

ACC Academic Leaders Network

Today's top-tier universities recognize that future success requires bringing together resources from a broad variety of different sources in ways that leverage collaboration and innovation. The ability to continue to compete nationally and internationally requires broad networks and collaborations, diversity of ideas and approaches, and initiatives that go beyond the abilities of any one single institution. To that end, the ACC Academic Leaders Network (ALN) is designed to facilitate cross-institutional networking and collaboration among academic leaders while building leadership capacity for the participating institutions.

Each on-site session will begin with lunch at Noon on the first day and conclude at Noon on the third day with a boxed to-go lunch. Meals will be provided throughout each session.

2026 Program

February 6, 2026

Virtual Kick-Off, 1-3pm EST

March 23-25, 2026

Southern Methodist University
Dallas, TX

June 29-July 1, 2026

University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN

October 5-7, 2026

University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA

The ACC Academic Leaders Network builds upon existing campus programs by creating distinctive learning opportunities while capitalizing on networking and collaborative opportunities to further develop our leaders along a range of dimensions, in ways that no single university can accomplish on its own.

Participant Objectives

- Continue to grow in leadership effectiveness with other academic leaders at various levels in the participating universities
- Leverage the network to build and develop cross-institutional communities of practice
- Build relationships and network with other participants in ways that leverage inter-institutional contacts for the benefit of all
- Gain practical insight into emerging trends and the broader landscape of higher education
- Broaden awareness of higher education leadership needs and challenges in a setting that provides exposure to multiple disciplines, organizational roles, and organizational structures

Benefits to the University

- Access to an additional level of leadership development for promising academic leaders, building from existing campus programs
- The ability to access and leverage information, perspectives, people, and approaches that no one university can offer on its own
- Building internal leadership capacity, diversifying the leadership pool, facilitating succession planning, and developing internal networks and collaborations
- Sharing and studying best practices and benchmarking across a diverse range of institutions, creating an enhanced ability to build departments, programs, and approaches that can result in competitive advantages
- Seeding additional inter-institutional collaborations that will strengthen participating universities as well as overall Academic Consortium



Target Audience

This program is geared to advance inter-institutional networking and collaboration as well as to provide a context for further developing your own leadership, identifying and leveraging leadership strengths in others, and cultivating future leaders. The target audience is faculty who have received foundational leadership training and who have at least 1-2 years of experience in their current leadership role, such as department chairs or heads, assistant or associate deans, and assistant or associate provosts (or similar titles as they may vary across institutions).

Program Structure

The program consists of three on-site sessions over the course of the calendar year, each hosted at a different participating university campus. These sessions are designed to build leadership awareness and effectiveness in the context of higher education and facilitate conversations over a range of topics that support leadership growth in key areas across multiple spheres of influence.

On-site sessions will include content and discussion designed to further knowledge and skills of intra- and inter-personal leadership styles, building equity-minded leadership capacity, leading and navigating complex challenges in higher education, and collaborating on complex challenges for leaders in academia. In addition to a range of topics that build from session to session, the following elements are common to all on-site meetings:

- Intentional inter-institutional networking
- Exploring differences, pressures, strengths, strategic opportunities across the diversity of our various institutions
- Campus tours
- Talk with President/Chancellor and Provost of host institution
- Current events in higher education
- “Swap and Share” – conversations about current challenges, sharing resources and approaches for best outcomes
- Conversation in cross-institutional communities of practice