

# Preparing for the Trek: Pre-Conference Advising

Compiled by Danielle A. Morgan, Salem State College; Updated for GLACURH, October 2011

You play a crucial role in ensuring your delegation is properly preparing for their conference experience. This may mean taking an active role, especially with new NCCs and NRHH CCs, so that your delegation is representing your institution in a positive light. Here are some tips to help you find the best path!

## *Deadlines*

Be sure your NCC(s) and NRHH CC are prepared to meet all the conference deadlines. Follow up with them to ensure they are on the regional listserv and/or NRHH listserv, and double-check that you are on the Advisor and/or NRHH Advisor listserv. Conference deadlines are set according to hotel and event space deadlines...please keep this in mind!

## *Review Conference Policies with the Delegation...Often!*

It is your responsibility to your institution and GLACURH/NACURH that your students are following conference guidelines and rules. Be sure to review specific conference policies with your NCC(s), NRHH CC and delegates before the conference, and remind them of the importance of such policies. For example, alcohol and drugs are not allowed at conferences (this includes travel to and from conferences as well!). Students will be sent home immediately at their own expense and your institution may be placed in bad standing. For many schools, an on-campus judicial sanction follows. Be sure to reiterate this idea to your students.

## *Explain the Need for Appropriateness*

Your delegation represents your institution to numerous different colleges and universities at the conference. Ensure that they are aware of the need for appropriateness in cheering, presentations (roll call, banners, displays, programs, meals, etc), comments and general conduct. GLACURH and NACURH are not the place for profanity, negative cheers, booing, offensive actions/acts, disrespect or bias-related language.

## *Check On Your Finances*

GLACURH/NACURH strictly adhere to a "No Pay, No Key" policy. Follow up with your NCC(s) and NRHH CC to ensure that all financial preparations have been made and help make sure things are ready to go. It typically is safer to bring your check with you to check-In at the conference. Remind your NCC(s) and NRHH CC to check on your institution's affiliation status (both RHA and NRHH) and that they have no debts to GLACURH/NACURH to be sure they will have a vote in the boardroom!

## *Expectations*

Be sure that a discussion during at least one of your delegation meetings centers around expectations—from the Advisor, NCC(s) and NRHH CC and delegation. Cover areas such as attending programs, behavior and actions, displaying positive attitudes and spirit, fully

participating in the conference, bringing something back to the campus community, etc.

### *Prep Your NCC(s) and NRHH CC*

Help your NCC(s) and NRHH CC prepare for the boardroom and business meetings and double-check they are on top of information on the listservs and website. Encourage them to make informed and unbiased decisions, read materials thoroughly once they are posted, ask questions (neighbors, RBD, or presenters), listen and address issues that may be relevant to your institution. Also, remind them GLACURH isn't supposed to be about being cut-throat; it's about learning and leadership opportunities!

### *Encourage Your Delegation to Participate in Endless Opportunities*

Your delegates may be nervous, but work to help them submit program proposals, and aid the NCC(s) and NRHH CC in pairing returning delegates with first-timers. Be sure to remind them of all the ways they can participate in a conference: banner, display, roll call (regional conference), cheers, spirit packs, matching attire, presentations, school spirit, etc. Remind them that they may feel silly, but they are having fun, and may be disappointed if they aren't prepared come conference time.

### *Pump Up the Spirit!*

Delegation meetings are probably added on to your already busy schedule, turning many evenings into late arts and crafts nights. Be sure to express enthusiasm, gratitude and excitement to your delegates, as they will look to you and the NCC(s) and NRHH CC for guidance and support. Surprise them with fun snacks/gifts, and try to go into each meeting bursting with contagious energy!