

Dalhousie Professional & Managerial Group  
Professional Development Committee  
2015-2016 Report

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## **Executive Summary**

The 2015-2016 year provided the DPMG PD Committee an opportunity to expand the committee's portfolio from a yearly conference planning committee to providing ongoing PD opportunities to Dalhousie's DPMG members throughout the year. Reflected in the committee's commitment of full inclusion of membership and participation across a multi campus environment, this included the first ever PD opportunity held on the Agricultural Campus. The 2016 annual conference was a successful event with the largest number of registrants to date.

Leading up to the conference, however, the committee was challenged by a number of factors including several portfolio changes for some committee members which impacted commitment to the committee. As a lesson learned, it would be important for the committee moving forward, to accurately educate the committee members on the time and involvement required throughout the year, as well as having a back-up plan for additional volunteers to assist in the 1-2 months before the conference. Potentially, a reassessment of the number of committee members required on the committee could be beneficial for the DPMG Executive to consider.

## **2015/16 PD Committee Members**

Janet Bardon  
Department of Psychiatry

Jill Malolepszy  
Student Services  
Committee Chair

Alyson Murray  
Recruitment and Admissions

Sarah O'Brien  
SITE Office

Jason Penney  
Facilities Management, AC

Kate Somers  
DalCard Office

Stefanie Wilson  
Communications & Marketing

## **Pre-Conference PD**

This year, we hosted 4 non-conference PD sessions, in response to member requests for more PD throughout the year.

- **Understanding your Benefits delivered by Medavie Blue Cross**  
October 26 – 35 attendees  
Description: Join our campus representative from Medavie Blue Cross for an overview of the ins and outs of your medical and dental plans and your health spending account (HSA). Learn about other services offered to employees, about the quick and easy online claim submission option, and the new mobile app. Have specific questions that you would like to see covered? Send them with your RSVP and we'll address them during the session.
- **Understanding your Dalhousie Pension delivered by Senior Pension Consultant Chris Patterson**  
November 17 – over 80 attendees  
Description Whether you are new to Dal, about to retire, or somewhere between, this session is for DPMG members at any stage of their careers who have an interest in better understanding their pensions. Learn about recent legislation changes, how to calculate your defined benefit formula, tax implications, and more. Bring your lunches, and your questions!
- **Time Management and Stress Relief delivered by Steve Skinner of Breathing Space Yoga and Wellness Centre**  
January 27 – 30 attendees  
Description: The world we live in is extremely fast-paced and shows no signs of slowing down anytime soon. This Time Management and Stress Relief workshop is designed to help you manage and prioritize your life in a way that will allow you to be effective and enjoy life at the same time. Using techniques based on military effectiveness, corporate performance, and ancient practices, this workshop will add benefits at work and at home.
- **The Art of Managing Conflict delivered by Morneau Shepell**  
March 7 – 30 attendees  
Description: Conflict is a common part of life, a natural result of people having different points of view, values, and beliefs. When left unaddressed, workplace conflict can lead to increased absenteeism and reduced productivity. When well managed, conflict can enhance your relationships, deepen your understanding of yourself and others, and stimulate change and growth. This seminar will provide participants with a framework for assessing the types of conflict common in the workplace and propose strategies for their resolution. This session is being facilitated by Morneau Shepell – Dalhousie's Employee and Family Assistance Program provider.
- **Leading change – what works? Presented by Keltie Jones**  
February 25th 16 attendees  
Description: An opportunity for coffee and conversation about the Theory and Practice of Change Management. We will discuss the ideas about change expressed by leaders in change management research, along with our own experiences and challenges with leading change.

## The 2016 DPMG Conference

Our conference theme this year was “Finding our Way—A Roadmap to Moving Forward”, which gave participants practical tools and new perspectives to help them apply and champion the university’s Strategic Direction in their work.

