



An Invitation to Apply for the Position of
Director of the Templeton Institute of Engineering and Computer Science
and
Associate Dean for Engineering
Union College
Schenectady, New York

THE SEARCH

Union College seeks a visionary, strategic, and dynamic leader to serve as the Director of the Templeton Institute of Engineering and Computer Science and Associate Dean for Engineering (DTI/A-DFE). The DTI/A-DFE will join Union College—one of the few liberal arts colleges in the United States that offers ABET-accredited engineering programs—during a time of exciting transformation. Inspired by the College’s current strategic plan, [*The Power of Union*](#), and fueled by a [historic \\$51 million gift from Class of '80 alumni Mary and Rich Templeton](#), Union has launched a groundbreaking initiative to: 1) strengthen existing engineering and computer science programs; 2) add programs in civil and environmental engineering; and 3) achieve the full potential of embedding world-class engineering and computer science programs in a liberal arts context. The objective is to fundamentally reimagine how engineering and computer science students develop the depth and breadth of knowledge required to lead, as well as how non-engineering/computer science students develop the perspectives required to thrive in a world where technology and data will play a significant role in their lives and careers. This is a transformational opportunity to position Union as a leader in undergraduate engineering and computer science education, enriching and enriched by liberal arts perspectives and disciplines.

To advance this initiative, Union seeks a DTI/A-DFE with the creative vision, collaborative spirit, and leadership acumen to help guide Union’s engineering and computer science programs through growth and development, while enhancing educational connections across the College and expanding partnerships beyond the campus community. Union continues to diversify its student body and faculty, and the DTI/A-DFE will promote a culture of inclusive excellence for all throughout this period of growth and beyond. They will bring a deep commitment to shaping the future of undergraduate engineering education. In addition, the DTI/A-DFE will serve as an external ambassador of Union’s engineering and computer science departments and programs, communicating exceptional stories in a way that differentiates and raises Union’s profile and visibility, and highlights the College’s paradigm-shifting approach to integrative learning across the curriculum.

The DTI/A-DFE will report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty (VPAA) and will work in concert with the broader Union community to further strengthen the academic enterprise at the College. The ideal DTI/A-DFE will have a demonstrated track record of designing and implementing integrative activities that foster interdisciplinary thinking and collaborative research, as well as successfully leading operational planning and execution of curricular and co-curricular initiatives in a shared governance context. The DTI/A-DFE must champion the benefits of a blended engineering/computer science and liberal arts education and have a passion for serving at a student-focused undergraduate institution.

Union has retained the services of Isaacson, Miller—a national executive search firm—to assist in conducting this important search for the DTI/A-DFE and to help identify outstanding candidates. All inquiries, applications, and nominations for this opportunity should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE UNION COLLEGE ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE INITIATIVE

In 1845, Union College became the first liberal arts institution in the United States to offer a degree in engineering. Today, the College is ranked #21 by *U.S. News and World Report* among national undergraduate engineering programs accredited by ABET and offers degree programs in biomedical engineering, computer engineering, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering. In spring 2022 the faculty approved the addition of programs in civil and environmental engineering, which will begin in Fall 2023. Approximately 430 students are majoring in engineering programs (about 20% of the student body). The curriculum begins with the Exploring Engineering course in the fall term of the first year, which is common to all engineering majors and provides students with an introduction to the engineering field through a team-based design project. During the senior year, all engineering students complete a capstone design project. Classes are small, making the atmosphere ideal for discussions and questions. Lab classes are an integral part of the engineering curriculum, giving all students hands-on research training with sophisticated instrumentation of the kind typically reserved for graduate students.

In February 2020, the College received the [largest single gift](#) made to the institution in its history. Alumni Mary and Rich Templeton ('80) donated \$51 million toward bolstering engineering and computer science education at Union, including by creating the Templeton Institute for Engineering and Computer Science (TI), which anchors the College's new Engineering and Computer Science Initiative ("the Initiative"). Taking shape within the broader Initiative, the TI will engage engineering and computer science students from all backgrounds in new and innovative learning experiences within the context of a broad and vibrant liberal arts education. Equally important, the TI will offer non-engineering/computer science students opportunities to become conversant with data and technology while engaging their perspectives and disciplinary knowledge on challenges rooted in engineering and computer science.

