



CEDAR CREST COLLEGE

Report on the scope of responsibilities and challenges in preparation for the appointment of the 14th President of Cedar Crest College.

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The Context

This scoping document is designed to identify the scope of the work of the next president of Cedar Crest College. The document identifies both key challenges and opportunities that will guide the work of the president and the desired professional qualifications and personal qualities that will lead to success in the role. It is the result of extensive conversations in person and by telephone with key stakeholders including trustees (current and past), the presidential search committee, members of the faculty, members of key administrative units, and students, staff and alums.

Presidential Transition

The college has been ably served by President Carmen Twillie Ambar, J.D. who was appointed its 13th president in 2008 and served until the summer of 2017 when she became president of Oberlin College. Her tenure at Cedar Crest was marked by significant enrollment growth, a 92 percent increase in the value of the endowment, the introduction of 18 new academic programs (including the college's first doctoral degree) and a 35 percent growth in net assets. Upon the announcement of her appointment at Oberlin, the board appointed Provost and Professor of Philosophy Elizabeth Meade to serve as interim president for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years. Dr. Meade had been named provost in 2013 and has been a member of the faculty since 1993.

The College

The Cedar Crest College Mission

Cedar Crest College is a liberal arts college primarily for women dedicated to the education of the next generation of leaders. Cedar Crest College prepares students for life in a global community by educating the whole student at all stages of life and experience.

The College, Past and Present

Cedar Crest College was founded in 1867, the post-Civil War era, as Allentown Female College – later renamed Allentown College for Women – to expand women's access to higher education at a time when other Lehigh Valley colleges were reserved for men. Now in its 151st year, Cedar Crest College continues its bold approach to education, creating a college and a curriculum designed primarily for women who want to achieve at the highest levels. Recognizing the multi-dimensional nature of students, Cedar Crest College dedicates itself to the education of the next generation of leaders by preparing the whole student for life in the global community at all stages of life and experience. A wealth of opportunities exists for traditional, non-traditional and graduate students in both the traditional women's college and the co-educational School of Adult and Graduate Education (SAGE).

Traditional student enrollment has increased steadily, year after year, and in Fall 2017, more than 1,600 full-time and part-time students enrolled in the traditional women's college, SAGE or other programs at Cedar Crest. Student diversity is notable with 37 percent students of color.

Cedar Crest by the Numbers

- 40+ Majors (and almost 30 minors)
- 7 Graduate Programs
- 16 Certificate Programs
- 77 Full-time Professors
- 9 Division III Athletics Teams
- 10:1 Student to Faculty Ratio
- 15 Average Class Size
- #5 Ranking for Student Engagement by the Wall Street Journal, Northeast Region
- *U.S. News and World Report 2018* #6 Regional Colleges North, #2 Best Value Schools and #2 Best Colleges for Veterans
- 1,664 undergraduate and graduate students

Over the last three years, \$12.3 million has been invested in the campus buildings and infrastructure. The college continues to add degree programs to meet emerging demand, growing its overall enrollment and increasing student retention rates. The college's operating budget is \$53 million, and its endowment is currently valued at \$32 million.

The Aspiration of Others

Cedar Crest has recently and successfully completed a seven-year strategic plan and has embarked on a new five-year strategic plan to position the college to be the Aspiration of Others. As Cedar Crest continues to grow and evolve, it will embrace its role as a leader in the Lehigh Valley and on the national stage. To this end, the college's new and dynamic strategic plan positions it to become a college of greater impact and reach. Cedar Crest will continue to provide excellent academics and invest in campus renovations that innovate as well as improve accessibility, all while fostering an inclusive community with the resources to support a vibrant, diverse student population.

Governance

A board of 25 trustees (including 11 alums, a faculty trustee and a student trustee) serves as governing body and chartered legal entity for Cedar Crest College. The board is primarily responsible for the articulation of general educational policies and academic goals, as well as ensuring the financial means to meet the current and future educational mission of the college. The board fully embraces shared governance. An 11-member board of associates provides additional support and connection to the college. A strong faculty governance structure further supports and extends the excellence of the college and is charged with legislative oversight of the curriculum.

