

# 2026 AGEP Student Success Conference

November 6-8, 2026

Michigan State University

## Workshop Descriptions

### **Friday, November 6, 2026**

#### **Enhancing Grant-Writing Strategies and Identifying Untapped Resources**

**Who this is for:** Graduate-bound students, graduate students, and postdocs interested in funding their work

Funding can open doors, but only if you know where to look and how to ask. This session is designed for students who want to better understand how grants, fellowships, and institutional resources really work. You'll learn how to read funding calls, align your ideas with funder priorities, and reuse application materials strategically over time. The session also acknowledges that many students were never taught how funding systems function, and there is anxiety around the ever-changing funding landscape. **Join us to gain clarity, confidence, and concrete next steps for supporting your academic goals financially.**

#### **Making the Most of Your Graduate School Experience**

**Who this is for:** Prospective, incoming, and early-stage graduate students

Graduate school can feel exciting, confusing, and overwhelming. This workshop is designed for students who want to be intentional about their graduate experience from the very beginning. We'll talk openly about what graduate school really involves beyond coursework, including navigating expectations, building supportive relationships, and finding your place in academic spaces that may not always feel built for you. You'll learn practical strategies for managing time, communicating with advisors, and recognizing opportunities that support both

your academic and personal goals. **You'll leave with tools, questions to ask, and a clearer sense of how to shape a graduate experience that works for you.**

### **Making the Most of Your Postdoctoral Experience**

**Who this is for:** Advanced doctoral students and current or incoming postdocs

A postdoctoral position is more than a stepping stone, it's a critical period for shaping your future career. This workshop is for scholars who want to use their postdoc years with purpose, clarity, and confidence. We'll explore how to set realistic goals, build a professional identity, and advocate for your growth in research, teaching, leadership, and career preparation. You'll also hear practical advice for choosing mentors, tracking accomplishments, and preparing for next steps inside or outside academia. **Join us to leave with a clearer plan for turning your postdoc into a launchpad, not a holding pattern.**

### **LinkedIn Profile Development for the Changing Workplace**

**Who this is for:** Students interested in building their professional brand online

This presentation will help participants strategically position their LinkedIn profiles for today's evolving, skills-driven job market. Attendees will learn how to craft compelling headlines, summaries, and experience sections that highlight transferable skills, research, leadership, while aligning with emerging workforce trends and employer expectations. **Join us to learn new networking strategies and practical tips for personal branding.**

### **Developing Interdisciplinary Collaborations**

**Who this is for:** Students interested in research that crosses disciplines or communities

Many of today's biggest problems don't fit neatly into one discipline. This workshop is for students curious about interdisciplinary work but unsure where to start or how to be taken seriously across fields. We'll explore what interdisciplinary collaboration really looks like, how to communicate your ideas to different audiences, and how to identify collaborators who respect your contributions. You'll also learn how interdisciplinary skills can strengthen your research, funding prospects, and career options. **You'll leave with language,**

**strategies, and confidence to pursue collaborative work that reflects your full interests and values.**

### **Enhancing Cultural Awareness Through Mentoring**

**Who this is for:** Students who are mentored, mentoring others, or navigating mentoring relationships

Mentoring can be transformative, depending on how expectations, identities, and power dynamics are handled. This workshop centers students' experiences and helps demystify what healthy, culturally responsive mentoring looks like. You'll gain tools for navigating mismatches, seeking multiple mentors, and recognizing when it's okay to ask for change or support. **Join us to leave better equipped to advocate for yourself and build mentoring relationships that support both your success and well-being.**

### **Student Support Roles in Academia**

**Who this is for:** Students curious about student services, administration, or leadership alongside scholarship

Academia relies on more than faculty and research, it also depends on people who design programs, support students, and shape institutions. This workshop introduces student support roles in higher education and how graduate training can lead to impactful careers beyond the tenure track. We'll explore what these roles look like, what skills they require, and how students from underrepresented backgrounds bring critical perspectives to this work. You'll learn how to explore these pathways, build relevant experience, and talk about your interests without feeling like you're "leaving academia."

