

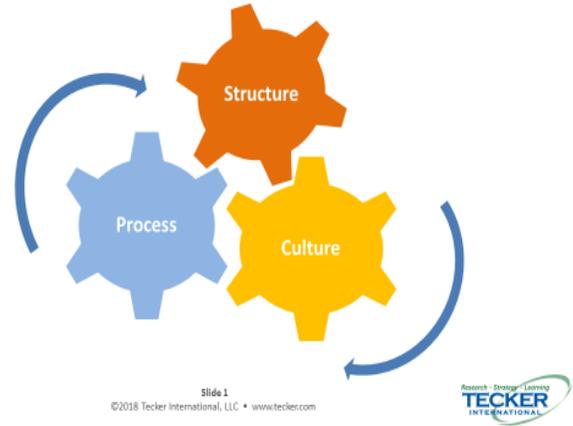
# House of Delegates Backgrounder

Fall 2018

The House of Delegates (HOD) convened for the first time in Richmond, Virginia, in 1937. Eighty-one years later, it continues to serve as a voice for Academy members. The 100<sup>th</sup> meeting of the House of Delegates will convene in Washington, D.C., in October, engaging in conversation about who we need and want to be in the future.

We will be architects of our future, challenged with designing a governance approach that is fast, fluid and flexible, produces visionary and meaningful outcomes and utilizes new ways to engage members and other key stakeholders.

## Leading Together for Good Governance



### Why Assess the HOD?

- The environment in which our profession and organization operates is quickly changing.
- The Academy has recognized that solving today’s unique problems will require a new way of working – including engaging new stakeholders, working globally and collaborating with different partners.
- A new Strategic Plan presents a perfect opportunity to assess how the HOD can support the work called for in this new Plan.

**Mega Issue Question: Going into the Second Century, how do we design an engaged HOD to best support and advance the Academy’s Strategic Plan?**

### Objectives:

At the end of the meeting, we will have:

1. Identified the overall future purpose of the Academy’s HOD.
2. Confirmed how our desired culture impacts our ultimate decisions regarding the mega issue.
3. Come to consensus on the features of a model for further exploration that position the HOD to best execute its desired role.

### HOD Core Functions

Per the Academy Bylaws, the HOD exists to govern the profession by providing a forum for membership and professional issues and to establish and maintain professional standards.

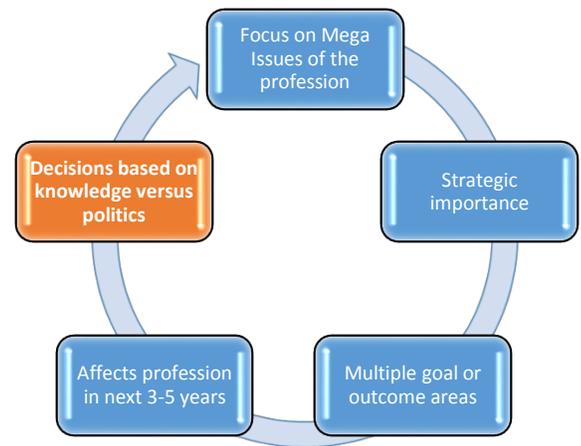
### Current Composition

- The House of Delegates (HOD) includes 105 delegates:
  - **6 House Leadership Team Members (HLT)** including the Speaker, Speaker-elect, immediate Past Speaker and 3 HOD Directors (all elected by membership). The 6 HLT members are also members of the Academy’s Board of Directors.
  - **67 Affiliate Delegates** elected by members of the 53 affiliate dietetic associations.
  - **25 Dietetic Practice Group Delegates** elected by DPG membership
  - **7 At-Large Delegates** elected or appointed
    - NDEP, Student, NDTR, Retired, 30 and Under, Retired, \*ACEND and \*CDR
    - \*Non-voting members

## Knowledge Based Strategic Governance

Knowledge-Based Strategic Governance (KBSG) is the process used by the House of Delegates to deliberate professional issues. KBSG provides for dialogue before deliberation.

- Decisions should be based on shared knowledge rather than opinions, politics or passion.
- Mega Issues are topics of strategic importance affecting the profession in the next three to five years which also span multiple goal areas.
- Delegates function as “representative of” their constituencies.
- HOD has helped support and drive many new programs and initiatives through its dialogue sessions and motions throughout the years and continues to be in a position to meet the needs of the profession.
- Backgrounders, meeting recaps, motions, as applicable, and updates can be found on the [Mega Issues and Updates](#) page of the Academy’s website.



*The four key questions used in knowledge-based decision making are highlighted in blue boxes throughout the rest of the backgrounder.*

**Question 1: What do we know about our stakeholders’ needs, wants, and preferences that are relevant to this decision?**

- Delegates facilitate a voice for Academy members related to issues affecting the profession.
- We want skilled and diverse leaders.
- Stakeholders want to be able to engage and have input in areas that are important to them.
- Stakeholders want the Academy to be fast, fluid and flexible.

