Hello fellow graduate students!

I hope that your semester is ending on a high note and that final research projects are turning out nicely. To all graduate students who are graduating, congratulations!

It has been an honor to serve as President of the Graduate Student Advisory Council this year. I have been able to meet some amazing graduate students, grow as an individual, and help develop an organization that I truly feel can help unite graduate students into one graduate community, advocating for the many needs of graduate students.

When I took this position I outlined five different areas in which I wanted GSAC to focus its attention. I am happy to report that we made significant gains in each area! My fellow board members will share more details, but here is a brief synopsis of our gains in those outlined areas:

**Increase the communication between graduate students:** GSAC implemented a quarterly newsletter, increased our social media presence, and created a listserv for all graduate students to receive monthly updates!

**Create real leadership development opportunities for graduate students:** GSAC created five separate standing committees for graduate students that were chaired by each of the executive positions!

**Plan Monthly Social Events for Graduate Students:** Our Event Planning committee tripled the number of events we planned as compared to last year!

**Implement another Quality of Life Survey:** Dean Augustine is incredibly pleased to see another quality of life survey sent through to graduate students, with close to 20% participating each year!

**Examine the orientation process for graduate students:** The Orientation Committee was created and they completed many projects that are close to completion, including videos and updated publications!

In addition, we were able to revise our constitution, present at a national conference on the growth of GSAC, bring Graduate Student Appreciation Week to EIU, and build a closer partnership with the Graduate School.

These acts have built a strong foundation for future graduate student leaders to continue the success of GSAC in the years to come!

I would like to thank Beckie Maday, Jessica McDonald, Jenna Day, Susan Voskuil, Bill Elliott, and Dr. Carrie Dale for serving with me on the executive board. They put in a great deal of hours growing the organization, provided many unique ideas, and most importantly, were able to keep me in line when my ideas got a little too big! I appreciate getting to know them as individuals and know they all have bright futures here at EIU and beyond.

It is sad to think that my time at EIU is coming to a close, but the memories and friendships I have made will last a lifetime. Best of luck to each of you in the future!

Alex Dresen
2012-2013 President
I am Valerie Penn, a first year in the College Student Affairs program and the Associate Resident Director of Andrews Hall. I grew up in Meridian, Mississippi, and attended Mississippi State University for my undergrad where I earned a degree in communication with a public relations emphasis. At Mississippi State, I served as the Chair for the Relay for Life planning committee, was appointed as a Communication Ambassador, and was a member of the MSU Fashion Board. I was also a Resident Advisor for two years. Here at EIU, I advise the men of Sigma Alpha Epsilon and was a coach for Girls on the Run this semester. I am also the incoming advisor for the Andrews Hall Council. I look forward to serving as the president of GSAC for the coming year.

In the coming year, I propose the following goals for GSAC:

• **Represent the graduate students at EIU.** This is the purpose of the Graduate Student Advisory Council and crucial part of the organization. I plan to continue this effort as we move into a new year and continue to need communication between the graduate student body and Dean Augustine.

• **Maintain communication among graduate students.** This year has been a year of improvement and progress for GSAC. The communication channels have improved. It would be my goal to try to maintain and improve this communication.

• **Continue to work on and enhance the orientation process for graduate students.** This goal is in progress and will continue to be a focus for GSAC as it has been a specific request from the graduate student body.

• **Provide opportunity for social engagement.** Many graduate students only know graduates within their program. GSAC facilitated some great events this year that promoted community within the graduate student body, and I would like to see those efforts continued and improved.

• **Continue community service efforts.** This semester’s March Madness was a step in the right direction as GSAC strives to be a more contributing member of the local, state, national, and global community. I would like to see GSAC continue engaging in community service opportunities.

• **Increase professional development opportunities.** This year, GSAC brought in Robert Allan Paul from Company of One. I would like to see GSAC continue providing opportunities like this for the graduate student body as well as the undergraduate and faculty and staff populations.

