



82nd Annual Meeting

February 18–20, 2026

Phoenix, AZ

Fostering **Resilient** Leadership

2026
Annual
Meeting

An illustration showing a hand holding a bright red umbrella, standing out from a dense crowd of dark blue umbrellas. The hand is wearing a red sleeve. The background is a light blue sky.

acad.org/annualmeeting

Welcome

ACAD welcomes you to our 82nd Annual Meeting , *Fostering Resilient Leadership.*

The last decade has seen many changes to the higher education landscape, including the effects of the pandemic, changing student demographics, institutional closures, and changing social attitudes toward education. Such stressors have complicated the work of faculty and staff, many of whom are struggling to manage these pressures. In addition, recent changes to federal education policy and processes will likely have significant impacts on our home institutions into the foreseeable future. Given the increasing pace of change, academic leaders may feel as if they spend most of their time resolving problems or addressing crises rather than providing true leadership. How does one lead into the future while maintaining critical institutional responsiveness to the evolving landscape?

At this time, institutions must identify ways to maintain leadership that is mission-driven and that sustains higher education into the future. This year's theme of Fostering Resilient Leadership will address the many ways in which academic leaders can and, indeed should, combine necessary responsiveness with resilience for the future. Considering the need to increase grit, innovation, and resilience across the academic enterprise.

ACAD prides itself on providing sessions and programming that are interactive and engaging as well as offering networking opportunities with colleagues: new and old. Networking is key to our programming, and we know you will find as much value in the hallway connections and conversations as you will during the program sessions. We look forward to seeing you in sunny Phoenix, AZ!

**For more information about ACAD,
please visit us at www.acad.org.**

2025–26 Board of Directors

Officers

Kendrick Brown
Chair

*Provost and Senior Vice
President of Academic Affairs*
Morehouse College

Michelle Mattson,
Vice Chair

Provost
Carleton College

Bridget Keegan
Treasurer

Dean of Arts and Sciences
Creighton University

Feng-Ling Johnson
**Governance and Board
Development Chair**

*Dean of University College
and Associate Vice President
for Student Success*
St Cloud State University

Vacant
Past Chair

Class of 2025

Marcy Brown Marsden
*Provost and Vice President
of Academic Affairs*
Midwestern State
University

Elaine Meyer-Lee

*Provost and Senior Vice
President Academic Affairs*
Goucher College

Orlando J Perez

*Dean, School of Liberal Arts
and Sciences*
University of North Texas
at Dallas

Brian Peterson

*Vice President for Academic
Affairs*
LaGrange College

Courtney Smith

Dean, School of Diplomacy
Seton Hall University

Class of 2026

Richard Badenhauen

Dean of the Honors College
Montana State University

Kim Davis

Dean, Arts & Humanities
Harford Community
College

Sheila Liotta

*Vice President for Academic
Affairs*
Saint Anselm College

Pamela MacRae

*Assistant Provost and Dean
of the College of Arts and
Sciences*
University of Maine at
Augusta

Sarah Tuskey

Dean of Faculty
Miami Dade College

Class of 2027

Elaine Carey

*Dean, College of Arts &
Sciences*
Oakland University

Jamie Frueh

*Vice President for Academic
Affairs and Dean of the
College*
Westminster College (PA)

Brian Norman

*Provost and Principal
Academic Officer*
Antioch College

David Ribble

*Dean, D.R. Semmes School
of Science*
Trinity University (TX)

Alicia Slater

*Senior Associate Provost for
Academic Operations and
Dean, School of Science*
Marist College

Staff

Laura A. Best

*Executive Director and
Secretary to the Board of
Directors*

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Day One: Wednesday, February 18

8:45 AM

Welcome Remarks

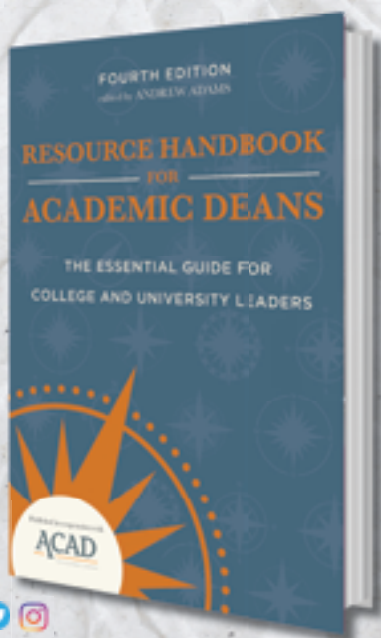
Laura Best, ACAD Executive Director, and ACAD Board Chair *Kendrick Brown*, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Morehouse College, welcome attendees on behalf of ACAD.


Now in its Fourth Edition!

**The guide by—and for—academic
leaders in higher education.**




“Practical advice, insightful leadership principles,
and inspiration from authors with deep experience...”
— *Marjorie Hass*, President, Council of Independent Colleges

“Whether one is a veteran academic administrator
or one just appointed, there is much to learn and
absorb in this volume.”
— *Bonnie D. Irwin*, Chancellor, University of Hawai‘i at Hilo



 **JOHNS HOPKINS**
UNIVERSITY PRESS

press.jhu.edu
Ebook also available

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Opening General Session

The Caring University: A Roadmap to Reimagining the Higher Education Workplace

Kevin McClure, Professor of Higher Education and Department Chair, University of North Carolina Wilmington

Many colleges and universities continue to experience high turnover, low morale, and questions about how to engage employees. Drawing on his best-selling book, Dr. McClure explores the roots of higher education's workplace problems, connecting his personal experiences to the latest research on designing workplaces that attract, grow, and retain talent. The presentation shares compelling narratives from Dr. McClure's research and introduces his model of organizational care, providing attendees with multiple concrete strategies to advance organizational change and better support the wellbeing of staff and faculty.



Kevin McClure

Dr. Kevin McClure is a professor, researcher, and speaker dedicated to reimagining the higher education workplace. A distinguished scholar of higher education, McClure holds the joint title of Professor of Higher Education and Department Chair at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. He is the author of *The Caring University: Reimagining the Higher Education Workplace after the Great Resignation* (Johns Hopkins University Press). His research on college leadership, workplace culture, and organizational care has been featured in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and national conferences. Through McClure's writing, keynotes, and workshops, he helps leaders create people-first campuses where faculty and staff can thrive.

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Morning Break

10:30 AM – 11:30 PM

First Set of Roundtables (*for descriptions, see page 8*)

Round tables: Intimate engaged facilitated discussions on topics relevant to Higher Education

Participants will be asked in late January to download the meeting app to pre-select their two roundtable topics. Selections will appear in attendee's calendar.

