Washington and Lee University provides a liberal arts education that develops students' capacity to think freely, critically, and humanely and to conduct themselves with honor, integrity, and civility. Graduates will be prepared for life-long learning, personal achievement, responsible leadership, service to others, and engaged citizenship in a global and diverse society.

Washington and Lee University invites nominations and applications for the position of Provost.

Background Information

Founded in 1749, Washington and Lee is the ninth-oldest institution of higher learning in the United States. It is among the most selective and highly regarded universities in the nation, combining a rich history of liberal arts education with a commitment to meeting the educational challenges of the future. U.S. News and World Report ranks W&L among the top 10 National Liberal Arts Colleges. The university prides itself on the strength and complementarity of its three divisions: The College of Arts and Sciences, The Williams School of Commerce, Economics, and Politics, and The School of Law. The university has an exceptionally qualified and increasingly diverse student body, an outstanding faculty of teacher-scholars, a robust endowment, a loyal and generous alumni base, and a dedicated and talented team of staff and administrators. Together, they create a vibrant community distinguished by an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and collaboration. This is fostered by perhaps the most fundamental aspect of the institution: its student-administered Honor System. Mindful of its history, the university vigorously affirms the ideal embodied in its motto, “Non Incautus Futuri” (not unmindful of the future). Washington and Lee embraces both its rich sense of tradition and its vision for providing an innovative liberal arts education in the 21st century.

Washington and Lee University's central and steadfast mission is to teach. In this small community, relationships are powerful mechanisms for educating the next generation. Students develop into their most resourceful, analytical, generous, and responsive selves through close daily interactions with faculty, staff, and administrators who are earnestly and actively invested in their well-being and success. Washington and Lee currently enrolls 1,843 undergraduate and 401 law students. It has 213 full-time faculty members in the two undergraduate divisions and 30 in the School of Law. The undergraduate student-faculty ratio for the 2019-2020 academic year is 8:1, and the School of Law has a student-faculty ratio of 7:1.

Washington and Lee is deeply committed to creating a diverse and nurturing academic community. Its aim is to attract geographically, racially, and socio-economically diverse applicant pools in order to recruit qualified students, faculty, and staff who will carry forth the personal, ethical, and intellectual characteristics that have always characterized the W&L community. Several initiatives serve this goal. The university is a member of the American Talent Initiative, an alliance committed to substantially expanding the number of talented low- and moderate-income students attending America’s undergraduate institutions with the highest graduation rates.
Washington and Lee is also a partner with *QuestBridge*, a national organization that connects high-achieving, low-income students to leading institutions of higher education. Washington and Lee’s [Johnson Scholarship](#) provides full scholarships to approximately 10 percent of each entering class. The university is committed to meeting full demonstrated need for each undergraduate student without the use of loans. [The W&L Promise](#), introduced in 2013, guarantees free tuition to any student whose family income is under $100,000. These programs have had a discernible impact on W&L’s efforts to diversify its student body; 18 percent of the students in the most recently admitted undergraduate class are domestic students of color, and 14 percent of that class is eligible for Pell grant assistance. The university is committed to building on these and other successes to further increase the diversity of its student body, faculty, and staff. Washington and Lee’s recently approved [Strategic Plan](#) powerfully frames a path forward that continues and amplifies this progress.

**Academic Life**

Washington and Lee boasts a distinctive academic structure consisting of three curricular branches: the undergraduate College, the Williams School of Commerce, Economics, and Politics, and the graduate School of Law. Each division is rooted in a liberal arts approach that prizes a well-rounded knowledge base, exploration and cross-pollination of ideas across disciplines, small classes that place a priority on faculty-student contact, and a high level of mentorship. This educational mission is fueled by faculty and staff members in academic departments as well as the Leyburn Library, Information Technology Services, the Registrar’s Office, and other critical stakeholders across campus.

The departments and programs within the College represent the flourishing liberal arts core of the university. The nationally-accredited Williams School offers a top-ranked business education within a larger liberal arts curriculum. Washington and Lee offers *36 undergraduate majors and 37 minors*. Interdisciplinarity is a hallmark of any W&L liberal arts education, and it is formalized in *12 interdisciplinary programs*.

