

Executive Report

NAGPS Western Region Conference
April 6-9, 2006
Colorado University
Boulder, Colorado

Goals: Attend my first NAGPS Board Meeting, gain insights for planning our regional conference, network with other graduate students and associations, and establish a leadership role in NAGPS.

Summary:

I participated in the planned events beginning Thursday evening with a casual reception through Saturday night. Friday morning the conference sessions began with an informal conversation over breakfast with John Stevenson, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education at University of Colorado (UC). The sessions and workshops proceeded rapidly, with short breaks in between. The following sessions were held:

- “Putting on a Symposium for Research, Creative Achievement, and Scholarship”
Chris Lackey – Illinois State University
- “Surveying Graduate Students”
Lou McClelland
- Graduate Teacher Program: “The Lead Network”
Brian Klocke
- GTP: “Preparing Future Faculty”
Laura Border, and Hoag Holmgren
- GTP and ISSS: “Where are the international graduate students”
Tina Tan, Sae Ogihara, Hiromi Sumiya, Galina Siarheichyk
- Academic or Non-Academic Career: “Non-Academic Career Mentoring”
Valentine Roche
- “How graduate students can advocate and organize effectively for LBGT issues on their campus.”
Doris Dirks, Western Michigan University

On Friday afternoon the NAGPS Executive Board held a closed meeting to set the agenda for the NAGPS Board Meeting on Saturday. Friday evening was closed out with a very nice dinner at a local restaurant – sponsored by UC.

Saturday the NAGPS Board met all day, taking a break to join the Legislative luncheon session with Colorado State Senator Ron Tupa. We discussed the need for activism regarding graduate-professional student tuition aid and tax relief. The following sessions were held concomitantly, but I could not attend because I was in the Board meeting:

- “Graduate Student Health”
- “Running a Successful GSA Organization”
- “Importance of Lobbying”

The Board meeting ran all day, breaking only for lunch. Primary issues revolved around the reorganization of NAGPS as an organization. Membership, financial accounts and records, and leadership have all suffered a period of drought and are being restored through the hard work of the President, Vice-President, CFO and CIO (listed on roster). New Southeastern and Western Regional coordinators were attending. I will be working with the President on a strategic planning process for NAGPS to help it redirect and strengthen itself as an organization. This will be ready for presentation and implementation by the next Board meeting, to be held at the National NAGPS conference in November, 2006. The National Conference is to be hosted by the University of Washington in Seattle from November 6-9.

In the interim, I will have regular phone conversations with the VP regarding the membership drive. Also, there will be monthly NAGPS Board conference calls (next scheduled is May 7).

The West Regional Conference was a great success, and an estimated 30 people attended. The sessions were informative (but long and exhaustive) showing the wealth of information that is important to graduate-professional students. Saturday evening casual conversation turned to the need to have internal discussions about the social implications of the legislation that NAGPS continues to lobby for (the Higher Education Affordability and Equity Act¹). Future sessions should include more open debate regarding the possible impacts this legislation could have – both positive and negative.

This report is respectfully submitted to the GSS Executive Committee by Liz Linares, April 12, 2006.

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¹ This website is a gateway to information on the bill and lobby efforts:
<http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/gsa/gradtax/>