

**Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC)**  
**January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010, 12:00 P.M.**  
**Rathskeller Loft**  
**General Meeting Minutes**

**Executive Board Members Present:**

Kate Hale, Madeline Landes, Amanda Fountain, Meghan Glow, Zach Thuring

**Advisors Present:** Bill Elliott, Tina Veale

**I. Parking Proposal**

- A. Currently, Dean Augustine is finding out what individuals GSAC should speak to regarding the parking situation. (Update: Vice President Nadler is person we need to speak with about this.) Bill mentioned that he will bring the report from these conversations to executive board members when the information comes available.
- B. GSAC members were reminded that the revision of the current parking situation will focus more on the parking regulations for graduate students whom are holding graduate assistantships on campus. Kate explained to members that of the approximate 800 graduate students on campus, there are only 250 graduate students that hold assistantships. The primary focus for directing the parking revisions was two- fold. First, the revision in the parking situation will allow for graduate assistants to be able to find a place to park so they can get to their jobs and teaching classes on time and not be late because of a lack of parking spaces available. Second, this proposal may be better accepted by university officials as it is asking for a remedy for a specific situation rather than a total reformation.
- C. Members suggested that the GSAC executive board also look into the Lantz gymnasium parking area that has recently been converted back to a staff only parking lot. This parking lot could also be another option to add to the parking proposal as it would allow for graduate assistants to have a parking lot in a central location from both sides of the campus. Originally, this was mentioned as the Doudna parking lot is not beneficial for those on the other side of campus.
- D. Members also suggested that the GSAC Executive Board also look into the W lot across from Taylor Hall. This parking lot was also converted to provide more staff spaces. This option would also provide parking for graduate assistants on the opposite end of campus than the Doudna parking lot.

**II. Student Insurance**

- A. Currently, the student insurance policy was designed to primarily serve the undergraduate student population at Eastern.
- B. Students currently have a \$15,000 maximum coverage per incident. According to the current policy, students may have multiple claims of \$15,000 dollars.
- C. GSAC members continued to express interest in pursuing this issue. GSAC members mentioned that this coverage is not nearly enough to cover even a minor injury, such as a fracture. Members expressed that they would be willing to pay a little more for an increase in this coverage as the benefits in increased coverage would outweigh the results of not having such coverage. Members mentioned that they fear something happening to them and they

- would be placed in a financial hardship that forced them to choose to pay medical bills or pay tuition to go to school. Other GSAC members mentioned that this would put an undue hardship on their families and would cause their education and their personal life to be challenged.
- D. Some GSAC members expressed that if they would have known that this coverage was so low, they may have chosen to attend a different institution that offers better coverage that is at a lower rate and is similar in size to Eastern.
  - E. Bill provided more information that was obtained during the student insurance meeting held earlier in the month with Dean Augustine and other officials of Eastern.
  - F. Bill mentioned that another meeting regarding this situation is scheduled to take place at the end of February or at the beginning of March to discuss more options and the research that has been obtained from companies such as ETNA.

### III. Graduate Showcase( Formally the Grad Expo)

- A. Early discussion proposed an amendment to the current format of the Graduate Showcase by adding a gala to the event. However, after some review, it was decided that if in fact GSAC does continue with this idea, it should be held as a separate event from the Graduate Showcase. At this time, the support and structure could not be enacted in time for the event to be carried out as hoped. Additionally, after review of the academic calendar and activity calendar, the Gala would be held very close to a similar event that is hosted by the EIU athletic department.
- B. This year, each college will have a video that is composed of multiple three minute clips that provide a student showcase of work to demonstrate what students are doing within each of the academic departments' graduate programs in each particular college.
- C. The EIU CATS team will be working collaboratively with the students, faculty mentors, and graduate coordinators to produce these videos. The finished videos will then be shown to members of the faculty before the Graduate Showcase so that a panel discussion with students can ensue regarding their work and research.
- D. The videos produced by CATS will also be used as a recruiting tool by the graduate school to highlight the EIU graduate program as a whole to prospective graduate students, EIU visitors, and community members to showcase what the current members of the graduate school are doing across the curriculum. Additionally, these videos will be housed on the graduate school website for viewing.
- E. The videos will be shown at an agreed upon time and location for each of the individual colleges so that members of the campus community have the opportunity to see what is going on in each individual college because of the timing of these video showings. There will be one liaison from the Graduate School for each school that will be working with each of the academic departments within the school to coordinate times to produce the video and to decide the best showing time of the completed videos. The timeline of the dates and events of the Graduate Showcase Series will tentatively be presented at the next GSAC general meeting on 2/11/10.
- F. Tina mentioned that she felt that this year the Gala should not be incorporated into the Graduate Showcase series because of the short time frame for the publicity, time frame, planning, and specifics of the event that would have to be done to implement this event. Tina

