Bergen Community College’s annual *Tri-State* *Best Practices Conference* provides a forum through which issues affecting teaching and learning in our area colleges can be addressed. Through this forum, problems impacting higher education are identified, possible solutions are discussed, and the relevant social and cultural factors are considered. Participants present research papers, discuss classroom best practices or provide roundtable discussion sessions on any number of topics related to the conference theme. Please consider joining this year’s dialogue that will focus on the theme of *equity in higher education*.

Tri-State Best Practices Conference

Call for Papers

Conference Date: Saturday, March 4, 2017

The Meadowlands campus of Bergen Community College is hosting its sixth annual one-day conference dedicated to the exchange of ideas and “best practices” among educators. The theme of this year’s conference is ***“Issues of Equity in Higher Education.”*** While we will consider submissions on many topics related to pedagogy, scholarly research, or best practices in the college environment, we encourage submissions that focus on the theme of equity and the college learning experience.

The purpose of the conference is to provide educators with a theme-based forum through which strategies that can benefit our students are shared. This year’s theme speaks to issues that loom large on many fronts involving numerous social institutions, including government and government policies, the economy and workforce needs, philanthropic organizations and financial needs of schools at all levels. The focus on equity is intended to encourage discourse on the evolving position of schools and ideas of schooling in our society today including colleges as a societal resource. We encourage participants to consider a broad definition of equity – not limited to problems of race and ethnicity but inclusive of gender, physical and cognitive abilities, teaching and learning platforms, teaching models and learning styles, and so on.

This is a highly politicized election climate in which issues of equity have become the topic of national conversations. How this impacts higher education, directly and indirectly, on national, state and local levels, is of paramount importance. Reliable research and informed discussions are needed. Consistent with this year’s theme, we encourage submissions that address topics such as: student persistence and drop-out rates (age, race, ethnicity, immigration status, gender and sexual orientation, cognition, language), faculty role conflicts, the college as a community partner, politics and higher education, equitable assessment techniques, addressing different learning styles, and teaching techniques that promote equitable access to instruction.

To these more theme focused topics are also those addressing general questions such as: What are students learning and why? Who is teaching and how? What is the best way to prepare students for today’s workforce? How have we altered our programs to meet the demands of student populations? To what extent should work experiences and scheduling needs factor into expectations of students? As always, submissions related to undergraduate education that lie outside the purview of this theme will still be considered.

**Possible paper topics or presentations include:**

*Models of teaching and learning*

* Learning communities (including paired teaching)
* Online and distance learning
* MOOCS
* Engaging students in critical thinking through a variety of active learning strategies

*Social and cultural factors impacting teaching and learning*

* Student characteristics (teaching the returning student, the older student, students needing remediation, ESL students, students with disabilities, etc.)
* Teaching students with different learning styles
* Formatting courses to fit different schedules and time constraints (abbreviated/accelerated courses)
* Politics in the classroom and creating safe environments for diverse opinions
* Impact of funding and funding sources on education

*Climates of accountability and impacts of stakeholders*

* The business of education; education as a market value
* Education as a consumer product
* Financial aid as a factor in student persistence
* Admission and graduation rates: standards and trends
* Creating a range of approaches to assess learning

Presentations can be given as traditional papers, roundtable discussions, power point presentations, teaching demonstrations, case studies, displays and discussion of student work, or other methods of presentation deemed suitable.

**Instructions for Submission of a proposal: (Abstracts due by November 15, 2016)**

Each individual presentation should be limited to 20 minutes to allow for audience comments and questions at the end. You are encouraged to submit a full panel of three presentations, however partial panels of two presentations or single presentations will also be considered and will be grouped with other individual presentations by the conference organizers in order to form a full panel of three presentations. Alternatively, a roundtable presentation can be submitted. Roundtables run concurrently with presentation sessions, a full 75 minutes.

The submission form requires name, institutional affiliation, email address, a title for each presentation, and a 250-300 word abstract for each presentation. When submitting a full panel, please also provide a panel title \*\* For a double session or full panel, only one person, the organizer, should submit the proposal. Their co-presenters’ contact information should be entered into the form’s text box and their titles and abstracts attached with the organizer’s as a single document.\*\*

Send all questions or communication to the conference committee at: tristatebestpractices@gmail.com

All submissions are to be made through an online form available on the conference website:

 <http://www.bergen.edu/tristate>