

Thriving beyond the Narrative: Academic Leadership for the Future

The American Conference of Academic Deans (ACAD) invites session and workshop proposals for its 75th Annual Meeting, “Thriving beyond the Narrative: Academic Leadership for the Future.” The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Annual Meeting scheduled for January 23-26, 2019, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Throughout history, Americans have viewed higher education as a gateway to opportunity, allowing people to step outside of their limited means and engage in continuous improvement from generation to generation. Higher education is no less important today, but it is increasingly challenged by narratives of bifurcation: public good versus private good; transformational versus transactional; liberal learning versus vocational or technical training; elite versus non-elite. Institutions of higher education must focus on resiliency through models that highlight innovation, creativity, flexibility, and adaptability. The challenge is how our respective institutions will move beyond the existing narratives and sustain a thriving model in support of the ideals of higher education.

ACAD invites presenters and participants to consider the multiple roles, responsibilities, and opportunities that administrative academic leaders have in creating and sustaining more positive narratives and working to develop a strategic vision that leads to long-term resiliency and thriving communities. Questions to consider might productively include the following:

- How have institutions adapted to the changing environment of higher education and developed programs to ensure resiliency?
- How can institutions best communicate that American higher education is simultaneously a public good and a private good, that liberal learning and vocational or technical education are compatible with one another, and that higher education is both transformational and transactional?
- How have institutions successfully developed strategic initiatives and a vision that can bridge often contradictory binaries to offer valuable higher education experiences for all students?
- How have institutions successfully financed specific initiatives that ensure opportunity in higher education?
- What does shared governance and decision-making look like at institutions that are actively focusing on resiliency and long-term sustainability?
- How can academic leaders develop an ethos of cooperation, rather than competition, among academic programs, units, or approaches to create a strategic vision?

ACAD welcomes proposals from academic leaders who have successfully navigated the challenges of higher education to develop a strategic vision that lends itself to long-term sustainability and resiliency. We especially welcome proposals that demonstrate collaborative partnerships and connections between academic affairs and other campus units. Proposals that address issues of diversity, inclusivity, and equity within the context of sustainability and growth in American higher education are encouraged.

The 2019 ACAD Annual Meeting program will feature sessions that academic administrators will find useful, challenging, and enriching. ACAD sessions are known for their emphasis on practice and the use of interactive methods of presentation. We urge all session proposers to consider using case studies, discussion of exemplars, workshops, and other approaches that actively engage participants and draw on the wisdom and practices of the group. The most successful sessions are those that invite participants to share their wisdom and experience and that include meaningful time for activities such as dialogue, reflection, and sharing.

We encourage proposers to work with their colleagues from other institutions to provide ACAD sessions with broader interest to its membership. We invite proposals from a broad array of institutional perspectives and we are especially interested in sponsoring sessions that address partnerships between two- and four-year institutions or between colleges and universities. Please keep in mind that ACAD's membership consists of academic leaders at the dean and provost level as well as associate deans and associate provosts. Presentations should address the needs of those populations. ACAD sessions also generate significant interest among the broader AAC&U annual meeting audience; these are professionals from a variety of institutions who share our commitment to effective academic leadership in these challenging times.

Proposals should include:

1. The title or topic of your session;
2. A brief narrative (up to 60 words, suitable for conference promotional materials) describing the focus of your presentation;
3. A longer statement (up to 500 words) describing the session content, format, and context for the session;
4. A brief explanation of how your session will be interactive (small group discussion, case study, etc.). In this section of your proposal, please indicate whether you would be willing to expand your session to a pre-conference workshop format (three-hour timeframe);
5. The names, titles, and institutional affiliations of the session presenters (maximum of three participants from any single institution). Clearly designate one session leader who will be

the point of contact with ACAD and provide that person's email address, mailing address, and phone number;

6. Any audiovisual requests, such as projector and screen. Please explain why it is essential to your presentation.

Proposals are due by midnight (EST) on Friday, July 13, 2018. Please send proposals to Laura Matthias, ACAD Executive Director at: matthias@acad.org. Please contact Laura Matthias with any questions about the process at matthias@acad.org or by phone at 202-884-7419.

Please visit www.acad.org for more information about ACAD. We look forward to a thoughtful and provocative annual meeting!

American Conference of Academic Deans, Annual Meeting Program Committee