### Conference Budget & Financial Statement

**DPMG Conference Budget 2016**  
**June 9, 2016 - McCain Building, Dalhousie University**

	Actual	Budgeted	Notes
<b>Sponsorship Revenue</b>			
	\$7,830.00	\$8,000.00	Sponsors: Lord Nelson, Johnson Insurance, Big Eric’s, Assante Wealth Management
<b>Total Sponsorship Revenue</b>	<b>\$7,830.00</b>	<b>\$8,000.00</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Catering</b>			
Welcome Coffee	\$504.00	\$450.00	Food costs projected based on 275 registrants. Actual registration was above 300 people at the cut-off point to change food orders - order was adjusted accordingly.
Morning Break	\$1,031.10	\$800.00	
Lunch	\$3,745.98	\$3,400.00	
Bar Services	\$777.59	\$700.00	
<b>Total Catering</b>	<b>\$6,058.67</b>	<b>\$5,350.00</b>	
<b>Programming/Other</b>			
Keynote - M Francis	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	
The Phone Lady (presenter)	\$787.12	\$0.00	
Breathing Space Yoga (presenter)	\$131.19	\$0.00	
Name tags/tickets	\$30.42	\$250.00	Water for speakers, candy for reception, nametag inserts
Speaker gifts	\$494.00	\$600.00	
Misc/Contingency	\$394.80	\$300.00	Facilities costs - Security call-in fee, move furniture in McCain 2198
Posters	\$69.99	\$0.00	
<b>Total Programming/Other</b>	<b>\$2,907.52</b>	<b>\$2,150.00</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,966.19</b>	<b>\$7,500.00</b>	
<b>Net Profit/Loss</b>	<b>-\$1,136.19</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>	

## Registration

The DPMG had the highest registration to date with over 300 registrants. Registration was once again done through the EOD system.

## Conference Program

June 9, 2016 - Marion McCain Arts & Social Sciences building

8:30	8:55	DPMG Annual General Meeting					
8:55	9:00	Open Address- DPMG Executive					
9:15	10:00	Keynote Speaker: Dr. Mayann Francis [PDF-16kB]					
10:00	10:20	Break					
10:20	11:10	Senior Leaders Panel, Moderator: Richard Florizone					
11:15	12:05	Workshop 1 Research Excellence at Dalhousie Presenters: Nancy Hayter and an Ocean Tracking Network researcher	Professional growth and career development at Dalhousie Presenters: Jasmine Walsh and Joanne Fraser	Aligning Operational Activities with Strategic Priorities Presenter: Mike Drane	Supporting our diverse and ever-changing student population Presenters: Quenta Adams and Qiuling Wu	Sustainability Tips at Work and Home Presenter: Rochelle Owen	
12:15	1:15	Lunch (Howe Hall Dining Room)					
1:25	2:15	Workshop 2 Understanding Student Success and Retention at Dalhousie University – Strategic Priority 1.1 Presenters: Anne Forrestall and Heather Doyle	Time Management and Stress Relief Presenter: Stephen Skinner	Facilitated Networking Opportunity	Workshop 2 & 3 (double session): Communication Conundrum: How Email, Text and Phone Calls Support Clarity, Efficiency and Strong Relationships Presenter: Mary Jane Copps		
2:25	3:15	Workshop 3 Managing Change Presenter: Verity Turpin	Talent Management at Dalhousie Presenter: Tracy Rands and Angela MacMaster	Campus Tour			
3:25	3:55	DPMG Awards					
3:55	4:00	Prizes and Closing Remarks					
4:00	5:00	End of Day Mixer					

## Feedback

We had 154 responses to our survey.

- 92% of respondents were at the 2016 conference.
- 77% of respondents who attended came from Studley campus; 13% from Carleton; 5% from Agriculture and 3% from Sexton campuses.
- Of those who didn't attend, 27% indicated work load was the barrier while the majority of the rest were either out of office or not interested in the topic.
- Respondents overwhelmingly replied in favour of more professional development related to these topics
- The majority of respondents were happy with the move to the McCain (over 80%) and the move to Howe Hall (70%).

