



ACS COUNCIL OF DEANS MEETING – **DRAFT AGENDA**

October 1-2, 2026 – Rhodes College, Memphis, TN

Register for the meeting [here](#).

Hotel: [Book here](#) at the [Peabody Memphis](#), 149 Union Ave, Memphis, TN 38103, phone: 901-529-4000.

Cut-off date: Sept 1. Attendees are responsible for booking and covering their own hotel room and incidentals.

Rhodes Contact: April Allen, Academic Affairs Coordinator, allena@rhodes.edu, 901.843.3795; Tim Huebner, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, huebner@rhodes.edu, 901.857.4905

ACS Contact: Ashley Torgerson, Executive Assistant to the President, atorgerson@acsouth.edu, 404.636.9533

Location & Parking Information: [Rhodes College Campus Map](#): 2000 N. Parkway, Memphis, TN. Most sessions will be in Briggs Hall. Parking is available in the Visitor Lot by the Philips Lane Entrance ([Yellow lot on the map](#)).

Wireless Information: **pending**

AGENDA

Time	Session Details	Location
Thursday, October 1st		
3:40 PM (All times CT)	<i>Shuttle transportation from Peabody Hotel to campus</i>	<i>Pick up outside of hotel lobby</i>
4:00 PM	Welcome Reception <i>Hosted by Jennifer Collins, President, and members of the Provost's Office</i>	<i>Barret Library Apse</i>
5:15 PM	Campus Tour <i>Bill Short, Associate Director of Barret Library</i>	
6:00 PM	Dinner	<i>Robinson Lobby</i>
7:30 PM	Roundtable Campus Updates	<i>Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall</i>
8:30 PM	<i>Shuttle transportation back to the Peabody</i>	
Friday, October 2nd		
7:40 AM	<i>Shuttle transportation to campus</i>	<i>Pick up outside of hotel lobby</i>
8:00 AM	Breakfast	<i>Outside of Spence Wilson Room</i>

8:30 AM	Welcome & ACS Updates <i>Tim Huebner, Provost, Rhodes College</i> <i>Anna Drake Warshaw, President, ACS</i>	<i>Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall</i>
9:00 AM	Session 1: Redefining Liberal Arts Teaching & Learning with AI <i>Dave Dixon, Head of AI Education & Innovation, MIT Open Learning</i> • What do we know about how AI can improve, or inhibit, learning, especially in small classrooms? • What are the most innovative liberal arts institutions doing to incorporate AI? • What is the most exciting AI work happening across ACS classrooms? • What are the barriers and opportunities to large-scale pedagogical innovation with AI? • How can ACS institutions lead a collective pedagogical transformation that leverages AI? <i>Miriam Clinton, ACS Mellon Fellow and Associate Dean for Teaching, Learning, and Emerging Technologies at Rhodes will join this session</i>	<i>Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall</i>
10:15 AM	Break	
10:30 AM	Session 2: Humanities, Vocation, and the Liberal Arts Tradition: Rhodes' Search Program and NetVUE Grant Initiative <i>Profs. Kenny Morrell and Vanessa Rogers, Co-Directors of the Search Program and Rashna Richards, Associate Provost</i> • How does a near century-old humanities sequence like Search stay relevant today, and how did Rhodes use their Teagle Cornerstone grant to enhance the program? • What does it look like to build career readiness into a liberal arts curriculum? Who needs to be involved? • What roles do academic leaders, faculty committees, and the broader faculty community play in these initiatives? Where has faculty buy-in been most challenging, and what lessons has Rhodes learned? • What can other ACS institutions borrow or adapt from Rhodes' approach? Where can we collaborate?	<i>Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall</i>
11:30 AM	Lunch <i>At 12pm we will transition from informal conversation into an Open Mic session, while continuing to enjoy lunch.</i>	<i>Outside of Spence Wilson Room</i>

12:00 PM	Open Mic <i>Potential topics:</i> - Who is venturing into 90-hour baccalaureate territory approved by SACSCOC? - What's the latest with changes to advising structures? - How are campuses responding to the new federal accountability framework effective as of July 1, 2026?	Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall
1:00 PM	Session 3: Two Case Studies in Community Engagement: The Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies and the Liberal Arts in Prison Program <i>Natalie Person, Dean of Community Engagement & Executive Director, Turley Center for Community Engagement; Charles McKinney, Professor of History & Director, Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies; Stephen Haynes, Professor of Religious Studies & Director, Liberal Arts in Prison Program</i> - What is Rhodes' relationship to Memphis and its unique history in the South? How does Rhodes incentivize and track campus involvement across the city? - How has Rhodes developed the Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies, a unique summer undergraduate research opportunity? - How did a weekly reading group based on Rhodes' Search sequence evolve into a full bachelor's degree program? What infrastructure and capacity did the institution have to develop to make this possible? - What outcomes, benefits, challenges, or opportunities have resulted from Rhodes work in Memphis? - How can ACS peers learn from or adapt Rhodes' approach to extending the liberal arts through community engagement?	Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall
2:00 PM	Break	
2:15 PM	Session 4: Addressing Dysfunctional or Underperforming Departments - What's the difference between a department that's struggling and one that's truly dysfunctional? - When does a persistent personnel problem become a departmental problem? - What interventions have actually worked to turn around an underperforming department? - How do we know when to invest in rebuilding a department versus shrinking or merging it – and what process have others gone through to rebuild?	Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall

3:15 PM	Session 5: Balancing Action with Shared Governance • How do you keep shared governance aligned with institutional priorities and objectives? • What are processes or strategies for addressing structural issues with shared governance? • How do we educate those involved in the governance process about their governance roles and about the bigger picture in higher education today? • What do you do about dysfunctional or rogue committees? • What happens when you reach a governance impasse on an issue that's strategically or financially crucial? How have colleagues found a way forward?	<i>Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall</i>
4:15 PM	Wrap-up & Closing • What are we taking away? • What questions do we still have? • Where are there opportunities to collaborate?	<i>Spence Wilson Room, Briggs Hall</i>
4:45 PM	Break/Transition to Dinner	
5:30 PM	Closing Social Gathering & Dinner	TBD
7:00 PM	<i>Shuttle transportation back to the Peabody</i>	