Welcome Message
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Welcome to ACSP’s second conference hosted in this academic year! The first conference this past Fall in Buffalo was a huge success, more than 1200 people attended, and it was truly successful in many ways as this conference will be as well.

ACSP currently has 101 Full member schools, 12 Affiliate members and 19 Corresponding members. With us yesterday and for today and tomorrow are 92 leaders of the planning academy. This is significant and we’re grateful you took the time to be with us this week.

As we move into this conference, I want to ask that you do two things:
1) If you haven’t spent any time at the new ACSP web site, please take some time tonight. You might just be very surprised by everything that has developed this year. Your tour may also inspire questions, or may even generate new ideas for us.
2) Please reflect on the ACSP mission statement. ACSP has experienced significant growth this year in membership, journal subscriptions, conference participation, and “buzz” meaning energy, expectations and recognition as the organization for urban and regional planning academics.

Mission
The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning promotes education, research, service and outreach in the United States and throughout the world by seeking to:
- recognize diverse needs and interests in planning;
- improve and enhance the accreditation process;
- strengthen the role of planning education in colleges and universities through publications, conferences, and community engagement; and
- extend planning beyond the classroom into the world of practice.

We hope you’re here in Minneapolis to help us further this mission with new ideas and support for existing programs. Any ideas at all? Please start writing them down. We’ll have an opportunity to share tomorrow night at our Town Hall Meeting and dinner.

Donna will be taking lots of notes about ideas generated throughout the conference as well as tomorrow night, and feedback on this conference will be just as important to us as the feedback we collected from Buffalo. Donna will be sending you a short questionnaire after the conference. I promise it will be short.

You won’t see me very much at the podium during this conference. Let me wrap up my sincere welcome to you by introducing those who should receive the accolades for bringing us here today.

The Committee on the Academy has been a long-standing committee working for the ACSP. The 2017-2019 committee was confirmed about two years ago when the planning for this event began. It’s been a long-time coming, and we’re so glad to finally be here. Many thanks to our colleagues Dawn Jourdan
(chair), Renia Ehrenfeucht, Samina Raja, Stacey White, Ed Feser, Greg Lindsey, Bruce Stiftel, Eran Ben-Joseph.

Lastly, let’s give a great thank you to our conference Local Host, the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota: Dean Laura Bloomberg, Assistant Dean Carissa Slotterback and Ryan Allen, Department Chair. We truly enjoyed last evening’s reception, and Laura hosted the Dean’s Dinner as well. We are tremendously grateful for the generosity of your time and resources.

I will now turn over the podium to Dawn Jourdan, Chair of the Committee on the Academy.

Opening Remarks

Dawn Jourdan, Chair, ACSP Committee on the Academy, 2017-2019
Executive Associate Dean & Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture & Urban Planning, Texas A&M University, dawnjourdan@arch.tamu.edu

Like me, many of you travelled to this conference as a part of your spring break. You are here not because you have to be but because you understand the importance of coming together with peers and mentors to discuss that ways in which planning programs add value to the Universities of which they are a part.

It is an interesting time to be in a leadership role. Dialogue about the role of higher education is relevant on campus and off. Many of you spend a significant portion of your days addressing issues and concerns that would have been dismissed a short time ago. You are being asked to become adept at making decisions related to race, gender, age, and disabilities, among other important topics. The law is expanding and so too is your need to understand the ever-changing parameters of higher education law. You are being asked to broaden your understanding of measuring the impact of scholarship and creative activity. You are being challenged to become an expert in the field of conflict resolution. These are but some of the dimensions of the modern leader.

Thank you for taking on this charge and for coming together in Minneapolis to have frank and open conversations about these issues. I encourage you to think of this conference as more than the sum total of the sessions offered. Consider this a safe space to ask difficult questions. Most importantly, please consider utilizing this opportunity to create a network of peers that will support you into the next year and throughout your careers. We are never too senior in our careers to seek the mentorship and guidance of others who care about the things we do.