An Invitation to Apply
for the position of

VICE CHANCELLOR FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

THE SEARCH

Washington University in St. Louis (WashU), one of the nation’s premier private institutions of higher education, seeks a visionary and collaborative leader for the position of Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA). Reporting directly to the chancellor, the VCSA will lead and continue to inspire a first-rate, complex student affairs organization to support students across the university. WashU prides itself on knowing its students by name and by story, and this student-centric mission has been the foundation for excellence and investment in student affairs over the years.

This search is underway as Lori S. White, the former Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at WashU, assumed the presidency at DePauw University on July 1, 2020. The next VCSA will be a student-centered leader, a builder of community and culture, an advocate for student needs and success, and a gifted and data-driven administrator and manager. Success in the role will require a deep understanding of the current issues and best practices in student affairs, the needs of an increasingly diverse student body, the role the university plays in creating and sustaining a safe learning and living community for students, and the interdependence of the academic and non-academic aspects of the student experience. Moreover, the next VCSA will need to focus on how to help WashU maintain a best-in-class residential experience in a post-pandemic society. In order to sustain excellence, the VCSA must inspire a culture of constant innovation and aspire to better serve all students, particularly those from traditionally marginalized communities.

The VCSA oversees an expansive portfolio including campus life, the office for student success, athletics and recreation, residential life, student career development, the center for diversity and inclusion, and student health, wellness, and community standards. The VCSA has 9 direct reports and is ultimately responsible for over 300 staff members and $52M budget.

The executive search firm Isaacson, Miller has been retained to assist the search committee for this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

Washington University offers student-centered educational excellence within a world-class research-intensive university. WashU has seven academic divisions: Arts & Sciences, Brown School (Social Work and Public Health), Olin Business School, Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, McKelvey School of Engineering, School of Law, and School of Medicine, and educates approximately 15,000 full-time students, divided almost equally between undergraduate
and graduate/professional students. Over 90 fields of study and 1,500 courses lead to bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in a broad spectrum of traditional and interdisciplinary fields.

Washington University belongs to a small class of elite universities characterized by a deep commitment to excellence in education as well as in research and scholarship. Over the last two decades, the university has invested significantly in its student enterprise, constructing new residence halls, academic buildings, and a university center, expanding student services, and maintaining its strong commitment to personalized attention and small class size. The university's undergraduate student-faculty ratio is 7:1, and over 65 percent of its classes have fewer than 20 students. Today, Washington University is one of the most selective institutions in the country, and its undergraduate program is ranked sixteenth in the nation by U.S. News and World Report.

Washington University’s FY2020 operating revenues were $3.75 billion and its operating expenses were $3.56 billion. As of June 30, 2020, the market value of the university’s endowment was $8.5 billion, a number that has risen steadily with successful capital campaigns and investments.

St. Louis

As the third-largest employer in the metropolitan area, Washington University is an essential institution for St. Louis, and the city’s prosperity is essential to Washington University. The university has provided innovative leadership and the entire region counts on the university as a key partner for its success. To underscore the institution’s commitment to the region, in October 2019 Chancellor Andrew Martin announced the WashU Pledge, a bold new financial aid program that provides a free undergraduate education to incoming, full-time students from Missouri and southern Illinois whose families earn less than $75,000 a year.

Consistently ranked among the nation's most affordable and best places to live and raise families, the St. Louis region has excellent schools and offers many opportunities to watch or participate in a wide range of sports, recreational activities, and cultural events. St. Louis is highly accessible, and there are more free, world-class attractions in the city than any place in the U.S. outside of Washington, D.C., largely due to the area’s active philanthropic community. Not far from St. Louis’ urban core are the beautiful rolling hills of the Ozark Mountain region.

STUDENTS

WashU has long been committed to recruiting and enrolling a diverse student body. WashU enrolls fairly equal numbers of women (8,174, 52.9 percent) and men (7,286, 47.1 percent). These percentages hold true for both undergraduate and graduate student populations. Nearly 50 percent of WashU students identify with a non-White ethnic or racial group or international population. Among those students reporting racial and ethnic affiliations, 8.6 percent are Hispanic or Latino, 1.3 percent are American Indian or Alaska Native, 34.3 percent are Asian, 10.3 percent are Black or African American, 2.2 percent are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; and 47.3 percent of students are White and not multi-racial (5.6 percent are unreported). The international student enrollment is now 21 percent of total enrollment.

