



# Washington College's 31st Presidential Search

Prospectus



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## THE OPPORTUNITY

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### The Board of Visitors and Governors of Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland, has launched a national search for the institution's 31st President.

The College seeks nominations of, and applications from, exceptional leaders for consideration as candidates for president.

Washington College's next president will be a strategic visionary who can focus on student-centered academic excellence and co-curricular engagement. The president will lead the College to increasing levels of success and recognition in a rapidly changing higher education environment in a thoughtful, innovative, and inclusive way. The qualities and qualifications the College seeks in its next leader include traits that will enable them to lead through significant opportunities, challenges, and disruption while maintaining focus on strategic objectives.

An earned terminal degree (including but not limited to a Ph.D., J.D., Ed.D. or M.F.A.), coupled with substantial experience relevant to the Washington College mission and needs, and significant, impactful administrative experience in a complex organization, are required.

## THE ROLE OF OUR PRESIDENT

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### Overview

Our ideal president will possess a deep belief in the mission of small, liberal arts higher education institutions and embody Washington College's core values. This individual must embrace and respect our pedigreed history and the passion our alumni hold for their alma mater. This leader, working with a team of dedicated faculty and staff as well as committed members of the Board of Visitors and Governors, will be an inspiring fundraiser, a committed advocate for social justice, an engaged member of the internal and external community, and a champion of transparency, collaboration, and the overall mission of the College.

The President will engage the students, faculty, administration, staff, the Board, and external Washington College community in a shared vision for the future of the institution, with a focus on increasing awareness of the institution's profile as a college that provides transformational educational opportunities to students.

Reporting directly to the Board of Visitors and Governors, the President will maintain a working relationship with peer campuses in the state and Centennial Conference, partner with the local community, and engage at the state and national levels. This individual will develop and direct strategic plans related to institutional vision, mission, value and goals, the student experience, academic programs, teaching, research, learning, public service, financing, enrollment management, and physical plant development.

### Qualities and Capabilities

Change Management	Evidence of experience as a visionary, innovative, and strategic leader who sees transformational possibilities and takes a long-term view
Higher Education Experience and Leadership Capabilities	Experienced professional with strong academic credentials, a demonstrated track record in higher education leadership up to and including successfully leading a college or university, understanding of the opportunities and challenges that face schools like ours, and ability to build and support a high-performing senior leadership team
Ability to Unite and Inspire	Demonstrated ability to communicate and work closely with the College's multiple constituency groups to bring about cultural and organizational change, with a focus on the student experience and their opportunities for growth
Operational and Financial Prowess	Deep command of higher education finances, the national higher education finance environment, and an ability to work in a constrained resource environment and address the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 crisis
Exceptional Written and Oral Communication	Comfort with and prowess in public speaking, with strong interpersonal skills
Marketing and Fundraising	Experience with fundraising, soliciting leadership gifts, and developing and maintaining high-level donor relationships, as well as playing a meaningful and vested role in the alumni community
Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	Unwaveringly committed to embracing, promoting, and forwarding initiatives around diversity, equity, and inclusion
Community Relations	The close relationship between the town of Chestertown and Washington College is critically important, especially as the College plays a major role as a lead employer and economic influence in Kent County. The individual must understand, value, and prioritize relationships in the town, county, and region and seek to expand the College's influence. The individual should be accessible as a figurehead, but also as a member of the community who is committed to living in and improving the community.



## ABOUT WASHINGTON COLLEGE

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Founded in 1782, Washington College is the tenth oldest and first college chartered after the creation of the new nation.

George Washington supported the founding of our College by consenting to have the "College at Chester" named in his honor, through generous financial support, specifically the sum of 50 guineas, and through service on the College's Board of Visitors and Governors – his only such

involvement with an institution of higher learning. With close ties to the nation's founding, Washington College's 239-year history is a distinguishing factor and one proudly celebrated by our community.