The Position

As the college's executive leader, the president is elected by and responsible to the board of trustees for upholding the mission, stewarding the resources, and leading and managing the direction of all aspects of the college. The president assumes responsibility for the overall strategic direction of the college, for the administrative and academic leadership, and for the financial and operational health of the institution. As the leader of a diverse and inclusive community, the president is an enthusiastic spokesperson on behalf of the college to its multiple constituents. This individual is elected by, reports to and serves at the will of the board of trustees, with regular contact with the board chair.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The new president will be expected to make considerable progress on the following inter-related imperatives in the coming few years:

Build on the strategy

The *Aspiration of Others*, the college's strategic plan, establishes Cedar Crest College's ongoing commitment to women's education, and in particular women's leadership, and outlines an ambitious set of plans for academic program expansion and the establishment of programs and resources to undergird the academic experience. The next president will assess progress on the plan, build the resource base needed to realize the many worthy initiatives described and continue to refine the strategy to achieve the college's aspirations to deliver a globally-oriented education to an increasingly diverse community of students.

Articulate the Cedar Crest College institutional identity

In the highly competitive market space in which the college operates, a crisp and clear sense of identity and purpose is essential for effective strategic positioning and optimal health. Like many colleges in its peer group, however, Cedar Crest has expanded the definition of its student population to meet the needs and demands of increasingly diverse populations. While admirable as a goal, the unintended consequence of this expansion has been a growing confusion around the dissonance between the description of a "college for women" and the actual composition of the student body. The Cedar Crest student body today is a wonderfully comprehensive mix of traditional age and adult students, of females and males, of domestic and international students, of those studying the liberal arts and those studying in professional areas, and of in-classroom and on-line learners. The next president must face squarely into this dissonance and lead the conversation to identify the overarching themes that unify the core values and purposes of the college, and find a robust and sustainable identity for the whole college through its shared commitment to the education of the many Cedar Crest College students whom it serves with an educationally purposeful experience.

Advocate and champion the liberal arts

The college is rightly proud of its deep roots in the liberal arts tradition and actively affirms the value of the liberal arts as foundational to its approach to all of its programs. As such, it is

consistent with the college's strategic direction for the next president to reaffirm the centrality of the liberal arts in the curriculum as part of the college's commitment to the education of global citizens who can, in the words of the Cedar Crest faculty, "reason, question, create, serve and communicate."

Engage in "fund-and-friend-raising" with enthusiasm and skill

Active engagement in fund-raising is essential to the Cedar Crest president's core duties and responsibilities. It will be essential to increase the base of philanthropic support, particularly in the area of scholarships, in order to continue to attract a talented student body while increasing the college's net tuition revenue. A dedicated board is ready to support an ambitious fund-raising agenda and actively engage with the president in these efforts. The Cedar Crest community of alums includes a number of highly committed and invested graduates as well as a considerable number of alums who need to reconnect to the college and be drawn in to its modern identity. A successful new president will devote a considerable amount of time to coming to know – and be known by – the college's alums, and to inviting them in and helping them to envision themselves as the owners of and accountable to the future of the college. The new president will ensure a strong Institutional Advancement department and will lead the fund-raising effort by engaging the entire college community, board members, alums, faculty, staff and students in the fund-raising effort.

Connect with engaged partners

The president of Cedar Crest College is a leader in the many communities upon whose support the college relies. In the Allentown area, the college is a jewel with many citizens valuing Cedar Crest's contributions to the local community, both economically and as an intellectual resource. More broadly, the Lehigh Valley's array of colleges and universities offers possibilities for the development of new partnerships and the strengthening of existing ones. A loyal and talented community of alums in both the northeast and around the country express great interest and affection for the college and the role it played in their development and professional success. An increasingly global student body, and subsequently body of alums, creates new pathways for international opportunities for the college. All of these creative possibilities and others must be fully explored to ensure that the college's strategic energies and resources are being fully harnessed in ways that realize maximum return.

