



# Guelph Engineering Society



Report on ESSCO AGM at the University of Toronto,  
June 21-24, 2007  
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## ***1. Purpose of Conference***

The purpose of this conference was to be the Annual General Meeting of the Engineering Student Societies Council of Ontario's. Notable activities include information sharing sessions, accountability on outgoing Executives, elections, and plenary, where mandates are set for the upcoming year, as well as changes to the constitution and/or policy manual, take place, through formal meeting formal following Robert's Rules of Order. This is a chance for all member societies of ESSCO to get together and have a united voice in issues involving external organizations and initiatives (PEO, OSPE, etc.). In addition, it offers a great networking opportunity for delegates from member schools.

## ***2. Personal Goals for Conference***

This was my first conference as head delegate and VP-External. So even before we attended the conference, I had a lot of goals regarding the preparation and such for ESSCO AGM. My first goal was to find the maximum number (5 including me) of delegates to attend the conference, all of whom were involved, or planning on becoming major players in the University of Guelph's Engineering experience. I wanted to make sure they all entered the conference with goals, and had ideas on how they could contribute in sessions and plenary. I wanted not to tell them what to pursue, but to give them the resources (documents, background info, etc.) to be prepared to see those goals through. I wanted a delegation that would enter the conference with a purpose and sense of direction.

At the conference, I wanted to keep the momentum I had hopefully built through preparing my delegates. I wanted to make sure we were all in constant contact, updating each other on how the sessions were, who is talking about what, good ideas picked up, etc., so that we all knew exactly what was going on, staying prepared and on top of the ball. I wanted to have representation at all of the sessions, and make sure we contributed in a positive way.

Many of my goals had to do with the performance of the delegation, which is my role as head delegate. However, I also had personal goals. As this was my first conference as VP-External, as it is for all the other schools, I felt it was very important for me to present myself in a professional manner,

networking and working with the other incoming VP-Externals to do positive things. It was important to me to get my “foot in the door” and make the connections necessary to set myself up well for the rest of the year.

### *3. Summary of Events*

- ESSCO 201 -presentation by the ESSCO Executive explaining the role of ESSCO, what ESSCO can do for YOU, etc.  
-personally I was fairly familiar with all of the information, but it was a good way to start off the conference, by getting all of the basics out there and made clear
- CFES 201 -presentation by the CFES Ontario Ambassador, much like the one above, explaining the role and dealings of the CFES
- RIM Workshop  
-presentation by two RIM representatives highlighting the advantages to working with RIM  
-stressed the camaraderie, work ethic, and challenges an employee at RIM can expect, as well as what they are looking for in/how they look for an employee  
-was interesting to hear an industry point of view, gave some insight on the way things work in the real world
- LIAC  
-LIAC is a committee which aims to gauge the concerns of engineering students and represent those concerns to the proper people  
-this year, the project took a huge leap forward, an extensive survey was done on student’s opinions on professor evaluations, a 200+ page report was in the midst of being put together on the results  
-the goal was to take the results to CODE (Council of Ontario Deans of Engineering), however CODE wouldn’t let ESSCO come in to present, the thought is now, to overcome this, have individual schools talk to their individual deans, hopefully making CODE more open to considering the results or at least hearing the presentation  
-another huge topic was what subject to do the survey on in the coming year. It ended up that a committee would be formed to make a recommendation as to what subject to hold the survey on this year
- Forget Bridges, Let’s Build Teams!  
-presentation by Caitie Rosen stressing how important team building is and the different roles that need to be filled for a team to be successful (facilitators, followers, etc.)

