



Vice Provost for University Life

The University of Pennsylvania seeks an innovative, inclusive, collaborative, and entrepreneurial leader for the role of Vice Provost for University Life. The Vice Provost plays a critical and highly visible role in leading and supporting the University-wide student experience at Penn.

Reporting directly to the Provost, the next Vice Provost for University Life will lead the Division of University Life, working collaboratively with undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty across Penn's 12 schools and a wide range of interdisciplinary centers and institutes. The Vice Provost leads the student life portfolio at Penn, which includes academic, career and personal support; community clubs and organizations; cultural resource centers; and administrative services. The Vice Provost will lead all campus initiatives related to student life in a manner that is inclusive, innovative, strategic, data-informed, and maximizes the value of available technologies, while maintaining the responsiveness and individualized approach to students that Penn has always exemplified.

With the arrival of newly appointed President Liz Magill, a legal scholar and transformative leader, this is an exciting time to join the University of Pennsylvania. This position presents a unique opportunity to shape the lives of exceptionally talented students who are deeply committed to the Penn ethos of making a meaningful difference in the wider world. The University's longstanding emphasis on student life, combined with lessons learned from the pandemic, offer new opportunities for the Vice Provost to think creatively and flexibly about how to continue to advance the student experience at Penn.

The University invites applications and nominations for this significant leadership role.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Pennsylvania's 300-acre West Philadelphia campus reflects its rich heritage—a heritage closely bound with the birth of the United States—with more than 200 buildings and many notable landmarks, including the nation's first student union (Houston Hall) and first double-decker college football stadium (Franklin Field).

The 165 research centers and institutes on campus also reflect the University's innovative, civic-minded, and pragmatic creator. More than 250 years after Ben Franklin broke new ground in founding Penn, its faculty, students, and alumni continue to make breakthroughs in research, scholarship, and education. Its many subsequent "firsts" include the world's first collegiate business school (Wharton, 1881), the world's first electronic, large-scale, general-purpose digital computer (ENIAC, 1946), the first woman president of an Ivy League institution (Judith Rodin,

inaugurated in 1994), and the first female Ivy League president to succeed another female (Amy Gutmann, inaugurated in 2004).

Penn has a proud tradition of translating knowledge into social-minded action that dates back to founder Benjamin Franklin. This tradition of active pragmatism, articulated in Franklin's maxim "well-done is better than well-said," lives today through inclusive policies, innovative work, and the impactful engagement of the faculty, students, and staff.

Consistently ranked among the top 10 universities in the country, Penn enrolls 10,001 undergraduate students and welcomes an additional 16,746 students in their world-renowned graduate and professional schools. For many of these students, financial need is not a barrier to a Penn education. Penn currently admits undergraduate students without regard to need and offers all-grant financial aid packages.

Home to eminent researchers, scholars, and educators, Penn is one of the world's most powerful research and teaching institutions, with a research budget of nearly \$1.1 billion and more than 5,000 active faculty members. The scale and interdisciplinary character of research and teaching at Penn put the University in a league of its own.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

Penn dates its founding to 1740, when a plan emerged to build a Philadelphia charity school that would double as a house of worship. After construction was underway, however, the cost was seen to be much greater than the available resources, and the project went unfinished for a decade. Then in 1749, Benjamin Franklin—printer, inventor, and future founding father of the United States—published his famous essay, *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth*, circulated it among Philadelphia's leading citizens, and organized 24 trustees to form an institution of higher education based on his proposals. The group purchased Whitefield's "New Building" and, in 1751, opened its doors to children of the gentry and working class alike as the Academy and Charitable School in the Province of Pennsylvania. Franklin served as president of the institution until 1755 and continued to serve as a trustee until his death in 1790.

Franklin's educational aims—to train young people for leadership in business, government, and public service—were innovative for the time. In the 1750s, the other Colonial American colleges educated young men for the Christian ministry, but Franklin's proposed program of study was much more like the modern liberal arts curriculum.

In addition to challenging the educational conventions of the day, Franklin pushed boundaries that moved science and society forward and helped shape America's very nationhood. His broad knowledge spanned multiple disciplines, and far from regarding it as an end in itself, he saw knowledge as an asset that required practical application to be of value.

Franklin's new institution went on to obtain a collegiate charter (1755), graduate its first class (1757), establish the first medical school in the American colonies (1765) and become the first

American institution of higher education to be named a university (1779). In 1802, the University expanded to a new campus, but by the 1860s had outgrown even that space, so in 1872 the trustees built a new campus in the streetcar suburb of West Philadelphia.

