GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
September 30, 2020 Meeting via Video Conference
9am to 10:30am PT; 10:00am – 11:30am MT;
11:00am – 12:30pm CT; 12:00pm – 1:30pm ET

Voting Members in attendance:
• Awais Azhar, University of Texas at Austin, Student Governing Board Rep
• Marlon Boarnet, University of Southern California, ACSP President
• Michael Boswell, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, ACSP Treasurer
• Renia Ehrenfeucht, University of New Mexico, Central Region Representative
• Justin Hollander, Tufts University, Northeast Region Representative
• Atticus Jaramillo, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Student Governing Board Rep
• Zorica Nedovic-Budic, University of Illinois at Chicago, Midwest Region Representative
• Francis Owusu, Iowa State University, ACSP Representative to the GPEAN Board
• Laxmi Ramasubramanian, San Jose State University, ACSP Vice President
• Sherry Ryan, San Diego State University, West Region Representative
• Tom Sanchez, Virginia Tech, Southeast Region Representative
• Siddhartha Sen, Morgan State University, Southeast Region Representative
• Lisa Servon, University of Pennsylvania, Northeast Region Representative
• Weiping Wu, Columbia University, ACSP Immediate Past President
• Stacy Harwood, University of Utah, West Region Representative

ACSP Staff in attendance:
• Donna Dodd, ACSP Executive Director

Attachments emailed to the board for this meeting:
• Matrix that June sent on Sept. 27 with June’s cover email
• 2018 meeting with HBCU leadership recommendations
• Minutes from June 18, 2020 Governing Board Meeting

Opening Comments from Marlon:
Boarnet reviews the agenda and instructions for voting via the chat box.
Members indicate assent (via chat) to have meeting recorded.
Marlon welcomes new Vice President Laxmi Ramasubramanian to her first meeting in this role.

Working group has created a wonderful matrix, sent to all board members, with two columns of responses. Would like the bulk of this meeting to que up next steps. What are tangible things we can do as a board, steps that we might discuss, to possibly create an open process for additional input, moving toward action. One of those actions might be better listening mode. Would like to return to members with a summary of what the board has done and learned with a sense of how the board will move forward.
Agenda

Approval of the Minutes from June 18, 2020

Motion to approve the Minutes from the June 18, 2020 Governing Board Meeting
Justin Hollander moves; Renia Ehrenfeucht seconds. With one abstention, the motion passes.

Update Working Group & Discussion

Lisa Servon

- Matrix of Past Actions and Responses – Created by Lisa Servon, Renia Ehrenfeucht, Sherry Ryan, Atticus Jaramillo, Awais Azhar as members of the Working Group.

Marlon invites Lisa Servon to share the recommendation of the working group:

Working group formed after ACSP got the response from Black faculty following ACSP’s statement to the murder of George Floyd. What would be a good way for the board to respond? They divided up the set of documents referred to in the letter from Black faculty which had been created over the years about diversity and climate. The Black Faculty stated in the letter their recommendations had not been sufficiently followed up on. Began to research, created the spreadsheet of all the recommendations from various reports and if any follow up was done by the ACSP. The working group is fairly new in ACSP leadership so not familiar with ACSP history. Sent spreadsheet to Marlon Boarnet to help fill in the column and for him to share with other people to help fill in the story; shared with key writers of the letter from Black faculty. They expressed reticence diving into a big overwhelming spreadsheet and thought that ACSP’s inability to track its own history was significant. Next step was to meet with a group of faculty of color (working group and Marlon, plus about 5 signatories on the letter). Some people had opted out of being in ACSP because they were tired from all the work they had done. Expressions of frustration. Black Faculty felt they didn’t have a home at ACSP. They reiterated some of the things in the letter. They really want ACSP to do the next step of the work. The working group felt they understood the Black faculty feel they’ve done a lot of work and want others to pick up the load. The working group picked up on the need for an apology.

