Graduate Student Council GSC General Meeting Minutes

Monday October 7, 2013

12:00-1:00 p.m. KSU Union 227

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dr. Carol Shanklin, Dr. Duane Crawford, Taylor Wadian, Amanda Fairbanks, Erik Garcia, Emily Reinhardt, Amanda Martens, Stuart Miller, Lacey Solheid, Lauren Reiter, Angela Anejan, Chuynan Wang, Ambrosia Franklin, Nick Colsch, Neda Dadashzadeh, Elizabeth Chevalier, Erica McMillon, Kris Grinter, Kim O’Keefe, Bethany Belanger, Kerri Neugebauer, Sarah Barmore, Bethany Quesnell, Xialong Wang, Rui Zhang, Nana Baah Appial-Nkansah, Manpreet Rai, Jared Nyagol, Jay Weeker, Mohamed Ismail, Michael Reichaberger, Jan Vosahlk, Kaley Oldani, Barbara Amoah

Call to Order

1.0 Review and Approval of Agenda

T. Wadian asked the General Council if there were any additions of corrections to the agenda as presented.

Motion #1: Move to approve the meeting agenda as distributed

Action: Motion approved. No discussion.

2.0 Review and Approval of GSC General Minutes from September 9, 2013

T. Wadian requested an approval of the General Meeting Minutes from the General Council.

Motion #1: Move to approve the General Meeting Minutes

Action: Motion approved. No discussion.

3.0 Guest Speaker Provost Mason
**Provost Mason** discussed the concerns Graduate Students have regarding Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) stipends and paying tuition, because the assistantship is taxed prior to paying tuition. **Provost Mason** informed the General Council that the state funding has been cut $6.6 million for the fiscal year. The budget cut has put constraints on the financial plans for the University and how the University supports graduate students. **Provost Mason** stated that tuition increases could remedy the situation and are being explored. A Budget Committee is being formed to address the budget of the University. **Dean Shanklin** has recommended that a graduate student representative serve on the committee. The Committee will help prioritize the University budget and recommend how the budget is allocated. On October 29 members of the Kansas Legislature will be visiting the Kansas State campus to view the infrastructure and understand the operations. The Kansas Board of Regents will be visiting the K-State campus on November 3-4.

**Provost Mason** opened the floor to questions from the General Council and graduate students.

Comment from General Council member: 1. Graduate students can be audited if they are not informed about paying taxes on their stipend if they are a GRA. 2. The current system deters students from coming to Kansas State and from going to Graduate School.

**Provost Mason** stated she learned two things: First, that graduate students are liable and subject to a fine for not being informed about the tax on a GRA stipend. Second, student are reconsidering going to Graduate School, which is exactly what she doesn’t want prospective students to do.

**Dean Shanklin** stated that students will compare tuition but not necessarily the fees associated with attendance at an institution. Kansas State’s fees are lower than competing institutions. There has been talk of creating a website that includes the bottom-dollar amount to attend Kansas State. **T. Wadian** stated that the calling campaign collected data about why students did or did not come to K-State. The biggest reason students declined the offer of admission was the graduate stipend amount. Another reason students declined an offer of admission from Kansas State was the offer of admission came too late. **Provost Mason** stated the Graduate School has hired more staff to accelerate the application and decision process. **Associate Dean Crawford** stated that he examined the data from the calling campaign and he concluded that graduate students were involved in a ‘balancing act’ to decide between institutions offering bigger stipends but were attracted to the quality of the graduate programs and graduate faculty at Kansas State.

Question from Graduate Student: What priorities are coming to the top of the list in relation to graduate students?

**Provost Mason** stated that nothing has come to the top of the list yet but tuition waivers for GRAs is certainly a priority and so is increasing the graduate student stipends.
Question from Graduate Student: Why doesn’t the Graduate School cover tuition for GRAs?

Provost Mason stated that the tuition waiver comes from a pool of money built into the University budget. The University’s budget can only currently support GTAs and needs the revenue from the GRAs to support University costs.

Question from Graduate Student: I currently have a GRA but I teach a lab section and grade assignments. Why isn’t my tuition waived?

Provost Mason stated that she wasn’t quite sure about the specifics, but she is going to look into it to try and understand the situation.

Question from Graduation Student: Can pay for graduate students increase after a decrease?

Provost Mason stated that recently salaries were frozen from Administration to graduate students. Currently there is no freeze on salaries. Salaries can be increased after preliminary examinations. Departmental policy usually dictates when a graduate student gets a raise. In January faculty and staff will get a merit-based increase in salary.

