



SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Chief of Staff to the President

Seattle University

Seattle, WA

THE SEARCH

Seattle University (SU), a leading Jesuit Catholic institution, seeks a strategic and collaborative professional to serve as Chief of Staff (COS) to the President. The COS will join a dynamic institution committed to providing a transformative education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in an urban setting and will serve as a trusted advisor and thought partner to the President. The COS is integral to helping advance the President's vision, driving institutional priorities, and facilitating strategic alignment and execution across the university.

One of 27 Jesuit universities in the United States, and a premier independent college in the Pacific Northwest, Seattle University is recognized for its undergraduate teaching and community engagement. The university enrolls approximately 4,000 undergraduates and 2,700 graduate students across seven schools and colleges and two campuses, as well as 800 law students. Its approximately 750 faculty members (525 full-time) engage in teaching, research, and service with a clear focus on academic excellence, justice, leadership, and diversity, emphasizing the student experience of learning in all of its forms – in the classroom, on campus, and around the world.

The President's Chief of Staff will be joining Seattle University at a pivotal moment in the institution's history. [Dr. Maura Mast](#) will assume the presidency on September 1 as the first woman to lead the university, and the campus is poised for an exciting future marked by innovation and change. Serving as a member of the [President's Roundtable](#) and [Senior Leadership Team](#), the COS will enhance the President's effectiveness by providing counsel on matters of strategic importance, keeping the President informed of key initiatives across the university, and helping protect, promote, and advance the President's vision, priorities, and time. The successful candidate will bring strong judgment, authenticity, diplomacy, and discretion, and the ability to navigate complex issues and competing priorities alongside a strong and engaged leadership team. The COS will be an exceptional institutional navigator and relationship builder, regularly working collaboratively with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders to the university.

A list of the desired qualifications and characteristics of the President's Chief of Staff can be found at the conclusion of this document, which was prepared with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to provide background information and detail the key duties related to the position. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1891, Seattle University is a Jesuit, Catholic university located on a vibrant and green 50-acre campus in Seattle's First Hill neighborhood, in the heart of the city. From its roots as a small parish school, Seattle University has grown into the largest independent university in the Northwestern United States. The university also operates a South Lake Union campus, home to Cornish College of the Arts at Seattle University, which joined the institution in 2025.

Thirty-seven percent of Seattle University's undergraduate students are first-generation college students, and in 2025-2026, 98% of students received financial aid. While there is a large population of undergraduates aged 18-22, there is a significant population of commuter and non-traditional-age students as well.

The university houses seven schools and colleges, each with its own highly ranked programs: the Albers School of Business and Economics; College of Arts and Sciences; College of Education; College of Nursing and Health Sciences; College of Science and Engineering; Cornish College of the Arts at Seattle University; and the School of Law.

Seattle University is in the midst of the [Reigniting our Strategic Directions 2022-2027](#) strategic plan, which outlines five goals to be one of the most innovative and progressive Jesuit and Catholic universities in the world. With a foundation based on remaining anchored in its Jesuit and Catholic character, the RSD goals focus on reimagining and revising curriculum; strengthening professional formation for all; enhancing the student experience; promoting inclusive excellence; and repositioning resources and institutional infrastructure to meet these goals.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

On June 25, 2026, the Seattle University Board of Trustees announced the unanimous appointment of Dr. Maura Mast as the university's 23rd President. Following a comprehensive national search grounded in Seattle University's Jesuit, Catholic mission, Dr. Mast will assume the presidency on September 1. Dr. Mast comes to Seattle University from Fordham University, where she served for a decade as Dean of Fordham College at Rose Hill. During her tenure as Dean, she expanded philanthropic support, launched innovative student success initiatives, strengthened advising and experiential learning opportunities, and championed faculty research and curricular innovation. Dr. Mast earned a BA in mathematics and

anthropology from the University of Notre Dame and a PhD in mathematics from the University of North Carolina.

The President serves as the chief executive officer of Seattle University, reports to the Board of Trustees, and is responsible for advancing the institution's Jesuit, Catholic mission and vision. In close partnership with the Board, the President provides strategic leadership for the university's academic, financial, operational, and community priorities while fostering a culture of excellence, innovation, and service.

