



2025 SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Swissotel Chicago
July 10-11, 2025

Preliminary Conference Program – Advanced Track

Thursday, July 10, 2025

8:00-9:00am: Breakfast and Welcoming Remarks

9:00-9:30am: NAGAP Uncovered: A sneak peek into what you need to know



Dr. Naronda Wright, NAGAP President, Associate Dean of Graduate Student Services, Georgia Southern University

NAGAP is the only professional organization devoted exclusively to the concerns of individuals working in the graduate enrollment management environment. The mission is to engage and advance Graduate Enrollment Management Professionals by promoting excellence and collaboration through education, research, and professional development. This session will provide knowledge of NAGAP as an association and a general overview of graduate enrollment management.

Learning outcomes:

- List three NAGAP member benefits.
- Identify locations of NAGAP resources.
- List three areas of graduate enrollment management.

9:30-10:30am: Facilitated Connection Activity

One of the advantages of a smaller professional development event is having time to form more meaningful connections with new colleagues. In this high-energy facilitated session, you'll start learning from your colleagues and reflecting on your own work.

Learning outcomes:

- Meet at least three new colleagues you want to follow up with later on
- Identify personal challenges and wins and share with others
- Get actionable advice from your peers

10:45am-12:15pm: Enrollment Projections 101



Dr. Courtney Doxbeck, Director of Academic Processes and Data Operations and Lauren McGowan, Assistant Dean for Admissions and Enrollment, University at Buffalo School of Social Work

Do enrollment projections sound scary? Not anymore! This session will provide a hands-on interactive approach to understanding the factors contributing to enrollment and tuition revenue projections. You will learn how headcount, credits, and revenue can be leveraged to predict three-year trends. You'll leave with a model in hand to bring back to your institution.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand definitions for headcount, credits, and tuition revenue and how they are used in projections
- Identify data necessary for projections and where to find them
- Understand and apply a basic formula for tuition revenue and enrollment projections
- Apply provided model to your institution

12:15-1:15pm: Lunch

1:15-2:30pm: Leadership and Supervision in GEM



Dr. Kristen Sterba, Associate Provost for Students and Administration, Director, Department of Institutional Research, Policy, and Accreditation, Associate Professor, Division of Academic Affairs, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

This interactive session will provide GEM professionals with tools and strategies to effectively lead and supervise their teams in times of rapid change.

Learning outcomes:

- Identify and describe their communication and leadership styles.
- List 3 effective leadership and/or supervision strategies.
- Identify one action that they will implement with their teams.

2:35-3:15pm: Emerging Priorities for GEM Professionals in Our Dynamic Higher Education Landscape



Keith Ramsdell, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing, Ashland University; Dr. Pam Royall, Head of Research, Marketing and Enrollment Services, EAB and Donald Resnick, Global Higher Education Consultant

This interactive panel discussion provides new data from a series of surveys completed by graduate enrollment professionals, including many NAGAP members. It compares findings from five full research cycles, drawing results from 17 separate studies conducted from 2020 to 2025. Panelists offer important trend analyses for top-of-mind issues in the work life of graduate and professional school enrollment managers and provide data-driven insights to support your strategic planning.

Learning outcomes:

- Discover “best-outcomes” recruitment activities
- Explore challenges and opportunities for AI in graduate admissions
- Consider opportunities and challenges created by current trends in

3:30-4:30pm: Budgeting with Purpose: Strategic Financial Planning for GEM Leaders



Sabrina Brown, Director of Graduate Recruitment, UNC Charlotte

In this interactive session, we'll move beyond spreadsheets to explore budgeting as a leadership tool that supports strategic planning, advocacy, and innovation in graduate enrollment management. Participants will engage with budgeting practices relevant to their current experiences, walking away with strategies to align financial decision-making with institutional priorities and enrollment goals.

Learning Outcomes:

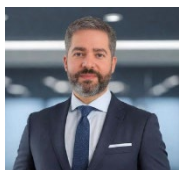
- Identify core components of a strategic GEM budget and differentiate them from operational line items.
- Analyze how to use budget narratives to advocate for resources and communicate priorities to stakeholders.
- Apply budget development strategies to support long-term enrollment planning and goal-setting.
- Evaluate budget decisions through the lens of impact and institutional mission.

