Leadership Profile

Dean of the College and Vice President of Academic Affairs

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This leadership Profile is intended to provide information about Occidental College and the position of Dean of the College and Vice President of Academic Affairs. It is designed to assist qualified individuals in assessing their interest in this position.
The Opportunity

Occidental College invites inquiries, nominations and applications for the position of Dean of the College and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Dean/VPAA).

The Dean/VPAA is the chief academic officer, reports directly to the President, and serves on the President’s College Leadership Team. As such, the Dean/VPAA participates in all aspects of institution-wide planning, program and policy review; provides strategic vision and operational leadership to all aspects of the academic programs; and encourage opportunities for distinctive programmatic synergy in support of the academic mission of the College.

The successful candidate will have a distinguished record in teaching, scholarship, and administrative leadership as well as a deep understanding of the transformative power of a liberal arts education. Significant research, influential publications, and administrative ability and effectiveness are key qualifications. To be considered, candidates must have an earned doctorate to merit academic appointment at the rank of Professor with tenure in one of Occidental College’s academic departments. As the chief academic officer, the new Dean/VPAA will provide critical guidance during an important period of institutional growth and transition that offers opportunities to enhance and implement a strategic and academic planning process; recruit, retain, and support outstanding faculty; reorganize and build a strong administrative team; and articulate and advance the college mission anchored by the four cornerstones of excellence, equity, community, and service. Unwavering commitments to campus-wide diversity, inclusive excellence, and shared governance are essential.

Founded in 1887, Occidental is a small, highly selective and diverse liberal arts college in Eagle Rock, a creative and vibrant neighborhood in northeast Los Angeles. The distinctive interdisciplinary and multicultural focus of the College’s academic program, which includes 32 majors and a breadth of innovative minors and co-curricular programs, seeks to foster both the fulfillment of individual aspirations and a deeply rooted commitment to the public good. The College is distinguished by the faculty’s excellence in teaching and research, undergraduate research, institutional partnerships, and community engagement both locally and globally. One of the original campuses where Upward Bound got its start and home of one of the first West Coast chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, Occidental College boasts a firmly rooted tradition of integrated academic achievement and dedicated community service. Today, the Chronicle of Higher Education ranks Occidental as one of the country’s top producers of student Fulbright awards, and recently the College was recognized by the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, Project Pericles, and the Carnegie Foundation for its distinct promotion of civic engagement in higher education. Deep collaborative partnerships with local institutions such as Caltech and NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the Huntington Library, the Autry Museum of the American West, and Art Center College of Design provide faculty and students with incomparable research opportunities. The InternLA Summer Internship Program...
directed by Career Services offers equally exciting opportunities in L.A. based organizations focused on six broad sectors: Business and Entrepreneurship, Media and Entertainment, Visual and Performing Arts, Law & Policy, Social Services and Advocacy, and Science and Research. Over half of the student body participates in credit-bearing study abroad programs while the International Program Office’s innovation in college-sponsored student projects increases the College’s global engagement rate to over 75%. The small size of the campus, yet wide access to the resources of Los Angeles and the world, make Occidental College intimate in scale but infinite in scope.

Information about how to nominate someone or to apply for this opportunity can be found in the section titled “Procedure for Candidacy” at the end of this document.

The Role of the Dean of the College and Vice President of Academic Affairs

OVERVIEW

As the Chief Academic Officer, the Dean/VPAA will have primary oversight for Occidental’s academic program. S/he will be responsible for maintaining the College’s unique academic strengths in teaching, scholarship, and programming. It will also be imperative that s/he develop a strategic plan for building on those academic strengths in new and innovative ways, enhancing intellectual connections between the disciplines, and articulating the value of the liberal arts within an urban environment.

The Dean/VPAA will work in close collaboration with the Board, President, faculty, and students to provide leadership, vision, and advocacy for the academic program. This will entail a collaborative understanding of leadership. Evidence of this through a demonstrated commitment to shared governance -- including a record of having created processes and structures that have galvanized people to work across hierarchies in order to collectively address important issues -- will be welcomed.

