

GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
November 12, 1999
Bernhard Centre, Connable Board Room (Board of Trustees)

MINUTES

Representatives Present: Trisha Basford (Chemistry), Patricia Clark (Biology), Ron Coleman (Sociology), Doris Dirks (History), Jessica Gardner (Music), Jessica Grace (History), Kathy Hassen (Physician Assistant), Kurt Hayden (Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering), Matthew Hollrah (English), So Mei Khoo (Finance and Commercial Law), Tim Kuehnlein (Political Science), Mary Lucas (Communication), Francena Purchase-Owens (Teaching, Learning and Leadership), Courtney Thomas (Construction Engineering, Materials Engineering, & Industrial Design), Rodger Zanny (Computer Science)

Guests: Julie Scrivener (The Graduate College), Dr. Michael Pritchard (The Graduate College), Rob Engblom (WSA), Amy Nelson (Student Affairs), Elton Weintz (GSAC Past-Chair)

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. GSAC Committee members introduced themselves.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of October 8, 1999 GSAC meeting were approved.

Patricia Clark noted that the College of Arts and Science TA mentors meet regularly and perhaps an invitation to GSAC meetings should be extended to them. GSAC will contact Dean Jorgens office to get a list of TA mentors.

III. Report from the Chair

A. Dirks met with Dr. Floyd twice this month; once with other student leaders and a second time one-on-one. The Presidential Advisory Committee's goal is to facilitate Western's mandate of being a "student centered research university." This includes extending the library and Rec Centre hours and

working towards a student centre on campus. Dirks discussed graduate student issues in her meeting with Dr. Floyd: concerns about the Science Studies program and the proposed Ph.D. program in Materials Engineering; parking; playgrounds demolished in at Goldsworth Valley Apartments; Writing Skills Centre support for grad students; health care and unionizing for/of grad students. Suggested new topics to be discussed with Dr. Floyd: sidewalk needed leading to Moore Hall; discount for student organizations renting rooms in the Bernhard Centre; branch campus grad student support.

- B.** Dirks has been attending Western Student Association (WSA) Executive Cabinet meetings representing GSAC. Dirks has also recently become a senator on the WSA senate representing the Graduate College.
- C.** Dirks reported that the Supreme Court had heard a case about the “constitutionality” of mandatory student fees. A decision will be returned in the spring.

IV. University Councils, GSAC Sub-Committees and WSA Reports

- A.** Admissions, Financial Aid, and Student Affairs Council: Clark - The university is Y2K ready. Working on program system development for 2000-2001. Policy of minimum 2.0 GPA for undergrads to be instituted.
- B.** Budget and Finance Council: Dirks - After the last Faculty Senate meeting, the University Budget and Finance Council was amalgamated with the Campus Planning Council. As usual, the meeting was mind-numbingly boring. University endowments were discussed.
- C.** Campus Planning Council: Werkema - Meeting was canceled.
- D.** Faculty Senate: Dirks - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day activities were discussed. There is a website for the week's events. The Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board made a presentation and fielded questions.
- E.** Graduate Awards and Fellowships: Hsieh - The committee made the first round of selections. Another will be made shortly.
- F.** Graduate Studies Council: Dirks - Electronic theses and dissertations are a hot topic for the Council right now. Graduate enrollments figures were discussed; there are approximately 3,000 on-campus grads to 1,500 off-campus.
- G.** Regional Education Council: Hayden - The search for the Dean of Continuing Education will occur after the searches for the Provost and the Dean of Engineering are completed. Pay changes have been approved for instructors at regional centres (due to doubling of continuing-ed course fees). Regional Centre directors will be meeting with the Provost to map out a five year plan.
- H.** Research Policies Council: Zanny - Discussion of Intellectual Property policy. Discussion revolved around the role of funding: if one is not directly funded for the work, one should retain the rights to the work (and TA/GA research would not be included in “direct funding”). Ongoing discussion around the issue concerning data generated during key research; if the primary researcher must give the information to Western and the university is to maintain the data to protect Western's and the researcher's interests.
- I.** NCA Re-Accreditation: Fredrick - Process whereby the University's programs are assessed and “graded.” There is a web site. Solicitation from the committee for student input on the reports complied for the Re-Accreditation process.

GFAC - Dirks Student Organization Budget Requests

The Western Michigan Gamers Guild (WMGG) requested, and the GFAC recommended, \$658. 50 for room rental in the Bernhard Centre for their event, the Marmalade Dog Game Fest. Moved by Jessica Gardner and Seconded by Matt Hollrah. Approved. The Music Graduate Students (MuGS) made requests for event and operational funding. The GFAC recommended \$600 in event funding and \$600 in operational funds. Elton Weintz moved and Ron Coleman seconded. Approved. The Student Music Therapists' Association (SMTA) made a request to send students to the World Congress of Music Therapy in Washington, DC. The GFAC recommended funding the five graduate students @ \$200 each for a total of \$1,000. Moved by Jessica Gardner and seconded by Tricia Basford. Approved.

V. Old Business

A. WSA Senate Positions - Dirks is now a senator on the WSA representing The Graduate College. There are five available spots for graduate students and it would great if we could fill them. Open to GSAC committee members; if we do not get any GSAC interest we'll throw it open to all grad students through the Gradients newsletter.

B. GSAC Calendar and Handbook - the PR sub-committee of the GSAC will review this matter. Volunteers for the sub-committee: Matt Hollrah, Trisha Basford, Ron Coleman, Peter Lawson, Jessica Gardner, Tim Kuehnlein, Elton Weintz and Doris Dirks.

C. Off Campus Students - There has been some discussion concerning the fact that off campus grads do not pay the Student Assessment Fee but receive access to football tickets and receive the newsletter and handbook/calendar. The GSAC will examine whether we should continue to "subsidize" these students through on-campus fees.

D. Academic Fairness Committee has been eliminated through Faculty Senate changes. Dirks spoke to Ms. Judy Walters in the Ombudsman Office. Appeals now go through department chairs and if they are not resolved they go through the Ombudsman Office. Professional Concerns Committee deals with academic appeals and is composed of three faculty members. Discussion generated pertaining to TA's role as "apprentice" faculty and could we have representation on that committee based on this concept? Dirks will pursue this with the appropriate persons.

E. GSAC Ad Hoc Committee - Tim Kuehnlein reported on the two meetings which were held to discuss the administrative structure of the GSAC. Questions revolved around voting rights (1 vote per student versus 1 vote per department); are we a representative body? Are we a democratic institution? "Transparency" issue. Some of these issues were resolved by referring to the GSAC Rules.

VI. New Business

Mark Frederick could not attend this GSAC meeting, but he did contact Kurt Kearcher from the Writing Centre and he has developed several ideas with regard to facilitating aid to graduate student writing. Further discussion on this issue will follow.

VII. Old Business

- A.** December GSAC Meeting - straw poll will be conducted via email to determine best date for most members.
- B.** GSAC end of semester dinner - same as above.
- C.** Dinner with President Floyd - RSVP to Dirks as Dr. Floyd's secretary needs numbers before the end of the winter term. The dinner will be February 1, at 6:00 p.m. in the Gilmore House.
- D.** Cawthorne, Rumega and Dirks will be representing GSAC at the annual meeting at the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students in Columbus, Ohio, November 17-21.
- E.** The Fall issue of the Gradients newsletter will be printed and mailed out shortly.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.