Graduate Professional Council
General Assemble Meeting
Meeting Minutes
May 1st, 2012

Notes: Slides, documents, or other documents provided to GPC will be included in these minutes. When speaking for the first time, the speaker will be identified by full name and department. After this, the speaker will be identified by last name only.

Summary of Business

The following motions\(^1\) were passed by the General Assembly during the meeting.

- Motion to adopt the minutes.
- Motion to adopt the agenda.
- Motion to adopt resolution 1112-06.
- Motion to adopt the GPC Travel Award Guidelines.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm by Jake Wright, Vice-President

Adoption of the Minutes

Wright brought forward the first order of business, the adoption of the minutes from the April meeting. No errors, corrections, omissions, or amendments were identified. Wright entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting.

Raymond Troy of Nuclear Engineering moved to adopt and Sarah Kendrick of Fisheries and Wildlife seconded the motion. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Adoption of the Agenda

Wright brought forward the next item of business, the adoption of agenda. There were no changes to the agenda and Wright entertained a motion to accept the agenda as is. Sage Buckner of the Veterinary School motioned and Amanda Gray of Educational Leadership & policy seconded the motion. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Action Items

None

\(^1\) Motions to extend discussion are not in this section.
Old Business

None

New Business

Proposed changes to the GPC Constitution and Bylaws.

Krisstopherson Culmer, President, briefly discussed and then read resolution 1112-06.

6.2 The Constitution and Bylaw Review Committee

The primary purpose of the Constitutional and Bylaw Review Committee is the monitoring and review of the GPC constitution and bylaws as they exist for the current operating year. This committee will be chaired by the GPC President.

a. Specific Responsibilities
   1. Complete a yearly review of the operating guidelines of GPC as written in the GPC constitution and bylaws.
   2. Make recommendations for revisions and amendments to the GPC constitution and bylaws to the GPC General Assembly as needed.

6.3 The Academic Affairs Committee

The primary function of the Academic Affairs Committee is the monitoring of academic issues on campus. Members of this committee are selected by the Vice President to serve on various student-faculty committees that impact the state of academic affairs at the university. This committee will be chaired by the GPC Vice-President.

a. Specific Responsibilities
   1. Appoint representatives to external committees related to academic affairs
      i. Grad Faculty Senate
      ii. Faculty Council
   2. Planning of the Gold Chalk Awards
   3. Serve in an advisory capacity to the GPC General Assembly on campus-wide academic issues

6.4 The Programming Committee

The primary function of the Programming Committee in the planning and publicizing of GPC activities. This committee will be chaired by the GPC Programming and Publicity Coordinator.

a. Specific Responsibilities
   1. Planning of the Research and Creative Activities Forum (RCAF)
   2. Planning academic and professional development programming and initiatives
   3. Planning of monthly social events, including at least one faculty friendly event per semester
   4. Planning of community service and outreach events
There was no discussion following Culmer’s presentation of the resolution. After the suggestion to entertain a motion, Seth Kurtenbach of Philosophy motioned to accept as is and Kendrick seconded. The motion to adopt resolution 1112-06 was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Travel Award Guidelines**

Matt Mower, Technology Coordinator, outlined the travel award guidelines that were discussed and accepted the GPC Executive Committee. He explained about the need for such guidelines because of the increase of the number of travel grant applications and the need for specific and written guidelines for the finance committee. Mower explained the highlights of the GPC Travel Award Funding Guidelines seen below.
GPC Travel Award Funding Guidelines

by Matt Hower – 2012 GPC Technology Coordinator

Premise
Over 2002–2011, GPC’s Travel Award program has seen a significant surge in applications. The increased award competitiveness justifies more and well-defined funding guidelines for the Finance Committee. As of October 16, 2011, with Raising 1112-6 and the introduction of Section V.6.1 in the GPC manual, the Finance Committee of GPC must approve modifications to travel award funding guidelines. This document outlines a minimal set of guidelines established by the executive board which the Finance Committee should follow when deciding which travel award applications to fund and how they should be funded.

Abstract
The travel award funding guidelines presented here aim to give the Finance Committee considerable flexibility in deciding which applications to fund and how they should be funded. Two guidelines are established by the executive board to ensure that the award maintains its prestige and is applied uniformly over many travel periods. A minimum award value and an average award value per application are defined. These rates are designed to be fair and robust under circumstances of a variable number of applications and as fluctuations in the travel award budget.

