



Middlebury

## Vice President for Student Affairs

Middlebury College seeks an innovative, knowledgeable, and collaborative leader to serve as its next Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA). The VPSA will serve as a key member of President Laurie Patton's leadership team, setting the strategic direction for student affairs at Middlebury's Vermont campus as well as ultimately providing guidance for its affiliated programs and locations around the world. The VPSA will bring a creative, data-informed, and systems approach to several critical College priorities: 1) the collaborative re-envisioning of residential life at Middlebury, 2) ensuring an anti-racist, inclusive, and equitable campus community in which all students can thrive, and 3) further integration of restorative practices into the daily work of the student affairs division. Middlebury is deeply engaged in the process of identifying and dismantling systemic inequities across the institution and the VPSA will be expected to serve as a key collaborator and visible leader in this important work.

### ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Middlebury College is a complex global institution that has grown and evolved significantly since its founding in 1800. Today, Middlebury offers a wide array of students a rigorous and innovative liberal arts and sciences experience that connects their academic work with the challenges of our changing world. Middlebury's campuses and programs around the globe include:

- The undergraduate College, founded in 1800 and the heart of the enterprise. Located in the village of Middlebury between Vermont's Green Mountains to the east and New York's Adirondacks to the west, the college enrolls about 2,500 students each year
- The [Middlebury Language Schools](#), which in 2015 celebrated the centennial of their founding, attract 1,500 students a year from around the world who want to experience the best in language education. The Language Schools run during the summer months on Middlebury's Vermont campus and on the campus of Bennington College in southern Vermont.
- The [Schools Abroad](#) programs, operating in 37 cities in 17 countries, provide hundreds of students from Middlebury College and other colleges and universities around the country with an academic experience prized for its excellence, rigor, and emphasis on language acquisition.
- The [Middlebury Institute of International Studies](#) is a graduate school in Monterey, California, where students acquire exceptional professional skills in a range of diverse fields, including translation, interpretation, nonproliferation and terrorism studies, development practice and policy, international education management, and environmental policy.

- The [Middlebury Bread Loaf School of English](#), located on the idyllic Bread Loaf campus in the Green Mountains above Middlebury—and with campuses in Santa Fe, New Mexico and Oxford, England—is a one-of-a-kind learning environment for teachers and other lovers of literature.
- The [Middlebury School of the Environment](#), a program for undergraduates that builds upon Middlebury’s long history of environmental leadership and its commitment to sustainability, was founded in 2013.

These programs and locations are united by preparing students to address the world’s most challenging problems, and doing so by engaging them in the life of the mind, heart, body, and soul.

## **INCLUSION AND EQUITY**

Middlebury is deeply committed to creating a diverse, welcoming community with full and equitable participation for all individuals and groups. No single person or office is responsible for accomplishing this mission—it is a goal that requires ongoing, collective action. The Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (OIDEI) serves as an important hub for these efforts by providing education, support services, advocacy, and accountability. Led by Chief Diversity Officer Miguel Fernandez, OIDEI is home to 15 total staff working in the areas of education for equity and inclusion, civil rights and Title IX, human relations, intercultural programs, disability resources, and spiritual and religious life.

In September 2020, OIDEI released an [Action Plan for Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) with the goal of identifying and implementing strategies that will engage the entire campus community in the work of fostering greater access, equity, inclusion, and full participation for Middlebury students, staff, and faculty. The introduction notes that “Diversity plans often present lofty goals but lack specificity and strategy and therefore lead to ‘diversity clutter’ with a host of disconnected initiatives.” In order to avoid that misstep, Middlebury’s action plan lists strategic goals and accountable parties within five focus areas: Faculty and Staff; Students; Fostering and Restoring Community; Accessibility; and Transparency and Response. Each goal is related to a structural barrier identified in previous conversations and reports.

Beyond the formal office of the OIDEI, Middlebury student leaders have been actively engaged in anti-racism initiatives, and faculty are addressing systemic racism in the curriculum and the academic program. Within the student affairs division, staff have undertaken a rigorous review of the College’s policies and processes, seeking to identify and correct inequities and discriminatory practices. Middlebury recognizes that, in the words of the Action Plan, “The work of promoting racial justice, eliminating oppression, and creating a more equitable and inclusive community falls on all of us.”

## **FINANCES AND RESOURCES**

Middlebury’s operating budget is approximately \$350 million for fiscal year 2022, with an endowment of just over \$1.3 billion. For more information, please see the College’s [audited financial statements](#).

## THE ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

The Vice President for Student Affairs will be responsible for the strategic vision, personnel management, and fiscal management of the student affairs division, which comprises two interconnected and highly collaborative functional areas: the Office of the Dean of Students, led by the Dean of Students, and the Center for Health and Wellness. Both the Dean of Students and the Executive Director of the Center for Health and Wellness report to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Director of the Department of Public Safety will also have a “dotted line” reporting relationship to the VPSA. The VPSA will also work closely with their partners and colleagues in the Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, Academic Affairs, Athletics, Enrollment, Advancement, and other areas across the college. While Middlebury’s Dean of Students is primarily responsible for day-to-day operations and case management of individual students, the Vice President will focus on removing systemic barriers and building new structures that will enable all of Middlebury’s students to thrive.

The VPSA will initially be primarily responsible for the Vermont campus, but over time the VPSA will lead the alignment of student life values, policies, and practices with Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (which enrolls 750 graduate students each year and is currently developing exchange programs for undergraduates on the Vermont campus), the summer Language Schools on the Vermont campus, and the Schools Abroad.