## General comments from respondents

- The sessions and opportunities to talk were great. No speaker during lunch!!! yeah!!!
- The sessions I attended gave a great view point on Dal as a whole and a greater outlook on my professional growth here at Dalhousie and for the future.
- It was good to socialize with my colleagues across the university and also to get a sense of what everyone's (sometimes differing) priorities are from some of the panels/workshops.
- A worthwhile opportunity to improve professional practice but most important for networking.
- Networking opportunity was valuable. Would be more valuable to get external speakers and speakers who are inspirational and motivational to attract and capture the interest of long service employees who seem a little jaded and fatigued....
- It was a great way to connect with other departments and colleagues. I think it would be beneficial to lengthen the workshops to allow for more dialogue (Q&A). I would also recommend bringing in inspiring leaders and speakers from other institutions as it could provide employees with perspective on new/different ways of doing things.
- Valued the effort to make the strategic priorities relevant and understand the connection our individual and team work has to Dal's overall mission and objectives. Good theme.
- I always get value out of the leaders' panel and the keynote speaker session. The workshops can be excellent but I always try to sign up for the ones that are about something specific rather than general "manage change"-type ones which I don't feel can be addressed adequately in a brief session.
- A great chance to network and meet colleagues face-to-face. Liked having multiple sessions to attend, even if they were shorter. The senior leaders panel might replace the keynote, if you can't find a stellar speaker next year, to give more time for other sessions.
- I really appreciate all the work that goes into organizing an event like this. Seems, however, to offer little in the way of real professional development. Also feels like attendance dwindles every year?
- I think the programming this year was one of the best DPMG conferences I've had the pleasure to attend. Things seemed far less rushed this year which was nice. The sessions I attended were well structured and did answer questions I had been thinking about. Thank you.

- Great opportunity to look up from the daily grind and focus on your own career and development.
- As a long-time member of DPMG, I am always encouraging others to attend this conference - it is sometimes the only conference we get to attend in a year. It would be much more helpful if the senior leaders (managers) attended. No senior leaders from Financial Services attend the conference.
- It would be interesting to tie the session topics to Dal's recently published competency framework.
- I think some context at the beginning of the day would have helped me. I'm a new employee and not familiar with the history and purpose of the conference. Although I found it interesting, I was a bit lost as to why we were having the conference. Also, I think networking and meeting more of my colleagues would have been valuable and I didn't feel there was enough time for this.

### **Specific to Senior Leaders Panel**

- It was interesting and inspiring to hear the senior leader's perspectives but the information was not directly "useful" in my position.
- Have someone work the sound. No use if people are speaking and you can't hear them.
- I found it seemed a bit like a presentation being made by Dr Florizone with panel members to back up his points. Not inherently a bad thing but contrary to the concept of the panel, or so I thought. I also felt that the panel topics and focus was a rehash of the strategic update from earlier in the week, so there wasn't much new to hear.
- The panel is good because it allows communication with the senior leaders. It's an opportunity to reinforce how strong the contribution of the DPMG group is to the greater organization, and I think that could have been more strongly communicated. A bit of a missed opportunity to reinforce the value of the team.
- I would have liked to see more questions from the audience. This is the one time of the year when DPMG members get to ask the senior leadership questions. I think too much time was spent on questions from the President.
- Richard Florizone is an excellent moderator, keeping the conversation on track, managing time and giving good feedback.
- I think that it is important to incorporate leaders from clinical faculties as they are very different than undergrad or grad studies. Having the dean of medicine would bring another perspective to the table and take some of the focus off of the student experience. Especially for those of us who have no interactions at all with students, but instead professional learners that bring a very different set of experiences.
- It was a more education based discussion. Would prefer to have discussion based on how DPMG impacts the university and what plans we can make for streamlining processes and efficiency.
- The questions afterward were somewhat valid, but the general "presidential" approach was neither interesting nor particularly relevant.
- It could benefit from being slightly longer and also let people submit their questions in advance.
- More discussion from the panel and less talking from the President. I liked the linkages between the panel and the president and the strategic direction, but other years the panel chatted more and it was interesting to get their perspectives in greater detail.

### **Related to future PD opportunities**

- I would like to know more about having a mentor
- Focus was on HR's work. I expected session to be on how ee's can develop their own career and lead their own
- Professional growth. This was a component but not nearly the majority of the presentation. Interesting overall but not what I expected.
- More related to strategic alignment of business activities
- Students are why we are here. Anything we can learn to help us better assist students is worthwhile.
- I felt what I learned yesterday was sufficient. More on dealing with emails would be useful. This course is very useful for department that deals with customer service.
- Effectively communicating with others - more work with difficult conversations - how to effectively mentor in challenging work places
- More time management
- Would like to know how to help facilitate more systemic change beyond my unit. I don't feel this was addressed.
- Change is the new norm. We need to be constantly aware of tools to help us work through change.
- info on new spaces