**Amended Constitution and Mission Statement**

During the 2013 Spring semester the GSAC Executive Board, under the direction of Vice President of Administrative Activities, Beckie Maday, College Student Affairs master’s candidate, worked diligently and intentionally to update our mission statement and constitution so that those documents were more relevant to the functionality of the organization. On April 16, 2013 the amendments and revisions were approved by a general assembly electronic vote due to not meeting quorum at April’s monthly meeting. **CLICK HERE** for the final copy of the constitution.

The Mission Statement was adopted at the January Executive Board meeting and also approved by electronic vote on April 16, 2013. After review, the original mission statement was over a page in length and did not encompass the current purposes and goals of the organization. For the amended Mission Statement **CLICK HERE**.
Executive Council Annual Reports

**Graduate Student Advisory Council Advisor Report**
This past year has seen a dramatic increase in awareness of the campus community to GSAC and it's role in graduate education. From the beginning of Fall semester, our GSAC Executive Board has worked tirelessly to promote graduate student issues, and has used the past years Quality of Life survey to guide it's programming and social activities. A social media-friendly Newsletter, active roles on campus advisory boards, and hosting Robert Allan Paul as a guest speaker have been just a few of the many activities that have been accomplished this past year. In addition, the Board and several GSAC members have updated and re-written the GSAC constitution to better represent our organization. Our Graduate Student Dean has created an archival project that will showcase GSAC’s history and help future members understand the GSAC mission. As an advisor to GSAC, I could not be more proud of their many accomplishments this past academic year.

**Orientation Committee Report***
Rachael Jannusch, Master’s Candidate in Dietetics, and Alex Dresen co-chaired the Orientation Committee. They performed surveys, focus groups, and interviews to gain insight on graduate students’ experiences as they enter EIU. As a result, the committee has the following projects at or near-completion:
- Published a “50 Things To Do in Charleston” document.
- Wrote the script for a 5 minute “Orientation to EIU” video, which will feature President Perry and Dean Augustine.
- Analyzed the current online orientation for graduate students and are working with the Graduate School to repurpose it as a “Graduate Resource Center.”
- Planning a welcome event at the beginning of each semester to bring together graduate students, faculty, and staff to immediately start forming connections with each other.
- Creating a “Welcome to EIU” letter to be sent to all graduate students on behalf of GSAC once accepted to their program. Special thanks to the MBA Association on this project!
- Performed research for future GSAC groups if they so choose to implement projects on graduate program orientation or advising best practices.

We can’t wait to bring about these changes for future graduate students, and hope this will significantly ease the transition for graduate students as they enter EIU!

* President report can be found on the first page of the newsletter

**Vice President of Administrative Activities Report**
With the help of some fabulous committee and Executive Board members, we were able to create a constitution that better aligned with the goals and mission of not only GSAC but also the university. We tried to create communication with SGA and the graduate student representatives by becoming a part of the mailing list as well as reading about the updates that SGA was talking about and continuing their implementations throughout the second semester.

**Vice President of Programming and Event Planning Committee Report**
This year has been a GREAT turnout of GSAC members to our events! Thanks to the Event Planning Committee and everyone who help in planning, promoting, and putting on the events throughout both semesters! Here a just some of the awesome things we have been able to accomplish this year:
- 4 O’Clock Club Social
- Mike and Stan’s Social
- Festival of Trees with Sara Bush
- Helped with the EIU Student Volunteer winter coat drive
- Bowling and Wings Social
- Professional Development Speaker
- March Volunteer Madness
- Girls on the Run 5K
- Grad Student Send-off!

We hope that you have enjoyed the events that have happened this year and we can to continue growing and expanding to do even more next year! Thanks!

