January 2, 2018

Greetings!

It is an honor to serve as the 2018 president for the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP).

If you are a member of STP then I know you'll agree when I say this is the most dedicated group of psychology instructors that you could ever meet. I found my professional home in STP about 20 years ago, and it's no accident that most of my professional service has been to this organization. It was through the resources STP provides and through the countless conversations about teaching we've had -- at conferences, through PsychTeacher, and more recently, through Facebook and Twitter – that have made me a better instructor.

If you are not a member of STP, but have found the resources and opportunities for conversations that STP provides have also made you a better Instructor, I invite you to give back to STP by joining us. Your $25/year helps us continue to help all of us become better at our craft.

If you have ideas on how STP can better serve you or if you'd like to just talk teaching, please contact me (sfrantz@highline.edu) or visit with me at a conference. In 2018, you can find me at NITOP, EDUCAUSE Learning Institute, EPA, RMPA, WPA, the Advanced Placement reading, BISTOPS, the APA Convention, ACT, and GSTA Pedagogy Day.

One of the many fun things about being STP president is having task forces. If you are an STP member (even if you just joined!) and if any of these task forces interest you, I encourage you to apply. Please send your CV and a letter of interest to me at sfrantz@highline.edu by January 21, 2018.

1.   **STP Presidential Task Force on Re-Envisioning Intro Psych**

With over one million students taking Intro Psych annually, it is the most important course in our curriculum. This is the course that tells our future politicians, engineers, business leaders, and medical personnel the value psychology holds for public policy, for our work lives, and for our home lives. With that audience in mind, if we were to create an Intro Psych course today, what would it look like? What content from our current course should we remove? What content should we add? What big ideas from each content area should our students be walking away with? What are the themes that run throughout the discipline?

2.   **STP Presidential Task Force on Promoting the Value of the Psychology Bachelor's Degree**

Of the 1.8 million U.S. students holding a bachelor's as their highest degree, 73% (about 1.3 million) are in the workforce (2015 numbers). It's not uncommon for our bachelor's students to say apologetically that they have great jobs, but they're not using their degree – jobs like human resources, management, marketing, sales, and real estate. It's obvious to faculty what psychology brings to those fields, so how can we help our students to both see the skills and knowledge they developed through their degree program as well as see how those skills and that knowledge apply to whatever career field they choose? How can we help our bachelor's students better market themselves to employers? Further, how can we better help employers see the value our psychology baccalaureates will add to their organization?

3.   **STP Presidential Task Force on Restructuring the STP Graduate Student Teaching Association**

Currently, STP's Graduate Student Teaching Association (GSTA) is housed at a university for a 3-year term. What are the pros and cons of this current model? What other models could there be for how GSTA is organized? What are the pros and cons of these models? With this information in hand, how should GSTA be structured?

I'm looking forward to working with you in 2018!

Sue Frantz

President, Society for the Teaching of Psychology

STP Presidential Task Force on Restructuring the STP Graduate Student Teaching Association

Chair: Raechel Soicher
Members: Melissa Beers, Melissa Birkett, Patricia Brooks,
Jared Keeley, Teresa Ober

Rationale

The Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP) has several ways in which it supports the development of graduate students in the teaching of psychology. All graduate student members of STP are automatically members of the Graduate Student Teaching Association (GSTA) and also receive a discount on their yearly STP dues. Additionally, membership in STP provides a subscription to the STP flagship journal, *Teaching of Psychology*. STP also provides space in their newsletter for news and updates to/from graduate students. GSTA, in turn, provides a number of additional resources to graduate students. These include the GSTA blog, GSTA social media outlets (Twitter and Facebook), a Pedagogy Day conference at the GSTA host institution, currently The Graduate Center, CUNY, and valuable e-books on teaching (e.g., *How We Teach Now: The GSTA Guide to Student-Centered Teaching, 2017)*.

The GSTA has over 200 members, of whom 120 are new student affiliates to STP. The GSTA membership represents 38 states, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany. These numbers, especially the growth in new membership, are quite encouraging. However, the GSTA can and should reach a larger number of graduate students across the United States. In 2000,

an estimated 70% of graduate students had some teaching responsibility (as reported in Bettinger, Long, & Taylor, 2016). In 2015, 14% of the academic labor force was comprised of graduate students (American Association of University Professors, 2017). As of 2017, *U.S. News and World Report* statistics indicated that up to 26% of courses taught at national and regional universities list a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) as the instructor of record (Friedman, 2017). The role of a GTA is critical: one study found that if undergraduates had a graduate student instructor for their first course in a subject, they were more likely to continue in that major (Bettinger et al., 2016). The same study also found that GTAs usually graduate earlier and are more likely to be employed at a college or university than their counterparts who teach less frequently. Although these statistics are not from psychology graduate degree programs explicitly, even a conservative generalization suggests a large number of graduate students in psychology are teaching in some form while earning a degree. While the demands of teaching in higher education have increased for graduate students and new faculty, the scope of training and support for teaching in graduate programs has not kept pace (Buskist, 2013; Chew, et al., 2018)