Most important is a strong engagement with Occidental’s mission and strategic plan. Promoting equity and inclusion among students, staff, and faculty will be essential to effective leadership in the academic and administrative domains.

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

Curricular Vision and Development
The Dean/VPAA will be responsible for maintaining and increasing the quality of Occidental’s institutional teaching. S/he will work through faculty, department chairs, and faculty leadership to keep curricula dynamic throughout the institution. S/he will develop programs that build on Occidental’s strengths in community-based learning and research, global and urban studies, faculty-student research collaborations, study abroad, and a commitment to how excellence and equity are mutually constituted. The Dean/VPAA must also be able to facilitate continuing pedagogical innovations and creative curricular development throughout the College.
Engagement with new learning technologies and methods is essential in this respect, as is creating productive internal and external partnerships. A key role will be working closely with the Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs to develop and implement strategies to improve students' learning experiences outside the classroom and the context to improve outcomes inside the classroom. The Dean/VPAA will have ultimate responsibility for monitoring assessments of educational effectiveness that protect the College's accreditations.

**Faculty Development and Mentoring**

The Dean/VPAA will be responsible for creating support structures to maintain and increase the quality of Occidental's faculty research and creative production. This will entail providing support to both junior and senior faculty members based on a nuanced understanding of their particular professional goals, with an emphasis on experience in mentoring faculty through promotion processes. Such mentorship should also include experience in empowering faculty leadership that brings diverse faculty voices into administrative decision-making.

**Administrative Leadership**

**Dean's Office Structure, Reporting Offices and Programs, and Constituencies**

The Dean/VPAA will oversee the associate deans and administrative staff tasked with carrying out the responsibilities of the Dean's Office. Under current structures, reporting to the Dean/VPAA within the Dean's Office are three associate deans: the Associate Dean of the College for Research/Divisional Dean of the Sciences, the Associate Dean of the College for Curriculum and Academic Support/Divisional Dean of the Arts and Humanities, and the Associate Dean of the College for Core Curriculum and Student Issues/Divisional Dean of the Social Sciences. We are looking for innovation in envisioning structures that can give greater focus to administrative responsibilities, as well as bring together faculty and administrative voices in shared governance processes.

Within the Dean's Office, the Dean/VPAA will serve as a leader, mentor, and manager who can effectively coordinate the efforts of the Associate Deans and Directors, bringing a strong sense of direction, teamwork, and common purpose. The Dean/VPAA is also expected to work collaboratively with faculty and staff to re-envision and potentially restructure the organization of the Dean's Office to best allocate the important and increasing work of the Office.

Working in productive collaboration with the staff of academic support units is vital to the Dean/VPAA's success. Advancing the College's research and creative enterprise will also include oversight of the College's academic centers, institutes, and specialized academic initiatives with a focus on greater strategic alignment among them. The following offices and programs are within the portfolio of the Dean of the College:

- Advising
- Center for Academic Excellence
- Center for Community Based Learning
- Center for Teaching Excellence
- International Programs Office
- National and International Awards Advising
- Pre-Health Advising
Faculty Governance
The Dean/VPAA will ensure meaningful faculty participation in institutional governance through transparent decision-making that follows agreed-upon and well-defined processes. In this context, the Dean/VPAA will be expected to work closely with the committees of the Faculty Council on College governance matters. More broadly, s/he will be expected to promote cooperation between faculty members and their departments, mitigate the effects of dominant faculty voices by promoting the opinions of all faculty members of varying levels of seniority, and ensure transparent deliberative processes that create trust in shared governance structures.

Key responsibilities include overseeing -- in cooperation with appropriate committees/chairs -- faculty processes on tenure and promotion, hiring at all levels, and sabbaticals and reappointments. The Dean/VPAA recommends to the President all candidates for appointment to the faculty as well as candidates for tenure and promotion.

Budget Responsibilities and Other Duties
The Dean/VPAA will work collaboratively with the Vice President for Finance and Planning and relevant college-wide and faculty committees to provide prudent oversight to the college’s fiscal priorities. The Dean/VPAA will enter a fundamentally collaborative partnership with the VP of Finance and Planning to enable strategic and equitable budgeting, as well as the securing and alignment of necessary resources in order to provide the facilities and environment required for faculty success. S/he will manage the academic affairs budget in a way that prioritizes advocacy for the college’s academic mission, maintaining transparency in budget procedures and decision-making processes.

