

Graduate Student Advisory Council
December 10th 2009, 12:00 pm
Blair Hall, Room 3108
General Meeting Minutes

Executive Officers Present: Kate Hale, Amanda Fountain, Meghan Glow, Madeline Landes, Zach Thuring

Advisors Present: Mr. Bill Elliott, Dr. Tina Veale

GA Present: Jiwon Sung

Members Present: Anne Coats, Melissa Helregel, Karlien Lang, Eileen O'Rourke, Jamie Van Allen, Lindsay Wieland, Jeremiah Yokley

I. Outreach Programs

- Project Backpack
 - Zach made a motion to the general members to make *Project Backpack* the outreach program for December and January. Unanimously, members voted to move forward on this project.
 - **Program Overview:** Kate provided members with a recap summary of the project. *Project Backpack* is a program under Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) that provides a backpack full of essential living items, such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, soap, shampoo, and deodorant to children that are in foster care homes. When these children move homes they are only allowed to take the amount of their belongings that will fit into a garbage bag that is provided to them. *Project Backpack* allows for individuals to create a backpack full of these living essentials that the children often leave behind in the rush of moving from home to home. Additionally, these backpacks are meant to give children something more personal in this time in their lives rather than just a black trash bag.
 - **How to Contribute to this Project:** Zack is going to receive a list of the items needed to fill these backpacks from Bridget whom received the list of items from DCFS. When this list becomes available, Zack will e-mail all GSAC members, GSAC Executive Board officers, and graduate coordinators. Please be looking for this list in your e-mail box.
 - If you are interested in becoming a part of this project there are many areas that GSAC can use your help! GSAC is looking for individuals whom can go shopping for these supplies, whom can donate supplies, monetary donations to obtain supplies and backpacks for this project, and to assemble these backpacks.
 - Boxes to drop off item donations or backpacks will be located around campus. A box will be placed in the EIU Graduate School Office in Blair Hall as well as in other various locations on campus within departments, such as the

Elementary/Middle Level/Early Childhood Office. Further drop off locations for items will be sent with the item list.

- Additionally, monetary donation can and box will be available at GSAC's upcoming Finals Crunch Brunch on Sunday December 13th, 2009 if anyone wants to contribute at this time.
- A can will also be located next to these boxes if individuals would rather give a monetary donation to *Project Backpack*.
- Anyone can participate in this project so please speak with faculty members and students within your department and any other individuals on campus that could support GSAC's *Project Backpack*.
- This project will continue until the end of January.
- If you have questions on this project, e-mail a GSAC Officer, Advisor, or member.

II. Once a Month Outreach Programs

- At this GSAC General Meeting, Kate conducted a vote to participate in some form of community outreach program every month. All members present were in favor of moving forward with this program.
- Purpose: The purpose of this program is to set the stage for news exposure to help community members remember what GSAC is and what our organization is about. These events are to help gain support for the graduate students and programs that exist at EIU. Members commented that many community members are not aware EIU offers countless graduate study options. These events will allow for more support and involvement by members of the community for graduate studies at EIU.
- What: These events will be "as they come" type of projects. Every month, GSAC will pick a program or organization to partner with for the month's project. Projects will be finalized at GSAC general meetings. A list of possible outreach programs in the up-coming year will be provided through working with EIU Community Service Director, Rachel Fisher.
- Participation: GSAC members decide to do a project every month over every other month to provide all individuals with a time to contribute their time and resources. With the various schedules that exist, members are not expected to participate in every activity. However, the multiple opportunities to participate in these outreach will hopefully accommodate the schedules of the graduate student population. Specifics on events will be published as available.
- Programs: Tina mentioned that the outreach programs should assist individuals that often utilize and hire members for their organization with graduate degrees. This idea will help GSAC support organizations and assist members of the community that represent the function of graduate education in our society. In such case, Tina mentioned that GSAC approach places that employ individuals with master's degrees and where a master's degree masters.

