

**Graduate Student Advisory Committee**  
Meeting Minutes  
Connable Board Room, The Bernhard Center  
03.19.04

**Representatives Present:** Marcel Brouwers (chair), Jessica Băby (CECP), Craig Tollini (Sociology), Paul Chen (Econ), Nalaka Kodituwakku (Physics), Jennifer Smith (English), Nate Michon (Comp Rel), Jay Cawthorne (PPSE), Peter Voice (Geo), Kurt Hayden (IME), Greg Waltz (Bio), Raghunath Rao.Thridandapani (material science), Philip Ngali (BLS), Jonathan Chesman (Music), Todd Ide (English), Antonio Zaldivar (History)

**Guests:** Dean Bill Wiener (Graduate College), Paula Boodt (Grad College),

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

**Introductions**

**Minutes approved**

**Report from the Chair - Marcel**

1. PSAC
  - a. The Committee had a discussion on intellectual diversity. Some students felt that they were being treated unfairly by professors commenting on their political beliefs in the classroom.
  - b. Dr. Bailey stated to the students that students come to college to be challenged and they should be hearing comments and questions that challenge them to think even though they disagree with what is being said.
  - c. The last PSAC meeting was canceled for the year since there “was nothing to talk about” according to the WSA representatives.
2. ICES Meeting with Dr. Delene, Dr. Wiener, and Dr. Stroh
  - a. Dr. Delene noted that the ICES system for faculty and TA evaluation is still under assessment, therefore there are not going to be any changes at this time to the process.
  - b. Marcel provided a handout to the membership on the Breakdown of the ICES system in regards to Graduate Assistant and the Faculty evaluation relationship.
    - i. The information can be found at <http://www.wmich.edu/poapa/ICES/preceduralprotocol.pdf>
3. Faculty Senate
  - a. Dr. Bailey reported that the university is going to face some very tough times ahead while Athletics reported that they are doing very well.
  - b. RPC reported that the Faculty Recognition website is now up and running, however there was no mention of whether or not students’ recognition will be included on this page as well.
  - c. The Dean’s List will now be applied to students during Summer I and II
  - d. The International Education Council’s Role Statement passed
4. Proclamation for Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week (GPSAW)
  - a. Dr. Bailey issued a proclamation declaring April 5-9 the official Week for GPSAW.
  - b. Unionization Sub-committee
    - i. Completed tour of GSO’s by meeting with the Sociology students at the end of February
    - ii. Craig noted that GSAC should continue these meetings with students and Dr. Wiener should continue to meet with students as well.
    - iii. Any GSO that would like to schedule meetings should contact Jessica

**Report from the Dean – Dr. Wiener**

1. The Budget
  - a. Currently the Graduate College’s tuition account is 1.7 million dollars in the red and the Graduate Assistants’ salary account is .5 million in the red.
  - b. 165 Doctoral Associateships were requested, however 154 can be allocated to the departments. The 154 Associateships is up from 147 last year.
  - c. The administration has been very helpful and not pressured the Graduate College to cut GA’s
    - i. Dr. Wiener proposes that in order to decrease the deficit, graduate tuition should be increased.

1. Essentially the University would be taxing all graduate students to support the appointees and better the University.
  2. There is a potential increase of 12% for in-coming in-state graduate students.
  3. The Governor's deal with President Bailey regarding tuition did not include out-of-state, international or graduate student tuition.
- ii. The other proposal is to cut all GA's in half, which is not something Dr. Wiener or the Provost want to do since it would greatly affect the University.
- d. Marcel presented the membership with a chart of proposed fees for next year. His analysis showed that up to 40% of the money in-coming graduate students will have to pay is due to class, registration and one-time entrance fees.
  - e. A discussion ensued as to whether or not all graduate students should pay for the assistantships of the few. Is this taxation without representation?
    - i. Faculty on the RPC committee are not happy about increasing graduate student tuition but feel that RA are extremely important.
    - ii. Also most of the assistantships that would be cut at TA's and there might be huge implications concerning the quality of undergraduate education.
    - iii. Jay motioned that Marcel, with the consultation of the Graduate College and others pertinent to the discussion, should address formally serious concerns about raising graduate student tuition whereby a large portion of graduate students would be paying to support a small number of graduate assistantships, and furthermore, whereby undergraduate students are benefiting from the assistantships and are not being asked to contribute to the cost of those educational services.
      1. seconded by Jen
      2. motioned passed unanimously

