

ASFPM HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT

Annual Conference-Atlanta, Georgia



Warren Campbell & Robert Freitag, Co-chairs
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2014-2015 Goals

The mission of the Higher Education Committee is to promote flood risk management curriculum within institutions of higher learning. Many universities teach floodplain management related courses, but these courses reside in a wide variety of independent departments and degree programs. There are no comprehensive flood risk reduction programs. With our most frequent and costly disasters being flood related, with more than 22,000 communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program and where federal law requires designated floodplain administrators, there is need and demand for degree programs.

In 2014 and 2015, we were able to establish a Bachelors of Interdisciplinary Studies with Floodplain Management Concentration at Western Kentucky University, and a Master of Infrastructure Planning and Management Floodplain Management Option at the University of Washington (Seattle).

At the 2014 ASFPM conference in Seattle, we had a Higher Education Early Bird that was well attended. From that session we received two messages loud and clear: 1) There is great interest in floodplain management degrees, and 2) put as much of it online as possible. The MS degree at UW satisfies both of these requirements, but that interest has not yet translated into the enrollment numbers needed to sustain the program. Consequently, our efforts in the near term must focus on marketing these existing programs.

If new programs other than these are to form in the next few years, they probably will be driven by ASFPM academia members. Currently, there is little or no government support for these existing programs other than through the universities themselves. It is difficult to persuade faculty to do research or to develop programs if there are no grants to do so.

The WKU program is currently a geography/geology track. In the next year, we want to establish an engineering track as well. We will encourage others to do so. It would also help if ASFPM had an outreach program to faculty in related fields. We need to increase the faculty membership in ASFPM.

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