

# Graduate Career Consortium

Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2017-2021

*Adopted by the GCC Executive Board in May 2017*



**GCC**

— GRADUATE CAREER CONSORTIUM —

# INTRODUCTION

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The 2016-2017 Executive Board of the Graduate Career Consortium (GCC) committed time and resources to long-range planning to ensure sustainability as an organization. While we continue to grow and diversify the membership base, increase financial resources, and plan for ongoing and new initiatives of the organization, this plan will guide us. During our regional meetings, we engaged over 140 members in the strategic planning process to elicit ideas and develop a shared vision that contributes to the GCC's five-year strategic plan. The Executive Board developed a new mission statement, value proposition, core values, strategic vision, and five strategic priorities that will guide the leadership and decision-making of the organization. In the coming months, we will engage our GCC committees to identify the who, what, when, and how of our strategic plan implementation.



## MISSION

*To lead the advancement  
of the graduate-level  
career and professional  
development community.*

# Value Proposition & Core Values

Engage & nurture the unique nexus of expertise, knowledge, resources, and people in the graduate career and professional development community.



# STRATEGIC VISION

*As the leading organization in graduate career and professional development, the GCC strives to be at the forefront of our field as:*

**Thought Leaders** in the national and international landscape, engaged in advancing our field of expertise and promoting the value of graduate-level education for diverse career paths.

**Engaged Mentors** to current and future members of our field, providing resources, tools, and networking opportunities to help our community grow professionally.

**Highly-Trained Experts** leveraging the collective expertise and diverse backgrounds of our members to advise and support graduate schools in preparing future leaders in their respective disciplines.

**Active Collaborators** in fostering a strong peer community, ensuring diversity and inclusiveness in the field and in the graduate student/postdoctoral scholar populations we serve.

**Cutting-Edge Innovators** in establishing the professional standards and competencies of our field, creating, and sharing best practices and new ideas to improve the career preparation of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.

**Proactive Stewards** in managing our organization, instilling sound fiscal and operational policies to create a sustainable, quality community for our members well into the future.

# NATIONAL & GROWING INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

**Strategic  
Priority  
One**

*As an organization, we will engage with the full range of stakeholders and activities in the national and international conversations around graduate and postdoctoral career and professional development.*

## National Representation

We will develop GCC national and international liaison roles to ensure official GCC representation at various national/international conferences of organizations with a related professional nature to the mission of the GCC (such as the Council of Graduate Schools, the National Association of Colleges and Employers, Modern Language Association, American Chemical Society, and the National Postdoctoral Association).

## Integrated Strategy with National Initiatives

The GCC leadership and members will seek opportunities to be included in graduate career development conversations, initiatives and planning, allowing us to integrate and align our organizational strategies, provide expertise, and contribute data and information to the global conversation.

## Engage Organizations

We will continue to promote the GCC nationally and globally, and encourage membership from individuals affiliated with institutions and organizations that are not yet represented in the GCC.



# INNOVATION & BEST PRACTICES

## Strategic Priority Two

*We will leverage the expertise of our members across several initiatives to expand resources and support to our membership.*

### Regional Speaker Exchange

We will create a “speakers’ bureau” of GCC members who are willing to share their expertise and present at other institutions. In addition, we will create a robust database of vetted outside speakers with expertise in professional and career development related topics.

### Professional Development Webinars

The ongoing professional development of our members is a core value of the GCC. We will develop a series of webinars to share best practices, introduce members to relevant technologies, and offer a variety of insights about the work of our membership.

### Resource Repository

We value the work of our colleagues and seek ways to both share and borrow resources to enhance our work across institutions. We will create a searchable repository for members to post resources such as presentations, recorded webinars, syllabi, handouts, surveys, and reports.

### ImaginePhD

We will continue to support the ImaginePhD committee in the creation, design, enhancement and assessment of this much-needed resource to provide self-assessment and career exploration for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in the humanities and social sciences. We will establish a plan to sustain this resource with technical updates and expanded needs and opportunities within career fields of interest to humanities and social science PhDs.



# PROFESSIONALISM

## Strategic Priority Three

*The GCC will work to advance the field through support of new professionals, promoting career development, and developing standards for the profession.*

**New professionals:** We will continue to expand trainings for new professionals in the field. Through promotion of the trainee membership category, we will have a means to connect with people new to this career field.

**Career advancement:** We will provide venues to share career opportunities in the field to help support career advancement for our members.

**Professional standards:** Building on our professional development for new members, we will develop guidelines for best practices in the field with specific consideration for the unique needs of PhDs and postdoctoral scholars.