4.0 Officer Reports

T. Wadian informed the General Council that the GSC earned $220 through volunteering at the University-Wide Career Fair. The money will be deposited into the Foundation Account and can be used to purchase pizza and beverages for a future General Council meeting. Details about the upcoming pizza party will be provided in the near future. T. Wadian reminded the General Council to support and attend events designed to educate graduate students about financial awareness and introduced Christyne to discuss these events. Christyne stated that if a graduate student attends the events he/she will be entered to win a gift card up to $500. There will be 3 events coming up on October 16, 29 and November 15. These events will offer financial guidance regarding budgeting, financial management, credit, savings, student loan repayment, and the benefits of SALT. Please encourage other graduate students to attend the events. Currently there are 39 gift cards ranging in value from $100-$500. Every time a graduate student attends an event, completes a survey, or signs up for an individual counseling session he/she will be entered into the drawing. On October 21 from 1:30-3:00 in Leadership studies Town Hall there will be an event for graduate students specifically aimed at student loan management and financial management. A wufoo RSVP will be sent out shortly to register for the event.

A. Fairbanks present, but no report

K. Penugonda absent, no report
E. Garcia present but, no report

Advisor Reports:

Dean Shanklin stated that graduate students should be getting an email and a link to a survey regarding attitudes and financial well-being. The survey should take about 5-10 minutes. Dean Shanklin stated she will be working with a handful of committee members to understand what education programs need to be developed to educate graduate students on the Affordable Care Act, which is now in effect. Fellowship applications are approaching deadlines. Please visit the Graduate School website and apply to those for which you are eligible.

Associate Dean Crawford stated that a group of architects leading the remodel of the Union inquired about graduate student needs in the Union.

5.0 Graduate Student Senator Reports

J. Vosahlik stated that the only bills that have been passed have been allocations.

6.0 GSC Committee Reports

Allocations: T. Wadian reported the Allocations Committee received 25 applications, 23 of which were fully complete for December travel. All 23 applicants who fully completed their application were funded for a total allocation of $9600.

Research Forums: A. Fairbanks informed the General Council that abstract review for Research and the State occurred last week. Research Forums Committee and volunteers reviewed approximately 75 abstracts.

Student Affairs: T. Wadian informed the General Council that the GSC Goes Wild at the Sunset Zoo event had over 45 people attend. The next scheduled event is GSC Family Day at the Flint Hill Discovery Center on November 10.

International Student Affairs: M. Rai informed the General Council that on October 25 the International Coordinating Council will participate in the Homecoming Parade. The parade is open to all student groups if you are interested contact Manpreet Rai. On November 9 there is an International Food Festival in Jardine Hall.

Professional Development: L. Reiter informed the General Council that although the Victoria McGovern talk was cancelled, they are planning to reschedule for the Spring. The Library and Your Research: Effective Database Searching is scheduled for October 14 in the
Library room 301. Career and Employment services will be hosting a workshop titled, “Are You Linkedin?” from 4:00-5:00 in the Union Big 12 room. On November 7 a Negotiating Brownbag with Industry and Academia will be held, with breakout sessions from 12:00-1:00 in Union 226 and 227.

**Fundraising:** No report.

**Awards & Recognition:** B. Quesnell stated that many nominations have come forth for graduate student awards and recognition from graduate faculty and department heads.

### 7.0 University-Wide Representatives

**Health Insurance:** J. Nyagol present but no report.

**Union Governing Board:** K. Grinter restated Dr. Crawford’s report.

**Library:** No report.

**Campus Master Plan:** No report.

**8020:** K. Grinter reported that the State Legislators will be visiting campus on October 29 and the agenda is being created.

**State Affairs:** No report.

**Women of K-State:** Dean Shanklin reported that Women in Politics is on October 10.

**University Sustainability Task Force:** E. Garcia reported that the Task Force held its second meeting. The Task Force will be splitting into working groups: Academics, Engagement, and Operations. E. Garcia is Co-Leading the Operations workgroup and will be a member of the Academics workgroup.

### 8.0 Summary of Upcoming Events: T. Wadian briefly summarized the upcoming GSC events and encouraged the General Council to spread the word and attend the events. Dean Shanklin asked the General Council for input about the tuition billing cycle and it was decided that the billing cycle be moved back to October 1. Also, she will try to see to it that if a student opts to enroll in the payment plan there will be no service charge. Dean Shanklin will propose this plan to try to get the policy into effect.

### 9.0 Adjournment: T. Wadian called the meeting to an end and adjourned the General Council at 1:15