

Role Specification and Process:

President of Mount Holyoke College

This “Role Specification” reflects a shared understanding of what the Board of Trustees is seeking in the president of Mount Holyoke College. Please see the [presidential selection website](#) for a detailed outline of the process leading up to its creation.

The Role Specification

The College’s Mission Statement

Mount Holyoke’s mission is to provide an intellectually adventurous education in the liberal arts and sciences through academic programs recognized internationally for their excellence and range; to draw students from all backgrounds into an exceptionally diverse and inclusive learning community with highly accomplished, committed, and responsive faculty and staff; to continue building on the College’s historic legacy of leadership in the education of women; and to prepare students, through a liberal education integrating curriculum and careers, for lives of thoughtful, effective, and purposeful engagement in the world.

Relevant College History

In December 2015, then-President Lynn Pasquerella ’80 informed the chair of the Board of Trustees that she decided to take a position as president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Her seven-year tenure yielded many accomplishments, including the completion of a capital campaign (conducted during a national economic crisis), significant strategic planning, the preliminary design and fundraising for a community center with dining, and a pattern of outreach to alumnae and students that raised the morale of the entire extended Mount Holyoke family.

With that announcement and after intense deliberation, the Board of Trustees concluded that Sonya Stephens, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty, should be named Acting President of Mount Holyoke College for a three-year term, effective July 1, 2016.

The College has an operating budget in excess of \$136 million. Its endowment is \$761 million, as of December 2017. Under the joint auspices of an alumnae-staffed Investment Committee that works closely with Cambridge Associates LLC, the endowment performed in the top 25 percent of approximately 400 U.S. colleges and universities over the last 10 years. With tuition and room and board of \$64,450 and a tuition discount rate of approximately 50 percent, 80 percent of the College’s student body receives financial aid.

In many ways Mount Holyoke stands out for its academic rigor, quality of faculty and campus beauty, and is distinctive in numerous ways. The recent New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) review and accreditation points out many of these distinctions, as well as some areas for focus. U.S. News and World Report, which measures very differently, places Mount Holyoke 36th in its ranking of national

liberal arts colleges.

Mount Holyoke College's Board of Trustees consists of up to 34 board members, including the College President. Most of its members are alumnae of the College, and others are parents or individuals with relevant skills and experience. International, diverse and composed of a broad range of ages and professional expertise, the Board is strategically focused on the future of the College. The Board has a strong relationship with senior staff, based on frequent communication and trust. The Board respects faculty governance and interacts regularly with Mount Holyoke's many constituencies.

Job Purpose

In addition to upholding the mission, the president of Mount Holyoke College has the general and active management, control and direction of all affairs of the College. The president is an effective and inclusive leader who understands, appreciates and communicates the place of Mount Holyoke in the world, its unique learning environment and the rich diversity of the institution. In particular, the president is responsible for the strategic direction, academic and administrative leadership, building of community, and financial health and operations of the institution.

The president recognizes the historic importance of the College and ensures relevance for today and the future. These responsibilities include daily management to ensure a strong faculty, administration and student body, as well as planning and preparing for long-term success of the institution. This individual leads and supervises administrative officers, faculty, agents and employees to promote the efficiency of each department and division and the College as a whole.

The president represents the mission, excellence and purpose of the College, both within and beyond the College gates. This individual works continuously to improve the College's standing and leading reputation and excellence. The president advocates, supports and values academic rigor, quality teaching and research. All responsibilities are to be carried out with integrity. This individual is elected by and reports to the Board of Trustees, with regular contact with the Board chair.

Key Accountabilities

- build the reputation of Mount Holyoke by communicating the College's vision and distinction while working continuously to amplify its voice in the world
- lead with distinction, understanding, inclusivity, curiosity, active listening and effective communication. Base decision-making on College priorities. Recruit, develop and delegate to a capable team
- foster and support a vibrant, diverse, global, inclusive and thriving community through effective communication and relationship-building
- execute the current strategic plan and priorities, while recognizing and planning for changes in the world of higher education
- ensure long-term financial stability and integrity of the College and oversee the preparation of the annual budget and the development of capital plans and projects of the College
- build and strengthen Mount Holyoke's endowment. Raise funds to support key initiatives and overall campaign goals
- lead all constituencies in the continued revision, enhancement and relevance of the College's mission
- ensure accreditation and successfully oversee other reviews, evaluations and licensure as needed. Use such opportunities to assure that best practice, leadership and strategic thinking penetrate all aspects

of Mount Holyoke College.

Key Competencies

Leadership

The president leads with distinction through ensuring a strong and diverse community of faculty, staff and students. The president ensures that the College's recruitment, hiring and retention process leads to a diverse, excellent and collaborative faculty and staff that is aligned with student needs, advances in knowledge and research, and the College's strategic priorities and curricular goals. The president works within a shared governance model with faculty and articulates the expectations of that model.