The TI will help catalyze this new Initiative and will generate novel learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom, immersive learning experiences, and learner-centered programming that cuts across academic centers. The TI will extend its educational reach beyond engineering and

computer science to actively engage students, faculty, and staff from across all areas of campus through integrative coursework and impactful, immersive co-curricular activities designed to prepare students from diverse backgrounds to tackle contemporary and emerging national and global challenges from multiple perspectives. Furthermore, the TI will be a hub for broadening participation by groups traditionally underrepresented in engineering and computer science fields through programming that attracts, supports, and ensures student success. The TI has the potential to make Union College a national and international leader in modeling transformational activities centered around engineering and computer science within the context of the liberal arts. It will help the College attract a more diverse faculty and student body across the curriculum, and foster innovation, risk taking, and resiliency—all of which are critical for student persistence and post-graduation success.

In addition to the integrative activities of the new TI, the Initiative will add faculty lines to existing programs while developing new major offerings in civil and environmental engineering. The Initiative aims to further strengthen Union's longstanding commitment to recruit and retain women pursuing a degree in engineering or computer science, while generating capital to develop new spaces and facilities on campus. While future growth anticipated through the Initiative will require additional space, Union's current engineering facilities provide a solid foundation. In 2020, the College completed its most ambitious project to date: the [Integrated Science and Engineering Complex](#). The \$100-million, 142,000-square-foot facility houses six major departments in science and engineering and promotes visibility and multidisciplinary connections with departments across campus. It is home to a 1.1-MV tandem pelletron accelerator, a 400-MHz nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer, a micro CT scanner, and other sophisticated instrumentation for student use, as well as a thermal science and fluid mechanics lab.

ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE TEMPLETON INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ENGINEERING

The Director of the Templeton Institute of Engineering and Computer Science and Associate Dean for Engineering is charged with providing strategic leadership that both enhances the academic distinction of engineering and computer science at Union and articulates a vision for creating an innovative and integrative undergraduate education experience across the College. The DTI/A-DFE will report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty (VPAA) and be supported by an External Advisory Committee, an Assistant Director for the Templeton Institute, a Templeton Institute Steering Committee, a programming budget, and administrative assistance. While the successful candidate will bring experience as a productive scholar, it is not necessarily envisioned that the DTI/A-DFE will be research active while serving in this role.

For the Templeton Institute for Engineering and Computer Science

The Templeton Institute is a transformational opportunity for the College that will position Union as a national model for how to strengthen existing undergraduate engineering programs while symbiotically integrating engineering and computer science into the traditional liberal arts. The selected candidate will lead the design, development, and implementation of high-impact inquiry-based, integrative, and cross disciplinary intellectual programming of the TI through seminars, courses, practica, research, and other activities. In this work, the DTI/A-DFE will partner with the TI

assistant director and interested faculty across the College. These curricular innovations will be complemented with impactful co-curricular programming for students, including support for workshops, student groups and clubs, competition teams, internships, and research experiences that develop students to lead and best prepare them for graduate studies and professional pursuits. The DTI/A-DFE will build a network of alumni and organizations to facilitate summer internship positions, sponsorship of design projects, and networking and mentoring opportunities for students. In addition, the DTI/A-DFE will design and implement evidence-based practices to retain all student populations and ensure they persist and succeed in engineering and computer science. Through this work, the DTI/A-DFE role will be poised to transform the student experience at Union College.

The DTI/A-DFE will also work closely with the College's director of interdisciplinary programs, department chairs, and program directors to develop and implement strategies to further integrate engineering and computer science education with the liberal arts and sciences, including through contributions to the new General Education curriculum. In 2021, after several years of committee work and discussion, Union's faculty passed a curricular reform that begins implementation in the 2022-23 academic year. The updated curriculum emphasizes big questions and real-world problems, examined via different disciplinary perspectives. Along with a first-year inquiry course, students will take courses across eight approaches to knowing and thinking. Each such course also will address a theme in one of two areas of inquiry: 1) Global Challenges and 2) Justice, Equity, Identity, Difference. Union seeks to facilitate increased access to engineering and computer science classes and resources for larger numbers of non-engineering/computer science students, within and beyond the general education curriculum. Across all priority areas, the DTI/A-DFE will develop a robust assessment process for TI-affiliated programming.

