

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN

## 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

October 10 – 13, 2018

### **Report of the Executive Director**

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The 2018 – 2019 academic year marks NASAD’s 74<sup>th</sup> season of service to its members and to the field. Efforts to support and advance the art and design profession in the United States remain at the core of the Association’s projects. Its work in various areas, including accreditation, professional development, research, and monitoring and analyzing policy surrounding higher education and the arts, is continually being reviewed, discussed, improved, and enhanced. As NASAD serves an ever-growing and diverse membership, its projects in accreditation and beyond continue to broaden and evolve. The Association’s principal activities during the past year are presented below.

#### **Accreditation Standards and Procedures**

Much of the yearly work of NASAD involves accreditation. This includes preparation for meetings of the Commission on Accreditation; scheduling accreditation visits; arranging consultations for member and potential member institutions; communicating with institutions preparing accreditation materials; receiving and reviewing accreditation materials; and reviewing and developing standards, guidelines, resources, and educational programs in support of the accreditation review process. All individuals involved in these activities—including institutional representatives, faculty and staff members, NASAD Commissioners, visiting evaluators, consultants, presenters, and National Office staff members—work to make this service a valuable component in the advancement of art and design programs in institutions of higher education.

In August of 2015, NASAD announced its intention to begin a multi-year comprehensive review of its standards. This process, now underway, is intended to focus on the following groups of standards currently found in the *NASAD Handbook*: Graduate Programs, Undergraduate Programs, Non-Degree-Granting Programs, Two-Year Programs, applicable Appendices, and Purposes and Operations. NASAD began this review in the fall of 2015 by opening consideration of its graduate standards; the review of undergraduate standards began in the fall of 2016; the review of non-degree-granting standards began in the fall of 2017. Continuing its multiyear review of accreditation standards, in August of 2018 NASAD began a review of standards pertaining to purposes and operations, two-year degree-granting programs, and applicable appendices. Mailings, which included the text under review and instructions regarding the submission of comments, were distributed to accredited institutional members including administrators, faculty, staff and students; non- and potential member institutions; the higher education community including regional, specialized, and national accreditors; related organizations and associations; and the general public. Although particular focus is devoted at this time to standards pertaining to purposes and operations, two-year degree-granting programs, and applicable appendices, the standards as a whole remain open for comment. This is particularly important, as there are relationships between and among standards. Consideration of these relationships will be included in review conversations and used to inform ongoing and later phases of the comprehensive review process.

Subsequent to the comment period, NASAD will hold an Open Hearing during its 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon. Feedback collected during the open comment period, as well as that collected during the Open Hearing, will be reviewed by the National Office staff, and considered by the appropriate bodies within NASAD. Individuals should feel free to contact the office of the Executive Director at any time if views are held that would assist the Association in this review process and its ongoing work.

An amended *Handbook* typically is released annually just after each Annual Meeting. The 2018 – 2019 NASAD *Handbook* is expected later this fall. Handbooks released just after Annual Meetings include any standards changes approved by the membership, Board of Directors, and/or Commission as appropriate during the most recent meeting, as well as any amendments approved between Annual Meetings. Official notices regarding the proposed revisions to the *Handbook* were disseminated on August 2, 2018 and September 10, 2018. Following these two open and public official comment periods, the proposed revisions are slated for votes by the appropriate bodies during this Annual Meeting.

All current accreditation-related documents, standards, and procedures are available for download from the Association’s website at [nasad.arts-accredit.org](http://nasad.arts-accredit.org). Institutions are reminded that the NASAD framework does allow for flexibility in approach. To discuss available flexibilities that can assist to address local conditions and realities, and for assistance in using the various *Procedures* documents and *Handbook*, please contact the NASAD National Office staff.

The Association continues to encourage consideration of the use of the NASAD review process or materials in other review contexts. Consolidating reviews may assist institutions to conserve resources and realize economies of scale. Many institutions are finding efficiencies by combining the NASAD review with internal and/or other external reviews. The Association is willing to work with institutions and programs to consider options and to craft NASAD reviews that are thorough, efficient, and suitably dovetailed with other internal and external efforts.

The Association is cognizant of the many hours devoted by member and applicant institutions to research, study, consider, prepare, and present accreditation materials for review by the Commission on Accreditation. NASAD is deeply grateful for these efforts on behalf of the field of art and design and congratulates the institutions and their representatives for the many accomplishments and successes resulting from their work.