Washington and Lee’s undergraduate curriculum has a three-term structure encompassing two 12-week terms (fall and winter) and a 4-week spring term, during which students take a single immersive course. The spring term allows students and faculty to devote their undivided attention to the deep scholarly exploration of innovative topics both on campus and abroad.

Washington and Lee students may take advantage of unique and transformational curricular and co-curricular opportunities through the university’s signature programs. The [Mudd Center for Ethics](#) advances dialogue, teaching, research, and a multidisciplinary perspective on ethics informed by both theory and practice. The [Center for International Education](#) supports traditional one-term and year-long study abroad opportunities, as well as a host of spring term abroad courses taught by W&L faculty members. The [Johnson Program in Leadership and Integrity](#) provides scholarships, grant funding, lectures, and programs that elevate students’ access to leadership experiences on campus and all over the world. The [Office of Community-Based Learning](#) develops, supports, and enhances mutually-beneficial collaborations with community partners that enrich teaching and learning and advance local interests. Washington and Lee was the founding institution of the [Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty](#), and many current students participate in curricular and co-curricular offerings of the Shepherd Program on campus, in the local community, and around the world.
The School of Law offers a personalized legal education that emphasizes small classes and experiential education. It seeks to cultivate broad-minded, highly skilled, and honorable practitioners of law, and it does so within a diverse and collaborative intellectual community exemplifying rigor, trust, and civility. Founded in 1850, the School of Law has a rich history and counts among its alumni many distinguished practitioners, judges, and entrepreneurs, including several U.S. Supreme Court Justices and the third highest number of American Bar Association presidents produced by any single school. The School of Law prides itself on the rigor of its academic program, its high employment and bar passage rates for graduates, and—most importantly—its supportive and close-knit community.

**Student Life**

Life beyond the classroom is rich and varied for W&L students. The Divisions of Academic and Student Affairs closely collaborate with one another to promote students’ holistic personal development and resilience.

Washington and Lee students are encouraged to explore their interests and develop healthy lifestyle habits by balancing their academic work with participation in extracurricular opportunities. Leadership skills organically emerge from students’ involvement in meaningful roles in organizations, teams, labs, clubs, work-study jobs, and performance groups, and they are mentored by staff and faculty members who value their multidimensional talents and interests. Student self-governance is an integral part of the W&L experience; students have responsibility for the administration of the Honor System as well as student government. The university also sponsors thriving outdoor recreation and intramural programs, an intercollegiate Athletics program with 24 varsity teams involving over a quarter of the student body, a vibrant Greek system, an internationally-touring acapella choir and a range of additional artistic performance groups, and over 150 recognized student clubs and organizations. The largest student organization is the Outing Club, which supports students, faculty, and staff with equipment and planning resources for backpacking, fly fishing, kayaking, rock climbing, canoeing, caving, mountain biking, skiing, and outdoor cooking in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. The Outing Club sponsors student-led day trips as well as domestic and international trips during breaks.

In the Division of Student Affairs, class deans provide support tailored to the unique opportunities and challenges that students face during each phase of their education, including campus-wide programs, trainings, and educational opportunities. The Office of Inclusion and Engagement brings to life the university’s mission and strategic plan by coordinating programs that explore, promote, and celebrate the increasingly diverse backgrounds of W&L students, faculty, staff, and administration, and by supporting religious, multicultural, and social justice organizations on campus.

Washington and Lee has a three-year on-campus residency requirement and houses students in residential facilities ranging from traditional first-year residence halls to apartments with full kitchens for upper division students.
Strategic Plan

The Washington and Lee community collaborated on an inclusive multiyear planning process that resulted in the Strategic Plan adopted by the Board of Trustees in May of 2018. This plan provides a roadmap for how the university aspires to be a national model for liberal arts education in the 21st century. The university will increase the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff through intentional national talent outreach. Washington and Lee will augment its existing policies of meeting full need without loans for all admitted students by also moving to need-blind undergraduate admissions. The university will become a more inclusive community by eliminating financial barriers to curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular participation and by enhancing community-building and support.