**Vice President of Public Relations and Outreach Committee**
With the active support of the Outreach Committee and Executive Board members the Graduate Student Advisory now has a strong digital presence on Eastern Illinois University’s website, Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. GSAC has also created a centralized communication hub by establishing an email address through Google that allows Executive Board members to organize emails and edit and store documents on the Drive. Additionally, the VP PR and Outreach committee have increased GSAC’s campus outreach by participating in PantherPalooza, purchasing a banner to display at volunteer, social, and collaborative events, creating and distributing advertisements for all programs and events, hosting the National Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week, utilizing the GSAC Listserv and Graduate Listserv to communicate relevant information to graduate students, and created a quarterly newsletter distributed to all graduate students, Graduate Coordinators, and Graduate School staff.
Executive Council Annual Reports

Student Dean and Finance Committee
As this year’s Graduate Student Dean I had the pleasure of serving on the GSAC E-Board, heading the GSAC Finance Committee, and representing graduate students at different school functions throughout the year. During the fall semester I attended the NAGPS National Conference, hosted by Duke University, and came back from the experience with a lot of ideas for our own University and grad. population. One such idea that came to fruition through the Finance Committee was an analysis of student fees on campus. Committee members and myself broke down the graduate student fees and contacted specific on-campus offices to better understand where fee money is allocated and how graduate students can make the most out of what they are paying.

This spring semester GSAC launched the second annual Quality of Life Survey to ascertain the graduate students general satisfaction with campus resources, graduate programs, and social activities provided by EIU. The analysis of this information is vital to GSAC for future programming and understanding what the grad. population at EIU needs. Currently, I am working on digitizing a GSAC archives from 2004 to present onto our website and making it accessible to the campus community. It has been a wonderful experience and an honor to serve as EIU’s Graduate Student Dean for the 2012-2013 academic year!

Select Survey Results:
2013 Quality of Life Survey

On a scale of 1 (Strongly Dissatisfied) to 6 (Strongly Satisfied)

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Average 2012</th>
<th>Average 2013</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please rank your satisfaction with your graduate program professors</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>5.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please rank your satisfaction with your program advisor and/or graduate coordinator</td>
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<td>5.05</td>
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<td>Please rank your overall satisfaction with EIU</td>
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<td>Please rank your satisfaction with campus resources</td>
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<td>Please rank your satisfaction with your connection to fellow graduate students</td>
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<td>Please rank your satisfaction with your orientation to your graduate program</td>
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<td>4.75</td>
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<td>Please rank your satisfaction with your program related courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please rank your satisfaction with your awareness of EIU events</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Social Events

- Happy Hour
- Recreational Events
- Bowling
- Weekend Activities
- Pub Night/Themed Meals
- Mixers
- Charleston Area Events
- EIU Sporting Events

2013 Respondents vs 2012 Respondents
The necessary expenses of GSAC shall be met by funding provided by the Graduate School at Eastern Illinois University, graduate student fees, and GSAC fundraising activities.

Section 2 The Executive Board shall propose an annual budget to be voted upon no later than the second regular meeting of the academic year. Any unbudgeted expenditures shall be approved in advance by the membership. When financial decisions must be made between meetings, the Executive Board is authorized to approve expenditures not exceeding $200.

Section 3 GSAC funds shall not be used to purchase or reimburse student members for alcoholic beverages.
A Glance at the 2012 - 2013 GSAC

Fall Social
At the end of the Fall '12 semester the VP of Programming and the Programming Committee hosted an end of the semester social at Mike and Stan's located off of the Charleston Square.

Meetings

PantherPalooza
This spring the GSAC Executive Board represented GSAC at Pantherpalooza. Pantherpalooza as an RSO fair sponsored by Student Government. The purpose of the fair is to showcase the many campus registered student organizations in a simple, centralized, convenient, and organized fashion.
In February GSAC took their monthly social to Charleston Lanes for a night of family friendly bowling!

Robert Allan Paul gave three professional development presentations (faculty, undergraduate students, and graduate students respectively) on Wednesday, February 27, 2013. In 45 minutes, Mr. Paul was able to discuss how to discover personal strengths, develop professional strategies, and differentiate yourself from everyone else in a "brand new way" to become the candidate of choice.

Congratulations to the College Student Affairs graduate program! Because of their high participation in our 'Like' drive GSAC hosted a pizza party for the graduate students.
Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week

The week of April 1-5, 2013 EIU's Graduate Student Advisory Council celebrated the work of nearly 1,500 graduate and professional students by having a week long series of extracurricular events.