SCHOOLS

Penn's 12 [schools](#) include some of the top-rated undergraduate and graduate programs in the world. Because they share one contiguous campus, collaboration and the integration of knowledge across the disciplines happen in formal and informal settings every day. The unique aspect of a Penn education prepares students to excel in an increasingly complex 21st-century world.

[Annenberg School for Communication](#)

[School of Arts and Sciences](#)

[School of Dental Medicine](#)

[School of Engineering and Applied Science](#)

[Graduate School of Education](#)

[School of Nursing](#)

[Penn Carey Law School](#)

[Perelman School of Medicine](#)

[School of Social Policy & Practice](#)

[Stuart Weitzman School of Design](#)

[Wharton School](#)

[School of Veterinary Medicine](#)

STUDENT BODY

Students come to the University of Pennsylvania from all over the United States and around the world and are diverse in every conceivable way. The University enrolls over 10,000 full-time undergraduates and over 12,000 full-time graduate and professional students. An additional 5,000 part-time students pursue degrees for a total student population of over 28,000 (as of Fall 2021). See <https://www.upenn.edu/about/facts> for details and up to date information.

Penn is a wide-ranging, ever-changing community that draws its strength from a multitude of races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, ages, religions, interests, perspectives, and socioeconomic backgrounds. For more information about student, staff and faculty [demographics](#), diversity offices, school-specific initiatives, and student organizations championing diversity and inclusion efforts at Penn, please visit: <https://diversity.upenn.edu/>.

LOCATION AND LOCAL CULTURE

Philadelphia is known for being walkable, historic, bustling, and unpretentious. From the Constitution Center to the Liberty Bell and many famous firsts — including the country's first

zoo, library, stock exchange, hospital, and medical school (Penn's own Perelman School of Medicine) — Philadelphia contains 67 National Historic Landmarks and the World Heritage Site of Independence Hall.

Penn's setting—a tight-knit, beautiful, green campus in the nation's sixth-largest city—offers the best of two worlds. The campus has more than 215 buildings (excluding hospitals) on 300 acres. While distinctly urban, the West Philadelphia campus alone has so much green space that it was officially declared an arboretum in 2017. Penn is an environment like no other, bringing together intellectual and social connections, and fostering an indomitable community spirit.

The urban campus is highly regarded for [student safety](#). Penn has been ranked first for safety in the Higher Education Sector by *Security Magazine* for seven straight years. With a private police force and a 24-hour-a-day walking or riding escort program for students, Penn is one of the nation's safest campuses. Learn more about [Penn's Clery reporting](#).

The Penn campus is well served by an extensive network of subway, bus, regional rail, national rail, and trolley lines. Penn Transit's comprehensive system provides integrated transit free of charge to all PennCard holders. Penn buses make continuous loops downtown and through Penn's surrounding neighborhoods. Discounted passes for the Philadelphia and New Jersey transit systems are available to full-time Penn students. Visit [Penn's transportation page](#) for more information.

DIVISION OF UNIVERSITY LIFE

Penn's Division of University Life is part of the Office of the Provost and includes 135 staff and 16 campus departments that address the myriad social and support needs of Penn's diverse students, providing academic and career programming, campus and community engagement, and much more. As Penn's foremost provider of student activities, services, and support, the Division of University Life enhances the ability of Penn students to reach their fullest potential through diverse academic, personal, and professional development experiences.

University Life Programs and Services:

Engagement & Leadership

[Career Services](#) helps students define their career goals and learn how to achieve them. The office helps students and alumni obtain permanent and short-term career-related employment and graduate and professional school admission through counseling sessions, workshops, alumni networks, a large career resource library, and online information. Career Services also hosts employer interviews through the on-campus recruiting program and establishes and promotes contact between employers, graduate/professional schools, and the University.

The [Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life](#) administers and oversees Penn's Greek letter social fraternity and sorority system, including three Greek governing councils (Multicultural Greek

Council, InterFraternity Council, and Panhellenic Council), the over 40 recognized undergraduate social fraternities and sororities, and chapter housing.

[Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps \(NROTC\)](#) educates and trains qualified young men and women for service as commissioned officers in the Navy and Marine Corps. Students are awarded scholarships through a highly competitive national selection process and receive tuition, books, fees, and other financial aid.

The [Office of Student Affairs \(OSA\)](#) is a central provider of resources and experiences designed to supplement students' classroom learning and to contribute significantly to their personal development. The Office of Student Affairs serves as a primary source of information and advice about co-curricular opportunities and resources. Staff members assist students in becoming involved in campus life, conduct leadership development programs, provide continuity for organizations from year to year, manage organizational finances, coordinate [Family Weekend](#), educate students about [University policies](#), mediate organizational and individual disputes, and advise [special programs and activities](#) and [student government](#), among other responsibilities.