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM

Second Set of Roundtables (*for descriptions, see page 8*)

Round tables: Intimate engaged facilitated discussions on topics relevant to Higher Education

Participants will be asked in late January to download the meeting app to pre-select their two roundtable topics. Selections will appear in attendee's calendar.

1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Networking Lunch

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Catch-up Sessions

During the time between when our program is selected and when the meeting occurs, the landscape of Higher Education can change. New issues and hot topics arise, and these sixty-minute sessions are our opportunity to add sessions allowing everyone to “catch-up” on the latest topics. Titles and descriptions will be in the meeting app.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

Afternoon Break

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Closing Plenary Session (*see next page*)

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Opening Reception

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Closing Plenary Session

From Resistance to Resilience: A Framework to Empower Faculty Critical Engagement with AI

Tazin Daniels, Associate Director, Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan



Tazin Daniels

Generative AI is quickly changing the landscape of higher education, challenging long-standing assumptions about teaching, learning, and academic integrity. Yet many faculty remain uncertain or even resistant about how to engage this new reality. In this plenary, Dr. Tazin Daniels introduces her “Faculty Critical Engagement Framework” and explores how academic leaders can empower their colleagues to move from hesitation toward thoughtful, values-driven experimentation and leadership. Drawing on her consulting work with institutions across the country, she offers practical strategies for building trust, aligning campus messaging, and creating conditions where innovation and integrity can coexist. Participants will leave with concrete strategies for strengthening institutional readiness, fostering faculty growth, and shaping a resilient culture of ethical and informed AI engagement.

Dr. **Tazin Daniels** is an educational developer, consultant, and coach who helps individuals and institutions pursue equity-focused innovation. An Associate Director at the University of Michigan’s Center for Research on Learning and Teaching and founder of The Pedagogist LLC, she is nationally recognized for her expertise in inclusive teaching and instructional technology. Named one of EdTech Magazine’s Top Higher Ed IT Influencers to Follow, Dr. Daniels is a leading voice on the ethical and equitable use of Generative AI in higher education. She contributes to national conversations on AI and pedagogy, including writing the forewords to *Teaching and Generative AI: Pedagogical Possibilities and Productive Tensions* and *Transforming Teaching with Generative AI*.

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Wednesday Roundtable Descriptions

Roundtables take place on day one of the conference (Wednesday, February 18). There are two sets of roundtables—facilitators stay at the table while registrants move from one session to another throughout the day. The roundtables occur after the opening plenary and before lunch. Registrants will be asked to preselect their roundtable choices to ensure that tables are not overfull.

1. Data and Analytics: Data-Informed Decisions by Academic Leaders

Peter Skoner, Dean Emeritus School of STEAM, Saint Francis University

The movie *Moneyball* showed how data transformed baseball; companies use consumer behaviors to customize advertising; and big data uncovers hidden patterns and builds predictive models. How can academic leaders leverage data to recruit and retain students, improve learning, and highlight outcomes? What institutional data are being shared on external websites? How can AI increase our capacity to find answers? We will share relevant examples about how data are used, and what the future might bring.

2. Building Resilient Student Success: How a 100% Experiential Learning Guarantee Can Foster Institutional Durability

Peter Ubertaccio, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Stonehill College

Stonehill College guarantees 100% of students complete high-impact experiential learning. This roundtable examines how such bold commitments strengthen institutional resilience through distinctive value creation, community partnerships, and job-ready graduates. Participants explore intentional leadership strategies for building sustainable experiential systems, engaging faculty, and developing funding models that preserve mission.

3. Cultivating Resilient Faculty Department Chairs

Andra Basu, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College, Chestnut Hill College

This roundtable session will focus on implementing faculty development strategies for cultivating resilient faculty chairs at your institution. Participants will learn about different initiatives and programs that can be utilized at many different types of institutions. More specifically, external opportunities, internal workshops, individual and group meetings and mentoring will be discussed.

4. Leading with Authenticity and Holding Strategies: A Blueprint for Building Resilient Faculty and Staff

Kerri Golden, Dean for the School of Health Sciences and Education, Saint Francis University

This roundtable addresses the urgent need to build faculty and staff resilience amid rising workloads, student needs, declining enrollment, and eroding public trust in higher education. It explores shifting from servant leadership to authentic leadership and crisis “holding” strategies to sustain purpose, trust, and adaptability. Through real campus examples participants will identify practical leadership approaches to combat burnout, foster collaboration, and strengthen campus culture.

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Wednesday Roundtable Descriptions, *continued*

5. Developing Your Leadership Philosophy

Sheila A. Liotta, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Saint Anselm College

Whether explicitly articulated or arrived at more intuitively, every leader has a set of core beliefs and guiding principles that shape how they approach their role and responsibilities. In this session, both new and established academic leaders will reflect on their leadership philosophies by considering how their core values affect their decision making, their interactions with a range of constituents, and their definition of and goals for success as a leader in their institutional contexts.

6. Navigating Unsuccessful Faculty Reviews: Managing Communication, Confidentiality, Emotions, and Professional Care

Kristin Bonnie, Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Oxford College, Emory University

Faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion reviews are integral processes at academic institutions. There are often clear processes for the review itself, but managing the outcome may be less clear. When negative outcomes occur, communication and support with appropriate confidentiality and care can be a challenge. We'll share examples of successful and unsuccessful approaches to this work in order to identify practices, strategic partners, and support processes for individuals and institutions.

7. A Common Read Discussion of "A Caring University"

Richard Badenhausen, Dean of the Honors College, Montana State University

Participants will engage in a common read discussion of ACAD plenary speaker Kevin McClure's "A Caring University," which asks academic leaders to think intentionally about transforming their systems and practices to foreground well-being and, in turn, increase retention of talent, which should ultimately result in more resilient institutions. You will assess your own institution's climate of well-being and identify tangible steps from McClure's book to put into practice when returning home.



Photo by Joe Cook on Unsplash

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Wednesday Roundtable Descriptions, *continued*

8. Leading Through Exigency with Care and Compassion

Andrew Gay, Dean of the College of Arts & Humanities and Executive Director of the Oregon Center for the Arts, Southern Oregon University

On August 1, 2025, Southern Oregon University declared exigency, announcing a 20-business-day timeline to reduce its operating budget by 15% and its major offerings by 1/3rd, laying off tenured faculty in the process, all during the university's summer break, when most faculty are off-contract. This roundtable will explore the challenge of managing an existential financial crisis while adhering to one's values (with particular reference to *The Caring University* by Kevin R. McClure).