- also mentioned that it may be difficult to decide the food situation and to agree upon a specific local charity to donate the proceeds from the Gala Silent Auction. Tina mentioned that more support needs to be obtained from GSAC general members as this cannot be solely supported as a GSAC Executive Board decision.
- G. In terms of gaining community support, Kate mentioned that she did have a list of business that GSAC approached last year to donate to the EIU Graduate Showcase. The main idea of this is to gain support for graduate study by community members while increasing the awareness and involvement of these individuals in the EIU Graduate School.
  - H. It was determined that if the Gala is going to take place this year, donations can be solicited from now until the end of March. Members did express that they were uncomfortable approaching local businesses alone to gain donations. Most expressed that they were not good at a “sales pitch” and would feel more comfortable doing this in pairs or as a group. It was also mentioned that donations could be obtained via a phone conversation with the heads of the local businesses. A list of talking points could also be formulated for students to use while obtaining donations.
  - I. An idea to partner with the Charleston Chamber of Commerce to get letters out to local businesses to inform them of GSAC and what we are seeking may help.
  - J. The Graduate Student Showcase Series is set to take place on April 13, 14, 15, 16.

IV. Graduate Student Advisory Council Student Representative Attendance

- A. Bill mentioned that he would be sending out an e-mail and a letter to the current graduate coordinators in each of the academic programs on campus regarding their departmental student representatives. (Sent Feb 2, 2009)
- B. In this notification, each department will be notified of whom their current GSAC representative is and their attendance at the GSAC meetings. With attendance at meetings decreasing without any notification by students, a reinforcement of the role of these department representatives needs to be enforced by each graduate school department to their departmental representatives. If students are no longer interested in participating than the department needs to reappoint a representative. E-mails were considered being sent to students however from past precedent for a call of response from members, little to no reply would be obtained.
- C. Both Tina and Bill expressed that students need pressure from their department graduate coordinators to come to meetings and be active in GSAC.

V. Project Backpack

- A. Donation boxes for supplies for project backpack have been set up in the graduate school and in some departments around campus.
- B. Amanda will be in charge of creating a flier that contains the information and description regarding this event. These fliers will be sent via e-mail to all of the departmental graduate coordinators on campus. Additionally, these fliers will be placed on the collection boxes that are placed around campus as well as on the approved bulletin boards around campus. (Fliers sent out 2/5/2010)
- C. GSAC members were told to spread information about this outreach program to their departments and other students on campus. Anyone can donate toiletry items or backpacks

for this project. You do not need to be a graduate student in order to donate to this project. Meghan brought a bag and toiletries to donate to the project and to demonstrate to members an example.

- D. Individuals may also donate a monetary donation to this project if they wish. These donations can be dropped off in the Graduate School or put into the jar that is located next to the donation box at each site around campus. All donations would like to be collected by the end of February. Please bring any donations to the next general GSAC meeting. An advertisement and a brief description of the project will be put in the Daily Eastern News and the EIU University Newsletter. Bill offered to assist with this aspect.

VI. T-Shirt Designs

- A. With little response for a call of submission t-shirt designs, GSAC is investigating if members do in fact want to continue this idea.
- B. If you are interested in submitting a design for a GSAC t-shirt, please drop the design off at the Graduate School or scan the design and e-mail it to [graduate@eiu.edu](mailto:graduate@eiu.edu)
- C. If you are interested in obtaining t-shirts, please do e-mail Bill or an GSAC Executive Board member.

VII. Friday Soiree

- A. Please remind your fellow graduate students that a Friday Soiree will be held at 4:00 p.m at Marty's the day after the GSAC general meeting. All graduate students are welcome to attend and you do not need to be a GSAC member in order to participate.

VIII. Constitution

- A. Kate spoke with former GSAC President, Peter Salvadori regarding the revision of the GSAC Constitution. Peter has expressed interest in assisting with the revision of the constitution. Kate reported that this project was started last year and is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way complete. Kate, Peter, Zach, Meghan, Madeline, Amanda, Sharon Lewis, Bill, and Tina will be working together on the Constitution Committee to finalize this document that was requested by Dean Augustine by the end of the Spring 2010 semester. Members will be presented with the draft of the GSAC constitution for approval.

\*Minutes taken and submitted by Madeline Landes, GSAC Vice President of Administrative Activities.