



Professional Development Curriculum Plan

Adopted April 2020

OVERVIEW

NAGAP, The Association for Graduate Enrollment Management, was created, first and foremost, to serve the professional development needs of professionals working in graduate enrollment management (GEM) throughout the U.S. and now abroad. To continue delivering on these objectives, the 2018-2020 Education Committee has herein created a guiding document to plan educational content for NAGAP's members through a variety of channels with relevance across levels, roles, and areas of responsibility. As part of this work, the Committee, including the work of previous Education Committees, defined the core competencies and traits that GEM professionals should strive to possess to be successful working across the GEM lifecycle. These competencies and traits should serve as the foundation for planning and delivering all NAGAP educational content.

PREPARING THE GEM PROFESSIONAL

As NAGAP has evolved from its beginnings as an association dedicated to serving graduate *admissions* professionals, it has embraced how members' roles have expanded significantly to serve both their institutions and graduate students more holistically. It formally removed "graduate admissions professionals" from its tagline and refocused on GEM in 2014, making a commitment to provide comprehensive professional development for its members in all areas of the graduate student lifecycle.

To that end, the Education Committee defined the core areas of competency for GEM professionals through a series of six domains, or educational categories, as identified below. In the appendices, the Committee has provided a list of GEM competencies and traits to provide a roadmap for our members to obtain the skills necessary for success in GEM, now and in the future. We anticipate these lists will be amended and enhanced over time.

DOMAINS

Over the past 10 years, the Education Committee continued to shape and better define NAGAP educational offerings by adding educational domains. The domains were first used to appropriately group sessions at the NAGAP Annual Conference and to solicit content that would help broaden the Conference's typically heavy emphasis on admissions, marketing, and recruitment sessions. Now, the domains serve as a roadmap for providing comprehensive GEM lifecycle training across all of the NAGAP professional development offerings.

The educational domains effective as of 2020 are as follows:

- Career, Staff, and Personal Development
- Enrollment Modeling & Strategic Planning
- GEM Operations
- Money Matters
- Recruitment & Marketing
- Student Lifecycle, Engagement, and Support

EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS AND CHANNELS

NAGAP has refined and expanded the various educational activities and channels for which members can access professional development. It is critical for the Association to continue to assess all of these activities to ensure the needs of all members are being met, at all careers stages, and through all preferred channels.

As of 2020, the Association offers professional development through the activities listed in the following pages, with the specific intent of covering as many of the educational domains as possible as part of each activity (indicated in the far right column).

DOMAIN SCHEDULE

For educational content that is delivered monthly, content should address each domain area as indicated in the agreed-upon schedule below. The Education Committee may amend this list as needed over time.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Domain</i>
January	GEM Operations
February	Career, Staff, and Personal Development
March	Enrollment Modeling & Strategic Planning
April	Recruitment & Marketing
May	Money Matters
June	Student Lifecycle, Engagement, and Support
July	GEM Operations
August	Career, Staff, and Personal Development
September	Enrollment Modeling & Strategic Planning
October	Recruitment & Marketing
November	Money Matters
December	Student Lifecycle, Engagement, and Support

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Recognizing that each NAGAP chapter has varying levels of resources available to them, the Association expects that each chapter make good-faith attempts to meet the domain intentions outlined herein with various chapter activities (conferences, workshops, webinars, etc.).