9. Legal Landmines and Leadership: Building Resilience Through Proactive Governance

Jon Dalager, Adjunct Professor, Alexandria Technical and Community College, and Attorney, Eckberg Lammers, P.C.

This roundtable explores how academic leaders can build resilience by proactively addressing legal challenges before they escalate. Through real-world case studies and peer discussion, participants will examine issues such as faculty disputes, Title IX investigations, and academic freedom controversies. The session emphasizes intentional governance, strategic policy development, and legal foresight as tools for cultivating trust and stability across campus communities.

10. Cultivating Community and Faculty Resilience Through Teaching and Learning Center Collaborations

Christine Rener, Vice Provost for Instructional Development and Innovation, Grand Valley State University

Partnerships with educational developers and teaching and learning centers can prove a powerful approach in helping academic leaders address both internal and external challenges facing our institutions. This session will address the benefits of such partnerships, ways to foster community, build collective and individual resilience, and include case studies around ways in which educational development support of individuals, programs and organizations.

11. Fostering Resilience During Reorganization

Genevieve West, Associate Dean for Research, Texas Woman's University

Drawing from published research and personal experience, I provide ten key actionable strategies for fostering resilience among faculty and programs undergoing reorganization. By empowering faculty to participate in the process, deans can help ensure that the new department emerges from the process stronger and with a new identity.

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Wednesday Roundtable Descriptions, *continued*

12. Compassionating Our Way to Resiliency in Higher-Ed

Chris Kukuk, Sharp Dean of the Cormier Honors College, Longwood University

Compassion should be the North Star of values for higher education, especially in a time when colleges and universities need to be resilient. The roundtable will focus on discussing how and why compassion builds resiliency throughout a higher-ed organization. We will use the four step model for fostering compassion as outlined in “The Compassionate Achiever” (LUCA...Listen to Learn, Understand to Know, Connect to Capabilities, and Act to Solve) as a guide for discussion.

13. The Accidental Administrator: Using Emotional Intelligence and Transformative Leadership to Build Resilience in Interim/New Academic Administrative Leadership in Community Colleges

Christine Howell, Dean of Online, Metropolitan Community College

Know anyone in an interim academic administrative leadership role—or are you considering the role yourself? This roundtable spotlights how transformative leadership, Emotional Intelligence, and trust can energize interim academic leaders. Through engaging mentorship and creative professional development activities, participants will explore practical, people-first strategies for building resilience, managing workload, and inspiring the next generation of leaders.

14. That's Mine, This is Yours: The Best of Shared Governance

Brian Peterson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, LaGrange College

Shared governance involves not only involving multiple stakeholders in the decision-making process, it requires that faculty and administration understand when decisions are left to the other – and trust that those decisions are made in the best interests of the institution. This roundtable will discuss what happens when separate decision processes occurs and how to discuss these with faculty and with administration.



photo by @cassiescompass via Visit Phoenix

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Wednesday Roundtable Descriptions, *continued*

15. Rethinking 1:1s: Balancing Rapid Change with Personal Growth & Satisfaction

Sherman Elliott, Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Grand Canyon University

In today's fast-paced workplaces, one-on-one meetings often get consumed by urgent updates, leaving little time for personal growth. This workshop introduces a new approach to 1:1s that balances immediate demands with long-term goals. Participants will explore a practical framework, case examples, and guided reflection to adapt this method within their colleges or organizations. By the end of the session, participants will leave with a flexible template for conducting impactful 1:1s.

16. Less but Better: Subtractive Change as a Sustainability Strategy

Greg Domski, Associate Dean of Academic Strategic Priorities, Augustana College

Most institutions default to solving problems by adding—programs, committees, or features—creating complexity and drift. Leidy Klotz, following Dieter Rams "less, but better" design principle, shows subtraction is often overlooked, though it can yield stronger outcomes. In this roundtable, we'll explore research on subtractive change, share higher-ed examples, and consider what challenges at our own institutions might best be solved not by doing more, but by doing fewer things better.

17. Resilient Liberal Arts Models and the Rise of Dual Credit

Suzanne Ehst, Associate Academic Dean, Goshen College

Dual credit is on the rise in US high schools, with promises for students to complete nearly all of their general education requirements in high school. If the general education curriculum is a key place where liberal arts values have been traditionally expressed, how do we envision new models of liberal education? Participants will engage in discussion around challenges their institutions face and innovative curricular solutions to preserve liberal ideals in the face of change.



photo by Visit Phoenix

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Wednesday Roundtable Descriptions, *continued*

18. Developing a Resilient Academic Leadership Playbook

Katie Fischer, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College of Education, Concordia University (MN)

This interactive workshop helps academic leaders design a personalized “resilience playbook” for themselves and their institutions. Leaders today must navigate demographic change, financial pressures, and external challenges while sustaining mission and supporting students and faculty. Through case studies and guided discussion, participants will develop practical strategies—“plays”—that strengthen resilience at the individual, team, and institutional levels.

19. Building Your Own Resilience When Your Institution Is Bumpy

Cherilyn Lacy, Assistant Provost, Hartwick College

Sometimes – perhaps often – new administrators start at a time of high leadership turnover. You might be brand new to your role when senior leadership is in transition, or when multiple key positions across the institution are unfilled. This will be an opportunity to share experiences, challenges, and strategies for surviving and thriving in a new, leadership role when everything around you seems to be in flux.

20. Resilient Leadership in Practice: Facilitating Difficult Dialogues with Faculty and Staff

Rebecca Lafleur, Dean, School of Arts and Sciences, Manhattanville University

This roundtable invites participants to explore resilient leadership through the lens of difficult dialogues with faculty and staff. Participants will share experiences, strategies, and insights on navigating challenging conversations with empathy, clarity, and institutional purpose.



photo by Visit Phoenix/An Pham

Agenda: Day One: Wednesday

Wednesday Roundtable Descriptions, *continued*

21. New Faculty: Building Relationships and Setting them up for Success

Pamela MacRae, Associate Provost and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Maine at Augusta

This tabletop discussion will explore how to design faculty welcome events, orientation, professional development opportunities, access to technology, instructional and AI training and resources and mentoring programs that build community and strengthen relationships between faculty and administration from the beginning to set new faculty up for success.

22. Resilience and Grace in Times of Institutional Transition

Dan Peterson, Dean, College of Fine Arts and Humanities, West Texas A&M University

Career transitions occur and leaders move to different opportunities and locations. This session is designed to provide thoughts about transition from one opportunity to another and how to gracefully and resiliently leave one organization and integrate with the new. The session will discuss strategies for exiting, entering, and becoming part of a new organization, whether it be a new university, new college, or even a new role within a college or university.

