



2024 Annual Conference of Southern Graduate Schools

Location: Hyatt Regency Greenville Downtown

Meeting Dates: 13-15 March 2024

As we gather for our 2024 annual conference, our theme is Navigating the Falls: Reflection, Resilience, and Reinvention in Graduate Education. Like the falls in the center of Greenville, successful graduate education leadership in the South requires appreciation of the beauty of our community and reflection on the challenges of our past, present, and future. Navigating the falls (safely) is an appropriate and timely organizing idea.

With this theme in mind and guided by the desire to reflect upon the resilience of our community and reinvention in times of change or crisis, the Executive Committee and the Program Committee, led by our President-Elect, Dr. Jon Hakkila, sought plenaries and proposals that demonstrated solutions and highlighted work at multiple institutions in the following areas: (1) Advocating for Graduate Education in the South: Administrative, Legislative, and/or Advancement, (2) Recruitment of Diverse Students to the South, (3) Retention and Support for Students, Faculty, and Staff in the South, and (4) AI: Ethics, Innovation, and/or Management.

It's a strong program, and we look forward to benefitting from collaborative engagement and productive conversations as we navigate the falls together.

Conference Program (updated 12 March 2024)

All times are Eastern Standard Time.

Wednesday, March 13		
Redbud	7:30 to 4:30	Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools (CHBGS) Programming You can find CHBGS meeting details online at https://www.chbgs.org/conferences/
Meeting Planner Office	3:00 to 5:30	CSGS Registration
Greenville ONE 1 North Main Street	6:00 to 8:00	CHBGS / CSGS Joint Reception Join us in this great Clemson University space to reconnect with colleagues, meet new members of our community, and celebrate the long-standing partnership and collaboration between our two organizations.

Thursday, March 14		
Meeting Planner Office	7:00 to 5:30	CSGS Registration
Regency Ballroom A + B	7:30 to 8:30	Breakfast
Crepe Myrtle	7:30 to 8:30	<p>William “Bill” Carr Breakfast for New Deans and Associate Deans</p> <p>This working breakfast is held annually in honor of the late Dr. William “Bill” Carr. For more than 30 years, Dr. Carr served as the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education at Jacksonville State University. He was a long-serving member of CSGS and a highly respected leader and mentor to many in the regional and national graduate education community. If you are new to graduate education leadership, in any form and whatever your title, you are encouraged to attend.</p> <p>Facilitators: Dr. Ruth Bahr, Dean for the Office of Graduate Studies, University of South Florida Dr. Nancy Biggio, Associate Vice President for the Graduate School, University of New Orleans</p>
Regency Ballroom C	8:30 to 9:00	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Dr. Mary Farmer-Kaiser, President, Conference of Southern Graduate Schools and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Louisiana at Lafayette Dr. John Lopes, Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, Clemson University Dr. Robert H. Jones, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Clemson University</p>
Regency Ballroom C	9:00 to 10:00	<p>Plenary I</p> <p>Navigating the Falls ... What Value the Reflection, Resilience, and Reinvention in Graduate Education? Clemson University – An Example</p> <p>Chair: Dr. Brian Dominy, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Engagement and Curriculum Development, Clemson University, and CSGS Executive Board Member Speaker: Dr. Frankie Felder, Former Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School and Associate Professor of Education, Emeritus, Clemson University</p> <p>2024 marks the 100th year of awarding graduate degrees at Clemson University, and three years short, technically, of 100 years of CSGS' focus on graduate education. This centennial milestone for Clemson, and South Carolina's hosting of the CSGS conference in Greenville, affords an appropriate opportunity for reflection on progress, problems, solutions, predictions, hopes and desires -- not just at Clemson, but in the southern region. This session uses Clemson University as an example of the value embodied in the Conference</p>