Educational Offerings and Channels

Activity	What It Is	Timing	Primary Audience	Domain Content	Presenters
Graduate Enrollment Management Summit	The NAGAP annual conference, offered in the spring typically Wednesday evening through Saturday lunch, with a variety of types of sessions and keynote offerings	April	All GEM professionals	Offers sessions and keynotes across all six educational domains. Specific efforts are made to solicit and accept sessions that span all six areas with varied intended audiences and experience levels. Session types may include, but are not limited to, presentations, roundtable discussions, and panels.	NAGAP members, corporate partners, and GEM professionals at large. Presenters and topics are selected by peer review from the Conference and Education Committees.
Annual Conference GEM Certificate	A NAGAP-issued certificate that represents attendance at a series of GEM Summit sessions each year. The intent of the certificate is to expose attendees to a variety of content across domains to more effectively prepare GEM professionals for diverse roles in graduate enrollment.	April	All attendees of the GEM Summit	Certificate content will vary each year. Members of the Education Committee will select a series of conference sessions that represent each of the six educational domains and/or relevant special topic areas.	GEM professionals, corporate partners, and other related speakers. Speakers and topics are identified by the Education Committee as providing a topic of high relevance to members that should be included as part of the Certificate.
Pre-Summit Institute	A half-day session tailored to a specific topic that is offered prior to the opening session of the GEM Summit	April	Varies annually	Addresses, at minimum, at least one of the six educational domains.	Subject matter expert(s) on a particular topic area of high current relevance to NAGAP members. Selection is made by the Professional Development Committee.
Summer Professional Development Institute	A two-day mini-conference designed for professionals	July	New GEM professionals	Offers at least one session for each of the six	Established GEM leaders and/or corporate

Educational Offerings and Channels (Continued)

	new to graduate enrollment management or who need a refresher in the key fundamentals of GEM			educational domains to provide exposure to attendees of the entire GEM lifecycle. Domains will be identified in the Summer Institute program.	sponsors with depth of experience in their respective fields. Selection is made by the Professional Development Committee.
Winter Professional Development Institute	A two-day mini-conference for advanced GEM professionals that alternates annually between an East Coast destination (typically San Juan, PR) and a West Coast destination (typically Palm Springs, CA).	January	Advanced GEM professionals	Offers at least one session for each of the six educational domains to provide exposure to attendees of the entire GEM lifecycle. Domains will be identified in the Winter Institute program.	Established GEM leaders and/or corporate sponsors with a depth of experience and topics relevant to an advanced audience. Selection is made by the Professional Development Committee.
Leadership Academy	A comprehensive leadership training program for mid-level GEM professionals that offers a three-day, intensive, onsite training in the fall with a series of leadership training webinars and GEM topical webinars, a 360 leadership assessment, and a comprehensive project	September – May	Mid-career GEM professionals	Focuses heavily on the Career, Staff, and Personal Development domain (leadership training) with six interactive webinar offerings covering a strategic topic in each of the six educational domain areas.	Established GEM leaders, academic faculty, and leadership training experts
Webinars	One-hour, live virtual sessions delivered on a current topic of relevance to GEM professionals. Attendees can log in live and hear/watch the virtual session from a mobile device or desktop	Monthly, typically on the first and third Tuesday of each month	All NAGAP members, with varied monthly target audiences	Each monthly content webinar (third Tuesday) will focus on a different domain, with the goal of offering topics that focus on a rotating cycle of domains (see enclosed domain schedule). In each	NAGAP members, corporate partners, and GEM professionals at large. Presenters and topics are selected by the webinars chair as part of the Education Committee.

Educational Offerings and Channels (Continued)

	computer. Sessions are recorded for later access by members.			subsequent offering of a similar domain, attempts will be made to vary the intended level of the audience and topic. On the first Tuesday of each month, webinars will be offered from our sponsors and/or to support NAGAP initiatives. Where possible, these will be aligned with the assigned domain of the month.	
Podcasts	Typically a 30- to 45-minute, audio-only session on a current topic made available on-demand on the NAGAP website and on current podcast hosting channels (Google Play, iTunes, Spotify, etc.) free of charge to the public.	Monthly	All GEM professionals, with varied monthly target audiences	Each podcast will largely focus on a different domain topic on a rotating basis, with attempts to mirror the webinar domain schedule. In some cases, the audio from the month's webinar will be featured.	Subject matter experts on a variety of GEM and NAGAP-related topics.
<i>Perspectives</i> articles	<i>Perspectives</i> is the official NAGAP magazine. It is published in print and electronic versions.	Three times per year	All NAGAP members	The NAGAP Publications Committee will attempt to have educational content in each issue that spans all six educational domains.	All NAGAP members are welcome to submit content for publication. Content from GEM professionals at large may be considered.
NAGAP-led research	The NAGAP Research Committee regularly conducts research, including some scheduled and ad-hoc projects.	Varies	All NAGAP members	Varies	Research is most commonly conducted by the NAGAP Research Committee or selected as part of peer review process. Research