-well received, a game was played testing logic, but we were encouraged to take note of the dynamics of the group, what was successful and what was not

#### OSPE

-presentation by a representative from the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) explaining the role of OSPE  
-it was noted that while in the past year, ESSCO has “repaired” relations with the PEO, there still may be a bit of a disconnect with OSPE  
-OSPE is an organization that works for engineers and the profession (speaks on our behalf), while the PEO regulates the profession

#### Academic Events: Good and Bad

-presentation by VP-Externals from Ryerson and Windsor, two schools that are in very challenging situations; Ryerson struggles with attendance mainly due to the fact that it is a commuter school, Windsor struggles because it is small  
-both schools, as well as all schools who participated in the session, reported large amounts of student apathy as the main cause of poor showings at events put on  
-we brainstormed ways to combat this, how we could alter events to make them successful, what some schools tried that worked, and what some did that didn't  
-good ideas came out of it, however student apathy will always be a huge challenge for engineering societies

#### PEO Speaker

-the student liaison from the PEO came to talk about the relationship that exists between ESSCO and the PEO  
-again, outlined the role of the PEO, etc., laid out the basics but things that must be made clear nonetheless

#### ESSCO Accountability

-went through all of the ESSCO Exec, first listening to the Exec present their mandates they had received, what they did, etc.  
-was a session designed to give members the opportunity to evaluate the quality of work done by their elected Execs, at the end of the term  
-after all presentations, Executives left, and there was a discussion on the good, bad, what could be improved on, etc.  
-a vote of confidence is then done, where it was shown that the jobs that the Executives had done were accepted by the members in fairly strong fashion

#### Elections

-the results of the elections for the four Executive positions in the upcoming year:  
President – Ruth Anne Vanderwater, Waterloo

Vice President Services and Development – Justin Kaufman,  
Ryerson  
Vice President Communication – Dan Taylor, Waterloo  
Vice President Finance – Mike Orr, McMaster

#### **4. Evaluation**

##### **i) Conference Organizers**

Overall, I would say that this conference was done well, with all of the necessary events taking place without trouble. Strengths were that pretty much the entire conference took place on campus, which kept things simple and easy (also made transportation easy). The facilities used were adequate, and the sessions that were run were well done for the most part, ranging from educational to forum-type to fun ones. The overnight accommodations were decent (residence is never too nice, but for a summer conference it is cheaper and gets the job done). With only a few exceptions, events did not run over the time allotted, which tends to be a major problem at conferences. The food was good, plenary was done very efficiently, and I left having gained a lot from the experience.

However, I would say that the pre-conference communication between U of T and the VP-Externals was fairly poor. We were told we would get a delegate package a month before, and were left in the dark until a week before when it was actually sent out. This not only was confusing for the VP-Externals, but frustrating for delegates wanting information. In addition, we were told we would be given a place to park (for a cost), then that was changed to us having to find it all on our own. This would be the only area I would suggest that could be improved on. Even if there is a delay, just communicating that to the right people is important.

##### **ii) Delegate**

Personally, I felt like I gained a huge amount from this experience. For one, I had to shift my mindset about my role. When I have attended conferences in the past, I could follow people, just absorbing things that came to me. However, this time, I was the head delegate, and I was the one in charge, I had to facilitate things for my delegation, had to make sure we were at the right places at the right times, etc. Through this, I also learned what type of delegation makes for an effective one at these conferences. I have never been in a position to be in charge of that, so seeing and thinking about what kind of people do well in conference situations will help me to try to take good delegations to represent the University of Guelph.

I felt like I did a decent job as well with preparing my delegates. I picked delegates that I thought would have something to offer and could benefit from this experience. I sent out the ESSCO Constitution and Policy Manual weeks beforehand, and stressed in emails that we all need to have goals for what we want to learn. I kept in contact, keeping my delegates informed on the details for the conference as they came to me. At the conference, I encouraged participation in sessions, trying to find ways to get my whole delegation involved. I had “mini-debriefings”, sharing what went on at sessions, keeping the communications lines open. I aim to continue this at future conferences.

I also felt like I established myself as someone with something to offer to ESSCO and other organizations. I contributed in sessions, participated in writing motions, and was able to make connections with other VP-Externals in the process.

In the future, I feel that I want to grow and build on my performance at this conference. I feel like I have set myself up so that I will be in positions to be an effective leader for the University of Guelph. Maintaining this mindset that I have developed from this conference will be a goal of mine.