

## Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Monday, August 24, 2009

- Meeting was called to order by President Beth Rauhaus at 5:31 pm.
- President Rauhaus introduced herself and discussed the Graduate Student Association in general.
- President Rauhaus informed those in attendance that meetings this year will rotate between Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights.
- The Graduate Research Symposium was discussed; it will be held on Nov. 6 in the Union from 8 until 12 noon; time was given for students to ask questions.
- The Travel Awards Program was discussed; Beth and Brittany Clay, the Vice President, handed out copies of applications for funding.
  - Travel Award information:
    - The awards will be given on a first-come, first-served basis
    - The information and the award applications are available on the GSA page from the Graduate School website.
- 2009-2010 GSA officers introduced themselves:
  - President: Beth Rauhaus
  - Vice President: Brittany Clay
  - Secretary: Courtney Walker
  - Treasurer: Braxton Stowe (absent)
- Suggestions and comment sheets were given to all in attendance for ideas/concerns that students wished to express to GSA
- President Rauhaus spoke about Graduate Ambassadors, many of whom were in attendance; the ambassadors in attendance introduced themselves.
- President Rauhaus introduced guest speaker, Dr. Lou D'Abramo, Dean of the Office of the Graduate School
  - Dr. D'Abramo spoke about the 3 parts of the Office of the Graduate School: (1) Business (2) Programs and (3) Admissions.
  - Dr. D'Abramo spoke about student accountability in regards to Graduate School success.

- Dr. D'Abramo mentioned the Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. William A. Person and introduced Program Coordinator and Webmaster, Julie Goodin.
- Dr. D'Abramo allowed time for students to ask questions.
  - The first student asked for more information on the travel assistance program and its funding.
  - The second student asked about his thesis and graduation requirements.
  - The third student inquired about Graduate Fees; the student was concerned with the use of the fees and requested an itemized list. Dr. D'Abramo responded that he would check on providing an itemized list but that he could not promise that the information would be given to students.
  - The fourth student asked about health insurance coverage for graduate students and dependents.
    - There were follow up questions about student fees and family health insurance as well.
- Julie helped Dr. D'Abramo answer some of the students' questions.
- Dr. D'Abramo and Julie also discussed GA parking as a result of the work that GSA has done in the past.
- Dr. D'Abramo said that he is working on a gated parking issue for Graduate Teaching Assistants and a no-interest loan for international Graduate Assistants to be provided to the students before they are able to be put on the payroll.
- President Rauhaus talked about the Awards Banquet for GSA, which will be held at the end of the academic year. Beth also discussed the format of future meetings, guest speakers, and socials.
- Dr. D'Abramo mentioned workshops on survival skills for Graduate Students. Dr. D'Abramo and Julie also discussed the process by which a student can become a Teaching Assistant in the spring, in response to a student's question.
- Julie spoke about the distinction between TA1s—no teaching responsibilities (only grading, taking roll, etc), TA2s—act as teacher, and TA3s—teacher and instructor of record (responsible for assigning final grade).
- Julie provided the website for the TA workshop ([www.grad.msstate.edu/workshop](http://www.grad.msstate.edu/workshop)). The spring dates, which Julie said would be updated on the website soon, are January 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

- Julie also discussed the stipend for TAs, which is at least \$600 and on average \$1000, in response to a student's question.
- Dr. D'Abramo offered his assistance as the Dean of the Office of the Graduate School and suggested that students visit with their departments in the event that they have concerns about their treatment at the University; he offered an example of a student being asked to work more than the required 20 hours a week as a Graduate Assistant.
- Dr. D'Abramo and Julie added that future meetings would be held in another room, due to overcrowding in Room 15.
- The meeting concluded at 6:20.