Educational Offerings and Channels (Continued)

					proposals are welcome from all NAGAP members.
The Exchange	NAGAP’s official member portal with a dynamic online message board for members to ask questions, seek advice, and to share content and best practices. It also hosts past issues of <i>Perspectives</i> and recordings of previously released webinars and podcasts.	Varies	All NAGAP members	Provides threads and forums dedicated to content spanning all six educational domains.	All NAGAP members
NAGAP website resources	The official NAGAP website at nagap.org offers a variety of blog content, articles, research, and resource guides.	Varies	All GEM professionals with some members-only content	Varies	Varies, though most commonly, content is provided by NAGAP members, corporate partners, and NAGAP committee members

Core Competencies of the GEM Professional

The core competencies listed below provide a summary roadmap for NAGAP members to enhance skillsets across the GEM lifecycle. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should it be viewed as a static document. Competencies have been outlined in each of the six educational domain areas.

Graduate enrollment management professionals should...

Career, Staff, and Personal Development

- Demonstrate a high level of self-awareness, personally and professionally
- Possess a broad understanding of social justice, racial, ethnic, sexual, and gender identity theories and their applications across the professional and GEM lifecycle
- Possess a strong ability to negotiate
- Possess a working knowledge of the basics of GEM - functional areas, roles, and skillsets
- Possess management experiences in an operational unit within a graduate admissions office
- Possess strong crisis management skills
- Possess strong project management skills
- Possess strong public speaking skills with individual, small group, or presentation capabilities
- Possess strong time management skills
- Possess strong writing skills with the ability to adjust to internal and external, and informal and formal needs
- Possess the ability to adapt to the rapidly changing technology within GEM
- Possess the ability to articulate the value of a GEM model
- Possess the ability to effectively communicate ideas
- Possess the ability to handle multiple competing priorities simultaneously
- Possess the ability to influence prospective students to make institutional selection decisions
- Possess the ability to inspire and motivate others
- Possess the ability to provide quality customer service to external constituencies and internal stakeholders
- Possess the ability to recognize unconscious bias in oneself and staff
- Understand and effectively apply ethical principles throughout the GEM lifecycle
- Understand best practices and current research within the GEM profession and models that work for staff and colleagues
- Understand how to communicate and adjust messaging effectively with different internal and external audiences
- Understand how to develop a personal career plan (short/long-term)
- Understand how to effectively assess and evaluate self, staff, and related GEM units
- Understand how to effectively communicate expectations to staff
- Understand how to effectively cross-train staff to maximize resources
- Understand how to effectively delegate responsibilities to others
- Understand how to effectively manage conflict
- Understand how to effectively manage teams in unionized, non-unionized, and hybrid environments
- Understand how to effectively organize and motivate a team with diverse abilities and skillsets
- Understand how to effectively provide constructive feedback to staff
- Understand how to effectively use and interpret data for strategic decision making in GEM
- Understand how to identify opportunities for collaborative partnerships including pipeline programs, corporate partnerships, and articulation agreements
- Understand how to leverage limited resources to maximize productivity and results

Core Competencies of the GEM Professional (Continued)

- Understand how to leverage your strengths to find and engage in networking opportunities and leadership roles
- Understand how to manage change
- Understand how to prepare staff for opportunities for personal and professional development
- Understand the resources and organizations available for professional development in GEM
- Understand the roles and applications of managing and leading others
- Understand various leadership theories in managing diverse staff

