

Call for Proposals

Catching the Wave: Energy and Renewal in Liberal Arts Education

A Conference on Academic Leadership



June 23–25, 2016
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Sponsored by
The American Conference of Academic Deans
and
The Phi Beta Kappa Society

The American Conference of Academic Deans (ACAD) and The Phi Beta Kappa Society (PBK) invite proposals for concurrent sessions for the sixth in a series of joint conferences on the liberal arts and liberal arts education. For this conference, our focus is on sustaining energy and nurturing renewal. We hope conference participants – a mix of faculty members and academic administrators, including deans, provosts, and presidents – can reconnect with the motivations that drew them into their work in the professoriate or academic administration and, in so doing, find new energy to advance liberal arts education into the future. In short, our goal is to create a positive narrative about where we are and how we got here and about the future and how we will get there, individually and collectively.

Conference plenary speakers

We are very pleased to announce that our conference plenary speakers are Earl Lewis, President of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and Georgia Nugent, President Emerita of Kenyon College.

What we seek

The conference will consist of three blocks of concurrent sessions. Sessions are 90 minutes in length.

1. For the first block, we invite you to consider addressing our motivations to work in the academy and questions such as these: Why *do* we do what we do? What is the inner landscape of a faculty member or academic leader, and what happens there that has the potential to sustain us? How shall we think about our identities as active, inquisitive practitioners of the liberal arts, especially in the context of institutional bureaucracy? We welcome proposals that prepare participants to move into the next block of sessions.
2. For the second block, we invite proposals that address where we are now as a bridge that connects our motivations with the future of liberal arts education and consider questions like these: What is the role of faculty members as public intellectuals who engage the public in discourse about or inspired by the liberal arts? How shall we shift the balance of public discourse more towards the public good of the liberal arts? How can we realign our motivations, rooted in our love of the liberal arts, with the management imperatives of modern institutions? We would especially welcome proposals to engage participants in discussion of recent publications like Bobby Fong's "Cultivating the 'Sparks of the Divinity'" (*Liberal Education*, Summer 2014, p. 28), Fareed Zakaria's *In Defense of the Liberal Arts* (Norton, 2015), or William Deresiewicz's "The Neoliberal Arts" (*Harper's Magazine*, September 2015, p. 25) and Brian Rosenberg's spirited response ("My William Deresiewicz Problem," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 2, 2015).
3. The third block looks to the future of the liberal arts and liberal arts education and, especially, the role of faculty members and academic leaders in inventing the future of liberal arts education. To what extent can we shape what liberal arts education will look like in the future? How can our faculty development programs build

processes for curricular and pedagogic change to support the students of the future (e.g., changing demographics, underserved populations entering the academy, quality of student preparation for college)? How can faculty leadership consider what counts or matters in faculty evaluation and advance the faculty role in marketing liberal arts education to a public that doesn't understand the liberal arts? What does the future hold for institutional leadership and shared governance?

Suggestions for proposers

We urge all session proposers to consider using case studies, discussion of exemplars, or other approaches that engage the participants. In our experience, the most successful sessions invite participants to share their expertise and experiences and incorporate time for activities such as dialog, reflection, and reporting from small group discussion.

Proposal format

Please include in your proposal

1. The title or topic of your session
2. A brief narrative (50 words or less, suitable for conference promotional materials) describing the focus of your session
3. A longer statement (up to two pages) describing the session content, format and context
4. A brief explanation of how your session will be interactive (small group discussion, case study, etc.)
5. The names, titles, and institutional affiliations of the session presenters, indicating one session leader who will be the point of contact with the planning committee
6. Contact information for the session leader from February to June 2016 (email, mailing address, and telephone)

We will have digital projectors available, but please provide specific information if you require additional equipment. We can consider such requests, but we may not be able to accommodate requests that entail significant expense.

Please submit your proposal by 5pm, eastern, February 12, 2016, to Laura Rzepka, Executive Director, American Conference of Academic Deans, at rzepka@acad.org. Please contact Ms. Rzepka with any questions.

Please visit www.acad.org for more information about ACAD and www.pbk.org for more information about PBK.