23. Beyond the CV—Crafting an Administrative Résumé for your Job Search

Michelle Mattson, Provost, Carleton College

If you started your career as a faculty member, your CV might not emphasize the details and experiences needed to transition to a search for an administrative job search. Your audience will change on the administrative job market, as will the skills and experiences that may take priority. Additionally, the administrative résumé can fill in gaps that a cover letter simply cannot address. In this workshop we will discuss what to include or reduce, important experience categories, and how to detail administrative experiences not immediately evident from your faculty roles. Please send a copy of your current administrative résumé to the round table facilitator and bring one or two paper copies for workshoping with other round table participants.



photo by @cassiescompass via Visit Phoenix

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

Day Two: Thursday, February 19

7:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Continental Breakfast

9:00 AM – 11:30 AM

First Set of Workshops (*beverage break 10:00 AM – 10:30 AM*)

Registrants will be asked in advance of the meeting to select the workshops they wish to attend (one in each time period). Seating is limited for each workshop.

From Burnout and Moral Injury to Moral Imagination: A Neuroscience Informed Invitation for Resilient Leadership

The past decade has reshaped higher education. Leaders are navigating policy shifts, demographic change, and public skepticism while managing rolling crises. The result isn't just "burnout." Many faculty and staff describe moral injury: being asked to act in ways that collide with their core values. That kind of wound erodes trust, agency, and purpose in a way yoga and pizza cannot fix! Through a practical, socioecological neuroscience informed lens, we will work with what it means to cultivate resilience in times of change. We'll look at how chronic stress functions like chronic threat. It narrows our attention, scrambles our judgment, and pushes our teams into reactive loops. How might we respond in a way that breaks such vicious cycles and engenders a virtuous cycle of growth and flourishing? We can begin to interrupt those loops by co designing processes that restore predictability, voice, and co regulation. We'll build on the literature on moral injury and on work in conflict transformation about moral imagination: the discipline of envisioning humane alternatives under real constraints. You'll leave with a four step framework you can put to work in your departments or organization: Acknowledge, Attune, Align, Act.

Mays Imad, Associate Professor, Connecticut College

Building Institutional Resilience through Trauma-Informed Leadership

The session will begin with a brief description of the prevalence and concerns related to trauma exposure, particularly community trauma (e.g. COVID-19, mass shootings). A study of adults in 24 countries found 70% of respondents had at least one traumatic event exposure and almost a third had four or more (Benjet et al., 2016). We will use the example of exposure to community trauma at our setting to underscore the need for addressing trauma in the workplace covering how trauma may result in adverse workplace outcomes, e.g. absenteeism, inability to focus, increased conflict. Participants will discuss how trauma exposure may be affecting individuals at their schools. We will cover how to ensure our institutions may be trauma-informed to ensure we are meeting the needs of employees as well as students and how we may create more resilient institutions and campus communities as a result. We will review how leaders may use trauma-informed principles, e.g. hopefulness, trustworthiness, transparency, empowerment and, most central, inclusive practices (Richardson & Ingoglia, n.d.). We will give examples

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

First Set of Workshops, *continued*

of structural trauma-informed work at our educational setting and then give participants an opportunity to share and discuss how they might move more toward a more trauma-informed organization. We will end discussing sustainability as an alternative to self-care and have participants discuss how they sustain themselves and others during these challenging times.

Susan Smalling, Associate Dean of Social Sciences, Director of Faculty Community and Belonging, and *Jason Engbrecht*, Associate Provost, both from St. Olaf College

Academic Freedom Under Stress: Strategies to Bolster Academic Freedom and to Navigate the Next Controversy

This workshop will prepare deans with strategies and best practices to bolster policies and programs that protect and promote academic freedom and equip them with a playbook for effectively managing academic freedom controversies. Academic deans are often the ones who implement policies developed at the provost or senior leadership levels while also adjudicating conflicts that arise at the department level. Occupying a position between the senior leadership team and the department chairs, academic deans often find themselves managing multiple stakeholders with competing interests and perspectives on academic freedom issues.

This workshop will have two parts. The first part will focus on presentation and discussion of ideas, policies, and practices academic deans need to respond to today's sharp pressure on academic freedom, whether from outside actors (such as politicians, activist alumni, and donors) or campus actors (including senior administrators who may not prioritize academic freedom, faculty, and students).

During the second part of the workshop, attendees in breakout groups will use tabletop exercises to explore how they might respond to academic freedom controversies.

Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, Senior Director of the Civic Learning and Free Expression Projects, Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)

Faculty Resilience, Reciprocity, and Revitalization through Mentoring

Faculty resilience is essential for well-being, retention, and institutional growth, but can be undermined when faculty feel unsupported or disconnected. This workshop explores how mentorship programs at Gettysburg College, Goucher College, and The American University in Cairo build meaning, agency, and supportive networks to help new and mid/late-career faculty sustain and revitalize their teaching, scholarship, and service. Participants will gain practical insights for designing or reframing mentorship initiatives that enhance both individual and institutional success.

Our institutions have implemented formal mentoring programs for new full-time faculty (at all ranks) and for new chairs. While structures vary, our programs share commonalities: pairing of new hires with faculty outside of their disciplines, programming through the first year of employment (sometimes longer depending on interest), and offering additional models depending on needs.

In this workshop, we will examine commonalities and differences in approaches, address mentoring beyond the first year (including pilot projects stemming from COACHE findings on faculty job satisfaction), and the use of goal setting, resilience frameworks,

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

First Set of Workshops, *continued*

and reflective practices. In addition to exploring the reciprocity inherent in mentoring, participants will be invited to consider and work through questions of timeframes, administrator's roles, and the balance between structure and flexibility in mentoring.

Jillian Campana, Associate Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, The American University in Cairo (AUC); *Jamie Mullaney*, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, Goucher College; *Michelle Schmidt*, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, Gettysburg College

Assistant/Associate Deans—Cultivating Resilience in New Academic Leaders

The uncertain landscape of higher education demands resilience of its leaders. Institutional plans may need to be changed due to sudden changes in funding or policy. Effective leaders not only adapt plans to changing conditions, but they lead diverse academic communities through that change—addressing both the cognitive and emotional needs of their campuses.

Assistant/associate deans are well-positioned to be positive agents of resilience on their campuses. Having often come to their roles relatively recently from faculty positions, they often retain strong networks among the faculty and are able to hear from a broad set of faculty. By communicating these concerns, associate deans can assist senior leaders in developing responses that both advance institutional priorities and respond to community concerns.

Associate deans require resilience themselves as they transition into the high-paced world of administration. They need strategies to manage workloads and retain their humanity as they serve their communities.