Enrollment Modeling & Strategic Planning

- Articulate university vision and mission through a planning and modeling process through understanding of departmental, unit, and university level coherence
- Know how to set achievable enrollment goals based on institutional need for headcount, financial aid, tuition revenue, and related metrics
- Possess the ability to analyze and understand data in the context of enrollment, tuition, and institutional priorities
- Possess the ability to create comprehensive reports for internal and external audiences
- Possess the ability to effectively provide financial and headcount enrollment projections for use by key stakeholders
- Possess the ability to identify opportunities for public/private partnerships, pipeline programs, and articulation agreements
- Possess the analytical skills necessary to understand the trade-offs and complexities associated with determining enrollment targets
- Understand how to build a strategic enrollment plan
- Understand how to conduct market research for strategic program development
- Understand how to create short- and long-term goals as part of the strategic planning process
- Understand how to effectively model for financial aid and budgeting
- Understand how to implement the GEM model
- Understand the role of commitment deposits in the admission process
- Use data and historical trends to create an enrollment plan that factors in local, regional, national, and global markets

GEM Operations

- Know the legal and ethical requirements of the application process
- Possess knowledge of current events and issues related to operations (standardized testing, international document issues, processing technology, etc.)
- Possess knowledge of the vendors and technologies available for lead generation, application processing, yield, and retention efforts
- Possess the ability to cross-train staff to facilitate "integrated interdependence" across the graduate student lifecycle
- Possess the ability to effectively manage events as a function of yield for orientation activities and student services
- Possess the ability to lead groups through use of new systems, processes, and technologies

Core Competencies of the GEM Professional (Continued)

- Understand CRM technology, its role and value in the recruitment process, how to implement it, and how to effectively use it in GEM
- Understand data privacy laws and good data collection and retention practices
- Understand higher education as a business model
- Understand how to build and improve technical solutions for efficient admission processing
- Understand how to effectively assess existing programs and new program opportunities
- Understand policies, both internally and as industry best practices, and evaluate the efficacy of these policies on-campus
- Understand the admissions operational needs of international students (transcript evaluation issues, English proficiency, visa issues) and how they impact the admission process
- Understand the course registration process for graduate students
- Understand the local, state, and federal regulations that impact graduate enrollment management

Money Matters

- Possess knowledge of current trends in student debt management and personal financing during graduate school
- Possess the ability to effectively budget for a graduate enrollment management office
- Understand graduate financial aid modeling strategies for the recruitment of new students (i.e. tuition discounting, scholarships, assistantships)
- Understand grant writing and other related funding opportunities to help secure funds for office or department
- Understand how financial aid can be leveraged for graduate student retention and engagement
- Understand how gross and net revenue works within an institution and the varied sources of such revenue
- Understand how to communicate with students and internal constituents about financial concerns (tuition revenue, aid, etc.)
- Understand how to create models to plan the budgetary mix for a variety of enrollment, recruitment, and operations activities
- Understand how to leverage employer reimbursement programs
- Understand how to manage purchasing and outsourcing procedures and how to implement them for a GEM office
- Understand how to use market and institutional data to demonstrate value and ROI for prospective students
- Understand scholarship award models and how to administer them in a centralized and decentralized environment
- Understand institutional, state, and federal financial aid policies, regulations, and procedures
- Understand the effective use of graduate assistantships
- Understand the GI Bill and other military tuition benefits
- Understand the role of federal financial aid and how loan programs work
- Understand the university and/or department level budgeting process, with knowledge of the mix of funds to meet enrollment goals

Core Competencies of the GEM Professional (Continued)

