

COGEL 2011 CONFERENCE AGENDA

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Electronic Filing Roundtable

This interactive session will discuss electronic filing systems for campaign finance, conflicts of interest and lobbying. Participants will be encouraged to share what is happening in their jurisdictions, and innovations they have undertaken to improve electronic filing programs and public disclosure.

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Local Agency Roundtable

This session will provide a forum for local ethics, campaign finance, disclosure and lobbying agencies to compare notes on the issues faced in administering and enforcing laws at the local level. An active discussion format will enable attendees to explore common ground, share best practices, and help each other make a positive difference in the work of their own local agencies.

International Perspectives Roundtable

The International Perspectives Roundtable is planned as an unstructured discussion among attendees of experiences and involvement in international activities over the past year. All COGEL delegates are invited to attend the discussion.

Vanderbilt University & Area Self-Guided Tour

Visit the conference registration table to receive a map of the Loews Hotel area and Vanderbilt University campus. We encourage you to take a self-guided tour of the campus beginning with Vanderbilt's Alumni Lawn and ending at the The Wall/Sarratt Student Center/Rand Dining Hall/Bookstore.

3:15 pm - 4:15 pm

The Kay Williams First Timers Session

What is COGEL? How long has COGEL been around and how did it get started? How can it make your professional life easier? What is the Steering Committee and why is it important to the organization? If this is your first COGEL conference, you're new to the job, or you just want to know who and what makes COGEL work, then this is a session you don't want to miss. Ask those questions that everyone in the room has; we'll try to answer them for you in a friendly forum. It's not easy to be the new kid in the room; we'll make you comfortable.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5

8:45 am - 10:25 am

Plenary Session

Welcome to the 33rd Annual Conference

- ❖ **Theresa Kirk**, 2011 COGEL President, Executive Director, West Virginia Ethics Commission

“What’s Working for You?” – An Interactive Session

Why are you attending this conference? To learn more about your field, to enhance your professional skills, and to meet new people who are facing the same challenges you are, of course! The first plenary of the 2011 COGEL conference will kick off with an entertaining and interactive session that will allow attendees to share what’s working for them. Please come prepared to report in one minute or less “what’s working for you.”

10:25 am - 11:55 am

Ethics Update

This traditional session consists of a survey and discussion of developments and trends in ethics and conflicts of interest legislation, litigation and recent advisory issues since the last COGEL Conference.

Freedom of Information – The Ethics of Using Social Media

E-mail, was going to make governing easier and make access as simple as a push of a button. Has that happened? Using e-mail and other social media also has raised ethical considerations attached to their use. The panel will explore these topics in depth.

Redistricting Models

[to be announced]

Independent Expenditures – disclosure – “World of Independent Expenditures”

[to be announced]

The Ins and Outs of Online Public Disclosure

Many agencies are engaged in some form of online public disclosure—campaign finance data, lobbyist information, financial disclosure—and we can all use some advice on making it available in ways that engage the web-browsing public. What are the characteristics of excellent online public disclosure? “Just getting it up on the web” doesn’t cut it in 2011. This session starts with a look at some of the best state campaign finance websites and what they are doing right, followed by a behind-the-scenes look at developing and implementing an online submission process for collection of data from Kentucky lobbyists, which streamlined the process for the regulated community as well as for KLEC. The rest of this session will be a roundtable discussion between the audience and the panelists. Bring your experiences, challenges, mandates, and aspirations for leading-edge online disclosure to the table for a lively discussion on best practices and how to get there.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Plenary Luncheon

Speaker

- ❖ **John Avlon**, Author and Senior Political Columnist for Newsweek and the Daily Beast, CNN contributor (<http://johnavlon.com>)
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1:45 pm - 3:15 pm

Freedom of Information (FOI) Legislation and Litigation Update

This session is a moderated discussion that will explore legislative and litigation developments from the past year involving freedom of information. It will present a state-by-state report on the issues and allow ample time for the audience to exchange information and insights from their own jurisdictions concerning government access.

Campaign Finance Update I – Litigation

This must-attend panel will lead an interactive discussion of significant developments in campaign finance litigation in the U.S. and Canada at the various levels of government. The discussion will feature David Kolker, Associate General Counsel for Litigation of the FEC, who will share his unique perspective on the latest federal developments.