- Process: Tina and Bill suggested that GSAC approach the directors of these organizations and ask them what we can do to help them and what we can do for them. This idea is in contrast to approaching businesses and community members to tell them what we want to do and if they would like to participate. The goal of this is to introduce members of GSAC as professionals while promoting and representing the entire Graduate Education Program and the idea of graduate study. Members agreed that the outreach activities should be tied to graduate education and studies and we should present ourselves to community members as professionals.
- Timeline: A list of outreach ideas for GSAC to participate in will be compiled by the GSAC Executive Board based off of member's suggestions for activities and a list from Rachel Fisher. After compiling this list, it will be sent to the GSAC general members via e-mail and brought to the next general GSAC meeting in January. If you have an idea for an outreach program, please e-mail or speak to a GSAC Executive Board member, GSAC member, or GSAC Advisor.

III. Student Insurance:

- Bill updated members about the upcoming graduate student insurance meeting on December 15th, 2009 with Dean Augustine, other leaders of the university, and members of the EIU Student Insurance Office. Bill explained that at this meeting, individuals will discuss the current graduate student insurance policy and why it has been set as it is, the potential for revision, and any support needed by the graduate student population to evidence a revision in the current graduate student insurance policy. Bill mentioned he may be sending an e-mail that contains a graduate student survey to gain an idea of the current need and how many individuals this policy currently impacts. Please take a few minutes to respond to the survey if it is in fact distributed and encourage other graduate students to provide feedback. These surveys really do matter and have an impact on the future of the graduate student insurance policy. Results from this meeting will be brought back to members at the next GSAC general meeting in January.

IV. Parking

- Members voted to continue to move forward on the graduate student parking situation. Kate has formed a committee to assist her in drafting a parking proposal that is supported by the research conducted on the parking policies at schools similar in size to EIU and through the agreed upon options to change the student parking situation evidenced by the vote at the last general meeting. Options for revision of the current graduate student parking situation are as followed:
 1. Graduate students that currently hold graduate assistantships have the option to buy a faculty parking sticker on a first-come first-serve basis. Dean Augustine mentioned that a certain number of faculty passes could be set aside for

individuals holding a graduate assistantship and would be distributed on a first come first serve basis

2. Lower the current graduate student parking fee through a price reduction that is equivalent to the difference in dollar amounts from underclassman parking to upperclassman parking.
 3. The Doudna Fine Arts Faculty lot be turned into a Faculty/Graduate student lot. This lot would be open to graduate students that are currently holding graduate assistantships on campus
 4. Increase the number of tickets that could be waived by the parking division for graduate students. This would increase the number of tickets dismissed beyond the first parking ticket received. Often times, graduate students cannot find a place to park and are forced to park in a different lot in order to fulfill their teaching responsibilities.
- Other Parking situation issues:
 - Currently, graduate students holding assistantships that are working between the hours of 2-5 a.m. are being ticketed for parking in the McAfee lot. GSAC would like these students to be given something to put in the window of the vehicle that designates that they are inside McAfee working and are not using the lot to engage in activities at establishments such as Marty's. Additionally, GSAC proposed that a list of names of these students be given to the parking division to let campus security know whom these individuals are and their vehicles that will be parked in that lot.
 - Anyone interested in assisting Kate on the parking committee please contact her at kbhale@eiu.edu or see any GSAC advisor, Executive Board member, or GSAC member.

V. Grad Expo

- GSAC members continued to discuss revamping the EIU Grad Expo in the Spring to a Gala format.
- Suggestions up for discussion:
 - The Grad. Expo would be shorten in length from the current 4 day program to a 2 day program.
 - The event would be a semi-formal event that could offer appetizers, a cash bar, and a silent auction that would follow the Grad Expo awards ceremony.
 - Members of the community that helped fund and support the Gala would be invited to the Grad Expo awards ceremony and would be invited to participate in the Gala that followed.
 - The Gala would take the place of getting donations for incentives and gifts for students to come to the Grad. Expo (example, raffle tickets or gift cards to come to the Grad Expo. would not happen this year).