2013 Distinguished Graduate Student

The Graduate School recognized graduate students hard work and scholarship at a banquet hosted at EIU. This awards ceremony was preceded by a graduate research fair and proceeded by a VIP dinner.

Graduate Student Send Off

Held at Morton Park, the graduate students and friends gathered to listen to acoustic music, share stories about the year, and enjoy some great good!
Girls on the Run is a national organization that promotes positive youth development for girls from 3rd to 8th grade through programming and training for a 5k. The organization inspires girls to be joyful, healthy, and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running. This year GSAC sponsored the East Central chapter by volunteering as motivators along a section of the 5k course.

Executive Board Vacancies for 2013-2014

Are you a motivated individual that is interested in enriching your graduate student experience by getting involved? Do you know an incoming masters candidate that is looking to refine their leadership skills while having a blast!? Elections for the Vice Presidents are held at the first General Assembly meeting of each fall semester and if that first meeting is a time that quorum is not met, will be conducted by electronic ballot.

Below is a list of each of the positions and their responsibilities. If you are interested and have more questions or would like to recommend someone for GSAC to contact about a position, please feel free to email GSAC at eiuGSAC@eiu.edu.

The Vice President of Administrative Activities shall preside at organization meetings in the absence of the President. In this time, the Vice President shall perform all legal duties assigned by the President. The Vice President of Administrative Activities shall also act as liaison between GSAC and Student Government, maintain and enforce the constitution, maintain membership records, and record all meeting minutes from GSAC meetings.

The Vice President of Programming shall organize and oversee all activities and events of GSAC, seek relevant professional development opportunities for graduate matters, and collaborate with other departments, RSOs, and community groups to organize and execute GSAC events.

The Vice President of Public Relations shall be responsible for creating all print and non-print correspondence for all GSAC events, developing and publishing the bi-semester newsletter, monitor and update social media outlets and website, oversee other special correspondence with external constituents as needed.
Spring Commencement: Saturday, May 4, 2013

Ceremony Times:
9 a.m. College of Sciences
12 p.m. College of Arts and Humanities and School of Continuing Education
3 p.m. College of Education and Professional Studies
6 p.m. Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences

Commencement Day Instructions

- The graduate should arrive at Lantz Fieldhouse one hour before his/her ceremony. THERE IS NO REHEARSAL.
- Chairs will be set up in the Fieldhouse exactly as they are in the Gymnasium. A name card will be on each chair with the name of the graduate that is to sit in that chair. Some simple instructions will be given and the graduates will process as a group from the Fieldhouse to the Gymnasium.
- Each graduate should take his/her name card with them as they proceed to the ceremony. This card will be used to read his/her name as they cross the stage. If the graduates name is difficult to pronounce, the reader will be available at the south end of the Fieldhouse, prior to the ceremony.
- Please Do Not Bring Valuables To The Fieldhouse. Leave them with a relative or lock them in your car. The Fieldhouse Will Not Be Secured During the Ceremony.
- Please plan to meet your family or guests outside or in the Student Rec Center after the Ceremony.
- Cap and Gown Returns will be in the Student Rec Center immediately following the ceremony. Graduates will not return to the Fieldhouse after the ceremony.

Ticket Distribution
May 1-3, 9 am to 5 pm
Arcola-Tuscola Room, MLK Union

TICKET AVAILABILITY
9 am: up to 8 tickets, with 2 extra available
12 pm: up to 8 tickets, with 2 extra available
3 pm: up to 7 tickets, with 1 extra available
6 pm: up to 7 tickets, with 1 extra available
You must present ID when picking up your allotted guest tickets.
NO ADMITTANCE WILL BE ALLOWED WITHOUT A TICKET.

Cap & Gown Pick Up
TODAY through May 3 from 9-5 pm.
Charleston/Matton Room, MLK Union

If you are unable to be on campus until Commencement Day you can pick up your cap and gown in the Fieldhouse of Lantz Arena on Commencement Day.