Keeping All Hands on Deck in a Budgetary Tidal Wave: Motivating and Engaging Your Crew and Keeping the Ship Afloat in Difficult Budgetary Times

Facing a tidal wave of unprecedented budget cuts, organizations must explore new ways to engage and motivate employees faced with layoffs, furloughs, travel and training reductions, and a myriad of other cost saving strategies. How do you maintain the level of staff morale necessary to accomplish your mission while being forced to cut your budget in ways that affect each and every staff member? Panelists will highlight a variety of management tools and strategies they have successfully used to engage, reward and motivate employees despite the tough budgetary climate. Audience members will be encouraged to share non-traditional motivational strategies and success stories.

Higher Education and the Real World of Governance

Can we provide enhanced value to the public in ethics/elections practitioners working collaboratively with academics to advance agency mission? What benefits/challenges do academics see to their research or educational endeavors in jointly working with public sector governance agencies? Is time spent in joint endeavors cost-effective for overwhelmed public agencies or overwhelmed educators?

Enforcement Challenges: What Works? Are Fines Fine? Are They Worth the Cost? Should They Be Confidential?

There are different approaches to penalties among ethics, campaign financing and lobbying regulators and agencies with enforcement authority. Some can levy fines—significant fines, at that—others can merely recommend appropriate disciplinary sanctions, up to discharge, or suspend lobbyist registration—and still others can recommend criminal charges and cooperate in bringing them. What are the challenges facing agencies in collecting fines levied? Must they go to court? Must they petition their law departments to do so? Is that worth the cost? Are there other ways to enforce penalties and collect fines? What are the successes and challenges other jurisdictions have faced? What advice can experienced enforcement practitioners in the field offer you, or your lawmakers?

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5

3:30 pm - 4:45 pm

Dealing with Your Legislature

In order for agencies to be effective they must work with their legislators. Whether it is changes in legislation, explaining the enforcement of existing statutes or dealing with budget issues, agency personnel must “Deal with Their Legislature”. This will be an open panel discussion of the issues faced by both sides of the fence.

Board, Commissions and Staff: Who is In Charge Here?

Most agencies have stable staffs and ever-changing board members. Executive Directors are faced with challenges in “on-boarding” new members – how do you bring a new member up to speed, how much background information does a new member need? Executive Directors must also work well with multi-member (and often divided) Boards, maintain good staff/board relations, facilitate good relations among the members, deal with micro-managing board members or members who have their own agenda which may conflict with the mission of the agency. Board members must also deal with Executive Directors and senior staff who are entrenched in the “old way” of doing things, and are not open to new ideas or suggestions.

A Peek Behind the Curtain – Corporate Compliance

This interactive panel will examine how effective corporate compliance programs are structured and how companies can work with regulators to achieve the common goal of compliance with ethics and election laws. Among the issues addressed will be the challenges companies and regulators face when confronted with ambiguous laws, and how companies approach (and what regulators look for with respect to) compliance with laws that impact non-employees (e.g., outside directors and outside consultants) or large numbers of employees.

Constitutional Challenges to Ethics Laws

[to be announced]

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6

9:00 am - 10:00 am

Plenary Session

Speaker

- ❖ **Charles E.M. Kolb**, President, Committee for Economic Development (<http://ced.org>)
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10:15 am -11:45 am

Campaign Finance Update II – Legislation

The panel will lead a lively and interactive discussion of important developments and trends in campaign finance legislation in the U.S. and Canada at the various levels of government. The panel will present the popular COGEL Blue Book with important updates on campaign finance activity on the federal, state and local level in the United States and in Canada, with audience participation.

Freedom of Information – “Open Data”

Across North America, governments of all levels are implementing "Open Data" policies, whereby they pledge to make relevant information quickly and routinely available. This includes posting whole data sets by which researchers and members of the public can sort. It also means routinely publicly posting the results of freedom of information requests at the same time they provide the records to the requester. Open Data policies have come under attack by both the media and transparent government advocates, who claim these policies have the ability to diminish openness, rather than increase it. Hear from two seasoned regulators how open data has evolved, the incentives to implement them and the unintended consequences these policies may have on calling governments to account.

