

# Anthropology of Higher Education TIG

## Newsletter

### Update

*By Lauren Herckis & Brian Foster, Co-Chairs*

This year's annual meeting in Portland saw more than 100 papers associated with Higher Ed TIG sessions, making this a fourth successful SfAA meeting. Two clusters of affiliated sessions, one on credentialing and one on academic leadership, were broadly successful. A capstone session drew engaged discussion and constructive commentary, TIG leadership welcomed new collaborators, and as a community we have continued to build momentum on engagement, outreach, collaboration, and publications.

TIG priorities and leadership were revisited at a productive Board meeting in Portland. Lauren Herckis continues as Co-Chair and is joined by Brian Foster as Co-Chair and Karla Davis-Salazar as Co-Chair Designate. Jim McDonald has been appointed Chair of the Advisory Board, which welcomes several new members this year. Over the past year a new Communications team, headed by Meta Gorup, has drafted a strategy that will be put into effect after discussions at this year's Board meeting and Capstone session. A knowledge management team, headed by Nathan Woods, has made great strides towards curating the TIG's growing institutional memory and making some prospective plans for

data management moving forward. A significant TIG priority will be collaboration with other Society for Applied Anthropology TIGs, to support development of sessions—and discourse!—on topics of interest to multiple TIGs, such as disability and access in higher education. We are excited to leverage the TIGs to bring disparate expertise to bear on mutually relevant subjects at the 2020 meeting and beyond.

Higher Ed TIG-affiliated sessions in Portland covered topics ranging from diversity and inclusion to leadership and from pedagogy to the faculty experience. The first “mini-cluster” considered a very broad look at credentialing, certification, and licensing, ranging from lawyers to auto mechanics—credentialing in the “professions” being a critical role of all sectors of higher education. The second mini-cluster addressed continuity in academic leadership and the dynamics of individuals passing into and out of administrative roles. Both clusters generated extensive discussion that culminated in a roundtable session affiliated with each cluster. The papers affiliated with these clusters, and the ensuing discussions, have strong possibilities for future publication in book or special of a journal contexts. The TIG is strongly supporting efforts towards publication.

Publication and dissemination is a high priority for the TIG, which is in the process of publishing a second edited volume with Information Age Publishing, Inc. The title, Paths to the Future of Higher Education, indicates clearly that the book's focus on the future, which nicely complements our previous edited volume on the origins of the present state of higher education. This new book has a strong emphasis on active learning and the complex environmental and structural forces both for and against this powerful movement. Several other significant publications are underway: one a special issue of a journal and the other a cluster of papers in a journal. Jennifer Wies has agreed to continue as Vice Chair for Publications, facilitating the search for publication venues, bringing together groups of authors, and encouraging publication in many different forms—e.g., individual articles, individual sessions as clusters of papers in a journal, books, and more.

The TIG Board meeting and Capstone session were both opportunities for extremely engaging and thoughtful discussions. The 2020 meeting in Albuquerque was an important topic of conversation, with positive focus on three intersecting, complementary themes. First, the many ways that different higher education sectors (e.g., research universities, regional

and two, how do we navigate the conflicting demands that our many constituencies place on us (e.g., donors, faculty, students and parents, regents, legislators, accrediting bodies, employers, disciplinary organizations, k-12 schools, and much more). At present, we are considering three mini-clusters of sessions to address these three themes. Other favored themes include educational technology; protection, precarity, and support in higher education; the complex landscape of institutional

cultures and pasts; and stress, support, and anxiety in challenging times. We invite comments and proposals for organized sessions on these and related themes.

It is important to stress that these themes will not limit other content for sessions and papers: we welcome proposals for individual papers or sessions on all topics related to the anthropology of higher education. We especially welcome proposals building on the unique New Mexican context,

including the large Hispanic and American Indian populations, proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border, and the prominent arts presence. The Anthropology of Higher Education TIG is looking forward to exploring community partnerships in Albuquerque ahead of the 2020 meeting, which provides an opportunity to learn from local organizations and to explore the experiential, engaged, and critical pedagogies developed in and for this region.

