Pre-Conference Programming

Join us from 1:00-4:45 PM before the official start of this year’s HxA Conference for hands-on workshops led by HxA staff, members, and allied organizations followed by an exclusive networking dinner from 5:00-6:00 PM. Learn more about the confirmed workshops below, and sign up for pre-conference programming in the conference registration form.

Putting Principles in Action: A Workshop for HxA Campus Communities

Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM

EXCLUSIVELY FOR CURRENT CAMPUS COMMUNITY LEADERS: The value and joy of building a community with a shared purpose is foundational to creating a culture shift on your campus. The HxA Campus Engagement team invites you to this interactive workshop exclusively for active members in our HxA Campus Community Network, where camaraderie and creativity will converge as you and fellow Campus Community leaders identify opportunities, challenges, and strategies through a series of engaging activities that you can bring to your own Campus Communities. Serious progress can also be seriously fun—let’s turn our shared vision into reality. At this workshop, you can expect to identify your Campus Community’s distinctive approach to organizing, build and sustain relationships across the Campus Community Network, consider what it means to be an expert and exemplar on your campus, determine what your Campus Community needs—from HxA, your campus leaders and stakeholders, and develop some strategic communication strategies for your Campus Community.

Building an Impactful HxA Community

Offered at 3:00-4:45 PM

Leaders of existing HxA Communities, each with a distinctive approach to organizing, will offer those interested in building an HxA community insight into proposing, starting, and structuring
a community, as well as identifying goals, priorities, and potential partner groups and organizations. A panel discussion with a heavy emphasis on addressing audience questions and concerns, ending with an informal networking opportunity, will help participants understand the value, responsibilities, and impact of forming an HxA community. This workshop will give you the tools necessary to identify what type of HxA community is right for you, know how to propose an HxA community, determine the appropriate cadence and priorities for meetings and programming, understand the commitments and rewards of building an HxA community, and identify opportunities, strategies, potential challenges, and best practices.

When to Pull the FIRE Alarm: Understanding Faculty Rights and How FIRE’s Faculty Legal Defense Fund Can Help

Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM and 3:00-4:45 PM
The Faculty Legal Defense Fund (FLDF) at the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) offers “first responder” assistance in protecting freedom of expression and the academic freedom of public college and university faculty members. FIRE’s FLDF staff will explain what these rights encompass, and what threats against them look like, as well as the scope of the program and how it operates as a resource available to you and your colleagues.

Writing for Mass Audiences: A Primer

Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM and 3:00-4:45 PM
Writing for a general audience is very different from academic writing in many respects. Scholars do not gain much training in conveying complex knowledge and ideas in a clear, concise and accessible way for non-specialists -- however, mastering these skills can pay dividends in enhancing the reach and impact of one's research, improving one's pedagogy and enhancing one's opportunities. But for people who are interested in reaching a wider audience, it can often be difficult to know where to start. This session will provide a primer on how to compose an essay that stands a good chance of getting published in mainstream media outlets. The course will be led by Musa al-Gharbi, current professor of journalism and communication at Stony Brook University and previous Director of Communications for Heterodox Academy. Al-Gharbi's work has been published in the New York Times, Washington Post, The Atlantic, CNN, The Nation, The Guardian, New Republic and many other prominent outlets, and he regularly helps other scholars do the same.
Why and how to collaborate with your adversaries in science (and beyond)

Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM and 3:00-4:45 PM
This workshop will discuss Adversarial Collaboration, a methodological procedure in which scholars with contradictory empirical beliefs and hypotheses design new research together to adjudicate their competing perspectives. Dr. Cory Clark, the Executive Director of the Adversarial Collaboration Project at University of Pennsylvania, will discuss how adversarial collaborations can improve and expedite the scientific discovery process and turn enemies into friends. She will instruct attendees on how to carry out adversarial collaborations successfully. Attendees are encouraged to BYOA (bring your own adversary) to facilitate brainstorming of project ideas. There may be opportunities to get involved in ongoing or new adversarial collaborations and to apply for seed money to initiate your own adversarial collaboration. This workshop is suitable for all, but academics and researchers might gain the most.

Building Capacity for Civil Exchange Among Students

Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM and 3:00-4:45 PM
Pluralism is one of the main ingredients necessary for a healthy democratic republic. It is the capacity in citizens to steward and appreciate diversity towards a healthy, liberal, inclusive society; even while making space for deep divides and disagreements. It’s no secret that today's populace struggles to understand and practice it, but the university is the best place to reverse that trend. This hands-on workshop will provide attendees with tools that foster constructive dialogue, reflective listening, and the virtues of curiosity, authenticity, and respect. The workshop will invite participants to simulate Mercatus Center's “Pluralist Lab” experience and then breakdown the key elements so participants can use parts or whole of the training in their classrooms.

Making Space for Contentious Topics in the Classroom

Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM and 3:00-4:45 PM
It can be very difficult to talk freely about contentious issues on campus. Part of the challenge we face is that certainty about our perspectives drives the oversimplification of ideas that, in turn, shuts down conversation. Join the founders of the Mill Institute at UATX for an interactive session where we'll discuss how to create the conditions where students can challenge their own settled thinking. Agreement isn't the goal. Living with the disagreement is.
Foundations in Facilitating Dialogue as a Student Affairs Professional
Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM and 3:00-4:45 PM
This workshop equips university staff in student affairs with the skills to facilitate meaningful conversations about contentious issues. Participants will learn out-of-the-box strategies to proactively create a culture of trust, techniques to support the development of students’ mindsets and skills for engaging across differences, and specific tactics to intervene in tense moments of conflict. The workshop is highly interactive and experiential. Student affairs staff will learn new techniques and then will apply them through case studies and examples.
Objectives of this Workshop:
- Receive an introduction to CDI’s unique approach to setting up a culture of trust and dialogue through preparation, support, and intervention
- Gain strategies to create a culture of trust for dialogue
- Examine different ways to support student use of dialogue
- Learn how to and best practices for intervening in moments of conflict

Debating Contentious Ideas through Reacting to the Past: Revisiting Diderot’s ENCYCLOPEDIE
Offered at 1:00-2:45 PM and 3:00-4:45 PM
Explore controversial ideas by taking a role in a complex game, set in the past. That’s the idea of Reacting to the Past, now used at over 500 colleges and universities. Participants in this session will play an abbreviated version of the Reacting game, The Enlightenment in Crisis: Diderot’s Encyclopédie in a Parisian Salon, 1750. In advance of the session, participants will be sent materials and assigned roles—as Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu and other leading scientists and thinkers of the day. Will Diderot’s dream team brave the threat of the death penalty for sedition and irreligion? Will they find enough capital to publish the most ambitious undertaking in the history of publishing? Come and reshape the contentious intellectual history of the Enlightenment—and learn about an active-learning pedagogy that’s reshaping higher education. This workshop is led by David Eyck, Professor of French, Fellow, Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center; Grand Valley State University; and Judy Walden, Professor of History, Simpson College.