In addition to the Chief of Staff, the President oversees 10 direct reports: the Provost; Senior Vice President for University Advancement; Senior Vice President for Strategic Initiatives; Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs and Chief Financial Officer; Vice President for Enrollment Management; Vice President for Mission Integration; Vice President for Athletics; Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer; Vice President for University Affairs; and Vice President and University Counsel. The President's Roundtable and broader Senior Leadership Team provide strategic leadership in support of the university's mission and long-term success.

The Office of the President advances Seattle University's mission and strategic plan while coordinating and supporting key institutional priorities. For more information on the President's key initiatives, please visit [this page](#).

ROLE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE PRESIDENT

Reporting directly to the President, the COS serves as an essential advisor to the President on strategic matters, providing leadership to advance university-wide priorities while overseeing the operational functions of the Office of the President. As Seattle University welcomes President Mast, the COS will play a critical role in supporting her successful transition to the university and the broader Seattle community by accelerating her understanding of institutional culture, governance structures, key relationships, and strategic opportunities.

The COS leads a variety of initiatives, projects, and events managed through the Office of the President, working closely with the Provost, vice presidents, deans, trustees, and other leaders and partners internal and external to the institution to advance university goals and support executive decision-making. The COS supports the President by providing counsel and recommendations on issues requiring presidential attention, coordinating action across university leadership, and helping ensure university priorities are advanced and implemented effectively.

Working in such a capacity, the COS will bring strong strategic, organizational, and execution planning skills, along with the ability to build productive relationships across a complex institution. The COS must also bring strong communication skills, sound judgment, and the ability to build alignment and drive coordinated action across various academic and administrative units. Successful candidates will work well

both independently and collaboratively and must be genuinely enthusiastic about and committed to the mission of Seattle University.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

The Chief of Staff will be an integral member of the Office of the President and will bring strong communication, project management, and organizational skills to the team. The COS role covers the following key duties and responsibilities:

Act as a trusted advisor, strategic resource, and representative for the President

- Serve as the President's aide, trusted advisor, and confidant on matters of strategic and institutional importance.
- Advise the President on priorities and provide confidential and candid counsel, recommendations, and strategic guidance on matters requiring presidential attention. Surface competing viewpoints, identify institutional implications, and be attentive to potential structural inequities to be resolved.
- Act as the President's delegate and representative in leadership meetings, strategic discussions, and other engagements, as assigned, to facilitate executive decision-making, ensure follow-through on presidential directives, and exercise sound judgment to move initiatives forward.
- Brief the President on key initiatives, projects, meetings, and emerging issues across the university.
- Prepare and/or contribute to reports, briefings, presentations, communications, and responses on institutional matters as appropriate. Review, research, and synthesize complex information and data to support the President in decision-making.
- Support the President in addressing faculty, student, parent, alumni, trustee, regent, and public affairs matters and governance, and directly manage issues of institutional importance on the President's behalf when appropriate.

Advance presidential priorities through strategic projects and initiatives

- Lead and coordinate special projects and strategic initiatives assigned by the President, frequently involving senior leaders across the university to advance institutional priorities.
- Facilitate collaboration, communication, and follow-through among members of the President's leadership team and across the institution to advance shared goals and priorities.
- Monitor and drive progress on priority initiatives, working closely with campus leaders to ensure accountability, remove barriers, resolve challenges, elevate issues requiring executive action, and communicate progress to the campus community as appropriate in support of university goals.

- Anticipate, identify, and analyze emerging issues, risks, and opportunities that may affect the President's priorities or the university's strategic objectives, and recommend courses of action as appropriate.

Lead and coordinate the operations and priorities of the Office of the President and the University leadership teams

- Establish and maintain an integrated view of the President's institutional priorities, commitments, decisions, and emerging issues.
- Assist in optimizing the President's schedule by managing competing institutional and community priorities and requests, relieving the President of administrative detail.
- Oversee communications and correspondence originating from and directed to the President's office, including reviewing, screening, routing, and drafting responses.
- Lead the coordination of executive leadership priorities by shaping agendas, facilitating strategic discussions, tracking key decisions and commitments, and ensuring follow-through across the President's Office, including the President's Roundtable and Senior Leadership Team, and associated offices.
- Provide leadership and oversight for the day-to-day operations of the Office of the President, including supervision, mentorship, and evaluation of staff and stewardship of the office budget.
- Maintain accurate confidential files, records, and institutional information.
- Maintain a broad understanding of the university's programs, operations, policies, guidelines, and procedures to support effective leadership and decision-making.

