2024



Higher Education Committee Annual Status Report

JERRY MURPHY AND THOMAS RUPPERT, CO-CHAIRS

Introduction

The Higher Education Committee is a standing committee with the goal of encouraging and enabling the development of flood risk management degree programs at institutions of higher learning including 2-year associate degrees, minors, 4-year bachelor's degrees, graduate certificates, degrees, and doctoral programs. The committee works with partner agencies to actively promote the increase of existing flood risk management curriculum within institutions of higher learning already engaged in teaching flood risk management and related coursework, as well as seeking out opportunities within other disciplines, such as planning and emergency management, to promote flood risk management courses within their current higher education curriculum structure.

Key Accomplishments

In 2023-24, the Higher Education Committee focused on pursuing grant funding for development of a Graduate Certificate in Floodplain Stewardship in conjunction with HBCUs in an effort to better diversify the profession of floodplain administration. This pursuit led to:

- Submission of two (2) Letters of Intent (LOI) to fund development of a graduate certificate in floodplain stewardship to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), one (1) of which was selected to submit a full proposal. We anticipate notification of a decision June 2024
- Participation in the FREDx Puerto Rico expedition, providing a higher education perspective on opportunities to better engage floodplain professionals in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in ASFPM and the CFM® Program.
- Establishment of two (2) subcommittees, one (1) focused on committee activity and membership outreach, promotion, and retention; one (1) focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI); and continued our support for the Climate Change Task Force.

Priorities

Maintaining a committee structure:

- Participate in conference calls and retreat.
- Attend policy committee chair meetings and hold an annual meeting.
- Organize and facilitate regular committee conference calls.
- Represent ASFPM when asked.
- Solicit new members.

Establishing and maintaining a forum:

- Conduct quarterly conference calls on desired subjects.
- Solicit topics and interested presenters.
- Maintain and expand list of administrators, faculty, and allied higher-ed professionals.
- Support the ASFPM Librarian's efforts to establish a peer-reviewed journal or participate in an established journal.

Promoting floodplain stewardship as a professional career and recognized field of post-secondary study:

- Develop core curriculum for all levels of post-secondary educational instruction that can be expanded for broader educational opportunities.
- Support and mentor other efforts to establish floodplain management courses, degrees, and minors.
- Identify curriculum champions, share experience, and provide available support.
- Assist in developing doctoral dissertation and post-doctoral research topics.

Recommended Actions

- Prepare for the committee's retreat and the annual higher education policy committee meeting.
- Prepare notes of annual meeting for distribution.
- Facilitate, organize, and support the Membership Subcommittee in conducting regular bi-monthly conference calls with active committee members.
- Continue to expand on and improve viability of existing and potential programs, market the programs, and identify supporting resources for establishing programs.
- Continue to share experiences and provide general support to create certifications, courses, degrees, and minors related to floodplain management or stewardship.
- Promote diversity and inclusion by collaborating with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to promote the study of floodplain management.
- Continue to pursue a Graduate Certificate in Floodplain Stewardship. This will be done regardless of the activities to establish a major or minor in the referenced subject. Such certificates bring together a variety of like subjects to focus on a concept.
- Continue to engage with our Pod leader, David Powers, Leaders of Membership Subcommittee, and AI Subcommittee.