Yale University

Dean, Yale Divinity School

New Haven, Connecticut

THE SEARCH

Yale University seeks an inspiring, accomplished, and collaborative leader to serve as the next Dean of the Yale Divinity School (YDS). This is an extraordinary opportunity to lead and advance one of the nation's foremost divinity schools at a time when YDS has never been stronger. YDS prepares students for ministry, scholarship, nonprofit leadership, and public service through an academically rigorous and ecumenical theological education. The School is known for its interdisciplinary approach and its emphasis on faith, justice, and engagement with contemporary global issues.

The Rev. Dr. Greg Sterling has served as the Reverend Henry L. Slack Dean for nearly 15 years and will step down from the position at the end of the 2026–2027 academic year. Over the past 15 years, YDS has reimagined its academic programs, increased access to theological education through expanded financial aid, advanced initiatives focused on sustainability, justice, and community, and renewed much of the school's physical campus, including the building of the Living Village, the largest living-building residential complex on a university campus. Seminal institutional partnerships and affiliations have been solidified and/or reaffirmed including Andover Newtown Seminary at Yale Divinity School, Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, and a unique partnership with the Institute of Sacred Music. The next Dean will have the opportunity to build on these strengths, working collaboratively with faculty, staff, students and the broader YDS and Yale ecosystem to continue to sustain and grow a vibrant engaged community while evolving the school in the face of a rapidly changing landscape.

Reporting to the Provost, the Dean will have a deep-rooted commitment to the enterprise of theological education in a research University context that is fully committed to the interrelationship of scholarship and practice. The ideal candidate will have a record of scholarly excellence, an understanding of the

contemporary issues of the Church, significant experience leading complex organizations, a pastoral sensibility, and a passion for cultivating community across difference.

Yale University has retained the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist with this important search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm in confidence, as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT YALE UNIVERSITY

Yale University is dedicated to expanding and sharing knowledge, inspiring innovation, and preserving cultural and scientific information for future generations.

A member of the Ivy League and the Association of American Universities, Yale ranks among the world's premier private research universities. The University's academic divisions consist of Yale College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and 13 professional schools: architecture, art, divinity, drama, engineering and applied science, environment, global affairs, law, management, medicine, music, nursing, and public health. For fiscal year 2027, the University has an operating budget of $6.7 billion, with grant and contract expenditures supporting Yale's research and training programs totaling $1.2 billion and spending from the Yale endowment for the year totaling $2.2 billion. Yale's endowment stands at $54.5 billion.

In 2026, Yale was ranked 4th overall in National Universities, #3 in Best Value Schools, and #6 in Undergraduate Research by *US News and World Report*. Today, Yale enrolls more than 15,000 students, including ca. 6,500 undergraduate students and ca. 8,500 graduate and professional students. Its network of more than 190,000 living alumni remains deeply engaged with their alma mater. The University also employs ca. 5,700 faculty and ca. 12,000 staff members.

University Leadership

President Maurie McInnis

Maurie McInnis is the twenty-fourth president of Yale University and a professor in the Department of the History of Art. A distinguished scholar, President McInnis has contributed significantly to her field as a cultural historian and is the author of five books.

Her academic career began at Yale, where she was a graduate student. She has spent three decades in higher education, holding a range of teaching, research, and leadership positions at several preeminent universities, including at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Virginia. Most recently, she served as the sixth president of Stony Brook University.

Since her arrival at Yale in 2024, President McInnis has partnered with faculty, students, staff, and alumni to elevate the transformative power of universities, as well as work to restore public trust in higher education. She continues to prioritize expanding financial aid for students, reaffirming academic excellence, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, and strengthening Yale's partnership with New Haven, among other focuses.

Provost Scott A. Strobel

Scott Strobel was appointed Yale University Provost in 2020, a role in which he helps set and advance Yale's academic and research priorities and lead the faculty in their pursuit of research and teaching excellence. An award-winning teacher and mentor, Provost Strobel is also the Henry Ford II Professor of Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry (MB&B), having joined the Yale faculty in 1995 and serving as department chair from 2006-09. Among other roles, he has additionally served as Vice President for West Campus Planning & Program Development, where he orchestrated the emergence of the West Campus as a research and educational center of the University; the inaugural Deputy Provost for Teaching & Learning, overseeing the creation of the Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning; and as chair of the University Science Strategy Committee, which was tasked with developing a ten-year strategic plan for the sciences and engineering at Yale, and then as Vice Provost for Science Initiatives, where he was charged with beginning the implementation of that plan.

THE YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL

Yale Divinity School is interdenominational and nonsectarian. The faculty is drawn from the major Christian traditions as well as other world religions. Students represent several dozen denominations and faith groups.