In an effort to expand the reach of the GSTA, the STP Presidential Task Force on Restructuring the STP Graduate Student Teaching Association authored the following report to familiarize the Executive Committee with the history, structure, and initiatives of the GSTA and to suggest alternative structures which may be beneficial to GSTA in the longer-term.

Background

History of the GSTA

The GSTA was established in 2002 by the STP under the presidential term of Bill Hill. The executive committee of STP at the time desired to have an organization that could reach

out to graduate student teachers of psychology and advocate for their needs. The executive committee felt that the GSTA would be best served if the new organization was housed at a particular institution with a specific faculty mentor. The concern was that if the original leadership of the organization was spread amongst multiple sites, it would be difficult to gain traction and have an organized approach. Auburn University was selected to house the organization with William Buskist as the first faculty mentor. In addition to Auburn University, host sites have included the University of Akron, University of New Hampshire, and University of Georgia. The Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY) serves as the current host institution.

The GSTA leadership consisted of a Faculty Advisor serving a term of three years, a Graduate Student Chair holding a one-year term, and a Deputy Chair serving a one-year term. In this structure, the Deputy Chair served in that role to gain experience to take the position of Chair the next year. The host organization changed after each three-year term. The GSTA and its structure were formalized in the Bylaws of the STP. These rules were operationalized in a policies and procedures document that was first drafted in 2006, and subsequently updated in 2009 and 2010.

Current Structure of the GSTA

Under the current governance, the GSTA is hosted by an academic institution for a three-year term with a faculty member of the host institution serving as GSTA Faculty Advisor. Graduate students at the host institution are encouraged to join the STP in order to serve as GSTA leaders (Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, at-large members). The GSTA leadership develops programming at the host institution (e.g., an annual Pedagogy Day conference, pedagogy workshops) as well as at regional and national teaching conferences (e.g., APS-STP Teaching Institute, ACT, NITOP). In collaboration with GSTA members at other

institutions, GSTA leaders coordinate submissions to the GSTA Corner (monthly column in the STP newsletter), the GSTA Blog, and the e-book series (*How We Teach Now: The GSTA Guide to Student-Centered Teaching*) and select a speaker for the GSTA Invited Address at the APA Convention. The GSTA receives an annual budget of $6000 from the STP, with the majority of funds used to sponsor travel to the ACT conference, where GSTA leaders develop research projects at the annual STP SoTL Writing Workshop, and to other conferences (e.g., APA, APS). The proposed spending of funds and recent past activities are reported to the Vice President for Membership of the STP on a regular basis.

To select a host institution, the Vice President for Membership circulates a call for applications. The application includes: (1) a letter from a faculty member at the host institution willing to serve as the GSTA Faculty Advisor for a three-year term, (2) a letter from the Chair of the Department indicating a willingness to host the GSTA and provide institutional support, (3) confirmation of the availability of graduate students to fill GSTA leadership positions for three years, (4) a statement of goals to maintain and expand GSTA functions with plans for implementing those goals, (5) a statement of plans to involve GSTA members at other institutions, and (6) information about supports available at the host institution.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to (1) review the advantages and disadvantages of the current GSTA structure outlined above and (2) consider alternative models which would capitalize on these advantages while minimizing disadvantages. The tenure of the current host institution will end as of January 1, 2020. Although the timing and nature of the transition from the current GSTA structure to a new model is beyond the scope of this report, the Task Force would like to emphasize that both sufficient time and resources will need to be provided by STP to ensure none of the achievements of the GSTA to date are lost.

Strengths of the Current GSTA

The current structure has several advantageous features. First, the presence of a designated GSTA Faculty Advisor ensures that GSTA leaders have necessary support when negotiating a balance between coursework, doctoral research, teaching, and GSTA service by helping them troubleshoot situations and find solutions when conflicts arise. Second, the designation of the host institution ensures departmental support for graduate students to devote considerable time and effort to teaching-related activities and SoTL projects. Third, GSTA workshops and other local programming build a community around teaching at the host institution that extends beyond the three-year term and exceeds the boundaries of its current host.

