

Monday – September 14, 2026

Yours Truly 1143 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC

9:00 am – 9:30 am – Morning Beverages & Snacks (not breakfast) *(Set in Room 12, Eating in Rooms 9 & 10)***9:30 am – 11:00 am – Members Only Session** *(Combined Rooms 9 & 10)*

Only for ASPA members, their staff and board.

Zach Waymer, Executive Director, Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors**11:15 am – Official Start of Conference (All Attendees)****11:15 am – 12:15 pm – Taming the AI Frontier: Mitigating and Auditing Risk** *(Rooms 9 & 10)*

- ★ Understand the risks of inaction including data exposure, loss of institutional knowledge, and reputational risk
- ★ Learn how to audit AI usage and contain risk that can protect your accreditation agency
- ★ Review specific strategies to ensure your accreditation agency can safely and responsibly embrace the future of AI

Emily Vandermade, Accreditation Coordinator, Commission on English Language Program Accreditation**Jeff Reiter**, Chief Executive Officer, RWK IT Services**12:30 pm – 1:30 pm – Lunch** *(Buffet in Room 12, Eating in Rooms 9 & 10)***1:45 pm – 3:30 pm – Campfire Conversations: Peer Discussions on Accreditation Issues** *(Rooms 9 & 10 and 11)***Kevin Connell**, Associate Director for Accreditation Review, Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs**Mergers and Acquisitions Among Accreditors**

- ★ A relevant discussion about the challenges and opportunities when considering a merger or acquisition, including defining terms, reviewing the similarities and differences, and exploring some of the reasons they occur.

Kendra Harrington, Vice President, Practice & Research, American Physical Therapy Association**Mary Romanello**, Director of Accreditation, Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education**Sylvia Fernandez**, President and CEO, Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs**Accreditation Travel Costs**

- ★ A frank conversation about rising travel costs that includes how site visit fees are assessed, who assumes the costs, and ways to implement efficiencies that can reduce costs.

Kelly Velasquez, Director of Accreditation for Site Visit Operations, Council on Academic Accreditation Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology**Marc Medwed**, Director of Accreditation, National Architectural Accrediting Board**High-Stakes Testing**

- ★ An open conversation about the impact that high-stakes testing or assessments can have for the test-taker, educator, and institution, including how this impacts student outcomes.

Nell Ard, Chief Accreditation Officer, Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing**Innovations**

- ★ A general discussion on how innovations can ensure accreditors remain responsive to the evolving needs of students, programs, and institutions while ensuring the achievement of its mission.

Rayane AbuSabha, Executive Director, Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics**Shirdell Mattox**, Executive Director, Midwifery Education Accreditation Council**3:30 pm – 3:45 pm – Snack Break** *(Set in Room 12, Eating in Rooms 9 & 10)*

3:45 pm – 4:45 pm – Rounding Up the Latest: Federal and State Policy Developments *(Rooms 9 & 10)*

- ★ Learn how the political climate drives federal policymaking on higher education.
- ★ Become aware of specific pending legislative and regulatory actions impacting higher education institutions, including possible risks to their operations as a result.
- ★ Understand how the priorities and policies of the Administration impact federal policymaking across higher education and what that means for institutions.

Jon Fansmith, Senior Vice President for Government Relations and National Engagement, American Council on Education

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm – Reception *(El Chalet)*

Tuesday – September 15, 2026

7:30 am – 8:30 am – Breakfast (Set in Room 12, Eating in Rooms 9 & 10)

8:30 am – 9:30 am – Changing the Trail: Implementing Modern Board Governance (Rooms 9 & 10)

- ★ Learn to reframe traditional risk management strategies by applying an opportunity lens to identify growth and innovation prospects.
- ★ Examine effective governance practices and oversight strategies designed to strengthen board performance, transparency, and organizational decision-making.
- ★ Develop actionable methods for agile leadership that enable governance bodies to respond proactively to shifting organizational dynamics and external disruptions.

Nell Ard, Chief Accreditation Officer, Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing

Denise Roosendaal, Vice President, Association Management, Smithbucklin

Tim Hopkins, Managing Director, McKinley Advisors (a Smithbucklin Company)

9:45 am – 11:00 am – Prospecting for Value: Communicating Accreditation's Impact (Rooms 9 & 10)

- ★ Identify the value proposition challenges for accreditors.
- ★ Discuss evidence that accreditors can use to show value.
- ★ Review how value can be effectively communicated to various audiences.
- ★ Analyze new ways to frame the value of quality assurance using a risk-based approach.

Jamie Pak, Senior Manager, Program Accreditation, Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

Ann Kenimer, Chief Accreditation Officer, ABET

Mollie Mulvanity, Deputy Director, Council on Education for Public Health

Leanne Worsfold, Senior Strategic Partner, Innovation and Strategy Planning, Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

11:00 am – 12:00 pm – Staying on the Right Side of the Law: Antitrust Risks (A Legal Perspective)

(Rooms 9 & 10)

- ★ Review antitrust principles and how they apply to accreditors.
- ★ Discuss antitrust developments impacting accreditors.
- ★ Identify best practices when developing and applying policies, procedures, and standards.

Kendra Harrington, Vice President, Practice & Research, American Physical Therapy Association

John Przypyszny, Partner, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

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