

MINUTES
GSAC MEETING March 14, 2003
Connable Board Room, Bernhard Center

Representatives Present: Marcel Brouwers (Chair, English), Craig Tollini (Sociology), Raluca Gera (Math), Greg Waltz (Biology), Jennifer Smith (English), Peter Voice (Geoscience), Sabbir Hossain (Physics), Kurt Hayden, (IME), Coleen Barry (CECP), Alhaji Njai (Chemistry), Craig Thomas (Ed Tech), Fodei Batty (Political Science), Jessica Baby (CECP), Tom Owiti (F&CL), Doris Dirks (History), Carol Harris (Occupational Therapy).

Guests: Dean Bill Wiener (Graduate College), Janice Jaroneski, (VPSA, Business Manager), Angela Prater (Com), Emily Eads (OT), Debbie Glowacki (OT).

Introduction: Meeting was called to order. Introduction of all present. Minutes were approved.

Report from the Dean:

Budget deficit -- what does it mean?

- 12% cut to each department
- Tuition will go up
- Cuts in classes being offered (more vulnerable)
- DA/GA university contribution to tuition is EXEMPT from cuts
- Departments have certain allocations for DA/GA positions so this is one area where they can cut (since stipend comes from individual colleges.) GA positions in more jeopardy than DA
- Hiring freeze will continue this year and probably next year as well
- WMU is actually better off than schools in other states -- U. of MO had a 17% cut last year; Cal State at Fresno has a \$34 billion deficit

Faculty Senate meeting on 03.13.03 considered a large number of policy changes:

- Transfer Credits Policy - 24 credits must be taken at WMU; up to 16 credits can be transferred, effective fall of 2003 (passed).
- Expectations Policy - like a "Bill of Rights" (passed).
- Adjudication Policy - situation involving a graduate student and faculty will follow a step-wise process: 1) meet with Faculty, 2) meet with department Chair, 3) Ombudsman, 4) Department Hearing Board, and 5) Graduate College Hearing Board. If the Graduate Student is dismissed from position, the process goes to an even higher level (passed).
- Leave of Absence Policy - worded to try to protect the position of the DA/GA as much as possible (passed).
- Full tuition reimbursement for DA/GA - the university can't put this into affect as this time but this is a #1 priority; long-range goal is 100% reimbursement for unlimited number of credit hours (currently, 12 credit hours reimbursable).
- Differential Compensation Policy - no departments will be reduced. WMU will compare rates with other universities so this is still a year away. Hard sciences most likely to be affected (passed).
- Annual Review of Graduate Students Policy - Faculty Senate will come back to this issue.
- Accelerated Masters Policy - would all 12 credits in senior year to count toward both bachelor and masters degree; this policy will go back to the Graduate Studies Council for approval.

Other Policies being considered for future review:

- PTC (permission to take classes) Policy - currently, only 9 hours can be applied if person later wants to apply to a department.
- Graduate Faculty Status - "Full" or "Associate" titles differ by department, tend to be confusing; needs to be brought in line with other colleges.
- Certificate Programs
- Diversity Programs - this is a "systemic" issue (both faculty and student); previous attempt at a survey only yielded 35 respondents. Issue is part of WMU mission statement.

PFF Program, portfolios:

- WMU plans to go ahead with the PFF (Preparing Future Faculty) Program but it will probably not be a certificate at this point -- 15 hours is a lot to ask of students and faculty. Students will take a 1 - 3 credit hour course, which will include portfolio, Dreamweaver exposure.

- "Interfolio" is another option through a private provider -- fee is \$5 each time the portfolio is sent. Interfolio would need to be "branded" for about \$3,000 so each sent portfolio is identified with a WMU logo. Dean Wiener indicated his office can probably front half of this cost and suggested GSAC consider making up the other half.

Workshops, Scholarships, Misc. Information:

- Dissertation workshop - WMU cannot offer the 5 full day program with outside consultants this year since the cost runs about \$1,500 per student. Instead, students can schedule 2-hour conferences with outside consultant and can meet with Marianne DiPierro for Writing Consultation.
- Thurgood Marshall Scholarships - 22 awarded (80 applied, 40 were qualified.)
- Other scholarships - 40 students selected.
- Kingship - 3 students selected; teaching is a requirement.
- Research Review scheduled for April 4 at 2:00 pm.
- Dissertation Awards - no service requirement, funding to write dissertation; 4 awards given.
- Application for student travel due Monday (03.17.03) - 74 names have been submitted; 20 will be selected.
- Training / Orientation dates: ITA Aug. 18-22, Domestic Aug. 20-22, Depts. Aug. 25-27.
- Revision to DA/GA appointment letters - this has been done to make the letter more of a legal contract, with a start / end date and with time (hours) expectations.
- DA Position Deadline - a date of April 15 for replies to offer letters has been set so departments have a chance to make an offer to an alternate.
- Dames, Fisher, Don Thompson, Frostic Scholarships - no interest, so no scholarships!
- Budget Impact - College Deans have conferred to make the impact as minimal as possible.
- NSF Granting - WMU is applying (Life Sciences, BTR Park). Currently, \$5 billion in grant money is available and this is being increased to \$10 billion. Any grant proposal written by faculty should include DA/GA funding. Per Craig Thomas, Bob Miller will present on BTR Park 03.25.03.
- Provisional Passage (per Marcel) - for another graduate student on Faculty Senate; Jennifer Smith will fill this position.