**You'll leave with a broader picture of academic careers and permission to define success on your own terms.**

### **Virtual Industry & Non-Academic Career Job Search Panels**

**Who this is for:** Students exploring careers beyond the tenure track

These panels are designed for students who want to understand how their skills translate outside of academia and what real career pathways look like across sectors. Panelists will share honest perspectives on job searching, hiring processes, and career transitions, with time for questions and reflection. Each

panel centers the value of graduate and research training while affirming that there is no single “right” career outcome. **Join us to learn how others navigated similar decisions, and to imagine what might be possible for you.**

## **Saturday, November 7, 2026**

### **Strategies for Navigating the Dissertation**

**Who this is for:** Doctoral students approaching or working on their dissertation

The dissertation can feel like the most mysterious, and intimidating. This workshop breaks down the process into manageable pieces while naming the emotional and relational challenges that often go unspoken. We’ll discuss how to set realistic timelines, communicate effectively with committees, and keep momentum during long stretches of independent work. **You’ll leave with practical frameworks, language for tough conversations, and reassurance that needing support is part of the process—not a personal failure.**

### **How to Maximize Your Summer Internship Experience**

**Who this is for:** Undergraduates and graduate students participating in summer research or professional internships

A summer internship can open doors, but only if you know how to use it well. This workshop helps students move beyond “just completing” an internship to strategically learning, networking, and positioning themselves for future opportunities. We’ll talk about setting goals early, managing imposter feelings, and making your contributions visible without feeling uncomfortable or out of place. **Join us to leave with strategies that help your summer experience pay dividends long after it ends.**

### **Designing Spaces for Academic and Community Engagement**

**Who this is for:** Students interested in community-engaged research, teaching, or advocacy

Many students come to academia because they want their work to matter beyond campus. This workshop focuses on how to design academic spaces for projects, programs, or partnerships that genuinely engage communities. We’ll discuss what respectful, reciprocal engagement looks like, and how to center community knowledge alongside academic expertise. You’ll explore examples of engagement

across disciplines and learn how to translate values like equity and access into concrete actions. **You'll leave with guiding principles and practical ideas for connecting your scholarship to the communities you care about.**

### **Academic Job Search Panel**

**Who this is for:** Doctoral students and postdocs exploring faculty careers

The academic job search is complex, competitive, and often opaque. This session breaks down the process from application to interview to negotiation, with an emphasis on transparency and preparation. We'll discuss how to read job ads critically, present your work clearly, and navigate the hidden curriculum of faculty hiring. Special attention will be given to how first-generation and underrepresented scholars can advocate for themselves while staying grounded in their values. **Join us to leave with clearer expectations, practical advice, and a stronger sense of agency in the academic job market.**

### **Beyond the Journal: Why Public Engagement Matters**

**Who this is for:** Students interested in connecting research to communities, policy, or the public

Your research doesn't have to stay within academic journals to matter. This workshop explores why public engagement is increasingly valued and how students can participate in ethical, meaningful ways. We'll discuss how engaging with communities, policymakers, or the public can strengthen research, broaden impact, and expand career options. **You'll leave with a clearer sense of how to share your work beyond academia while staying true to your purpose and integrity.**

### **Personal Statement Writing Workshop**

**Who this is for:** Students applying to graduate school, fellowships, or research programs

Personal statements can feel intimidating, especially when no one has shown you "what works." This workshop helps students craft statements that are authentic, focused, and strategic. We'll break down what reviewers actually look for, common pitfalls, and how to frame your experiences as strengths. This session is especially supportive of first-generation and pathway-program students who may

struggle to translate lived experience into academic language. **Join us to leave with clearer structure, stronger messaging, and renewed confidence in your story.**

