



**Search for the I.A. O'Shaughnessy Dean
College of Arts & Letters**

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THE SEARCH

The University of Notre Dame seeks a visionary, collaborative leader to serve as the I.A. O'Shaughnessy Dean of the College of Arts & Letters (A&L).

Established in 1842, the year Notre Dame was founded, Arts & Letters is the University's oldest and largest college. It comprises 20 academic departments in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, with over 500 faculty, 2,600 undergraduates, and 900 graduate students. Arts & Letters occupies particular pride of place at the University and is closely identified with the mission of Notre Dame. The institution's Catholic mission, its pursuit of knowledge in service to the world, its commitment to free inquiry, and its valuing of intellectual breadth and depth—all these are elemental to the work and purpose of the College.

It is a remarkable time to join Notre Dame and lead the College of Arts & Letters. The University's [Strategic Framework 2033](#) has set forth ambitious goals to advance Notre Dame as the leading global Catholic research university, on par with but distinct from the world's best private research universities. These efforts include bold initiatives calling for cross-disciplinary collaboration and greater impact. Notre Dame has made significant investments in facilities, undergraduate and graduate education, faculty hiring, and research (with more to come). The University is also augmenting and deepening its global engagement. The College, too, is flourishing and prosperous. Under a [College Priority Plan](#), research and creative endeavors across fields and disciplines have risen, graduate programs have been strengthened and graduate student funding increased, and faculty recruitment has resulted in a faculty body that is stronger and more diverse than ever.

Notre Dame seeks a Dean who will seize the opportunities of the moment, lead with vision and passion, and partner with others. The ideal candidate will be academically distinguished; evince superb leadership and strategic thinking; possess the administrative management experience to strengthen operations and systems in the College; have a history of substantive engagement locally, nationally, and globally; and embrace and champion the values and goals of Notre Dame's Catholic mission.

A search committee has been formed and the executive recruiting firm Isaacson, Miller has been retained to support this search. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications can be directed to the firm as indicated at the conclusion of this document.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

The [University of Notre Dame](#) was founded in November 1842 by Rev. Edward F. Sorin, C.S.C., who sought to establish a great Catholic university in America, one that would "be one of the most powerful means for doing good in this country." From the outset, the institution's ambitions and purpose were evident: Notre Dame exists to be an enlightening force for a world in need.

Notre Dame is both a leading undergraduate teaching institution and a formidable research university. It was admitted into the Association of American Universities in 2023 and is the only formally religious institution among the top 20 research universities. The University is made up of eight academic colleges and schools: the School of Architecture, College of Arts & Letters, Mendoza College of Business, College of Engineering, Keough School of Global Affairs, The Graduate School, The Law School, and College of Science. In Fall 2023, Notre Dame enrolled 8,968 undergraduates and 4,206 graduate and professional students. Notre Dame employs 1,526 instructional faculty and approximately 4,700 staff.

Notre Dame has a prominent global footprint. It attracts over 1,700 students from more than 100 countries outside the United States; its researchers have active awards across 67 countries. [Notre Dame Global](#) oversees more than 50 study abroad programs and the institution's [Global Network](#). The University is a recognized leader in producing and hosting recipients of Fulbright grants.

Notre Dame's 2023–24 operating budget is \$1.8 billion. The University's endowment is \$18.9 billion. Annual fundraising totals are among the very highest for American universities: in 2022–23, the University raised over \$1 billion in commitments and pledges.

UNIVERSITY MISSION

The University of Notre Dame is a Catholic academic community of higher learning dedicated to the pursuit and sharing of truth, advancing knowledge through original inquiry and publication, and educating students in mind, body, and spirit. The University seeks to cultivate in its students "a disciplined sensibility to the poverty, injustice, and oppression that burden the lives of so many." The aim, according to Notre Dame's mission statement, is "to create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning becomes service to justice."