*Strategic  
Priority  
Four*

# SUSTAINABILITY

*The GCC is committed to transparent and fiscally-responsible practices that ensure the sustainability and continued growth of our organization.*

## Succession Planning

To ensure the smooth transition of members onto and off of the executive committee, we will develop current position descriptions so responsibilities and duties are clearly defined. We will also develop standard operating procedures and an operations calendar for mission-critical tasks performed by each member of the executive committee. We will also create position descriptions for ad hoc committee chairs.

## Regional Planning

To continue the community of sharing and professional collaboration, for which the GCC is known, we will develop regional director positions who will coordinate and maintain GCC regional networks and activities.

## Conference Planning

To vet and secure conference locations, we will create a conference-host policy and proposal process. For our hosts, we will update detailed national and regional conference planning guides. To lessen the burden on our members, we will investigate contracting with a conference-planning company.

## Financial Practices

In order to grow from an all-volunteer to a staffed organization, we will develop financial models based on continued growth of our membership and conference revenue streams. To demonstrate our value, we will continue to maintain financial transparency to our members by communicating an annual financial report.





# MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

*Strategic  
Priority  
Five*

*Our members drive the organization, and engagement with them is of the utmost importance. In order to increase member engagement, we will continue to assess our support for our volunteers, including communication strategy, technology, and web access.*

## **Website/User Experience**

The goals of a website redesign or refresh is two-fold: to make the site more user friendly and make the resources more prominent. We will continue to add more resources to the site and provide a platform for a repository of member-generated materials. The website will also be a stage to share the success of our members and their contributions to our organization and profession.

## **On-going Communications**

To ensure new and returning members are informed and able to navigate the site, onboarding emails will be sent to new members, and returning members will be sent newsletters which will feature new resources available.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

The GCC is committed to promoting and embracing a diverse membership in order to fulfill the mission and vision of the organization. A diverse and inclusive organization encompasses members from multiple dimensions, including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, culture, gender,

gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, (dis) ability, physical ability or attributes, religion or spirituality, ethics, national origin, and/or political beliefs. The GCC is also committed to recruiting and supporting professionals from diverse types of organizations.

## **Committee and Volunteer Support**

The GCC currently relies on its volunteer committees to accomplish our mission. As such, we will continue to support our committees with the resources and volunteers they need, and we will recognize their work and achievements on an annual basis. We will continue to find new ways to engage more members on existing and new committees to provide professional development opportunities for our members.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*We would like to thank the many professionals who inspired and contributed to the creation of, and values and ideas grounded in this document:*

The **140+ GCC members** who participated in the strategic planning discussions during the 2016-2017 GCC Regional Meetings.

## 2016-2017 GCC Committee Chairs

Natalie Lundsteen, UT Southwestern | Co-chair 2017 National Conference Committee  
Christopher Taylor, MD Anderson | Co-chair 2017 National Conference Committee  
Alexis Thompson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | Chair, Governance Committee  
Jami Armbruster, University of Alabama Birmingham | Chair, Communications Committee  
D'Anne Duncan, Vanderbilt | Co-Chair, Diversity Committee  
Joseph Barber, University of Pennsylvania | Chair, Carpe Careers: Inside Higher Ed Writing Group  
Mearah Quinn-Brauner, Northwestern University | Chair, Virtual Career Fair Committee & Co-Chair, Diversity Committee  
Teresa Dillinger, UC Davis | Sponsor Development & Project Lead, ImaginePhD  
Annie Maxfield, UCLA | User Experience, ImaginePhD  
Sarah Peterson, Emory | Content and Resource Development, ImaginePhD  
Melanie Sinche, Jackson Labs | Co-Chair, PhD Career Outcomes Committee  
Heather Morgan, NYU | Co-Chair, PhD Career Outcomes Committee  
Kay Gruder, University of Connecticut | Chair, Benchmarking Committee

## GCC Advisors

Julie Vick, retired from University of Pennsylvania, founding member of the GCC in the 1980's  
Victoria Blodgett, University of Connecticut, GCC past-president  
Christine Kelly, Claremont Graduate University, GCC past-president  
Richard Kurz, retired from Columbia University

## 2016-2017 Executive Board

Alexis Thompson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | Past-President  
Amy Pszczolkowski, Princeton University | President  
Laura Stark, Harvard University | President-elect  
Michael Matrone, Oregon Health and Science University | Treasurer  
Sue Levine, Brandeis University | Secretary



GCC Members at the 2015 GCC National Conference, NYC



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