### **Specific to Keynote**

- It is always an honour to hear Dr. Mayann Francis speak. She remind us to be mindful, grounded and use a social justice lens when thinking about engagement, diversity and progress. Sometimes we are so busy "doing" that we forget to reflect on our practices.
- While Dr. Francis' address was relevant and fitting, I did not find it, or her presentation style all that inspiring. To me a Keynote should get you fired up for the day of learning ahead. I did not leave that room feeling energized or inspired.
- I liked how she thought about us as an organization (DPMG), how she realized academic organizations are administered differently and that she challenged us to act. Act anyway! I think her point about not finding Dalhousie's values articulated along with our mission and vision was really important.
- Engaging and interesting, her experience shone through. She's pretty matter-of-fact, which is great. She clearly did her homework and covered the Strategic Initiatives without getting bogged down by them.
- I really appreciated the fact that she was willing to call us out on things that weren't being done to the required level let alone where we weren't being leaders in the field.
- It would have been nice to see a previous DPMG member, or current one. There appeared to be a bit of a disconnect between Dr. Francis and what we do.
- I was disappointed with this year's Keynote Address. Dr. Francis did not seem happy to be there, and her speech reflected that. It seemed to continually take a negative tone. Had she used more personal examples perhaps it might have been more engaging and inspirational.
- Probably one of the best keynotes since the inception of the conference. She was well prepared, engaged the audience, spoke from the heart, yet applied it to Dal. Great choice on keynote! It will be hard to top this next year.

- I was slightly concerned that her message would be simply about diversity and her challenges in NS. However, it was very clear she did considerable work to construct a message that was relevant to the theme of the conference and she did a fair bit of research on our strategic priorities. Not sure how she came up with the analogy of local train vs express train, but it was excellent!
- I felt that Mr. Francis did not have a good understanding of the changes we are currently making at Dalhousie, and as such, her comments made it sound like we aren't doing anything positive.
- Interesting that she worked at Dal and has a real feel for the place - plus she is a great speaker!

### **About the venue**

- I was not pleased with the venue. As indicated earlier - it made for a long day sitting in lecture style and not being able to move around and interact with people and it was VERY cold! More than one presenter made a comment that they had planned group work or break out groups but could not really do it effectively with rows of seats. Suggest looking at the CHEB next time. Natural light is always nice, too!
- I think the auditoriums were big which is good. Although there were times that the speakers thought it was too big and wanted everyone to come closer.
- This was an excellent venue for the conference. Building is well laid out for people flow - registration, socializing/ breaks and sessions. The hot meal at Howe Hall was very nice.
- I found it to be a great venue. There was clear signage to help find washrooms and presentation rooms.
- A very easy building to navigate and plenty of room in the rooms used.
- The venue was fine. It was a bit crowded on the mezzanine level.
- I prefer the Rowe - the breakout sessions seemed to be in rooms far too large for the number of attendees.
- All of my sessions were in the auditorium, and I found it too large of a space for the break out sessions. I felt like there would have been more conversation if the space was more intimate.
- McCain building is great, and would prefer to keep this venue. Didn't feel cramped... unlike other years.
- Classroom 2198 was a little small for a workshop but otherwise the auditorium was great and the upstairs lobby areas perfect for mingling and networking. Great choice.
- It would be nice not to have to limit the size of the groups - if you could match the room to the number of people interested in the sessions.
- New venue? We've had it here before.
- Very comfortable location
- Beautiful building. It seemed to have a better open area for mingling during breaks.
- Lots of common space for networking and good size for workshops
- Enjoyed the new venue.

### **About Lunch**

- The food was good. Seating was awkward. It was difficult to get around.

