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Smith College
Vice President for Campus Life and Dean of the College

Smith educates women of promise for lives of distinction and purpose. A college of and for the world, Smith develops global citizens and leaders to address society's challenges.

Leadership Opportunity

The Vice President for Campus Life and Dean of the College ("the VP") is a critical leadership role at Smith College, with primary responsibility for the totality of the student experience. Leading with strategic clarity, rigor, and empathy, the VP will sustain, design, and build structures, services, and systems that promote a healthy, dynamic, inclusive, and safe campus environment in which students thrive. College leadership will support the VP in developing a compelling vision for student life at Smith and in realizing that vision through an integrated array of effective and efficient programs managed by talented professional staff dedicated to student success. Given the significant resources that the college can continue to invest in the student experience, the VP will collaborate with other college leaders to oversee the development of a campus life program designed to deliver on Smith's mission to educate women of promise for lives of distinction and purpose.

As a direct report to the President and a member of the President's Team, the VP will be a crucial partner in the implementation of *Compass 2035*, Smith's strategic plan, and will be engaged in all aspects of institutional planning and policy development. They will draw on a comprehensive understanding of best practices and national standards in campus life and student affairs, and will focus on enhancing and supporting students' growth, learning, and well-being.

At this moment of disruption in post-secondary education, the new VP will help Smith's current and future students meet the moment *and* prepare for a future that is being shaped by the global economy, political and cultural shifts, generative AI, and other factors. In this regard, the next VP will have the opportunity to shape the experience of all current and future students.

The Campus Life Portfolio

Smith College provides a comprehensive and integrated array of services that span student life from the point of admission through the arc of an alum's career, services that are designed for the next decade and beyond. In its current structure, the division of Campus Life consists of five units comprising approximately 100 FTEs and supported by a $20M budget:

- The office of the Associate Dean of College, encompassing the Class Deans Office and staff and resources focused on student advising, academic integrity, and fellowships
- The Office of Student Affairs:
    - Accessibility Resource Center
    - Residence Life, including management of the college's 40-plus residential houses and their student-governance councils, which are a distinctive and valued part of the Smith student experience
    - Office of Student Engagement

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  - Schacht Center for Health and Wellness, which provides in-house professional staff for physical and mental health services and coordinates access to area clinics and specialized healthcare providers
  - Case Management and Student Conflict
  - First-Year Experience
  - Smith College Athletics, supporting 11 varsity sports, club sports, and the Outdoor Recreation Program
- The Jandon Center for Community Engagement
- The Lazarus Center for Career Development

In addition to directly supervising the leaders of each of these five units, the VP jointly supervises, with the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, the Associate Dean for Integrative Learning. This associate dean position is held by a member of the faculty who serves a renewable three-year term. Integrative Learning encompasses the Wurtele Center for Leadership, the Conway Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center, the Narratives Project, the Design Thinking Initiative, and other programs that are primarily curricular. While the Associate Dean for Integrative Learning formulates strategy for these centers and programs primarily with the Provost and college faculty, the VP Campus Life and their leadership team inform the development and operations of the centers and enhance their overall integration into the student experience.

The Jandon Center for Community Engagement helps faculty, students, and community partners collaborate on social-change projects that tackle community-driven goals. Focused on advancing social equity and supporting healthy communities, the Jandon Center engages over 200 students in projects each year and serves 35-plus community organization partners. Jandon students have completed over 17,000 service hours with their local partners.

Smith College's career development is anchored by the Lazarus Center for Career Development, where advisors work individually with students to connect their liberal arts education to their career goals, starting from day one. In recent years, the center has significantly expanded its capacity and reach, increasing staff from 12 to 24, more than doubling first-year student engagement, and building an active alumni mentor network of over 2,400 volunteers.

The advising services coordinated by the Class Deans under the Associate Dean of the College, the Jandon Center, the Lazarus Center, and the Integrative Learning portfolio are areas of important interaction between the division of Campus Life and the office of the Provost & Dean of the Faculty.

The VP's portfolio also includes the Ada Comstock Scholars Program, which enables women of nontraditional college age to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree either part-time or full-time, with flexible options for course loads, special academic advising, career counseling, and some housing. There are currently approximately 40 students in the program.