The Dean/VPAA will undertake other duties as assigned by the President.
The Expectations for Leadership

The Dean of the College/VPAA will be responsible for leading the academic program at the College. The successful candidate will have a demonstrable record of having used institutional structures to advance “equity and excellence.” Occidental College has a long history of providing an inclusive and socially-engaged education that is academically rigorous and intellectually ambitious. We are deeply committed to the College’s mission of fostering diversity in all of its various forms, and we seek a Dean/VPAA who will revitalize this commitment in new and exciting ways. The following represent some of the opportunities and expectations for the position, as well as the categories by which the new Dean/VPAA’s performance will be evaluated during the first few years of his/her tenure.

Enhance the intellectual vitality of the College

The intellectual vitality of the College begins with a forward-thinking and visionary academic program. At Oxy, we envision an environment in which faculty scholarship, pedagogy, and student research are mutually complementary. Further, we see the College’s mission of embracing diversity and encouraging “equity and excellence” as central, rather than ancillary, to our academic program. To this end, we seek a Dean/VPAA who will aggressively promote faculty research so as to ensure that Oxy is at the forefront of scholarly and pedagogical innovations. Currently, Oxy is a leader in student research, as reflected in our on-campus research programs as well as our consistently high yield of Fulbright, Truman, and other national award recipients. We wish to expand access to these programs and resources so all of our students will be competitive for them. Therefore, a successful candidate will have a demonstrated ability to foster intellectual growth across various campus constituencies, in tandem with encouraging and expanding the College’s rich intellectual diversity. While Oxy has a long tradition of inclusiveness, we seek to enhance this reputation in ambitious and innovative ways, especially with regard to curriculum, scholarship, and faculty and student governance. A strong candidate will have a record of work that reflects a deep intellectual understanding of how structural factors affect educational outcomes and will be able to draw on this knowledge to lead the campus community in addressing systemic inequities. While recent conversations at Oxy, and nationally, have been difficult at times, we see these conversations as an opportunity to both reinforce our strengths and make meaningful changes where necessary. As the leader of the College’s academic program, the Dean/VPAA must harness and coordinate resources from across campus toward creating a thoughtful, coherent, and intellectually robust curriculum.

Grow and support an engaged and diverse faculty

As a senior member of the faculty, the Dean/VPAA is the chief advocate for faculty needs among executive leadership and must be so in symbol and substance. The Dean/VPAA, therefore, must bring a proven record of advocacy and support for the attainment of excellence in the primary domains of faculty work: teaching, scholarship and service. Resources allocated by the Dean/VPAA across the full range of the College’s divisions, departments and programs will ensure the cultivation and mentoring of a faculty that produces superior teaching and research. Moreover, the successful Dean/VPAA must also work to strategically increase the size of the faculty, shaping it in such a way as to reflect the College’s deepening commitments to the full range, depth, and intersectional complexity of diversity. Developing this level of support
requires a leader with unique vision and innovative approaches to management. The Dean/VPAA will also work closely with Faculty Council, Advisory Council, Academic Planning Committee and department chairs to establish standards for faculty excellence and to execute a shared vision of excellence, equity, community and service.

**Commitment to Shared Governance**

The Dean/VPAA will embrace and enhance a strong commitment to shared governance structures and principles. In order to realize this commitment, the Dean/VPAA must quickly establish productive and collaborative relationships with key constituents across campus, leveraging the many strong pre-existing relationships. S/he will foster a culture of mutual respect that acknowledges the expertise and commitment of faculty and staff to the College and its mission. S/he will also develop transparent decision-making processes and regularly communicate the goals and outcomes of these processes to the campus community, as an essential component of establishing and maintaining trust.

