



Widener University

Provost

Widener University seeks a creative, innovative, and collegial leader to serve as Provost of this leading metropolitan university just outside Philadelphia. As a key member of the President's five-person leadership team, the Provost will have the opportunity to oversee academic and student affairs across three campuses in Pennsylvania and Delaware. The Provost will also lead and advocate for Widener's approximately 280 full-time instructional faculty and a staff of more than 200, and oversee a budget of approximately \$74.2 million.

Widener's commitment to academic excellence, career preparation, and civic engagement is reflected in its diverse array of academic programs, which range from the arts and sciences to law, nursing, engineering, business, education, physical therapy, social work, and beyond. The new Provost will be intellectually invigorated by Widener's disciplinary breadth and will work to understand, support, and advance all of the University's schools and colleges, both individually and collectively.

The historic core of the University is the traditional undergraduate student population based on the main campus near Philadelphia. Widener has built upon this foundation a robust collection of master's and doctoral programs – both in person and online – which address the needs of the region while also reflecting the mission of the University. Today Widener enrolls nearly equal numbers of undergraduates and graduates. The Provost will play a leading role in facilitating the continued evolution of Widener as a vibrant and thriving University delivering high-quality academic programs in a diverse and inclusive environment.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Since its founding in 1821, Widener has undergone multiple transformations to become a selective, nationally ranked, doctoral university. Today, Widener offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs, as well as certificate programs, to 3,345 undergraduates and 3,276 graduate students across three campuses and online.

Widener's distinctive collection of programs reflects its foundational belief that the liberal arts and sciences and professional/pre-professional programs are mutually reinforcing. The University is proud to embrace the following seven schools and colleges:

- College of Arts and Sciences
- School of Business Administration
- School of Engineering
- School of Human Service Professions
- School of Nursing
- Commonwealth Law School (in Harrisburg, PA)
- Delaware Law School (in Wilmington, DE)

In addition, Widener has developed a number of innovative interdisciplinary offerings and research programs, including: three new undergraduate majors in Business Analytics, Digital Media Informatics, and Robotics Engineering (one of only ten in the country); a pioneering graduate program in Human Sexuality; a PsyD/MBA program that prepares executive coaches; groundbreaking multidisciplinary research and programs addressing challenges in neuroscience and medical care; a sustainability law and policy program combining environmental science with legal education, and leadership development offered by the Oskin Leadership Institute.

Widener University's main campus in the City of Chester is located just off I-95 and is only twenty minutes from Philadelphia, the nation's sixth largest city and home to world-class art, culture, sports, entertainment, and history. The main campus sits on 110 acres and has benefited from \$220 million in new construction and renovations over the past decade.

On its other two campuses, Widener has the unusual distinction of hosting two law schools that operate independently from each other: Widener University Commonwealth Law School and Widener University Delaware Law School. Widener University Law School was separated into two independently accredited and operating law schools in 2015 in recognition that the two campuses had developed powerful and distinctive identities and career pathways specific to their geographic locations. Widener University Commonwealth Law is focused in particular on the interaction of law and government and leverages its location in the Pennsylvania state capital to enrich students' experiences. Widener University Delaware Law, the only law school in Delaware, has particular strength in corporate law and is an integral part of the legal community in America's corporate capital.

MISSION AND VALUES

A Commitment to Academic Rigor and Student Success

At the heart of a Widener education is the transformation of its students into scholars, leaders, and globally engaged citizens. Its faculty, supported by staff and administrators, meet this goal in several ways. A 12:1 student/faculty ratio allows for close interactions between faculty and students and facilitates experiential learning. Newly constructed buildings, such as Founders Hall and Freedom Hall, provide state-of-the-art facilities for a number of academic programs.

The richness of the student experience goes much further than a broad array of academic programs, up-to-date facilities, and small class sizes. Widener places the University's values – experiential learning, community engagement, and career preparation – at the center of every program offered. These values are complemented by leadership programs that help students develop competency, character, and courage. At the graduate and professional levels, challenging and engaging classroom work is combined with real-world experience offered in a multitude of clinics and cooperative ventures sponsored by the University. Throughout their studies, undergraduate and graduate students have opportunities to collaborate with faculty in cutting-edge research projects. A robust, donor-funded summer undergraduate research program continues to grow each year.