For the Broader Union College Engineering and Computer Science Initiative

The Engineering and Computer Science Initiative is a critical component of Union College's future. While the broad contours of the Initiative have been established—including the Templeton Institute—the DTI/A-DFE will advance the design and implementation of the full initiative. The selected candidate will serve as a partner and resource to Union's engineering and computer science departments as they work to recruit a diverse faculty, strengthen programming, and serve students. The DTI/A-DFE also will engage with the Office of Sponsored Programs in the development of major grant proposals to government agencies, private foundations, and corporations to bolster resources. The DTI/A-DFE will advise the VPAA on all matters pertaining to engineering and computer science and serve as the institutional liaison for the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). The DTI/A-DFE will be a member of the Academic Affairs DEIB Team and will collaborate in the implementation of a six-year HHMI Inclusive Excellence (IE3) Grant, focused on meaningful evaluation of effective and inclusive teaching and professional development for instructional teams in STEM fields.

The DTI/A-DFE is expected to meaningfully engage with the campus community, including the College's [shared governance structure](#), to refine and operationalize the Initiative's vision. The DTI/A-DFE will lead in space planning and implementation processes for new and existing facilities

connected to the Initiative. In addition, the selected candidate will partner with Union's Vice President for Admissions and Enrollment as well as the Vice President for Communications and Marketing to promote the Initiative to a wide audience, including prospective students and their families, by delivering a clear and concise message about the College's students, faculty, programs, and achievements. This individual similarly will work with the Vice President for College Relations to cultivate and steward donor support for the Initiative's priorities. The DTI/A-DFE will also reimagine the [Engineering and Liberal Arts Symposium](#) in ways that will highlight innovation in integrative learning at Union and beyond.

In addition to advancing all aspects of this Initiative on campus, the DTI/A-DFE will have a significant external role, and the selected individual is expected to be a champion for the College, promoting its faculty, students, research, and integrative pedagogical approach to undergraduate education. The selected candidate will convene the Initiative's External Advisory Committee (EAC), which launched in February 2022 and is charged with providing input and counsel to the Initiative. With a membership that encompasses endowed professors, established C-suite executives, and emerging industry leaders, the EAC will support TI programming, the development of industry partnerships, space planning, fundraising, and efforts to strengthen diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. The selected candidate will also represent Union at major conferences and with engineering leadership groups, including the Engineering Deans Institute and other American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) events. The DTI/A-DFE will raise the College's visibility among national and international engineering associations, elevating the groundbreaking work of Union faculty and serving as a model for how to integrate undergraduate engineering education with the liberal arts.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

Union College seeks an innovative and collaborative leader with experience building curricular and co-curricular bridges between engineering, computer science, and the liberal arts. While no one person will possess all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will have many of the following professional experiences and personal characteristics:

- An earned doctorate in engineering as well as credentials and achievements in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service that satisfy Union College's criteria for appointment with tenure. Credentials and achievements that merit appointment at the Full Professor level are strongly preferred.
- Understanding of national trends and issues related to undergraduate education in engineering and computer science; the ability to develop and articulate a powerful and bold strategic vision for the future of undergraduate engineering education, with success in formulating and executing strategies in a complex academic setting.
- A powerful affinity for, and commitment to, the mission and values of a liberal arts college.
- A demonstrated ability to build bridges between engineering, computer science, and other academic disciplines, and a commitment to facilitating the potential of collaborative activities across disciplinary boundaries, including both interdisciplinary teaching and research conducted by faculty and students.

- A commitment to diversity, including individual action and institutional leadership to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Leadership experience as a successful academic administrator, with a proven ability to make difficult decisions and prioritize.
- Experience building community and industry partnerships for the benefit of student growth and development.
- Ability to build relationships with a range of stakeholders in order to successfully orchestrate and manage complex initiatives.
- Track record of curricular and programmatic innovation and creativity, including a demonstrated ability and willingness to provide visionary direction as well as “boots on the ground” execution skills.
- Experience applying best practices in the design and implementation of inside-the-classroom learning as well as complementary, high-impact co-curricular enrichment experiences outside the classroom.
- Excellent communication, interpersonal, organizational, analytical, and problem-solving skills.
- An understanding of higher education finances and experience planning and managing a budget.
- Familiarity with fundraising strategies, with a willingness to engage individuals, corporations, and/or private foundations to secure gifts and grants.
- A high degree of integrity paired with a fair, collaborative, and transparent leadership style that will succeed in a shared governance environment.

