

**THE GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Friday, February 16, 2001**  
**Bernhard Center, Connable Board Room**

**MINUTES**

**Representatives Present:** Daryl Arkwright (Biology), Jessica Baby (History), Marcel Brouwers (English), Jay Cawthorne (Paper and Printing Sciences & Engineering), Sarah Dempsey (Communication), Doris Dirks (History), Nancy Greer-Williams (Communication), Sabbir Hossain (Physics), Toby Johnson (Comparative Religion), Tim Kuhnlein (Political Science), Peter Lawson (Anthropology), Heidi Solberg-Viar (History), Gerald Unterreiner (Geosciences), Tim Williams (Music), Rodger Zanny (Computer Science)

**Guests:** Paula Boodt (The Graduate College), Dr. John Coons (Counseling and Testing Centre), Amy Nelson (Division of Student Affairs)

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The minutes of the January 12, 2001 GSAC meeting were presented.

**III. PRESENTATION**

Dr. John Coons from the Counseling and Testing Center addressed GSAC representatives. He informed representatives about services available at the Center, and he solicited advice about how to better market the Center among the graduate student body. He expressed a desire to develop and on-going dialogue among graduate students about anxieties associated with graduate work, especially during the comprehensive exam and dissertation phases of graduate studies. He suggested that focus groups would initiate a dialogue. Paula Boodt agreed to organize such a group in the near future. It was also suggested that Dr. Coons should meet with graduate student organizations, and that a presentation of counseling services should be provided during the annual TA orientation.

Paula Boodt, GSAC Advisor, reported that Dr. Thompson wants GSAC representatives to meet with graduate students

at various regional centers in order to provide a sense of inclusion among Western's graduate student body. Discussion ensued about the possibility of telecasting GSAC meetings to the regional centers on a regular basis. No final decision was made in this respect. Boedt agreed to work with Nancy Greer-Williams to organize a possible luncheon for graduate students through the Communication Department in order to initiate the process of interaction.

#### **IV. REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

The Chair reported that MLK festivities were successful. There were nearly 3,500 people in attendance at the Convocation. The Chair thanked those representatives who helped at the Convocation, and she announced that the 2002 MLK Committee is looking for volunteers.

Regarding the Campus Activities Board, the Chair announced GSAC's inquiry into reallocating the student assessment was complete. Reallocation would require a student body referendum, and the trouble does not warrant further action on the matter. She stressed that GSAC would encourage more activities from CAB that focus on graduate student interests. GSAC received its official voting card for CAB.

Regarding the university's reaccreditation process, the Chair announced that site team visit would take place. They have allocated time to meet with graduate students on February 19 from 3:00-4:00 PM in the Graduate College and from 4:00-5:00 PM in the Faculty Lounge of the Bernhard Center. Representatives were encouraged to attend the scheduled meetings.

The Chair announced that room rental at the Bernhard Center for student organizations was a topic of discussion with the Presidential Student Advisory Committee. Presently student organizations must pay a rental fee for use of conference rooms in the Bernhard Center. Concern had previously been expressed among GSAC representative about using student assessment fees for such services within university facilities.

The Chair reported on the McNair Program for traditionally underrepresented students. She thanked Heidi Solberg-Viar who, along with Dirks, served on a doctoral panel for the program.

The Chair announced the success of the GSAC guest speaker for 2000-2001, Dr. Harry Brod. She estimated that about 160 people were in attendance at the lecture entitled, "Working From and Against Privilege". Nearly 60 people were in attendance at the luncheon, and Dr. Brod was expected to speak at both Kalamazoo College and the Congregation of Moses, Kalamazoo. The Chair stated that she was receiving very positive feedback about Dr. Brod's visit.

## **V. UNIVERSITY COUNCILS**

### **Budget and Finance Committee/ Campus Planning Council (Jessica Grace):**

Grace reported that the Health and Human Services building plans on south campus were reviewed. No action was taken.

### **Faculty Senate (Doris Dirks):**

Dirks reported that Dr. Elson Floyd gave his state of the university address at the last Faculty Senate. Among the issues presented were a new mission statement, the objective of creating two hundred new faculty positions over the next ten years, an institutional assessment program, and achieving high standards of information technology services on campus.

### **Research Policies Council (Roger Zanny):**

Zanny reported that twelve new three year doctoral associateships would be created by the Graduate College. He also announced that the electronic thesis pilot program is presently being tested by the Graduate College. Awards of \$100 are being issued to students willing to test the process. It was announced that the deadline for doctoral fellowships had passed and that students must be enrolled in 730 credits in order to receive a fellowship. He announced that Dr. Pritchard would be addressing research ethics issues for grant recipients. Those receiving funding from the Graduate College would be required to have training in ethics. Furthermore, the ethics of research program would become an integral part of the RA orientation process. It was also announced that the Asylum Lake Preserve would be used for recreation and research. Special attention would be made to protect the land. Finally, the number and amount of budgeted doctoral associateships per department was discussed during the Council meeting. Consideration of more funding to hard science disciplines

was the basis of such discussion. Considerable discussion about the merit of disproportionate funding to the hard sciences versus humanities/social sciences ensued among GSAC representatives.

## **VI. GSAC SUB-COMMITTEES**

### **Graduate Financial Allocation Committee (Jay Cawthorne):**

At the recommendation of GFAC, GSAC unanimously approved a \$400.00 operational budget and a \$1500.00 event budget for Africa Night. A \$1500.00 event budget was unanimously approved for Hong Kong Night. A GFAC meeting was scheduled for March 9 at 2:00 PM at the Graduate College, Walwood Hall.

### **Public Relations Committee (Nancy Greer-Williams):**

Greer-Williams reported that plans for the Graduate Student Appreciation Week were developing. The committee plans to use the same menu as last year. Tim Williams is arranging for music/entertainment, and Greer-Williams is making arrangements for the printing of new GSAC t-shirts. The Graduate Student Appreciation Week reception is scheduled for Tuesday, April 10 in the South Ballroom of the Bernhard Centre from 4:00-6:30 p.m.

### **Webpage Committee (Roger Zanny):**

Zanny reported that the web committee has not been meeting regularly of late. Representatives who wanted personal/professional information listed next to their names should get the information to the GSAC Chair as quickly as possible.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

The Chair encouraged representatives to review the new GFAC guidelines and come prepared to discuss and vote on the rules during the March GSAC meeting.

Regarding the Committee on General Education, the Chair was advised by Dr. Rollin Douma to refrain from pursuing representation on the Committee due to the limited substance of the Committee.

Regarding the 2001-2002 GSAC Chairmanship, Tim Kuehnlein moved to approve the reappointment of Doris Dirks. Nancy Greer-Williams seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval for the reappointment. Congratulations and thanks were extended to Dirks for her continued service to the graduate student body.

**VIII. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BRIEFS**

The next GSAC meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2001 at 3:00 PM at the Graduate College, Walwood Hall.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m..