The University is committed to the highest levels of academic rigor. Widener's Social Work program was ranked as the top online social work graduate program. Commonwealth Law School has been named as one of the nation's top 20 schools for government law and top 5 for bar exam

preparation. The graduate physical therapy program was ranked among the nation's top 40. The School of Business Administration rates among the top 75 schools for financial planning and our School of Engineering ranks as a top 100 engineering program in the country among universities with undergraduate and master's engineering programs. And since 2013, the School of Nursing has been designated as a Center of Excellence for Advancing the Science of Nursing Education by the National League for Nursing, the oldest professional nursing organization in the United States.

A Commitment to Civic Engagement

Widener's civic engagement is known, valued, promoted, and lived by senior administrators, faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students alike. Through its leadership and conviction to work *with* and *in* the local community, Widener has created an environment of service and a willingness to engage in partnership. This environment is enhanced by and reinforces the academic rigor and focus on student transformation that is at the heart of the Widener mission.

The Widener Partnership Charter School (WPCS), the state's first university-sponsored charter school, offers a holistic curriculum for grades K to 8; it has proven pivotal to increasing students' academic achievement within the local district. The University supports the charter school by providing management support, access to university facilities, and administrative assistance for fundraising. The management support includes both strategic and day-to-day technology support. In turn, WPCS provides learning opportunities for Widener students in Education, Social Work, Clinical Psychology, Physical Therapy, and Nursing. Graduates from WPCS who meet criteria for admission to Widener University are guaranteed a generous financial aid package.

Widener has received national recognition for its achievements in civic engagement and service learning. The University has been placed on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for six consecutive years, including as a President's Award finalist in 2013. In addition, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning selected the University for its "Community Engagement" classification, a distinction it earned through its sincere and extensive commitment to service within the local and global community.

A Commitment to Leadership Development

With leadership development as a strategic goal, Widener established the Oskin Leadership Institute in 2011. The Institute aims to inspire students to be strategic leaders and responsible citizens who possess the character, competencies, and courage to affect positive change throughout the world. The Institute offers a certificate program and minor for undergraduates, special classes for selected high school students from the area, campus-wide lectures from distinguished scholars and corporate leaders, support for faculty and graduate student research on leadership issues, and leadership training for corporate executives.

The institute includes Organizational Development Services, a program supported by faculty and students in the joint Psy.D. and M.B.A. programs who provide executive coaching to campus administrators, student leaders, and regional corporate executives.

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

For more than 25 years, Dr. Julie E. Wollman has been a passionate, fearless, and effective advocate and leader in higher education. She is the tenth president of Widener University, a role she assumed in January of 2016. Guided by a relentless pursuit of excellence, she has articulated a clear vision and distinct goals for the university focused on providing an unparalleled learning experience.

Leading with enthusiasm, authenticity, and a strong respect for others, Dr. Wollman is nationally recognized specifically for her commitment to building community and bringing people from varying perspectives together to engage in conversation. In the fall of 2017, Dr. Wollman launched Common Ground, an ongoing university-wide initiative designed to encourage reasoned civil discourse on challenging topics.

Dr. Wollman serves on the boards of local, regional, and national organizations, including the Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County, an economic development organization, where she serves as Board Vice-President; the Global Philadelphia Association; the Middle Atlantic Conference of the NCAA where she serves as Board Secretary; the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia where she chairs the President's Alliance; the Baldwin School; and the American Association of University Administrators.

Prior to joining Widener University, Dr. Wollman served as president of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, and she has held academic leadership positions at Wheelock College, Worcester State University, and Rhode Island College. She earned her undergraduate degree from Harvard University, her master of science from the University of Pennsylvania, and her doctor of philosophy from New York University.

Dr. Wollman is a frequent commentator and dynamic speaker on education-related public policy issues, higher education affordability, and leadership, appearing regularly in print, online, and broadcast media outlets. She is the recipient of numerous teaching, academic, and professional awards and recognitions. Most recently, she was named by the *Philadelphia Business Journal* as a "2017 Women of Distinction" and one of its "People to Watch for 2018," as well as one of *Main Line Today* magazine's 2017 "Women on the Move."