### Delegates

- Annual surveys completed by delegates from the past four years reveal they are generally satisfied with the work they do in the HOD. Depending on the issue, it may take several years after a dialogue to see substantial outcomes related to the Mega Issue.
- Delegates feel it is important to have immediate deliverables to take back to constituents after an HOD meeting.
- Delegates desire more involvement in the topics selected for discussion by the HOD as well as the flexibility to address “emerging professional issues” as they arise.
- Some delegates want to see several topics/issues addressed at a HOD meeting, with the ability for them to select the one(s) they want to discuss based on their member interest area.

### HOD Culture

- Delegates seek a culture of transparency with defined processes, better communication and a role in strategy development.
- Delegates want continued collaboration and authenticity with a vision toward the future.

- Review more information from the [spring 2018 HOD Meeting](#).

Preliminary Themes Identified During the Meeting			
Who We Are		Who We Should Be	What Are We Going to Do About It *Preliminary "To-Do List"
<b>Most Evolved Areas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Authenticity</li> <li>• Visionary</li> </ul>	<b>Least Evolved Areas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Outcomes management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More transparent and defined in our processes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mega issue determination</li> <li>○ Mega issue outcomes</li> <li>○ Delegate roles</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Stronger communicators</li> <li>• Strategy drivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance communications and training</li> <li>• Increase transparency</li> <li>• Clarify success</li> <li>• Preserve and build on areas where we are most evolved</li> </ul>

### Councils, Committees and Task Forces

The Academy has [councils, committees and task forces](#). As of June 1, 2014, all committees report to the Board of Directors. It is important for the HOD to provide input on issues, while being mindful not to duplicate efforts. These groups often take the outcomes from a dialogue session and move the next steps forward or may already have areas in their program of work where the delegates can provide input from members to help inform the work.

**Question 2: What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics of our environment that are relevant to this decision?**

**Technology and communications** are changing the way business is conducted.

- There is less focus by membership associations on use of a single tool for member engagement with a reallocation of resources towards multi-platform content creation and communication.
- There is a trend toward increased storing and use of member data for association decision-making; more discussion of data and analytics.
- The Academy utilizes various methods to connect with members. The trend toward real-time response and information points to the need for the HOD to respond more quickly to emerging issues affecting the profession.
  - Communication through delegates, affiliate presidents/DPG chairs and committee chairs.
  - Traditional mailings, Academy-wide emails, *Eat Right Weekly* digital newsletter, various social media channels and events such as Twitter chats, videos and webinars, infographics, *Food and Nutrition Magazine* and Stone Soup Blog, the Member Engagement Zone for survey questions and meetings.
- Some delegates are concerned about sharing information that has already been shared in other ways as their members report "information overload." This also affects how they feel about their role as a communicator and their effectiveness.
  - Everyone learns and processes information differently and may need exposure to a message more than once.

**Volunteering** is at a 10-year low, as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (1).

- Declines in volunteerism may create challenges with attracting the right people with the right skills in volunteer positions and will ultimately force the overall landscape of the volunteer role to evolve.
- The HOD plays a role in advancing and creating a pathway for leaders/leadership development.
- We need to look at ways to foster new leaders to continuously build the volunteer pool.

## Millennials Driving Change

- Millennials now make up the largest number of the workforce and are typically more diverse in terms of ethnicity, race and experiences, which ultimately affects the Academy's membership (2, 3).
- Millennial leaders want to make a difference right away. This will drive organizations to respond more quickly to opportunities and challenges (3).

## Council on Future Practice's (CFP) [Change Drivers and Trends Driving the Profession: A Prelude to the Visioning Report 2017](#) (4)

- An aging RDN and NDTR workforce will affect Academy membership and composition of the leadership pool.
- The racial and ethnic background of the U.S. population has shifted dramatically over the past one and one-half decades, while the percentage of RDNs who are men, black, Asian or Hispanic have not significantly changed over the past ten years.
- Organizations increasingly rely on data and outcomes to drive decisions about priorities, including how and where their limited resources are utilized.
- Technology is transforming the way we learn, work and live. We are becoming digital citizens and should value and appreciate the many benefits of technological innovations; but we must also understand the many implications and unanticipated consequences to shape the technological future we desire.

## Benchmarking

- No two professional associations are alike in their needs and each one's governance structure should match the unique needs of the organization.
- In speaking with a small sample of health care associations, the following governance practices were noted:
  - Not unusual for associations to routinely review their governance structures.
  - Some use a representative assembly/delegate assembly, while others use an advisory council to the Board of Directors.
    - ✓ Under either model, members are elected every 1-3 years.
    - ✓ Under both models, problems noted with connecting and engaging members.
    - ✓ Groups meet face-to-face and/or virtually anywhere from annually to every 3 years.
    - ✓ In-person meetings are more engaging; moving on-line has increased effectiveness.
    - ✓ Stronger polices have emerged with online discussions prior to the meeting.
  - Some set policy for the profession; others discuss professional issues.
  - Online forums are common to facilitate discussion of professional issues. Some associations also use online discussions to help inform the representative assembly of upcoming motions, allowing for clarifications and questions.
  - Representative assemblies may develop recommendations and approve policies and motions; advisory councils make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

## Delegate Perceptions: Mid- and End-of-Year Self Evaluations

- Trends in mid-year and end-of-year delegate self-evaluations throughout the years show that ~90% of delegates responding felt effective in their roles.
  - More recently (past two years), we have seen a drop in ratings with 72-84% of delegates responding felt they were effective.
    - ✓ During this time the HOD conducted an Appreciative Inquiry training and the HOD Culture Assessment in place of some Mega-Issue dialogues. These special events strayed away from the "typical" delegate roles from prior years. Comments through open-ended questions on the survey suggested that the new events contributed to their ranking in this area.

