

THE GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Friday, September 8, 2000
Bernhard Center, Connable Board Room

MINUTES

Representatives Present: Jessica Baby (History), Trisha Basford (Chemistry), Tom Brignall (Sociology), Marcel Brouwers (English), Jay Cawthorne (Paper and Printing Sciences and Engineering), Sarah Dempsey (Communication), Doris Dirks (History), Apollos Goyol (Educational Leadership), Nancy Greer-Williams (Communication), Kurt Hayden (Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering), Sabbir Hossain (Physics), Kelly Jackson (Marketing), Jill Jepsen (Art), Dawn Keller (Accountancy), Tim Kuehnlein (Political Science), Peter Lawson (Anthropology), Francena Purchase-Owens (Educational Leadership), Julie Stahlhut (Biology), Tim Williams (Music), Danielle Wright (Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology), Rodger Zanny (Computer Science)

Guests: Paula Boodt (The Graduate College), Amy Nelson (Student Affairs), Heidi Solberg Viar (History), Chad True (WSA), Elton Weintz (GSAC Chair Emeritus), Dr. William Wiener (The Graduate College)

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

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

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the August 25, 2000 GSAC meeting were presented.

III. PRESENTATIONS

On behalf of the History Graduate Student Association, Jessica Baby challenged other graduate student organizations to competitive events. Thus far the

History graduate students have held competitive events with the Political Science Graduate Student Association and the Medieval Institute in both softball and soccer. The objective of the challenge, Baby commented, is to foster greater camaraderie between departments and graduate students. Baby may be reached at <jessyl10@aol.com>.

As Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) Advisor, Paula Boodt informed GSAC members about the Graduate Studies Awareness Week beginning October 16. There will be a Graduate Program open house on October 18 in the Bernhard Center with all university departments being represented. The objective is to provide the greater Kalamazoo community, alumni and undergraduates as well as prospective graduate students a forum in which to learn more about graduate educational opportunities at Western Michigan University. Boodt also solicited ideas from GSAC members about how the university might develop recruitment and retention of graduate students at Western Michigan University.

As Senior Associate Dean, Dr. William Wiener outlined a White Paper currently being prepared by the Graduate Studies Council. The White Paper is intended to be a thorough articulation of various academic, financial and social programs deemed vital to the development of graduate education at Western Michigan University. Areas of graduate education addressed in the White Paper include: graduate financial support, the number of doctoral associateships, recruitment, enrollment and retention, diversity, general academic environment (climate), program evaluations, the work load of teaching assistants, academic standing policies, continuous enrollment policy, and regional/distance educational opportunities. A number of issues were raised by GSAC members concerning health insurance benefits, the quality and quantity of graduate student housing, dual graduate degree programs, and the use of social security numbers as student identification numbers. Wiener assured GSAC members that health insurance benefits were a primary aspect of the White Paper. While the issue of housing was not included in the existing draft, it would be included as an issue under environmental concerns. Dual programs and student identification numbers were discussed in general by the forum and suggested as items to be included in the White Paper as well.

Wiener also addressed concerns among GSAC members about the discontinuation of red cards and WMU Bookstore discount policy for graduate assistants and associates. Wiener stressed that bookstore policy is distinct from Graduate College policy. Both the Graduate College and the bookstore, however, have worked cooperatively to streamline the process of providing the benefit. The present policy is under evaluation and subject to change, he concluded. Concerning the specifics of a stricter discount policy, Wiener stated that he would have to inquire and report back at the next GSAC meeting. He also suggested that a GSAC resolution concerning the red card policy may be appropriate.

IV. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reported that roughly 8,000 calendar/planners were distributed to students at the 2000-2001 Bronco Bash. Planners were in the process of being sent to all graduate students currently enrolled at the university. The cost for sending the calendars is estimated at \$3,000.

Regarding the Student/Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, the Chair solicited a volunteer to serve as an advisory member for a three year appointment.

Regarding CommUniverCity, the Chair distributed tickets to GSAC members. The Chair reported that reserved tickets issued by GSAC had been mailed out. Volunteers for greeting people at the GSAC tailgate prior to the game were solicited by the Chair.

V. UNIVERSITY COUNCILS

Western Student Association (Chad True):

True reported on the WSA's continued interest and involvement in Kalamazoo's zoning ordinance. True stressed concern for the impact that single family ordinances would have on the availability of student housing at Western Michigan University. It was also announced that WSA is trying to arrange for alternative banking providers (cash machines) on campus.

No other university councils had met prior to the GSAC meeting.

VI. GSAC SUB-COMMITTEES

Webpage Committee (Roger Zanny):

Zanny highlighted that the new GSAC webpage has been created, and he encouraged GSAC members to take a look at it.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Considerable discussion ensued regarding the status of the GSAC budget. Specific questions arose with respect to funding the purchase of CommUniverCity football tickets for the 2000-2001 CommUniverCity. There were also concerns raised about the distribution of funds among existing line items of the budget. The budget was tabled for further Graduate Financial Allocation Committee (GFAC) consideration.

The Chair reported that she would be initiating a revision of the GSAC rules in the near future.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

The Chair raised issues concerning the allocation of graduate student assessment fees to Campus Activities Board (CAB). The Chair advised an inquiry into limiting the funds allocated to CAB.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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