Introduction
For the 2012–2013 academic year, GPC budgeted 20% of its available revenue to the travel awards program. This significant allocation indicates GPC’s commitment to the educational and professional development of students across the campus. Recent changes to the program have further established GPC’s confidence in the value of the travel awards program. Thus, from 2010–2011 academic year, changes were incorporated into the process: increase the maximum award amount to the level of access to types of graduate students (MA) and (2) allow professional students to apply for the award in addition to graduate students. During the 2011–2012 academic year, changes were incorporated to allow the award to be awarded even if not all funds are distributed. Students could now apply for the award during the summer quarter, and in most cases, could apply prior to or concurrently with their coursework. In addition to these changes, GPC has put considerable effort into advertising the availability of travel awards. Announcements include email notices, Facebook, Twitter, the GPC website, and reports by GPC representatives. The response is in apparent alignment with increased interest in applications seen over the last two academic years.

The available budget refers to the total amount after allocating funds to student activities fees to ensure as agreed upon in the MLA/CA Articles of Cooperation.

With the increase in applications to GPC’s travel award program, and associated increase in competitiveness for the awards, it is important to ensure uniformity and fair funding guidelines are followed during each application period. Furthermore, because awards to applicants should not fall too far below the amount requested by the applicant, the award should be substantial, and not be considered trivial.

The need for these guidelines stems from a lack of any existing written guidelines for how travel awards should be funded. Historically, the treasurer has worked with the executive board each travel award period to decide how applications are funded, and this decision is passed on to the Finance Committee as recommendations for funding. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this process, that it is not documented leads to confusion in the process every year with the selection of a new treasurer and formation of a new Finance Committee. Thus, at a minimum, the process needs to be documented.

Defining the funding process also gives GPC a chance to incorporate some guidelines which will help maintain the awards worth from one travel period to the next. Two steps are taken to achieve this goal: (1) maintain an average award per recipient; (2) set a minimum award value per awarded recipient. The maintenance of an average award per accepted applicant in any given travel period ensures that the award value represents a significant fraction of travel expenditures. These guidelines are designed to have minimal impact on the way the Finance Committee awards on travel. It is at the committee’s discretion to decide exactly how many applications get funded and how many tiers of funding should be incorporated, based on the quality of applications. This document also outlines the ability of the Finance Committee to begin reviewing and deciding funding for applications without waiting for the executive board to pass down recommendations each funding period.

Funding Guidelines
The following guidelines are meant to accompany the previously defined travel award descriptions and application procedures, as outlined in Appendix A. Two important quantities are defined first. When any mathematics is presented, the variable can be referenced from the parenthesized letter or word following a quantity. E.g. in the first entry below, the variable “max” refers to the max award per application at $3000. The statement could be stated as: The maximum award per application is $3000.

1. Maximum allocation for an individual application (max) – currently set at $3000.
2. Budget per allocation period (B) – currently set at $10,000.

In order to maintain the high level of prestige and value of travel awards, both a minimum award per application (min) and a maximum average award per application period (avg) should be defined. The minimum average award per application and the maximum average award per application period are defined as follows:

Example 4 – Many applications, funding of applications would result in very small awards distributed to each applicant. This would put the prestige of the award and in many cases funds only a small fraction of travel expenditures. Maintaining a minimum average award per application ensures that the award value represents a significant fraction of travel expenditures. Maintaining a minimum average award per application amount for each award is awarded at a level higher than other applications and sufficiently across application periods is achieved. Again, this does not imply that some applications will not be funded.

Example 5 – Few applications. It is in GPC’s interest to allocate its entire travel budget each year to prevent carryover (which may result in GPC’s travel budget being reduced if carryover persists over several years). Thus, if it is a single application period GPC has the ability to fund all applications at an average award greater than the minimum average award per application period, applications should be funded at a higher value.

The minimum award per application and the minimum average award per application period are defined as follows:

1. The minimum award per application is set as min = 0.40 × max
2. The minimum award per application period is set as min avg = 0.40 × max

For example, a maximum award of max = $600 implies that min = $100 and min avg = $120 when rounded to the nearest dollar.

Due to the varying number and quality of applications submitted during each application period, it is left to the Finance Committee to decide exactly how the funding should be distributed amongst individual applications. This is allowed so long as the above requirements are met. The work of the Finance Committee can be used as a guide in determining the distribution of individual applications. This approach allows the committee to compensate for some issues if the distribution of applications roughly matches the linear program shown in Figure 1. [The number of funding tiers and their award values are arbitrary, provided as example]. If it is the case, then the number of applications to be funded will be approximately 0.40 × max. As a first rate, the best 5% applications can be set aside, and only then graded more rigorously and binned into appropriate funding tiers.