#### **GSAC Sub-Committees and University Councils**

1. Web Committee – Marcel
  - a. Still there
2. Public Relations - Jessica
  - a. Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week Reception will be held on April 7, 2004 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. in the South Ballroom of the Bernhard Center. T-shirts will be given away and the Butter fat Trio will be playing.
    - i. Posters and information will be sent to GSAC representatives via email.
3. General Education Sub-Committee - Craig
  - a. The Committee did not meet
  - b. Marcel did talk to the President about his concerns with undergraduates teaching general education courses.
4. Legislative Affairs – Jessica
  - a. The NAGPS Midwest regional conference will be on March 26- 28, 2004 in Bloomington, IL
  - b. There was not interest on behalf of the membership to attend the conference, but GSAC will be sending representatives to the NAGPS national conference in November.
  - c. Further discussion was held on whether or not GSAC should continue to support NAGPS. The consensus is that, YES, the Committee should continue to support the organization, but should continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the Organization.
5. University Councils
  - a. Research Policies Council – Kurt
    - i. Dr. Wiener presented to the Committee on a study done on doctoral students over the past 20 years concerning retention.
      1. WMU's attrition rate for doctoral students is 35%, whereas the national average is 24-28%.
      2. This information will be able to be viewed by the public only after the WMU administration has viewed it. This information has the potential to harm WMU in the public relations department.
    - ii. Dr. Wiener also asked the Committee to investigate professors who advise the theses/dissertations of more than 15 graduate students at one time.
      1. Incentives should be given to faculty for directing a thesis or dissertation.
    - iii. The Committee also discussed Indirect Costs for Grants
      1. Indirect costs are costs for overhead in a project
      2. The revised breakdown is as follows
        - a. General Fund, \$600,000 (~20%)
        - b. Department, 10%
        - c. College, 25%

- d. V.P. of Research, 30%
    - e. Research Pool, 10%
    - f. PI, 10%
- b. Technology and Operations Committee – Peter
  - i. Assessment of Technology Subcommittee report
    - 1. Subcommittee felt that charges as given by the Senate Faculty were too vague.
    - 2. Technology is difficult to define—chalk and chalkboard is just as valid a form of classroom technology as are specialized furniture arrangements.
    - 3. Designing an assessment tool is impossible considering the wide ranges of technological use and technological skill university wide.
    - 4. Also, we already bombard the students with lengthy surveys to evaluate coursework—do we really need more surveys?
    - 5. A report of the subcommittee's conclusions will be given at the March meeting.
  - ii. Report from Vice President for Information Technology and CIO Viji Murali
    - 1. Discussion of Student Information Services System
      - a. Formation of New Committee—includes two graduate students (Ms. Ralucca Gera and Mr. Peter Voice) as well as undergraduate students (2 WSA representatives who are yet to be determined), staff, faculty and administration representatives.
      - b. ISIS Committee will oversee implementation of the system and will test new features as they come on line. The ISIS system has 11 modules and their implementation will be staggered over the next two years.
- c. Graduate Studies – Jen and Marcel
  - i. Research Tools – language on which research tools are adequate needs to be clarified in the Graduate Student handbook.
  - ii. Discussion on when a student should file their “Program of Study”
    - 1. Masters students should file by the time they reach 12 credit hours
    - 2. Ph.D. students should file by the time they reach 18 credit hours
      - a. Advisors will have to be more active in advising students in order for this to work.
  - iii. The Graduate Faculty Status proposal passed
  - iv. The WMU Honor Code proposal is being revised for GSC approval at the next meeting.
- d. Campus Planning – Greg
  - i. Future layoffs will not be anyone who has been placed on ¾ time and no new ¾ positions from fulltime will be created.
  - ii. McCracken chemistry labs may get updated. The old part will be torn down and an addition will be placed onto the 1967 wing.
    - 1. There is a possibility that trailers will have to be used in place of missing classrooms.
  - iii. Budget Model for Dr. Judith Bailey
    - 1. The plan is to keep moving on as a research university (Doctoral) with some pace of progression.
    - 2. Focus on first year students and providing a good experience in all aspects of college life.
    - 3. Student access at an affordable price.
    - 4. Fees changes for Summer I and II, and other Fees may be developed for the Fall, but no student will be hit with a Gen Ed. Fee
    - 5. Graduate student may not follow the 2.4% increase. Graduate tuition remission will be budgeted in to the General Fund so students will not lose the remission, however, if academics and buildings need further financial support then graduate student remission may take a hit.
  - iv. Construction update
    - 1. No road construction at the end of East Campus until 2005.
    - 2. Miller Auditorium construction is over budget and is on hold.
  - v. Environmental Statement
    - 1. The University will not sign the environmental mission statement due to the way it is written.
- e. International Education Council
  - i. New Program in Global and International Studies
  - ii. Haneicke Institute for International and Area Studies
    - 1. Discussion on the Hiring of International faculty.
    - 2. This is hard however with new VISA restrictions.
  - iii. Office of International Affairs

