

What is the Annual Augusta State University Student Research and Fine Arts Conference?

The **Celebrating Student Success** conference is an opportunity for all students at Augusta State University, regardless of discipline, to showcase their scholarly and artistic endeavors. The Conference is held as an annual, one-day event in March.

The conference program presentations are competitively selected on the basis of anonymously reviewed abstracts submitted by a deadline in January. Presenters and their faculty sponsors are notified of acceptance by email in February.

The presentations may be paper (oral) presentations, poster presentations, symposia (multiple presentations on a highly integrated topic), and other presentations including recitations, musical performances, displays of artwork, dramatic scenes, and reading of original creative writing

The conference day begins with a plenary lecture arranged by the Student Conference Committee, followed by poster presentations, artistic presentations, concurrent contributed paper sessions, and a reception.

The Conference is held on the Wednesday in March that falls before the annual Chapter initiation and banquet on Friday. The initiation is held in the evening just before the annual University-wide Honors Convocation at which the new PKP members are recognized.

The first conference was Wednesday, March 22, 2000. The **Eighth Annual Augusta State University Student Research and Fine Arts Conference: Celebrating Student Success** was Wednesday, March 14, 2007.

What was the impetus for the first conference in 2000?

- 1) PKP members were influenced by organizations like CUR (Council on Undergraduate Research) and NCUR (National Conference on Undergraduate Research)
- 2) Several faculty members were aware of other institutions that had started local research conferences. The original organizers were Augusta State professors of chemistry, economics and psychology.
- 3) The subtitle “**Celebrating Student Success**” was a way to show off our students’ accomplishments and coincided with a retooling of the University’s mission statement and with the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
- 4) “**Fine Arts**” was added to the title in 2001 to include students in art, music, drama, etc. who had not actively participated in the first conference; but whose outstanding creative efforts were recognized.
- 5) There was strong financial and moral support from the Dean of Arts & Sciences, the Director of Student Activities, and the Development/Alumni Relations office.
- 6) PKP was already sponsoring a fall lecture and symposium which was associated with the University’s A-Day annual fund kick-off. These events featured the university’s faculty; so a conference in the spring featuring students was a natural extension.

How is the Conference Organized?

- 1) The Chapter has a Student Conference Committee which plans and coordinates the conference.
- 2) Funding comes from the Chapter and other interested campus units.
- 3) A notable plenary speaker for a morning lecture is identified and invited by the Student Conference Committee several months before the conference day.
- 4) A campus-wide call for paper and presentation proposals with a January deadline goes out early in fall semester to students and faculty.
- 5) Selections are made in February from the student submissions by referees from the Student Conference Committee and other interested PKP members.
- 6) The PKP Communications Committee handles the advance publicity and conference program printing with the help of ASU's Department of Public Relations and Publications.
- 7) The morning lecturer and the afternoon's events are introduced by the current President of the Chapter and ASU administrators, usually either the President and/or the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.
- 8) Poster presentations and artistic presentations are scheduled in the afternoon in the lobby of the Science building.
- 9) The refereed contributed papers are presented in concurrent sessions in classrooms in the Science building.
- 10) At the end of the day there is a reception for everyone involved with the conference: student presenters, faculty mentors, speakers, and all PKP members.

Why has the Augusta State University Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi Annual Student Research and Fine Arts Conference been successful?

- 1) Competent and dedicated volunteers from the Augusta State Phi Kappa Phi Chapter have taken responsibility from the beginning.
- 2) The Augusta State University administration continues to be very supportive.
- 3) We have proactively sought to display student achievement across all disciplines.
- 4) We have typically held the event—especially the poster session and musical presentations—in a public area where student traffic is high.
- 5) Many faculty members have been supportive by releasing students from class to attend and/or by having students attend and report on their observations.
- 6) We have some very talented students and supportive faculty mentors.

How has the Conference benefited students?

- 1) The event replicates a professional conference with a plenary lecture, anonymously refereed contributed papers sessions, poster presentations, and social events.
- 2) It gives the best students a learning-by-doing-research opportunity
- 3) Students learn to work with a faculty mentor who sponsors their research.
- 4) Students learn research methodology.
- 5) Students bound for graduate school have the opportunity to prepare proposals, write abstracts, present research, and practice their public speaking skills.
- 6) It gives aspiring authors/poets and fine arts students the opportunity to perform.
- 7) The student presenters are role models for other students. It shows underclassmen what they can/may be expected to do as upperclassmen after they settle into their majors and/or build their resumes for graduate school.

What Are Future Goals for the Conference?

- 1) Draw more local and state participation from educational institutions such as the Medical College of Georgia, Paine College, and other public and private Georgia and South Carolina colleges and universities
- 2) Submit more of the best papers and presentations to regional and national student and professional association events

Answers to these questions gleaned from information provided by:

- Dr. Bill Bloodworth, President, Augusta State University
- Dr. Jurgen Brauer, Professor, Hull College of Business & Co-founder of the Conference
- Dr. Steve Hobbs, Professor, Department of Psychology
- Dr. Jim Garvey, Professor, Department of Communications & Professional Writing
- Minutes of the ASU Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi
- Archives of the ASU Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi
- *Master Calendar* on website of ASU Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi at www.aug.edu/pkp