



Guelph Engineering Society



Report on CFES CONGRESS 2010 at McMaster University,
Jan 2-8, 2010.

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1. Purpose of Conference

The purpose of the CFES Congress is an annual general meeting for CFES. There are many activities that occur over the course of the week that this conference is held. For example, many of the sessions occurring deal with internal affairs of CFES such as bidding for new members, elections, and accountability of its current members. Also, this is an opportunity for engineering societies from across the country to discuss problems that they have had and how they overcame them, so they can learn from one another.

2. Personal Goals for Conference

Some personal goals that I had in this conference were to network with a lot of different people. I think of networking in the sense that you don't have to be best friends with the other individual but you exchange a few words with each other and somehow in the future you can help each other out when it's needed. During the conference, I would take the opportunity to discuss with other schools some of the problems some of the students face academically within their schools. I would be interested in finding out the curriculum differences between our unique programs against most of the other common programs that the other universities share. Both of these things listed above were accomplished and I learned more on top of it from a delegate from Queens University about what he does as a VP Academic. Mainly, I wanted to bring back insight in a variety of different topics and attempt to apply them to situations that we have back in Guelph.

3. Summary of Events

I attended many workshops and events and below is the summary of the important points that affected me for each one:

Engineering & Public Policy

Presentation was given by Howard Brown

- More engineers should be incorporated into the political system to allow a different perspective that non-engineers cannot provide

- Attempt to connect with your local community of politicians (counselors, MP, MPPs in your riding) to build a relationship
- Gave me thoughts of possibly looking into politics on the future of my career

Drew Dudley

- One of the best speakers that I have ever listened to because he changed the way I thought about things in life
- He spoke about the experiences he had in life and how in numbers people are stronger and can help each other in ways a person alone can't ever do and many other topics that you just have to see in person
- Highly recommended for anyone that can go see him speak, GO!

Balancing Traditions

- Many schools have traditions and stories behind them; however, stories are not told and traditions are just done. In short, traditions have lost their essence and they seem to be a bit "dry" these days.
- Times have changed and so traditions should change
- Back in Guelph, I think we should reinforce why we do certain traditions in person rather than in the agenda, explain them to the Frosh.

Speaker at the Banquet

- The speaker (forgot his name) discussed about Google and YouTube and how he is part of a company that founded the first Internet browser/search engine
- Research In Motion is a great company that is in the Top 5 of 50 companies of some time period (forgot)
- Personally, I was very excited because he talked about YouTube and I'm a fanatic for that website.

Diversity

- Issues discussed from presenters from UBC (women), Carleton (GLBQQ), and Engineers Canada (indigenous, retention of women)
- These issues are addressed but need to be acted upon more or else they'll still be there and their numbers will drop
- Carleton's "gay" engineering club sparked interest in me but numbers in Guelph are not large enough and it would become a cliché group, but it works in Carleton due to their larger population.

EngSoc Academic Interests

- Learned about other schools and how they deal with academic issues, main point being the interaction between faculty and students
- U Manitoba has a "scrawl on the wall", anonymous writing info on a wall on feedback to the school; wall is monitored on a regular basis. Also have a "bear pit", where students walk in to discuss with director/dean about issues, open door discussion. **Good option to do in Guelph.

- Other schools condone stealing exams “accidentally” and add it to their exam banks. Some profs know this is happening and don’t care because they are too busy.

Faculty Relations

- Relationships with other schools were discussed. Queens had a strong relationship with faculty while McGill had minimal to no interaction.
- Many similar points were shared in this session and the Academic Interests stated above
- We should continue our strong bond with faculty especially since we are undergoing construction of a new expansion.

Future of Engineering Education

- Somewhat of an insightful session, nothing really memorable from it.
- Emphasis placed on the social context of engineers against everyone else, engineers go above and beyond.
- In the end, more well-rounded engineers are wanted and there should be more exposure on “soft-skills” and liberal arts in the engineering education

Alumni Relations

- Honestly was a boring session, little learned anything from it compared to other ones
- Administration needs to be involved in order for a successful Alumni network that does not involve association of the EngSoc
- We need to build on our engineering Alumni relations since they still support us and go to some of our events we hold during the year

WIEEEEE

- The speaker was very passionate about what she wanted to get across to the audience
- Women in Engineering is a big problem, needs to have retention in education, and in the workplace. Big long process that needs to be upheld.
- We all need to be more open minded and think outside the box on this issue.
- Effort to revive WiSE back in Guelph to include not just women but to celebrate diversity and minorities

Bilingualism

- Most of the round table discussion was done in French and I understood half of it
- Francophones believe conferences should be more bilingual so the communication between Anglophones and them can be more smooth. Both side can have their say in issues that need to be discussed
- *****Priority should be given to candidates that are bilingual when going to a conference since you would get more out of it with the French opinion

CE

- Conference during the summer where there is a theme and “soft-skills” are taught and applied, small group of 50 people from across Canada
- These skills are not necessarily taught during Engineering education and is something we will eventually all need to learn in our lives
- Held last year (2009) at U of T

Speeches, Bids, Votes

- Congress 2012 is going to Yukon, in all seriousness that is crazy. I learned how other schools put on bids for conferences and what needs to be included in the process
- Many speeches were given across many positions such as executives, commissioners for CFES and for ESSCO
- Voting was done in a style that was different from what I have seen before; apparently, they say it is a quicker process.

Job Fair

- Learned about consulting engineering with one representative and it's not what everyone thinks it is!
- Talked with a man who's company represents many engineering firms across North America, got free stuff from him
- Entered to win iPod Nano that had a camera, did not win. *sadface*

Plenary

- Interesting experience of a large scale voting, bidding, and debating session. Motions are put forward and are essentially ripped apart to see if they can make it into the CFES constitution and policy manual
- Very very long to sit in through the whole thing. I only went to see a few bits and saw the very end
- We need to change a few things in our policy manual and constitution as things become irrelevant or are not completed by members on EngSoc

4. Evaluation

i) *Conference Organizers*

The conference was really well run in all aspects. I appreciate how a lot of work is put in to make this event possible. I enjoy the range of speakers and keynotes that I was privileged to have a listen to. One large weakness was the confusion of where certain sessions were being held but that was quickly overcome with schedules posted on each meeting rooms' door. I would not argue with anything being improved during the conference, it depends on the individual to make the best of the setting they are in and to absorb information and bring it back to their schools. In addition, some things are out of the organizers range to control such as the venues for meals and variety of what can

be served given a certain budget that they are to work with. Overall, I can confidently say that this conference was a strong one and I have never been to one before.

ii) Delegate

I think that I was a good delegate for this conference because I did not do anything that would jeopardize the reputation of Guelph. I was sober the whole week and thus no actions made were unjustified because I did not consume alcohol. I learned so much from this conference and it has changed my way of thinking and made my love for engineering grow more and more. The profession is very powerful compared to others and deserves the amount of trust and respect that it has in today's day and age. I will not forget little things I learned that I will use and apply at my time at Guelph. There is no need to say any of them because you should go learn them yourself by going to CFES Congress. All of the goals that I had stated earlier were achieved in one way or another. Having the talk with the individual from Queens was one of the most insightful things I did the whole week. If I could attend another conference I would definitely try to socialize more and put myself out there because I will know familiar faces that I knew from before. I will have come out of my shell and be able to carry out conversations that will have more meaning. Other conferences that I would want a chance to go to are NCWIE, PEO-SC, and ESSCO-AGM. Speaking of which, I am excited for CFES Congress 2012 in Whitehorse, Yukon. You should go as it will be a chance of a lifetime!