In pursuing its research and educational mission, the University welcomes, and is enriched by, the presence and voices of diverse scholars and students. Catholic intellectuals play an important role in

sustaining and deepening Notre Dame's Catholic mission, but the University is home to scholars and students of all backgrounds who have "a respect for the objectives of Notre Dame and a willingness to enter into the conversation that gives it life and character."

The University is committed to academic freedom and welcomes all areas of scholarly activity as consonant with its mission. One of Notre Dame's distinctive goals is "to provide a forum where, through free inquiry and open discussion, the various lines of Catholic thought may intersect with all the forms of knowledge found in the arts, sciences, professions, and every other area of human scholarship and creativity."

For more information, visit <https://www.nd.edu/about/mission/>.

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

[Rev. Robert A. Dowd, C.S.C.](#) became Notre Dame's 18th President in June 2024. A member of Notre Dame's political science department since 2004, he specializes in comparative politics. Prior to his election as President, he served as Vice President and Associate Provost for Interdisciplinary Initiatives, overseeing a number of departments and institutes.

[John T. McGreevy](#) is Charles and Jill Fischer Provost of the University of Notre Dame. He was named to the post in 2022 and is the sixth provost at the University since the position was established in 1970. He is a historian and served as the I.A. O'Shaughnessy Dean of Notre Dame's College of Arts & Letters from 2008 to 2018.

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & LETTERS

The College of Arts & Letters is foundational to Notre Dame. First, it fuels and defines the intellectual experience of many students: the design of the core curriculum, with requirements in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, means that every single undergraduate takes many courses from Arts & Letters faculty. Roughly 30 percent of the undergraduate student body chooses a first major within the College, and nearly 800 graduate students are enrolled in the College. The College and its faculty are essential to the University's Strategic Framework, which identifies eight priorities for coordinated attention from multiple disciplinary perspectives, many of which have a significant presence in Arts & Letters: arts, climate and sustainability, data and computational science, democracy, ethics, global Catholicism, health and well-being, and poverty.

Notre Dame's commitment to the disciplines that make up the College is unwavering. Fields in the humanities, social sciences, and the arts have not been subject to hiring freezes or budgetary cutbacks, and instead display vitality and relevance not experienced on other campuses. Of note, over the past 25

years, the number of Arts & Letters faculty at Notre Dame receiving fellowships from the National Endowment of Humanities exceeds that at any other private university.

Recent fundraising successes have amplified the College's ability to excel in the liberal arts and Notre Dame's leadership sees success in these areas as central to the University's aspirations. In the last philanthropic campaign, which raised over \$6 billion, the College significantly exceeded its fundraising target. The Dean is expected to play a major role in fundraising; many of the University's most generous alumni are Arts & Letters graduates. Gifts directed to Arts & Letters are conveyed in full ("untaxed").

Notre Dame follows a centralized budgeting model. The College's annual operating budget is around \$157 million, with about \$100 million coming as a central allocation and \$50 million from grants and endowed funds. Any surpluses at the end of the year are retained by the College as quasi-endowment, which is currently being used to support graduate student stipends. The College's current endowment is approximately \$1 billion.

CURRENT OUTLOOK

This is a college that operates from a position of strength, with a vibrant intellectual community. This is decidedly not an academic unit compelled by circumstance or constrained resources to take a defensive posture. Years of strong leadership and significant financial resources and investments have resulted in a prosperous organization.

The College has been led for the past seven years by [Sarah Mustillo](#), a distinguished sociologist and herself a graduate of Notre Dame. Under Dean Mustillo, the College has flourished. Among entering students, interest in majoring in the liberal arts has risen, and undergraduates increasingly elect to complete a senior thesis or capstone experience. The College has been able to attract many of the best graduate students by increasing stipend support from \$23,500 to \$38,000 annually. Some departments such as Philosophy and Theology are perceived as among the very best in the world. Arts & Letters has continued to recruit and retain superb faculty (three faculty in the College received Guggenheim Fellowships in 2024), and the faculty body is increasingly diverse. The recent establishment of the Initiative on Race and Resilience, among other efforts, testifies to the College's support of areas of study and activities that examine systemic racism and injustice. The construction of a new clinical psychology facility reflects a commitment to alleviating the contemporary crisis in mental health.

