

## **LTER Graduate Committee Chair Report CC meeting Fall 2005**

### **April 2005 – First Graduate Student Collaborative Research Symposium**

The symposium was conceived, organized and written by graduate students (Robert Daoust - PIE, Tiffany Troxler Gann – FCE, Harmony Dalglish – KNZ, Stephanie Oakes – PAL, Rachel Michaels – VCR, Evan Kane – BNZ, Tamara Heartsill Scalley – LUQ and with help from Executive Committee member and CAP lead PI Nancy Grimm).

Whendee Silver (LUQ) and Scott Collins (SEV) attended the symposium as plenary speakers and stayed to help and play roles in the activities. In attendance were a total of 66 graduate students that included 1-2 representatives from 24 US LTER sites and 11 students representing ILTER sites (China, Mongolia, South Africa, Austria, Czech Republic, Brazil, Mexico and Sweden). There were two post-docs and 1 undergraduate also in attendance. Overall, 35 site presentations, 17 personal research presentations, 19 research posters and 13 training sessions or student-led collaborative workshops were held during the meeting. Five teams that were formed from the workshops are currently working on data analysis of long-term datasets from all the LTER sites to be published in peer reviewed journals. The students responded very favorably and so much that they wrote a new proposal for a future symposium; please see attached for some details.

### **May 2005 – Two groups of students receive funding to analyze long-term LTER datasets from LTER network office**

A group of students received funding to explore long-term datasets of different enzyme activities across different biomes. The funding was awarded to Chris Lauber, Marcy Gallo and Chelsea Crenshaw (all from SEV). They will hold a workshop September 2005 to finalize the publication draft and participants are all graduate students or post-docs. A group of students from BNZ (Evan Kane, Emma Betts, ) received funds to analyzed datasets of nutrient deposition and runoff across different LTER sites. This group is meeting in Fairbanks, AK in November 2005 to finalize the analysis and publication drafts. This group includes all graduate students from different LTER sites.

### **June 2005 – All hands meeting in Santa Fe, NM**

Six students were selected to be involved with LTER grant planning and each appointed to one of the six working committees. They have each attended meetings to help design and participate in the process and during the next year will continue to participate in their committees and attend the LTER planning grant meetings.

**July 2005 – Nominations for new co-chair solicited and elections for new co-chair took place**

Tiffany Troxler Gann rotated out of her position as graduate student co-chair. Tiffany played a critical role and is still a very strong voice for the graduate students. We welcome newly elected Amy Burgin as the new co-chair.

**August 2005 - LTER/ESA student mixer in Montreal Canada**

LTER PIs and students participate in LTER/ESA student lunch chat. This format was very informative for students and provided great opportunities for interactions among senior scientists and students.

Submitted by Chelsea Crenshaw and Tiffany Troxler Gann

## **LTER Student Symposium: a framework for graduate student synthesis and collaboration**

28 April 2005

*on behalf of:*

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### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The first LTER Network Graduate Student Collaborative Research Symposium was highly successful at fostering interactions among LTER graduate students, stimulating their engagement in comparative and collaborative research efforts. The meeting hosted student-led discussion groups and workshops that resulted in 'living documents' of materials and references, all of which are available online. Importantly, the symposium prompted the writing of this proposal, which is designed to perpetuate future LTER Student Symposia. Here, we propose an evolving framework for LTER graduate student meetings focused around the NSF-LTER core research themes and designed to further cultivate LTER graduate student cross-site synthesis projects. The first LTER student symposium laid the foundation for a commitment across the LTER-Network to graduate student collaboration and synthetic research. We have outlined a framework that builds from this foundation with a specific, theme-based symposia series. These focused symposia will lead to collated cross-site datasets, synthesis publications, and new collaborative research proposals. We are requesting funding to host a subsequent symposium in 2006 at the University of Santa Barbara in conjunction with the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS) with a focused theme entitled, "Patterns and Control of Primary Production." The second LTER Network Graduate Student Collaborative Research Symposium hopes to bridge the gap between LTER core research themes and the network's grand challenges.

## **I. PROJECT INTRODUCTION:**

On April 13-17, 2005, the first LTER Graduate Student Collaborative Research Symposium (SS-1) was held at the H.J. Andrews LTER, Blue River, OR. Held independent of other LTER meetings, such as the All-Scientists Meeting, the purpose of this symposium was to facilitate graduate student interactions and stimulate graduate student engagement in comparative and cooperative research efforts. The meeting was a successful and productive venture that exposed graduate students to research being conducted at US LTER and I LTER sites and generated focused cross-site collaborations (see attached). As a result of graduate student enthusiasm for continued collaborations, a symposium planning committee was formed to establish a proposal for a subsequent symposium. Here we detail a long-term plan to develop a template for future symposia that incorporates the collaborative ideals of the first symposium while establishing a more defined theme. Following the template, the theme of each symposium will reflect the LTER Network's five core research areas and address its four grand challenges by organizing representative graduate students from LTER sites into collaborative work groups to synthesize data and generate publishable results. This proposal is a request for funding on behalf of the LTER Graduate Student Committee to host a subsequent collaborative research symposium (SS-2) in summer 2006 at the Santa Barbara Coastal LTER.

## **II. REVIEW OF LTER SS-1 AND FUTURE DIRECTION:**

In response to the success of the first LTER student symposium, we propose subsequent symposia designed to maintain the original objectives (i.e., learning about other LTER sites and fostering cross-site collaboration of LTER graduate students), with two additional primary objectives: (1) to synthesize and publish existing cross-site datasets in support of the LTER Network core research areas (as described above), and (2) network with other agencies and resources. We have developed a framework for a theme-focused symposium consisting of the following: student led working groups, symposium sessions, and training sessions.

## **III. FRAMEWORK: GOALS AND DELIVERABLES**

The overarching goal of this proposal is to produce a framework for generating focused NSF-LTER cross-site collaborative projects at the graduate student level. Specifically, this framework will provide early-career graduate students the opportunity to develop collaborative-based theses and dissertations and provide late-career graduate students the opportunity to start cross-site collaborative projects that can carry into their post-graduate careers. This framework will provide early-career graduate students with mentorship and the opportunity for late-career graduate students to develop leadership and mentor skills within the existing LTER network. LTER SS-1 was a highly successful framework for exposing LTER graduate students to research at each network site and helped to reveal opportunities for specific collaborative projects. We would like to expand upon this framework by developing productive symposia with clear goals and deliverables (Table 1).

**Table 1.** *Goals and deliverables for LTER Student Symposia.*

Goals of LTER Student Symposia:	Direct Deliverables:
<b>1. Generate cross-site collaborative efforts as related to core research areas</b>	Working groups, papers, proposals
<b>2. Discuss datasets around a core research area; focusing working groups around the grand challenges</b>	Collated, publicly available datasets and synthesis papers
<b>3. Communicate symposium cross-site research ideas to fellow LTER graduate students and site PIs</b>	Post symposium meeting with site PIs, Post-meeting site presentations with all LTER site members, and developed mentorship plan with PIs
<b>4. Introduce students to LTER collaborating organizations</b>	Networking opportunities
<b>5. Learn about core research at all Sites</b>	Presentations on CD, collation of information on LTER student website
<b>6. Expose students to research and experiments at other LTER sites</b>	Field trips, host site presentations