

Shelley R. Adler, PhD
University of California, San Francisco

Involvement to Date in the Academic Consortium:

I have been an active member of the Consortium for many years and feel excited about and engaged with the remarkable ways in which the organization has grown and evolved. I served as Education Working Group co-chair, Executive Committee member (by virtue of EWG role), and steering committee member. I have represented UCSF at members' meetings for quite some time and find the sense of common purpose extremely inspiring. I have served as a member or chair of several program, planning, and scientific review committees for Consortium conferences—one highlight of which was co-leading the design and implementation of the International Congress for Educators in Complementary and Integrative Medicine.

Experience and Expertise:

My formal training is in medical anthropology, sociocultural gerontology, and medical education research—and I have used tools and approaches from these areas throughout my career-long focus on integrative medicine. I am an avid student of leadership, collaboration, and communication, using these skills every day as Director of the UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine. My responsibility for our clinic, education, and research programs gives me a breadth and depth of engagement with integrative medicine that I think will allow me to contribute meaningfully to the Consortium Board. I have special interest in integrative medicine education (including co-directing our NIH T32 pre- and postdoctoral research training fellowship, co-directing our new predoctoral summer institute on integrative health equity and action research, and teaching health professions students and trainees) and integrative medicine research (focused on integrative palliative care, integrative health equity, and mindfulness-based interventions).

Vision for Integrative Medicine and Academic Consortium's Role in Achieving the Vision:

The evolving field of integrative medicine, with the significant support of the Consortium, has made remarkable progress in recent years. These developments make me even more hopeful and optimistic about the future of our field. There remain, of course, many enormous issues to address; developing strategies for how and when to approach these problems is key. We need to balance a focus on significant and urgent challenges (endemic racism, global pandemic, climate change, healthcare crisis...) with a long-term view and plan that strive to anticipate and prevent future crises. As an anthropologist, I feel the compunction of understanding context and acknowledging history, but I am also interested in looking to the future by building new ways of doing things.

The Consortium will clearly have an increasing role in promoting the highest quality integrative care, most impactful integrative education programs, and most rigorous research. As we continue to pursue important initiatives in these areas I think it is critical to include the goal of eliminating persistent disparities in health and healthcare. Integrative medicine can contribute to reducing health disparities and advancing health equity through whole person, culturally appropriate care for complex conditions

that disproportionately impact vulnerable populations. We need to be aware of the dangers of a two-tiered system, though, in which equivocal modalities are available to everyone, but safe, effective modalities are available only to those with sufficient resources. The Consortium, as the principal academic organization in the field, can lead the way by developing equity-centered approaches to clinical care, education, and research. A diverse clinical and research integrative medicine workforce is critical to addressing disparities and inequities. Integrative health professions training programs that value diversity and inclusion equip trainees to understand the needs of all patients and provide quality care to everyone. My vision for the field of integrative medicine is that our endeavors across the spectrum are undertaken with the goal of advancing integrative medicine and health for all people.