Dean Mustillo has been supported in this work by a talented group of associate deans and professional staff. They—and the University as a whole—are deeply committed to the College's continued success.

ROLE OF THE I.A. O’SHAUGHNESSY DEAN (Key Opportunities and Challenges)

As the College's chief academic and administrative officer, the Dean provides strategic vision, operational guidance, and political, financial, and social support for the work of Arts & Letters. The Dean is expected to chart a bold path for the College and simultaneously serve as a campus partner; apprehend the ways in which the College can be strengthened and direct efforts to that end; align the College's undertakings so they complement the University's vision (particularly as set forth in the Strategic Framework) and work to the benefit of the College's faculty, students, and staff. The Dean reports to the Provost.

Reporting to the Dean are the:

- Twenty Department Chairs
- Associate Dean for the Arts
- Associate Dean for the Humanities and Equity
- Associate Dean for the Social Sciences
- Associate Dean for Research and Strategic Initiatives
- Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies
- Director of Academic Advancement (dotted line)
- Director of Communication and Marketing
- Senior Director of Finance and Administration
- Senior Director of Organizational Effectiveness
- Dean’s Executive Administrator

The Dean will:

Develop, broadcast, and execute on an ambitious vision for the College.

The Dean must have a unique and prescient view of the liberal arts and the disciplines contained within Arts & Letters, and be prepared to craft a compelling case for them. The vision should take into account the breadth and scope of the College's intellectual activities; balance commitment to the individual disciplines with attention to interdisciplinarity; and preserve Notre Dame's historical emphasis on undergraduate education while advancing research. The Dean is a primary point person in the University’s tenure and promotion system and, as such, must also have a keen eye for academic excellence.

The Dean should also be able to sustain momentum with respect to recent progress in faculty hiring and research support, graduate education and financial support, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Above all, the Dean must be able to communicate what Catholic liberal arts education is, and how it is animated by and expressed through the teaching, learning, research, and creative activity taking place in the College of Arts & Letters.

Partner and collaborate.

Notre Dame has a history of setting and achieving ambitious goals. As recently as 40 years ago, the University's financial situation was "stable if unpromising," according to one assessment, and there was no dedicated office of research until 2004. Financial aid for students was limited. By 2022, however, Notre Dame's endowment was the seventh largest among private universities, which enabled the physical

transformation of the campus, the recruitment of an increasingly diverse and talented undergraduate student body, and the emergence of Notre Dame as a leading research university.

As would be expected given Notre Dame's mission to be a force for good in the world, the University's Strategic Plan has identified [eight areas](#) for coordinated, institution-wide efforts that will contribute to questions of national and international concern. The College must be a driver of, contributor to, and partner in these initiatives. Collaboration around joint hires, dual programs, large-scale collaborative research projects, and the development of cross-disciplinary approaches and methods: all these should be encouraged and supported by the Dean.

Deans at Notre Dame are representatives of the University as much as they are leaders of individual colleges or schools. As an institutional citizen, the Dean's charge is to understand the future of each of the other academic colleges, present Arts & Letters as a constructive colleague and stakeholder, and work cooperatively and productively with other units. The Dean will also position A&L in the spaces where the College might be initially overlooked but, in fact, can play a foundational role—for example, in data and computational science, or in artificial intelligence.

Champion operational excellence.

The scale and pace of College activities can test any administrator, and the Dean's team is critical to the success of the Dean. Department chairs and institute and center directors work directly with the Associate Deans on resource allocation and planning, research support, curriculum, and faculty hiring and faculty affairs. The Dean will take care that information is broadly shared to enable high-quality service and outcomes; clarify communication and decision-making paths to minimize confusion and create a frictionless experience for chairs and directors; and rationalize systems and applications to reduce duplication of effort and other inefficiencies. The Dean will evince trust, work transparently, communicate broadly, and empower others. Arts & Letters, by virtue of its size, can be an operational model for other academic units; the Dean will recognize this as an opportunity for meaningful University leadership.