5:30-7:00pm Reception and Networking

Friday, July 11, 2025

8:00-9:00am: Breakfast and Day Two Welcome

9:00-10:30am: Strategic Tuition Discounting for Graduate Enrollment and Revenue Optimization



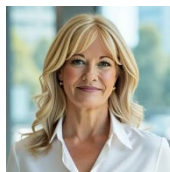
Dr. Joseph Paris, Dean, School of Graduate & Professional Studies, Delaware Valley University

In an era of rising tuition discount rates and intensifying competition for graduate students, enrollment leaders must move beyond intuition toward data-informed strategy. This session explores how to develop and implement graduate tuition discounting models that align with institutional goals, maintain financial sustainability, and drive enrollment outcomes. Participants will examine key types of discounts, analyze funded vs. unfunded models and learn how predictive analytics can enhance decision-making. Special focus will be given to balancing access, merit, and mission in today's evolving higher education landscape.

Learning Outcomes:

- Differentiate between various types of tuition discounts (funded, unfunded, merit-based, and need-based) and their implications for financial planning and student access.
- Design tuition discounting strategies that align with institutional goals for enrollment, diversity, academic quality, and net tuition revenue.
- Calculate tuition discount rates and interpret their impact on revenue and affordability.
- Develop a predictive enrollment model using tuition discount data alongside other applicant characteristics.
- Evaluate the ethical considerations of tuition discounting practices, such as classmate subsidies, in the context of access and equity.

10:45am-12:15pm: Beyond the Basics: Data-Driven, Video-First Strategies for Modern Graduate Recruitment



Jennifer Lonchar, Co-Founder, AmbioEdu and Matt Byerly, Executive Director of Brand Strategy, AmbioEdu

Graduate students are a different audience—with different motivations, life stages, and expectations. To reach and convert them effectively, your marketing strategy needs to go beyond broad-stroke messaging and outdated channels. Beyond the Basics is built for seasoned higher ed marketers who specialize in graduate recruitment and are ready to harness data, segmentation, and personalization to maximize impact. This session will dive into the behaviors and preferences of today's grad prospects—from how they discover programs to what types of content actually influence decision-making. You'll explore how to combine CRM data, analytics, and audience segmentation to deliver the right message at the right time, through the right channel. We'll also unpack advanced advertising strategies across platforms like CTV, TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and paid social, plus show how a coordinated, omnichannel approach can boost performance throughout the funnel.

Learning Outcomes:

- Decode what motivates today's graduate students and how their decision journey differs from undergrads

- Use CRM segmentation and behavioral data to power personalized, scalable outreach
- Leverage video-first strategies and high-performing ad channels like CTV and TikTok
- Tailor messaging by program, modality (online, hybrid, in-person), and professional goals
- Align graduate marketing with enrollment and academic leadership to drive performance
- Implement advanced campaign measurement and optimization tactics for long-term ROI

12:15-1:15pm Lunch and Networking with NAGAP Board Members

1:15-1:55pm: Storytelling with Data: Strategic Communication for Graduate Enrollment Management Leaders



Amanda Kulp, Director of Operational Excellence and Continuous Improvement, University of North Florida

In today's competitive higher education landscape, data is everywhere—but insights only matter if they drive action. This advanced-level workshop is designed for experienced professionals in graduate enrollment management who want to elevate their data communication skills. Learn how to craft compelling, narrative-driven presentations that connect data to strategy, inspire stakeholders, and support decision-making. We'll explore techniques for identifying key messages, visualizing complex data clearly, and tailoring your story to different audiences—from deans to the president.

Learning Outcomes:

- Define data storytelling and describe how it is used to transform complex data into compelling narratives that effectively communicate strategic insights.
- Identify frameworks for tailoring data storytelling to audiences at different levels of the leadership hierarchy at their own institutions.
- Apply methods for visualizing data clearly and effectively, enhancing the overall engagement of their audience.

2:00-2:45pm What's the Plan? Shaping a Steadfast Career Development Plan



Teisha Johnson, Senior Director of Admissions, Illinois College of Optometry

Many GEM professionals didn't set out with a clear plan to build careers in graduate education—but that doesn't mean you can't start taking a more intentional approach now. Whether you're looking to grow within graduate enrollment management or preparing for your next professional move, this session will provide practical activities and insights to help you create a personalized career development plan. You'll walk away with tools to build a career that is both fulfilling and meaningful.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding the basic components of a career development plan.
- Practice techniques to develop professional goals, which can be used as a foundation for regular practice of revising and updating your career development plan.
- Assess potential gaps in skills or experience and develop strategies to address them.

2:45-3:00pm: Closing Remarks and Final Activity