

ACSP President's Agenda

2013-15

The years leading up to 2013 have allowed for major steps forward for the Association for Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP). These include the holding of a series of successful national conferences, specific support for the study of diversity concerns and the implementation of several strategies, greater cooperation between U. S. and international partners, and sponsorship of meetings which assisted specific subgroups ranging from doctoral students to program administrators. Also important have been the continued improvements in ACSP's journal of record, the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (JPER), which grew in impact and professionalism even as it helped both emerging and established scholars publicize their research. At the same time, challenges remain for ACSP, particularly concerning such issues as communication/ collaboration and diversity. The next few years offer opportunities to build on successes even while addressing these challenges. The President's theme for this two-year period will be *connections*, a simple concept that will allow us to maintain focus and vision even as we move forward with several initiatives. Here are the three main components, organized roughly in order of priority:

1. *Connections among planning schools and faculty.* Enhancing such connections is a primary function of ACSP. The annual conference and related meetings assist with this effort, as do JPER and other instruments such as the *Guide* to planning education. Other opportunities exist, however. For example, ACSP is already moving toward considering ways to facilitate national dialogue in addition to PLANET and the formal ACSP e-mail list. With the topic of sustainability, we have also seen how one school's innovative model could be replicated elsewhere; more such efforts should be made. So we will work specifically to:
 - a. Help create new connections with global colleagues, in collaboration with the Global Planning Educators Interest Group (GPEIG).
 - b. Make ACSP a stronger resource for information about innovative approaches to planning education in the U.S.
 - c. Enhance data collection about planning schools, particularly related to the *Guide*.
 - d. Consider ways to strengthen ties among planning schools both within ACSP and within its regions.

2. *Connections with diverse people, particularly historic racial and ethnic minorities, in the community, profession, and academy.* Representation in the planning academy for underrepresented minority races and ethnic groups has not improved over the last few

decades according to key indicators. ACSP has addressed this issue by supporting a climate study for planning faculty of color and providing financial support for the Planners of Color Interest Group (POCIG), as well as for the ACSP Committee on Diversity, a committee formed in response to POCIG recommendations. POCIG has sponsored conference sessions, reports, memos, workshops, travel scholarships, and a new award that highlights work in social justice. The Diversity Committee has provided a pivotal report, planned and conducted training sessions for administrators of planning schools, as well as sponsored a workshop designed to attract students of color into doctoral programs. Even so, planning schools and faculty are not sufficiently diverse in either their faculty or their student bodies, and many initiatives, including those efforts to support gender equity, are fragile. It will take focused attention to continue to create added value to past efforts and to begin to make a discernible difference in this area of endeavor.

- a. Enhance and intensify efforts to attract racial and ethnic minorities into the planning profession and academy, using “pipeline initiatives”ⁱ;
 - b. Support efforts to strengthen retention and productivity of both graduate students and junior faculty of color;
 - c. Create print or on-line suggested guidelines/resources for planning programs related to enhancing diversity by race and ethnicity;
 - d. Offer training and similar resources to planning schools’ chairs and directors concerning ways to enhance diversity;
 - e. Continue to support efforts by the Faculty Women’s Interest Group (FWIG) to enhance the presence and experiences of women in the academy;
 - f. Work to unify more effectively all ACSP efforts related to such diversity.
3. *Connections among the planning academy, the profession, and the public.* Already ACSP leaders have begun to open a dialogue with APA and AICP leaders about how to enhance linkages between the academy and the profession. Past efforts include the recent example of ACSP facilitating faculty’s ability to earn AICP credits at ACSP conferences when desired; APA in turn has extended efforts to highlight research at APA conferences. AICP is exploring mechanisms for sharing a common understanding of core competencies. Such efforts stemmed from conversations among national leaders. We need to focus these efforts and extend them to the national communities of faculty and planners, as well as to engage more with the public arena. A natural focal area for collaboration is recruitment of students as a particular segment of the public. For this set of connections, therefore, we will aim to:
- a. Collaborate more closely with the profession for the sake of marketing planning as a public service and as a profession,

- b. Collaborate more closely with the profession in matters related to students, particularly recruitment, mentoring, internships, and job placement.
- c. Seek other ways to increase visibility of planning schools among the public.

Much of the work of ACSP has been built up over years, in response to innovations and their enhancements. These efforts have been routinized and must be maintained: sponsoring conferences and other meetings and workshops, supporting JPER and other publications such as *Dialogues*, selecting and presenting awards for excellence in several areas of endeavor, supporting specific initiatives related to planning education and target populations, etc. During this Presidency we will continue these efforts, striving always for a high level of excellence, but at the same time aim higher, for the accomplishment of goals such as those listed above. This will only be possible with the concerted efforts of dozens or hundreds of planning faculty and graduate students, volunteering their service to ACSP and to planning scholarship and practice.

June Manning Thomas, President 2013-15
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ⁱ Phrasing used in POCIG 2010 recommendations posted at their web site
http://www.acsp.org/sites/default/files/POCIG_Recommendations_Final.pdf