The Dean will also attend to faculty and internal leadership development. There is an opportunity to examine policies around promotion and tenure, to ensure that they do not run counter to encouraging interdisciplinary and cross-unit activity, and to look at governance and support with respect to TPAC faculty (teaching, professor of the practice, advising, clinical, research, and library faculty), who play a critical role in the College ecosystem. In addition, Associate Deans serve renewable 3-year terms before reverting to the faculty; department chairs also serve renewable 3-year terms. The Dean will make a point of knowing the individual departments and faculty, work with the departments to ensure continued strong leadership, invest in faculty leaders, promote accountability across all roles and ranks, and increase engagement.

Engage both global and local communities.

The University's strategic framework calls for increased institutional impact beyond Notre Dame's campus. The Dean will champion Notre Dame and the College, look for ways to contribute to external communities, establish long-term and substantial relationships with partners outside the University, expand educational programming to benefit students, and extend the impact and awareness of faculty research. Most of all, the Dean must be a gifted conceptual thinker and communicator who can develop and advance an explicit global strategy for the College, leveraging the University's many assets in this area including its global network. In addition, the University also emphasizes engagement with South Bend and the surrounding community. The Dean will cultivate and nurture relationships with local governments, business entities, schools, and other organizations, in service to Notre Dame and South Bend.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Notre Dame seeks an academic administrator with a history of strong scholarship and teaching, who will lead the College with enthusiasm, wisdom, generosity, and institutional ambition that matches that of the University. The successful candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal qualifications:

A track record of mission-driven, collaborative, inclusive intellectual leadership and championing of the liberal arts: Passion for the Catholic mission of the University of Notre Dame and appreciation of the value of a liberal arts education, and ability to talk about both with fluency, conviction, and infectious excitement. Sophisticated insight into the current and future states of higher education; ability to position the College of Arts & Letters to take advantage of opportunities and avoid adverse outcomes. Informed understanding of the global higher education landscape. A record of effective partnership with units and entities across campus as well as regionally, nationally, and globally.

Commitment to academic excellence: A record of distinguished accomplishment in scholarship and a keen eye for academic excellence. Ability to provide intellectual leadership of a large academic unit; intellectual capaciousness and range. Organizational ambition: appetite for boldness and innovation, and ability to raise sights, inspire, empower, and motivate toward excellence and impact. Success in strengthening learning, teaching, research, curricular and co-curricular programs, and the support structures and mechanisms required for these activities to flourish.

Excellent administrative leadership skills: Significant administrative experience in complex settings. Understanding of the interplay of financial resources, needs, and student and faculty interests. Ability to attract and willingness to use social, political, and financial capital. Commitment and ability to advance College and University aims effectively and simultaneously. Willingness and ability to delegate and hold others to account. Clarity of communication; decisiveness; exceptional organizational skills.

Demonstrated record of commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion: A history of success in achieving a more inclusive and equitable community of scholars, staff, and students.

Cultural curiosity and empathy, broad-mindedness, and global engagement: Evidence of global citizenship. Comprehension of global issues and trends in the field. Understanding of the global landscape of the liberal arts and research universities.

Professional and personal qualities: Intellectual daring, rigor, and open-mindedness. Persistence and resilience; focus and discipline. Strong interpersonal skills. Exceptional negotiation, networking, and listening skills. Curiosity, empathy, warmth. The ability to engender trust, and to communicate trust and confidence in the abilities and motives of others. Integrity of the highest order.

TO INQUIRE

Nominations, inquiries, and application materials (CVs and letters of interest) can be submitted electronically and in confidence to Anita Tien, Partner, and Jonathan Sanchez, Senior Associate, at:

[I.A. O'Shaughnessy Dean Search, College of Arts & Letters](#)

Isaacson, Miller

The University of Notre Dame is dedicated to equal employment opportunity and to the implementation of positive programs designed to ensure the prevention of any discriminatory practices, either intentional or inadvertent, with respect to race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, veteran status, age, or sex.