

Graduate Student Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Connable Board Room, The Bernhard Center
10-10-03

Representatives Present: Marcel Brouwers (chair), Jay Cawthome (PPSE), Jessica Baby (CECP), Craig Tollini (Sociology), Debbie Glowacki (OT), Nate Michon (Comp Rel), Paul Chen (Econ), Erin Huskey (English), Jennifer Smith (English), Peter Voice (Geosciences), Alison Karwan (CECP), Nancy Greer-Williams (TLL), Doris Dirks (TLL), Jonathan Chesman (Music), Sean Butterfield (Music), Rodger Zanny (CS), David Black (Anthro), Sankar Shanmugam (Construction E), Nalaka Kodituwakku (Physics), Tom Owiti (FCL)

Guests: Paula Boodt (Grad College), Janice Quakenbush (Student Affairs)

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

Approval of the minutes from 9-12-03 – unanimous

Report from the Dean, Dr. Wiener (not present)

- a. Marcel reported on behalf of Dr. Wiener
 - The faculty senate passes the accelerated bachelors/masters program and the annual graduate student review process with little resistance.

Report from the Chair

- a. Meeting with Dr. Bailey
 - Dr. Bailey noted that the GSAC handbook look great.
 - AAUP contract
 1. Faculty will receive a 1% raise starting in January, and graduate students will receive the same raise.
 - Financial Aid for doctoral associates
 1. The financial aid department did not calculate the correct stipend amounts for doctoral associates. The office is now asking for the associates to repay that money. The graduate college intervened in the process and asked the financial aid office to send an extensive letter to the associates explaining the situation and inform students that the money owed back to the university will be taken out of next semester's stipends.
 2. Jay mentioned that the financial aid problem might have been caused due to the late appointments this year and the increase in tuition remission.
- b. GSAC resolution
 - The members voted on the resolution Marcel presented to the membership at the 9-12-03 meeting.
 - Marcel edited the previous version of the resolution and presented the following text to the membership:

Whereas, the Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) represents all of Western Michigan University's graduate student population to the administration;

Whereas, nearly 20% of the University's population consists of graduate and professional students;

Whereas, the Western Student Association (WSA) is often viewed as representing the entire student population, their focus is on the undergraduate population;

Be it hereby resolved that the GSAC be recognized as the leading representative body for graduate students and be included in all functions, alongside the WSA, where representation of all WMU students is desired and promoted.

- Jessica asked to whom the resolution needed to be presented to if GSAC passed it. Marcel noted that he would present the resolution to Dr. Wiener and ask for his opinion as to whom the resolution should be given to for approval.
- Jay motioned to accept the resolution as written and to follow-up with Dr. Wiener and WSA as to the resolution's content
 1. Rodger seconded the motion
 2. The motion was passed unanimously
- c. SAF subcommittee of the WSA
 - At the WSA meeting on Wednesday, the membership approved a subcommittee that will look at the fee and allocation of student assessment fees
 - Marcel made a motion to the WSA membership to have a graduate student as a co-chair on the sub-committee, the motion failed.
 - The chair of the subcommittee, a WSA member, will begin with representatives from Keystone Leadership Society, Campus Activities Board, GSAC and Student Activities and Leadership programs to develop membership for the SAF sub-committee.

University Sub-Committees and University Councils

- a. Web-Committee – list-serv should be up and running, but isn't
- b. Public Relations
 - Homecoming is tomorrow, October 11th
 - Jessica handed out an informational sheet for the parade containing times to arrive at the set-up place and how to get there.
 - Kurt constructed a t-shirt cannon and will be shooting off 100 shirts
 1. GSAC received special dispensation from Student Activities and the City of Kalamazoo to use the cannon.
 - Century Buick donated a Sierra Pick-up truck to GSAC to use during the parade
 - Jessica encouraged all members to attend
- d. University Assessment – did not meet
- e. Legislative
 - There will be an informational forum for students to ask questions of the City Commissioner candidates on October 22, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the Fetzer center.
 - There are nine candidates for the city commission
- f. University Councils
 - Research Policies Council
 1. The University is leaning toward working more with industry than the government
 - i. Research teams seem to get more research done when funded by private industry than the government
 2. To increase research more graduate students are needed.
 3. The AAUP hurts research by not providing incentive packages for faculty who conduct research.
 - Technology and Operations Council – did not meet
 - Graduate Studies Council
 1. The Graduate College will now need to ask departments for the number of assistantships they will need for the following year in November