- Food was not good.
- Excellent location and food options!
- I found the lunch much better last year. I liked the large round tables last year over the smaller tables at this years' event.
- This was a great change from the McInnis - much preferable!
- Too disconnected from the conference, and spillover into different next room perhaps reduced chances to network.
- Very nice to have plenty of food available and ability to choose what you would like. In years past, the food in the SUB tended to run out quickly (or popular options would). The environment of Howe Hall also made it good to mingle and feel comfortable getting up to get food as you would like. Very friendly staff as well!
- Recommend using Howe Hall dining room again. Aramark did a fantastic job, Excellent service-food/kitchen staff. Friendly and helpful Food: great choices..loved the chicken kebobs..so tender; great veggies and desserts; and cucumber water!!!!
- I preferred previous lunches where I found the salad and sandwiches and desserts to be tasty and fresh. The quality of food was not good this time and there was no meat left when I was going through the long queue. I was surprised though, because I've eaten in Howe Hall before and found the food there to be good.
- This was a really good idea -- much more choice and it was nice to be able to have a sit-down lunch without a presentation or speaker
- It was congested in the line-ups. People did try to resolve this but a little more crowd control/direction would be useful next year.
- Very chaotic, crowded seating, difficult to network. Lining up cafeteria style in three locations was disorganized and uncomfortable.
- Best lunch for this event yet! I hate to complain about the food (especially when it's free!), but the past few years have been pretty disappointing. I thought the venue, style, and meal choice was excellent!
- The food was simply excellent and by far the best DPMG conference food I have had in 6 years. Well done.
- Howe Hall is a better venue than in previous years as there is more space. However, I found the signage for food was not very good. I had a difficult time finding out whether I was able to eat some of the food, according to my food allergies. Additionally, at the cocktail mixer after the conference, there were no signs for the food at all. I asked the bar staff about the ingredients but they had no knowledge and the person responsible had left for the day. This left me unable to eat most of the food. This is the second year that I have made these comments. Lunch was better this year for labeling, but there was inconsistency between the stations.
- Lunch was excellent. Great food. I do think something was lost by not having a keynote address during lunch though.
- I actually liked the dining hall better than the Sub. Except for lack of coffee
- Food was excellent. It was frustrating having to wait 5-10 minutes for staff to refill the buffet.
- They do a wonderful pulled beef and pulled chicken, build own taco salad. Choices yesterday where great though.
- Much better! Good diversity and the venue was nice and spacious.

- Although there were several choices that I was able to eat, there was only one dessert (compared to a half dozen) that was gluten-free and I had to ask for it, as there was no signage to indicate if it even existed.
- Bar closed before scheduled 5 pm times, refused to honor tickets advised they met their limit.

### **Topics for next year**

- Working together, collaborative practices and tools
- Leadership (dos and dont's) More networking built in (the middle?) Great work- it was really well done
- More hands on and interactive workshops. Perhaps we could be guided through a cultural competency measure and debrief about the results, etc.
- What about something on critical reflection, evaluation, or conflict resolution?
- Time management, staff management, email management, de-stressing, taking care of self in order to provide better
- service to others.
- Themes related to communication, relationship building, collaboration would be welcomed.
- Some of us work in Faculties and some directly in administrative services. How do we connect? How do we have a sense of common mission? For those who work in Faculties, how do we overcome feeling/being "less than" the professors and instructors in DFA?
- Highlight staff or faculty doing important research or work in areas we would likely not get to see otherwise, eg. Agricultural research
- I would like another more in-depth session on diversity and inclusion. I found this year's session incredibly valuable and would like to have more education on this topic.
- More on how to manage one's own approach to work. We are all stretched thin and yet we still try to do the best we can to support the university. the workload will not decrease and the complexity will continue to increase. What's available to us on campus that will help us work effectively and what can we do personally to move past the daunting amount of work ie accept it.
- Student Engagement - how to get students to attend an event. How to promote the event. What tools can be used for marketing purposes.
- International student - the session this year spent way too much time talking about trends and current data etc. Which I found is not useful. Everyone in the session knows we have more and more int students on campus. It would be nice to touch more on how to communicate with int students etc.
- More opportunities for people to socialize with each other and with senior managers. They left the panel right away so no many people were able to talk to them
- More on John Gardner's work on the undergraduate experience - focusing on what matters most.
- Embracing change is always a great topic. It would also be nice to see some more updates on strategic priorities but also what we can do to help achieve those. It also could be neat to incorporate some of Dal's 200th anniversary planning into next year.
- Since it is Dalhousie's 200th anniversary..we should keep this in mind. I am thinking a theme that captures 1.Past achievements/ initiatives... 2. Present achievements/projects-initiatives and 3. Future.... mobile technology and how Dal can use it / is using it.