Under Dr. Wollman's leadership, Widener has garnered substantial regional and national recognition: When they graduate, Widener students are in the top 21% nationally in salaries earned in mid-career; Widener is among the top 25% best colleges and universities in the country according to the fall 2018 Wall Street Journal rankings; Widener was just named #15 in the country among the 50 most underrated colleges by Business Insider, because the university's outcomes far exceed expectations based on rankings; The Princeton Review recently named both Delaware and Commonwealth Law Schools to their list of the best law schools in the nation; Widener received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award in fall 2018; the university was #5 nationally in the Forbes magazine #mytopcollege social media contest to identify campuses with the greatest school spirit; and Widener was named a 2018 Great College to Work For. Additionally, grant funding for research is increasing with three new National Science Foundation grants awarded within the past year.

STRATEGIC PLAN

After an inclusive, collaborative, and transparent planning process, the University's Board of Trustees approved the Vision 2021 strategic plan in May 2014. Vision 2021 outlines the University's goals through Widener's bicentennial.

As the strategic plan reads, by 2021 Widener University will be a leader among metropolitan universities in promoting student transformation and success through:

- Rigorous academic expectations and high-impact educational practices that support intended learning outcomes.
- A dynamic campus environment that immerses students in meaningful curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences.
- A culture of leadership that inspires students, faculty, and staff to have a positive influence on their workplaces, professions, communities, and the world.
- A diverse university community that champions a culture of respect, civility, and inclusivity.
- Scholarship by faculty and students that enriches learning and advances knowledge within and across disciplines.
- Civic engagement that furthers the university's national and global leadership in educating engaged citizens and in contributing to the vitality and well-being of the communities we serve.
- Institutional agility and innovation that make the university attractive, accessible, and sustainable.

President Wollman has begun the process of looking forward to the development of a new strategic plan and anticipates that the new Provost will play an important role in that work.

ROLE OF THE PROVOST

Reporting to President Julie E. Wollman, the Provost leads and advocates for 280 full-time instructional faculty across Widener's seven schools while simultaneously serving as a key senior administrator for a vibrant, multi-campus University. The Provost mentors Widener's talented group of Deans, and aids them in advancing shared institutional and school/college goals. The Provost is also responsible at a high level for faculty development, and ensures that formal opportunities and resources are available for those interested in pursuing leadership roles or deeper involvement in shared governance. In addition to this focus on faculty development, the Provost, as head of both academic and student affairs, must embrace a holistic approach to student development and demonstrate, across both divisions, a deep understanding of and commitment to student success.

The Provost serves as key member of the President's Leadership Team, a collaborative and supportive group that includes the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, the Vice President for Advancement, the Vice President for Library and Information Services, and the Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff. As part of this core team, the Provost plays a vital role in the University's budget process and in the allocation of resources. The Provost also works closely and broadly with other senior administrators to provide thoughtful and insightful leadership across the University.

The Provost oversees a \$74.2 million budget and a number of dedicated and hardworking individuals. Direct reports to the Provost currently include:

- Dean, College of Arts & Sciences
- Dean, School of Business Administration
- Dean, School of Engineering
- Dean, School of Human Service Professions
- Dean, School of Nursing
- Dean, Commonwealth Law School
- Dean, Delaware Law School
- Associate Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs
- Associate Provost and Dean for Graduate Studies and Extended Learning
- Dean of Students
- Director, Honors Program
- Director, Oskin Leadership Institute

The new Provost will be pleased to discover that, despite Widener's size and complexity, the campus culture places a high value on collegiality and civility, as evidenced in a number of key areas. First, the University enjoys a healthy tradition of shared governance and the Provost's relationship with the Faculty Council is a strong and productive one. Second, the liberal arts and the professional schools/pre-professional programs consistently demonstrate mutual respect for each other and have forged a number of significant partnerships. Finally, Widener boasts close collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs, reflecting the University's strong student-centered mission.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

As the University continues to grow and evolve under the leadership of President Wollman, the new Provost will have the opportunity to address the following priorities:

- **Shaping University-wide efforts to refine and implement key strategic initiatives in the Vision 2021 strategic plan.** As outlined in the current strategic plan, Widener is a leader among metropolitan universities in promoting student transformation and success, and aspires to continue its ascent in the coming years. As the University has embraced President Wollman's leadership in interpreting and influencing the strategic plan, so too does it welcome a new Provost, who will work closely with the President and other administrative and faculty leaders across the University to bring to fruition the initiatives described in the strategic plan.