[Platt Student Performing Arts House](#) provides leadership and support for the creation and implementation of arts programming for students at the University of Pennsylvania. Platt House supports over 70+ student performing arts groups, which stage over 100 comedy, spoken word, dance, theatre, and music events each year. In addition, the team provides trainings, workshops, masterclasses, career mentorship, and facilitates youth arts mentorship, audience outreach, and engagement with the regional arts industry.

Cultural Centers

The [Greenfield Intercultural Center](#) is Penn's resource for enhancing students' intercultural knowledge, competency, and leadership through programs, advising, and advocacy. GIC offers experiential courses for credit, signature intercultural programs, and other services related to diversity and intercultural education. The Center's numerous co-curricular educational and cultural programs bring together diverse groups to raise awareness of the rich traditions and diversity within the Penn community.

[The Center for Hispanic Excellence: La Casa Latina](#) promotes greater awareness of Latinx issues, culture, and identity at Penn. La Casa Latina works closely with the Penn community to offer a supportive environment where all students are welcomed and engaged in programs, events, and dialogues that address important issues affecting Latinxs/Hispanics locally, nationally, and internationally.

The [Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center](#) enriches the experience, fosters success, celebrates victories, and affirms the existence of Penn's LGBTQ+ undergraduates, professional and graduate students, staff, faculty, and alumni using the lenses of social justice and intersectionality.

[Makuu: The Black Cultural Center](#) is a nexus of academic, professional, and personal growth for Penn students interested in Black culture and the African Diaspora. Through advising, leadership development, network facilitation, and cultural programming, the Center expands student access to the University's resources, enhancing our campus and global communities.

The [Pan-Asian American Community House](#) (PAACH) is a hub of academic, personal, and professional growth for Penn students interested in Asian American culture and the Asian American Diaspora. Through advising, leadership development, advocacy, and social and cultural programming, PAACH expands student access to the University's resources.

The [Penn Women's Center](#) (PWC) seeks to promote gender justice, and to empower, support, and advance personal and professional development. As one of the nation's oldest Women's Centers, founded in 1973, the Center works with students, staff, and faculty of all genders and identities.

Student Care & Support

[Penn Violence Prevention \(PVP\)](#) engages the Penn community in the prevention of sexual violence, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual harassment on campus. It fosters collaborative relationships across campus to ensure a survivor-centered, multi-faceted approach to support services and primary prevention. Through collective community action, PVP is committed to ending interpersonal violence by addressing gender inequity, social injustice, and oppression through outreach and education.

[Student Intervention Services](#) enhances well-being, academic success, and personal growth within Penn's diverse student body through crisis intervention and prevention. SIS collaborates with multidisciplinary partners to provide support, advocacy, solutions, and coordination of services for individual students and the Penn community.

[Weingarten Learning Resources Center](#) provides academic support and disability services for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. The center includes three offices: the Office of Learning Resources, Academic Accommodations, and the Tutoring Center. The professional staff of these offices collaborate with faculty and staff to ensure that students receive comprehensive services that enhance their learning experiences and intellectual development at Penn. All services and programs are free and confidential.

The [Office of Learning Resources \(OLR\)](#) provides professional instruction in skills such as academic reading, writing, study strategies, and time management.

[Academic Accommodations](#) provides comprehensive, professional services and programs to ensure equal academic opportunities and participation in University-sponsored programs. On a case-by-case basis, staff determine reasonable accommodations, including academic adjustments, e-text, accessible campus housing, and transportation and parking. SDS also coordinates auxiliary aids and services such as sign language interpreters and Computer Aided

Realtime Translation (CART) reporters, as well as the loan of equipment and assistive technologies.

The [Tutoring Center](#) provides tutoring, training, and access to academic resources for undergraduate students. Tutorial services are provided by undergraduate peer and graduate student tutors for core and introductory courses.

Administrative Services

[Space and Events Management](#) The oldest operating student center in the country, the Student Center @ Houston Hall was built in 1896 as a private club space for Penn students. Today, this historic building remains at the center of campus life – a place where students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests gather for social, cultural, recreational, and educational activities. It provides a welcoming environment where students can interact with each other, support their community, and find a home away from home.

[University Life Technology Services](#) works to provide University Life with best-in-class student and administrative information systems and desktop computing equipment. The group offers a variety of technical services to ensure that technology facilitates the work processes of divisional offices. Technology Services also works to develop collaborative relationships to ensure that technologic projects are developed and delivered in an integrated fashion. The central goal of Technology Services is to create and maintain a supportive environment, in which technology advances the imperatives of the division and the University.