Recruitment & Marketing

- Possess a working knowledge of different recruitment and enrollment funnel models
- Possess knowledge of industry trends related to changes in recruitment strategies and channels (i.e. Content Marketing, Personas, etc.)
- Possess the ability to analyze and interpret recruitment data to inform recruitment planning
- Possess the ability to create content (digital, video, photo, written) for use in communication, marketing, and recruitment campaigns
- Possess the ability to develop marketing materials to promote the institution and its programs (digital and print), relevant to the target audience
- Possess the ability to effectively advise prospective graduate students on the admissions process and the concept of "fit" in matching student interests and available graduate school opportunities
- Possess the ability to identify and create strategies to recruit various populations of students (online, on campus, adult learners, etc.)
- Understand all available marketing channels, including but not limited to, electronic, print, and outdoor channels
- Understand how to build and implement an effective communication plan to engage prospective graduate students
- Understand how to develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan
- Understand how to develop segmented messaging plans and identify diverse media for communicating with students
- Understand how to effectively recruit international students
- Understand how to effectively utilize alumni in the recruitment process
- Understand how to engage faculty in the recruitment process
- Understand how to execute and disseminate market research for graduate enrollment planning
- Understand how to integrate diverse, first-generation, and under-represented populations into communication and marketing channels
- Understand how to run effective recruitment events in both physical and virtual environments
- Understand how to use current technology and other means to analyze the efficacy of marketing efforts (i.e. recruitment strategies, communication campaigns, etc.)
- Understand the basics of selecting and working with outside marketing vendors related to recruiting and admission services, creative services, digital marketing, etc.
- Understand the role of graduate recruitment events (fairs, conferences, etc.) in the recruitment process
- Understand the role of social media in the recruitment process and the most effective platforms for target populations

Student Lifecycle, Engagement, and Support

- Possess a collaborative mindset to understand both enrollment and retention efforts
- Understand and advocate for the role of career services in supporting graduate student alumni
- Understand how to advocate for a student services model that acknowledges and supports the GEM lifecycle

Core Competencies of the GEM Professional (Continued)

- Understand how to conduct outreach to alumni for career/placement tracking and future engagement
- Understand how to design programs that match institutional goals and needs while supporting student transition and success
- Understand how to develop a clear roadmap for students enrolling in the institution
- Understand how to develop and implement measurement tools and metrics to track student success and engagement
- Understand how to develop and provide mentorship training for program stakeholders
- Understand how to effectively retain graduate students
- Understand how to engage advisors, faculty, or current student staff in the collaborative student lifecycle process
- Understand how to leverage the voices and skills of alumni to create a dynamic and inclusive program/campus community
- Understand how to plan and guide program-centric orientation efforts for maximum student success
- Understand how to plan and run an effective graduate student orientation
- Understand how to utilize career outcome data with prospective students, current students, and alumni
- Understand personal development theory in the context of a graduate student
- Understand program curricula for the purposes of advising and supporting graduate students
- Understand the mental health needs of graduate students
- Understand the needs of various student identities, and support their transition to graduate school (LGBTQ, URM, adult learner, first generation, international, etc.)
- Understand the role of campus engagement in the retention of graduate students
- Understand the roles of all student service units (i.e. Registrar, Bursar, Financial Aid, Student Life, Accessibility, etc.) in the GEM lifecycle
- Understand the service needs of graduate students in each student affairs unit
- Understand the various student needs at different points in the GEM lifecycle

Key Traits of the GEM Professional

Some of the key traits identified among successful GEM professionals are outlined below. As noted above, this list is not intended to be exhaustive and should continue to be developed. NAGAP will offer educational content that assists members in honing these key abilities and traits to become more effective graduate enrollment managers.

Able to empower others	Ethical	Openly receives constructive feedback
Adaptable	Honorable	Passionate
Analytical	Independent	Persuasive
Charismatic	Innovative	Process driven
Collaborative	Intellectually curious	Professional
Compassionate	Possesses leadership potential	Rational
Confident	Lifelong learner	Reflective thinker
Creative thinker	Moral	Relatable
Credible	Motivated and motivational	Respected
Emotionally and intellectually mature	Nimble	Responsible
Empathetic	Open to change	Sensitive to cultural differences
Engaging		