## Projects

NASAD participates in the Council of Arts Accrediting Associations (CAAA) with NASD (dance), NASM (music), and NAST (theatre). The Council is concerned with issues that affect all four disciplines and their accreditation efforts. NASAD President Jeffrey D. Nesen and Vice President Sally McRorie are the art and design Trustees of the Council. President Nesen represented NASAD during CAAA meetings held in January 2018. CAAA sponsors the Accrediting Commission for Community and Precollegiate Arts Schools (ACCPAS), which reviews arts-focused schools at the K – 12 level. Currently, there are 16 institutions accredited by ACCPAS. This undertaking is valuable in that it assists to connect K – 12 and higher education efforts.

The Higher Education Arts Data Services (HEADS) project continues to be refined and improved. Participation by member and non-member institutions remains strong. Following the close of the information gathering process facilitated by the 2017 – 2018 HEADS Data Survey on January 31, 2018, the resultant Data Summaries were published in April 2018. Additional capabilities and services are added as time and financial resources permit. Periodically, minor adjustments to the Data Survey are made that are intended to clarify the submission process, thus ensuring the collection of accurate and helpful data. Data Survey changes typically are followed by associated changes to the Data Summaries. Enhancements to the 2017 – 2018 Data Survey included clarification of existing language and additional features that automatically check entered dates. Comparative data in the form of Special Reports are a feature of the HEADS system and can be valuable resources for administrators. These Special Reports and their possible uses will be discussed during an Annual Meeting session and can be discussed at any time with staff in the National Office. NASAD welcomes thoughts and feedback regarding the HEADS project.

The NASAD Annual Meeting provides various opportunities for the discussion and dissemination of current information surrounding art and design study, higher education, administration, and other related fields. A large number of individuals participate in the Annual Meeting program each year, producing sessions that provide helpful and thought-provoking ideas. The 2018 Annual Meeting will address various areas of importance to administrators of art and design

programs in higher education. A full afternoon will be devoted to the topic of enrollment management. Other topics of focus will include the planning and creation of undergraduate degree programs which develop student competency and expertise; developing today's students into the leaders of tomorrow; design thinking; mounting strategic planning initiatives; honing fundraising skills and approaches; accessibility; and addressing student mental health issues. The meeting will also provide opportunities for discussion of the topics on the program, and those of interest to attendees. Breakout discussion groups and forums will be held, as will several informational sessions for individuals guiding their institutions through the accreditation/reaccreditation process. Training opportunities will be offered for potential and experienced visiting evaluators. Informative sessions addressing NASAD annual reporting requirements, administrative resources, and federal issues for art/design administrators will also be offered.

NASAD continues in 2018 its long-standing tradition of offering a Pre-Meeting Workshop for New and Aspiring Art and Design Administrators in Higher Education. This workshop is well attended each year, and highly recommended by those who have participated. Additionally, NASAD offers a Pre-Meeting Workshop for Seasoned Administrators. This workshop will provide registrants the opportunity to discuss in detail those current and salient issues faced by today's art and design administrators.

The Association is pleased to welcome each registrant and is grateful to all those who developed specific agenda material for the Pre-Meeting Workshops and Annual Meeting, as well as those who volunteered to serve as moderators and recorders.

## Policy

The Association continues to follow and monitor carefully various federal and state initiatives and issues.

As a reminder, the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), first authorized in 1965 as part of the "War on Poverty" legislation introduced by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, was reauthorized and signed into law on December 10, 2015 through passage of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA). This new law, which took effect October 1, 2016, rewrites ESEA and replaces the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), which expired in 2007. The law is intended to return decision-making authority and control to states and school districts. The federal government continues the implementation of this Act through the application of law and regulation.

Activity regarding reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act* (HEA) began in earnest in late 2017. This Act was last reauthorized in August 2008 and expired December 31, 2013. Issues of concern include initiatives pertaining to the definition of the credit hour, gainful employment, state authorization, teacher preparation, and misrepresentation. Joining this list are issues such as access, cost and completion, new pathways for collegiate study, student achievement, institutional responsibility, borrower defense to repayment, and institutional obligations under Title IX. On December 12, 2017, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce voted along party lines (23 (R) – 17 (D)) to advance a comprehensive bill to reauthorize the HEA. The bill, entitled the *Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform Act*, or the "PROSPER Act" ([H.R. 4508](#)), was introduced by Committee Chair Virginia Foxx (R – NC). As of September 2018, this bill has yet to be taken up by the entire House for debate or vote.

