



Conference of Southern Graduate Schools

Riding the Open Range

Corralling Challenges and Spurring Innovation in Graduate Education

MARCH 19-21, 2025
Dallas, Texas



2025 Annual Conference of Southern Graduate Schools

Location: Southern Methodist University

Meeting Dates: 19 to 21 March 2025

Program Outline:

All times in CST.

Wednesday, March 19

	7:30 AM to 4:30 PM	Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools (CHBGS) Programming
Moody Atrium	5:30 - 8:00 PM	CSGS Registration
Moody Atrium	6:00 to 8:00 PM	CHBGS / CSGS Joint Reception

Thursday, March 20

Hughes-Trigg Student Center - Lower Level	7:00 to 5:30	CSGS Registration
Hughes-Trigg Student Center – Ballroom –	7:30 to 8:30	Breakfast
	7:30 to 8:30	William “Bill” Carr Breakfast for New Deans and Associate Deans
	8:30 to 9:15	Welcome by CSGS President and introduction of SMU President
	9:15 to 10:15	Plenary I - "Graduate Education, Innovation, and Local Economies: G.W. Bush Institute Perspectives," Cullum Clark, Ph.D. Economics, SMU, (Alan Itkin, convener)
Student Senate Chamber – Hughes-Trigg	9:15 to 10:15	Graduate Student 3MT Introduction Session - Jill Huerta, UNCC
	10:15 to 10:45	Networking / Coffee Break

	10:45 to 11:45	Plenary II – “Artificial Intelligence,” Dr. David Joyner, Executive Director of Online Education & OMSCS in GA Tech’s College of Computing (Aimee Suprenant, convener)
	10:45 to 11:45	Graduate Student Breakout Session: research and scholarly methods
	12:00 to 1:00	Networking Lunch
	1:15-1:30	Transition/Travel to Moody Hall across the street
Auditorium (First Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	1:30 to 2:30	3MT Heat 1
Classroom 125 (first floor), F.A. Moody Hall	1:30 to 2:30	3MT Heat 2
Classroom 126 (First Floor), F.A. Moody Hall	1:30 to 2:30	3MT Heat 3
Jamie G. Williams Reading Room (Second Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	1:30 to 2:30	3MT Heat 4
Fellows Suite (Second Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	1:30 to 2:30	3MT Heat 5
Atrium, F.A. Moody Hall	2:30 to 3:00	Networking/Coffee Break
Auditorium (First Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	3:00 to 4:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>“Graduate Enrollment Growth Planning: Strategies for Leading Campus Wide Change”</p> <p>Topic – Obtaining and using data to gain insights to advocate for graduate education. Type – Panel Discussion</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Susan Carvalho, Assoc Provost and Dean, Graduate School, University of Alabama; Dr. Dixie Thompson, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School (retired), University of Tennessee; Dr. Ron Walcott, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Georgia</p>
Classroom 125 (first floor), F.A. Moody Hall	3:00 to 4:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>“Fostering Futures: Facilitating Graduate Success with IDPs”</p> <p>Topic- Building a NEW Graduate Community – connections among and between students and mentors Type- Facilitated Discussion</p>

		Presenters: Dr. Tracy Costello, Director of Postdoctoral Affairs and Graduate Student Development, University of South Florida; and Dr. Julie Harlin, Associate Dean, Texas A&M University
Jamie G. Williams Reading Room (Second Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	3:00 to 4:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>"Spurring Innovation – Digital Recruitment, social media and transforming a prospect into a graduate student"</p> <p>Topic – The unique challenges of recruitment and retention of students, faculty and staff in Southern graduate education</p> <p>Type – Other</p> <p>Presenters: Ms. Kaitlynn Beard, Graduate School Recruitment Program Director, University of Alabama and Mr. Brian Wayne, Graduate Programs Recruiter, Elizabeth City State University</p>
Classroom 126 (First Floor), F.A. Moody Hall	3:00 to 4:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>"4 Case Studies of Building Graduate Community"</p> <p>Topic- Building a NEW Graduate Community – connections among and between students and mentors</p> <p>Type- Case Studies (15 minutes each)</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Lauren Benton, Assistant Director, Graduate Enrollment Marketing, Mississippi State University; Isah Veronica D. Juranek, Student Success Coordinator, & Teagen Hruska, Texas A&M University; Dr. Lilli Harris, Assistant Director of Graduate Student Development, Mississippi State University; and Dr. Ruth Schemmer, Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Success, University of Texas at Dallas; Emily Grace McCall, Photographer, Mississippi State University.</p>
Fellows Suite (Second Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	3:00 to 4:00	Grad Student Breakout Session: Self advocacy and career awareness - how to sell your academic experience
Auditorium (First Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	4:15 to 5:00	Plenary III: CGS Master's Exit Survey Analysis by CGS
TBD	4:30 to 5:30	Audit Committee Meeting
Meadows Museum	6:00 to 8:00	Reception