		theme and demonstrates the invaluable contributions of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools to the growth of graduate education and research in the South.
Regency Ballroom C	10:00 to 10:45	Welcome from CGS + Master's Degrees At Work Dr. Suzanne T. Ortega, President, Council of Graduate Schools
Prefunction Area	10:45 to 11:00	Networking / Coffee Break
	11:00 to 12:00	Concurrent Breakout Sessions
Regency Ballroom G		<p>Concurrent Breakout 1a Riding the Rapids of a Receding Applicant Pool: Factors Impacting Graduate Student College Choice Speaker: Dr. Lindsey Shelton (Mississippi State University) Speaker: Dr. Haley Hardenbrook (NC State University) Speaker: Dr. Steven Bergman (NC State University)</p> <p>The impending enrollment cliff has been a regular topic amongst higher education officials for years. Slated to hit undergraduate programs by 2025, it is anticipated that graduate schools will begin feeling the impact by 2029. This study looks at factors influencing graduate student college choice to determine how to offset the decline in both international and domestic eligible students. This session presents case studies from two different public, research-intensive institutions, and examines applicants' decisions to enroll or not enroll over a four-year period. One case study will focus on domestic student enrollment and one on international enrollment. The results of these studies provide insight into the individual and academic factors that influence college choice, while also measuring the impact that the length of time from app to admit has on an applicant's decision to enroll or not enroll. By identifying these influences and determining which factors universities can control, enrollment managers will have a better understanding of where to invest their time and resources when it comes to graduate recruitment.</p>
Regency Ballroom F		<p>Concurrent Breakout 1b Fostering Support for High-Impact Professional Development Practices Speaker: Dr. Jana Stone (Georgia Institute of Technology) Speaker: Dr. Tracy Costello (University of South Florida)</p> <p>Professional development and co-curricular experiential learning opportunities are high impact practices that are critical to preparing students for their academic and career success. Students are most likely to take advantage of professional development and experiential learning activities when encouraged by their academic advisors, however faculty support can vary. This session will look at two case studies to illustrate common challenges and benefits of collaborations between centralized career and professional</p>

		<p>development units and graduate programs.</p> <p>Case 1: Centralized professional development programs can both augment the training students receive and support faculty and graduate programs.</p> <p>Case 2: Internships provide a means for Master's and Ph.D. students to use the technical skills they learn in their academic program in real-world, collaborative settings, and frequently result in full-time job offers following graduation. They also provide a platform to build university-corporate partnerships.</p> <p>These cases will be used to initiate a discussion of how central service units can best work with graduate programs and faculty to provide professional development activities that align with their academic objectives.</p>
<p>Regency Ballroom H</p>		<p>Concurrent Breakout 1c Silencing the ‘Woke’ Mob: Becoming a Mutually Offensive Offender in Graduate Education Speaker: Dr. Troy Terry (University of North Georgia) Speaker: Dr. Suzanne Barbour (Duke University)</p> <p>The First Amendment remains under attack from political and local community organizations on both the right and left, and professional educators remain caught in the crosshairs. P-12 public educators have been caught up in the ‘culture wars’ for more than 30 years, but now the mob has moved from the local schoolhouse to the ivy-covered halls of higher education. Multiple states have passed laws limiting, and in some cases, attempting to do away with academic freedom, tenure, and higher education accreditation. How are academic administrators navigating the turbulent waters of ‘appropriate’ public communication while leading faculty and students toward academic achievements and better understanding? Can higher education still be seen as the ‘expert’ and a contributor to ‘the public good?’ In this proposal, we focus on a few Southern states that have passed laws meant to rein in academic freedom in higher education, and how educators in those states are navigating the rapids in each. We propose conversation, engagement, and “humble” listening as strategies to empower graduate students to be leaders who both exercise their own first amendment rights and protect the rights of others. After framing the question during the first part of the session, we will engage the audience in conversation about existing and potential approaches that graduate deans can take to empower their students on this issue.</p>
<p>Redbud</p>	<p>11:00-12:00</p>	<p>Graduate Student Breakout Session How to Get the Most Out of Your Time Managing Complex Projects Speaker: Dr. Jenny Presgraves (Clemson University) Speaker: Dr. Virginia Clark (Clemson University)</p>

Regency Ballroom A + B	12:15 to 1:15	Networking Lunch
Regency Ballroom C	1:30 to 2:45	Plenary II Navigating Higher Education Legal Issues Impacting Graduate Education Chair: Dr. Jon Hakkila, Associate Provost of International Services, Academic Integrity, and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Alabama in Huntsville and CSGS President-Elect Speaker: Mackenzie Murphy-Wilfong, JD, Vice President of Legal Affairs and General Counsel, Tulsa Community College
Prefunction Area	2:45 to 3:00	Networking/Coffee Break
	3:00 to 4:30	3MT Preliminary Heats
Regency Ballroom H		3MT Heat 1
Regency Ballroom F		3MT Heat 2
Redbud		3MT Heat 3
Dogwood		3MT Heat 4
Boardroom	4:45 to 5:30	Audit Committee Meeting
Avenue (Event Venue) 110 E. Court Street	6:00 to 8:00	Reception Join us to celebrate our CSGS community and to learn who will compete in the 3MT Finals.
Friday, March 15		
Meeting Planner Office	7:00 to 5:30	CSGS Registration
Regency Ballroom A + B	7:30 to 8:30	Breakfast – Sponsored by ETS Get to Know Your International Applicants Speaker: Dawn Lipker, Educational Partnerships / Global Higher Education, ETS Speaker: Dale Turner, Associate Director, Educational Partnerships, ETS
Regency Ballroom C	8:30 to 9:45	Plenary III Affirmative Action in Southern Universities and Graduate Education: The Meaning, Impact, and Opportunities Related to the Supreme Court Rulings during Times of Uncertainty and an Unfolding Political Climate Chair and Facilitator: Dr. Desi S. Hacker, Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies, Norfolk State University Speaker: Dr. Ansley Abraham, Founding Director of the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program Speaker: Dr. Lorelle L. Espinosa, Program Director at the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation)

