuhiro moves to approve, seconded by Stephany.
4. *Approval of Minutes from 2/13/09: Katya moves to approve, seconded by Lothi.
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Not present.
6. Report from the Chair
 - a. GSAC Vice Chairperson: Brandi reported that Joel was selected as the new GSAC Vice-Chairperson. She stated that although he won't officially begin his position until the Summer II semester, he plans on attending GSAC meetings in the meantime and will begin training for the position during the Summer I semester with the help of Alyssa.
 - b. Meeting with Bob Miller – Community Involvement: Brandi reported that she needs assistance in assembling a list of resources for graduate students at WMU, including employment, volunteer, funding, and low-cost service opportunities, as she is working to put together a database of all of these things. Kazuhiro reported that KVCC offers low-cost dental services and also has a bulletin board with postings about volunteering opportunities. Franco stated that the soup kitchen he volunteered at had a book that listed numerous volunteer opportunities in the Kalamazoo area. Melissa stated she can provide Brandi with a copy of that book and also noted that the book includes many skilled volunteer positions. Furthermore, she noted that you can search BroncoJobs for skilled volunteer positions as well.
 - c. East Campus Task Force: Brandi reported that she attended an East Campus Task Force meeting this morning. Brandi stated that the Task Force is trying to get developers to invest in East Campus. Ideally, the Task Force would like to see the building renovated and the land used, without having to sell it. One suggested use for the land was student housing. Brandi asked for the opinions of the members of the GSAC as to how they think the land should be used. Kazuhiro and Franco suggested renovating the building and using it for social and professional functions. Alyssa noted that she thinks it is important that the University work on maintaining the unique architecture of the East Campus buildings.
 - d. Meeting with President Dunn: Brandi reported that Dr. Dunn enjoyed the presentation given by graduate students at the last Board of Trustees meeting and encouraged graduate students to continue to share other positive accomplishments. Brandi also discussed the recent Forum with Dr. Dunn. She noted that a number of topics came up in discussion, including a Western Edge program for graduate students, establishing connections with the Kalamazoo community, issues pertaining to sustainability, and the cost of tuition. Dr. Dunn also encouraged Brandi to meet with Bob Miller to discuss graduate student community involvement.
 - e. Student Union Revisited: Brandi asked students at the GSAC Forum how they would feel about GSAC having offices at the Bernhard Center. The students at the meeting seemed to be supportive of the idea, so Brandi plans on advocating for having a part-time space in the remodeled section of the Bernhard Center. She noted that there will be mandatory meetings coming up regarding this matter, where student organizations will be asked to advocate for why they should be allowed to have

space in the remodeled portion of the Bernhard Center. Brandi stated that having this space will benefit the GSAC and encouraged at least a few members to be present at these meetings, when they occur. She will provide details about these meetings as soon as she has more information about when and where they will occur.

