



Vice President for Advancement
Princeton Theological Seminary
Princeton, New Jersey

THE SEARCH

Princeton Theological Seminary (the Seminary) seeks a strategic, aspirational, and collaborative fundraising leader to serve as vice president for advancement (VP, vice president). Reporting to a visionary president early in his tenure and serving as an integral member of the Seminary senior leadership team, the vice president will establish vision and strategies that strengthen the culture of philanthropy, support seminary-wide strategic priorities, attract new sources of funding, and deeply engage alumni and friends of the Seminary. The VP will develop and implement best practices throughout the advancement operation, raising philanthropic sights among all constituencies, and significantly enhancing overall fundraising success.

Princeton Theological Seminary was the first seminary founded by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. Established in 1812, the Seminary has stood at the forefront of theological education for over 200 years, shaping generations of Christian professionals for ministry around the world. The Seminary stands with the Reformed tradition, which shapes the instruction, research, practical training, and continuing education provided by the Seminary, as well as the theological scholarship it promotes. This is an exceptional opportunity at a pivotal moment as the Seminary charts an ambitious future trajectory and builds upon the momentum of new presidential leadership, a refined strategic framework, and a cultural commitment to historical tradition while embracing innovation.

The vice president will develop and implement a strategic, comprehensive, and systematic institutional advancement program that reflects contemporary industry best practices and is consistent with the Seminary's mission and core values. The VP will mobilize and lead a staff of eight, empowering individuals through mentorship, training, and the use of data to track progress and outcomes. As an exceptional communicator and relationship builder, the VP will inspire trust and establish and deepen essential partnerships across the Seminary. The vice president will work closely with the president, board, and

division leadership to articulate funding priorities, engage donors, and develop and implement appropriate strategies to enhance and elevate the Seminary's fundraising success. In partnership with the vice president for marketing and communication, the VP will develop clear, consistent, and compelling messaging that reflects the Seminary's uniqueness and aspirations. The vice president will strengthen a culture of philanthropy among the Seminary's constituencies, enhance and strengthen donor pipelines, identify opportunities to engage and cultivate unaffiliated prospects and donors, and refine the overall strategy and structure of institutional advancement and ready the Seminary for future fundraising endeavors.

The incoming VP must possess a sophisticated understanding of the science of advancement, expertise in CRM systems, and experience shaping and growing a high-performing team and program informed by best practices and industry standards. In addition to developing an overarching strategic vision and plan for advancement, the VP must be able and willing to design and build a program at a systems level from the ground up. With at least ten years of leadership experience in advancement, the ideal candidate will possess a keen understanding of fundraising best practices, a proven track record of program building, and fundraising success in securing major and principal gift commitments from individuals, corporations, and foundations. The successful candidate will be data-driven and have the ability to develop, implement, and optimize infrastructure, policies, and procedures, ensuring data-informed best practices are embedded throughout the advancement operation.

The VP will excel at engaging various constituencies, including local civic and business leaders, through events and programs that showcase the Seminary's purpose and mission. The vice president will be adept at motivating, empowering, and advocating for staff, as well as facilitating cohesion and team success. The vice president will be an integral member of the Princeton Theological Seminary community. The VP will reflect and embody the core values of the Seminary by serving with authenticity, warmth, compassion, and humility. It is imperative that this individual bring a deep appreciation and passion for the mission, goals, history, and uniqueness of Princeton Theological Seminary and its constituents. A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

Princeton Theological Seminary has retained Jack Gorman of the national executive search firm, Isaacson, Miller, to assist in this important recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The establishment of The Theological Seminary at Princeton in 1812 marked a turning point in American theological education. Affiliated from the beginning with the Presbyterian Church and the wider Reformed tradition, Princeton Theological Seminary is a denominational school with an ecumenical, interdenominational, and worldwide constituency. This is reflected in the faculty, the curriculum of studies, and the student body. Princeton Theological Seminary is uniquely positioned to serve the church and the world, and it seeks to respond to that call with imagination and energy.

