



The American Conference of Academic Deans (ACAD) invites session and workshop proposals for its 76th Annual Meeting, “Leadership in Turbulent Times.” The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Annual Meeting scheduled for January 22-25, 2020, in Washington, DC.

Now more than ever, higher education needs leaders who can navigate our institutions through these turbulent times. Parents and prospective students are questioning the value of a liberal arts education, and indeed, the value of a college degree. Demographic trends are exerting enrollment pressure on our institutions. In our increasingly polarized society, we must model respectful and civil discourse for our students. Recent conflicts suggest that successful leaders must have a sophisticated understanding of and sensitivity to diversity and inclusion, academic freedom, freedom of speech, and conflict mediation. New technologies and media, such as social networking, present powerful tools for outreach and social engagement, but are fraught with potential perils.

All of these challenges call for academic leaders who understand the current higher education landscape and have the wisdom, experience, and courage to move our institutional missions forward in a sustainable way. ACAD invites presenters and participants to consider the multiple capacities, approaches, and opportunities that academic leaders must develop in order to lead during turbulent times. Questions to consider might productively include the following:

- Which leadership approaches will be most effective at addressing our current challenges?
- How can academic leaders provide professional development for faculty and other academic leaders to thrive in turbulent times?
- How can institutions adapt to the changing environment of higher education to ensure resiliency?
- How can leaders develop the internal capacities to thrive in challenging environments?
- What legal issues should effective academic leaders understand in order to make good decisions?
- How can responsible academic leaders preserve free and open discourse while also insuring feelings of safety within an academic community?

- How can effective leaders integrate a concern for well-being and mental health into their decisions?
- What should academic leaders do in order to meet recruitment and retention goals while maintaining high academic standards?

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 leadership and sustainability in American higher education are encouraged.

The 2020 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 Wednesday, July 17, 2019. Proposals are being accepted online at: <https://acad.org/acad-annual-meeting-proposal-submission-form/>

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