UNIVERSITY LIFE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

As Penn's foremost provider of student services and educational access, the Division of University Life nurtures an inclusive campus life environment where students grow intellectually and personally, engage in meaningful experiential opportunities, and deepen intercultural and interpersonal understanding in preparation for a life of meaning and purpose.

Penn fosters a welcoming, stimulating campus life environment where students and participants develop intellectually and personally, experience meaningful co-curricular opportunities, evidence civic responsibility, and model intercultural and interpersonal understanding. Penn students and community participants will leave prepared to freely pursue lifelong personal and professional fulfillment, engagement, and stewardship of ever-changing local and global communities.

To achieve this, the Division of University Life has created several working groups in spring 2021 that will inform the strategic priorities of the unit in the coming years. The groups consist of the following:

- Group 1 – Mission, Branding, and Website
- Group 2 – Culture of Student Care – Individualized Duty of Care of Students

- Group 3 – Culture of Assessment
- Group 4 - Culture of Human Flourishing (Diversity, Inclusion & Social Justice Education)
- Group 5 - Divisional Celebrations & Recognitions
- Group 6 - Divisional Communication Strategy
- Group 7 - Learning Agenda & Professional Development
- Group 8 – Student Spotlights
- Group 9 - Unified Curriculum for Student Employees & Leaders

THE ROLE OF VICE PROVOST FOR UNIVERSITY LIFE (VPUL)

The Vice Provost for University Life oversees a nationally honored division providing services, support, and leadership development opportunities to support a diverse community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. Penn students benefit enormously from the University's rich global diversity and renowned interdisciplinary educational opportunities. University Life plays an integral role in students' lives, integrating student supports and co-curricular experiences in civic engagement, peer education, career planning, mentoring, and cultural programming.

Reporting to the Provost, the next Vice Provost will lead a complex portfolio of responsibilities, including the following:

- Lead University Life departments and programs serving over 26,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students;
- Provide leadership in the areas of long-range University Life strategic planning, student outcomes assessment, University Life facilities planning and renovation, development and resource acquisition opportunities, program review, and staffing;
- Develop, recommend, and implement long- and short-range University Life goals, objectives, policies, and procedures; and
- Serve as a member of the Provost's Leadership Group, the Council of Graduate Deans, the Professional Masters Deans Council, the Council of Undergraduate Deans, and the University Academic Planning and Budget Committee.

The VP will oversee a budget of \$45 million and a staff of 135 full-time employees across 16 departments, including the following direct reports:

- Senior Associate Vice Provost for University Life
- Associate Vice Provost for University Life
- Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
- Assistant Vice Provost for Strategic Planning and Operations
- Interim University Life Technology Services Director
- Executive Assistant to the Vice Provost for University Life

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Vice Provost will be energized by the following opportunities and challenges, among many others:

Bringing innovative practices to student life – The next Vice Provost will ensure that the Division continues to be a national and campus model for proactive, inclusive student-centered practices that promote and support student success, fulfillment, personal growth, and well-being. Recognizing that the national landscape of student affairs has changed significantly since the pandemic, the Vice Provost will lead in a way that is transparent, consultative, and innovative in approach, taking strategic risks to maximize impact, while maintaining the responsiveness and highly personalized student services that Penn has always exemplified.

Bringing vision to an evolving division – As the portfolio within University Life continues to evolve, the Vice Provost will work closely with the Provost and senior leadership to re-envision the Division’s work across the University, how it serves students with excellence, and how its culture and approach support the University. The Vice Provost will bring vision towards new and ongoing initiatives aimed at championing students’ intellectual, personal, and professional growth.

Enhancing the undergraduate and graduate student experience, with a focus on supporting inclusion and belonging for Penn’s diverse student body - By providing programs and initiatives that facilitate continued success and positive outcomes for underrepresented Penn students, the Vice Provost will serve as a vocal, visible, and effective champion of anti-racism, equity, and inclusion and will lead the Division’s efforts around DEI initiatives.

Partnering, communicating, and collaborating across a large, complex, and decentralized university model – Keeping the well-being and success of students at the forefront, the next Vice Provost will develop strong and collaborative relationships across the University. This includes working with academic units and all areas that engage with the student experience, as well as partnering with the student affairs teams positioned within Penn’s 12 schools. Close collaboration with student health and wellness, which is a separate organization reporting directly to the Interim Provost, is essential to provide holistic student wellness services.

