2017 Global Engagement and Social Responsibility

October 12, 2017 to October 14, 2017

New Orleans Marriott

555 Canal Street

New Orleans, LA 70130

*Well-structured global engagement opportunities can bring those within and beyond higher education into conversation, enabling students—as well as faculty, staff, and community members—to learn from different sources of knowledge and wisdom and to develop their individual and collective capacity for deep listening, dialogue, and agency for the common good.*

**Conference Overview**

The need for meaningful global engagement and higher levels of social responsibility has never been greater. Political upheavals and global terrorism, migration patterns and refugee movements, climate change, economic instability, and public health crises—all symptoms of persistent inequity, injustice, and misunderstanding—are manifested with increasing complexity in the local and global patterns that govern our daily lives. Global climate patterns, influenced by personal, business, and political activities, affect local ecosystems and communities, often in destabilizing ways. Individual economic security depends inextricably on the global exchange of information, goods, and services. Nationalist movements around the world are challenging values associated with global citizenship and liberal democracy. Refugees and immigrants on campus and around the world are threatened with uncertainty. Challenges to public health respect no political boundaries. What must higher education do to prepare students to understand the local and global synergies of such issues and to solve these problems in ways that make the world a better place for all, while also offering institutional leadership that addresses these challenges? How can we shift students’ narratives and those of our institutions from a focus on self to a focus on others, so that all members of our higher education communities can become informed, competent, and responsible citizens in and of the world?

Addressing the issues facing our localities, nation, and world will require engagement with diverse ideas and perspectives originating across campuses, communities, and countries*.* Well-structured global learning practices provide students with opportunities to deeply engage real-world issues, both on and off campus and across disciplines and majors—through classroom experiences, dialogues and problem solving with community members, peers, and practitioners. Many colleges and universities are embracing the responsibility to serve as place-based anchor institutions engaged in the local community and in the communities of their partner institutions around the world. Meanwhile, students are engaging in contentious debates and striving to create meaningful change around such issues as the establishment of sanctuary campuses, the defense of the notion of global citizenship in the face of increasing cries for nationalism worldwide, and the role of higher education in welcoming refugees. In these and other debates, greater understanding of the local often deepens engagement with the global, resulting in strategies, expectations, and partnerships that honor both frames of reference.

*Global Engagement and Social Responsibility: Higher Education’s Role in Addressing Global Crises*will highlight how institutions explore the local and the global, providing students with opportunities to apply new learning in diverse contexts—including through nuanced deliberation about the complexity of the real-world issues of our time.

The conference will provide models, practices, and resources for:

1. developing courses, programs, and curricula that put student engagement with real-world issues at the center of the educational experience;
2. project-based and signature assignments that advance ethical integrative thinking, teamwork, and community-based research and service;
3. assessing global learning, engagement, and social responsibility to ensure that all students leave college prepared to address the issues of our time with knowledge, sensitivity, and commitment to the well-being of others, and using requirements of the accreditation review process (such as the Quality Enhancement Plan) as opportunities to develop institutional commitment to and strategic planning for global learning;
4. Preparing faculty for their multiple roles—including teacher, facilitator of difficult dialogues, and mentor—with special attention to issues affecting student well-being, and investing in institutional resources to ensure that students, faculty, and staff receive they support they need.

AAC&U invites you to lend your expertise and voice to the conference conversations. Please save the date, submit a proposal, and plan to attend the conference next October 12–14.