



Guelph Engineering Society



Report on First Year Integration Conference at Lakehead University from
Friday, February 5, 2010 to Sunday, February 7, 2010.

Prepared By: Lauren Patrick, First-Year Delegate.

1. Purpose of Conference

The purpose of the First Year Integration Conference is to introduce first-year engineering students enrolled at Ontario universities to the governing bodies, student societies and accreditation boards in Ontario and Canada. Students can also learn about events and opportunities available throughout their university career.

The conference also provides networking opportunities for all delegates in attendance between other first-year students and members from student societies, namely ESSCO, as well as provincial and national organizations.

2. Personal Goals for Conference

My goals as a delegate at the FYIC were to gain more knowledge of opportunities available to engineering students, to share my enthusiasm for engineering and to be able to return to the University of Guelph and motivate fellow students to get involved and continue with engineering. I also wanted to gain insight on the topic of women in engineering.

One of the most important things that I learned about at the conference was how to volunteer with ESSCO at their events. I was not aware that any student could volunteer, and thought it was restricted to executive members. This is something that I hope to pursue in the near future. I feel like I attempted as much as possible to meet other students and represented Guelph in a positive light. I was enthusiastic and tried to remember everyone's names. After returning to Guelph, I spoke to many classmates about my experience at the conference, and I think that some are considering becoming more involved because of what I told them. I was very surprised by how many females delegates were in attendance. I thought it was great how Guelph had five female representatives. I have experienced some very strange reactions when telling people that I am in engineering, and I think that the stereotypical responses have affected me, so the strong female representation was very encouraging.

Overall I think I met the goals that I had and successfully attended my first conference, but I do think that there are ways to improve for next time.

3. Summary of Events

⇒ *Friday Night Social*

- *The social was very unique and gave delegates the opportunity to participate in activities that were very appropriate to the location.*

- *Delegates could go dog-sledding, skating or sit around a bonfire! The bonfire was ideal because everyone had the opportunity to move around the circle and meet other delegates. First-year students also learned a variety of engineering songs from the upper-year students.*
- ⇒ *ESSCO 101*
 - *It was beneficial to be introduced to the executive members of ESSCO and see who they actually were and hear about what they are doing with the council during the presentation from ESSCO.*
 - *Learning about different events ESSCO was running (Rube Goldberg, Wonderland, etc.) and how to personally get involved was helpful and easy to pursue.*
 - *Learning about the history was interesting. It was entertaining to learn some of the facts, such as their official colour (pink), mascot (flamingo), old motto (La, la, la, la), the goat rule, etc.*
- ⇒ *CFES 101*
 - *During this session, delegates learned what CFES is (the Canada-wide engineering student society) and how we, as Ontario universities, fit into the picture.*
 - *It seemed a bit more difficult to get involved with this group, but it was good to know that a national group is out there supporting us.*
 - *The concept of complimentary education courses was a completely new concept, so that is something to look into more.*
- ⇒ *PEO*
 - *One of the great things about this presentation was learning that the Professional Engineers of Ontario really encourage student education and membership.*
 - *Learning more about the PEO is important because it is from them that all Ontario engineering students will receive their certification.*
 - *Membership is free to join for students and they often run workshops and presentations for student members and certified members.*
- ⇒ *OSPE*
 - *This presentation was very informative on the purpose of the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers because many delegates were unaware that engineers have not always had the greatest repertoire in society.*
 - *This is very relevant to engineering students because we should know what to do to aid in strengthening the reputation of engineers, but also what not to do, so we do not reverse the work that the group has done.*
 - *There is also an option for student membership here; however, it is \$25.00.*
- ⇒ *Larry Betuzzi [Engineering as a Career]*
 - *Mr. Betuzzi had an interesting story about how he got to where he was; however, instead of simply telling us about it, it would have been more effective for it to be interactive, where all attendees could discuss how they got to where they are now. Even though there were a lot of first-years,*

other conversations exposed some interesting stories about how other students ended up in engineering.