Alongside their direct responsibility for the Campus Life portfolio and their shared responsibility for Smith's Integrative Learning centers and programs, the VP sits on key committees established within Smith's governance structure. These include the Academic Integrity Board, the Academic Board, the Committee on Academic Priorities, the Committee on Mission and Priorities, and the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation. Together with the Provost, the Vice President for Undergraduate

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and Graduate Enrollment, and the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion, the VP serves as a liaison to the Academic and Student Experience Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Priorities for the VP

The work that informed *Compass 2035* brought into focus an array of opportunities for Campus Life to contribute even more strongly to the impact of a Smith education. *Compass 2035* is already guiding much activity across campus and will inform the way in which the VP will plan their work. It establishes four interdependent goals in the domains of Academic Experience and Campus Community:

Academic Experience:

- Inspire and support academic excellence, exploration, and discovery
- Prepare students for fulfilling careers and a lifetime of leadership

Campus & Community:

- Foster resilience, well-being, and belonging across [the Smith] community
- Strengthen institutional sustainability to ensure the College's enduring contributions to the world

The Campus Life team is central to the success of these goals. The VP will start their tenure with the opportunity to refine the measures of success and the communication strategy to share progress with internal and external constituents.

While realizing the aspirations established in *Compass 2035* will constitute a significant portion of the VP's leadership activities, there are other areas in which they will strengthen the college:

- Assessing the organizational structure, services, and programs of Campus Life to ensure it is positioned to exceed expectations
- Ensuring that college policies guiding how Smith manages activities and events involving students are attentive to both law and politics and bring the appropriate level of risk-awareness to the responsibilities entailed in providing a residential liberal-arts education in today's complex environment
- Increasing the use of data and metrics in evaluating the efficacy of Campus Life programs and shaping the future set of services, resources, and activities that the division will provide
- Understanding and anticipating demographic and generational shifts and leading institutional responses to these changes with agility
- Working with the Provost and Dean of the Faculty and with faculty more broadly to increase the synergy between Campus Life and the Provost & Dean of the Faculty office in the ongoing development of experiential education as a facet of Smith's liberal-arts curriculum
- Similarly, enhance engagement between Campus Life and the Provost & Dean of the Faculty in the area of student advising
- Partnering with Campus Safety, Communications, and General Counsel in the development of best practices that shape the college's response to incidents involving Smith students

Given Smith's remarkably talented, highly engaged, and increasingly diverse student body, the VP will be intimately familiar with the challenges of building more equitable and inclusive communities.

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The VP will possess the cultural agility and the experiences, skills, and willingness to champion a vision for Smith's community that appreciates and accepts differences, as well as the recognition that diversity, in all its forms, plays an integral role as part of a liberal arts education, particularly as this education sustains democratic ideals and prepares students for civic life.

The VP will be frequently called upon to publicly and effectively articulate and reaffirm Smith's commitment to social justice and equity, both through words and action. At the heart of this preparation will reside a heightened social awareness and knowledge of the experiences of, and challenges facing, a wide range of students who belong to frequently marginalized groups. The VP will be proactive when working through complex cultural issues of race, ethnicity, ability, gender and gender identity, socioeconomic status, and other related issues of identity. The VP will actively and consistently engage students, faculty, and staff in order to identify and address challenges and seek novel ways to build a community in which all students feel welcomed, supported, and able to do their best work. Furthermore, the VP will work to capture the opportunity afforded by the increasing internationalization of the student body and integrate global awareness into the student experience at Smith.

Qualifications

Smith College seeks a strategic, engaged, and imaginative leader to partner with the President and senior leaders in charting the path for the next generation of Smith students. Success will require an understanding of both complex organizational structures and the interdependence of the academic and non-academic aspects of students' education, along with a systems-thinking approach.

The VP will bring energy and interpersonal skills to foster new cultural norms and programmatic innovations while respecting the value of tradition. The VP will be an advocate, role model, and mentor for Smith students, and will work directly with student leaders, faculty members, residential life staff, the Provost, the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion, President Willie-LeBreton, and other campus leaders to build an increasingly diverse and inclusive community that provides opportunities for social, emotional, and intellectual engagement and growth so that every Smithie graduates as an adaptable thinker, an engaged citizen, a good neighbor, and a collaborative leader.

Finally, the VP will be energized by the opportunity to work with and on behalf of Smith students and will find joy and satisfaction in helping them navigate this time in their lives and in shaping a community where all can thrive and contribute.