Under the guidance of the current faculty advisor, Dr. Patricia Brooks, the GSTA has made remarkable advances in terms of strengthening the services and resources that they are able to provide to their members. The GSTA currently directs a number of activities that are vital for graduate student teachers of psychology. Regardless of the model selected by the Executive Committee, there should be an emphasis on sustaining and strengthening these activities.

- GSTA Corner in the STP Newsletter (monthly)
- GSTA Blog (https://teachpsych.org/page-1784686)
- Travel funding for graduate student presenters at national teaching of psychology conferences
- Selection, invitation, and introduction of the GSTA Invited Speaker at the annual APA convention
- GSTA Programming at regional conferences (EPA, MPA, NEPA, RMPA, SEPA, SWPA, and WPA)
- Social media outreach (currently Facebook and Twitter)
- E-book Editing

- Liaising with ECP members for programming

- Large-scale, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning research projects

- Maintenance of STP Wikipedia page

  (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Society_for_the_Teaching_of_Psychology)

- Purchasing and distribution of GSTA swag

Challenges of the Current GSTA

Despite the number of advantages and achievements of the current GSTA structure, no organization is without its challenges. The majority of the challenges facing the GSTA are related to reach and sustainability. For example, it is currently difficult to reach a wide range of GTAs, especially those who are not already well-supported in their teaching (e.g., because they have an advisor who does not emphasize teaching). Relationships formed at regional conferences have been historically difficult to sustain over time. In a survey sent out to a limited sample of graduate students in psychology, only three of 46 respondents noted any engagement with the GSTA, while 45 of them reported having some level of teaching responsibility. Even within GSTA, communication with members and management of the member database is difficult.

A second challenge for the GSTA is connection to other substructures in the STP. For example, although the GSTA chair attended executive committee meetings prior to the restructuring, this is no longer the case. The GSTA chair reports to the VP of Membership who also oversees a number of other groups within STP. Therefore, there is no direct representation of the GSTA with the executive committee. Additionally, the current GSTA is not connected directly with the Early Career Psychologists which results in a broken pipeline for STP leadership.

The last major challenge faced by the current GSTA is the incredible workload for maintaining GSTA activities given the size of its governing committee. For example, the original structure of the GSTA has already been expanded to include a secretary and treasurer (in addition to the faculty advisor, Chair, and Deputy Chair). As another example, the GSTA recently put out a call for editorial board members for the GSTA blog, a job which requires 3-5 graduate student leaders beyond the "executive committee."

Potential Models to Consider for the GSTA

The Task Force unanimously agreed that, regardless of the future form and structure of the GSTA, it will be critical to decentralize the current model in order to (1) reach and support more graduate student teachers and (2) redistribute the workload involved in maintaining GSTA activities. There are, however, several ways in which these goals may be achieved. The models listed below include a proposal of how the model might function and the advantages and challenges of each model. These models are not listed in any particular order.

1. Regional Representatives Model

Model Description

There are currently seven regional American Psychological Association (APA) conferences: Eastern Psychological Association (EPA), Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA), Northeastern Psychological Association (NEPA), Rocky Mountain Psychological Association (RMPA), Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA), Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA), and Western Psychological Association (WPA). Under this model, there would be a graduate student representative and faculty mentor associated with

each of these regions in addition to a core GSTA executive board (Chair, Past-Chair, Chair-Elect, Treasurer, Core Faculty Mentor, or some other minimal structure).

Student representatives could meet regularly and virtually to conduct business. The executive board would continue to provide some directive organization, but the regional representatives would be much more active in implementing the mission of the GSTA. Regional members could be selected either because they happen to reside in a particular region or through some selection process that occurs in collaboration with the regional association.

Advantages

The main advantage to the Regional Representative model is that it is more inclusive than the current model for both graduate student and faculty members of STP. This model would expand the current leadership structure of GSTA while increasing the national reach of the organization. Additionally, faculty members interested in mentoring graduate students in teaching, but who may be unable to do so at their home institutions, would be given the opportunity for more direct mentoring experience.

Another advantage to the Regional Representative model is the increased visibility of GSTA. It would be more common/feasible for graduate students to be attending these regional, science-focused conferences, effectively creating natural touch-points for promoting GSTA membership. This would also allow GSTA to deliver services to graduate students who may otherwise not have access to teaching support.