Washington College is located in historic Chestertown on the Chester River and within the environmentally important Chesapeake Bay region. The College's setting on Maryland's Eastern Shore has become an extension of the campus, serving as a laboratory for our students' intellectual, social, and personal growth. Within a learning community of approximately 1,100 students, Washington College provides a high-touch and personalized education that tests and expands each student's talent and potential. Our College takes advantage of its size in a world that more often values the larger scale, and it celebrates the interaction between students and professors – of exploring and guiding. We offer academic rigor and self-discovery in a supportive, residential community of well-qualified, increasingly diverse, and motivated individuals.

### Mission, Vision, and Values

**MISSION:** Washington College challenges and inspires emerging citizen leaders to discover lives of purpose and passion.

**VISION:** The enduring values of Washington College – critical thinking, effective communication, and moral courage – move the world.

**VALUES:** We develop in our students habits of analytic thought and clear communication, aesthetic insight, ethical sensitivity, and civic responsibility. We share these values of our founding patron, George Washington:

- Integrity
- Determination
- Curiosity
- Civility
- Leadership
- Moral courage



We offer academic rigor and self-discovery in a supportive, residential community of well-qualified, diverse, and motivated individuals, preparing our students for rich and fulfilling lives and a lifetime of learning, leadership, and productive endeavor.

### **Our Location and Unique Assets**

Building on its rich history and its beautiful location on the Chester River, Washington College invites students to learn in a traditional liberal arts and sciences setting but compels them beyond the classroom to understand complexity, solve real-world problems, and make a profound difference in an ever-changing world. These opportunities begin at our doorstep with our location on a major tributary of the nation's largest estuary, an ideal setting that reflects in microcosm the complexities of our world and gives our environmental programs their distinct character. Students and faculty can examine and directly affect local and global issues such as sea-level rise, water quality, food security, population distribution, and sustainable growth, while hands-on work built into the program connects students with the environment through experience, experimentation, and problem-solving.

Among the assets that make this possible are the 4,700-acre River and Field Campus, Semans-Griswold Environmental Hall on the Chester River waterfront campus, the innovative Eastern Shore Food Lab, Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory, two research vessels, and the GIS Lab, which executes real-world environmental contracts and projects. The Center for Environment & Society supports students and faculty interests in the environment and provides an array of opportunities for applied, hands-on learning in real-world projects throughout the region.

We also draw inspiration from our College's legacy as a place where a revolutionary American vision of higher education for citizens of a thriving democracy has flourished since 1782. We believe that everyone here can make history: as students, as teachers, and as engaged citizens. In a culture of the immediate and the instantaneous, we take the long view. History comes to life here at the first college in the new nation, where George Washington was a founding patron and trustee. On the colonial streets of Chestertown, among the picturesque waterways of the Chesapeake, and in the vibrant cities of our surrounding mid-Atlantic region, opportunities to learn about America's past and present abound. The College's Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience connects students with the world beyond campus.

Washington College also makes a space for writers. Writing is foundational to who we are and what we do, from First Year Seminars to our distinctive Senior Capstone. It's second-nature to us and takes place everywhere—even in a biology or math course that satisfies one of our writing requirements. Perhaps because we have made such a home for it, we value writing's place in each student's growth. The heart of this writing culture is the Rose O'Neill Literary House, a 3-story Victorian home for writers, which on any given day might host an open mic or a Print Shop Workshop or a late-night editing session for the newest issue of *Cherry Tree*. Students join their friends in the Lit House library to do homework or rehearse the performance piece they just wrote or talk about their favorite books. Down the block, in the Publications House, they work on one of our student-run publications, honing their skills as a journalist, editor, designer, or wordsmith.

This is the unique ecosystem at Washington College that provides students with everything it takes to build a career, explore the world around them, and live a life of purpose and passion.