This interactive session will connect associate deans with others who do similar work. Using case studies as a resource, this session will bring together new and veteran associate deans to share insights and strategies on the following topics:

- Transitioning into the role
- Leading from the middle
- Collaborations in (and beyond) the office
- Preparing for future transitions

James M. Sloat, Senior Associate Provost, Colby College; *Gail Evans Grayson*, Dean for the College of Health Sciences, Western University of Health Sciences; *Heidi Kraus*, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Hope College; *Nick Phillips*, Associate Dean of Curriculum and Academic Programs, Grinnell College; *Heidi Schumacher*, Associate Dean of the College, Pomona College

Fostering Support Networks for Resilient Leadership: Conversations of Hope for Women and Gender-Diverse Leaders

This session brings together leaders with diverse career paths who have participated in HERS programs to build community and facilitate conversation about fostering resilience in leadership roles. Through panel and roundtable discussions, we will examine individual, intersectional, interpersonal, and institutional facets of leadership. Participants will discuss leadership paths and share stories of hope and strategies for support with their peers, thus building their own network within ACAD.

The first hour will include a panel moderated by a member of the HERS Leadership Team. Four panelists who have participated in HERS programs will share their leadership narratives and insights on various topics, including decisions about

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

First Set of Workshops, *continued*

career paths; sources of hope, resilience, and support; and strategies for navigating external challenges in higher ed. The panelists will then lead roundtable discussions on similar topics, allowing participants to share their own experiences and gain strategies from the collective group. In the second hour, we will follow a similar format, starting with dialogue from the panelists and then transitioning to roundtable conversations with new prompts.

Participants will be encouraged to sit at tables organized by geographic region, years of leadership experience, and/or functional area (student affairs, faculty development, etc.) throughout the session to increase networking opportunities and model different versions of peer networks.

Jennielle Strother, Vice President of Programs, Higher Education Resource Services (HERS); *Laura Frost*, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Florida Gulf Coast University; *Maria Wong*, Associate Dean, Endicott College; *Sarah Tuskey*, Dean of Faculty, Miami Dade College Wolfson Campus

Resilient Leadership from the System Level to Microaffirmations – Finding Joy and Building Community Strength

Resilient leadership requires attention both to the large-scale systems that shape higher education and to the small, daily practices that sustain individuals within them. This workshop explores how leaders can balance institutional strategy with human-centered approaches that foster joy, belonging, and renewal. We will examine resilience at the system level—through adaptive structures, mission-driven planning, and responsive practices—while integrating work on the micro level, where small acts of affirmation, gratitude, and recognition build community strength.

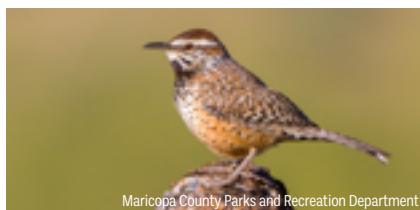
Through case studies, reflective exercises, and peer dialogue, participants will practice connecting the macro and micro: from resilient funding streams and strategic initiatives to microaffirmations (Rowe, 2008) that cultivate trust, morale, and joy. Attendees will leave with practical tools for embedding resilience across their leadership—anchored in both structural foresight and responsiveness and everyday acts of care.

The workshop will begin by framing resilience in higher education institutions, discussing pressures, possibilities, and sources of joy, with a case example of systemic resilience through mission-driven strategy. We will then move to mapping resilience strategies from institutional structures to daily leadership practice. We will close by developing next steps including individual plans to embed both system-level strategies and microaffirmations into daily leadership.

Kristin Croyle, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, Sciences, and Engineering, SUNY Oswego; *Jeanine Mingé*, Dean, School of Liberal Arts and Business, SUNY Oneonta



photo by Visit Phoenix



Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Keynote Luncheon and Award for Excellence in Service to ACAD presentation

Diversity and Discrimination after Students for Fair Admissions and Trump 2.0



Richard Thompson Ford, George E. Osborne
Professor of Law, Stanford Law School

Richard Thompson Ford

Richard Thompson Ford writes for both scholarly and popular audiences and has published in newspapers and journals such as the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Boston Globe, the San Francisco Chronicle, The Christian Science Monitor, The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Boston Review, Esquire.com and Slate as well in such scholarly journals as the Harvard Law Review, the Stanford Law Review and the Yale Law Journal.

His latest book, *Dress Codes: how the laws of fashion made history* received highly positive reviews worldwide in journals such as The New York Times where it was selected as an editor's choice, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Fortune, Slate, The Guardian and The South China Press. It has been translated into five languages and is the inspiration for an Editor's Choice Ted Talk for 2021.

Two of his other books were selected as Notable Books of the year by the New York Times: *The Race Card: how bluffing about bias makes race relations worse* which The New York Times Sunday Book Review selected as one of the 100 Notable Books of 2008 and *Rights Gone Wrong: how law corrupts the struggle for equality*, which The New York Times selected as one of the 100 Notable Books of 2011. He has appeared on national television and radio programs including The Colbert Report, the Rachel Maddow Show, The New Yorker Radio Hour and All Things Considered. He was the co-host with Joe Bankman of the Sirius XM Radio program Stanford Legal from 2020–2022.

He has been a visiting Professor at Harvard Law School, Yale Law School and Columbia Law School and has lectured in 12 countries on five continents. He is a founding member of the Academic Freedom Alliance, a member of the American Law Institute, a board member of the Author's Guild Foundation and a 2022–2024 Fellow of the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation.

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

2:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Second Set of Workshops (*beverage break 3:00 PM – 3:30 PM*)

Registrants will be asked in advance of the meeting to select the workshops they wish to attend (one in each time period). Seating is limited for each workshop.

Building Resilient Department Chair Leadership Through Strategic Development Pathways

The sustainability of higher education institutions relies on robust mid-level leadership pipelines, particularly at the department chair and program director levels. This 2.5-hour interactive workshop introduces a leadership development framework rooted in institutional resilience, succession planning, and inclusive mentoring. Drawing from a case study at X College, where a pilot chair development program was launched in 2024–2025, participants will explore how educational developers, deans, and provosts can co-design developmentally appropriate, equity-centered supports for chairs.

Using structured small-group activities, participants will map institutional assets, identify key collaborators, and assess current gaps in leadership capacity. Interactive segments will include campus ecosystem mapping, barrier analysis, and a strategy lab. Special attention will be given to how data (e.g., PULSE surveys, focus groups) can inform capability-building efforts and how provost-level advocacy can institutionalize success. The session culminates in an action-planning segment where participants develop a tailored, campus-specific strategy to launch or scale chair development efforts.

