

THE GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Friday, September 7, 2001
Walwood Hall, Walwood Commons

MINUTES

Representatives Present: Abubakar D. Alhassan (Communications), Delwar Ahmed (Geosciences), Daryl Arkwright (Biology), Jessica Baby (History), Marcel Brouwers (English), Doris Dirks (History), Cindy Duda (Music), Rodney Glover (Music), Nancy Greer-Williams (Education Leadership), Toby Johnson (Comparative Religion), Peter Lawson (Anthropology), Alhaj N'jai (Chemistry), Dave Sperry (Speech Pathology and Audiology), Dan Stauffer (Health, Physical Education, and Recreation), Scott Viar (Health, Physical Education, and Recreation), Wanda Viento (School of Social Work), Deborah Wilson (Sociology), Roger Zanny (Computer Science)

Guests: Paula Boodt (The Graduate College), Amy Nelson (Division of Student Affairs), William Weiner (The Graduate College)

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Members of the committee and guests introduced themselves to one another

III. REPORT FROM THE SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN

The senior associate dean reviewed the new health insurance policies and premiums for graduate assistants. He noted that cost to graduate assistants for this insurance is on a sliding scale: 150 dollars for full time and three-quarter time GAs, 225 dollars for two third time GAs, and, 300 dollars for half time GAs. He also stated that coverage is through MegaLife, covers students for one calendar year, and that dependants are quite expensive – 1800 or 1900 dollars. The senior associate dean stated that health care providers will be reviewed each year in order to secure the best rates for graduate assistants. He also mentioned that there is a 75,000 dollar cap on coverage for GAs through this plan, and that Sindecuse Health Center may be consulted when one is injured or ill for references to the most reasonably priced health care facilities. The senior associate dean stated that students who receive appointments for Winter term only may be provided coverage if they pay the university portion of the co-pay.

It was mentioned that an orientation session for returning graduate students might be helpful for making students aware of their options and coverage for health insurance.

The senior associate dean reviewed business from last year regarding proposals brought forth (but not passed) by the Graduate Studies Council, including the proposal to change required GPA from 3.25 to 3.00, the proposal to allow a student's degree program GPA to replace overall GPA in evaluation, and the policy on repeating courses.

The senior associate dean encourage participation by GSAC members in newer issues, including:

- A. Review of Graduate Programs Committee
(An eight person committee aims to profile current department programs)
- B. Academic Policy Taskforce
(A taskforce concerned with the adjusting the continuous enrollment policy and facilitating the transfer of graduate credits from other institutions)
- C. Graduate Certificates
- D. Credits from concurrent graduate/undergraduate programs
- E. Graduate Student Code
 - 1. Due Process
 - 2. Expectations and requirements of departments
 - 3. Training and support
 - 4. Decision - making bodies
 - 5. Health Care
 - 6. Employment security

The senior associate dean mentioned that focus groups might be implemented to deal with issues surrounding research ethics in the university. He also announced that the following assistance is need with these taskforces:

- 1. Two (2) people for the GA/DA Student Compensation taskforce – aiming to compare WMU compensation to 16 peer universities
- 2. One (1) person for the Diversity taskforce – aims to increase minority student population
- 3. One (1) person for the Technology and Virtual Classroom Environments taskforce – aims to investigate current policies on technology and virtual classrooms
- 4. One (1) person for the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation taskforce – aims to increase participation in posting theses and dissertations electronically

Finally, the senior associate dean mentioned that two speakers will be at WMU on October 12th and 3:00 p.m., and encouraged GSAC participation.

IV. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The chair reported that CommUniversity was successful, as was the Graduate and Non-Traditional Student Services Fair.

The chair reported that the University Mission Revision Committee is offering copies of the revised mission and other pertinent information, and that copies are available to those interested.

Regarding GSAC recruitment, the chair reported that efforts were continued over the summer, and that an additional committed might be re-instated to facilitate recruitment of graduate student representatives.

The chair reported that the NASFA Conference, held May 29-31 of 2001 was useful, and announced that the report from the NAGPS Lobby Day and Board Meeting held on June 7-10 is posted on the GSAC website.

The chair reported on a McNair Scholars' Luncheon held recently and also on the Board of Trustees meeting in which the tuition increase was approved.

Regarding the Graduate Assistant Orientation, the chair reported that several GSAC members participated in orientation talks.

Lastly, the chair reported that several data jacks have been installed in university departments for graduate student use.

V. UNIVERSITY COUNCILS AND GSAC SUB-COMMITTEES

Web Page Committee (Roger Zanny)

Zanny reported that the website is in need of maintenance during the coming academic year.

Public Relations Committee (Daryl Arkwright)

Arkwright distributed a new GSAC brochure that informs graduate students of the function of GSAC and encourages participation in the committee.

GFAC (Marcel Brouwers)

At the recommendation of GFAC, GSAC unanimously approved a \$1000.00 budget request from the African Student Association for Africa Week.

Council Appointments

The chair announced that the following assistance is needed for these council appointments:

1. Two (2) persons for the Research Policies Council
2. One (1) person for the Campus Planning Council
3. One (1) person for the Technology and Operations Council

VI. NEW BUSINESS

The Graduate Writing Center

It was announced that the graduate writing center is available for students who desire assistance with writing their theses and dissertations. It is recommended that student contact the center through their thesis/dissertation advisor.

2001-2002 GSAC Budget

GSAC voted unanimously to approve the 2001-2002 budget.

NAGPS National Conference Delegates

The chair announced that members interested in attending the 2001 NAGPS Conference in Tuscon, Arizona from November 7-11 should contact her.

VII. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BRIEFS

The next GSAC meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2001

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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