- ⇒ *Bill Butuk [Engineering Landmarks in Canadian History]*
 - *This presentation seemed very rushed, but was filled with lots of interesting facts relevant to engineering.*
 - *Learning about some of these things felt inclusive because the stories of the Iron rings, the Sons of Martha, etc. seem almost like engineering lore.*
- ⇒ *Tours*
 - *It was great that Lakehead had the opportunity to showcase some of the work that they have been doing at their university. Getting to see the competition bridge and team, the virtual reality lab, the Formula SAE team and the power plant were great ways to see how engineering was being applied within the university.*
 - *Personally, I did not know much about Lakehead engineering, and learning about their success with the bridge-building was empowering. I liked learning about their Formula SAE team because it is something that I could relate to from Guelph. Also, learning about the power plant's retrofit, and the environmental impact really appealed to me because of Guelph's big push for environmental awareness.*
- ⇒ *Dr. Mirza [Engineering Responsibility]*
 - *Most of the students that I spoke with had already been exposed to an engineering ethics class, as I have at Guelph. We all felt a bit intimidated by this presentation, and I think it was a bit of a reality shock to realize how big of an impact our future careers could have on a multitude of people.*
 - *It almost seemed like a warning speech implying that engineering is not something to be taken lightly, but I think it was a good wake-up call; although we are allowed to have fun, we do need to take what we intend to pursue seriously because it is a serious business.*
- ⇒ *Nicole Mayette [Olympic Torch]*
 - *Learning about Bombardier and the different applications already in our country was very informative. I had some previous knowledge about Bombardier, but it was intriguing seeing how varying the projects that they were working on were (ex. Olympic torch, Toronto subways, etc.).*
 - *This presentation made it very obvious how the different disciplines in engineering could work together on one larger project.*
- ⇒ *Saturday Night Dinner/Social [Speaker: Rob Frenette]*
 - *There was a dinner, with speaker, Rob Frenette, from TBT Engineering in Thunder Bay, followed by an evening at the Fun Factor.*
 - *Both of the events were great at providing the delegates with a very comfortable environment to interact and continue networking.*
- ⇒ *Competition*
 - *The competition seemed a bit unorganized, but it was certainly in the spirit of engineering because of the use of Lego to construct our creations.*

- *This experience served as a lesson on project planning and management.*

4. Evaluation

i) Conference Organizers

The conference was organized effectively for networking! Having everyone stay at the same hotel and travel in vans together really allowed for integration between delegates.

The presentations from ESSCO, CFES, OSPE and PEO were very informative and it seemed very possible to follow through with a lot of the opportunities available, even though the presentations were short. The speakers on various other engineering topics were varying. Some seemed too short and some seemed too long. Some of the speakers also seemed to need a little bit more direction on the topic they were to speak about.

The events that were planned for us seemed appropriate and something that might not be possible to experience somewhere else, even the Fun Factor!

The competition on Sunday was a little confusing, the groups were too big and it was challenging to actually do anything productive. A simpler task and less materials might make it a more viable challenge.

ii) Delegate

I feel like I was a good representative for the University of Guelph and its' engineering program. I met lots of people, took in quite a bit from the presentations and tried to participate to my fullest with everything.

I feel like I have learned about methods of involvement the most from the conference and I have already begun passing on this knowledge to other first-year students at Guelph. I also learned about some great events that other universities have run, and engineering pranks! I have also been "promoting" the conference because I had such a positive experience.

I feel like I did meet my goals for the conference, but through reflection, I feel like there are ways that I could have taken then further and enhanced my experience. The big change I would make is regarding networking. I met a lot of the first-year representatives (almost all of them), but I think that I should have tried to interact with the head delegates and executive members of ESSCO more.

If I attend another conference, this is something that I will ensure happens. Although this was a first-year conference, I should not have held myself back from interacting with ALL participants.