Participants will leave with a replicable leadership framework, sample data-gathering tools, and a menu of collaborative interventions to ensure that department chairs are not only prepared for their roles but also poised to help their institutions thrive.

Heidi E. Kraus, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Hope College; Vicki Baker, Associate Dean, Strategic Partnerships & Innovation, Albion College

What Am I Supposed to Be Doing Now?: Developing a Resilient Approach to Project Planning and Execution in Uncertain Times

Higher education faces uncertain times. Nevertheless, academic administrators still need to research, devise, and execute plans, initiatives, and programs. In the meantime, uncertainty abounds and institutional circumstances and priorities may change in an instant. This workshop will give each participant hands-on experience in developing a resilient approach to project planning and execution.

As academic administrators we all have found ourselves wondering what we should be doing at any given moment. We regularly find ourselves focusing on multiple initiatives at different levels of intensity and in different vectors of responsibility. In the first half of the workshop participants will discuss the challenges of negotiating our multiple responsibilities to the people who report to us and those to whom we report.

Participants will be asked to bring plans for a specific project they wish to undertake, will undertake, or are currently undertaking. In the second half of the workshop, they will spend time working in groups and individually to develop further the

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

Second Set of Workshops, *continued*

plans for this project and to see how to bring it to a successful completion, dynamic circumstances notwithstanding. Participants will anticipate the challenges this project will encounter and firm up plans to engage those challenges. In doing so, we will try to find ways to make good on the idea that we do our jobs best by preparing for changed circumstances and by being supremely adaptable.

Ted Mason, Associate Provost for Inclusion and Equity and Special Advisor to the President, Kenyon College

Resilience Under Pressure: Navigating AI-Escalated Conflict

AI is changing how students raise concerns and challenge decisions. What once felt like minor grading disputes or misconduct claims can now come packed with AI-generated arguments that sound legal, demand documentation, and escalate fast. When these cases intensify, academic leaders are the ones who must interpret vague policies, calm tensions, and ensure institutional responses hold up under pressure. This workshop, led by professionals with expertise in both law and higher education operations, offers a practical model for navigating these situations with clarity and consistency.

The session begins with a focused overview of AI escalation patterns and institutional risk, grounded in real examples. Participants then work in small groups, analyzing case files that highlight common vulnerabilities such as ambiguous policies, inconsistent communication, and misaligned enforcement. Groups identify breakdowns, apply response strategies, and share practical solutions. The session concludes with a full-group debrief, policy reflection, and Q&A.

Attendees will leave with applied tools and a tested framework for strengthening policy, supporting faculty, and building resilience in the age of AI.

Paul Heddings, Director of Academic Integrity, West Virginia University;
Steve Smith, Associate and Co-Founder, The Association for Academic and Professional Development (TAAPD)



Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

2:00 PM – 4:30 PM

First set of four concurrent sessions

Listening as a Leadership Act: Building Trust and Setting Direction

Given that listening tours are now expected of new leaders, many of us wonder what exactly makes “listening” truly effective? How might we begin a listening tour? How can we listen with intention? When is it okay to ask questions? How do we synthesize what we hear into actionable priorities? Panelists will address these questions and share strategies for new and seasoned leaders on building trust, aligning vision, and fostering resilience through ongoing dialogue.

Lisa Jasinski, President, Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM); *Stephanie Dance-Barnes*, Dean, College of Science and Health, DePaul University; *Hilton Kelly*, Dean, Elon College, the College of Arts and Sciences, Elon University

Click. Simplify. Persist: Harnessing Technology Integration to Support Student Retention

Have you ever had a flat tire caused by a shard of metal you couldn't possibly have seen? The tiniest obstacle in the academic process – a form that takes 5 clicks to find, an incorrect charge, a dirty shower, bad advising – can prevent students from attending or returning to the institution. By integrating our tech systems and digital processes, we can clear obstacles, model resilience, and improve student retention.

Christina Wendland, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Newberry College

From the Margins to the Middle Strategies for Organizational Change

Colleges and universities across the nation are reconstructing themselves into new constellations with shifting educational priorities. Innovative thinking is required to organize and codify the processes and policies that govern and support the people and the units – that often are newly being brought together as colleagues. This session will be about the strategy of navigating the management and leadership processes that are entailed in this work.

Trisha Gott, Associate Dean, Staley School of Leadership and *Mary Tolar*, Dean, Staley School of Leadership, both from Kansas State University

Partnering with Human Resources to Sustain our People, Systems, and Institutions

Presenters from four varied institutions (liberal arts, flagship state, regional comprehensive public) and roles (Provost, Assoc. Provost, Assoc. VC) will overview a range of divisions of labor between HR and offices of the Provost/Dean, and their pros and cons. Each will share a few challenges, lessons learned, and strategies they have found most effective in building resilience, before facilitating roundtable conversations of participants' own experiences and reporting out of key takeaways.

Elaine Meyer-Lee, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Goucher College; *Lee Kahan*, Special Associate Vice Chancellor of Advising and Retention, Indiana University South Bend; *Rebecca Thomas*, Associate Provost for Faculty Advancement, University of Kentucky; *Gundolf Graml*, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic and Campus Life, Ursinus College

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Afternoon break

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Second set of four concurrent sessions

Everyone Counts: Building Resilient Capacity for Optimal Outcomes

This session introduces “Leading Real”; a practical, compassionate framework for grounded, authentic leadership. Participants will explore, through small group discussion, what is meant by “authentic” leadership. Reflective prompts and simple, sustainable habits will be shared that promote clarity, emotional alignment, and resilience. Case examples will demonstrate how “leading real” can help foster trust, inspire hope, and navigate complexity with intention.

Kianga Thomas, Associate Professor/Chair, Norfolk State University

From Crisis to Capacity: Legal Literacy as a Tool for Resilient Leadership

In today’s volatile academic landscape, resilient leadership demands legal fluency. This session equips deans, chairs, and provosts with essential legal literacy—covering employment law, governance, compliance, and risk management—to build systems that prevent crises and foster institutional stability. Through scenario-based discussion and strategic reflection, participants will explore how legal foresight strengthens decision-making, supports faculty resilience, and cultivates trust across campus.

Jon Dalager, Adjunct Professor, Alexandria Technical and Community College; Attorney, Eckberg Lammers, P.C.