- Over the past three years, the House Leadership Team (HLT) has explored different options for engaging delegates and promoting transparency, including personal outreach from the HLT members to delegates, HOD office hours and most recently the addition of the Mentor/Mentee Program Open Forum.
  - Delegates noted they feel more connected to the work of the HOD as a result of these efforts.
- Surveys and comments consistently reveal that some delegates struggle with obtaining feedback from their constituents.
- The main form of communication with constituents is through newsletters or quarterly or monthly Executive Committee or Board presentations.
  - In order to help delegates connect with their constituencies and gather a variety of viewpoints from key membership segments, the HLT has encouraged delegates to identify “Key Informants” (for example, a dietetic intern, under-30 member, male, NDTR or others identified as relevant to their group).

**Question 3: What do we know about the “capacity” and “strategic position” of our organization that are relevant to this decision?**

- Technology allows us to gather direct member input in real time.
  - Some of these include Academy-wide emails, *Eat Right Weekly* digital newsletter, various social media channels and events such as Twitter chats and the Member Engagement Zone survey questions.
  - The Academy should continue to maximize use of technology and communication tools to gather member feedback and ensure members have opportunities to share input.

**Council on Future Practice Change Drivers**

- The House Leadership Team has committed to utilizing the change drivers and trends in the Council on Future Practice [Visioning Report 2017: A Preferred Path Forward for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession](#) as it considers HOD Mega Issues. Each change driver provides opportunities for the nutrition and dietetics practitioner now and in the future (5).

**Academy Strategic Plan**

- As we look to the three focus areas of the [Academy’s Strategic Plan](#): Prevention and Well-Being, Health Care and Health Systems, and Food and Nutrition Safety and Security, the profession and Academy members have endless opportunities for growth in new areas. This will certainly affect the issues identified and to be discussed in the future.

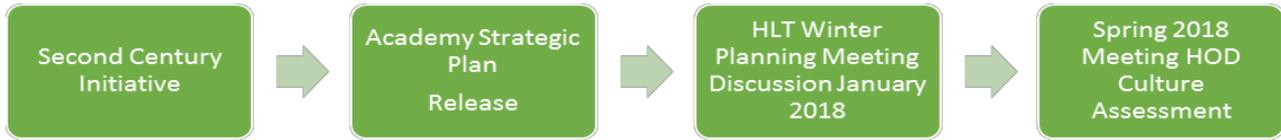
**Question 4: What are the ethical implications?**

- Any changes need to respect the Academy’s Principles and the Code of Ethics of the profession.
- Decisions made about the future of the HOD should be reflected in the Bylaws.

**Timeline**

We will invest the time necessary to reach a well thought-out decision.

**Prior to 2018 Fall HOD Meeting**



**2018 Fall HOD Meeting and Forward**



**Success Criteria**

The House Leadership Team drafted Success Criteria to be used when evaluating options. The following criteria are based on input from delegates regarding the desired HOD culture, the four KBSG questions and the Academy’s Principles.

Category	Members and Relationships	Communication	Agility	Visionary and Strategic Thinking
<b>Criteria</b>	This option provides a pathway for the member voice and is based on trust and our rich history. It aligns and integrates Academy organizational units and includes internal and external collaborators and content experts to maximize impact on the profession.	This option guides open communication and transparency, while promoting candid conversations based on values and knowledge-informed discussions rather than emotion.	This option helps us anticipate and understand change drivers, while responding to emerging trends and other professional issues.	This option is guided by the Academy’s Strategic Plan and the Council on Future Practice’s visioning work to promote visionary thinking to drive successful outcomes. This option honors parliamentary governance (such as Bylaws) and populates the leadership pipeline.

## References

1. Volunteering in the United States-2015. United States Department of Labor-Labor of Bureau Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/volun.nr0.htm>. Last accessed September 20, 2018.
2. Data Nugget- Millennials the Most. Pew Research Data Center.
3. Millennials and Association Governance: A Winning Combination. Forum. January/February 2016.
4. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Visioning Process. *Change Drivers and Trends Driving the Profession: A Prelude to the Visioning Report 2017*. [www.eatrightpro.org/resource/leadership/volunteering/committee-leader-resources/visioning-process](http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/leadership/volunteering/committee-leader-resources/visioning-process). Published November 12, 2015. Last accessed September 20, 2018.
5. Kicklighter JR, Dorner B, Hunter AM, Kyle M, Pflugh Prescott M, Roberts S, Spear B, Hand RK, Byrne, C. Visioning Report 2017: A Preferred Path Forward for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession. *J Acad Nutr Diet*.2017; 117(1):110-12.