

A Quarterly Newsletter by the Graduate Student Association

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THE YEAR AHEAD

This is an exciting time to be a graduate student at the University of Montana! The anticipated solution to the proposed three-credit minimum requirement, the University's desire to expand the graduate program to unprecedented levels, and the recruitment of a new Graduate School dean all point to a new beginning at the University of Montana! Graduate students will be playing a more important role than ever.

As a new continuous enrollment requirement of three credits is on the horizon, the graduate school has taken on the challenge of finding out whether it will solve the problem of getting students through their programs in time. This will mean, in the very near future, that the Graduate School along with the Graduate Student Association will be sending out a survey in order to shed light on whether getting students through their programs is a problem, and if the one-credit continuous enrollment requirement is at the heart of it. The information acquired in this survey will mean the difference in the affordability and quality of graduate programs on this campus.

Not only is the graduate school changing, though, but the entire university. Because of the decline of graduating high school seniors in the state of Montana, the university is looking to shift some focus from undergraduate to graduate programs. In President Dennison's State of the University address, he revealed his plans to expand the graduate program to unprecedented levels. It is with this shift of focus that we will begin to see other issues move to the forefront such as faculty loads and a search for sources of funding for the expansion of graduate programs.

Along with the new vision at the University of Montana, we are seeing the retirement of our much-appreciated Graduate School Dean, David Strobel, and the coming of a new dean at the end of this semester. From dean candidates thus far, we have seen proposed solutions ranging from increased stimulation of our most successful programs to integrating various programs on campus.

It is with these changes in mind that graduate students can better plan for their futures and make sure their voices are heard. We have an opportunity now, more than ever, to shape the future of our school, the university, and the state in a way that has not been presented before.

Steve Hurin
GSA President

LOGISTICAL CHANGES FOR THE YEAR

This year there will be some changes that affect every student on campus and how they conduct business with the university.

The first important change is that the course schedule for spring will only be online. It can be accessed at <http://cyberbear.umt.edu>. Like our financial statements, this means that most university business will now be conducted online.

Also, if you want grizmail messages sent to your personal account, there is a way to do that. Just go to <http://grizmail.umt.edu>. At the bottom of the page there is a link to a FAQ sheet that addresses how to bounce grizmail into your personal account. This enables those of us who do not regularly check the all-important university e-mail to stay abreast of university notices more regularly.

If you have any logistical questions about the Graduate School, policies, and procedures please feel free to e-mail the Graduate Student Association at umgsa@umontana.edu or the Graduate School at grad.school@umontana.edu.

CONFERENCES, ANYONE?

There are many conferences that occur during the year for students from all disciplines across the nation.

Such conferences are a great way to network and represent yourself and the University of Montana to the rest of the nation.

During the year, the Graduate Student Association offers three travel awards for students wanting to represent the university; though the trouble often is finding a conference that will fit for you. The following are some upcoming conferences, but feel free to contact your department and program advisor for more information on conferences that apply to you and your area of expertise.

The big local conference that will be happening is the Graduate Student Faculty Research Conference. It will be held Saturday, April 5. Submissions are due March 8. Please e-mail GradFacConf@mso.umt.edu for more info.

Another conference of notice is the International Globalization, Diversity, and Education Conference in Spokane on Feb. 28. Again, for more information please contact the GSA or the Graduate School.

MEET AND GREET...YAY!

The Graduate Student Association will be hosting a fundraiser/mixer for graduate students at The Pressbox Bar and Grill at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 7. Stay as long as you like – it's \$5 all-you-can-drink.

Also feel free to order food or other drinks at the bar.

This is a great opportunity to meet students from other disciplines and take some time from the otherwise hectic life of a graduate student at the University of Montana.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The University of Montana Graduate Student Association will be implementing a strategic plan for the rest of the year. With this plan, GSA hopes to increase graduate student involvement, make sure that our voice is represented to the university administration and our state, and to increase fiscal viability.

In increasing student involvement, the plan includes workshops at the next Big Sky Career Fair and biennial (or more) meet and greets for graduate students. This gives people the opportunity to be more involved on campus and more aware of graduate student concerns.

In making sure the graduate students are represented, the GSA is attending relevant committee meetings and making sure that there is student input on important decisions such as the selection of a new Graduate School dean candidate. We will also be hosting a forum this spring on the relevance of graduate education to the state of Montana in April.

In increasing fiscal viability, the GSA is taking a hands-on approach where all of the officers write down how much we are spending in order to make sure that we do not go over budget. We will also be seeking ideas on how to bring more money into our organization in order to create a GSA that the students deserve.

With everything that is going on this semester, it is important to have a GSA that is involved on campus and promotes active student participation.

Thank you for your continued support,

The GSA officers