In particular, the Dean/VPAA will work effectively and collaboratively with the Faculty. Faculty members engage deeply and vigorously across a broad range of work with the administration and trustees in all matters pertaining to the well-being and mission of the College. The Dean/VPAA will recognize, support, and encourage this close, collaborative work with the faculty to sustain and strengthen shared governance processes in which faculty are not simply pro forma consultants, but share in decision-making, responsibility, and accountability. S/he will also support strong faculty governance of the academic program.

**Represent Occidental internally and externally**

As an advocate for the academic priorities of Occidental College, the new Dean/VPAA will represent Occidental’s mission, aspirations, and achievements to internal and external constituencies. The Dean/VPAA will be a strong spokesperson for the College by fostering communication and cooperation within Occidental and with the broader community. Working with faculty, students, staff, the Board of Trustees, alumni, community leaders, and the President, the new dean will establish rapport and open communication; help fundraise; and generate awareness and pride in Occidental’s distinct culture, values and strengths as a liberal arts institution.
Personal Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Occidental College seeks a Dean/VPAA to guide the College’s academic mission who will bring outstanding academic vision, administrative leadership, fiscal acumen, entrepreneurial talent and dynamic engagement in an active and vibrant campus community. Critical to the new Dean’s success will be a track record of leading innovative change in a complex organization, the ability to work collaboratively, communicate effectively and move agendas forward through implementation. Successful experience in strategic planning, personnel and organizational management, and resource allocation is necessary.

The successful candidate will be a visible leader and stabilizing force for the College’s academic mission, providing the vision, enthusiasm and commitment to propel the institution forward. The new Dean/VPAA will embrace and uphold the College’s values and will possess the ability to galvanize the faculty around a vision for the future of academic programs; the communication and interpersonal skills necessary to advocate for that future; an understanding and regard for the liberal arts and the work of faculty both in the classroom and as scholars; and an overriding focus on student success, diversity and inclusive excellence.

The Dean/VPAA will be an inspiring campus leader who demonstrates the qualities of integrity, thoughtfulness, emotional maturity, energy, creativity and a sense of humor that typify the finest leaders. S/he must possess the ability to listen to a broad array of constituents; an appreciation for and understanding of shared governance; a commitment to faculty; and the fortitude to make tough decisions that put the best interests of the College first.

In addition, candidates will have the following professional qualifications and personal characteristics:

**Collaborative and transparent leadership:** dynamic leadership and a collaborative, transparent management style; commitment to the College’s tradition of shared governance; ability to serve as an effective and collegial member of the President’s College Leadership Team and a desire to be part of an administrative structure in which all members contribute to the conversation about issues and policies across the College; ability to engage the academic community in open and collegial discussion and debate; strong political skills and commitment to relationship building across the institution; capacity and willingness to make difficult and timely decisions; and excellent communication skills.

**Academic excellence:** appreciation for the liberal arts; track record as an excellent teacher and scholar; demonstrated commitment to the continued excellence of the educational and research programs of the College; experience promoting and assessing scholarship and teaching excellence across disciplines including recruiting, retaining, evaluating, developing and supporting outstanding faculty; academic planning and curriculum development experience; understanding of how to leverage new technologies appropriately in an academic enterprise; and creative initiative and demonstrated experience in developing and implementing solid, forward-thinking programs.

**Commitment to diversity:** a record of achievement in promoting diversity and building inclusivity among faculty, staff and students, as well as in the curriculum; ability to work
effectively and sensitively with diverse populations across the faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members and trustees; ability to translate Occidental’s commitment to diversity and inclusion into meaningful programs and curriculum; understanding of the unique opportunity that Occidental presents given its setting, mission and history.

**Management skills:** strong record of administrative experience and achievement; ability to gain the confidence and support of faculty; success as a skilled and strategic manager of resources and operations; and capacity to develop and manage an effective organization, including creating and implementing long-range plans.

**Budget management skills:** strong record of experience in successful management of significant budget resources, especially in tight fiscal environments; the capacity to create and implement financ strategies to accompany long-range plans across academic affairs; and experience in resource generation, allocation and prioritization in academic operations in order to create a viable, sustainable economic model.

**Change management skills:** ability to manage change collaboratively and transparently, with firmness, grace and finesse; ability to innovate and be creative and to discern where such innovation is needed; ability to earn the trust of faculty, staff and students, to work effectively with the President and senior leadership team and to inspire and to galvanize others around the academic mission of Occidental.