7. *GFAC – *Alyssa Kalata*
 - a. Organization of Students With Disabilities: Requested \$100.00 toward covering expenses of their participation in a Relay for Life event. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$100.00 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
 - b. Latino Student Alliance: Requested \$500.00 for their Splash of Culture event. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$125.00 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
 - c. Latino Student Alliance: Requested \$2,500.00 for their Cesar Chavez event. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$2,350.00 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
 - d. Indian Student Association: Requested \$500.00 in operational expenses. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$150.00 in operational expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
 - e. Graduate Students of Color: Requested \$1,275.00 for the GSOC Spring Reception. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$1,250.00 in event expenses be approved. Motion to approve passed.
 - f. The Voices of WMU Gospel Choir: Requested \$2,450.00 for their 11th Annual Conference and College Night events. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that \$1,100.00 in event expenses be approved, with \$900.00 of funding contingent upon graduate student pre-registration. Motion to approve passed.
8. GSAC Treasurer – *Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa noted that organizations who wish to submit proposals for allocations should do so quickly, as the funds for allocations for the fiscal year are running low. Brandi noted that proposals for the April meeting must be received by the last Friday in March in order to be considered.
9. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils -
 - i. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa noted that she is currently working on getting the GSAC blog up and functioning.
 - ii. Public Relations Committee (3) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto, Svetlana Stone, Krystal Bresnahan*: Alyssa mentioned that the Bowling and Karaoke Night at Airway Lanes is occurring in a couple of weeks and encouraged interested GSAC members to attend.
 - b. Graduate Research and Publication Committee (4) – *Vacant*
 - c. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Kamleshkumar Suthar*: Not present.
 - d. University Councils & Committees
 - i. Research Policies Council (2) - *Greg Laing, Needs 1 member!*: Greg stated that Research and Creative Activities Awards Day is occurring on April 10th, 2009. GSAC has agreed to provide some financial support toward this event. Greg also noted that they are looking for graduate students to serve as judges for the event. Individuals who serve as judges will receive a free lunch and have the opportunity to hear a faculty emerging scholar speak. Greg also noted that RPC, in conjunction with IEC and GSC, has been working on a motion that would indicate support for charging out-of-state graduate students who are externally funded in-state tuition rates. There is concern that this motion may not pass, so RPC is working with individuals who deal with financial matters at the university to assess the impact of such a proposal and try to come up with solutions to offset the cost.
 - ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Brandi Pritchett, Alyssa Kalata*: Brandi noted that the topic of accelerated degree programs came up again and that members of the GSC and USC were eventually able to reach an agreement that approves of undergraduate students taking 6000 level courses. This decision is now being taken to the Faculty Senate for consideration.
 - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Needs 1 member!*
 - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto*: Kazuhiro noted that IEC will be circulating a survey shortly that examines recruitment and retention issues as they relate to international students. He also noted that the in-state tuition rate for externally funded out-of-state graduate students was supported by IEC.
 - v. President’s University Sustainability Committee (1) – *David Shoup, Daniel Seidling*: Brandi reported that this Committee has been trying to develop an incentive program to encourage

sustainability initiatives on campus. She stated that the report relating to this incentive program may be in its final iteration.

- 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), John Kusku (Acquisition, Discovery, Application) ***NEEDS 1 MORE MEMBER!***: Greg reported that his committee is in the process of writing a final draft of a report, most of which is pertaining to action planning. Phyllis was not present, but gave a report to Brandi that stated that her committee is at a similar point to Greg’s committee, and is also waiting for further direction from the Steering Committee. Brandi stated that her committee is working on trying to get a solid understanding of the University climate and places where the University is thriving and areas in which it could improve. Brandi noted that one topic that is come up is that there needs to be an increase in the amount of discussion occurring about graduate student needs and issues, which would demonstrate that graduate students are valued at the University. She also noted that funding and supportive services are other issues that have entered discussion. Stephany noted that her committee is still working on documents. Brandi noted that across all the University, there has been an increased emphasis on the importance of assessment. Brandi stated that she would like to increase the emphasis on assessment within the GSAC as well.
- e. MLK Committee – No updates.
- f. WSA representative/Senator – *Andrew Crowe, Vice-President/John Kusku, GSAC Senator*: Not present.
- g. CAB representative – *David VanDeusen, President*: Not present.
- h. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) – *Jamie McCandless* – TAU: Jamie noted that TAU is currently bargaining with the administration and would like to present a proposal from the University to all graduate students on March 18th at 5:00 p.m. in room 211 of the Bernhard Center. He noted that part of the proposal includes changing the structure in which Teaching Assistants are paid back to the way that it was in 2004. This “stipend-based” format, which involves a large stipend up front and smaller bi-weekly paychecks, would reduce available financial aid. The proposal also recommends that the University keep its contribution toward TA health care fixed at \$800.00 over the next three years, even though there is a 20% anticipated increase in insurance costs for next year alone. Alyssa asked if TAU representatives could try to keep in contact with the GSAC about further updates.

