



Graduate Student Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

Friday, November 09, 2007, 3 PM.
Connable Board Room– Bernhard Center

Representatives Present: Rosana Alsaud (Chairperson), Alyssa Kalata (Vice-Chairperson), Linsay Singer (Communication), Greg Laing (English), David Shoup (History), Deondra Ramsey (Political Science), Elizabeth Bradshaw (Sociology), Aaron Tremblay (Management), Tyschora Lowers (Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology), Katie Smith (Educational Leadership, Research and Technology), Sheryl Johnson (Family and Consumer Sciences), Kate Block (Mallinson Institute for Science Education), Mustafa Sanver (Computer Science), Susan Celestini (Occupational Therapy), Joy Goff (Physician Assistant), Chris Pradel (Western Student Association)

Guests Present: Limin Zhao (International Programs Council), Heidi Baine (VOX)

1. Call to order: 3:00
2. Introductions
3. *Approval of the Agenda 11/09/07: David moves to approve, seconded by Aaron
4. *Approval of Minutes from 10/12/07 (pgs. 2-4) : Joy moves to approve, seconded by Greg
5. Report from the Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College: Not present.
6. Report from the Chair
 - a. Dinner with the President – Rosana reported that twelve graduate students attended this event. She stated that it was a success and provided the students with a good opportunity to interact with the president in a more informal setting.
 - b. State of the University Address – Rosana stated that the purpose of the State of the University Address is to provide the president with an opportunity to report on what has happened during the past year and what's expected to occur during the upcoming year. In this year's State of the University Address, the president commended GSAC and WSA for their representation of the student body and sent a message to the entire community that WMU is a great place to be.
 - c. Professional Development Day – Rosana reported that approximately 40 to 45 student attended this event. She stated that Dr. LeBlanc and Dr. Ariza (the panel members) gave graduate student excellent advice on their job search and publications. David concurred that the event went well. Rosana stated that another Professional Development Day will occur next semester about obtaining jobs with corporate and private firms, rather than institutions of higher education.
 - d. Provost Search Advisory Committee – Rosana attended the first meeting of the Provost Search Advisory Committee. She reported that she can't provide details about the applicants, but she can provide information about the process and an overview of what is occurring. Rosana requested feedback from GSAC members about what qualities they would like in a provost and asked GSAC members to attend one of the Open Forums on November 19th to give their suggestions.
 - e. GSAC Listserv issue – Rosana reported that on October 31st, an error occurred with the GSAC Listserv that has since been resolved.
 - f. GSAC report to Office of Student Conduct – Rosana stated that one student replied to the e-mails sent to the Listserv with an obscene message that reached one other graduate student. This message has since been reported to the Office of Student Conduct, the Graduate College, and the police and appropriate action will be taken.
 - g. Board of Trustees Meeting 11/15 – Rosana reported that Brandi Pritchett will be providing a report on behalf of GSAC at this meeting.
 - h. Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) – *Jason Trowbridge*: Not present.
7. GFAC – *Alyssa Kalata*
 - a. Proposals (separate GFAC handout):
 - i. Student Music Therapists' Association (SMTA): Alyssa reported that no individuals from this organization attended the GFAC meeting and as a result, the request for funds will be tabled until the next GFAC meeting.