- Collegiality and work relations Collaboration Professional Development: how do we set goals for ourselves, why do we do PD, what types of PD should we seek, etc.
- Targeted opportunities to meet people from similar roles (e.g. new to Dal, new supervisors, etc.). More on practical tools for stress management, how to grow at Dal, leadership or other competencies, conflict resolution, supporting co-workers with mental health, etc.
- More awareness on the value, scientifically proven value of healthy lifestyles.
- how to manage your email
- Reimagining universities!
- I think another session on professional growth career development would be beneficial, more focused on advice for what individuals can do vs Dal's role/work. A session on delivering negative information is always welcome (although I'm not sure how much could fit into one block!).
- Career progression was fantastic, more on how new DPMG members who would like a long career at Dal can progress and build their career.
- More interested in work-related professional development sessions as opposed to sessions related to personal well-being
- Leadership Growth Contribution
- I think the topics this year were really great. However, I would like to see smaller more in-depth discussions for more intense topics. I'm not sure how this could be facilitated, but possibly multiple 'short' seminars on things like email etiquette, Dalhousie brand guidelines etc, but longer sessions on topics like leadership, project management, etc.
- I'd like to hear more about departments that aren't often in the spotlight at Dal. I'd also like to learn more about how other departments operate, and about different job roles across campus.
- Time management - Advice for moving into a leadership role - Career management - Stress Management -
- Communication skills - Positive thinking
- Collaborating into the future - championing this across the five campuses as one institution more efficient ways to communicate as an educational institution - we are different from private sector more on stress management Sharepoint tips, know hows Outlook tips, know hows Brightspace tips, know hows Campus booking tips, know hows
- I think it would be interesting to assemble a panel of DPMG for a discussion with the conference attendees. Maybe the president could moderate that discussion!
- It might be interesting to have a few departments (like the block 1 session on research) that could highlight what they do to give others a better understanding of what happens in their department and the roles they play in operation of the university
  - some areas do many things that very few know about - could be a team presentation.
- I like that the last few years have been focused on career development, but I think that the sessions need to have "levels" - where those not yet managing others could have different sessions than those who are managing others. Also, when you have to choose between sessions, it might be nice to have repeat sessions from year to year in case you missed it the first time attending.
- The importance of networking, volunteering, and mentor-ship is something that many of us overlook or ignore. While not a session yesterday - the topic still surfaced. Including a session each year may be beneficial

- how to think differently - how to think strategically - how not to get lost in the day to day activities, when large scope projects/deadlines are feeling the impact. - how to communicate with diplomacy, tact and credibility - Negotiating with Challenging personalities
- change and systemic change preparing for change helping people deal with change
- Focus on DPMG and we can implement change.
- Worldview intelligence session (see <https://worldviewintelligence.com/>) - this maybe useful as we continue on the path of increasing our diversity and becoming more inclusive.
- Work-life integration session
- I would like to see a presentation on each department / unit at Dalhousie to give people an overview of the university, highlighting main initiatives. I don't think we appreciate or understand all of the many amazing components.
- Workshops oriented for various levels of DPMG members (senior managers, middle level manager and employees with no supervising experience).
- 1. Strategies how to deal/communicate with different "types" of personalities - managers/employees 2. Body language 3. Resolving conflicts at workplace.
- -Internal opportunities at Dalhousie -Changing careers -Getting involved on campus - Leadership skills for leaders at Dalhousie -conflict management -effective communication - working with multiple levels of employees/management
- Inclusiveness and diversity Change management
- Strengthening Effectiveness, Building on Professional Competency or something like that.
- More on Managing Change and mental Health
- It would be nice to examine some case studies of other universities and what they are doing in this challenging time to survive and even thrive. I'm always a fan to not reinventing the wheel so if there are other best practices out there (for recruitment, retention, employee morale/motivation) perhaps have some guest speakers from other institutions come and talk about 'what works'??
- I'm not sure because like I said before I'm not really sure on the purpose of the conference.

### **Improvements for next year**

- Sound. Make sure someone is on hand to ensure that presenters and speakers are loud and can be heard easily....without having to strain.
- Great conference, although I feel this would be better held on a Friday.
- I did not like the Lord Nelson presentation during the opening of the conference. Once again, the kick-off to a conference should energize and inspire; being forced to sit through an advertisement did not energize me. I realize that they are a big supporter of our group, but there must be a better way/time to acknowledge this. I think it was much better being held at lunch last year.
- Please have a refreshment break between the first and second afternoon sessions. Mid-afternoon is the hardest time of the day for people to stay focused and it's useful to grab a coffee or snack for energy.
- In previous years members have been asked to bring their own mugs to be environmentally friendly. I would like to see this promoted for next year.
- I noticed that some of the volunteers had to spend the whole day at the registration table so they didn't get to participate in the sessions. Could there be some rotation of duties so that

they all get to participate in at least one session? If more volunteers are needed, I'm sure people will step up so that their colleagues can more fully participate.