Key provisions of H.R. 4508 include: the repeal of regulations regarding the definition of the credit hour, gainful employment, borrower defense to repayment, and the October 29, 2010 and December 19, 2017 state authorization regulations; changes to procedures and rules regarding borrower defense to repayment processes; language disallowing the Secretary from creating or enforcing rules related to gainful employment and the credit hour; the prevention of the creation or administration of a postsecondary institution rating system; language banning public colleges from restricting speech through speech zones or speech codes; the creation of new due process requirements regarding investigations and disciplinary hearings related to sexual assault allegations; the reauthorization of Pell Grants through FY 2024; the repeal of Academic Competitiveness Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP)

Program, and the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship; the elimination of cohort default rate calculations and implications thereof for federal student aid programs; and the sunset of the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant program.

While the House has made progress to advance its latest reauthorization bill, no such companion bill has yet been introduced in the Senate. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), chaired by Lamar Alexander (R – TN), has been attempting to reach bipartisan agreement on many of the issues during the bill writing process and has held a variety of hearings in 2018 regarding reauthorization.

It is important to recall that these Acts govern the flow of federal monies earmarked for elementary, secondary, and higher education.

As a reminder of past activities and events, following the release of final regulations in 2016 pertaining to state authorization, teacher preparation, and borrower defense to repayment, in 2017 these regulations were subsequently placed on hold by federal action. In July and August 2018, following delays of the implementation of recently approved rules related to borrower defense to repayment and gainful employment, the Department of Education announced a variety of new comment periods and plans to rewrite or rescind various regulations. In July 2018, the Department of Education announced the intention to form a negotiated rulemaking committee and requested comment regarding regulations related to the Secretary's recognition of accrediting agencies. The Department included in the notice information of significance indicating that in addition, the committee would be tasked with reviewing federal definitions and requirements related to state authorization, the definition of "regular and substantive interaction" as it relates to correspondence and distance education, the definition of the credit hour, and direct assessment programs and competency-based education. Also in July 2018, the Department of Education announced a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) requesting comment related to federal standards concerning the evaluation of applications related to borrower defense to repayment. In August 2018, the Department of Education announced a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) requesting comment concerning the Department's proposal to rescind regulations related to gainful employment.

In July 2018, the Justice Department and Department of Education through the publication of a "Dear Colleague" letter formally rescinded seven documents issued by the agencies between 2011 and 2016 which offered guidance related to Affirmative Action and the use of race in decisions by schools and colleges.

In September 2017, the Department of Education 1) rolled back Title IX guidance, specifically, previous guidance offered in the 2011 "Dear Colleague" letter and the 2014 Question/Answer set; 2) issued interim guidance pertaining to Title IX; and 3) published notice of its intent to negotiate regulations pertaining to Title IX.

There is no doubt that the federal landscape associated with higher education continues to change dramatically. Members and colleagues should continue to remain abreast of unfolding activities, study federal writings, and offer feedback pertaining to federal requests and proposed regulation. Concerted effort is needed to ensure that neither law nor the regulation that follows restricts the academy from designing and implementing effective programs of study. Protecting and maintaining institutional autonomy and freedoms vital to the success of our educational system as well as our pursuits of creative and innovative undertakings remains paramount.

NASAD currently publishes advisories, which describe regulations associated with the current 2008 authorization of the Higher Education Act. These may be found within the Publications section of the website and are titled *NASAD Advisories on Federal Issues*. Review is highly recommended.

On December 22, 2017, the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*—a comprehensive tax bill—became public law. Key changes affecting higher education include: a 1.4% "endowment tax" applicable to institutions with enrollments of at least 500 students, assets of \$500,000 or more per full-time student, and more than 50% of students located in the

United States; the expiration of the “above the line” tuition and fees deduction, while maintaining the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC) and the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit; an expansion to the deduction for charitable contributions so that taxpayers may contribute up to 60% of adjusted gross income rather than the previous contribution limit of 50%; an increase to the standard deduction (\$24,000 for joint filers, \$12,000 for individuals), which may translate into more filers claiming the standard deduction and fewer people choosing to itemize their tax returns and deduct their charitable giving; a \$10,000 deduction cap for state and local taxes; the ability for individuals enrolled in 529 plans (known as “qualified tuition plans”) to use funds for tuition at elementary and secondary schools; and the cessation of treatment of forgiven loans due to death or permanent disability as income.

On December 14, 2017, the commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to repeal the “net neutrality” regulations that required Internet service providers (ISPs) to treat all online traffic equally. The move gives ISPs free rein both to speed up service for websites that they favor and those that pay a premium for “fast lane” service and, conversely, to slow down or simply block other sites. Many in higher education worry that this change could negatively impact both research and instruction, and result in higher broadband costs for institutions. Other critics of the repeal decry the implications for free speech and innovation. A number of state attorneys general have filed lawsuits that challenge the FCC’s decision.