History

Training for the Christian ministry was a main purpose in the founding of Yale College in 1701. As expressed in its original charter, it was to be a school "wherein Youth may be instructed in the Arts & Sciences who through the blessing of Almighty God may be fitted for Publick employment both in Church & Civil State." That purpose has always been recognized at Yale, and the history of the University is one of increasing development in the facilities for training for religious service.

During the early years of Yale College, its general curriculum, supplemented in some cases by a year or two of reading under the direction of its instructors, was deemed sufficient for ministerial preparation. But in 1822, in response to petitioning from students of theology who asked to be recognized as a distinct group, a professorship in theology was established, marking the formation of what was later to be known as the Yale Divinity School.

Divinity School classes were first held in rooms above the University chapel, and in 1835–36 Divinity College was constructed on what is now Yale's Old Campus as the new home of the Divinity School. In

1869, two years after Yale awarded its first Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) degree (changed in 1971 to the M.Div.), the cornerstone was laid for new Divinity facilities at Elm and College streets. The present home of the Divinity School, Sterling Divinity Quadrangle on Prospect Street, opened in 1932, the same year women were admitted for the first time as candidates for the B.D. degree. A $49 million renovation of the Georgian Colonial-style campus, where Marquand Chapel dominates as the central unifying monument, was completed in 2003.

Over the years, YDS has been associated with some of the most prominent figures in American religion, such as faculty members H. Richard Niebuhr, Roland Bainton, Brevard Childs, James Gustafson, Henri Nouwen, Margaret Farley, and Emilie Townes; and alumni/ae including theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, antiwar activist and Yale University Chaplain William Sloane Coffin, Jr., Union Theological Seminary President Serene Jones, Sharon Watkins, former General Minister and President of the Disciples of Christ, and Otis Moss III, senior minister at Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago. Other well-known alumni include International Rescue Committee President and CEO George Rupp, Emory University President and U.S. Ambassador James Laney, and former U.S. Senator John Danforth.

Additionally, YDS has historic connections to the study and practice of Christianity globally. The long and distinguished line of YDS scholars who have shaped the study of Christian movements worldwide include Alexander Crummell, the 19th-century African American minister, author, abolitionist, educationist, and missionary to Liberia, who studied at Yale and was later awarded a Yale degree posthumously.

Today, YDS is a thriving ecumenical school inclusive of a wide range of Christian traditions. The School graduates about 150 students every year, including many who enter pulpit ministries and others who embark on careers in chaplaincy, academia, law, medicine, business, social service, and the world of nonprofit agencies.

Academic Programs

At Yale Divinity School, students immerse themselves in a challenging academic environment where they analyze contemporary issues in the light of a long tradition of theological reflection. Working with an internationally recognized faculty, Divinity School students learn to write clearly, research independently, listen critically, and manage time effectively—all while enjoying the academic and other benefits of being part of one of the world's best universities.

YDS offers programs of study leading to the degrees of Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Master of Arts in Religion (M.A.R.), and Master of Sacred Theology (S.T.M.). Programs for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) are offered by the Department of Religious Studies in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and with collaboration and support from YDS, including faculty who have joint or secondary appointments in Religious Studies. In addition, there are a number of certificate programs including but not limited to Black Church Studies, Ecological Leadership and Ministry, and Public Policy and Public Theology.

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YDS also encourages students to pursue concurrent degree programs that lead to the receipt of more than one degree when such programs constitute a coherent and well-defined preparation for ministry. Students may work simultaneously toward a YDS degree and a degree in certain other Yale schools or other approved graduate programs. A full list of joint degree programs can be found here. In addition to a range of joint degree options within Yale University, students also have the option to seek a joint Master of Social Work with University of Connecticut or a Joint Master of Social Work with Quinnipiac University.

Students

In 2025 YDS had a total of 287 students and has seen record numbers of applications and exceptional selectivity in recent years reflecting YDS' outstanding reputation and advances in financial aid as well as society's renewed interest in theological education and religious/spiritual formation. In Fall 2026, 54% of students were enrolled in the MDiv, 43% in the MAR, and 3% in the STM. In terms of student demographics 41% identify as Male, 54% as Female, and 5% as Non-Binary; 57% identify as White (Non-Hispanic), 6% as Asian or Pacific Islander, 11% Black (Non-Hispanic), 6% Hispanic, and 5% Multiracial. 15% of the class did not self-identify.

For the most recent graduation class, placements were: vocational placement: 40%; non-vocational placement: 4%; further study: 46%; other and unknown: 10%.

Faculty & Staff

YDS's faculty is comprised of preeminent scholars and educators who have been recognized with numerous honors including but not limited to receiving honorary degrees from other institutions, serving as members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and being invited to deliver the prestigious Gifford Lectures in Scotland. There are 49 full-time and 23 part-time faculty members. The faculty identify as 50% male and 50% female. 22% of the faculty identify as Black. A number of YDS faculty hold joint or secondary appointments in a range of departments and programs across the University including American Studies, English, History, Medieval Studies, Music, NELC, Philosophy, and Religious Studies.