- **Enhancing further the University's visibility and momentum.** The Provost will be a key partner in driving the University's continued success and growth. Bringing creativity and fresh perspective to the University's efforts on a wide range of initiatives, the Provost will provide inspirational leadership by asking strategic questions, introducing best practices, and serving as a thought leader within the Widener community. The Provost will, at the same time, be responsible for ensuring that Widener remains focused on its core values and its educational mission as it pursues its bold aspirations.
- **Facilitating the accelerated identification and creation of new academic programs in areas of powerful growth, particularly in healthcare and STEM fields and across disciplines.** With its main campus located just outside Philadelphia and its wide range of liberal arts and professional programs, Widener is well-positioned to deliver high-quality programs – both in person and online - that anticipate the region's areas of greatest student and employer demand while simultaneously capitalizing on the University's strengths. Given the University's range of schools and colleges, it is well-positioned to offer unique interdisciplinary programs that align with local and national needs. The Provost will need to be both imaginative and pragmatic, able to propose and develop big ideas expeditiously, yet assess each one carefully for financial sustainability and mission fit.
- **Cultivating and sustaining strong relationships with faculty to inspire and support them in delivering high-quality, high-impact academic programs.** As the head of the University's faculty and a key member of the President's core leadership team, the Provost will advocate for the evolving needs of faculty in the context of administrative leadership. Widener's committed, hardworking, and student-focused faculty is a major strength of the institution, not only delivering excellent academic instruction to students but also serving as experts in their scholarly and professional fields. Widener is proud of their expert scholarship as well as the high-impact practices that faculty promote in their teaching to improve student learning outcomes, including undergraduate research, project-based learning, civic engagement, and other forms of experiential education. The Provost will work closely with the Deans to support faculty and provide further professional development opportunities for all faculty at every stage of their careers.
- **Enhancing Widener's strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.** Widener University is among a select group of institutions nationwide to receive an *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine 2018 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award, which recognizes U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. The Provost will be well positioned to work broadly across the University to ensure that Widener continues to strive toward greater levels of diversity and inclusion for faculty, staff, and students. Additionally, the new Provost will build on Widener's commitment to global education by supporting a diverse population of international students and scholars on campus as well as working with the Associate Vice President for Civic and Global Engagement to ensure that students have access to transformational opportunities to study, research, and participate in community service projects abroad.
- **Making astute, thoughtful, and data-driven decisions regarding strategic resource allocation.** The Provost will collaborate closely with faculty, staff, the President's

leadership team, and other constituencies to understand the current allocation of the University's financial, spatial, and human resources and to determine their future allocation as the University continues to grow. The Provost will assess and define the best use of resources to maximize the University's potential in serving students and advancing its reputation. In addition, s/he will work with the President and other senior administrative leaders to ensure university-wide financial and budgetary accountability.

- **Further strengthening the culture and practice of shared governance across the University and facilitating meaningful and appropriate faculty participation in academic decision-making.** With a healthy, positive, and optimistic culture of shared governance, Widener has established itself as a benchmark institution in university governance and leadership. The new Provost will collaborate with the Faculty Chair to harness the energy of robust faculty leadership and encourage faculty participation in the governance process as the University embraces new and exciting changes in academic programming in the years to come.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will bring a record that commands the respect of the academic community and meets the criteria for appointment as a tenured full professor at Widener University. In addition to being an imaginative and experienced leader with a commitment to supporting the mission, values, and strategic goals of Widener University, the ideal candidate will bring many of the following qualities, skills, and experiences:

- An entrepreneurial and energetic approach to academic leadership, and a passion for addressing the challenges facing higher education;
- The creativity and passion to generate new ideas coupled with the organizational and administration skills to bring them to fruition;
- An inclusive approach to leadership, coupled with the ability to make decisions respectfully, courageously, and with high levels of integrity;
- Excellent interpersonal skills, high emotional intelligence, and an ability to work effectively with a wide range of people and constituencies;
- Demonstrated budgetary and personnel management skills and the ability to use data to make evidence-based decisions;
- An understanding of how to evaluate and assess academic programs across a wide variety of programs and platforms;
- A natural ability and desire to build trusting relationships with faculty and to facilitate shared governance;
- A demonstrated commitment to fostering and maintaining a diverse and inclusive culture that values multiple perspectives and experiences;

- An understanding of best practices and data-driven research in the field of student affairs and the ways in which student affairs and academic affairs intersect in the retention and success of students;
- A willingness and readiness to assist with fundraising to implement new programs and strengthen existing ones; and,
- A personal leadership style that harmonizes with Widener's collegial and collaborative campus culture.

CONTACT

For best consideration, nominations, applications, and queries in confidence should be sent to:

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