Reporting directly to President Laurie Patton, the Vice President will serve as a collaborative and collegial member of her senior leadership team, which includes:

- Chief Diversity Officer
- General Counsel & Chief of Staff
- Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of Faculty
- Vice President for Advancement
- Vice President for Communications & Chief Marketing Officer
- Vice President for Human Resources & Chief Risk Officer
- Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Executive Vice President and Provost

The Vice President will be supported by a Dean of Students and oversee 60 staff in total. The division staff are currently organized into two groups: student affairs staff and health and wellness staff. The student affairs staff primarily oversee residential life, judicial affairs, public safety, new student orientation, and activities. The health and wellness staff oversee counseling services, health and wellness education, sports medicine, and student health services. The VPSA will encourage collaboration and communication among all of these expert and talented staff members to ensure that robust, holistic, and equitable systems are developed and implemented across the division and for all students.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Vice President for Student Affairs will be asked to address the following:

- **Collaboratively lead and further amplify the strategic work currently being done to strengthen the community experience for all students:** Both within the student affairs division and across the College important initiatives are already underway to increase the inclusivity and equity of

the community, to radically reimagine residential life, to proactively support student health, and to further embed restorative practices into daily operations. The VPSA will be asked to help unify, strengthen, and advance these inter-related initiatives through the articulation of a clear strategic direction for the division that ensures action and accountability in all four areas.

- **Serve as a visible and vocal advocate for anti-racism, inclusion, and equity across the College:** The VPSA should bring a sophisticated and expert understanding of how to advance equity and dismantle systemic barriers in a community, as well as experience helping students lead meaningful, transformative change. The VPSA will be skilled in resolving emotionally intense, high-conflict situations respectfully and credibly.
- **Continue the assessment of Middlebury’s student affairs protocols against national and global best practices:** The talented staff within the student affairs division has already begun the work of examining their policies through the lens of restorative practices. The VPSA will provide high-level guidance to this ongoing effort with the goal of establishing Middlebury’s student affairs division as a recognized model of inclusivity and equity within the profession. One of the key areas in which Middlebury will seek the VPSA’s contributing expertise is the re-envisioning of the residential life experience to include training in life skills and developing mentoring networks [via an ongoing planning and discussion process known as BLUEprint](#). This is an expansion of its nationally recognized “MiddCore” program to a more equitable and inclusive model.
- **Collaborate with faculty and staff across the college in support of the student experience:** The VPSA will develop strong partnerships with academic leadership as well as individual faculty to ensure that Middlebury’s historically strong connection between life inside and outside the classroom continues. In addition, the VPSA will be a flexible and creative thought partner to leaders within the Office Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, Enrollment, Advancement, and others in the shared project of building the best possible systems and policies for Middlebury’s students.
- **Join with campus partners to proactively address the mental and emotional health issues commonly faced by students in today’s complex higher education environment:** As on all campuses across the nation, Middlebury students face a multitude of external and internal pressures which can significantly challenge their individual mental and emotional health. The VPSA will work with divisional experts as well as other leaders across the college to determine how Middlebury can best support students through education, programming, and initiatives tailored to their collective needs.
- **Recruit, retain, and mentor a diverse, talented professional student affairs staff:** The VPSA will be pleased to find that the student affairs staff is a professional, dedicated group eager to work closely with a subject matter expert to further elevate its already strong operations. The VPSA will further cultivate the talents of each individual staff member and encourage their continued professional development. The VPSA will also recruit new staff members with a particular focus on ensuring that students from underrepresented backgrounds at Middlebury continue to see in the student affairs staff individuals whose experiences reflect their own.

## DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will possess an advanced degree and have deep experience with implementing state-of-the-art student affairs strategies and initiatives. They should be experienced in leading an organization through a time of change and committed to ensuring inclusivity and equity for all community members through both their personal and professional conduct. In addition, they will also bring the following complementary skills and experiences:

- A nuanced understanding of the challenges facing high-achieving students at a complex, global institution and a broad sense of the most effective solutions based on best practices;
- A strategic, systems-thinking mindset coupled with the ability to translate abstract ideas into concrete, effective, action;
- Subject matter expertise in and a high degree of personal comfort with leading difficult conversations related to inclusion, equity, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other topics related to personal identity;
- Demonstrated skill in leading with gravitas, confidence, and wisdom, including the flexibility to shift from resolving an emotionally charged conflict one moment to critically assessing technical policy details the next;
- Familiarity with the theory and implementation of restorative practices in a student affairs leadership context;
- A willingness to be accessible and visible to students, and open to hearing their concerns, their priorities, and their aspirations, as well as a readiness to advocate for their needs as appropriate;
- An ability to work closely, credibly, and creatively with faculty and academic affairs staff as partners in the academic enterprise;
- A strong sense of how to approach complex conversations and interactions with diplomacy, insight, and emotional intelligence;
- Demonstrated ability to develop relationships with internal and external constituencies, including parents, alumni, community leaders, as well as students, faculty, and staff both on the Vermont campus and around the world; and
- Excellent interpersonal, cross-cultural communication, organizational, strategic planning and problem-solving skills;
- A shared commitment to Middlebury's mission of creating a transformative learning experience for all of its students within a global, inclusive, and equitable environment.

## CONTACT

For best consideration, please send all nominations and applications to:



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Middlebury is an equal-opportunity employer where diversity, equity, and inclusion are core values. To this end, Middlebury recruits talented and diverse faculty, staff, and students from across the United States and around the world. Middlebury encourages applications from women, people of color, people with disabilities, and members of other protected classes and historically underrepresented communities. Middlebury also invites applications from individuals who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.