

Council of Deans (COD) Peer Groups

Background:

At the 2022 COD Spring Meeting, the Administrative Board presented six ideas to strengthen dean effectiveness and increase support for dean tenure. With the COD's review and feedback, the Administrative Board divided into subgroups, each tasked with drafting a project charter to develop and implement one of the ideas. The subgroup tasked with developing a peer counseling network of deans to support COD members in their roles met from April-June 2022. The subgroup drafted a two-phased plan to improve decision-making support and reduce professional isolation for deans, approved by the Administrative Board in July 2022. The first phase of this plan is the establishment of COD Peer Groups, a community-building/support resource to encourage networking, shared problem-solving, and sharing of new ideas and innovations. The following charge outlines the purpose of COD Peer Groups and expectations of participation.

Purpose:

COD Peer Groups are intended to promote relationship-building, reduce professional isolation, and broaden individual perspectives by creating regular opportunities for COD members to engage with their peers nationally. Peer Group meetings are intended to be informal and participant-led, providing opportunities for networking, shared problem-solving, sharing of new ideas/innovations, etc. Peer Groups will meet primarily virtually, though group members may wish to convene at appropriate times during in-person AAMC meetings such as Learn Serve Lead and the COD Spring Meeting to reinforce relationships.

Composition:

Each COD Peer Group will be comprised of approximately 8 deans. Peer Groups will be assigned randomly by the COD Program team, though adjustments may be made to promote diversity of representation within each group, especially regarding dean tenure.

Engagement of the Peer Group will be organized and overseen by the Peer Group Host, an individual within the group who has volunteered to take on this additional responsibility.

Charge:

Peer Group participants are tasked with:

- Meeting virtually at a regular cadence determined by the group (e.g., once monthly for 60 minutes, twice monthly for 30 minutes, etc.)
- Making every effort to attend and be fully present for scheduled Peer Group meetings, recognizing the complex nature of deans' schedules
- Maintaining the confidentiality of the group's discussions
- Completing a limited number of electronic evaluations to provide feedback on your experience and the value of participation
- Communicating directly with COD program staff if a change in group assignment is necessary (e.g., can no longer participate in regular Peer Group meetings, transitioning out of the dean's role, etc.)

- Welcoming new group participants enthusiastically, as COD program staff may modify group assignments periodically to accommodate newly appointed deans, dean transitions, requests for group changes, etc.

Peer Group Hosts are tasked with the following additional responsibilities:

- Providing administrative support from the host's office to schedule and coordinate the logistics of regular virtual meetings
- Tracking data on virtual meeting participation to share with COD program staff
- Sharing relevant discussion points with COD program staff, as needed (e.g., requests for AAMC data, products, or services; feedback regarding the AAMC Strategic Plan; etc.)
- Sharing compelling ideas, innovations, or discussion topics with COD program staff for distribution to the broader COD or use in COD programming
- Communicating directly with COD program staff if you are no longer able to host a peer group and change in assigned host is necessary
- Collecting and distributing topics or agenda items for Peer Group meetings (if desired by the group—this process is optional)
- Convening the Peer Group at appropriate times during in-person AAMC meetings (if desired by the group)