**Strategic data-driven planning experience:** experience with strategic and academic planning and with leading a plan to execution, including assessment and revision; a commitment to evaluation through data and data-based decision making within the construct of the College’s strategic objectives; inclination to work collaboratively with Occidental constituents to develop a plan, while exercising considerable leadership in doing so; and ability to anticipate and resourcefully and collaboratively address challenges within the academic enterprise.

**Credentials:** an earned doctorate and a distinguished record of teaching and scholarship commensurate with achievement at the full professor level.

**Personal style:** collegial, inclusive, optimistic, energetic, able to communicate effectively with tact and wisdom; finds genuine pleasure in the company of faculty and students; demonstrates grace under pressure and a sense of humor.
Occidental College: An Overview

Occidental College is an independent, coeducational college of liberal arts and sciences. Although founded in 1887 by a group of Presbyterian ministers and laymen, Occidental has had no formal religious association since 1910. It is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees, is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and holds membership in a number of regional and national organizations related to higher education. The Delta of California Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa was established at Occidental in 1926.

Occidental seeks to provide an education of the highest quality in the best tradition of the liberal arts, emphasizing thorough competence in a chosen field of study, together with a broad understanding of historical and cultural heritage and the relationships among fields of knowledge.

Students and faculty at Occidental are engaged in an intellectual partnership in which student initiative and responsibility are encouraged. To an uncommon degree, students may participate in the construction of their own educational programs. Independent study and independent patterns of study are encouraged.

Occidental students represent varied intellectual interests, socioeconomic backgrounds, racial and ethnic groups, religious beliefs, nationalities and social and political convictions. This diversity finds its expression, not only in the variety of academic programs and options open to students, but also through the entire range of student organizations and enterprises, college cultural events, visiting lecturers and forums, all of which taken together comprise the many facets of life in an invigorating academic community.

The College is committed to a philosophy of total education. Intellectual capability is a dominant component but is conceived of as one dimension in a process that includes and stresses personal, ethical, social and political growth toward maturation as well. The high percentage of students in residence at the College works toward the achievement of this objective.

Successful Occidental students are self-motivated, independent-minded and intellectually talented people. They are committed to social justice and community engagement. Above all, they realize that no education is finished, that they are in college to learn how to learn, so that they may carry on their own education for the rest of their lives.
Mission

The mission of Occidental College is to provide a gifted and diverse group of students with a total educational experience of the highest quality—one that prepares them for leadership in an increasingly complex, interdependent and pluralistic world.

The distinctive interdisciplinary and multicultural focus of the College’s academic program seeks to foster both the fulfillment of individual aspirations and a deeply rooted commitment to the public good.

This mission is anchored by four cornerstones: excellence, equity, community and service. These building blocks, in one form or another, have long been the basis for the College’s commitment to providing responsible leaders and citizens for our democratic society. Choosing them to support the future helps to ensure that the College remains true to its mission while adapting to a changing world.

For additional information on Occidental College please visit www.oxy.edu. Candidates may find the additional links below helpful in understanding Occidental:

Strategic Plan

Factbook

Institutional Research (IRAP)
Procedure for Candidacy

Nominations, expressions of interest and applications are invited. Interested individuals should provide a letter describing their interest in and qualifications for the position, a curriculum vitae or resume and the names and contact information of five references (Candidates will be notified before references are contacted). Review of candidate materials will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled; for full consideration, applicant materials should be received by September 1, 2016.

These materials should be sent electronically, via e-mail, to the Occidental College’s executive search consultants Oliver Tomlin and Jennifer Bauer at OXYDeanVPAA@wittkieffer.com. The consultants can be reached through the office of Angela Bettis at (301) 654-5070.

While electronic communication is preferred, documents that must be mailed may be sent to: Occidental College Dean of the College Search, Attn: Angela Bettis, Witt/Kieffer, 7201 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 775, Bethesda, MD, 20814.

Occidental College values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, color, disability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other status protected by law.

The material presented in this position specification should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from Occidental College documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.
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