### **Abstract Writing Workshop**

**Who this is for:** Students preparing conference abstracts or research summaries

An abstract is often the first impression your work makes. This workshop helps students learn how to clearly and confidently summarize research for conferences and publications. We'll discuss what makes an abstract strong, how to avoid common mistakes, and how to tailor language for different audiences. Whether this is your first abstract or your fifth, the session centers learning by doing and demystifies expectations that are often left unstated. **You'll leave with practical tips and a clearer framework for presenting your work with confidence.**

### **Financial and Mental Wellness in Graduate School**

**Who this is for:** Graduate students balancing money, stress, and life responsibilities

Graduate school success isn't just academic, it's financial and emotional, too. This workshop creates a supportive space to talk honestly about money, mental health, and work-life balance. We'll discuss budgeting, funding, insurance, and common stressors, alongside strategies for protecting your well-being. **Join us to leave with practical resources, reassurance, and strategies for sustaining yourself through graduate training.**

## **Sunday, November 9, 2026**

### **Graduate School Exploration and Managing Mentor Expectations**

**Who this is for:** Undergraduates and early graduate students considering next steps

This workshop is designed for students exploring graduate school and trying to understand what mentors expect, and what you can expect in return. We'll discuss how to evaluate programs, ask informed questions, and navigate mentor relationships with clarity and confidence. You'll learn language for setting

expectations early and recognizing when guidance or support is missing.

**You'll leave with clearer questions, stronger preparation, and a better sense of how graduate education can fit your goals.**

### **Leadership and Promotion Strategies**

**Who this is for:** Graduate students and postdocs interested in leadership pathways

Leadership in academia doesn't start after tenure, it starts now. This workshop introduces strategies for building leadership skills alongside research and teaching. We'll explore how students can seek out opportunities, document their impact, and prepare for advancement in academic and professional roles. The session centers on students who may not see themselves reflected in leadership but already bring valuable skills from family, community, and lived experience.

**Join us to leave seeing yourself as a leader in progress, not someday, but now.**

### **Investing 101 for Students and New Professionals**

**Who this is for:** Students and early-career professionals building financial confidence

Financial security can feel out of reach when you're just starting out. This session introduces the basics of investing in plain language, helping students understand why investing matters and how to get started responsibly. We'll discuss common myths, risks, and questions to ask to help you make informed decisions over time. No prior knowledge required, just curiosity and a desire to plan for your future.

**You'll leave with foundational knowledge and confidence to take small, informed financial steps forward.**

### **AI Use in Research and Society**

**Who this is for:** Students navigating AI tools in coursework, research, and careers

Artificial intelligence is shaping research, learning, and work, but many students are unsure how to engage with it responsibly. This workshop explores what AI can and can't do, ethical considerations, and how students can use AI as a tool rather

than a replacement for learning. We'll discuss implications for research integrity, equity, and future careers, with space for questions and real concerns.

**Join us to leave better informed, thoughtful, and prepared to engage with AI on your own terms.**

### **Best Practices for Student Leaders**

**Who this is for:** Undergraduate and graduate students in leadership, advocacy, or service roles

You don't need a title to be a leader, but your leadership deserves support. This workshop is for students navigating leadership roles in organizations, research groups, programs, or community spaces. We'll explore what effective, inclusive leadership looks like in practice, especially in environments where student leaders are balancing academics, work, and personal responsibilities. Topics include setting boundaries, managing conflict, building trust, and leading with your values, without burning out. The session affirms the leadership strengths that students already bring, such as community responsibility, adaptability, and care for others. **You'll leave with tools to lead more intentionally, communicate more clearly, and sustain yourself while supporting others.**

### **Understanding International Funding and Travel**

**Who this is for:** Students considering international research, conferences, or collaborations

International opportunities can be transformative, but the logistics and funding can feel overwhelming. This workshop is designed to demystify international funding, research travel, and global academic experiences. We'll cover common types of international support, what costs are typically covered, and how to plan ahead for timelines, paperwork, and expectations. You'll also learn how to assess whether an international opportunity aligns with your academic goals, personal responsibilities, and safety needs. **Join us to leave with clearer options, realistic planning strategies, and the confidence to pursue global opportunities on your own terms.**