Professional and Graduate Student Coordinating Committee
Minutes of February 13, 2017 Meeting

Present: Joseph Fox, Business; Ed Borbely, Engineering; Elizabth Walsh, Law; Lisa Moscoso, Medicine; Danielle Bristow, Brown; James Parker, Student Affairs, ex officio; Mary Campbell, Real Estate, ex officio; Bryan Lenz, Recreation Center; ex officio; Ashley Macrander, Graduate School, ex officio; Sheri Notaro, Graduate School, ex officio; Linh Vuong, Medicine; John Eads, Brown; Haley Dolosic, Arts & Sciences, GPC President; Alexandra Keane and Wei Zhu, Graduate Student representatives to Trustees, ex officio

Review Application Submission Dates and Interview Process for Graduate Student Representatives to the Board of Trustees

Dean Macrander reported that the application process will end on February 14th. There will be a meeting on March 1st to screen interview applicants, with interviews following on March 21st from 1:30-4:30. There will be a discussion after the interviews to consider which applications will move on. Dean Macrander also reported that there has been good response thus far.

Report of the Committee Chair

Dean Tate stated that he commends Vice Chancellor Wrighton’s message to students. He said “we want to be supportive of all students and give access to as many students as we can and that is our position.” Dean Tate asks students to reach out to his office for support. He reported that at the doctoral level, not including engineering, there are 18 students whose country of origin is on the ban list. He also reported that 42 doctorate applications out of 4,500 for this upcoming year are students whose nationality is from those countries on the ban list. He said decisions are not being made based on the ban.

Dean Tate then reported that progress on the Lewis Center has been made. He deferred to Mary Campbell.

Mary Campbell reported that “we saw that we needed more spaces for live and learn experiences for graduate students,” adding that a 30 unit building has been acquired exclusively for graduate and professional students. She reported that this facility includes decks and a community area for students as well as a community kitchen and common study rooms. She reported that this provides an opportunity for “interdisciplinary mingling in one property.” She said that with Sam Fox moving the MFA program out of the Lewis Center, we have an opportunity for a hub of creative opportunity and integration of the arts in a live and work community. She reported that a visualization plan exists. She reported that the plan is currently on the agenda for GSS in order to get student feedback on what they would like to see in such a community. She also reported that they are consulting with community partners to ensure input from the greater community as well. “We would like our true university services to be available to graduate students in the community” she said.

Mary Campbell then deferred to Dean Tate.

Dean Tate reported that graduate students, especially Ph.D. students, want additional career services. He reported that the administration has decided to hire an associate dean of careers, who will start in March and will work in collaboration with the current career center. He also reported that the career center is also currently hiring someone to fill a similar role. He said that conversations have been had about a space for a dedicated graduate career center, and they hope to have a footprint in place at end of the year, or at least an intellectual footprint if not geographical footprint.
Haley Dolosic reported that the GPC supported its first cultural event of the year through the cultural event grant. The event was a celebration for the Chinese New Year, hosted by the Chinese Students and Scholars Association. She reported that there are also several other social events coming up, including ice skating, a blues game, and a hockey info session with a local hockey player. There will also be a research symposium at the end of the month that will allow for cross-disciplinary presentations and cash prizes. The symposium is February 21st and will be hosted in the Law School. Haley also reported interest in conducting a Roads Less Travelled program, where people who have taken nontraditional roles post-graduation from programs such as the MBA, Law, or Ph.D. can share their experiences. There will be a trivia night in the business school on March 29th. There will be a mixer in the Brown School in April. The GPC also responded to the recent executive order to show solidarity with international students and is collaborating with the OISS for an event around the topic. GPC is also working with the Liberman Center to reach out to grad students about current available services.

The Graduate Student Representatives reported having seen an interest in the open application. They reported the big questions from applicants were what the responsibilities are, how to prepare for the interviews, and how many hours one must contribute weekly. Med students were told to check with the deans of the Med School in terms of whether time availability would be a concern for a med student fulfilling this role.

Associate Dean Parker reported that WashU will host a conference on campus where we will invite 25 institutions across the country to send people for a conversation around challenges and current happenings surrounding support of graduate and professional students. He stated that they originally wanted to do this in the summer but with limited space it might be moved to the Fall, which would also provide more time for planning. Dean Tate had an idea of authoring a book or other publication reporting outcomes of the conference. He reported this would situate WashU as a thought leader nationally in this conversation, seeing as graduate education has taken a backseat in terms of education research in recent years. They expect an attendance of approximately 200 people. When asked how many rooms can handle space for plenary sessions of 200+ attendees, Associate Dean Parker reported approximately 6, pointing out that it is an issue. He reported that the group would like to not require attendees to travel all throughout campus and would prefer to keep the conference in one building or one cluster of buildings nearby. He reported that they are looking at a date in June. He reported that they have heard back from the potential keynote speaker who also said Fall may be a better time due to the fiscal year and how travel compensations are dispensed.

Mr. Lenz reported that new data is available on how many unique members of each school have attended (whether they have visited once or 100 times). He reports that the number is now closer to 7,000. He said it is encouraging to see the impact this is having across all spectrums at the university. Future considerations are extracting data on how students are using various programs and classes, such as hikes, yoga classes, etc. Dean Tate pointed out that it appears that many more students are using this new facility versus the old facility. The biggest complaint received is the desire for the area to be bigger, particularly the strength area. They are looking at doing modifications to SOFO rec center to make it a more comprehensive small rec center to relieve traffic at
new rec center. Dean Tate recommended looking at, in addition to rough numbers of students from each school, the proportion or percent of students from each school. Ph.D. students have expressed interest in a family night event. Bryan Lenz reported that they have already begun to plan such an event including events such as children’s yoga. (Normally people under 18 cannot enter).

Associate Dean Parker said another point for collaboration would be a small workout facility in potential graduate student housing complexes. Mary Campbell reported that this is not currently in discussion. Dean Tate said we should look in to providing opportunities, especially for the purpose of incentivizing people to live there. Associate Dean Parker said that growth in usage will continue and an option to alleviate the use would be to provide this for graduate students in new living facilities, given their attendance at the new rec center. Mary Campbell said that a common facility for graduate students would be good for the neighborhood north of Delmar, as opposed to students having to return to campus.

**International Peer Mentoring – Ashley Macrander**

Dean Macrander reported that the survey last year revealed a need for mentoring services for international students. Currently there is a program that matches arts and sciences students with more senior Ph.D. students but the plan is to expand the program. The current test pilot has about 40 matches and enthusiasm is up for the program. Contact Dean Macrander if students are interested because there are still spots open, although waiting until fall is also an option.

**New Business**

Mary Campbell mentioned there used to be an ambassador for the community north of Delmar and asked if there has been thought of revisiting this position to build community. Dean Macrander said that from the report the most concerns raised were around housing and community in general, but that such a position could also be useful.

Associate Dean Parker said they have started working on a welcome event for graduate students and will send out an email to see if people have recommendations for what they would like to see done differently this year. He said restaurants are already reaching out to participate. One change they would like to see is for student organizations to have more of a presence at the event. He reported that they want feedback now so they can market it over the summer to all incoming graduate and professional students. They already have athletic field house reserved.

John Eads