Undergraduates

Washington University enrolled approximately 1,800 undergraduate students in fall 2020. More than 87 percent of incoming freshmen were ranked in the top 10 percent of their high school class,
and the average SAT score was 1500. The fall 2020 acceptance rate was 16 percent. Approximately 90 percent of undergraduates come from outside Missouri. 14 percent of Washington University students are eligible for Pell grants.

Undergraduates enroll within the School of Arts & Sciences, McKelvey School of Engineering, the Olin Business School, and the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts. The average freshman retention rate is 97 percent, and the six-year graduation rate is 95 percent.

Washington University undergraduates receive many prestigious graduate study awards including the Rhodes, Fulbright, Marshall, Beinecke, and Truman Scholarships and the Goldwater, Mellon, Putnam, National Science Foundation, and National Graduate Fellowships as well as the Howard Hughes Fellowship for undergraduate research. The university has had 29 Rhodes Scholars since 1902, ten of them since 2001.

Graduate and Professional Students

WashU enrolled 7,747 graduate and professional students in fall 2020. In the graduate and professional degree programs, students have the opportunity to pursue graduate degrees in architecture, art, business, engineering, law, medicine, social work, and a range of arts and sciences disciplines. Graduate student services, professional student groups, and graduate and professional student government are overseen by a combination of the schools and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, with centralized services in Student Health and the Career Center.

Laurie Maffly-Kipp, the Archer Alexander Distinguished Professor in the John C. Danforth Center on Religion and Politics at Washington University in St. Louis, has been appointed interim dean of the Graduate School and vice provost for graduate education, effective July 1, 2020.

The Graduate Professional Council (GPC) is the university-wide graduate student organization that represents more than 6,000 graduate and professional students from all eight schools. GPC offers programming to help graduate students to meet other students across disciplines. These programs are designed to assist students with professional and personal development as well as bring students together at events throughout St. Louis.

THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS: ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice Chancellor is responsible for all matters regarding the full co-curricular integration of Washington University students, both undergraduate and graduate, by working collaboratively with academic deans in each of the colleges and schools on campus.

The VCSA reports to the chancellor and is a key member of the chancellor’s cabinet, which includes the provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs; the executive vice chancellor for medical affairs and dean of the School of Medicine; the executive vice chancellor for university advancement; the executive vice chancellor and chief administrative officer; the vice chancellor for finance and chief financial officer; the vice chancellor and general counsel; the vice chancellor, board secretary, and chief of staff; and the executive vice chancellor for civic affairs and strategic planning. The VCSA is also a member of the University Council, the university’s senior leadership group.

Units reporting into the VCSA include:
Student Transition & Engagement

The office of Residential Life seeks to provide a safe environment that encourages learning and personal growth in an inclusive community that empowers and challenges its residents. The university has ten residential colleges, communities of about 300 students that aim to provide an enhanced sense of kinship, expanded program choices, increased faculty and staff presence, and support and additional common areas for study and gathering. Each residential college has a Residential College Director (RCD) who works in close association with Resident Advisors and a Faculty Fellow.

The Faculty Fellows program, started in 1998, was developed to foster meaningful interactions between undergraduate students and faculty outside the formal classroom setting by having professors live in the residential colleges with students for three-year stints. The program emerged in response to the realization that there was a growing gap between faculty members and undergraduate students on college campuses. In addition, many faculty members wished to extend their interaction with students outside the academic realm; this popular program continues to receive enthusiastic support from the faculty.

The Department of Campus Life is organized to support students and student groups in creating communities on campus that support their success at Washington University. This includes learning how to get involved on campus through student groups, including fraternities and sororities, planning events and activities, and areas of self-governance through Student Union, the undergraduate student government.

The First Year Center supports new students through their transition into the WashU community to assure that they build and sustain their academic and personal goals. The center brings together people, programs, and resources to provide the best undergraduate experience.

The Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards seeks to educate students in order to promote appropriate conduct and improve students’ decision-making abilities. If any infractions of the code occur, including drug and alcohol violations, academic integrity concerns, or assaults, the Office is also responsible for adjudicating them. The Office of Student Conduct proactively encourages students on how to meet those expectations and create a better community for all.

Diversity & Inclusion

The Center for Diversity and Inclusion supports and advocates for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from underrepresented and/or marginalized populations, creates collaborative partnerships with campus and community partners, and promotes dialogue and social change among all students. Its work enhances and strengthens Washington University’s commitment to diversity and inclusion. Key areas of focus include education, advocacy, research & scholarship, engagement, and social justice.

The Office for International Students & Scholars (OISS)’s services include immigration advising, orientation to the WashU and St. Louis communities, and other programs to help students thrive academically and socially and engage international students in U.S. life and culture.
The Office for Religious, Spiritual, and Ethical Life (ORSEL) is a new office at WashU started to encourage interfaith understanding, support the diverse religious, spiritual, and ethical communities on campus, and facilitate interfaith student leadership development.

**Student Support and Success**

The Office for Student Success houses the student success fund, the student union mental health fund, the student union opportunity fund, the community engagement opportunity fund, and the student athlete opportunity fund. These funds support students with financial need in accessing resources, participating in student group activities, and seeking other opportunities at WashU. It also houses the federally funded TRiO Scholars program, as well as the Deneb STARS program, a by-invitation cohort for students who are the first in their family to attend college or who are from under-resourced socioeconomic backgrounds. This office creates an infrastructure of support to assist Washington University students with their transition to and through college.

The Office of Scholar Programs (OSP) houses WashU’s signature merit-based scholarship programs. The OSP brings together the students from the Danforth, Ervin, and Rodriguez scholarship programs to a space where they can engage, collaborate, and inspire one another.

Disability Resources (DR) is the official resource for students on the Danforth Campus who have disabilities or suspected disabilities. DR is dedicated to ensuring that every student with a disability will have equal access to campus and academic programs whether they are an undergraduate, graduate, professional, or continuing education student.

Veterans Services is Washington U’s focal point for military and veteran matters, to include transitioning military-connected students into higher education, providing and connecting students with programs and services, and partnering across campus and in the community.

The St. Louis-Area Army ROTC program has a long tradition of producing consistently superior Army officers for the active and reserve forces. For over 80 years, thousands of officers have earned their Army commissions while students here.

**Career Services**

The Career Center supports students and alumni as they transform their passions, education, and skills into purposeful career paths by teaching lifelong career development strategies and by connecting diverse students, alumni, and employers. In addition to advising services, the center provides workshops and seminars for students to gain career-related skills, expand their professional network, and connect with internship, co-op, and job opportunities.

**Student Support and Wellness**

Habif Health & Wellness Center (also known as Student Health Services) supports the academic mission of WashU by providing the student community with premiere, student-centered health and health promotion services. Habif offers medical services including general medicine and reproductive health care, nutrition consults, allergy/immunization and travel clinics; mental
health services including psychiatry and counseling; ancillary services such as laboratory, x-ray, and pharmacy; as well as Health Education and Wellness programs.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) operates from a public health model and utilizes trauma informed practices, response, and prevention education to address relationship and sexual violence.

WashU Cares seeks to provide support, guidance and resources to all students on the Danforth Campus. The staff is committed to helping create a culture of caring by providing education and consultation for faculty and staff to identify, support, and refer students who may be having a hard time.

Athletics & Recreation

WashU’s Athletics Department vision is “to provide the nation’s foremost experience combining excellence in academics, athletics, and recreation. Since the mid-1970s the Bears have competed as a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III. Washington University has been a member of the University Athletic Association (UAA) since the beginning of the 1987-88 season. WashU Football is an affiliate member of the College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW). WashU has 8 varsity men’s teams and 9 varsity women’s teams. WashU’s student athletes have a 3.6 average GPA, a 98% job placement rate, and a 99% graduation rate.

Along with administering the facility and membership operations at the Gary M. Sumers Recreation Center and the South 40 Fitness Center, WashU Rec develops intramural sports programs, advises sport clubs, and provides comprehensive BearFit fitness programs and services that includes group exercise classes and personal training.

THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next VCSA will join the leadership of Washington University at a pivotal moment. The VCSA will play a defining role in sustaining the excellence of the WashU student experience and will enhance the quality of life and sense of community for all students as the university enters its next era of achievement. Success will require understanding and optimizing the interdependence of the academic and co-curricular aspects of the students’ education. The primary opportunities and challenges for the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will include the following:

Provide visionary leadership

The VCSA will be a leader with strategic vision, a thorough understanding of best practices in student affairs from student support and success to career services, a clear and unwavering commitment to racial equity and confronting systemic racism, and the creativity to meet the particular challenges facing higher education in the 21st century. The VCSA must have a positive, proactive focus, leading the division as it endeavors to enrich the WashU student experience. The VCSA will assess current programs and services with a fresh perspective and bring vision to launch innovative programs to strengthen campus life, ever mindful of the need for efficiency. The VCSA will drive conversations on even the most difficult topics and speak with a clear and trusted voice in university-wide leadership deliberations. In moments of crisis or conflict, the VCSA will draw on both expertise and imagination to offer constructive ideas and devise effective solutions.
Preserve a best-in-class residential experience in the face of a global pandemic

With 78% of its students in university provided housing, WashU offers a best-in-class residential life program with high levels of student success. The incoming VCSA will be tasked with envisioning how residential life can be most successful during the COVID-19 pandemic, and how the post-pandemic world may permanently change the residential life and housing experience. The VCSA will continue to cultivate thriving communities for WashU students and invest in residential programming and housing infrastructure. In addition, the VCSA will work with colleagues in Student Health and Wellness to expand efforts committed to mental health and well-being amongst the student population, as the pandemic is expected to exacerbate existing challenges.

Sustain a high level of direct engagement with students

The Vice Chancellor will fortify WashU’s culture of consultation and collaboration by maintaining a high level of direct and visible involvement with the students, both undergraduate and graduate, and distinguishing themselves and the student affairs division as a resource to all students. The VCSA will earn the trust and respect of the students and provide a model of engagement with them for other administrators and faculty.

The incoming VCSA should aim to form individual connections with students across campus and get to know them ‘by name and story’, a foundational tenet of the division’s goals. The Vice Chancellor should build these relationships across the entire student body but focus particularly on students who may find themselves at the margins, including students of color, in order to diversify the voices most often heard by central administration.

Support an increasingly diverse student body and build an inclusive environment

As the university builds a more diverse student body, the VCSA will work with colleagues to anticipate and respond, in innovative and creative ways, to the changing social and academic needs of the next generation of incoming students. The VCSA will also address more directly the needs of students who have not always been at the forefront of WashU’s student affairs’ policies, like students of color, first-generation college students, and international students, to create a more cohesive approach to the university’s diverse population. The VCSA will also help convey to the faculty and senior administration the resources and conditions necessary to create a sense of belonging and equity for all students.

The VCSA should be prepared to proactively address issues of inclusion and exclusion in student groups on campus. The VCSA, in collaboration with others, will envision new ways to encourage student social engagement that aligns with the university’s values and aspirations, and brings people together across lines of difference and broadens students’ social choices.

Promote a fully integrated student experience

The VCSA will promote the vision of a fully integrated student experience; combining the curricular and co-curricular dimensions of student life with a keen appreciation that fulfillment of its academic mission is the university’s paramount obligation. The Vice Chancellor will help students strike the right balance between the rigor of their academic program and the wide array of options outside the classroom and will seek opportunities to incorporate intellectual engagement in student life.
The VCSA will forge strong connections with the faculty, earning their respect and trust as an advocate for and administrative connection to student life. The VCSA will also collaborate closely with the provost and academic deans within each of the colleges and schools to plan for and provide services and programs of interest to faculty and students alike and ensure features of a common WashU experience across the undergraduate and graduate schools and colleges. This collaboration should be rooted in principles of diversity and inclusion, and the VCSA should take concrete steps to ensure that integration of student and academic life happens equitably for all students at the university.