Figure 1: Example travel award distribution across four funding tiers.
Appendix A: GPC travel awards description and application process

The statement of intent should be titled “Statement of Intent”. Write the statement for a lay audience, not experts in your field. Be thorough but concise. Your statement of intent must:

- Discuss the research or event in non-technical language, as if explaining the content of the grant to someone who is not familiar with the technical details.
- Discuss the importance of the conference to you personally, and
- Discuss the importance of the conference to you professionally, and
- Discuss the reasons why you are attending the conference.

You must submit your complete application package in person by noon on the deadline to the GPC travel award office. The award is limited to one trip per year for graduate students. No applications will be accepted after the deadline.

Schedule and Due Dates

The travel dates in this table correspond to the last day of your travel. For most travel dates over the entire year, you have a week’s notice, or you can apply earlier before or after you need a conference. These give you the flexibility to apply for funding in advance, to be sure you will have enough to cover expenses, or alternatively as a reimbursement. Some conference dates are noted below the table and diagnosed to address some questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel Ending Date</th>
<th>Application Due Date</th>
<th>Awards Announcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 28, 2013</td>
<td>Apr 1, 2013</td>
<td>Apr 1, 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Graphical depiction of travel ending dates and the corresponding application due dates.

Example: Trip ends on Oct 28, 2012. You have the option of submitting an application by Mar 1, 2013 or by Apr 1, 2013. If you are denied funding for the Apr 1, 2013 due date, then GPC will not fund your trip, regardless of whether or not you submitted an application on Oct 28, 2012.

Review process

The GPC finance committee will review applications. Several factors are weighed in reviewing the application—objective factors include the scope of the conference, whether the applicant is a first-time participant (first-time participants are given preference), whether the applicant has paid for other sources of funding (e.g., internships), and the ratio of amounts needed to costs. Subjective factors are limited to consideration of the applicant’s statement of intent and the quality and sign of the letter of recommendation.

After the finance committee has reviewed applications, award winners will be notified by GPC via email. Applicants and their advisor will receive an email with a link to the online application form, which allows them to upload supporting documents, including the letter of recommendation. Documents will be judged based on the criteria established by the committee.

As a reminder, candidates are expected to fill out their application forms as early as possible to ensure timely processing.

GPC strongly encourages students and programs to seek funding from their college or university to help fund conference travel. GPC does not reimburse schools for expenses beyond those approved by the GPC. All travel expenses must be covered by the institution or the student. The GPC will provide further details on this process.

You can access more information on GPC’s student travel awards by visiting the GPC website. Conference travel awards are available for up to five students per year, and students are encouraged to attend conferences that align with their research and career goals.

Note: The information in this document is correct as of March 2012.
Mustapha Alhassan, Social Work, asked about how the minimums were established. Mower explained the process. Culmer added to the discussion the details of number of the travel grant applications of the last two cycles. The increase in the number of applications as required the financial committee to make tough decisions. Culmer indicated the financial committee should not be handcuffed, but provided minimum guidelines. This is also a starting point for future financial committee members.

Wright indicated that ten minutes had passed and further discussion would require a time extension. Milbre Birch, Theatre, motioned to extend discussion time by ten minutes. Motion was seconded by a General Assembly member and passed unanimously by voice vote.

Birch talked about how the process is improving. People come ago and this document reassures a smoother transition for officers, committees, and members. She had a question about the 7 days to turn receipts and Mower explained how this was a small typo.

Ray Zuniga, At-large Member, asked about how the maximum was chosen. Culmer answered that the financial committee utilized established rubric, out of 5 with different cut offs. Mower also discussed that this doesn’t address how applications are scored and this will addressed later.

Birch discussed how important the letter of reference is and urged general assembly members to please spread the word.

Carrie Schmidt, Biological Engineering, motioned to accept the guidelines as read and Birch seconded. The motion to adopt resolution 1112-06 was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Open Discussion…

Culmer brought up open questions of what GPC should do in the coming year? What can GPC continue to do? What are new things that GPC should do? Culmer asked for honest responses to better serve graduate and professional students.