Critical Leadership Capabilities

Strategic Operational Leader

The VP will lead the division in alignment with the President's vision and the college's mission, create strategies and innovative approaches for the student experiences that build upon Smith's existing strengths and traditions, and ensure its ongoing position as a leader in liberal arts education and global leadership development. The VP will be a committed partner to colleagues in the President's senior team, a thoughtful listener, and a dedicated leader who uses the authority and resources of their position to empower a well-established team of professionals to advance the goals of the division and the college.

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The VP will convincingly articulate the benefit of investing in the rigorous, residential liberal arts education that Smith provides and will promote the vision of a fully integrated student experience, combining the curricular and co-curricular dimensions of student life. They will inherit a talented team and must continue to inspire, support, and manage accomplished professionals with a wide range of expertise and responsibility. Through accessible and supportive leadership, clarity of purpose, and ongoing opportunities for development, the VP will enable the division to continue to elevate its performance.

Collaborative Relationship-Builder

In a collegial community that values collaboration, the VP must develop strong working relationships across the college among the senior leadership team, notably with the provost, the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion, the Vice President of Enrollment, and the EVP of Finance and Administration, as well as with faculty, administrators, deans, and department chairs. The next leader must convey a deep respect for the academic culture at Smith and a commitment to advance the college's overall mission and goals. The VP will have a leadership style characterized by a passion for engagement that builds connections across the institution. They will appreciate the delicate balance of serving as an advocate for students while also being an institution-minded leader and a trusted advisor to the President.

Expertise and Competencies

While no one person is expected to possess all of the qualities enumerated below, the ideal candidate will have the following professional and personal characteristics:

- Visionary and strategic leadership to advance the college towards its highest aspirations and goals
- A leadership style characterized by collaboration, transparency, and accountability
- Strong organizational management and leadership skills developed in an academically rigorous residential college or university
- Passion for innovating and overseeing, providing support and opportunities for students, and an authentic appreciation for Smith's mission, values, and history
- Talent for working across institutional and organizational boundaries to develop an exceptional living and learning student experience
- Successful track record of having built collaborative and meaningful relationships with a broad group of constituents, including faculty, staff, students, parents, trustees, alumnae and community leaders
- Deep understanding of the challenges that institutions of higher education experience as they work towards building more diverse, just, and equitable communities
- A proven track record maintaining complex budgets and developing optimal institutional organization structures and systems
- A demonstrated capacity to develop and implement initiatives that improve and equalize the student experience
- Readiness and ability to partner in support of major institutional fundraising goals
- A strong, visible presence and the inclination to be an active participant or observer in a range of co-curricular contexts

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- Experience building, developing and empowering strong teams of faculty and administrative staff
- Domain expertise in campus life and student affairs, ideally to include familiarity with national standards and trends in the student-affairs function; a record of using data and metrics to inform the design, delivery, and assessment of student-support services; a record of bringing value to a campus from participation in national associations; a record of translating thought-leadership into strategies, systems, and programs
- A deep understanding of the value of a liberal-arts education and the ways in which that education interconnects with co-curricular experiences, including experiential learning
- Understanding of the legal, regulatory, political, and cultural context around Smith and the higher-education sector more broadly, along with experience developing policy in the student affairs space
- An undergraduate degree from an accredited institution (required); a graduate degree and/or non-degree credentials that attest to a sustained desire to develop professionally (strongly preferred)

Smith College – Background and History

Founded in 1871 as a private college with a mission to provide women with an excellent liberal arts education, Smith is one of the top 20 liberal arts colleges in the country. Primarily an undergraduate residential college, Smith stands alone in many ways. It is large enough to have the resources of a university, yet small enough to be an intimate community.

Smith College began more than 125 years ago in the mind and conscience of a New England woman. In her will, Sophia Smith expressed her vision of a liberal arts college for women equal to the best available to men, one that would make it possible "to develop as fully as may be the powers of womanhood." By means of such a college, she wrote, women's "wrongs will be redressed, their wages adjusted, their weight of influence in reforming the evils of society will be greatly increased…their power for good incalculably enlarged."