Friday, March 21

Hughes-Trigg Student Center - Lower Level	7:00 to 5:30	CSGS Registration
Hughes-Trigg Student Center - Lower Level –	7:30 to 8:30	Breakfast – Sponsored by
	8:30 to 9:15	CGS Presentation- Dr. Suzanne Ortega
	9:15 to 10:15	Plenary IV – “Corralling challenges that spur innovation to foster belonging on the open range in the wild west of graduate education.” Barbara Bichelmeyer, Ph.D., Provost - U Kansas, Sloan Foundation. Ruth Bahr, Convener
	10:15 to 10:45	Networking/Coffee Break
	10:45 to 11:45	Plenary V - Legal issues in Higher Ed - Mackenzie Wilfong (Mary Farmer-Kaiser, Convener)
	11:45 to 12:45	Awards Ceremony and Luncheon
	12:45 to 1:45	Business Meeting and Elections
	1:00 to 2:30	Graduate Student Breakout Session: Guild Hall Video Game Design Program presentation
Classroom 125 (First Floor), F.A. Moody Hall	2:00 to 3:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>“Hidden Data – Capturing the Nuance of Graduate Data and Data-driven decision-making”</p> <p>Topic - Obtaining and using data to gain insights to advocate for graduate education</p> <p>Type – case study/facilitated discussion</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Kacy Lawrence, Director of Assessment and Strategic Initiatives, Virginia Tech University; Dr. Manu Gupta, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, Virginia Commonwealth University; and Dr. Jeffery L. Wilson, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Virginia Commonwealth University</p>
Auditorium (First Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	2:00 to 3:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>“Setting Students Up for Success: Recent Innovations in Graduate Student Onboarding”</p> <p>Topic - Building a NEW Graduate Community – connections among and between students and mentors</p> <p>Type – Panel (3 school presenters)</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Anne Shaffer, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, University of Georgia; Dr. Andre’ Denham, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Graduate School, University of Alabama; and Dr. James Black, Director of Student and</p>

		Academic Affairs, Graduate and Postdoctoral Education, Georgia Tech
Classroom 126 (First Floor), F.A. Moody Hall	2:00 to 3:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>“Graduate Enrollment Outcomes and Value Transparency”</p> <p>Topic – Employment Outcomes, Value Transparency, and Gainful Employment Type – Facilitated Discussion</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Johnna Watson, Associate Dean for Graduate Enrollment Management, University of North Carolina at Charlotte</p>
Jamie G. Williams Reading Room (Second Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	2:00 to 3:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>“Money Matters & Career Innovation: Empowering Graduate Students and Building Community at UL Lafayette”</p> <p>Topic – Other Type – Facilitated Discussion</p> <p>Presenters: Dr. Brian Bolton, Professor of Finance with Dr. Mary Farmer-Kaiser, Dean of the Graduate School, University of Louisiana at Lafayette</p>
Fellows Suite (Second Floor) F.A. Moody Hall	2:00 to 3:00	<p>Breakout Session</p> <p>“Saddle up for change: Preparing for and Managing Leadership Transitions”</p> <p>Topic - The unique challenges of recruitment and retention of students, faculty and staff in Southern graduate education Type – Other</p> <p>Presenter: Dr. Kathleen T. Cox, Associate Dean and Dr. Debra L. Jackson, Dean of the Graduate School, East Carolina University</p>
Atrium, F.A. Moody Hall	3:00 to 3:30	Networking/Coffee Break
	3:30 to 5:00	3MT Finals and Farewell from the New President
	After 5:00	Dinner on your own.