Nathan Applegren, Chemistry, wanted a GPC newsletter to spread word about the work of the GPC. Culmer replied that we are working with the design center on a monthly GPC newsletter for the website and to be emailed for the next academic year.

Sarah Kendrick, Fisheries and Wildlife, Impressed with how together the council is and had no recommendations.

Grey discussed the major committees and small committees and wanted the team to reevaluate if we need them. Her committee leader never contacted her, even when she reached out with them. Culmer asked if the committee was internal or external. Grey
responded it was an external committee. Culmer explained the external committees (outside of us) process and our plans for utilized committee reports for general assembly members in external committees. Culmer wants to get more external committee information to the general assembly.

Birch had the same issue with her external committee. She never got an email about the process from GPC and we need to know the process. Wright addressed both concerns. He wants to streamline the process with following through and contacting people in the external committee.

Culmer discussed the possibility working with the Graduate school during the orientation event. He also requested that if assembly members had anything ideas to please email us.

A general assembly member motioned to extend discussion time by two minutes. Motion was seconded by a Mower and passed unanimously by voice vote.

A general assembly member wanted a document explaining GPC for mid-year joiners like him, assuming that general assembly members got it at the start of the year. Birch agreed with the idea because we get new people throughout the year, including at-large members; maybe a reminder at the start of each meeting.

Andrew Bisto, Sociology, wanted GPC to get involved in the Columbia community. Culmer gave some examples of GPC community work, including West Boulevard Elementary activity and X_MAS with Boys and Girls town. We want to continue these activities and new committee will encourage this. Urme Ali, GPC Programming and Publicity Officer, talked about a partnership with EPIC that needs to develop. She also asked general assembly members to let us know how we can do more service in the community.

**Officer Reports**

**Technology Coordinator**, Mower, thanked the assembly for the opportunity to serve and reminded the assembly to check the website for GPC information and documents.

**State Issues Coordinator**, Mary Francis, had nothing to report

**Programming and Publicity**, Ali, reminded the assembly about the upcoming event at Quinton’s

**Secretary**, Michael Martin had nothing to report.

**Treasurer**, Kristina Haug, presented the details of the last travel fund cycle (see below). All applicants would be notified Friday and she reminded the assembly to spread the word to their departments about the importance of the letters of recommendation for the travel grant applications.
Vice-President, Wright, Gave a brief update of the gold chalk awards, thanking those who helped evaluate the nominations. He also highlight that Rollins Society tapped 8 people on Tap Day.

President, Culmner reminded the assembly about the upcoming event with West Boulevard students. Culmner wants the GPC to partner with the Missouri Students Association (MSA) to make this event bigger. He thanked the general assembly members and three outgoing Executive Board members for their hard work. Culmner urged the members to contact the GPC Executive Board of the summer if they had any comments, questions, or concerns.

Liaison Reports
None

Announcements
None

Adjournment
Kendrick motioned to adjourn and Jake Mydlo, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis, seconded. The motion to adjourn was accepted by unanimous voice vote at 6:50pm.

Members Present
Sara Lizarraga, Agricultural Economics
Kristina Haug, Agricultural Education and GPC Treasurer
Niki Eaton, Art History & Archeology
Carrie Schmidt, Biological Engineering
Alice Tipton, Biological Sciences
Nathan Applegren, Chemistry
Rebecca Benson, Classical Studies
Brittney Goo, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Amanda Gray, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Genevieve Labe, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Jake Mydlo, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
Sarah Kendrick, Fisheries & Wildlife
Pennan Chinnasamy, Forestry
Deepika Menon, Learning Teaching & Curriculum
Raymond Troy, Nuclear Engineering
Seth Kurtenbach, Philosophy
Matt Mower, Physics and GPC Technology Coordinator
Andrew Bisto, Sociology
Mustapha Alhassan, Social Work
Mohita Emadi, Textile & Apparel Management
Milbre Burch, Theater
Sage Buckner, Veterinary School
Nikki Freeman, Veterinary School
Phillip Zema, At-Large
Dane Schaffer, At-Large
Chris Owens, At-Large
Patrick Spencer, At-Large
Tanvi Banerjee, At-Large
Ray Zuniga, At-Large
Phillip Mohebalisn, At-Large
Mary Francis, GPC State Issues Coordinator
Michael Martin, GPC Secretary
Urme Ali, GPC Programming and Publicity Coordinator
Jake Wright, GPC Vice-President
Kristofferson Culmer, GPC President