



# Deans' Institute

*A Virtual Event — Friday, October 24, 2025 — 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

### *Authenticity: The Best You is You*

*Jorge Gonzalez, President, Kalamazoo College*

President Gonzalez will discuss his professional journey from his early life in Mexico to academic leadership in the United States. He will examine the enduring value of a liberal arts education and the critical role of experiential learning in preparing students for an increasingly complex world. Drawing on his leadership experience, President Gonzalez will offer reflections on the presidency, emphasizing the importance of institutional fit, trust, and empowering colleagues. The session will provide guidance for aspiring academic leaders on cultivating authenticity, building professional networks, and navigating the evolving challenges of higher education.

Jorge Gonzalez has served as President of Kalamazoo College since July 2016. A fierce champion of the liberal arts, Gonzalez has more than 30 years of experience in higher education. In his time at K, Gonzalez has overseen the development of two strategic plans and led the public launch of The Brighter Light Campaign, the institution's largest fundraising campaign to date, which focused on support for student access to every facet of the *K-Plan* and investments in the institution's faculty, instructional spaces, athletic programming, and other aspects of campus life. Previously Gonzalez served as Occidental College's Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College from 2010 until 2016 and he was a member of the Trinity University faculty for 21 years (1989–2010). Gonzalez served as chair of Trinity's economics department for nine years and as special assistant to the president from 2008 to 2010. At Trinity, he played an important role in the internationalization of the curriculum, the creation of faculty-led study abroad experiences, the development of an open access policy for faculty scholarship, and the implementation of new interdisciplinary initiatives. A graduate of the Monterrey Institute of Technology in Monterrey, Mexico, Gonzalez earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in economics from Michigan State University. He has published extensively on such topics as foreign investment, undocumented immigration, international trade in the Americas, the Mexican financial system, and the political economy of U.S. trade and immigration legislation. A winner of Trinity's top teaching award, he has taught courses in micro- and macroeconomics, international trade, economic development, and the economies of Mexico and Spain.

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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.*

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.*

3:00 P.M.–4:00 P.M.

### **Closing Plenary**

The Deans' Institute will have a dynamic and engaging closing plenary speaker or panel discussion. More information will be shared with attendees in advance of the meeting.

## ***Roundtable topics include but are not limited to:***

**AI and ChatGPT: Student Success and Academic Integrity Approaches**

**So, You Want to be a Dean?**

**So, You Want to be a Chief Academic Officer?**

**Surviving and Advancing in the Administrative Job Search**

**Student Success and Retention**

**Lessons to Lead By: Navigating Faculty Affairs**

**Academic Prioritization**

**Rewarding In-House Superstars**

**Orienting and Mentoring New Faculty**

**Data and Analytics: Applying Business Models in Higher Education**

**Budget Basics**

**Active Listening**

**And other hot topics/issues in Higher Education.**