Assess the infrastructure

The next president will be asked to engage in a study of all aspects of the infrastructure of the college, including its human and physical resources. Many departments are functioning with noticeably thin levels of staffing, making professional growth and succession planning particularly challenging. The balance between tenure and contingent faculty requires examination. And like most colleges of its vintage, Cedar Crest's physical plant has some challenges. The board is to be commended for the investments in upgrading the physical plant, including the new FalconPlex Athletics Center that has recently opened. The new president will need to focus equally on the physical plant, the technology infrastructure and the human resources required to accomplish the ambitious plans of the college moving forward.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The ideal candidate will have the following professional qualifications and personal characteristics:

Commitment to mission and values: An unwavering commitment to Cedar Crest College's mission, vision and values, to a globally-focused education, to the principles of a liberal arts education, and to the value of maintaining Cedar Crest as a women's college; willingness to embrace and build upon the best of the college's history and traditions including the college's long tradition of educational leadership for women; enthusiasm for the people and the place; and commitment to consensus-building and shared governance as well as to community engagement and meaningful local and global participation.

Leadership: Vision and imagination; record of exceptional leadership that indicates a proven ability to align vision with capability, capacity and resources; demonstrated leadership and strength in creating and supporting an environment of continuous improvement; ability to inspire and catalyze a diversity of stakeholders; ability to attract and retain a strong faculty and staff; openness to different viewpoints and comfort with consultation, yet with the ability to move forward with decisions; source of good ideas and the ability to recognize, elevate and build support for the ideas of others; ability to assess risk, make tough decisions and effect change; experience leading, managing and implementing change across an organization; recognition of the value of inclusive decision making and fairness while also being able to maintain boundaries when and where appropriate; potential to be a national thought leader and to contribute meaningfully and forcefully to the national dialogue; and ability to serve as champion for institutional visibility and reputation.

Management: Evidence of successful executive or managerial experience sufficient to lead a complex institution; fiscal sophistication and analytical strength; experience in fiscal management, sufficient to make wise choices in allocating and reallocating resources for emerging and current needs and provide overall stewardship for the college; ability to delegate smoothly and effectively; understanding of and appreciation for technology and its ability to enhance the academic enterprise and experience; demonstrated commitment to the professional development of staff and faculty; experience with a governing board; finesse in crisis management; and ability to attract, retain and further develop superior talent on the leadership team as well as enlist and harness the strength of others.

Resource development: Capacity to be a successful fundraiser and to adapt to changes in the philanthropic landscape; understanding of the education marketplace and of the academic and co-curricular expectations of students and families; and understanding of the key forces driving college enrollments and how those forces are manifested at liberal arts colleges with aspirations for growth.

Inclusion: Demonstrated commitment to and achievement in advancing diversity and inclusion in multiple forms; ability to recognize the various ways in which the college may be experienced differently by different students, faculty and staff members; and ability to talk about, reflect on and address matters of inclusion with nuance and finesse.

Communication: Ability to build trust through communication, transparency and collaboration across a diverse community; capacity to engage, inspire and connect with varied audiences, including but not limited to students and parents, faculty and staff, alums and other friends of the college; ability to listen skillfully and to lead authentic conversations; and capability to serve as a vigorous and compelling spokesperson and advocate for the college and its students.

Personal qualities: Strong core values including impeccable integrity, sound judgment and appropriate levels of transparency; intellectual curiosity and a delight in the life of the mind; genuine interest in students and their development and welfare; a secure and confident sense of self; comfort with being the face of the college and with giving credit to others; ability to ask serious and insightful questions; comfort with complexity, ambiguity and critique; energy and stamina to commit to the intensity of the work with grace and good humor; exceptional relationship-building skills; boldness with a balance of warmth, confidence, hospitality and humility; approachability, personal accessibility and eagerness to engage with others, especially students; seriousness of purpose but not of self; and a sense of humor.

Credentials: A combination of academic credentials and intellectual abilities sufficient to command the respect of faculty and alums and a deep understanding of the higher education landscape and of higher education challenges nationally and globally.

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