

SUMMARY:
University Network for Collaborative Governance Fall 2008 Meeting
Austin, Texas November 9-11

The University Network for Collaborative Governance held its fall 2008 meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-11. The University of Texas School of Law's Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution hosted the meeting, which over 30 representatives from 24 universities attended.

This meeting featured a series of small group sessions on topics that allowed members the opportunity for small, focused discussions on key issues. In addition, members had the opportunity to hear from elected and university leaders, and explore potential for new projects, research, and activities.

Other highlights from the Meeting include:

- Texas State Senator Leticia Van de Putte welcomed the group to Texas and described her experience as one of the Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution's Fellows. She also shared a story of taking part in a community project to rebuild a flooded neighborhood park and how that made her recognize the legislator's ability to bring different groups together in consensus over a community issues
- Former Washington State University President Lane Rawlins, who is currently the Director of the William D. Ruckelshaus Center at WSU / University of Washington, gave an opening talk on how he and Bill Ruckleshaus created the Ruckelshaus Center. Rawlins emphasized the important role being played by the Center's Board members, who are leaders from multiple sectors in the State of Washington.
- Susan Sherry, Director of the Center for Collaborative Policy at California State University Sacramento, led a panel on the work that the UNCG Special Topics Committee has been doing to explore addressing the issue of climate change across the Network. PCI's Program Manager for Climate and Clean Energy, Peter Murchie, the Ruckelshaus Center's Rob McDaniel, and Kirk Emerson from the University of Arizona completed the panel. Murchie and Emerson shared a two page description of how collaborative governance can be beneficial in addressing both adaptation and mitigation. The panel discussed the concept of creating a Climate Change Alliance among UNCG members as a potential route. Sherry, as Committee Chair, also acknowledged that the Committee was open to pursuing other topics, such as Homeland Security / Emergency Management and Cultural Diversity. The Climate Change approach could be one that the Network uses as a model for proceeding in joint efforts around specific topic areas.
- Nancy Thomas, Director of The Democracy Imperative and a Senior Fellow at Everyday Democracy, described public deliberation processes as well as the work The Democracy Imperative is doing at universities across the country. TDI focuses on advancing deliberative democracy in and through higher education.

- Susan Kirkpatrick, Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, joined with Jim Murley, former Secretary of Florida's Department of Community Affairs and current Director of the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University, to provide their perspectives on how university programs can build relationships and provide capacity to state leaders. Kirkpatrick presented a case study of a town in Colorado
- In "Soup to Nuts", four pracademics shared books, networks, and other influences on their work. See the attached lists from Kem Lowry from the University of Hawaii, Ruth Craw of the University of Arkansas's Center for Public Collaboration, John Stephens of the University of North Carolina, and Martin Carcasson from Colorado State University's Center for Public Deliberation.
- Carcasson and Thomas also took part in a panel on forging links across other networks. Bob Jones, Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium, Steve Smukto from North Carolina State University, and Paul Alexander, Regis University's Institute for the Common Good, also shared the connections they've made with other networks (such as the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, the Deliberative Democracy Consortium) and how UNCG might partner with them. Carcasson showed his diagram of the various disciplines and how they engage in collaborative governance, which has continued to evolve since his presentation in Seattle, 2007, as well as an accompanying slide of the scope of the movement with various networks and organizations.
- Bob Jones (Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium) and Doug Yarn (Georgia Consortium on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution), provided updates on their consortiums' work across universities in their states. In Florida, the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium conducted a system-wide assessment of the strategic role of community engagement for public universities in the Florida State System. In doing this assessment, they found that university leaders respond more readily to "community engagement" rather than "collaborative governance." FCRC is currently developing recommendations on strategies for the Board of Governors based on their findings. Tim Hicks from the University of Oregon's Alternative Dispute Resolution Center also joined them and focused on the importance of including work with students in providing internship opportunities and how the UO and Portland State University programs have created a joint internship program.
- Jill Purdy from the University of Washington and Elaine Hallmark of Oregon Consensus led a roundtable discussion on "Developing Practice Standards and Accountability Measures for Collaborative Governance Processes." They identified potential problems in collaborative governance processes and principal-agent relationships and offered strategies to overcome the agency problems. Participants discussed developing standards of practice and identified this topic as one that they wish to continue addressing.

The Austin meeting also included a number of Exchange Sessions, where members met in small groups to focus on a particular topic and offer each other technical assistance. The Exchange Sessions covered:

How to Build Support for Your Program with Legislators and Governors – Greg Wolf, PCI Executive Director, shared two examples of how university programs are connecting with leaders (Oregon Solutions and UT's Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution). He shared a few videos PCI had made of leaders talking about collaborative processes. Participants then shared the hurdles / challenges / successes they had faced and asked Greg questions about making these connections and building support with leaders.

Technical Assistance for Projects on Emergency Management - Adam Sutkus, Senior Mediator at Sacramento State University's Center for Collaborative Policy, manages the Center's homeland security / emergency management projects. He offered advice to other centers on how to become active in this area.

Building an Online UNCG Presence - How should we connect, interact, and share on the web? Sarah Giles, Policy Consensus Initiative Program Coordinator, described what on-line tools are already available to UNCG members (PCI Forums, Directory, and Network pages). Participants discussed other options (list serve, other tools as part of the Forum, a stand-alone website). The Network would need to consider the costs of such tools as well as the membership's capacity to engage on-line.

Assisting Practitioners on Issues of Culture and Diversity - Raye Rawls, University of Georgia's Fanny Institute, and Ruth Craw, University of Arkansas's Center for Public Collaboration, brought together a group to discuss the challenges and importance of achieving diversity in civic engagement and collaborative governance. Participants described techniques and resources that they have found useful to increase diversity among practitioners and/or among citizens and stakeholders at events. A questionnaire has been sent to the UNCG membership to ask all members for input on this discussion.

Connecting Academic Research and Teaching with Practice – Kirk Emerson, University of Arizona, shared highlights from the Minnowbrook III Conference. The theme for the third gathering, coordinated by Rosemary O'Leary, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, was: The Future of Public Administration, Public Management, and Public Service around the World. For more information on the conference, visit the conference website at www.maxwell.syr.edu/pa/minnowbrook3/.

Working with Other Universities – Bob Jones, FCRC, offered his experience and advice for working with other universities within one's state. This session continued the discussion in further detail begun the previous day with a panel on the challenges, opportunities, and connections in working across universities.

Developing and Implementing Collaborative Climate Change Strategies - Peter Murchie, PCI's Program Manager for Climate and Clean Energy, and Kem Lowry, University of Hawaii, continued where the previous day's panel on the UNCG Special Topic Committee's work on Climate Change. In this session, participants discussed how their centers and the network, via a Climate Change Alliance, might go about developing and implementing a climate change focus.

Using a Solutions Approach for Sustainability Issues – Steve Greenwood, Director of Community Programs at Oregon Solutions (Portland State University), gave an overview of the Solutions model and presented examples of past and current projects in Oregon. Participants asked questions on how the model worked and how it might be implemented through their own centers.