Mission, Vision, and Values

The Seminary's model of theological education is characterized by four distinctive commitments, each involving a creative tension:

Reformed and Ecumenical: Princeton Seminary is a Presbyterian school in the Reformed tradition, an identity we embrace proudly and believe to be an essential source of wisdom and strength for our mission. At the same time, Princeton Seminary is an ecumenical, international, and intercultural community that holds Jesus Christ as the center of our life together.

Faith and Scholarship: True to its Reformed heritage, Princeton Seminary promotes academic excellence as a faithful expression of loving God. This community of learning nurtures intellectual curiosity and fosters theological research.

Residential and Global: A vital part of the learning experience at Princeton Seminary is our residential community, and the world itself is our classroom. Students also extend their learning in many locations throughout the globe with field education experiences, travel courses, and academic exchange programs.

Tradition and Innovation: The essence of the Reformed tradition is an impulse towards innovation: "the church once reformed always being reformed in accordance with the word of God." The Seminary is strengthening its core commitment to preparing pastors for parish ministry while providing room in the curriculum for new forms of Christian ministry and service to which our students feel called.

Read more about Princeton Theological Seminary's mission and vision [here](#).

Strategic Framework

Over the past year, the leadership team at the Seminary [clarified the institution's focus](#) on strategy and revised the goals of the strategic plan outlined in 2021, sharpening the original text to reflect a more nuanced vision of what is necessary to achieve these goals. The following themes are intended as areas of emphasis for the next three to five years.

Ensure that our Degree Programs are Relevant, Compelling, Flexible, & Accessible: Develop a slate of distinctive hybrid degree programs that draw from sustainable pools of prospective students to broaden access and entry points by expanding beyond the traditional academic calendar.

Create Consequential and Innovative Non-Degree Programs: Design and launch a new set of programs and credentials that extend theological education to new constituencies, equip people for faithful reflection and practice, and generate revenue.

Enhance the Campus Experience: Renew our campus to create a thriving destination for learning, able to accommodate broader and more diverse populations of learners who come to Princeton for short, intense

learning opportunities that provide transformative experiences in Christian community and reflect the reign of God in the world.

Enhance the Digital Environment: Transform our digital environment to create a best-in-class educational experience that is learner-centric, flexible, and accessible to serve a larger learning community spanning multiple stages of one’s professional and educational career.

Ensure the Financial Sustainability of the Seminary and Students: Steward the resources of the school and ensure that our students graduate without a life-limiting level of debt.

Fundraising and Financials

Unlike most institutions of higher education, the Seminary’s operating budget is funded almost exclusively by the endowment. The Seminary’s endowment is approximately \$1.491 billion. These resources make possible generous scholarship and financial aid for students, and the strategic plan identifies an aspiration to reduce student debt. The endowment also supports faculty and academic resources that facilitate teaching and research.

Princeton Theological Seminary received more than \$5 million in gifts in Fiscal Year 2024, including restricted, unrestricted, and endowed gifts, with more than \$1.5 million raised by the annual fund.

Leadership

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Lee Walton **President**

The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Lee Walton became Princeton Theological Seminary’s eighth president in January 2023. Dr. Walton is trained as a social ethicist whose scholarship focuses on the intersection of evangelical Christianity, mass media, and political culture. Dr. Walton has published widely across various academic journals, books, magazines, and newspapers. His insights have been featured in the New York Times, CNN, Time Magazine, and PBS. Dr. Walton is a member of the Humanities Advancement Council at Morehouse College in Atlanta.

Dr. Walton earned his Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Divinity degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary. Prior to his appointment at Princeton Theological Seminary, he served as dean of Wake Forest University’s School of Divinity where he occupied the Presidential Chair in Religion & Society, and as the Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church at Harvard University.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT

Reporting directly to the president, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Lee Walton, the vice president for advancement will be an active, contributing member of the president’s senior leadership team and will work closely with this group to establish priorities and devise strategies that strengthen the culture of philanthropy,

support seminary-wide strategic priorities, attract new sources of funding, and deeply engage alumni and friends of the Seminary.