With investments in faculty lines and facilities, W&L will advance a 21st century liberal arts education while building upon its distinctive curriculum. Washington and Lee will support innovative teaching and research needs through renovating and expanding key academic facilities, strengthening interdisciplinary education, expanding access to Williams School courses, supporting faculty in ongoing pedagogical development, and providing comprehensive academic support services for students.

Washington and Lee embraces institutional citizenship and will advance its environmental stewardship. The university will make efforts to present its institutional history comprehensively and accurately. The Strategic Plan also invests in curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs that foster leadership development, service to others, and civic engagement.

The Region

Washington and Lee is located in Lexington, Virginia, a historic and lively city of 7,000 residents. Situated in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley, Lexington is the county seat of Rockbridge County, home to an additional 21,000 people. Lexington is a two-hour drive to the state capital, Richmond, and a three-hour drive to Washington, D.C. The area features strong public schools, a variety of cultural events, and—with close proximity to the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Maury River—rich opportunities for outdoor activities. Lexington is also home to the Virginia Military Institute, and 13 other four-year colleges and universities are located within approximately 75 miles of the city. The W&L campus is renowned for its historical significance, and the front campus is designated as a National Historic Landmark.

President Dudley

William C. (Will) Dudley became the 27th president of Washington and Lee University on January 1, 2017. He was formerly provost and professor of philosophy at Williams College. A Virginia native, born in Charlottesville and raised in Arlington, Dudley received his B.A. in mathematics and philosophy, magna cum laude, from Williams in 1989, and an M.A. and a Ph.D., both in philosophy, from Northwestern University. He joined the Williams faculty in 1998, bringing his expertise in German idealism to its philosophy department. In addition to his administrative responsibilities, President Dudley relishes his connection with students and has taught courses on the Philosophy of Education and on Virtue Ethics and Liberal Arts Education at W&L.
University Governance

The Board of Trustees, led by the Rector, provides oversight of institutional affairs and is responsible for the governance of the institution. The Board also approves certain academic and administrative appointments and the awarding of degrees. Faculty govern the academic heart of the university through academic regulation of students, establishment of graduation requirements, approval and supervision of courses of study, and recommendation of students for degrees. Student self-governance is a hallmark of W&L. The Honor System is administered by the elected Executive Committee, which sets the rules of the community and determines whether a student has committed an honor violation and should, therefore, be dismissed from the university.

Finances

At the end of the 2018-19 fiscal year, the university’s endowment market value was $1.68 billion, and the annual operating budget for 2019-20 is $156 million; 40 percent of W&L’s operating budget is derived from the endowment and eight percent is derived from annual giving.

The Role of the Provost

Reporting to President Dudley, and working collaboratively with university leadership and the academic deans, the provost serves as the university’s chief academic officer and has primary responsibility for the academic mission of the university. The provost provides strategic leadership and oversight to the College, the Williams School, and the School of Law and leads the following administrative units: the University Library, the University Registrar, University Athletics, the Mudd Center for Ethics, the Center for International Education, and the Office of Community-Based Learning.

The provost manages nine direct reports, including:

- Associate Provost
- Dean of the College
- Dean of the Williams School of Commerce, Economics, and Politics
- Dean of the Law School
- University Librarian
- University Registrar
- Director of Athletics (Non-NCAA matters)
- Director of the Mudd Center for Ethics
- Director of International Education

Across all of these administrative units, the provost supervises 289 faculty members and 148 staff members. In 2019-20, the budgets for these units totaled $58.5 million.

The provost chairs the president’s advisory committee, an elected body of faculty members responsible for tenure and promotion processes, and serves as the Board of Trustees’ liaison to the undergraduate academics and admissions committee.
Key Challenges and Opportunities

The next provost of W&L will arrive at a moment of strong presidential leadership and a time of enormous excitement as the university looks to the future. Some opportunities and challenges for the next provost include:

Strategic leadership

With an unwavering eye on the current and future welfare of students, the next provost will work closely with administrative and faculty leaders across the university to coordinate the academic initiatives prioritized by the 2018 Strategic Plan. The planned 10 percent increase in faculty lines will afford W&L’s next provost a tremendous opportunity to help shape the future direction of the faculty body by attracting, developing, and retaining outstanding faculty committed to the university’s cornerstone teacher-scholar model.