Challenges

The main challenge of the Regional Representative model would be its much larger size with a relatively horizontal power structure. It would be entirely possible that the regions end up operating relatively independently and the organization as a whole could lose its cohesive

identity. Additionally, identifying graduate student and faculty representatives for each region represents a substantial recruitment effort. Depending upon the length of term of the representative, the process could have to occur every year, leading to difficulty identifying feasible and willing candidates for smaller regions. Further, it is not clear how current GSTA activities would be divided, but most likely different regional representatives would adopt separate pieces of the current work.

2. School Chapter Model

Under this model, the GSTA would be organized through GSTA chapters on campuses with graduate programs. Each chapter would identify one or more faculty advisors and recruit and support student members locally or regionally. A central office or host institution could also be a part of this model. This model is based on the organization of [Psi Chi.](#)

Model Description

In this model, departments could apply for (or sponsor) a GSTA chapter made up of a minimum number of students and faculty advisor(s). This model could incentivize teaching development opportunities within a graduate program in the form of additional criteria for chapter development - for example, development of credit-bearing teaching courses or experiences, access to professional development opportunities, and commitment to teaching-related activities. Individual chapters may wish to organize their own activities (conferences, seminars, teaching demonstrations, discussion groups, etc.) during the academic year and participate in national or regional conference programing.

Chapters might also partner with Early Career Psychologists to fill mentorship or leadership positions (chapter president, vice president, etc.) and to enhance the career

development pipeline. This could also extend to other partnerships such as involving faculty at smaller regional institutions, liberal arts colleges, or community colleges.

A central contact or hub might be necessary to coordinate reviewing chapter applications, some aspects of communication, and web-hosting of resources (currently available to all GSTA members or to be developed in the future, such as a mission statement or bylaws).

Advantages

This model would encourage wider and more diverse GSTA membership, extend activities to more campuses, and encourage the development of more graduate teaching support and resources, particularly in programs which may currently have few (if any) teaching resources. It would allow flexibility in activities to meet individual chapter needs. If some information is maintained centrally, it could help streamline setting up new chapters. This model could serve as a way to disseminate best practices in teacher training (by setting recommendations or requirements for chapter establishment). It could also provide a way for non-tenure-track, teaching-focused faculty and additional faculty from institutions without graduate training to be involved (for example, at community colleges).

Challenges

This model will require more widespread and diverse faculty and departmental commitment and involvement, as well as some level of coordination or oversight by a central contact or hub within STP. The central contact would need to organize a system for reviewing chapter applications, possibly keeping membership up to date and maintaining web-hosted resources. This could potentially be a significant number of chapters - according to the Graduate Study in Psychology Summary Report (APA, 2018) more than 500 departments and programs offer master's and doctoral degrees in psychology. Further, it is not yet clear how the

contact/hub would function within the current STP organization. While this model would help to develop more teaching mentors within institutions, it depends upon the availability of mentors at institutions who are willing and able to form chapters. Chapters may be constrained in various ways by university or departmental rules and policies - for example, whether graduate students are unionized - and the level of support for teaching development activities is likely to vary across institutions.

3. Central Leadership Model

Under this model, the GSTA would function as an STP subcommittee.

Model Description

The GSTA Full Committee (described in more detail below) would consist of an Executive Committee, At-Large Members, and Subcommittees. Given the substantive time commitment involved in participating in the full committee, one option would be for graduate student members to be able to serve a two-year term as a subcommittee member, a two-year term as a subcommittee chair, a two-year term as a member-at-large, or a three year term as chair (to include the year as chair-elect, and the year as past-chair). The treasurer position could be one or two-year terms. Additionally, it is recommended that all or some of these leadership positions be appointed. For example, the VP of Membership might review applications or nominations to appoint the Chair and Treasurer. The GSTA Executive Committee might review applications to appoint the members-at-large and/or the subcommittee chairs.

Full Committee

    Executive Committee

- Chair

- Past-Chair

- Chair-Elect

- Treasurer

Members-At-Large

- Communications

- Membership

- Mentorship

- Conference Programming

- Research

- Resources and Publication

Subcommittee Chairs

- Communications (GSTA Blog, GSTA Corner)

- Membership (Membership directory, Social Media)

- Research

- Resources and Publications

Advantages

Similar to other models discussed, this model is decentralized and would encourage broad participation from graduate students across multiple institutions (and potentially from more varied program areas within Psychology). This is a model that currently functions effectively and efficiently within other areas and divisions of APA (e.g, the APA Graduate Student Committee). This model has a strong focus on developing graduate student leaders, as it creates a wide range of leadership opportunities for graduate students to gain experience in national service with respect to teaching development. It also helps to develop a strong pipeline for graduate students to transition into ECP academic positions and/or further STP service.