1. Potential partnerships in Egypt
  2. Significant decline in international student application
    - a. All countries are down except Singapore
    - b. Homeland Security poses a problem
    - c. Application process for International students is also very difficult.
    - d. Would it be possible for International students to begin flight training at WMU?
  3. International Festival is March 23, 2004, Bernhard Center
  - iv. American Council of Education (ACE) Internationalization Collaborative Profile
    1. WMU joined this council
6. GFAC
- a. HGSO
    - i. Asked for \$1,000 for speakers coming in April (Dr. Hilgarth, Dr. Johnston, Dr. Friedmann and Dr. Boutlett)
    - ii. Since GSAC awarded the HGSO \$1,500 already for speakers, the committee can only give the organization \$500.00 based upon the GFAC policies that no organization can receive more than \$2,000.00 for events each academic year.
    - iii. Kurt made the motion to allocated \$500.00 to HGSO, Craig seconded.
    - iv. Discussion
      1. Should GSAC give the full amount, despite its policies, since the Committee will have a role over for next year.
      2. The consensus what no, the Committee should not. The rollover will go to the Graduate College for the Research and Travel Fund.
      3. The President of HGSO did not think that the smaller allocation would place too much hardship on bringing the speakers to campus.
    - v. The Committee voted, 14 approved, 1 nay
  - b. MUGS
    - i. Requested \$500.00 for speakers and \$200.00 for an awards ceremony.
    - ii. GFAC proposed that the Committee give \$500.00 for the speaker and nothing for the awards ceremony since it is too specific to the organization.
    - iii. Kurt made the motion to allocate \$500.00 to MUGS for the speakers, Jay seconded.
    - iv. Unanimous vote.
7. AABAC – Doris
- a. An Academic Affairs Budget Committee was struck by the President to discuss possible budget cuts in Academic Affairs.
  - b. Doris is one of three students who sit on the committee.
  - c. Faculty have interesting ideas on what needs to be cut. Doris could not share what these ideas are since the proceeding are confidential.
  - d. She did say that GSAC should make its own shopping list of what the Committee thinks would be best to cut from the budget.
  - e. An open forum to hear the AABAC's proposal will be at the Fetzer Center on March 24, 2004 at 4:00 p.m.

#### **Old and Continuing Business**

1. PFF/Interfolio
  - a. With the new Banner system, the University will be introducing Webfolio to students. This may make Interfolio obsolete
  - b. Further assessment of GSAC, the Graduate College and Career and Student Employment Services relationship with Interfolio will be done.

#### **New Business**

1. GSAC Recruitment for next year
  - a. If you are leaving please find a replacement
2. Graduate Student Tutoring
  - a. Jessica announced that the Fraternity she advises is having academic problems. If you are interested in helping out as a tutor, please let Jessica know.

#### **General Announcements**

1. GFAC meeting – April 16
2. Next GSAC meeting – April 16
3. End of the Year dinner – April 16

#### **Discussion at Roadhouse Adjournment**