Professional and Graduate Student Coordinating Committee

Minutes of Meeting February 16, 2011

Present: Dean Richard J. Smith, Committee Chair; Sarah Miller, Business; Beth Schnettler, Engineering; Elizabeth Walsh, Law; Leslie Kahl, Medicine; Taliah Weber, Architecture; Oyinade Ogenbekun, Business; Anatoly Zlotnick, Engineering; Lance Bonner, Law; Michael Abramson, GPC President, ex officio; Melissa Holtmeyer, Graduate Student Rep. 2010-2011 W.U. Board of Trustees, ex officio; Associate Dean Elaine Berland, ex officio

Absent: Peter MacKeith, Architecture; Patricia Olynyk, Art; Karen Cowley, Social Work; Lauren Pressler, Art; Barbara Barrow, Grad A&S; Tammi Cooks, Medicine; Maddie Carson, Social Work; Drew Gulick, Graduate Student Rep. 2010-2011 W.U. Board of Trustees, ex officio

The meeting was called to order by Dean Richard J. Smith, Committee Chair, on February 16, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. in Olin Business School, Simon Hall 107.

Minutes
The Committee considered and approved the Minutes of the December 15, 2010 meeting of the Professional and Graduate Student Coordinating Committee.

Report of the Graduate Professional Council President
Michael Abramson, GPC President, reported on the GPC’s Fall 2010 semester events (handout). He reported that events continue to be well-attended and well-received. Of particular note were the Parabola All-School Graduate Student Visual Arts Event (600 people attended) and the GPC Holiday Social (500 people). He announced events planned for Spring 2011 including the annual GPC Bridging GAPS Graduate Student Leadership Awards and April Ceremony; Relay for Life; and the GPC End of Year Party. He also invited the Committee to view GPC’s redesigned website (http://gpc.wustl.edu).

Report of the Graduate Student Representatives to the W.U. Board of Trustees
Graduate student representative to the W.U. Board of Trustees Melissa Holtmeyer, Engineering, reported on the December meeting of the Board of Trustees. The December meeting was focused on internationalization issues. At the Trustee Research-Graduate Affairs Committee a panel of faculty from Graduate Arts & Sciences, Medicine and Social Work Schools presented key issues related to doing research abroad and proposed what the University could do to support research abroad. A panel of international Ph.D. students from China, India, and Ethiopia talked about their reasons for selecting WU for graduate education, challenges in making the transition to WU and the St. Louis area as new students, and proposed what the University could do to assist international graduate students. Holtmeyer reported that she and the other graduate student representative, Drew Gulick, hosted two information sessions for students interested in applying for the graduate student representative to the Board of Trustees position 2011-2012. She also directed the Committee to their redesigned website (http://boardgradrep.wustl.edu).

Update on application and selection process for Graduate Student Representative Position (2) to the W.U. Board of Trustees 2011-2012
Associate Dean Elaine Berland updated the Committee on the application process and reviewed the selection timeline. Rachel Pepe, Administrative Assistant, demonstrated the online application website including web pages for applicants, recommenders, and Selection Committee members. Committee Chair Smith encouraged School representatives to create links on their own School websites to the websites of GPC, the Board of Trustees Graduate Student Representatives, and the Liberman Graduate Center to promote interdisciplinary opportunities for graduate students. In particular, he encouraged School representatives to post calls for the trustee graduate student representative position and other University-
wide interdisciplinary opportunities on their School websites and listservs. He stressed the importance of the Selection Committee’s work in the application and nomination process; these two students play an influential role in helping trustees understand that graduate and professional students comprise half of the university enrollment and are distinctly different from undergraduate students.

Discussion of graduate/professional student housing survey and future plans
Committee Chair Smith noted that this agenda item was a continuation of the discussion begun at its December 15, 2010 at which Henry Webber, Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration, and Mary Campbell, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Real Estate and Off-Campus Housing, updated the Committee about key findings from the graduate/professional student housing survey and invited input about what university priorities should be. Committee members identified several areas of concern to be addressed, including
1) Additional needs of new international graduate students, who are likely to have large adjustment issues in making the transition to US living as they are simultaneously adjusting to their academic life. Concern was expressed that dorm-style housing, which might be of interest to new international students such as on the Medical School campus, was an option did not get sufficient consideration in the survey;
2) Off-campus safety issues and support to continue efforts in this area;
3) Concern about affordability, particularly for graduate students with limited means;
4) Accessibility for disabled students, and
5) Need to communicate short-term improvement goals as well as long-range planning to improve graduate student housing to graduate students. Look at immediate changes that might be made so that August 2011 can be better than August 2010.
Committee Chair Smith said he would send Committee statements to Executive Vice Chancellor Webber.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Berland, Ph.D.
Associate Dean
Graduate School of Arts & Sciences