

Association for Continuing Higher Education Strategic Plan 2005 - 2007

Mission: The Association for Continuing Higher Education is dedicated to promoting lifelong learning and excellence in continuing higher education. As an organization of colleges, universities, and individuals, ACHE encourages professional development, research, and exchange of information for its members and continuing higher education as a means of enhancing and improving society.

Vision: ACHE will be a member-driven association advancing the profession, principles, and practice of continuing higher education.

Values:

- Lifelong learning and its transformative power
- Academic integrity and excellence
- Inclusiveness and engagement
- Mentoring and professional development
- Research, scholarship, and best practices
- Fiscal responsibility

Ends/Goals:

Membership: Increase ACHE professional and institutional membership.

Objectives:

- Establish baselines for institutional and professional membership using current numbers.
- Establish realistic target percentage increases over the strategic planning period in conjunction with the Membership Development Committee and appropriate networks; review progress and adapt means annually.

Inclusiveness: Increase access and opportunity to diverse populations, institutional types, and geographical areas, and promote full ACHE participation by all.

Objectives:

- Increase membership by international colleges and universities, community and technical colleges, Tribal Colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions as well as by individuals in these groups.
- Continue to provide opportunities for access and leadership to diverse populations.
- Compile baseline data.
- Set target diversity goals.
- Review progress and strategies annually.

Continuing Professional Development: Increase assistance available upon request to postsecondary institutions; provide learning opportunities and mentoring for newcomers to the field; advance leadership skills and professional development for continuing educators at all phases of their careers.

Objectives:

- Provide and market a CE 101 seminar, paralleling the current Leadership Institute, for newcomers to the profession at the Association's annual conference; assess its effectiveness and appropriateness.
- Develop a registry of experts in each area of adult and continuing education for mentoring of members and providing assistance to postsecondary institutions; make available limited financial assistance to those called on to assist postsecondary institutions.
- Develop a resource/mentoring center to which members can turn for consultation and advice on current issues; assess its effectiveness and appropriateness.
- Seek broad membership input on focal points for emphasis (summits, topics for conference presentations, research articles, etc.); provide programming responses to these, and assess.

Marketing and Communication: Promote and communicate the goals and activities of the Association.

Objectives:

- Market ACHE as a network of comprehensive providers of continuing higher education.
- Periodically generate, analyze, and disseminate results of a “State of Continuing Higher Education” survey.
- Maintain and update the design of the ACHE website to enhance access and functionality for internal and external audiences.
- Disseminate information about issues of critical importance to the profession, including surveys, research outcomes, and legislative issues.
- Explore additional modes of communication, including single-topic forums, on significant issues affecting continuing education.

Leadership and Advocacy: Demonstrate the importance of the Association through proactive leadership and advocacy.

Objectives:

- Constantly improve the appearance, usefulness, and scope of ACHE web pages.
- Enhance access to portions of ACHE’s web pages for non-members with interest in adult and continuing education, research, and practice.
- Engage with institutions, associations, or businesses with similarly defined missions, goals, and values; seek points of mutual interest and develop appropriate interactions. Invite leaders of these organizations to speak at ACHE conferences, provide articles on specific topics, and otherwise interact with our membership; assess effectiveness annually.
- Request articles addressing specific timely topics on lifelong learning, accreditation, emerging trends, and concerns from ACHE members, leading practitioners, representatives of other organizations, and policy makers; and make these articles available on the ACHE website and/or its publications.
- Provide sessions at the Association’s regional and international conferences, and/or issue “summits” to discuss and consider the most important issues, ideas, and articles generated.
- Raise awareness of and increase education on important issues impacting continuing education.
- Actively advocate policies and procedures relating to lifelong learning to regional and national accrediting associations.
- Document the life-changing impact of education on adult students as well as the efficacy and value of programs designed and developed by ACHE members. Use ACHE’s website, publications, and other media to present outcomes.

Organizational Development: Strengthen ACHE regions and networks as well as their articulation with the international Association.

Objectives:

- Request and use feedback from regions and networks regarding membership development, inclusiveness, leadership development, research, and communication.

Research: Emphasize adult learning and development, research, and theory; and expand opportunities for research, including qualitative research, and its dissemination to the membership and the public.

Objectives:

- Encourage members and member institutions to provide academicians and academic units with access to continuing education students and data in support of continuing education research efforts; encourage collaborative efforts with “mainstream” academia.
- Increase emphasis on research, on *The Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, and on research-based presentations at ACHE regional and international conferences.
- Request articles from current and emerging experts in the field on topics related to adult and continuing education for publication in the *Journal*.
- Extend access to research grants on important continuing education topics to researchers in academic disciplines.

Fiscal Responsibility: Maintain and increase the solvency of ACHE and ensure that the home office has sufficient resources to carry out the Association's mandate.

Objectives:

- Maintain a cadre of conferencing experts to provide assistance and review as needed to entities hosting ACHE regional and international conferences.
- Set financial expectations for the Association's annual conference after reviewing previous financial data and polling board members and regional officers for their expectations on attendance.
- Continue to seek less expensive electronic means for conducting ACHE business and providing more effective communication.
- Review the Association balance sheet and investment strategies at least annually with an eye to maintaining and building reserves.
- Request annual resource needs projections to meet current and anticipated Association mandates from the home office and consider these needs in setting Association budgets.
- Review ACHE dues structures for professional members and institutions.
- Seek alternative funding resources beyond dues and annual conference revenues. These could include scholarships, grants, and pooling of resources in collaborative efforts with other organizations.