

GRADUATE STUDENT COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26
August 2026

Leadership Information

- **Current Co-Chairs:**
 - Rachel Valentine, valentine.rachel.m@gmail.com, Ph.D. Student, Counselor Education and Supervision, University of Iowa
 - Lisa Cardello, lisamcardello@gmail.com, Assistant Professor, Online Counselor Education Department, The College of New Jersey
- Since the committee restarted in late Spring 2026, Rachel and Lisa will be continuing as co-chairs for 2026-2027.
- **Committee Members:**
 - Kellee Watkins, kellee@wisdom4thejourney.com
 - Delasia Rice, drice13@fordham.edu
 - Jillian Schiller, jillianschillerr16@gmail.com
 - Kadhem Aljabr, kadhemaljabr@gmail.com
 - Amber Hargrave, amber.d.hargrave@gmail.com
 - Diana Lee, dianalee852@gmail.com

Committee Activities to Date

- Reestablished the committee; Appointed co-chairs and committee members (each of whom has a specific role); Worked collaboratively with Board Liaison/Trustee Markell Morris to clarify the committee's purpose within NCDA and align our efforts with NCDA's Strategic Plan.
- Successfully planned and hosted an in-person meeting at the NCDA Conference in Minneapolis.
- Hosted a lunch at the conference for graduate scholarship recipients to share information about the committee.
- Developed, launched, and promoted the Graduate Student Needs Assessment Survey to guide future programming.
- Met with Dr. Melinda Gibbons to discuss collaboration regarding Student Spotlight articles for Career Developments magazine. We have already had 3 committee members volunteer to author these spotlights for the next 3 editions of Career Developments.
- Created infrastructure to support future initiatives, including CDQ Spotlight interest forms and establishing an NCDA GSC Gmail account.

Projected Plan/Work Completed through September 30

- Planning efforts are underway to offer **a minimum of 2 programs** during Fall 2026. We have narrowed down topics based on data collected through the needs assessment.
- During our next planning meeting in August, we plan to narrow this list further and solidify topics for the fall programs.
 - Some topics we are considering include: **informal virtual meet-ups** with a topic (ex: wellness for grad students; geographic career movers; working across the globe;

conversations with NCDA leadership; NCDA credentialing; networking events; publishing and research opportunities within NCDA; finding mentors) as well as **formal webinars/programs** (some possible topics: "Life After Graduation" panel featuring professionals across career settings; Credentialing and certification workshops; Panels on transitioning into practice and building a professional identity; Workshops on practical tools and strategies for career development practitioners; Future exploration of emerging topics such as AI in career services.)

- We are aiming to partner with other NCDA committees and groups (ex. International students), as we know these areas of interest overlap with other initiatives happening within NCDA.
- We have discussed potentially changing the name of the group to the Graduate Student Engagement Committee to be more all-encompassing. The committee will continue to explore this.