- i. The new process of appointing graduate assistants requires the Graduate College to know months in advance how many assistantships to plan for the coming academic year
 - 2. This year WMU graduated 86 doctorate students
 - Campus Planning and Finance Committee
 - International Education Committee
 - 1. This committee will meet for the first time next week
 - g. Graduate Financial Allocations Committee
 - Association of Graduate English Students (AGES)
 - 1. \$200.00 for operational budget
 - 2. \$100.00 for a workshop
 - 3. \$2000.00 for honorarium – Speaker event next semester (poet)
 - 4. Jay made a motion to allocate AGES \$2300.00
 - 5. Nancy seconded the motion
 - 6. The allocation vote was unanimous
 - African Student Association
 - 1. The organization asked for \$4000.00 for their African Nite
 - 2. GSAC can only allocate up to \$2000.00 for any one organization’s events and operational budgets
 - 3. Jen motioned that GSAC allocate the maximum amount of \$2000.00 to the African Student Association
 - 4. Jay seconded the motion
 - 5. The motion passes unanimously
 - International Worship (non-denominational)
 - 1. Since 1998 International Worship has provided Thanksgiving dinner for 200 International students. They also sponsor a speaker for the dinner. This year the speaker will focus on the history of Thanksgiving and why it is a big deal for people in the United States.
 - 2. International Worship requested \$2500.00, GSAC can only fund up to \$2000.00
 - 3. Nancy motioned to allocate International Worship \$2000.00.
 - 4. Jen seconded the motion
 - 5. The vote was unanimous
 - h. MLK Committee
 - Doris and Angela were not there to report

Old and Continuing Business

- a. PFF/Interfolio
 - The interfolio website is up and running. Check it out at www.wmich.edu/grad
 - PFF – funding from the government is close. The Graduate College will find out soon whether they received the grant money or not.
- b. Tax-exempt campaign
 - GSAC members will be going to Washington D.C. to lobby on tax exemption for graduate student stipends, grants, and fellowships
 - A bill concerning the issue will be introduced soon.
- c. GSAC gift to the University
 - The gift will be razed in late October
 - Dr. Bailey might attend the revealing ceremony
- d. GSAC Sponsored event - Slavery artifacts
 - Nancy reported that the Middle Passage and African American History Museum exhibit features slave artifacts from the 19th century. Nancy reported that she has been working

with the Walker Institute on bringing the exhibit to WMU. It was decided after much discussion that the exhibit would be held on the third floor of Waldo library. GSAC and the Walker Institute will handle publicity for the event separately. The Walker institute will feature a week of events surrounding the museum. GSAC will feature two panel discussions on slavery and its residual effects, and a look at gender, race, ethnic, and sexual orientation issues on campus.

Nancy has planned a reception for members of the University and local community on November 1st. GSAC members should attend.

A motion was made by Rodger to fund \$3,000.00 for the exhibit, all housing costs for the Pettys and the Museum reception on November 1st; the amount should total \$4,000.00. Erin seconded the motion.

- NAGPS national conference in Washington D.C. – 11/5/03 – 11/9/03
 1. Marcel, Doris, Nancy, Kurt and Jessica will be attending the conference
 2. The conference will include a lobby day where graduate students from all over the nation will be pushing for the tax exemption campaign

New Business

- a. Unionization
 - Marcel reported that he had been receiving calls from students regarding the issue of unionization
 - A motion was made to strike a sub-committee on unionization, the motion was seconded
 - Discussion was held as to whether graduate students would participate in a movement for unionization. Some members mentioned that graduate students at WMU seemed to be pretty apathetic and would not participate in a movement such as unionization. Other members noted that graduate students in their department were already discussing the issue and would get involved in a unionization campaign. Jay mentioned that the Graduate School would love for graduate students to have a contract; they could then provide or deny services based on a legal contract.
 - The motion passed with one nay vote
 - Marcel will be a de facto member of the committee in order to establish the first meeting for the sub-committee
 - Six members of GSAC were interested on sitting on the committee
- b. Photos and Bios
 - Members were reminded to have their picture taken for the website
- d. Habitat for Humanity
 - Members were reminded to volunteer for the Centennial Habitat for Humanity project. Available build dates are November 8 and 14 2003.

General Announcements and Briefs

- a. Next GFAC meeting – November 14, 2003
- b. Next GSAC meeting – November 14, 2003

Open discussion on the “State of Graduate Schools” will be held at the Roadhouse following the conclusion of the agenda in the Connable Board meeting

The meeting was adjourned at the Road House.