## OUR COMMUNITY

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### Students

Coming from all over the United States and over 20 countries, our student body of approximately 1,100 is diverse and talented. They craft their own curriculum from the over 30 majors and almost 50 minors and concentrations that are offered. One-third of our them are student-athletes, competing in the Division III Centennial Conference. Our students have created a thriving community of clubs and organizations, intramural sports and eSports, student government and Greek life. Dual-degree partnerships with universities like Duke and Columbia and the hands-on job



experience that our students obtain while they are here lead to phenomenal career outcomes. Over 65% complete one or more internships. On average, over 90% are employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation. The top graduate school destinations include the University of Maryland, Boston University, Georgetown, and Wake Forest.

### Alumni

Washington College alumni can be found all over the world but remain a close-knit and supportive community. These alumni are remarkably accomplished across a wide range of occupations. They also remain connected to the College, playing a particularly important role working with the Center for Career Development to enhance opportunities for graduates moving into the workplace. The Alumni Relations office makes sure alumni are taken care of like family and provides opportunities for engagement through chapters and affinity groups.

### Faculty

Our outstanding faculty are teachers first, pairing expertise in their discipline with a commitment to getting to know students as individuals and tailoring the broad curriculum of study to their students' needs and interests. The nearly 120 full-time faculty show their dedication every day by providing impactful learning experiences for students, creating safe and supportive living and learning environments, and building lifelong friendships. While teaching is the priority, the Washington College faculty are also accomplished scholars, and our small student-to-faculty ratio means that students learn from and research with leaders in their fields.



## Leadership and Staff

Our dedicated staff of 300 perform the jobs that make Washington College home for our students for four years. These are the chefs, coaches, public safety officers, groundskeepers, librarians, counselors, and many more. Every one of our staff is committed to the mission of helping our students become citizen leaders, and they are the ones who truly turn the College community into a family. A core team of nine staff members serves on the President's Senior Staff, including the Provost and Dean of the College, the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing, the Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Affairs, and the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

## Board of Visitors and Governors

Since George Washington first served on the Board, Washington College has asked its governing body to provide the vision, the philanthropic support, and the leadership needed to strengthen the College's position among the nation's best small liberal arts colleges. The 36 members of the Board are variously appointed by the Board and the Governor of Maryland and elected by the alumni of the College. They bring a broad range of experience and expertise to their governance role, including from the corporate sector, higher education, information technology, environmental stewardship, law, government, philanthropy, and healthcare.





## COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

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### Our Diversity Statement

We, the students, faculty, staff, and Board of Visitors and Governors of Washington College, welcome, invite, value, and support a diverse community of individuals. We strive to create a place where all can study, work, and thrive. We believe in the worth, dignity, and safety of human beings of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, gender identities and/or expressions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, cultural backgrounds, cognitive or physical abilities, emotional and behavioral characteristics, ages, and educational levels. In the pursuit of academic excellence, we endeavor to be a community made up of people from a variety of backgrounds with differing perspectives, life experiences, religious, philosophical, and political beliefs, lifestyles, and ideologies.

We pledge to create a respectful and supportive environment for collaboration, empathy, and the building of meaningful relationships among members of Washington College. We commit to fostering a more equitable, inclusive, and engaged community that embraces all the complexity that each person brings to campus.

- **We will empower** all members to contribute ideas, ask questions, contest assumptions, and revise points of view through civil debate.
- **We will confront and challenge** attempts to dehumanize others through prejudiced attitudes, behaviors, and practices that exclude, demean, or marginalize any individual or group.
- **We will encourage** alumni, parents, visitors, guests, and the wider community to respect and embrace the values and behaviors that we embody.

Our promise is to cultivate a continuous desire and ability to understand and meaningfully engage with different perspectives and experiences, including those of historically underrepresented and marginalized groups. We seek to contribute to the full intellectual and emotional development of every person and to the enrichment of our local, regional, national, and global communities.



## THE WASHINGTON COLLEGE STANDARD – OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Washington College’s small size presents students with a rare opportunity to enjoy a close-knit community atmosphere while its academic breadth enables students to choose from a wide variety of pursuits, both inside and outside the classroom. It also lends itself to educating the whole student in intensely personal, important ways. With a commitment to a low ratio of professors to students, teachers know their students by name rather than by student ID number. Our College’s commitment to the liberal arts and sciences encourages students to explore many areas of interest and to develop the capacity to reason, to appreciate literature and the arts, and to make the connection between course of study and their implications in society.