YDS employs 56 dedicated staff members who support the mission of the school and are engaged members of the community. Eleven staff are in the clerical union. 52% of the staff identify as Female.

Partners on the Quad

Yale Divinity School teems with diverse ideas and interests, offering resources for people on many varied paths. On the Sterling Divinity Quadrangle, the richness of students' experience and opportunity is enhanced by the robust presence of Andover Newton Seminary, Berkeley Divinity School, and the Institute of Sacred Music, as well as ongoing research and engagement resources and programs including the Center for Faith & Culture, the Center for Continuing Education, the Center for Public Theology & Public Policy, and the Jonathan Edwards Center.

Sterling Divinity Quadrangle was constructed for YDS in the 1930s when it became clear the Divinity School had outgrown its home on the "downtown" campus. YDS is the academic home of all students on the Quad. Many of these Divinity students pursue additional certification and formation in specific faith traditions or the arts through their participation with Andover Newton, Berkeley, and/or the ISM.

Berkeley, the Episcopal seminary at Yale, is part of YDS, with distinct aspects to its identity and mission. Much the same is true of Andover Newton, which provides students preparation for leadership in locally governed, historically congregational religious organizations and faith communities while they earn their YDS degrees. The ISM is an interdisciplinary graduate center whose students enroll in and receive their degrees from either YDS or the Yale School of Music while engaging deeply with sacred music, worship, and the arts.

Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, an Episcopal seminary, has been affiliated with YDS for over five decades. Berkeley Divinity School was founded by Bishop John Williams in 1854 in Middletown, Connecticut, to be a mediating seminary during a time of theological division in the Episcopal Church. In 1928 Berkeley moved to New Haven to better fulfill its mission by taking advantage of the resources of an urban center and a great university, a purpose that came to full fruition through its affiliation with Yale Divinity School in 1971. Berkeley Divinity School retains its identity through its board of trustees, its Dean, and the Berkeley Center. Episcopal students come under the care of the Dean of Berkeley Divinity School for spiritual formation and counseling but are not otherwise differentiated from other YDS students. As a result of the affiliation, there is one integrated student body and faculty.

The Yale Institute of Sacred Music (ISM) has operated in partnership with YDS since it was established at Yale in 1973. The Institute is a successor to the renowned School of Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. ISM trains musicians for churches, and it supports programs in choral conducting, organ performance, voice, and church music studies (with the Yale School of Music) and in liturgical studies and religion and the arts (both with YDS).

Andover Newton, the oldest graduate school in the nation, formally affiliated with Yale Divinity School in 2017 as Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School, becoming the third YDS partner institution on the Quad. The focus of Andover Newton is its celebrated tradition of ministerial formation and specialization in the training of ministers within locally governed congregational traditions.

The Center for Continuing Education provides resources to support faith formation, religious education, and personal and professional enrichment.

The Center for Faith and Culture, directed by Miroslav Volf, discerns, articulates, and commends visions of flourishing life in light of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

The Center for Public Theology and Public Policy, directed by William Barber, is dedicated to preparing a new generation of moral leaders.

The Jonathan Edwards Center supports inquiry into the life, writings, and legacy of America's premier theologian, Jonathan Edwards.

ROLE OF THE DEAN

Reporting to Yale University's Provost, the Dean of the Divinity School will guide the overall vision and mission of the School and have the opportunity to shape the future of theological education by fostering the knowledge and love of God through rigorous scholarly inquiry and the preparation of students for lives of transformative service.

Deep engagement in academic life is essential, including a commitment to teaching and learning within a divinity school setting, and fostering cross-disciplinary collaborations across Yale. This leader will have an active presence both on campus and in the New Haven community and serve with other graduate and professional school deans and vice-presidents in the University Cabinet.

The Dean will oversee a team of 10 direct reports including the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs; Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; Senior Director, Finance and Administration/Lead Administrator, Associate Dean/Dean of Andover Newton Seminary at YDS, Associate Dean/Dean of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, Associate Dean of Community Engagement, Senior Director of Development and Alumni, Director of Strategic Communications, Director YDS Library (shared report with Sterling Memorial Library), as well as an operating budget of approximately $40 million.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DEAN

The successful Dean will bring inspirational vision and a deep-rooted commitment to the enterprise of theological education in a research University context that is fully committed to the interrelationship of scholarship and practice. To accomplish this overarching vision, the Dean must be prepared to address the following opportunities and challenges.

