

Deans' Institute

A Virtual Event — Tuesday, June 9, 2026 — 11:30 A.M.–4:00 P.M. EST

The ACAD Deans' Institute is designed to provide a supportive environment where ACAD members and other academic administrators can develop their leadership abilities while building meaningful relationships with peers who understand the unique challenges of academic administration.

This Institute draws on insights gathered from ACAD members and institute participants, who include deans, associate deans and provosts, and other academic leaders who are committed to the ideals of liberal education and dedicated to advancing higher education.

The goals of the Institute are:

- **Advancing Leadership Excellence:** Develop and strengthen the leadership capabilities essential for effective academic administration, with focus on practical skills that can be immediately applied in your role.
- **Sharing Critical Intelligence:** Access valuable insights about the current state of academic leadership, emerging trends, and innovative approaches being implemented across diverse educational institutions.
- **Learning from Transformative Leaders:** Engage directly with accomplished executive academic leaders and peers who have successfully navigated complex challenges and can offer proven strategies for institutional success.
- **Building Lasting Professional Networks:** Connect with a diverse community of academic leaders from across the nation, creating relationships that provide ongoing mutual support and collaboration opportunities beyond the Institute.
- **Accessing Ongoing Resources:** Join an alumni network with continued professional development through dedicated communication channels, ensuring sustained growth and peer connection.

11:30 A.M.–11:35 A.M.

Welcome and Introduction

Laura Best, Executive Director, ACAD

11:35 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Opening Plenary: *Leading with Love: Triumphs and Tribulations*

Mary Dana Hinton, President, Hollins University

Mary Dana Hinton, Ph.D., is the 13th president of Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia, and president emerita of the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota. A nationally recognized champion of the liberal arts and women's education, her leadership is defined by an unwavering commitment to inclusion, access, and academic excellence.

Hinton earned her Ph.D. in religion and religious education with high honors from Fordham University, an M.A. in clinical child psychology from the University of Kansas, and a B.A. in psychology from Williams College. She has received the Williams College Bicentennial Medal and honorary doctorates from Misericordia University, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and Mount Saint Mary's University. In 2021, she was elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

Hinton's work focuses on higher education leadership, strategic planning, and access. She is the author of *Leading from the Margins: College Leadership from Unexpected Places* and *The Commercial Church: Black Churches and the New Religious Marketplace in America*, with her forthcoming book *Where Love Leads: Leadership, Love, and the Liberal Arts* to be published in 2026.

12:35 P.M.–1:30 P.M.

Round tables I—small group discussions on issues in Higher Education

Participants will be asked to pre-select their topics prior to attending the conference. Attendees will participate in two selections between opening and closing plenaries.

3:00 P.M.–4:00 P.M.

Closing Plenary Panel Discussion: Brick by Brick: Building towards a Presidency Through People, Purpose, and The Power of Yes

Claudia V. Schrader, President, York College, City University of New York (CUNY)

Claudia V. Schrader is the eighth president of York College, City University of New York (CUNY), assuming the role in 2025 after serving as interim president. With over two decades at CUNY, Dr. Schrader has been a leader across four CUNY campuses.

Since taking office, Dr. Schrader has launched strategic initiatives to enhance student success, increase the College's visibility, and community engagement. She has overseen key campus improvements and established the York Opportunity Network (YON) to empower pre-college youth and build partnerships. Under her leadership, York's launch of its new Workforce Development and Continuing Education program is on track. She also initiated York's Strategic Planning and Middle States Self-Study processes. York College now serves about 6,200 students and was ranked No. 24 by *Newsweek* among America's Best Colleges for Women, underlining its inclusive and supportive environment.

1:30 P.M.–2:00 P.M.

Session Break

2:00 P.M.–2:55 P.M.

Round tables II—small group discussions on issues in Higher Education

Participants will be asked to pre-select their topics prior to attending the conference. Attendees will participate in two selections between opening and closing plenaries.

Her leadership has garnered honors such as the Phoenix Empowerment Award, Dr. Lenore R. Gall Award, Women's Empowerment Award, and the Alumni Award from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Dr. Schrader is known for her student-centered approach. Her "Welcome Wagon" initiative, launched during the pandemic and expanded to York College, personally connects with new students and has boosted enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. The program has been featured in major media outlets.

Previously, Dr. Schrader held leadership roles at Bronx Community College, Medgar Evers College, and William Paterson University, and was the first African American president of Kingsborough Community College.

Roundtable topics include but are not limited to:

- So, You Want to be a Dean?
- Strategic Planning
- Crafting an Administrative Resume for your Job Search
- Thriving as an Assistant/ Associate Dean
- Budget Basics
- Data and Analytics: Applying Business Models in Higher Education
- Survive and Advance Through the Administrative Job Search
- Change Management for People who Hate Change
- Academic Prioritization
- Generative AI
- Lessons to Lead by: Navigating Faculty Affairs