- Could we include the name of our division/department/unit on our name tags? It would be great to have that available as we don't always know who works where...
- Not for the organizers but for the survey builders - Many of us attend part of the day. There is no way to indicate per session which we attended and which we didn't. I couldn't answer fairly on the sessions that I didn't attend.
- A little bit longer break between each session. Not enough time to go to bathroom and come back on time for next meeting as locations are changed.
- This is a little thing I noticed. It did not interfere with my enjoyment of the conference day. At the nutrition break and afternoon mixer, there was only one set of tongs per tray, but the line was set to go on both sides of the table. Food service should have provided tongs for both sides of tables (2 or more per tray). This would have helped with efficiency.
- Very well organized this year so continue to do what happened this year!
- It would be helpful to have more information about the content of the sessions and bios of the session leaders available at registration - I felt that had more info been available I might have chosen other sessions.
- More opportunity for dialogue with senior leaders regarding the role of DPMG members and how we can be effective contributors.
- a conference app would be helpful.
- Very minor and while creative, the draw process should be addressed.
- I missed hearing any words from the DPMG awardees but thought some last year went long.
- I like the break out session format and numbers of options/timing was an improvement.
- A lot of people skip the AGM because it's held first thing in the morning. Hold it right before lunch (or, during lunch?) and maybe more people will attend.
- I think it is important to look at all areas of Dal and not just those members who work on campus, or interact with students on a regular basis. For example your prize draw below is for \$50 to be added to your Dalcard, and in previous years, I believe it was a parking spot(?) are not things accessible to non-campus employees.
- I initially registered for the conference as soon as the sessions were open but that being said some of the sessions I was really interested in - Change Management - filled up very quickly. I had made an alternative selection but wasn't aware extra seats had been added to the session so I might have requested a change to my session information had I known.
- Consider an incentive to keep up attendance. First session had 25 subscribed and only 5 turned up so encouragement to attend is needed.
- It would be good if note pads or paper were provided at the workshops.
- Also, if there was time, and they wanted to, I would love to hear speeches from the DPMG Award winners. That was nice the last few years I thought.
- It might be a good idea to have the bar staff properly briefed on how long the bar is supposed to be open and serving drinks - they closed early.
- This is the second year in a row that my first choice of topics was booked before I could get in, although I did try to reserve shortly after the email was sent out. Not sure if a bigger venue could be used to host these popular topics.
- The Change Management session should probably have been held in a smaller space. Despite being an interesting topic, it was not conducive to interaction. The room was quite empty.

- The session before lunch went way over its time. It started late, however it went well over the time that it started late by, thus making it hard for those participants to make it over to the main hall and eat in time to be back for the next session. No one told the facilitators that they were at time, or gave them any indication of how much time they had left at any point in time during the session. This would likely be a good idea to do in future sessions.
- Having the people who won the DPMG awards stand there while the citation was read was slightly awkward. I would suggest asking them to sit in front, then only have them come up at the end for a handshake.
- Extend the concurrent session time by 10 mins to allow for more time to have interactive sessions.

### **Committee Recommendations**

- Look for a more robust registration tool that will allow for more accurate reporting and registration changes, as well as wait-listing.
- Move the AGM to later in the day and start with the keynote.
- Be sure we connect with HR to include the “excluded group” and reach-out to other potentially interested parties (non-DPMG members in DPMG roles and executive team/senior leaders).
- Ensure senior managers encourage staff to go to the conference.
- Adding registration numbers to name tags and working unit, if possible (Note: adding title or working unit was not possible within the EOD system without hours of manual work).
- Several requests for afternoon coffee.
- Lockable presenters’ room for bags, etc. instead of leaving it at Registration table (not able to leave the post).
- Create a rotation for registration desk and other committee roles so committee members can join at least one event.
- Signs for the food at mixer and lunch (gluten-free and vegan). Request gluten-free desserts. More details at opening remarks about “how-to” for lunch (several stations, etc.)