Rebuilding Trust Between Faculty and Administration

Faculty don’t trust that senior-level administrators on their campus are working in the best interests of the campus. Administrators don’t trust that faculty are doing the work they are paid to do. Issues of distrust and mistrust run deep on many campuses. While criticisms are typically aimed at positions (e.g., “the Provost doesn’t understand this”, “the Faculty can’t be bothered to do that”), they are given and received by humans, making it difficult for anyone to not take such comments personally. This makes the reconstruction of trust on campus that much more difficult. In this session, senior-level administrators (VPAAAs and Provosts) have worked at their institutions to rebuild trust between faculty and administrations across differing governance structures. We will focus on strategies that worked – and those that didn’t – as we try to identify best practices in creating a more positive working relationship between faculty members and administrators.

Brian Peterson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, LaGrange College; Sara Quay, Provost, Endicott College; Karen Moranski, Vice President, San Francisco Bay Region Network, California State University; Elaine Meyer-Lee, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Goucher College

Agenda: Day Two: Thursday

Second set of four concurrent sessions, *continued*

Engaging Guiding Values for a Resilient Leadership Philosophy: Fostering a Resilient Leadership Trajectory

Higher education leaders face volatility shaped by enrollment pressures, financial challenges, and technological change. True resilience goes beyond reacting to crises; it is grounded in guiding values. This session explores servant leadership, Franciscan traditions, TEAL practices, and the scholar-practitioner model, offering case studies and strategies to help leaders articulate and sustain resilient leadership trajectories.

Tricia Giannone McFadden, Director of the Executive Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership & Innovation, Saint Francis University

*The second general sessions will be 75 minutes in length and take place on Friday, February 20, 2026. There will be two sets of concurrent sessions. The first from 9:00am—10:15am and the second from 10:45am—12:00pm. There will be a morning break from 10:15am—10:45am.

5:00 PM

Dinner/Evening On Your Own

5:00 PM — 7:00 PM

ACAD Board Meeting



Agenda: Day Three: Friday

Day Three: Friday, February 20

7:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Continental Breakfast

7:30 AM – 9:00 AM

ACAD Members Business Meeting and Breakfast

This breakfast is separate for ACAD members to conduct the business of ACAD. You must be a member to attend.

9:00 AM – 10:15 AM

First Set of Seven Concurrent Sessions

Leading Real: Grounded Leadership in Uncertain Times

This session introduces “Leading Real”; a practical, compassionate framework for grounded, authentic leadership. Participants will explore, through small group discussion, what is meant by “authentic” leadership. Reflective prompts and simple, sustainable habits will be shared that promote clarity, emotional alignment, and resilience. Case examples will demonstrate how “leading real” can help foster trust, inspire hope, and navigate complexity with intention.

Janet L. Gooch, Chancellor, University of Illinois Springfield; *Stacey Robertson*, President, Widener University; *Nancy S. Niemi*, President, Framingham State University

Building Resilient Institutions By Shaping Public Narratives about Higher Ed

American political discourse currently includes a narrative that anti-religious, anti-American, leftist/Marxist “lunatics” have “captured” higher education. Since our missions and financial models depend on public trust and public funding, we must circulate a better narrative: Institutions of higher education value religious and secular moral perspectives. We facilitate social mobility and help people build meaningful, productive lives. We build resilient institutions by publicizing our values. Participants will leave with actionable ideas for impacting public narratives about their institution and about higher education.

Jeanne Petrolle, Acting Dean of Faculty Affairs, Columbia College Chicago; *Sheila Liotta*, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Saint Anselm College; *Bridget Keegan*, Dean of Arts and Sciences, Creighton University; *Stephanie Dance-Barnes*, Dean of the College of Science and Health, DePaul University; *Mary Crawford*, Associate Dean of the College, Knox College

Agenda: Day Three: Friday

First Set of Seven Concurrent Sessions, *continued*

Only an Interim: Reframing Interim Roles as Decisive Leadership

Facing rapid change, higher education often relies on interim leaders. This session features three at the University of Alaska Southeast: one who became permanent, one who sustained stability through transition, and one who stepped away from consideration for the permanent role. They will share strategies for collaboration, sustaining success, and fostering cultural change. Participants explore how interim leadership serves as a catalyst for lasting institutional resilience.

Carin Silkaitis, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Alison Staudinger, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Carlee Simon, Dean of the School of Education and Interim Dean of Career Education, all from the University of Alaska Southeast

Resilient Spaces: Reimagining Campus Facilities in Times of Constraint

This panel will explore how four institutions are creatively repurposing and updating existing campus spaces to foster resilience amid financial and demographic pressures. From immersive virtual classrooms to cosmetic updates and reimagined facilities, panelists will share cost-effective strategies. Through a guided activity, attendees will develop actionable insights on facility project planning, including stakeholder identification, data needs, communication plans, and funding sources.

Paul Szalay, Associate Provost, Muskingum University; Emmanuel Hernandez-Agosto, Dean, College of Business, St. Petersburg College; Elizabeth McDermott, Dean of Arts and Sciences, University of St. Francis; Pamela Conners, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Gustavus Adolphus College

Fostering a Resilient Leadership Trajectory: Lessons from Bucknell University's BUILD Initiative

This session will explore a new paradigm for resilient leadership, moving beyond a reactive mindset to a model of intentional, awareness-driven action. Drawing on the foundational principles of the Bucknell BUILD initiative, we will present a replicable mentorship framework that empowers leaders to cultivate resilience not just in themselves, but across their faculty and staff.

Nicole Whitehead, VP Talent Culture and HR, Karl Voss, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences and Angele Kingue, Senior Faculty Partner for Engagement and Inclusion, all from Bucknell University

From Surviving to Thriving: Cultivating Resilient Leadership Through Communities of Practice

In today's rapidly evolving HE landscape, academic leaders navigate competing demands while siloed in isolation, limiting time for strategic leadership, collaboration, and innovation. In response, we co-designed a Community of Practice (CoP) that fosters mentorship, shared practices, and resilience. Inspired by Clint Pulver's I Love It Here, and created using Design Thinking and Cognitive Coaching, CoPs offer sustainable, collaborative support where academic leaders thrive—not just survive.

Jorge Michael Cuellar, Dean of Faculty, Miami Dade College Kendall Campus and Amy C. Crowley-Gonsoulin, Director of Faculty Development at the Center for Institutional and Organization Learning (CIOL), Miami Dade College

Agenda: Day Three: Friday

First Set of Seven Concurrent Sessions, *continued*

Coordinated Responses to Academic Success at Morehouse College

An Associate Provost and a Division Dean at Morehouse College describe their efforts to support academic success and resilience among at-risk students. We describe how strategizing across offices within academic affairs and collaborating with student services, financial services, development offices and alumni relations has resulted in more sustainable approaches to academic success initiatives than siloed interventions. We share some success stories and challenges from recent pilot programs.