NASAD continues to monitor changes in leadership at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), as well as changes in direction which appear to be directly related to the evident narrowing of CFPB’s purview in a variety of areas, such as higher education and accreditation.

On September 5, 2017, the current administration formally announced its plans to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, effective March 5, 2018. The policy allowed individuals who entered the United States as minors without legal status to apply for a renewable, two-year deferral from deportation and to be eligible for a work permit. At this time, there are approximately 790,000 individuals enrolled in the program, 350,000 of whom are enrolled in secondary or higher education. In January and February of 2018, federal judges in California and New York issued injunctions barring the end of DACA while various lawsuits move through the court system. In March 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the administration’s appeal of the January injunction, noting that the legal actions are expected to “proceed expeditiously” through the lower courts.

In addition to accreditation policy mentioned above, the Association remains concerned about implications of tax policy, charitable giving, intellectual property rights, the preponderance of data collection and associated issues of privacy and confidentiality, the disparity in educational opportunity at the K – 12 level, and the pace of cultural climate changes enabled by technological advances and their impact. Many contextual issues that affect NASAD institutions grow out of large social forces that can be understood, but not influenced significantly. Economic cycles and downturns have a profound effect, but no single person or entity controls them. Increasing personal philanthropy is a critically important element in future support for education and the arts, particularly in these fluctuating economic times. As well, NASAD keeps a watchful eye on proposals that would bring increased federal involvement in the activities of and control over non-profit organizations and philanthropies.

NASAD will continue to monitor ongoing events, actively participate in the conversations that address such issues, assist to provide detailed and thorough information, and keep the membership informed as issues and projects progress.

### **National Office**

The NASAD National Office is located in Reston, one of the Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C., and the current terminus of Metro’s Silver Line. The office is about eight miles east of Dulles International Airport, and approximately 20 miles from downtown Washington. We are delighted to welcome visitors to the National Office. Should your travels bring you to the area, please feel free to schedule an appointment with a staff member, or merely stop by for a visit.

The primary purpose of the National Office is to operate the Association under rules and policies established by the membership, the Board of Directors, and the Commission on Accreditation. Its strength rests in its peer governance operations and its peer review efforts. The work of the Association is carried out by many volunteers—elected officials, evaluators, meeting participants—all willing to donate their valuable time and expertise, all holding and exhibiting unwavering commitment to the field. Although the availability of each member’s time becomes ever more precious, NASAD continues to seek volunteers and enlist their assistance in the work of the Association. Such acts of support and volunteerism in NASAD are a testament to the extraordinary spirit and dedication of its members. The work of our visiting evaluators and Commissioners is an exemplary expression of commitment to the field and faith in the future.

This outstanding corps of volunteers is joined by a dedicated and capable National Office staff—Stephanie Blakely, Adèle-Marie Buis, Kyle Dobbeck, Paul J. Florek, Tiffany Govender, Nora Hamme, Linda Kiemel, Jenny R. Kuhlmann, Tracy L. Maraney, Stacy A. McMahon, and Lisa A. Ostrich. To support the work of accredited institutional members, the work of the staff and the services to NASAD over the years have grown. Staff is focused on carrying out the daily work of the Association, developing new and refining old systems, assisting institutions seeking accreditation for the first time, and consulting with those seeking renewal of Membership. The staff is diligent in its efforts to assist and serve the institutions, and to carry out the responsibilities of NASAD effectively.

As a staff, we are able to see on a daily basis the great foundational strength of NASAD. Fundamental to this foundation is wisdom about the need to remain informed, communicate, and work together to build art and design in higher education as a whole, as well as in each member and applicant institution. NASAD has realized great success in maintaining its focus on issues of importance to institutions and the field, and in working to address these issues. It promotes collegial connections and centers its work on concepts, conditions, and resources necessary for competence and creativity. This foundation, now strongly in place, will serve NASAD well as it faces changing and challenging times ahead.

The staff joins me in expressing appreciation for the support, cooperation, assistance, and kindness extended by the NASAD membership. It is an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to serve NASAD, its member institutions, and constituencies. We hope you will always feel free to contact the staff whenever you think we may provide assistance. We look forward to continuing our efforts together.

Please accept our heartfelt appreciation and best wishes as you continue your work throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen P. Moynahan  
Executive Director