The vice president is responsible for providing strategic vision and effective leadership for the department of advancement. This individual will ensure an optimal organizational structure; define mutually acceptable annual and long-term performance goals; and engage, educate, and otherwise support staff, faculty, volunteers, and senior leaders in their respective engagement and fundraising efforts. The vice president will lead by example, personally participating in the identification, cultivation, and solicitation of high-level donors and prospects. The vice president will be an integral member of the community and will reflect and embody the values of Princeton Theological Seminary and its leadership.

Key Responsibilities and Duties

Strategic Vision and Leadership

- Provide leadership and direction to the department of advancement, which encompasses development, alumni relations/giving, and planned giving.
- Serve as an architect and builder, from the ground up, of a strategic, cohesive, and systematic institutional advancement program that is reflective of contemporary industry best practices and consistent with the Seminary's mission and core values.
- Assess the fundraising success and potential of Princeton Theological Seminary; craft a sophisticated multi-year strategy that leverages institutional strengths and assets to implement and reinforce a culture of philanthropy and sustainably increase philanthropic support in keeping with the mission, core values, and institutional priorities of the Seminary.
- Serve as an active and valued member of the president's senior leadership team; build strong, collaborative professional relationships with cabinet peers and foster a strong team orientation.
- Personally cultivate, solicit, and steward a select prospect portfolio; lead frontline fundraising by example, demonstrating success and providing mentorship to maximize philanthropic revenue for the support of the Seminary's ministry and mission.
- In conjunction with the president and other senior leaders, craft clear, consistent, and compelling messaging that reflects the uniqueness, strengths, and aspirations of Princeton Theological Seminary and results in greater philanthropic support.

Programmatic Growth

- Evaluate, strengthen, and enhance existing individual giving and foundation relations programs that will provide current operating funds, endowment funds, and capital funds sufficient to ensure the Seminary's financial stability and well-being for the present and in the future.
- Develop and implement a robust and sophisticated major and principal gifts program and pipeline, establishing new and innovative plans to identify and acquire prospective individual and institutional donors, both affiliated and unaffiliated, increasing donor retention and re-engaging existing donors.

- Plan and conduct events, on and off campus, that inform and engage specific constituencies, including local civic and business leaders, and showcase the Seminary's purpose and mission.
- Evaluate and bolster the stewardship of past donors by implementing best practices to cultivate, engage, and steward donor relationships.
- Leverage the president and senior leadership to build new and enhance the Seminary's existing relationships with civic and community leaders and foundations, among others; and to philanthropically engage unaffiliated individuals and institutions in support of the Seminary.
- Facilitate the implementation of a new CRM, and develop advancement-related best practices, policies, and moves management that effectively leverage the use of data to inform metrics and accountability and advance division and institutional priorities.
- Develop and provide administrative leadership for special capital campaigns.

Executive Support and Engagement

- Serve as a critical partner and advisor to the president of the Seminary; proactively plan, organize, and structure the president's personal role in the development process and his engagement with the Seminary's external constituents.
- Cultivate strong working relationships with administrators, faculty, and staff across campus; engender trust among these constituents through transparent communication and a clear motivation to work as a team.
- Collaborate with the communications and marketing team to share inspiring stories of the Seminary with donors in a compelling and innovative manner.
- In concert with the director of alumni relations, plan and administer a well-rounded alumni relations program to strengthen ties to the Seminary and enhance the Seminary's vision and ambitions.
- Engage the board of trustees to inspire giving, set appropriate and ambitious fundraising goals, and leverage as vital participants in growing a culture of philanthropy.
- Fulfill other responsibilities pertinent to the department of advancement as assigned by the president.

Staff Management and Empowerment

- Maintain a leadership style that is fair, equitable, and open; empower the advancement team through training, mentorship, and accountability, setting clear direction and priorities for staff; optimally organize the advancement team and operation.
- Promote excellence through clear communication, well-defined goals, and implementation of best practices and accountability measures. Provide opportunities for professional learning and growth; inspire, empower, and motivate staff through active, transparent communication and delegation.