The working group reconvened on their own. Marlon had by this time collected more input from past leadership. Talked about the importance for apology and process of repair. Group felt the danger of further alienating the Black and Latinx faculty in our community (referred to second letter from Latinx faculty). The group feels there is frustration that the voices of the BIPOC members of our community hadn’t been heard. The letter reflected the need for ACSP to listen to scholars of color, particularly Black scholars, on a constant basis. Working Group feels the response of an apology is a way of listening, letting them know we heard them, and that the insufficient or lack of institutionalization of some of the actions of the ACSP have been harmful and created alienation of that group. The Working Group feels apology is a necessary part of repair to reckon with the past and pave the way forward. An important medium step between recognition and action.

The Group drafted an apology, sent to Marlon, he replied with comments. Then Lisa met with the executive committee to discuss the apology. She relayed the Executive Committee decided not to go ahead with an apology on behalf of the Governing Board. The Working Group is disappointed, feels it is appropriate and necessary, and hopes we can still be part of issuing an apology and work together on next steps.

Marlon and Lisa invite comments from the Workshop Group and from board members:
Member 1 supports the idea to craft an apology as an intermediary step forward to taking action.

Member 2 suggests creating a balanced apology, one that recognizes what has been done in the past but apologizes for lack of institutionalization. Something a little more fair to those who have been part of efforts in the past.

Member 3 apologies recognize regret. The act of apologizing recognizes responsibility which is critical to recognizing this is something we should be doing, have been doing, but is not where it needs to be. Apologizing publicly holds us accountable. Apology is tied to the next steps.

Member 4 feels they heard from Black and Latinx faculty that there is a need to recognize things they recommended over time were not done.

Member 5 working group feels without an apology we have turned a deaf ear to what they heard in the meeting with Black faculty. Feels as an organization we should talk about our values and put those first. Part of the work of planners to cultivate spaces where people feel comfortable. As leadership of the organization, this is a moment where it is appropriate to talk as an organization of what are values are and putting them first.

Marlon Boreamet acknowledges the Executive Committee met and decided as a body not to support an apology letter. The Executive Committee points of concern were: 1) We want to be sure if we are apologizing we are clearly identifying specific actions, not lacking impact in an overly general way; a lot of work actually has been done by the Association in the past. June Thomas made diversity efforts the centerpiece of her presidential term. Marlon feels personal obligation to not throw past presidents under the bus; we should be lifting those accomplishments. 2) There is a question of the benefits vs. the cost of communication from the full board. Marlon spoke to past presidents Lois Takahashi and Weiping Wu, and Donna Dodd. Their advice was clear and in agreement with each other. Weiping and Lois had worked to establish a precedent to not make board level statements, avoiding pressure to make statements about newsworthy issues that do not pertain directly to ACSP’s mission. Hard to distinguish when ACSP should make a statement and not. Also, 3) the process of writing, and editing a statement from a full board has the effect of watering down the message. Marlon admits to making a mistake and led the board into a difficult position, making a decision to make the statement about the Murder of George Floyd. Admits the statement caused pain. He is reluctant to continue the pattern of board statements. He recognizes the Black faculty we spoke with feel a very deep sense of alienation. They maintain an involvement with ACSP because they feel it is necessary for their professional career, not from perceived intellectual or personal benefit.

Member 13 maybe acknowledge June Thomas’ work, but since we are in this place now, use this next message to address the concerns.