This individual actively builds relationships throughout the campus and solicits and understands the variety of perspectives. Actively listening to concerns and competing points of view prior to making a decision is expected. This individual also demonstrates an ability and process through which competing priorities are transparently prioritized, conflict is actively managed, and the tough decisions regarding resources are made and communicated. It is intended that an environment of mutual respect and trust is built and fostered.

This individual articulates an informed point of view regarding contemporary liberal arts. The president works effectively with faculty to develop and leverage resources in support of a distinctive academic curriculum, supporting excellence and innovation. Where barriers exist for progress, this individual works to remove them. The value of teaching will be clear and an effective assessment to continuously increase the impact and improve the outcomes of learning experiences on and off campus is expected. This individual ensures there is an ongoing process of review and assessment of academic programs to ensure their alignment with both student needs and the highest and best use of limited resources.

The president sets expectations, recruits, mentors and develops officers, and holds them responsible for their individual duties, collective responsibilities and agreed outcomes. This individual builds a high-performance team with complementary skills, shared vision and alignment, while allowing for active debate. Delegation to a team of capable individuals is expected. The president sets a tone and practice of appropriate human resources management practices. Similarly, the president is expected to have a process in place to monitor, manage and mitigate risks to the College.

Strategic Capability and Planning

The president executes [The Plan for Mount Holyoke 2021](#) and leads the thinking, process and planning for the future of the College. The current strategic priorities are:

- **Leading with Distinction** Mount Holyoke will provide excellent and distinctive academic programs for students that exemplify and demonstrate the extraordinary value of a liberal arts education.
- **Global Excellence** Within the spirit and framework of our robust commitment to the liberal arts, Mount Holyoke will embrace new opportunities and directions in teaching, academic programs and research and scholarship to better prepare students to respond to the needs and challenges of a global society.
- **An Inclusive and Collaborative Community** Mount Holyoke will shape and sustain an increasingly diverse, global and inclusive community of students, faculty and staff in an environment of mutual respect in which all thrive and contribute to the flourishing of others.
- **Effectiveness and Financial Sustainability** Mount Holyoke will ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the College by improving organizational efficacy and allocating resources in a strategic, evidence-based and consistent manner.

The president's approach continuously improves the College's standing and leading reputation, excellence in teaching and scholarship, and ensures aligned operational and financial oversight. As Mount Holyoke prepares women for leadership through a liberal arts education, this individual advances and sustains curriculum-to-career strategies. Recognizing that the landscape of higher education may evolve, the successful president stays at the forefront of understanding those changes, influencing where possible, and addressing them through the strategic planning process.

Financial Stewardship

The president is the steward of the College's resources and is accountable for sustaining and enhancing the financial future of the College and assuring a balanced budget that promotes the highest and best use of limited resources. This individual oversees the development and management of the annual budget and the necessary capital plans and projects. These activities are aligned to support the strategic priorities of the College, as well as day-to-day operations. They include — but are not limited to:

- a long-term student enrollment and retention plan with realistic projections of total class size and categories
- a review and reassessment of academic programs, student services, organizational and administrative structures and systems, positions and compensation to improve effectiveness
- a facilities plan tied to infrastructure development, maintenance and replacement needs
- a fundraising plan with a prospectus that makes the case for investment and support of the College. Appropriate financial processes and controls are expected.

Fundraising

Leadership in fundraising is a significant and active part of the role of president. This individual is active in College fundraising campaigns and ensures grants and other monies are being pursued. The president strengthens alumnae relationships and helps cultivate key donors. In this regard, the president articulates a compelling vision for the College. The president works closely with the Vice President of Advancement to establish a strategy, a plan, and performance expectations to elevate the College's fundraising and instill a culture of philanthropy throughout the community.

Community-building

Championing the inclusivity of the Mount Holyoke community and serving as a role model for belonging and mutual respect are pivotal to this role. The College's vibrant, diverse, global and inclusive community is an area of distinction that cannot be taken for granted. Strengthening the connections, networks and community on campus that make Mount Holyoke a place every member of the College wants to be requires the president to be visible on campus and within the broader community. To this end, the president lives in the president's residence and uses it to engage the community. This individual attends a variety of formal and informal campus activities to engage and interact with students, staff, faculty, alumnae and other members of the community. Recognition of the importance of cocurricular programming and activities is important.

This individual actively encourages and builds relationships with the Alumnae Association. As a member of the global community, the president expects Mount Holyoke to amplify and promote environmental efforts as a commitment to the future of our campus and the planet. In addition to active support and community-building, the president is responsible for enacting policies, programming, staffing and resources that support continued diversity, inclusion and a thriving community within a global context.

As a member of the larger community, the president will speak publicly and serve on relevant external councils in support of higher education, liberal arts, women's leadership and other areas of importance for

Mount Holyoke. The successful president demonstrates an ability to effectively participate in these fora as a spokesperson for the College and a force for change, where necessary. The president is expected to have an external voice to tell the College's success stories and position the institution in the larger discussion, enhancing its standing, reputation and recognition.

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