

Graduate Student Committee Report
SC meeting, PIE LTER
Submitted: May 3, 2010

A brief overview of the activities of the last year:

1. In January 2010, Sally Koerner (KNZ) succeeded Amber Hardison (VCR) as graduate student committee co-chair, alongside Chelse Prather (LUQ). To decide upon leadership, the current co-chairs find nominees and hold elections. To keep up-to-date membership, graduate student listservs are maintained by denoting graduate student status on individual LTER profiles.

2. Amber and Chelse organized LTER graduate students for the third Graduate Student Symposium (GSS) on September 13th, 2009, before the ASM began. Based on the feedback about previous graduate student symposia, this symposium was designed to teach newer students about the general structure of the LTER network, to expose all students to successful LTER social research occurring, and to foster cross site collaborations. Over 180 people attended, representing all 26 sites, ILTER, the LNO and NSF. The symposium began with several speakers who introduced the LTER Network and described graduate students' role in the Network (Amber and Chelse, Bob Waide (LNO), Todd Crowl and Henry Gholz (both NSF)). They were followed by Terry Chapin (BNZ), who was invited to speak about his successful integration of social and ecological sciences in Alaska. Terry was followed by a collection of student / recent graduate research talks highlighting examples of collaborative research within the LTER: Marko Spsojevic (NWT); Brian Voigt (BES); and Becky Ball (MCM). students participated in a career panel, featuring former LTER graduate students representing a variety of career paths, including academia, the private sector and state / federal government agencies. The expert panel consisted of Shawn Dalton (BES), Stuart Grandy (KBS), Dan Childers (FCE, CAP), Todd Crowl (LUQ), Sherri Johnson (AND), Meredith Knauf (NWT), and John Kominoski (CWT, ILTER). Finally, students self-selected into 8 concurrent student-led working groups. All of these working groups were well-attended (~155 attendees), and several groups plan to continue collaborating outside of the ASM. In fact, two groups received post-ASM funding to have another workshop. In the post-GSS survey, 85% rated their overall experience positively. We submitted articles featuring graduate student updates across the network for the fall 2009 and spring 2010 Network News.

4. At ESA this August, the LTER graduate students will sponsor an organized oral session, entitled "The Role of Student Research in Long-Term Studies: Insights into Climate Change and Disturbance Theory". This session, organized by Amber and Chelse, will be held on Tuesday, August 3rd from 1:30-5:00.

5. Amber and Chelse wrote a letter to the EB on behalf of the Grad Committee requesting consideration of a cross-site postdoctoral fellowship to enhance collaboration among sites in the Network and provide an extension of the training that students receive as members of the network.