Member 3 if the problem with the statement was that it brought forward the disconnect between ACSP and where we need to be, then the problem with it is that a statement didn’t reflect this past work and commitment from the past in a way we would have liked to make ACSP and planning as a discipline more forward thinking to dismantling racism but that we’re not there yet. Appreciate that this puts the board in the center of all this, but it seems to me the problem is the statement reflects the fissure and that is the focus. Taking responsibility for that is an important step in holding ourselves as a board accountable, indicative of how work is done and not institutionalized, June brought forward was that for the Administrative Conference the Committee on Diversity had a workshop and the intent was the reports would be carried forward so our chairs have greater in-depth knowledge, but then for the CoA, that was never
conveyed in a way that it was heard. No formal way that described what the Administrators Conference was set to accomplish, or nothing that was a set of expectations, nothing that says the Administrators Conference should focus on antiracism or to help chairs think about this in their departments. Wants to elevate the work of former presidents, but what we are seeing in all this tension is this is not institutionalized in who we are. This is maybe who we want to be, but as an organization, how do we get there. Hesitant that the speaking is important here to taking responsibility and committing to actions to move in a different direction or forward.

- **[Member 1]** In Administrators Conference, Minneapolis, there was a really interesting session and half the room walked out (harassment). Even when we are speaking, not everyone is listening. Really disappointing that half the leaders walked out. ACSP is the same way. Some are talking and others are carrying on the way they want to carry on.

- **[Member 6]** Two things: 1) Honored to issue an apology on how to address the problem that was communicated by the Black faculty that they do not see ACSP as home. If we are able to think about how can we change the environment, to change the ACSP in a way institutionally, that would help them feel their voices are reflected and represented, this would be more enduring. The apology is important, but we shouldn’t focus only on the apology and not on what they are calling for.

- **[Member 5]** The apology is a necessary but not sufficient step. Will help build trust, help to repair the feelings of not having been heard, and our making a commitment within that apology to continuing the work. Perhaps one of the triggers of the Black faculty is they were consulted in the writing of the statement. They are exhausted right now, they are in the midst of trauma, they shouldn’t be the ones crafting this statement. The apology is the step before action. In the letter they say none of their work was mentioned in the statement, nor was it acknowledged that ACSP has consistently failed to act on their work. Why would people take the trouble to write a note like that, and the Latinx faculty to join in the support if it was not sufficiently felt? We have to believe this group of faculty when they say they feel alienated and hurt. We could argue, but part of this is to just hear it, and believe there is something wrong and institutionally we have a problem that needs to be solved. Think it makes us stronger to acknowledge that.

- **[Member 7]** Concerned that an apology would be seen as another empty platitude when the letters specifically asked for action. An alternative is the letter from Fernando asks ACSP Governing Board thank our Black colleagues. Thinks putting another statement out there invites the same reaction we got from the first statement. Doesn’t think invoking June Thomas is not the right thing to do in this moment. Thank and acknowledge their hurt. Is it appropriate to put out another statement when we have a conference where we can have another conversation instead of another non-interactive statement?

- **[Member 8]** Agrees a conversation would be good. Faculty are deeply offended. Invite this group and see if they would like to have a panel, or send a representative to the next board meeting. Thinks another statement says, “We know it all”, or is near Colonial mentality, meaning I know better about you than you know yourself. Let’s talk with them to find out more, instead of just saying we’re sorry. This board with a few people of color is primarily white people. We have to consider that. We don’t know how deeply they are hurt unless we converse with them. Let’s talk to them to find out what is it we did wrong instead of just saying we’re sorry we won’t do it again.

- **[Member 9]** Agrees with having more conversation. Suggests Marlon “talk” in the newsletter about what is going on, our regret, some kind of apology. Different than the whole board word smithing and issuing a statement that is likely to be rejected on arrival.
• [Member 1] Something authentic and vulnerable, admit your struggle, group statements come out as over edited. Speak from the heart and simply saying, “I don’t know what to do sometimes. I’m blinded by my own whiteness and position of privilege.” Raw and honest dialog will be painful but sets the space for better interaction down the road. We have to do our own work in our positions of privilege. Hesitates to suggest we say one more time, “People of color tell us what to do?”

• [Member 10] Speaking as a member of the Association, feelings are real and raw, not disagreeing with anything already said. Much of this work is not going to get done right away. Much of this work needs to be done in the home institutions. Not all faculty are welcoming and safe. Maybe ACSP can push a little bit the work that needs to be done at a local level, centered in the departments where tensions are playing out. Not to absolve the ACSP, but we are the Association as volunteers, but we also have really paid work in our own university settings.