**Five pillars** provide the foundation of a Washington College education. They create well-rounded students, form a distinctive experience, and inspire successful graduates. We call these foundational principles **the Washington College Standard**.

- 1. Learning without Limits:** Our students and alumni follow their passions and constantly seek to find new ways to synthesize the things they love. Whether it’s securing a meaningful **internship**, traveling the world on **Chesapeake Semester**, or doing field research right here on the **River and Field Campus**, education is never confined to the classroom. By providing **hands-on learning** and meaningful job experiences alongside traditional instruction, we encourage students to craft the education that’s right for them.
- 2. The Written Word:** No matter the major, all Washington College students graduate with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively and must partake in the **Senior Capstone Experience**, which further serves to strengthen leadership capabilities. From our inclusive **first-year writing seminars** to the extensive literary lecture series offered by the **Rose O’Neill Literary House**, and even to applications for our **Sophie Kerr Prize** the world’s largest literary prize awarded solely to undergraduate students (valued at \$63,537 in 2020), opportunities for student writing are never restricted to the English department.

### KEY FACTS and STATS 2020-2021

<b>Student body</b>	1084
Women	665 / 61%
Men	419 / 39%
International	37 / 3%
<b>Students receiving some level of aid</b>	97%
<b>Students living on-campus</b>	84%
<b>First-year retention rate (Fall 2019 entering freshmen cohort):</b>	79%
<b>Four-year retention rate (Fall 2017 entering freshmen cohort):</b>	70%
<b>Four-year graduation rate (Fall 2016 entering freshmen cohort):</b>	65%
<b>Athletic programs</b>	18
Women	9
Men	7
Co-ed	2
<b>Student athletic participation</b>	390 / 36%
<b>Tenure track faculty – full time</b>	97
<b>Non-tenure track faculty – full time / part time</b>	15 / 43
<b>Non-instructional staff – full time and part time</b>	282
<b>2020-21 Tuition</b>	\$47,724
Standard Room	\$6,365
Standard Meal Plan	\$6,673
<b>FY 2021 operating budget</b>	\$54.7M
<b>Endowment as of Dec. 2020</b>	\$256M



3. **Environmental Action:** With guidance from the **Center for Environment & Society (CES)**, Washington College is committed to creating and maintaining a sustainable, environmentally-friendly campus. **Student-led initiatives** like our Back to Tap Program, Bike Share, and Food Recovery Network give our whole campus community the chance to pitch in and make the world a better place. Our **Campus Garden** not only provides students with the ability to study and design sustainable food systems, but it is also the first certified Bee Campus USA in Maryland. The recently completed **Semans-Griswold Environment Hall** was constructed to Living Building standards, reinforcing our commitment to sustainability leadership.
4. **History Informing the Future:** Washington College has provided an impactful liberal arts and sciences education **since 1782** and we leverage our past to inform the future. From the industry-leading work conducted by the **Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience** on preserving and updating oral histories to the **state-of-the-art equipment in our laboratories**, Washington College learns from history but never stops looking ahead.
5. **Meaningful, Lasting Connections:** **Unhurried conversation and close connections** with an exceptional faculty and staff complement our broad curriculum of study. At Washington College, our students never feel like a number and with a low **student-to-faculty ratio**, professors don't just know our students' names, they develop lifelong friendships. A beautiful campus, ready access to exciting cities and the Chesapeake Bay, and engagement with cultures and communities locally and around the world afford our students ample resources and opportunities for personal exploration, connection, and shared challenges. Washington College fosters a tight-knit culture and a family for life.