Implications of Extending Lobbying, Pay-to-Play, and Gift Laws to Contractors

The panel will address the unique ethics and election laws aimed at businesses with government contracts, including pay-to-play, lobbying, and gift and entertainment laws. What are the positive and negative implications of these laws? Are these laws achieving their purpose or should they go further? To what extent do these laws overreach or strike an unintended target?

Mainstream Media Engagement – “Get Ahead of the Crisis”

This session will cover how to engage local media and ensure your agency’s mission is understood, as well as how to share data and information to members of the press. It will also discuss how to anticipate and respond to local, state, and federal decisions made at the judicial and legislative levels.

Performance Metrics Roundtable

More and more governments are looking for metrics and the use of data to demonstrate agency accomplishments. You will be energized, inspired and informed by a short video of Hans Rosling and “The Best Stats You’ve Ever Seen.” After the video, please bring your experiences and your questions. This roundtable will be audience driven.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6

1:45 pm - 3:15 pm

Lobbying Legislation and Litigation Update

An annual review and discussion of significant developments in legislation and litigation affecting lobbyist registration, reporting, and regulation in the United States and Canada.

Elections Update: Current Trends in Legislation and Litigation

Electoral legislation, including voter identification rules, voting opportunities and legislation enabling the use of technology, continues to evolve. Panelists will discuss current trends in electoral legislation and litigation in the United States and Canada and the current legal issues regarding election administration in both countries.

Freedom of Information – Delays, Excuses – Solutions?

The panel discussion will focus on compliance delays. Why do agencies seem to take longer and longer to do what they are required to do? We will tell some nightmare stories, explore the various reasons for delay – be they economic, political, bureaucratic, or otherwise. We will also discuss possible solutions. Come and share your tales of woe!

What’s Going on Inside the Office – Are You Managing the Data Your Agency Collects or is it Managing You?

As agencies move deeper into the electronic age, are you getting the most out of the data you collect? Does your Agency use the data it collects other than to simply post it on the website? What do you do with your information? How do you use today’s technology? Our panelists guide you through the minefield of data overload, while explaining how innovative electronic processes can assist in investigations. They will demonstrate an application to ensure that Agency staff is providing consistent and accurate advice to the public. Moving forward, the session will also focus on the goal of the paperless office and what it takes to achieve it.

Maximize Participation Through Use of Technology and New Media

What is your Agency’s digital roadmap? How can your agency use technology and new media to effectively connect with candidates, voters, public employees, and of course, the public? How can the public and private sector use online tools to leverage the cost of elections? Where there is a constant feed of information, learn and discuss how to elevate your Agency’s conversation using Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, and text messaging.

3:30 pm - 4:45 pm

Plenary Session

Speaker

- ❖ **Richard Daft**, Professor of Management, Vanderbilt University
Professional Development: *Leadership – “The Executive and the Elephant”*
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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

9:15 am – 10:30 am

Freedom of Information Roundtable

This session is your opportunity to join a lively and wide-ranging discussion about emerging government access issues. Join your colleagues from all COGEL disciplines in this roundtable into freedom of information and how we make it work.

Now What? Leadership Lessons for Transitional Times

The times, they are a'changing! Agencies facing transitional times with new fiscal realities, new laws, and/or new leadership must adapt quickly in order to survive and thrive. How do you manage the present and look toward the future when everything around you seems to be changing? This facilitated discussion will allow attendees to share insights and advice with peers in an informal setting. There will be no long presentations at this session, just an opportunity to ask questions, get answers and be able to take home some practical tips, strategies, and encouragement to help you be an even more effective leader in the year ahead!

What Does an Ethical Agency Look Like?

[to be announced]

10:45 am – 12:00 pm

Engage & Educate – Next Steps in Interactive Training

An engaging and interactive curriculum can make all the difference when providing training regarding ethical standards of conduct, campaign finance or public records. Join us for an informal and stimulating dialogue regarding new and innovative methods to reach audiences with your agency's message. Topics such as E-Learning and new trends in training will be explored.

Round Up: Regulating Campaign and Lobby Grassroots Activity

At what point does free speech become regulated activity, is it grassroots or campaign, touch on new media regulation as part of this
