

USA Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

10/24/22 @ 3 PM

Faculty Club

Members Present: Eric Loomis, Mark Taylor U Gwendolyn Pennywell, Debra Chapman, Stefanie Robert Cloutier, Leigh Minchew, Ben Lee, Blair Sale, Aishwarya Prakash, David Woolverton, Joyce Pitman, Haley Mullinax, Todd Andel, Edmund Spencer, Harold Pardue, Lorene Flinders, Norman Tanner, Ashley Suggs, Heather Nix, DeAnna Cobb

Guests: Ashley Gibson, Avery Robinson, acyln Bunch, Nel Schwarz, Rajnaudhury, Tammy Vance

Agenda and materials distributed prior to the meeting.

1. Minutes from prior meeting(Pardue): Motioned, seconded, approved.
2. Graduate Dean's Report(Pardue): The Graduate School was not affected by budget cuts for this year due to the previous budget cut. The USA Foundation funding covers a significant portion of the graduate assistant stipends. We do not have an endowment source yet, however, the university is alert

they cannot pay the application fee, how will they be able to afford to get to Mobile? Also, part of the application fee covers marketing funds as well. An international student has been hired to welcome international applicants, answer questions, and nudge any applicants who have not completed the application process.

4. GSA Organization and role in the Graduate Council (David Woolverton)-David Woolverton was introduced and serves as the President of the GSA. This is a student led and student founded independent organization with no institutional association. The GSA will identify graduate student needs such as an increase in stipends for example. The GSA wants to be a part of the administrative decision-making process on behalf of graduate students at large. Housing/accommodations is a current need. Tres Stefurak agreed that housing is a critical need and the advising process needs improvement as well. Satisfied graduate students lead to higher retention rates and would help South become a more successful institution. Currently, it is not feasible to have the same organization set up as the undergraduate student association, but this is a potential. A neutral physical office location is needed.