Serve as a strategic, visionary, and collaborative leader of the Yale Divinity School

YDS is known for its distinctive Christian ecumenical identity and commitment to fostering the highest scholarly excellence and training students for ministerial vocations. In a rapidly changing context, the next Dean will need to be equipped to guide ongoing essential conversations about the role of a divinity school in this moment and how YDS is preparing graduates to serve the world. In collaboration with faculty, the Dean will need to continue to explore how to evolve the suite of academic, co-curricular, and continuing/extended education programs to meet the needs of students and the broader constellation of current and future constituents and stakeholders.

Recruit, develop, and inspire a world-class faculty and staff

The School's faculty and staff are indispensable to its mission. The Dean will oversee the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff committed to advancing YDS. The Dean will be responsible for cultivating the strengths of the staff, supporting their professional development, and developing a high-functioning

team to meet the evolving needs of students. The Dean will also be responsible for supporting faculty in their ongoing growth and development as scholars and teachers and partner with them to continually assess how the curriculum and programs align with the overarching mission of YDS in the context of the broader theological education landscape.

Maintain and foster a vibrant ecumenical and inclusive community within the context of a residential environment

YDS is known for its tight-knit supportive community, and its residential program provides a unique opportunity for students to live, learn, and worship together in community. The recent opening of the Living Village has been a welcome addition to community life. However, there are older residence halls that need to be renovated or replaced. The next Dean will work with the University on a long-term strategy to expand affordable housing. The next Dean will also be a visible presence within the YDS community, cultivating opportunities to keep community bonds strong, fostering an inclusive environment, and leveraging the partners on the quad.

Ensure the growth and success of the Yale Divinity School through successful fiscal management and fundraising efforts

Over the last decade YDS has seen significant success in fundraising including securing philanthropic support to provide full tuition scholarships for all enrolled students with financial need and major capital projects such as the Living Village. However, YDS, as part of Yale University, has been impacted by the tax on university endowments and other financial constraints. The next Dean will need to bring a creative and nimble approach towards financial stewardship and continue to cultivate and expand YDS' development network.

Cultivate collaboration opportunities within the School and across Yale University

The next Dean will inherit a robust set of partnerships that augment the overall YDS experience. Each of these entities has a unique and critical place within the YDS ecosystem. The Dean will need to be sure to maintain strong, collaborative, mutually beneficial relationships with Berkeley Divinity School, the Institute of Sacred Music, Andover Newton Seminary, the Department of Religious Studies, and other relevant departments, schools, and institutes throughout the University. The Dean should also continue to explore new future partnerships that align with YDS's mission and goals.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Recognizing that no single candidate will have all of the listed characteristics, the strongest candidates will have many of the following experiences, characteristics, and abilities:

- A demonstrated commitment to the mission and values of the Yale Divinity School and Yale University.

- A record of distinguished scholarship befitting appointment as a tenured member of the faculty at the rank of full professor.
- A commitment to the residential model of graduate theological education and the identity of Yale Divinity School as a graduate professional school committed to the highest levels of scholarship and academic inquiry as well as the spiritual and practical formation of leaders for religious institutions and society more broadly.
- A deep respect for the traditions that have shaped the School, coupled with a forward-looking, open-minded, globally aware, and adaptable vision for its future.
- Experience in and aptitude for administration, budgeting and financial management, and strategic planning and implementation.
- Experience facilitating creative and effective approaches to fundraising, alumni engagement, recruiting, degree and non-degree academic programming, and strategic partnerships with a wide range of entities; experience working with governing and/or advisory boards.
- Success in building and managing cohesive, vibrant, and diverse teams, with an informed grasp of key issues affecting faculty and staff recruitment, retention, professional development, and promotion.
- The ability to work cooperatively and effectively with administrators, faculty, students, staff, and other external constituencies; an appreciation and understanding of the need for collaboration and synergy among these groups to make critical decisions on academic priorities and the allocation of resources.
- Demonstrated commitment to and tangible experience in creating an educational environment that is open to all; respect for and competence in cultural diversity; and the ability to have difficult conversations, to unpack complicated issues, and to cultivate a strong sense of inclusion and belonging across diverse groups.
- Ability to effectively steward and manage a complex ecosystem of relationships and partnerships with varying degrees of direct and indirect authority by balancing competing interests, negotiating priorities, and aligning resources to adequately carry out the priorities of the School.

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/yale-university-divinity-school/dean

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Yale University is committed to basing judgments concerning the admission, education, and employment of individuals upon their qualifications and abilities and seeks to attract to its faculty, staff, and student body qualified persons from a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives. Additionally, in accordance with this policy and as delineated by federal and Connecticut law, Yale does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, or employment against any individual on account of that individual's sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions; race; color; national or ethnic origin; religion; age; disability; protected veteran status, or other protected classes as set forth in federal and Connecticut law.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Yale 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 Yale University would supersede any conflicting information in this document.