- Meghan Glow will provide more information on this event similar to the one she attended at Notre Dame.
- Further information will come after discussion with members of the Grad. School. An update on this event will be provided in the minutes of the next GSAC Executive Board meeting in January.

VI. T-Shirts

- A motion was made by Kate to conduct a vote to obtain GSAC t-shirts. All members present at the meeting voted in favor of designing and purchasing GSAC t-shirts.
- Purpose: The purpose of the GSAC T-shirts is to help individuals on campus to identify us and recognize whom to approach if they have a concern regarding the graduate student population. Additionally, these shirts could be worn at events on campus or outreach activities.
- Cost: The cost of the T-shirts will be between \$5-\$8 dollars. GSAC Executive Board members will select a local business to make these t-shirts and will communicate the final price to members when it becomes available. Individuals will be asked to pay for the T-shirts ahead of time.
- Design: GSAC is currently seeking submissions for a T-shirt design. Anyone can submit a design for the GSAC t-shirts even if they are not a GSAC member. GSAC encourages creativity and asks that the t-shirt reflect GSAC and its ideals. Submissions can be dropped off at the Graduate School Office or may be sent via PDF to a GSAC officer or advisor or can be sent to graduate@eiu.edu
- Currently, GSAC is considering making this a t-shirt design contest and is considering the designer of the final GSAC t-shirt will either receive a free t-shirt or will receive a prize.
- Submissions will be accepted through mid January. The GSAC Executive board will present the designs at the general meeting and a vote will take place to finalize the winning t-shirt design.

VII. Crunch Brunch

- The annual GSAC Crunch Brunch will take place on Sunday December 13th, 2009 in 1418 Klem Hall from 7-11 p.m. This activity is open to all graduate students on campus and is meant to provide a time of fellowship to get to know and catch up with other graduate students. This event also is in place to kick off finals week at EIU. At the event there will be free food consisting of pancakes, eggs, bacon, milk, coffee, and orange juice. Come and watch a movie and chat with other graduate students. Though the event is free a donation can be at the door and all proceeds will go towards the GSAC Dec/Jan outreach program *Project Backpack*
- Fliers were created by Amanda Fountain and her committee to post on the university approved bulletin boards around campus. Members at the meeting were given posters

to hand in their various departments, academic program buildings on campus, and in the Graduate Assistantship work areas. Mini fliers were also created and given to members to handout to individuals on campus that were graduate students. Currently, these fliers were to be hung on all 58 approved bulletin boards on campus. Individuals were given permission to photocopy the fliers for more distribution.

VIII. Executive Board Position

- Kate announced at the meeting the resignation of GSAC Vice President of Academic Affairs, Trish Miller, for personal reasons.
- A motion was made to elect current GSAC Executive Board Secretary, Madeline Landes to fill the position of GSAC Vice President of Academic Affairs. The vote was unanimous and Madeline Landes was elected to this position. Congratulations to Madeline!
- A motion was then made to discontinue the current position of GSAC Secretary that was created on a provisional basis to the organization to fill a need that existed. The need no longer is present for the position, so it will be abolished.

IX. GSAC Constitution

- A call to members is made to participate on the GSAC Constitution Revision Committee. More details regarding this committee will follow upon return from break in January. Dean Augustine shared with Bill that a final revised GSAC constitution should be done by the end of the spring semester in 2010.
- Kate shared that former GSAC Executive Board member, Peter Salvadori has shared his interest in being a part of this committee. Currently, the GSAC Executive Board and Advisors are seeking two GSAC members to participate in working with them to revise the current GSAC Constitution. If you are interested in assisting on this committee please contact a GSAC Advisor or GSAC Executive Board member via e-mail.

X. Next Semester Meetings

- Upon return from holiday break in January, GSAC Executive Board members will meet and begin to formulate some time slots and locations for the Spring Semester meetings. Possible dates and times will then be brought to the GSAC General meeting to propose times. Further information on meeting dates and times will be sent via e-mail and posted on the GSAC website.

Minutes taken and submitted by Madeline Landes, GSAC Vice President of Academic Activities