TO APPLY

Confidential inquiries, nominations/referrals, and CVs with letters of interest can be sent electronically and in confidence to:

Jeff Kessner, Partner

Karen McPhedran, Managing Associate

Amy Gillespie, Associate

Isaacson, Miller <http://www.imsearch.com/8390>

Union College is an equal opportunity employer and strongly committed to student and workforce diversity.

Union College is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its application process for individuals with disabilities and encourages applicants with disabilities to request any needed accommodation(s).

Appendix

THE COLLEGE: HISTORY AND OVERVIEW



Union takes great pride in its history with a mission that includes “shaping the future while understanding the past.” On February 25, 1795, Union was the first college to receive a charter from the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, and it has continuously operated as one of the 30 oldest institutions of higher education in the United States. Union established the Alpha chapter of Phi Beta Kappa in New York and the fifth oldest chapter in the nation. The College’s name comes from its early mission to be an ecumenical institution where individuals from multiple Protestant denominations could study and work together. Over time, the understanding of what it means to be diverse has expanded, and the commitment to building a diverse community characterized by mutual respect is part of Union’s institutional DNA.

Union’s early history played a seminal role in the development of the modern American college curriculum. Though Union’s earliest students received a classical education similar to that of the College’s antecedents, in the 1820s Union became one of several Hudson Valley colleges to adopt parallel courses of study. In this way, students continued to pursue the liberal arts while also studying natural sciences. Union was among the first colleges to allow modern languages to satisfy graduation requirements, and Union’s engineering curriculum, which continues as a robust component of the campus to this day, began in 1845. What once were parallel courses of study have blossomed into an integrative approach to the liberal arts and applied sciences.

Leadership

David Harris is the 19th President of Union College. Beginning this role on July 1, 2018, Harris previously served as Provost and Senior Vice President at Tufts University since July 2012. Prior to his time at Tufts, he served in multiple roles at Cornell University, including Senior Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Vice Provost for Social Sciences, Deputy Provost and Interim Provost, and the Founding Director of Cornell’s Institute for the Social Sciences. In 2010 and 2011, he served in the Obama administration as a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He attended Northwestern University, where he earned a B.S. in human development and social policy, and a Ph.D. in sociology.

The American Association of Colleges and Universities and education company Cengage recently honored President Harris with a 2022 AACU-Cengage Inclusion Scholarship. The scholarship recognizes college and university presidents whose outstanding leadership to advance liberal education has reduced equity gaps, improved inclusion and belonging for minoritized students, and

promoted diversity in hiring practices.

Active in the local community, President Harris is secretary of the Capital Region Chamber of Commerce, co-chair of the New York Capital Region Higher Education Council, and served on the Schenectady Downtown Reinvestment Initiative Local Planning Committee.

Academics

Today, Union continues to be at the forefront of undergraduate education, continuously defining—and redefining—what it means to provide a liberal arts education. In this inclusive environment, students develop in-depth expertise in their chosen discipline and, with emphasis on the intersections between fields, students also experience the kind of interdisciplinary learning that allows them to tackle problems from multiple angles. Union students become part of a community of scholars who are non-linear thinkers, able to synthesize knowledge and approaches from a variety of disciplines to address the multi-faceted challenges of the 21st century.

Union is well positioned to be a national leader in interdisciplinary education and scholarship in the coming years. In February 2020, the College announced it had received the [largest single gift](#) made to the institution in its history. Alumni Mary and Rich Templeton ('80) donated \$51 million for the creation of the Templeton Institute for Engineering and Computer Science, which anchors the College's Engineering and Computer Science Initiative and aims to further integrate engineering and the liberal arts. In addition to the new institute, the gift will be used in the recruitment and retention of women pursuing a degree in engineering or computer science, as well as enhancements to curriculum, faculty support, and capital to develop new spaces and facilities on campus.

The College currently offers 58 majors and minors. Majors in the fields of engineering, psychology, biological and biomedical sciences, and the social sciences are among the most popular. Each year, about half of Union students declare majors in arts, humanities, and social sciences, while the other half declare majors in science and engineering.