- ii. International Programs Council (IPC): The IPC requested \$2,500 for the 19th Annual International Festival 2008. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that this request for funds be approved. Mustafa moves to approve, seconded by Elizabeth.
 - iii. Sociology Graduate Student Association: The Sociology Graduate Student Association requested \$500 for operational expenses. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that this request for funds be approved. Kate moves to approve, seconded by Mustafa.
 - iv. VOX: VOX requested \$400 for the First Annual VOX Global AIDS Day Benefit Concert. Alyssa stated that GFAC recommends that this request for funds be approved, contingent upon the organization's willingness to ensure that the event is promoted to graduate students. Deondra moves to approve, seconded by David.
8. GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils
- a. Web Committee – *Alyssa Kalata*: No updates.
 - b. Public Relations – *Folashade Ogunleye*: Not present.
 - c. Graduate Research Symposium and Journal (Hiltop Review) – *Vacant*
 - d. Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards Selection Committee – *Aaron Tremblay*: Aaron stated that 14 Ph.D. students and 11 M.A. students were funded in the most recent round of applications. Aaron stated that students submit research and travel grant proposals, the proposals are rated in a number of areas on a one to five scale, and then assigned an average merit rating across areas. Students who do not receive funding are welcome to reapply. Rosana stated that GSAC will provide additional supplements to the travel awards of \$500 for those travel grants pertaining to international travel.
 - e. University Councils
 - i. Research Policies Council (2) – *Alyssa Kalata, Greg Laing*: Greg reported that the annual Research and Creative Activities Day is tentatively scheduled for April 11th. This program involves poster presentations put on by graduate students selected from their departments. Monetary awards will be given for the best posters. Greg stated that the Research and Creative Activities Day also involves talks from emerging scholars and meals. Rosana stated that GSAC will provide \$3,000 toward this program.
 - ii. Graduate Studies Council (2) – *Rosana Alsaud, Alyssa Kalata*: Alyssa reported that the issue of “double dipping” (graduate students receiving assistantships and also seeking outside employment) was put on the table for discussion and generally did not receive support. The general consensus was that as long as graduate students are making adequate progress in their respective programs, there is no reason they shouldn't be allowed to seek outside employment, particularly if it is pertaining to their professional or career development. The possibility of the development of a College Doctorate was also put on the table for discussion and a committee was developed to further investigate this possible degree. David asked whether this type of degree is recognized in the United States. Aaron stated that some business schools have a College Doctorate that allows students to obtain real life experience with a concentrated area of study without taking an extensive number of classes. Finally, Alyssa reported that discussion occurred about the issue of plagiarism and academic honesty.
 - iii. Campus Planning and Finance Council (1) – *Jennifer Messana*: Not present.
 - iv. International Education Council (1) – *Kazuhiro Iwamoto*: Kazuhiro reported that he will be sitting on a subcommittee addressing recruitment and retention and that he would like to hear members' thoughts about this issue. He also discussed partnership schools that WMU has established relationships with internationally.
 - f. MLK Committee – Vacant (Needs ONE volunteer asap)**: Rosana stated that GSAC typically provides this Committee with \$500 to put towards MLK events in January. She stated we need one representative from GSAC ASAP. Deondra stated that the position typically involves helping the Committee plan MLK events, which includes the Day of Service on Martin Luther King's birthday, events at WMU the day after Martin Luther King's birthday, and the events put on by churches on Sunday. She stated that participation on the Committee does not involve a substantial amount of time. Sheryl volunteered to participate on the Committee.
 - g. WMU Day at the Capitol - *Thon Moses*: Not present.
 - h. Rebuilding the Bernhard Center – *Padmapriya Srinivasan (Priya)*: Not present.
 - i. WSA representative – *Chris Praedel*: Chris stated that WSA has affiliated with the Student Association of Michigan, which is a lobbying group for students. He stated that 14 of 15 state universities have united through this group and that he is trying to get community colleges involved as well. Chris also

reported that WMU is bringing in the Polar Plunge on February 23rd, an event that raises money for the Special Olympics. He stated that he would like a graduate student team to be created for this event.

9. Unfinished Business

a. Winter events:

i. Social Events

1. Skiing Trip – Rosana stated that this event is tentatively scheduled for late January and will likely involve a bus trip to Timber Ridge.
2. Bowling Night – Alyssa stated that this event is tentatively scheduled for late March and will involve bowling, karaoke, laser tag, and possibly outdoor activities as well.

b. NAGPS National Conference – 11/15 – 11/18

- i. Rosana Alsaud, Alyssa Kalata, Aaron Tremblay – Rosana reported these members will be attending the NAGPS National Conference in Austin, TX. She stated that she is trying to ensure that someone from WMU will serve as a representative in NAGPS, since historically WMU has been very active in this organization.

c. Graduate Student Survey – Rosana reported that the survey is almost complete and will be sent to all graduate students shortly. She asked that GSAC members please take the time to complete the survey when they receive the e-mail about it.

10. New Business

- a. Western Edge Task Force – Rosana reported that she is a member of this Task Force. She stated that the Western Edge program offers a number of incentives for undergraduate students, but currently does not offer any incentives for graduate students. The criteria for undergraduate students were discussed and then Rosana asked GSAC members what some possible incentives for graduate students could be. David suggested that graduate students could receive an incentive for opting to complete a thesis instead of a comprehensive exam. Alyssa suggested that incentives could be given for meeting large program milestones (e.g. classes, thesis, comprehensive exam, dissertation) on time. The possibility of receiving incentives for publications was also discussed. Kazuhiro mentioned that possible incentives might be locked residence hall fees and locked tuition rates. Rosana stated she plans on presenting this information to the Task Force.

- b. Student Assessment Fee (SAF) – (pg. 5-6) – Rosana explained how the SAF is divided and noted that a substantial portion of the SAF of graduate students goes to CAB. She stated that CAB typically does not offer events that graduate students take advantage of and as such, she mentioned that she has the goal of restructuring the SAF breakdown because the money that goes to CAB is money that GSAC could be using to do events that are of more interest to graduate students. Rosana asked Chris for his thoughts on the issue. He mentioned that the issue is very controversial, but that he is committed to coming up with an amicable agreement between GSAC, CAB, and WSA. He suggested that it might be useful to poll graduate students about whether they attend CAB events. He also noted that the SAF has not been increased in almost two decades and that it might be worth increasing the SAF and changing the formula for calculating the SAF to one that is related to inflation. Mustafa suggested that he should also send a GSAC representative to CAB, as long as money from graduate students is going to CAB.

11. General Announcements & Briefs

- a. Announcements for the Good of the Order – Katie mentioned that she is serving on the Presidential Student Advisory Committee (PSAC). She stated that during the first meeting, most of the time was spent talking about the Western Edge, University pride, and campus safety. Katie stated that if people have concerns, positive feedback, or issues they would like to see addressed with the president, to please contact her and she would be happy to bring such topics up at PSAC meetings.

- b. Next GFAC and GSAC meetings: November 9, December 7

11. General Discussion “The State of Graduate Schools”

12. Adjourn: 4:35