In keeping with Sophia Smith's intent, the college aims to produce graduates distinguished by their intellectual capabilities, their capacity for leadership, their ethical values and their readiness to contribute to the betterment of the world. Today, Smith is among the largest of the selective liberal arts colleges and offers a broad curriculum. In 2000, the college established the first engineering program at a women's college. Its programs in the arts, humanities, and sciences have expanded to respond to the intellectual needs of today's students—offering study in computer science, data sciences, engineering, gender studies, environmental science and policy, film and media studies, Middle East studies, neuroscience, and other emerging fields. In particular, Smith has earned a leadership position in preparing women for careers in scientific fields and ranks highly among colleges in the number of women graduates who earn doctorates in science and engineering.

With 2,500 undergraduates, 313 faculty members, and an 8:1student-to-faculty ratio, Smith's enrollment and faculty size enable it to combine the curricular breadth of a small university with the close personal attention of a residential liberal arts college. This supportive academic environment is complemented by a student housing program in which most students (98%, typically) live in 41 self-governing residential houses accommodating from 10 to 100 students.

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Smith is a member of the Five Colleges, Inc., consortium, which affords students a wide range of academic, cultural, and social advantages. The consortium, a unique private/public partnership among five educational institutions, is one of the oldest and most esteemed in American higher education. Smith has an endowment of approximately $2.9 billion (June 2025) and an operating budget of approximately $315 million. The Smith campus is ideally situated steps from the center of Northampton, Massachusetts, a city of 31,000 that is home to a vibrant social and cultural scene.

At Smith, the individuality of each student emerges. Smith students graduate confident in their academic and personal accomplishments. Students attracted to Smith are talented and strong-minded, often with a more academic or intellectual orientation than their peers and a commitment to public or civic issues. Smith has become intentionally and significantly diverse, leading most of the academy, especially in socioeconomic diversity. Diversity today grows naturally from the college's historic mission and adds to its impressive accomplishments. In the tradition of Sophia Smith, Smith College has made a particular commitment to students of promise from the full range of socioeconomic classes. The 648 students who entered Smith in fall 2026 came from more than 550 different high schools and included 17 percent first-generation college students, 20 percent Pell Grant recipients, and 14 percent international citizens; 39 percent of domestic students in the latest class are students of color.

The college has made socioeconomic diversity possible through impressive financial aid, meeting the full demonstrated need of all students, implementing a "No Loans" policy and a commitment to cover 100% of the tuition for families earning $150,000 or less, and spending close to $100 million annually on financial aid. By remaining "need aware" versus "need blind," Smith carefully stewards the financial aid budget to ensure that all aided students are able to take part in every aspect of a Smith education. An important example is that Smith uses a "homeschool fee" policy in regard to study away, enabling students to study abroad -- a longstanding feature of many students' programs -- regardless of financial means. Smith has graduated an impressive cadre of leaders around the world. With its increased international appeal, the college expects to see an even larger group emerge.

To start learning more about Smith, visit https://www.smith.edu/discover-smith/smith-glance.

To Apply

Craig Smith, Managing Partner, Kenna Boyd, Partner, and Marisea Rivera, Senior Associate, are leading the search, which will remain confidential to the extent possible. For additional information, to nominate qualified candidates, or to apply, please contact Marisea Rivera via marisea.rivera@opuspartners.net.

Candidates will provide a letter of interest and a current CV. Letters may highlight leadership experience and professional motivations, anticipate questions that might be prompted by these materials, or note an accomplishment that may not be evident on a CV. The college values diversity, equity, and inclusion and will seek a leader who is committed to promoting these values throughout the organization. The college encourages candidates to address how they might promote these values and highlight initiatives designed to remove barriers and to increase participation by groups historically under-represented in post-secondary education.

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In addition to a competitive benefits package, the target salary range for this role is $244,400 - $298,500. Smith College is committed to paying competitively and equitably, taking into account the selected candidate's relevant qualifications.

Consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 151B, it is the policy of Smith College to provide reasonable accommodation when requested by a qualified applicant or employee with a disability, unless such accommodation would cause an undue hardship. The policy regarding requests for reasonable accommodation applies to all aspects of employment, including the application process. If reasonable accommodation is needed, please contact our recruiting team at recruiting-u@smith.edu.

As set forth in its mission and values, Smith College is committed to promoting a culture of equity and inclusion among students, staff, and faculty. The College will not discriminate in employment on the basis of age, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or any other classification protected by law. Smith College is an equal opportunity employer and complies with all state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination.

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