Union's academic year is divided into three ten-week trimesters. The first runs from early September to Thanksgiving, the second from early January to March, and the third from early April to June. Students typically take three courses per trimester for a total of 36 courses of study throughout their four years at Union. Nearly 60 percent of Union students go on terms or mini-terms abroad—one of the highest percentages among American liberal arts colleges. Union also has an impressive track record in post-graduate fellowships, including Watson Fellowships, Fulbright student research, and teaching awards. Union was named a top producer of Fulbright recipients in 2020-2021. Last year, Union proudly announced that a recent graduate had earned a Rhodes Scholarship.

Union offers opportunities for meaningful academic endeavors outside the classroom. Undergraduate research is a hallmark of a Union education, having taken hold in all disciplines and across all academic divisions. Union cultivates collaboration and creates learning communities to develop in its students the specialization and breadth necessary to become innovative problem-solvers while offering multiple points of entry into high-impact undergraduate research experiences, including independent study, research practica, terms abroad, internships, and senior theses. These experiences fully engage students, excite them to construct their own investigations, give them

practical experience, and prepare them for postgraduate study and careers. These endeavors are often linked to, or complemented by, the student affairs programming described below.

Union is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). In 2020, Union had its decennial review, and its accreditation has been reaffirmed without conditions.

Faculty and Staff

At the core of Union's academic experience are over 200 faculty members, 80 percent of whom are tenured or on the tenure track, and approximately 10 percent of whom are lecturers or senior lecturers. All classes are taught by faculty – not teaching assistants – and 97 percent of tenure-line faculty hold a terminal degree in their field. The Union faculty and all the College's educational offerings are organized into four divisions:

- Arts and Humanities
- Social Sciences
- Science and Mathematics
- Engineering and Computer Science

Close student-faculty interaction and small classes are a hallmark of the Union experience. The relationship between students and faculty motivates students to learn through inquiry and discourse. The College's 10:1 student-faculty ratio allows for students and professors to get to know each other, fostering a spirit of collaboration and partnership.

Every year, more than 100 Union students participate in College-sponsored summer research programs. Of these, over half are funded internally for summer research with a Union College faculty member through the Union College Summer Research Fellowship, the Summer Scholars Program, and departmental funds. The remainder are funded by external rewards, including NSF awards, of which Union ranks among the top of its peer institutions in number and dollar amount awarded. Student research spans all disciplines, and recent research ventures have covered history, economics, geosciences, environmental science, and more. Faculty frequently publish with student co-authors and recently, Union faculty and students authored a [paper on climate change](#) in *Nature*, considered by most as the world's leading journal of peer-reviewed science research.

As dedicated mentors, Union faculty are committed to encouraging, inspiring, and guiding students, and this careful work has resulted in increased retention and persistence, through faculty-driven academic opportunity programs. The College has secured numerous coveted grants to support Union's SUCCESS Scholars—cohorts of ten talented students from underrepresented groups in STEM who receive structured support by paired Faculty Cohort Mentor teams of sciences and engineering faculty. Social science students complete a two-trimester capstone thesis while working one-on-one with faculty advisors. They also benefit from numerous course offerings that comprise an experiential learning component which places them in the surrounding community. Union's arts and humanities faculty inspire all students to act, create, dance, pursue musical passions, learn languages, think, reason, interpret, and write. These commitments represent Union faculty's shared responsibility in providing an exceptional holistic experience to all Union students.

Their partners include the more than 620 staff members who support the student experience. Staff are integral not only to the administration, maintenance, and operation of the College, but also to its educational mission. The staff's loyalty, hard work, and commitment to the mission of the College are critical to its success.

Students value the support, guidance, and exemplary service they receive from staff, faculty, and administrators. In particular, staff and administrators are often long-time residents of Schenectady and the surrounding areas, and their connections and perspectives help to further solidify the valuable bonds between the campus and the Capital Region.

Historic Campus

[Union's campus](#) is beautiful and carries historical significance. It was the first campus in the United States to be fully developed by a comprehensive master architectural plan. The campus was intended to facilitate an academic community of faculty, students, and staff, all living and working together. Joseph Ramée produced the design in 1813, and his campus layout persists to this day. In 2013, Union hosted a bicentennial symposium of the campus landscape, which is still considered by architectural historians to be one of the most significant architectural creations of early America. Under the Ramée Plan, the College is organized around a rolling central court. The Court is flanked by academic buildings to the east, with residences primarily clustered to the west and south. In the center of the court stands the 16-sided [Nott Memorial](#), named for Union's fourth President, Eliphalet Nott, who served as President for 62 years until his death in 1866. Designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1986 and used for meetings, art exhibitions, and study space throughout the year, "the Nott" is the unofficial icon and symbol of Union College.