**Focus on mental health and well-being**

The VCSA must also recognize the importance of mental and physical health in a well-rounded student experience. A major focus area within this is addressing an increased need for mental health resources on campus. The incoming VCSA will need to leverage existing resources efficiently and work with the Mental Health Services (MHS) team to engage and support students in need. The VCSA should be enthusiastic about strengthening relationships with campus partners like the medical center and MHS to connect community members to resources and ensure accessible and approachable mental health services for the student body.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated stress on students as well as staff in the division. The next VCSA must bring a holistic approach to wellness and advocate for the necessary resources to ensure both student and divisional staff wellbeing.

**Refine organizational structure to ensure collaboration and innovation**

The VCSA will inherit a high-functioning division with a talented and collaborative staff. As an experienced manager, the VCSA will bring strong organizational development skills and a track record of building, managing, and intentionally bringing together cross-departmental teams. The VCSA will also assess programs and structures, in collaboration with staff, to discover opportunities for improvement and increased collaboration across all departments and offices, enhance staff members’ capacity to assess student engagement and success, and galvanize a commitment to continuous professional development and improvement among the staff.

The incoming VCSA should also work laterally with divisions across the university to support programs that do not fall under the purview of the student affairs division but still have a major impact on the student experience, such as the Gephart Institute for Civic & Community Engagement and the Title IX Office, and clarify the relationship between the VCSA and those programs.

**Serve as an ambassador and advocate for students within and beyond the university community**

The VCSA will engage in ongoing strategic discussions in collaboration with other senior leaders about the policies, planning, and operations for student affairs. Furthermore, the VCSA will also play an important external role as an ambassador and advocate for student life with external partners, including the alumni, parents, community partners, employers, neighbors, and other potential supporters of the university. Success in this role will not only enable the VCSA to
enhance student learning and development but will also help sustain alumni loyalty and community support for WashU’s next generation of well-rounded graduates.

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS

This is a tremendous opportunity for an accomplished student affairs leader to join the senior officers of Washington University, to serve its students as an inspiring and respected ally, and to lead the university’s efforts to continue to provide the very best student experience. The position requires a leader with strategic vision and a thorough understanding of best practices in student affairs. The successful candidate will be the students’ advocate first and foremost but will also bring the skills and experience necessary to manage senior staff, a large budget, and an appreciation for the aims and needs of the university community as a whole.

The successful candidate will bring many of the following professional qualifications and personal qualities:

- A passion for providing support and opportunities for students; an authentic appreciation for the university’s history and traditions, as well as a vision for increased excellence in the student experience;
- Proven skills as a senior manager; a demonstrated ability to mentor and support staff and provide successful oversight of people, budget, and space; a track record for inspiring colleagues with energy and a dedication to their professional development, as well as a commitment to clarity and accountability;
- A deep understanding of the educational value of a diverse community; a demonstrated track record of advancing equity and diversity and enhancing inclusiveness; an ability to bring groups and individuals to common ground across lines of difference, including race, gender, class, and socio-economic status;
- Successful experience as a strategic leader; an understanding of the full range of strategic issues in complex organizations, and the ability to execute large and ambitious plans with fiscal responsibility, sound management practice, and the ability to cultivate resources;
- Proven track record in developing and assessing innovative and engaging programming that connects the academic and co-curricular lives of students in a residential community;
- Demonstrated capacity to communicate broadly across the university, cultivate and sustain collegial relationships, and build unity around difficult and complex issues; be an active listener, facilitator, convener, mediator, and data-informed decision maker;
- Sophisticated interpersonal skills; strong listening skills; a firm, but fair, approach to the resolution of conflict; a commitment to consult extensively, balanced by a willingness to act decisively when consensus is elusive; energy, agility, sense of humor, and flexibility to work closely with a dynamic leadership team;
- Proven ability to manage through crises with equanimity, discretion and a sense of responsibility and respect for students, families, and the institution;
- Devotion to the highest ethical standards; personal and professional integrity above reproach;
- An advanced degree is strongly preferred.
TO APPLY

Washington University in St. Louis has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. Confidential inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent in confidence to:

Ponneh Varho, Partner
Sabrina Singh, Managing Associate
www.imsearch.com/7737

Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

Washington University in St. Louis is committed to providing equal opportunity to all qualified individuals in its employment and personnel practices. The university practices affirmative action by taking assertive steps to recruit, hire and promote minorities, females, individuals with disabilities, and veterans.