Support the President's fundraising and external engagement efforts

- Partner with University Advancement to support the President's fundraising, cultivation of donors, and other stewardship activities.
- Participate in planning and strategy discussions related to donor prospects, fundraising initiatives, and advancement events.
- Support the President's engagement with elected officials, civic leaders, business leaders, and other external stakeholders to strengthen strategic relationships and enhance the university's visibility and impact.
- Coordinate scheduling priorities and follow-up activities related to donor meetings and engagement efforts.
- Assist in preparing briefing materials, correspondence, and meeting preparations for donor and external constituent engagements.

Serve as the primary liaison resource between the President and the Board of Trustees

- Serve as staff support and liaison between the President and the Board of Trustees, including the

Chair and Executive Committee, on behalf of the President's Office.

- Partner with University Counsel and Board Secretary to support Board of Trustee meetings.
- Assist with planning agendas and overseeing the preparation and distribution of Board materials, meeting notices, and related communications, including preparation and dissemination of monthly reports.
- Oversee the logistics and administration of Board of Trustees meetings.
- Collaborate with the Secretary to coordinate trustee onboarding, orientation, and ongoing communication efforts to strengthen engagement with the President's Office.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Seattle University seeks a Chief of Staff to the President with a demonstrated record of strategic leadership, sound judgement, and the ability to collaborate and build strong relationships across a complex organization. A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution is required, and an advanced degree is preferred. The successful candidate will also bring many if not all of the following personal and professional qualities and characteristics:

- Minimum of seven years of progressively responsible administrative leadership experience in a large, complex organization.
- Experience providing senior-executive-level support, office leadership, or operational management within an institution of higher education.
- Previous experience as a Chief of Staff, Chief Administrative Officer, or in a comparable senior leadership role.
- Strong commitment to Seattle University's Jesuit and Catholic mission and values.
- Knowledge of the governance, leadership, and decision-making structures in higher education institutions.
- Demonstrated ability to build and sustain trusting relationships with trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, and external partners, serving as an effective bridge among diverse constituencies.
- Demonstrated ability to influence senior leaders, navigate complex organizational environments, and advance institution-wide priorities through formal and informal leadership, exercising sound judgement and strategic insight across various stakeholders;
- Demonstrated success leading high-priority projects, initiatives, and organizational priorities with significant institutional impact.
- Strong strategic thinking, analytical, and problem-solving skills, with the ability to assess complex issues, synthesize information, and provide sound recommendations.
- Exceptional project management, organizational, and execution skills to manage multiple priorities, deadlines, and competing demands.
- Strong collaboration skills, emotional intelligence, and the ability to calmly navigate organizational relationships and dynamics to advance institutional goals and priorities.

- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to build trust and credibility with a wide range of internal and external constituents.
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, including experience preparing executive-level correspondence, presentations, and briefing materials.
- Demonstrated experience with budget and resource management.
- High degree of integrity, discretion, and professional judgment to work with a range of individuals and manage sensitive and confidential matters effectively.
- Willingness and ability to address time-sensitive matters and institutional needs outside of regular business hours, including evenings and weekends as needed, to support the demands and priorities of the President's Office. Willingness and ability to work on-campus most days throughout the year.

COMPENSATION

The anticipated hiring range for this role is \$180,000-\$210,000. This range takes into account the wide variety of factors that are considered in making compensation decisions, including but not limited to experience, skills, knowledge, abilities, education, licensure and certifications, and other organizational needs, and is a good faith estimate. Seattle University offers a robust and comprehensive benefits program for its employees in order to attract and retain individuals that will carry out its mission. Salary offers are determined based on the final candidate's qualifications and experience.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/seattle-university/chief-staff-president>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

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Seattle University is an equal opportunity employer.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Seattle University. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Seattle University supersede any conflicting information in this document.