Developing programs and approaches that meet the needs of an evolving student demographic – The student body at Penn ranges from traditional-aged, full-time undergraduates to graduate and professional students from diverse national and international backgrounds to part-time, adult learners pursuing educational opportunities in Penn’s expanding online offerings. The Vice Provost will engage with Penn’s broad array of students to understand their varying and evolving needs and to ensure programs and supports are in place to serve all students. In addition, the Vice Provost will foster a shared identity and sense of community across the University through programs and resources that stimulate shared interactions and connections among students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members.

Recruit, retain, and mentor a talented and diverse student affairs staff – The Division of University Life consist of a large and talented student affairs staff that is dedicated to the mission of the University and its student body. The Vice Provost will further cultivate the talents of each individual staff member and encourage their continued professional development. The Vice Provost will also recruit new staff members with a particular focus on ensuring that students from underrepresented backgrounds at Penn continue to see in the student affairs staff individuals whose experience reflect their own.

Creating a student-centered environment of continuous improvement and informed decision-making – By creating a culture of care and evidence-based outcomes assessment for each department, the Vice Provost will engage all staff and stakeholders in an ongoing process of information gathering, analysis, and self-reflection intended to inform future planning and resource allocation in an ultimate effort to better understand and serve evolving student needs.

Generating and strategically allocating resources – In partnership with University Advancement and other University leadership, the Vice Provost will work to attract additional resources to support student needs. The Vice Provost will also continue to support the ongoing improvement of fiscal operations, budget efficacy within the division, and physical space needs for University Life units.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The University of Pennsylvania seeks a collaborative and visible campus leader with strong management skills who engages regularly and enthusiastically with students and who has significant experience leading change in complex organizations. Candidates must have a passion for Penn’s mission and a commitment to providing undergraduate, graduate, and professional students with an outstanding experience at Penn. An advanced degree is preferred.

The ideal candidate will possess:

- A deep passion for student life and the holistic student experience, including personal growth and student well-being;
- Deep experience serving the unique needs of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from a range of socioeconomic, racial, sexual identity, and other backgrounds;
- An unyielding commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and a history of strong and measurable progress advancing these issues in a campus environment;
- An ability to build teams and to lead, inspire, mentor, and retain staff within a complex division;
- A track record of welcoming collaboration with a range of partners and constituencies across a campus to advance the overall student experience;
- An ability to navigate a large, decentralized, and complex research institution;
- An understanding of national best practices around important student issues, including how to engage with parents, and an ability to be a leading voice in the national discourse surrounding student affairs and higher education;
- Experience managing crises and demonstrated calm under pressure;

- Facility with data and its value in determining strategy and allocating resources;
- An understanding of complex legal regulations that may impact student affairs decisions or approaches;
- A student-centered entrepreneurial, strategic, and evidence-driven approach to encouraging innovation and leading change;
- A highly nuanced understanding of equity and inclusion and how to design policies and systems so that students from all backgrounds and experiences can thrive;
- The ability to build consensus among constituents with widely varying needs and priorities;
- Experience serving in a highly-visible leadership role serving undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, faculty, and staff;
- Impeccable integrity and a deep commitment to the mission of Penn;
- Outstanding communication skills, including the ability to use technology and social media effectively;
- Superior written and oral presentation skills, adaptable for a variety of audiences including both internal and external stakeholders; and,
- A proven ability to be both compassionate and firm in managing complex student issues and concerns in a changing global environment.

APPLICATIONS

For best consideration, please send all nominations and applications, electronically and in confidence by October 20, 2022, to:



Ruth Shoemaker Wood, Ph.D., Managing Director
Fiona Jaramillo, Ed.D., Senior Associate
Storbeck Search
PennUniversityLife@storbecksearch.com

Penn is committed to ensuring that its academic, social, recreational programs and services as well as opportunities for admission and employment are available on an equitable and nondiscriminatory basis without regard to an individual's legally protected class status. Penn also has written affirmative action programs to address any underrepresentation of women, minorities, people with disabilities, and qualified covered veterans. The Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, in collaboration with the Division of Human Resources and the Office of the Provost, oversees the implementation and administration of the University's equal opportunity, affirmative action, and nondiscrimination policies and programs. The University recognizes the right of members of the community to raise questions and pursue complaints of discrimination and adheres to a strict policy that prohibits retaliation for doing so. Questions, complaints of alleged discrimination, or concerns regarding these policies or their implementation may be directed to the Executive Director, Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, Franklin Building, Suite 421, 3451 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6205, (215) 898-6993 (Voice) or (215) 746-7088 (Fax).