• [Member 2] Disagree with the assertion that an apology is not a tangible outcome and that it won’t be entirely symbolic. There is this notion that Black faculty are still open to have a conversation with us when they wouldn’t participate in the original letter writing. The only reason we won’t issue an apology, is because we feel it continue to invite criticism and critical discourse, that’s not great rational for not doing it.

• [Member 5] Hesitant to pursue a town hall event. Black and Latinx people don’t want to process with White people. Agrees being vulnerable is important. Danger there is Black and Latinx people are supposed to do something with White people’s confusion. We need to process with other White people. We need to do the work ourselves apart from communities of color.

• [Member 1] Interesting to propose something for White people to do about this at ACSP.

• [Marlon Boarnet] Some of our colleagues really don’t feel like they have a home. ACSP is a painful experience for them, subjecting themselves to micro aggressions, where their scholarship is unfairly dismissed. Struggling for how do we make our Association welcoming for people who feel they’ve never been welcome?

• [Member 11] Apology and statement are symbolic. Feels we need to find out more information from the Black faculty. What is being offensive? Understand general terms, but we need to understand better what we need to do. Need specifics without burdening that group. We need to educate departments and schools what they need to do as well.

• [Member 6] Statements from other organizations were clearly stronger. Ours was administrative speak. This is fundamentally a planning problem. Racism and COVID all somehow related to planning. Blank statements invoke all kinds of emotions. Address fundamental problems the profession has. Find ways to institutionalize change so it passes to future leadership. Pivotal moment. Associations across the world are now taking bold steps. Identify something important, and as an Association take the lead to share with departments so we can change as a profession.

• [Chat Member 3] Let’s be sure that we do not direct resources to white people’s anti-racism work, even if necessary, when ACSP opted against funding the retreat that POCIG requested funds for.

• [Chat Member 5] Perhaps ACSP can reconsider POCIG’s request for funds.

• [Chat Member 12] Great point on “what counts as planning.” Big issue!

• [Chat Member 5] How about a few sessions on restructuring ACSP conference structure - roundtable discussion perhaps?

• [Chat Member 11] I really would not want us to issue another offence and be dismissive by having statements without action. I can hear clearly that the talk only has been exhaustive.
• [Chat Member 11] I think the apology (if one is issued) should be on behalf of the organization as a whole
• [Chat Member 12] I agree with Zorica. Marlon you can apologize on behalf of the organization. That's different from the GoBo issuing an apology.
• [Chat Member 6] I agree with Zorica and all about doing it on behalf of the Board.
• [Chat Member 3] In terms of actions, most important to focus on those in the POCIG and Diversity Committee reports (over Committee on the Academy even)
• [Chat Member 3] For example, this may be the time for guidelines for the Administrators Conference for future years
• [Chat Member 5] I like the idea of having anti-racism efforts as the focus of the admin conference, rather than just an add on.
• [Chat Member 3] _____’s point about important work is in the departments. Can ACSP recognize departments who are doing really good work in this area, also so other departments can learn from them and that we recognize the importance
• [Chat Member 12] Even as a white, privileged man, ACSP has always felt a bit exclusionary.
• [Chat Member 5] for me, the ACSP conference feels like going back to high school
• [Chat Member 12] I recognize that if I can sense that ethos of exclusion and judgement, then it must be much worse for BIPOC and women. How we change that is a hard problem but one we need to work on.
• [Marlon Boarnet] Clear sentiment from the Working Group that an apology is necessary, but sensing doubt from the rest of the board.
• [Member 12] Is there a sense of who this apology should come from? The full board or just Marlon as president?
• [Member 5] Might be confusion if the apology doesn’t come from the same group. Acknowledges the difficulty in an apology coming from a large body that doesn't fully agree.
• [Member 12] Apology seems more of a personal thing, not a collective thing. Leanin more toward just the Executive Committee apologizing. Upset about the climate and people feeling unwelcome. Boils down to who we are as individuals and departments. What ability do we have to steer people?
• [Member 5] Better word is acknowledgement rather than apology. “We acknowledge that it was inappropriate for us to ask you to do our work at such a difficult moment. We acknowledge we have not sufficiently enacted the recommendations and acknowledge all the work that was done. We acknowledge we haven’t sufficiently institutionalized the work done in the past and apologize for that. We pledge to do better.”
• [Member 13] Restate as a recognition of short comings that have caused alienation.
• [Member 3] Not an apology instead of action. Not meant to be separate from action.
• [Marlon Boarnet] Possibly review the conference track structure. Have we organized our conference in a way that is right?
• [Member 6] Global planning Education Committee is concerned about implicit bias in the acceptance process. Rejection is at a higher rate for internationals.
• [Member 5] We haven’t intentionally caused harm, but harm has been felt.
• [Member 11] Thinks the apology should be from the Organization as a whole. Unintended actions by multiple individuals, by the Association.
• [Member 3] Regardless of how it is said, Marlon represents the Organization. Doesn’t mean that everyone on the board agrees. This is what institutionalizing some of this action means. People in their various roles doing what they can.
[Member 7] Agrees the message should come from the President but that the board supports him writing the statement and the struggle this has been. So it seems like Marlon isn’t out there on his own taking responsibility for everything.