		<p>Speaker: Dr. Jay D. Marr, Vice President, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)</p> <p>When the U.S. Supreme Court struck down affirmative action in college admissions, it triggered many questions, including: what is acceptable practice in graduate admissions, how is funding for underrepresented students affected, and how will it impact access to graduate education and diversity in the higher education workforce? This panel will explore these and related issues with representatives from three organizations concerned with equity in graduate education and the professoriate: the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Doctoral Scholars Program, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The panel will also present data on current trends in enrollment of underrepresented graduate students, how the ruling has shaped their work, their role as allies to the field, and as well as short- and long-term strategies for navigating the changing legal and political landscape.</p>
Prefunction Area	9:45 to 10:00	Networking/Coffee Break
	10:00 to 11:00	Concurrent Breakout Sessions
Regency Ballroom F		<p>Concurrent Breakout 2a</p> <p>Graduate Student Funding in the Era of Race-Blind Admissions: How Can We Enhance Diversity in Research and Training Programs Today?</p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Julie Goodliffe (University of North Carolina Charlotte)</p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Peter Harries (NC State University)</p> <p>In a ripple effect of the 2023 Supreme Court ruling that limited the use of race as a factor in college admissions, any consideration of race in scholarships or funding eligibility is also under scrutiny and there are also initial cases filed questioning the legality of scholarships focused on minoritized populations. The updated 2024 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program aims to “broaden participation of the full spectrum of diverse talents in STEM,” whereas prior to the ruling that was articulated to “broaden participation in science and engineering of underrepresented groups, including women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and veterans”. The loss of the explicit language to broaden participation of specific groups is noticeable, and accompanies different responses along a similar path such as the end of the racial and ethnic diversity-focused Ford Foundation Fellowship Program as of 2024. However, federal funding agencies remain dedicated to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, and NSF and NIH faculty-led research and training grants are required to demonstrate successful efforts to recruit a diverse pool of students. The NIH explains that “centralized institutional efforts alone will not satisfy the requirement to recruit individuals from underrepresented groups to the training program,” which may reflect that these institutional efforts with respect to admissions are now unconstitutional.</p>

	<p>This session seeks to generate a discussion about these potentially compounding impacts of changes in the law and in policies on our students' ability to obtain fellowships and research assistantships: the loss of diversity in our most competitive programs accompanied by threats to dedicated funding for students of diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.</p> <p>In this session, we will facilitate a discussion to understand: 1) what are institutions' current practices for identifying qualified and diverse applicants for the NSF GRFP, research, and training grants, 2) what are concerns or perils of current practices, 3) how engaged are faculty, and what training and support is needed, and 4) what is needed overall, and how might this change? We will brainstorm about: 1) best practices for supporting a diversity of students in their efforts to participate in scientific research, 2) new approaches to fund a diversity of students given the potential spread of race-blind requirements into funding, and 3) mechanisms and approaches to engage faculty in the effort.</p>
<p>Regency Ballroom H</p>	<p>Concurrent Breakout 2b Building a Culture of Mentoring in Graduate Education: Lessons Learned in Supporting Students, Faculty, and Staff in Developing Mentoring Competencies Speaker: Dr. Julie Harlin (Texas A&M University) Speaker: Dr. Morgan Schweller (Texas A&M University) Speaker: Dr. Delaney Couri (Texas A&M University) Speaker: Dr. Gogol Falia (Texas A&M University)</p> <p>Change in any institution of higher education is difficult but is especially challenging in very large institutions that are highly decentralized. This session will focus on how one institution has worked over the last four years to create and sustain a culture of mentoring for graduate and professional students that has reached thousands and engaged the entire campus community. We will discuss the process used to initiate this change using a shared-governance model and the strategic methods we have used to create and sustain the program by engaging faculty, staff, and graduate and professional students across every college and school and every location to ensure we are intentional in creating a culture of mentoring through the Graduate Mentoring Academy.</p> <p>This session will focus on the conference theme, Navigating the Fall, and the topic area, Retention and Support for Students, Faculty, and Staff in the South. Presenters will share how two offices at a large institution have worked collaboratively for four years to lead the institution into a new era where competence in mentoring is improved campus-wide with over a thousand faculty, staff, and students engaging in mentor development.</p>
<p>Regency Ballroom G</p>	<p>Concurrent Breakout 2c Don't Stick to the Rivers and the Lakes You're Used To: Strategies for</p>

