

Grand Valley State University
AIS Conference – October 13-16, 2011
Three Year Report

Conference Planning Committee

We have begun preliminary conversations on campus with key people and departments to inform them of our intent to host the conference. We have received enthusiastic support and encouragement in all areas, and will continue to initiate collaboration throughout the campus. Currently we have a written and/or verbal commitment of assistance from:

Gayle R. Davis, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
Wendy J. Wenner, Dean, College of Interdisciplinary Studies
Judy D. Whipps, Chair, Liberal Studies Department
Christine Drewel, Faculty, Liberal Studies Department
Susan Mendoza-Jones, Director of Integrative Learning
Mary Manier, Director of Special Markets, Grand Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau
Shelley Sickrey, Administrative Assistant
Diane Six, Administrative Assistant
GVSU University Promotions
Continuing Education

Within the next year we will continue to formalize and add to our primary conference planning committee and create several subcommittees to aid in the development, organization and facilitation of this conference.

Location

Grand Rapids is conveniently located approximately halfway between Detroit and Chicago, and is easily accessible by major highways. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GRR) offers direct and daily flights from most major metropolitan areas. The airport is currently undergoing a substantial expansion and remodeling, which is on schedule and will be completed approximately a year and a half before the conference. This will make air travel to and from Grand Rapids even more pleasant than ever before! In addition, downtown Grand Rapids has a vibrant and energetic culture and offers many opportunities for engagement, dining, shopping and entertainment, including a brand new art museum (in addition to several others), the Van Andel Arena, and (in close proximity) the Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park. Many of these are in walking distance from the hotels, and GVSU will also provide a shuttle service to the main campus (in Allendale, approximately 12 miles away) if there are theater or concert events conference attendees are interested in attending.

Site Selection

Downtown Grand Rapids offers several quality sites for the conference. They are, in likely order of selection,

1. Amway Grand Plaza (187 Monroe Avenue NW)
2. Courtyard by Marriott (11 Monroe Avenue NW)
3. J.W. Marriott (235 Louis NW—this is likely a little “high end” but we are still comparing prices and facilities)

The Grand Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau has provided a preliminary and competitive quote for the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, and will facilitate additional bids once we provide them more accurate numbers from the Springfield Conference. They have seen the comparison charts of previous AIS

conference reports, and are confident and eager to help us consider the variety of options, needs and budget in selecting the perfect location. All hotels are within walking distance of Grand Valley's downtown campus, several museums, the Van Andel Arena, restaurants, and shopping. Although Grand Valley's main campus is in Allendale, we will happily facilitate campus tours and/or travel to nearby events or attractions. The GR Convention Bureau is also interested in providing support and collaboration regarding additional social events, points of interest and tours. The timing of the conference, weather permitting of course, also coincides with the typical peak of the color tour season in West Michigan... something that is sure to delight conference attendants.

Budget

As our formal proposal indicated, Grand Valley has offered financial support and commitment of a \$10,000.00 subvention. We intend to invite many different colleges, departments and programs to join in this event, and do not anticipate finances or collaboration to be obstacles. We understand that any residual funds will go to AIS. As we construct a clearer idea of numbers, hotel accommodations and the costs involved, we will create a more detailed and formalized budget in concordance with the samples we have examined from previous years' conferences.

Tentative Conference Theme

We are flexible regarding a theme and sub themes for the conference, and welcome any suggestions and guidance in this area. Currently we are tentatively considering, "Traditions and Trajectories: Reflections on Interdisciplinarity" as a possibility. We think it is important to periodically reflect on and examine the roots and histories of integration and interdisciplinarity; we would like to consider these roots with our futures in mind as well. As the timing of this conference coincides with the forty year establishment of the William James College and immediately follows the fifty year anniversary of Grand Valley's founding, such reflection and dialogue would be energetic and timely within our campus communities as well. Finally, we sincerely welcome any and all suggestions for keynote speakers and topics as we proceed in our planning.