Regine O. Jackson, Dean of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Media, and Arts Division and *Mel Foster*, Associate Provost for Academic Success, both from Morehouse College

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM

Morning break

10:45 AM – 12:00PM

Second set of seven concurrent sessions

Four Models of Combining Deliberate Innovation and Collaboration to Promote Organizational and Professional Resilience

This panel on deliberate innovations will trace resilience development from the cross-institutional level through the institutional, faculty, and pedagogic levels. Drawing upon examples covering collaborative leadership development, academic restructuring through shared governance, cohort-model faculty development, and AI literacy, this panel will explore the role of collaboration in resilience. We will present case studies from two- and four-year private and public colleges and universities.

Victoria McGillin, Associate Vice President, Gardner Institute; *Kellie Toon*, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Pellissippi State Community College; *Susan Daniels Henderson*, Provost, Coker University; *Carin Silkaitis*, Dean of Arts and Sciences, University of Alaska Southeast; *Tracy Parkinson*, Executive Vice President and Provost, Mars Hill University



Visit Phoenix/photo by dspaz.com

Agenda: Day Three: Friday

Second Set of Seven Concurrent Sessions, *continued*

Administrator Fishbowl: A Conversation about Advancement/ Development Leadership

Ever wonder what fundraising work looks like through the eyes of Advancement/ Development leaders? This “Administrator Fishbowl” offers an insider’s view of one of academia’s most misunderstood roles. Advancement/Development VPs from a range of institutions will engage in a mediated, frank, focus-group style conversation before taking questions from those who want to better understand how to work effectively with their offices. Attendees will also end up burnishing their own fundraising skill set.

Mediated by: *Richard Badenhausen*, Dean of the Honors College, Montana State University
Michael Bacon, Vice President of Alumni Relations and Development, Trinity University;
Fran Albrecht, Vice President of Development and President/CEO Montana State University Foundation, Montana State University; *Gretchen Buhlig*, CEO Arizona State University Foundation, Arizona State University; *Daniel Lewis*, Vice President of Advancement, Westminster University; *Jeffrey Spoeri*, Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of the Midwestern State University Foundation, Midwestern State University

Breaking Down Silos: How Operational Governance Tackles Wicked, Cross-Campus Problems

Traditional governance models struggle to manage complex, cross-divisional operational challenges spanning multiple divisions. Colorado College developed an innovative three-tiered operational governance model featuring Standing, Temporary, and Sprint teams to address complex challenges more nimbly and effectively. This session will detail the development and implementation of Colorado College’s Operational Governance Model.

Aaron Stoller, Associate Vice President for Student Success, *Megan Nicklaus*, Associate Vice President for Strategic Operations and Experiential Education and *Pedro de Araujo*, Chief Operating Officer and Dean of the College, all from Colorado College

Building Resilient LGBTQ+ Leaders

In this interactive, collaboration-based community building session, we will explore resilient leadership through the experience of LGBTQ+ community members. Participants will reflect on individual and institutional obstacles and supports, what it means to mentor or be mentored from an LGBTQ+ perspective, and the importance of visibility of LGBTQ+ leaders on our campus — personally, for students, and for other employees.

Rachel Weir, Associate Provost, Allegheny College and *Michael Middleton*, Vice President for Teaching, Learning and Growth, Ramapo College of New Jersey

Agenda: Day Three: Friday

Second Set of Seven Concurrent Sessions, *continued*

Building Resilience Through Strategic Institutional Partnerships and Planning

In today's rapidly changing higher education landscape, fostering student success requires resilient, innovative collaboration. This session shares an evidence-based model that bridges academic and student affairs to address summer melt and retention. Through cross-campus partnerships, the two-year pilot strengthened the first-year experience and improved students' sense of belonging. Additional benefits included enhanced collaboration, problem-solving, and collective decision-making, as well as

Susan M. Pliner, Associate Provost for Academic Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives, and *Shelle Basilio*, Associate Vice President of Campus Life, both from Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Leading with Purpose: Student Success as a Foundation for Resilient Leadership

How can student success serve as a resilient leadership anchor during times of uncertainty? This interactive session draws on examples from DePaul's Colleges of Education, Science & Health, and the School of Continuing and Professional Studies to explore how academic leaders can sustain resilience by centering students in strategy, culture, and decision-making—ensuring institutional missions thrive amid complexity and change.

Stephanie Dance-Barnes, Dean of the College of Science and Health, *Jennifer Mueller*, Dean College of Education, and *Tatum Thomas*, Dean, School of Continuing and Professional Studies, all from DePaul University Chicago

Redesign for Resistance: Leveraging Technology & AI to Proactively Enhance Student Success and Institutional Operations

Technology can be integrated across an institution's infrastructure to promote data-informed decision-making, cross-functional collaboration, and more timely support for students. APLU's Office of Digital Transformation for Student Success will highlight lessons learned so far from technological integrations in adaptive courseware, peer mentorship, and transfer pathways to highlight how institutions can develop flexibility and sustainability even in times of limited capacity.

Riccardo Purita, Assistant Director, Office of Digital Transformation for Student Success and *Karen Vignare*, Vice President, Office of Digital Transformation for Student Success, both from Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

12:00 PM

Meeting ends

Hotel and Registration

Hotel Information

The ACAD Annual Meeting will be held in downtown Phoenix, Arizona at the Hyatt Regency Downtown.

Registrants will receive the room block. Registrants will receive the room block rate of \$279 per night (plus taxes/fees) single/double. Reservations must be made by Tuesday, January 27, 2026 to receive the rate. The block room rate is available February 10–21, 2026. We hope you will come early or stay late to enjoy all that Phoenix has to offer!



Reservations can be made online:

[Reserve now](#)

Conference Hotel

Hyatt Regency Phoenix, 122 N. 2nd Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004

Meeting Registration

Registration opens October 20, 2025 and closes February 7, 2026.

Registrants will be asked in late January 2026 to download the meeting app in order to preselect roundtables and workshops. Registration includes: Continental breakfast (Thursday and Friday), Lunch (Wednesday and Thursday), beverage breaks and opening reception Wednesday evening.

[Register online](#)

Cancellation policy: A \$100 processing fee will be deducted from all cancellations. No refunds will be made on any cancellations received after February 1, 2026. Cancellations must be made in writing to info@acad.org. Registrations are transferable within an institution.

Registration Type	Early Bird 10/20/25 to 12/15/25	Second Early Bird 12/16/25 to 1/15/26	Last Chance 1/16/26 to 2/07/26
Member	\$725	\$825	\$925
Non-member	\$875	\$975	\$1,075

Sponsors & Exhibitors



GRAD GRAPH



H · E · R · S