		<p>Success with Hispanic Serving Institutions and First-Generation Graduate Students</p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Lilli Harris (Mississippi State University) Speaker: Dr. Lauren Benton (Mississippi State University) Speaker: Dr. Jeff Ragsdale (University of Texas San Antonio) Speaker: Dr. Rebecca Weston (University of Texas San Antonio) Speaker: Dr. María R. Medrano Guillén (University of Texas San Antonio)</p> <p>This session presents approaches used at two Graduate Schools to more effectively recruit, retain, and ensure timely degree completion for minority and first-generation graduate students. We will provide (1) a brief overview of a program designed to build community among first generation graduate students with (2) the marketing strategy aimed at redefining support for this often-overlooked demographic. We will also discuss (3) a strategy for increasing enrollment of Hispanic/Latino students at the Master’s level, (4) a professional development opportunity to promote transdisciplinary collaboration and build community, and (5) present results from a recent study on doctoral alumni showing differences by ethnicity in graduate education-related debt and predictive validity of GRE scores that have informed development of a new approach to doctoral programming. After these brief presentations, the presenters will highlight common themes and invite comments and feedback from the audience.</p>
Regency Ballroom D + E	10:00-11:00	<p>Graduate Student Breakout Session</p> <p>The Final Frontier: Getting Ready to Search for Your Next Challenge Speaker: Dr. Marieke Van Puymbroeck (Clemson University)</p>
Regency Ballroom A + B	11:15 to 12:30	<p>Awards Ceremony and Luncheon Sponsored by ProQuest, Part of Clarivate Presiding: Dr. Mary Farmer-Kaiser, President, Conference of Southern Graduate Schools and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Louisiana at Lafayette</p> <p>Greetings from ProQuest, Part of Clarivate: Dr. Gilia Smith, Director of Academic Partnerships for ProQuest Dissertations & Theses</p> <p>Presentation of Faculty and Student Awards Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award Outstanding Thesis Award: Life Sciences Outstanding Thesis Award: Social Sciences / Business / Education Outstanding Thesis Award: Non-Traditional</p> <p>CSGS thanks ProQuest, Part of Clarivate for its continued support for our student awards. We also offer appreciation to Dr. Aimée Surprenant and Dr. Ethan Carver, who chaired our awards committees, and our members who served with them.</p>
Regency Ballroom A + B	12:30 to 1:45	<p>Business Meeting and Elections</p>

		Presiding: Dr. Mary Farmer-Kaiser, President, Conference of Southern Graduate Schools and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Azalea	2:00 to 3:00	Graduate Student Breakout Session Relieve Your Stress and Get Focused for the 3MT Speaker: Dr. Marieke Van Puymbroeck (Clemson University) Speaker: Dr. John Lopes (Clemson University)
Regency Ballroom C	2:00 to 3:15	Plenary IV Artificial Intelligence and Graduate Education: A Practical Guide for AI Use and Increasing Graduate Enrollment Chair: Chair: Dr. Peter Harries, Peter Harries, Dean of the Graduate School, North Carolina State University and CSGS Treasurer Speaker: Dr. Wes Fondren, Associate Dean, College of Graduate and Continuing Studies, Coastal Carolina University
Prefunction Area	3:15 to 3:30	Networking/Coffee Break
Regency Ballroom C	3:30 to 5:00	3MT Finals and Adjournment
	After 5:00	Dinner on your own. State dinners are always a great option on this night!
Saturday, March 5		
Boardroom	8:00 to 9:30	Executive Committee Meeting Presiding: Dr. Jon Hakkila, Associate Provost of International Services, Academic Integrity, and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Alabama in Huntsville and CSGS President