## OUR ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO

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### Majors and Programs

- American Studies
- Anthropology
- Art and Art History
- Biology
- Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- Business Management
- Chemistry
- Communication and Media Studies
- Computer Science
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- English
- Environmental Science and Studies
- History
- Human Development
- Humanities
- International Studies
- Mathematics
- Music
- Philosophy and Religion
- Physics
- Political Science
- Pre-Health Professions Programs
  - Pre-Allied Health Professions
  - Premedical
  - Pre-Nursing
  - Pre-Pharmacy
  - Pre-Veterinary
- Pre-Law
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Teacher Certification Programs
- Theatre
- World Languages and Cultures
  - French Studies
  - German Studies
  - Hispanic Studies
  - International Literatures and Cultures

### Minors and Concentrations

- Accounting
- Archaeology: Area of emphasis in Anthropology
- Art History
- Arts Management & Entrepreneurship
- Asian Studies
- Behavioral Neuroscience
- Biophysics and Biological Chemistry
- Black Studies
- Cell/Molecular Biology & Infectious Disease
- Chesapeake Regional Studies
- Clinical Counseling
- Creative Writing
- Dance
- Data Analytics
- Earth & Planetary Sciences
- Ecology and Evolution
- Ethnomusicology
- European Studies
- Finance
- Gender Studies
- Greener Materials Science
- Information Systems
- International Business
- Journalism, Editing & Publishing
- Justice, Law and Society
- Latin American Studies
- Marketing
- Medieval & Early Modern Studies
- Museum, Field, and Community Education
- Near Eastern Studies
- Organic and Medicinal Chemistry
- Peace and Conflict Studies
- Physical and Instrumental Chemistry
- Physiology and Organismal Biology
- Secondary Education Studies
- Social Welfare
- Studio Art



## **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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Washington College is not alone among higher education institutions in facing a daunting set of challenges. However, each challenge is counterbalanced by a strength or opportunity afforded by our people, assets, or location.

Here is what we need to do:

### **1. LEAD CHANGE TOGETHER**

Washington College is bound together by a strong set of shared values and a highly relational culture rooted in its tightly knit, diverse community of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni. These bonds have been strained in the last few years for various reasons, including leadership turnover and the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. A president will need to provide stable, focused, transparent leadership while garnering trust and promoting an inclusive culture.

### **2. MAINTAIN FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Washington College will be challenged in the coming years by the economic realities facing many private higher education institutions and the continuing impact of COVID. Significant budget limitations due to an unpredictable economy and families' ability to pay tuition will require creative and entrepreneurial solutions. Net tuition revenue must be bolstered as the primary revenue stream, even as alternative revenue is grown. While the College is running a deficit in fiscal year 2021, its strong endowment must be used responsibly for current needs but preserved for the next generations.

### **3. INCREASE VISIBILITY AND RECOGNITION**

Washington College benefits from a distinguished history, influential and impactful faculty and alumni, a beautiful campus, and a mission that has never been more essential for the future. Among those who know it, the College has a very strong reputation, yet its brand is less well known among prospective students, families, prospective donors, businesses, and the government. Efforts to tell the College's story in a wider and more compelling way must be intensified.

### **4. REFINE THE VISION AND STRATEGY**

Washington College's last comprehensive strategic plan was rolled out in 2014. Much of the vision outlined in this plan was realized, but other critical parts of it were not. Smaller scale strategic planning efforts on several fronts have been undertaken, including in athletics, sustainability, and diversity, with some success. But there is a pressing need for a unifying vision, new comprehensive plan, and focus on execution. This is both a major challenge and a fantastic opportunity for the new president. But strategic planning cannot be done at the expense of the immediate challenges facing the College, which must be addressed even while the president begins to frame a strategic direction for the College.



## PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

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Inquiries, nominations and applications are invited. For formal consideration, applicants should submit a curriculum vitae and a cover letter in response to the opportunities and expectations described within this Leadership Profile to WittKieffer's candidate portal. Confidentiality will be respected. For optimal consideration, application materials should be received by June 3, 2021.

Physical mail can be addressed to:

# WittKieffer

Attn: Washington College President Search  
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