Advancing W&L’s strong commitment to promoting a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion

The provost, in collaboration with the Office for Inclusion and Engagement and other leaders, will play a central role in advancing the university’s efforts to diversify the student body, faculty, and staff. The provost will promote a culture in which all members of the university community, diverse in myriad aspects of background and worldview, are not only welcomed but viewed as essential in the pursuit of academic excellence. This is a difficult task for all institutions of higher learning, and W&L’s institutional history makes this a particularly important priority. The Commission on Institutional History and Community, appointed by President Dudley in 2017, initiated important conversations across campus about Washington and Lee’s complex history. Those conversations are ongoing and serve as challenging, dynamic, and engaging pedagogical tools for the W&L community. It is essential that the provost possesses the skills and passion to articulate and galvanize these efforts.

Further strengthening the academic excellence of the university

Washington and Lee has been a leader for 150 years in synthesizing the liberal arts model with pre-professional education and public service. The next provost will have the opportunity to foster interdisciplinarity, community-based learning, and partnerships across divisions and departments, with special recognition of the Williams School and the School of Law as unique assets for the university. Working in collaboration with faculty, the provost will support the development of a new general education curriculum.

Supporting a robust culture of shared governance

The next provost will model and foster a collaborative and transparent leadership style, recognizing the foundational role of shared governance within the W&L community. The provost’s capacity to ask thoughtful questions, listen carefully, shape discourse, and promote collegiality is critical to successful leadership.
Managing new academic facilities

The university’s current strategic plan calls for three major academic facilities projects in the coming years: a renovation of the library to create space for the Center for Academic Resources and Pedagogical Excellence (CARPE); a renovation and expansion of Williams School facilities for teaching, learning, and conference needs; and a renovation and expansion of the Science Center to support state-of-the-art teaching and research. Planning for these capital projects as technology changes and disciplines shift will be a fascinating and critical role for the next provost.

Allocating resources effectively

The next provost will be expected to assure the strength and excellence of W&L’s academic programs across the full range of its offerings while embracing the 21st century evolution of liberal arts education, which involves interdisciplinary inquiry, new modes of teaching, and rapidly changing technology. The provost supports faculty growth with opportunities for scholarship and curricular and pedagogical development. The provost will strategically allocate resources, managing a broad portfolio of academic and administrative functions.

Fulfilling the vision of the university

The provost must bring an authentic appreciation of what makes W&L unique and a keen interest in leading a top-tier liberal arts university to an even more accomplished future. The provost must be highly knowledgeable about national trends in academic affairs and higher education overall, and be prepared to think creatively about how best to position W&L for the future.

Personal Attributes, Qualifications and Experience

The ideal candidate will have a deep sense of intellectual curiosity, distinguished educational achievements, an intrinsically collaborative and transparent leadership style, a record of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, demonstrated success with robust shared governance processes, and dedication to supporting academic freedom. The provost will also possess many of the following qualities and professional experience:

- Emotional intelligence, superb listening skills, flexibility, a strong work ethic, and pragmatism to enable successful navigation of multiple, interacting units and stakeholders within a thriving institution;
- Strong management and administrative skills and a record of successful collaborative leadership accomplishments;
- A track record of advancing initiatives in support of diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as a clear appreciation for the importance of diversity in all its forms among students, faculty, staff, and administrators;
- Ability to thrive in a small and intellectually diverse liberal arts institution while employing an open-minded approach to communicating with—and learning from—multiple constituencies;
- Relevant experience designing and managing budgets;
- Experience and comfort using data from multiple sources to inform strategy, policy, and practice;
• Advocacy and appreciation for the liberal arts and their value, as well as an understanding of the Williams School and the School of Law as unique assets for W&L;
• Experience successfully working across multiple divisions and stakeholder groups; and,
• An appreciation for the W&L community and student-run Honor System.

Information for Candidates

This position is expected to begin in the summer of 2021. Please send all nominations, inquiries and expressions of interest in confidence to:

Shelly Storbeck, Managing Partner
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