Given the size of the proposed committee structure, this model also has the advantage of spreading the workload associated with GSTA activities across a larger number of students. This effectively decreases the individual commitment for each committee member and allows graduate students to serve a role that fits their unique strengths.

Challenges

The main disadvantage of this proposed structure is that it is unclear where a faculty advisor or committee of advisors might fit. Members of the Task Force agree that graduate students often face opposition in pursuing teaching and teaching-related leadership experiences from their research advisors and/or home institutions. In these cases, GSTA faculty advisors can advocate on behalf of the graduate students or negotiate teaching development opportunities that fit within the structure of existing programs. In addition, graduate students have much to learn from ECPs and more senior faculty in the realms of both leadership and pedagogy. Although there is a "Mentorship" member-at-large position in the proposed structure, it is unclear the extent to which the development of that position will ensure effective and sustainable mentorship for the full committee as well as graduate students in STP more generally.

Recommendations of the Task Force

The Executive Committee, better so than the members of the Task Force, understand the organizational and political context within which the GSTA must function. In addition, the amount and quality of resources that could be committed to the implementation of a new GSTA structure is within the purview of the Executive Committee. Therefore, the Task Force has decided not to put forth one specific recommendation regarding a potential GSTA structure. Instead, it is the recommendation of the Task Force that the Executive Committee consider

each of the three proposed models carefully, with a focus on each model's ability to (1) expand the impact of the GSTA, (2) sustain and expand GSTA activities and initiatives, and (3) provide the most meaningful, effective, and sustainable mentored leadership experience possible for the students involved.

Regardless of how the Executive Committee decides to move forward, it is absolutely imperative that sufficient resources are provided to GSTA such that none of the achievements to date are lost. Throughout our meetings, members of the Task Force articulated a number of goals and/or visions for the future of the GSTA. Though these ideas are beyond the scope of our initial charge, we agreed that mentorship, financial resources, and input from the wider STP membership will be important for moving the GSTA forward.

The members of this Task Force thank the STP Executive Committee and President Sue Frantz for the opportunity to review, discuss, and offer these recommendations for your consideration.

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Troisi, ACT director, if they would like to advertise their conference to ACT attendees.

     b. Global Education Summit Update: There are now 12 registered attendees. VP Kelley proposed that UPeace could invite Costa Rican attendees and in turn STP will offer 1 year free membership to STP. VP Kelley will check with the hotel to see if the hotel can send one bill for the STP attendees.

     c. Email VP Kelley ideas for partnering with other international teaching organizations. Ask Dana Dunn to form a working group with members from international organizations (e.g., ESPLAT, Australian, etc.) to ask what would a partnership look like.

     d. **Action Item 2019-A-03-06**: President Rick will work with VP Kelley on a potential teaching pre-conference with IACCP for the next international conference in 2020.

9. Report from the VP for Membership was discussed.

     a. ECP membership has increased. ECP has submitted a proposal for name change. VP Meera is waiting on feedback from ECP. Proposal has been tabled.

     b. Membership Committee is doing a membership survey, EC will discuss the items proposed by membership committee no later than the May teleconference.
        Action Item 2019-A-03-07: VP Meera will ask Membership Committee to review the previous surveys and make a proposal for questions to EC.

     c. Restructuring GSTA: EC favored the central model, similar to the ECP structure. The new members should be diverse in regions and type of institution. The new GSTA can discuss budget, expectations, and programming. Any revisions to the P & P manual and bylaws should be sent to the Executive Director. VP Meera will serve as the faculty mentor.
        Action Item 2019-A-03-08: VP Meera will contact past and current chair of GSTA to serve as chair and associate chair of the new GSTA. They will put out a call for 4 new members at large.
        2019-03-29-01
        Motion: I move to change the current institution based structure of GSTA to mirror the current structure of the ECP committee.
        Moved: Fineburg
        Second: Altman
        Outcome: 10/0/0 (Y/N/A)

     d. **Action Item 2019-A-03-09:** VP Angela will check with ACT director to inquire about the possibility of running focus group(s) on membership.

10. Report from the VP for Programming was discussed.

     a. ACT has increased in attendees, cap has been raised for 2019, and the 2019 speakers are more diverse. ACT director Jordan has proposed additional ways to cut the budget deficit for the conference. Changes forthcoming are the workshops, opening reception, and the scheduling app.
        2019-03-29-02
        Motion: I move to increase the budget line for ACT conference director travel expenses to $1500.
        Moved: Altman
        Second: Frantz
        Outcome: 10/0/0 (Y/N/A)