- Foster a professional environment that recognizes and rewards performance, supports innovation, builds confidence, encourages teamwork, reduces silos, retains staff, and promotes diversity and inclusion; serve as an advocate for staff, representing their concerns and needs.
- Oversee all personnel activities for the department, including the recruitment, hiring, and onboarding of staff; as well as defining the job responsibilities and performance review process for each staff member.
- Ensure that all systems and processes maximize available intelligence via reporting and follow sound budgetary, legal, and accountancy practices.
- Plan and carefully administer the department of advancement budget, ensuring that resources are deployed efficiently and effectively in support of fundraising goals and objectives; utilize contemporary analytics to project, measure, and report on progress relative to goals.

Qualifications and Experience

The vice president will bring many, if not all, of the following professional qualifications, skills, and experiences:

- A deep appreciation for the history, achievements, and aspirations of Princeton Theological Seminary, and the ability to effectively articulate the president's vision to a diverse audience.
- A minimum of ten years of progressively responsible fundraising and managerial experience in advancement, preferably within higher education or a large, multi-unit organization; experience serving on a senior leadership team and contributing at the strategic level; depth of knowledge and best practices in all key areas of advancement.
- Demonstrated success in program building and/or enhancing and increasing the effectiveness of an existing advancement program and its staff, including individual and institutional philanthropy, through established objectives and performance standards, resulting in increased philanthropic revenue.
- A sophisticated understanding of the science of advancement, including expertise in CRM systems, relationship-building technologies, prospect research and management, and data-informed planning; experience with Salesforce is preferred.
- A willingness and interest to design and build programs, systems, infrastructure, and a high-performing team from the ground up.
- Proven achievement in creating a team- and goal-oriented environment that empowers staff through active communication and that builds confidence and celebrates accomplishments; a successful track record of building and maintaining highly collaborative and productive teams.
- A proven track record of success in personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major and principal gifts from individual and institutional donors.
- The political savvy to navigate complex academic and constituent communities; the desire and ability to build bridges and strong collaborative relationships with all members of an operation across an institution and its alumni and constituents.

- Intellectual curiosity and experience setting and implementing strategy, establishing and meeting goals and priorities; a proactive problem solver and creative thinker who welcomes and is proficient at navigating change and dealing with ambiguity.
- Superior written and oral communication skills; the ability to understand and translate information for all audiences; clarity and eloquence in writing and speaking.
- A sharp eye for operational efficiency and the best use of resources, including a demonstrated understanding of budgets and the ability to manage them.
- Proficiency in utilizing fundraising and special events databases and software.
- The personal flexibility to travel and work evenings and weekends, as required.
- A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

Princeton Theological Seminary offers an excellent benefits package, including housing or a housing stipend, and a salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Relocation assistance, if needed, is negotiable.

This is a permanent, full-time position in Princeton, New Jersey. The wage/salary of the finalist selected for this role will be set based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to qualifications, experience, education, licenses, specialty, and training.

The Seminary is enriched by its location in the town of Princeton, New Jersey, with its vibrant community of intellectual, artistic, and cultural resources. The neighboring Center of Theological Inquiry and Institute for Advanced Study contribute to the scholarly community. Located one block from Princeton University, and a few blocks from downtown Princeton's shops, restaurants, theater, and historical sites, Princeton Seminary is a wonderful place to live and study.

Princeton Theological Seminary's expansive campus comprises more than 1.2 million square feet of space, including academic, administrative, and dormitory buildings on the central campus, the Charlotte Rachel Wilson apartments for students in nearby West Windsor Township, the Seminary's 21-acre farm where the Farminary is located, and more than 40 residential homes that house faculty in close proximity to the campus.

The campus includes cherished 19th-century buildings, which have won awards for historic preservation. The Seminary's first building, Alexander Hall (1815), remains in use. The Seminary recently finished a full renovation of the Brown Hall dormitory (1865) to update the rooms with private baths and expansive gathering space. The main classroom building, Stuart Hall (1876), also recently underwent complete exterior preservation to historic standards.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/princeton-theological-seminary/vice-president-advancement>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

Jack Gorman is leading this search with Bryce Ervin and Ryan Cheung.
Isaacson, Miller

Princeton Theological Seminary is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in employment with regard to race, creed, color, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, military status, national origin, religious affiliation (except as religion may be a bona fide occupational qualification for certain positions at the seminary), disability, sexual or affectional orientation, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait of an individual, or any other characteristic protected by law.