Facilities

Union has undertaken aggressive investment in the renovation of its campus, strengthening facilities by building or renovating many major structures over the past 15 years. Nearly every academic building has received refurbishment, along with significant expansions and construction of new facilities. Recent projects include facilities for dance, humanities, social sciences, and a visual arts renovation. In 2008, the [Peter Irving Wold Center](#) was added to campus. The Center houses state-of-the-art teaching and research space where students and faculty can collaborate and pursue the integration of science and engineering with the social sciences and humanities.

In 2020, the College completed its most ambitious project to date: the [Integrated Science and Engineering Complex](#). The \$100-million, 142,000-square-foot facility houses six major departments in science and engineering and promotes visibility and multidisciplinary connections with departments across campus. Over the next few years, the College will be studying residential life and student life spaces to update plans for future renovations or enhancements to campus. Planning is currently underway for updates to the College's hockey facility, which, once complete, could offer space for conventions, trade shows, and other Union and non-Union activities alike.

In 2007, Union became a charter signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), adopting a plan to reduce the College's carbon footprint and provide research and education about climate change. With ambitious recycling programs, presidential

grants to promote [sustainability programs](#), and a new co-generation plant, Union has dramatically cut emissions and saved energy. According to the Princeton Review, the College is currently in the top 100 green schools and strives to reach the top 50.

Finances

Union College has been well-managed financially and is currently in a strong financial position, guided by a knowledgeable Board of Trustees and a strong administrative team. Union's operating budget for the 2021 fiscal year was \$133.7 million supported by an endowment of \$605.2 million as of June 30, 2021.

Union's policy is to meet the full demonstrated financial need of all admitted students. Union is one of the fewer than five percent of colleges and universities in the country that commits to meeting 100 percent of demonstrated financial need with more than \$58 million awarded in scholarships each year. More than 50 percent of Union students receive need-based financial assistance, including those receiving Making Union Possible Family Grants, one of the College's newest aid initiatives. A second new initiative, the Schuler Access Initiative, is a partnership with the Schuler Education Initiative that will help enroll more low-income students at Union. In less than a year, the College secured \$20 million in cash and commitments, which with Schuler's match, will provide \$42 million in scholarship grant funding to recruit and enroll more underserved students. For those receiving support at Union, the average need-based scholarship is \$43,800. About 25 percent of students receive merit scholarships and the average award is \$20,000.

Union's development efforts have been highly successful. At the start of 2020, Union launched the public phase of its \$300 million ["Powering Union: The Campaign for Multiple Tomorrows,"](#) the largest and most ambitious capital campaign in the school's 225-year history. To date, and with about one year remaining, the question is not whether the goal will be reached, but rather by how much it will be exceeded.

With support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Union is part of the [New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium](#), a partnership that includes Colgate, Hamilton, Skidmore, St. Lawrence, and Hobart and William Smith. Through the sharing of expertise and resources, The New York Six consortium provides member schools a group of peer colleagues who collaborate on ways to reduce colleges' individual and collective operating and capital costs.

Administrative Excellence Project

In the fall of 2020, Union launched the [Administrative Excellence Project](#) to address substantial, long-term challenges associated with staffing, processes, and systems at the College. The key areas of focus include finance, human resources, information technology, and culture change. This project's primary objective is to improve performance and enhance capabilities, not reduce costs, and the next VPSA will work closely with President Harris and senior staff colleagues on its implementation.

Schenectady, New York

Union College occupies 130 acres in downtown Schenectady, New York. Incorporated three years

after the College was chartered, the city's history is deeply connected to Union. Seated near the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and a short distance from the Adirondack, Catskill, and Berkshire mountains, Schenectady is part of the Albany metropolitan area with the state capital located 20 minutes to the southeast of Union's campus. Schenectady is three hours from New York City and Boston, and four hours from Montreal. This location has been a historic asset for Union, allowing students and faculty easy access to the state capital and the major metropolitan areas of the Northeast.

Union itself has contributed to Schenectady's renewal. The Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities estimates Union's total economic impact at more than \$313 million, including an annual average of \$133 million in operational spending, \$21.8 million in expenditures by students and visitors, and an estimated \$8 million in construction. The College is also a source of pride and comradery for the community.