Possible tangible action items (see below)

- Creating an open process for Association action and listening to members.
- Marlon suggests only communication from President – allows board to retain their own opinions
- Member Lisa Keep the actions in mind, when do we decide as a group what comes next, who will be responsible and who will be accountable. If we are serious about this work, delegate and figure out how to get it done.
- Marlon asks the board to review the draft action items for discussion at the next board meeting October 24. Bring more ideas. Determine what you think is impactful.
- Marlon proposes at future Fall board meetings, have a standing agenda items, a practice of focusing on list of Association action items and assessing.

Marlon will communicate back to the board by email, coming for advice rather than consent. Want to que up some next steps. Commit to thinking about what we can do to institutionally change the climate. Message might indicate differences of opinion within the board.

Adjourn

Awais Azhar makes the motion to adjourn; Renia Ehrenfeucht seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Draft Action Items for Discussion

- Engage the National Conference Committee to examine the conference tracks, to examine whether those tracks sufficiently reflect the need for a strong focus on race, social justice, anti-racism, and indigenous planning. Give note to calls for broader topics, such as policing and mass incarceration, indigenous planning.

- Engage the Committee on the Academy to lead an increased outreach to our member programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU’s).

- Ask the Institutional Governance Committee to bring to the Governing Board recommendations that can further broaden the representation of the board. The recent by-laws changes will help by creating five categories of board members (in addition to five regional representatives.) One of the categorical representatives will be a representative from the combination of HBCU’s, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Asian American, Native America, Pacific Islander Serving Institutions. The committee could examine whether this is or is not sufficient to address concerns about board representation, and also examine how interest groups relate to Governing Board (currently interest group chairs are liaisons to the Governing Board.)

- Resources for curricula: syllabi resources (formalize current member efforts) and possibly offering opportunities for member programs to have their syllabi audited. Explore the possibility of developing standard climate survey tools that members can adapt to measure and improve the climate in their own programs.
• Climate at national conference and openness of ACSP to a broad range of scholarship.

• Listening sessions, similar to those done for values statement, with signatories to Black and Latinx faculty letters, or interest groups and Committee on Diversity, or more broadly.

• Items called out in reports that are not mentioned above: Guidelines or resources for recruitment and retention of BIPOC faculty (are universities providing sufficient resources already? Is there a role for ACSP to do more?); PAB accreditation criteria (Council on Higher Education Accreditation does not allow ACSP to provide formal into to PAB on criteria).