10. Unfinished Business

- a. WMU Day at the Capitol: Tabled until next month.
- b. GSAC Trinkets – THEY ARE HERE ☺
- c. Hilltop Review: Brandi stated that the Hilltop Review has been reintroduced and that a special edition will be released in May that will include the papers of those individuals who had been accepted for the last publication, but ultimately not printed. Lothi will be serving as the editor for the journal and he currently is receiving assistance from two other members of the GSAC. Brandi reported that the deadline for proposals for the next regular edition of the Hilltop Review is September 18th, 2009. Brandi reported that the Hilltop Review is interdisciplinary in nature and that ideally, she would like to have a review committee that has individuals from a variety of disciplines involved so that the proposals can be competently reviewed. Brandi requested that individuals who are interested in getting involved in the Hilltop Review e-mail her at their earliest convenience. Lothi noted that he would like the journal to be known outside of the University and that he would like area businesses and industries to advertise in it. He asked that any individuals with connections to area businesses and industries to contact him to discuss this matter.
- d. GSAC Forum: Discussed earlier.
- e. Upcoming Events (pg. 5-6): Brandi stated that she will be e-mailing everyone regarding the Bowling and Karaoke Night at Airway Lanes. She also noted that the Second Annual Michigan Graduate Student Summit will be occurring tomorrow. She reported that Sarita Sankey, from Bowie State University, and Greg Rosine, from Western Michigan University, will be speaking at the event. Brandi also noted that there are still openings for GSAC members to serve as WSA Senators. She stated that John Kusku is regularly attending WSA meetings once a month, but that individuals from the GSAC are still needed to attend the three other meetings each month.

11. New Business

a. Departmental Reports ☺: Mohammad stated that the Physics Department will be holding an international physics conference, beginning on July 22nd, 2009 and is looking for volunteers to help with the conference. About 500 people are expected to attend. Dr. Berra is the contact person for the conference.

12. Student Concerns (open floor): Katya volunteered to serve as a GSAC representative on a diversity committee in Kalamazoo. Brandi stated that she received an e-mail from a graduate student expressing an interest in GSAC advocating for the extension of library services beyond graduation for graduate students who complete their degree at WMU.

13. General Announcements & Briefs

a. Announcements for the Good of the Order: The Organization of Students With Disabilities distributed information about their organization. Brandi noted that the “father of Black psychology,” Dr. Joe White, will be coming to WMU. She also encouraged students to attend the International Festival this weekend.

b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: April ^{3rd} (DATE CHANGE-same location), May ^{8th}, June 1^{2th}

11. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”

12. Adjorn: 4:23

* 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/>
- Volunteer Day: "Spring Into the Streets" – March 27th Participating community orgs. Include; YMCA, Ministry w/ Community, Fair Food Matters, Several neighborhood districts. Email Andrew Van Wasshova at salp-intothestreets@wmich.edu to participate.
- 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>
- College Women in Leadership Regional Conference – March 20th (first meeting on MONDAY FEB. 16th at 2 pm in Faunce) please RSVP to Jenny Steiner at wsa-publicrelations@groupwise.wmich.edu
- 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
- Special Education Mini Conference – March 21st from 9 am to 3 pm. For additional info. see Brandi!
- 2009 Assessment Institute – Oct. 25-27th. Proposals due March 20th. Additional info. can be found at www.planning.iupui.edu or contact Trudy at (317) 274.4111 or tbanta@iupui.edu
- Career and Student Employment Services (CSES) will host our first Federal Career Week from March 17th – March 19th. The first event is a federal internship panel on March 17th from 3pm – 5pm. The second event is the Federal Mix-and-Mingle event on March 18th from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. The final event is a Find and Apply for federal jobs workshop. For additional info. call Nadira Wells at (269) 387-2734.

GSAC Opportunities

The 2009 Midwest Regional Conference will be hosted by the University of Notre Dame, March 19-21, 2009

Security Camera Committee – Beginning Jan. 2009

ICES OnLine Committee – Next meeting will be held on March 19th at 2pm in Henry Hall. If you are interested please contact Brandi!

2nd Annual Graduate Student Summit – March 14th ***Who wants to go?***

Bowling/Karaoke Night – March 28th at Airway Lanes (Portage Rd.) from 8-11pm

WSA Senator – Attend one WSA meeting per month and voice your graduate student opinion. Meetings are held every week beginning at 4:15pm in room 157 of the Bernhard Center.

Committee to Develop Leadership in Diversity, Social Justice and Inclusion (LDSI). If you are interested please contact Dr. Yvette Hyter at yvette.hyter@wmich.edu