Report on Lobby Day 02.20.03:

Reported by Jessica Baby, Doris Dirks

- A Fact Sheet and Proposed Language (Tax Exempt Bill) were provided to GSAC members.
- Seven visits to Congressional staff included Stabenow, Levin, Upton and Conner offices.
- Doris Dirks is coordinating the committee to find a sponsor for Tax Exemption for Graduate Student Stipends Bill.
- The tax-exempt issue momentum was started by one student; demonstrates how one person can make a difference. A lot of networking has developed as a result of this issue. It is likely to be a long-term project. A key person (Neal Penney) has been identified for support.

Report from the Chair:

Reported by Marcel Brouwers

- Legislative visitors to WMU on 02.17-03 included Fred Upton.
- Meeting with Dr. Litynski - 02.19.03
 - \$15,000 Research & Travel Grant is a one-time allocation, not a perennial grant.
 - "Graduate Student Appreciation Week" is supported by Dr. Litynski (April 7-11).
 - Visit to Stadium Drive Apartments has not occurred yet.
 - Seelye Center "plans have changed" -- will be open to students. Marcel is still investigating whether some funding is coming from student fees.
- Presidential Search Committee - Marcel wrote Betty Kocher and verified letter has been received. GSAC message of an academic president versus corporate has been conveyed. Letter from Angela Sillmon, student rep. indicates "lots of good candidates".
- GSAC members expecting to leave the committee should start recruiting replacements.

GSAC Sub-Committees:

Web Committee:

Marcel Brouwers reported that everything is working. Visits per week: approx. 300 - 500.

Craig Thomas spoke on the importance of portfolios and offered to add a survey to the site to gauge interest in portfolio workshops. Jessica Baby will help publicize the survey.

Public Relations:

Reported by Jessica Baby

- Samples of a button-down shirt with embroidered logo were presented to GSAC members. A motion by Jessica to approve the logo was passed.
- A printed t-shirt logo with a centennial theme, "Protecting Tradition, Promoting Tomorrow" was approved by the GSAC body.
- Plans for Graduate Student Appreciation Week are in progress; still seeking entertainment for the Wednesday event (04.09.03 from 4-6 PM).

University Assessment Committee - no meeting this month.

General Education Subcommittee:

Reported by Craig Tollini - Subcommittee plans to send objectives to those who teach. The big goal is to have an assessment to measure objectives by next year.

Legislative Affairs Committee:

Reported by Jessica Baby

- Letters to legislators should be faxed since mail takes six weeks to be delivered.
- The letter to Gov. Granholm did not go out.
- Lansing Higher Education testimony - 04.02.03 per Christopher Donovan, students should sit in on this session. Legislative Affairs is writing a script, which students can refer to in the event they are asked to testify.

Research Policies Council

Reported by Craig A. Thomas

- A summary of the 03.13.03 meeting was distributed to GSAC members.
- Dr. Don Thompson presented a National Science Foundation report to the committee.

Technology and Operations Council:

Per Raluca Gera, meeting was cancelled. Per Marcel, a new e-mail policy by the council is the same as he has been following.

Campus Planning and Finance Council

Reported by Greg Waltz

- A summary of the 02.18.03 meeting (and subcommittee meeting) was distributed.
- Transportation and Parking Subcommittee met on 03.11.03.
 - Michigan Ave. construction has been put on hold.
 - After 5 meetings, the group has a proposal ready.
 - The biggest issue was the engineering campus. Shuttle busses will run every 10-15 min.
 - \$50 raise in parking passes.
 - Metro is trying to add bus services but needs 52 riders per hour.
- Campus Planning
 - Deferred maintenance on Kohrman Hall.
 - \$45 per semester student fee to help pay for maintenance.
 - WMU tries to use mostly in-state contractors.

GFAC:

Per Marcel, a decision was made at GFAC regarding the "conference issue" -- it would not be fair to make a change mid-year. Thus, the earlier approved limit of \$300 up to \$1800 will be used. Since \$16,000 has been spent and \$14,000 is left, budgeting is not an issue.

Reported by Raluca Gera

GSP in SA

- Nine students are requesting funds to attend a conference in St. Louis. This group previously was approved for \$525. Motion by Raluca to allocate \$1275 was seconded and passed.

Masters of Social Work

- \$725 was requested but GFAC voted to give them zero. Motion by Raluca to allocate nothing was seconded and passed.

International Festival

- Request was for \$2500 for International Festival, which will include 20 student organizations. Motion by Raluca to allocate \$2500 was seconded and passed.

Sociology Graduate Student Organization

- Request was for \$495; GFAC approved \$275. Motion by Raluca to approve \$275 was seconded and passed.

Marmalade Dog Event

- Request for \$1400 for Bernhard Ballroom room rental for weekend gaming event. Raluca moved to allocate \$1400 for this event; motion seconded and passed.

Geosciences

- Request for \$1990 for annual field trip to four-corners area of U.S. -- GFAC proposes \$1500 for approval. A motion to approve \$1500 was passed.

Hong Kong Night

- WSA has approved \$2500 for this event; request is for \$2600 from GSAC. GFAC proposes \$2000. A motion to approve \$2000 was passed.

Old and Continuing Business:

- Per Marcel, the film entitled "THIS Obedience" will be presented on April 8 during Graduate Appreciation Week.

New Business:

- NAGPS conference in Cincinnati is scheduled for 04.04 – 04.06.03. Let Marcel know if you plan to attend.
- Research / Teaching Awards 04.03.03.
- Graduate Student Appreciation 'Dinner' 04.09.03. Jessica is still seeking a band.
- GSAC Dinner 04.11.03
- Per Jessica, pick up shirts at Marcel's office so you can wear them during Grad Appreciation Week.

General Announcements and Briefs:

- Next meeting of GFAC - 4.10.03
- Next meeting of GSAC - 4.11.03

The meeting was adjourned.