



UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN AND DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LIFE
BROWN UNIVERSITY
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

THE SEARCH

Brown University seeks a visionary, collaborative, and deeply experienced leader to serve as University Chaplain and Director of the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (University Chaplain). The University Chaplain cultivates a vibrant religious and spiritual life ecosystem serving Brown's more than 11,000 undergraduate, graduate, and medical students, as well as faculty, staff, and alumni. Rooted in Brown's historic commitment to religious freedom, pluralism, and intellectual openness, the role advances three interconnected dimensions of religious and spiritual life: spirituality, faith, and interfaith engagement. The University Chaplain serves students who are deeply rooted in religious traditions as well as those who are spiritual, seeking, questioning, humanist, secular, or exploring meaning and purpose.

Reporting directly to the Vice President for Campus Life, the University Chaplain and Director of the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life provides strategic oversight and leadership of the Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life (OCRL) and serves as a senior leader within the Division of Campus Life. The University Chaplain advances Campus Life's commitment to student success, holistic well-being, inclusive community, belonging, open inquiry, developmental advising and mentoring, leadership, and engagement across differences. The role is pastoral and strategic, educational and institutional, grounded in care and guided by intellectual, ethical, and civic engagement. To support operational alignment with the affinity and belonging centers, this position will have a dotted line to the Associate Vice President of Campus Life for Community and Belonging. The University Chaplain leads a diverse chaplaincy team and sustains strong partnerships with affiliated religious organizations and communities. The University Chaplain advances religious and spiritual literacy, interreligious dialogue, pastoral care, meaning-making, community care, and constructive engagement across differences. The University Chaplain also provides visible leadership during moments of grief, crisis, conflict, and community disruption and works collaboratively across Brown to integrate religious, spiritual, ethical, and meaning-making dimensions into the broader student experience.

Brown University has engaged Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to support this search. All inquiries, applications, and nominations for this position should be directed to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document and will be held in the strictest confidence.

BROWN UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1764, [Brown](#) is a leading research university and the seventh-oldest college in the U.S. At the heart of the University's teaching, research, and scholarship is a commitment to academic excellence, intellectual freedom, and making an impact to better serve people, communities, and society.

The University is renowned for its distinctive undergraduate experience rooted in its flexible yet rigorous Open Curriculum. Its campus in Providence, Rhode Island, is home to a wide array of graduate programs, plus the Warren Alpert Medical School, School of Public Health, School of Engineering and School of Professional Studies. Brown's vibrant, diverse community consists of 7,125 undergraduate students, 2,689 graduate students and 611 medical students.

Like many institutions dedicated to the liberal arts, Brown encourages its undergraduates to study broadly, to become self-reflective, to engage in community life and to rigorously develop their communication skills. The spirit of the undergraduate [Open Curriculum](#) infuses every aspect of the University. Brown is a place where rigorous scholarship, complex problem-solving and service to the public good are defined by intense collaboration, intellectual discovery and working in ways that transcend traditional boundaries.

More information may be found on the University's [website](#).

THE OFFICE OF CHAPLAINS AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

The Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life (OCRL) facilitates pastoral care, spiritual support, and religious literacy across the Brown community including students, staff, faculty and alumni. OCRL seeks to ensure that a diversity of beliefs have voice and vitality throughout the University community. Through the multifaceted character of the chaplaincy and its relationship to some eighteen religious life affiliates, OCRL continues to support a diversity of beliefs in the Brown University community, facilitating the deepening of individuals' experience within their own belief systems and expanding religious literacy, broadening knowledge of other spiritualities and religious ideas that abound on campus, and promoting an ongoing interfaith dialogue.

OCRL is comprised of a full-time staff of five, including the University Chaplain, three associate chaplains, and a program coordinator. Additionally, OCRL programs and religious and spiritual communities are supported by a range of religious life affiliates, including Brown faculty and staff and third-party chaplains authorized to support spiritual and religious life at Brown.

The Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life (OCRL) oversees and is connected to a number of spaces on campus including two meeting rooms in Page-Robinson Hall and Manning Chapel, a historic early 19th century structure on Brown's Main Green which may only be reserved for religious or spiritual purposes. This space is ecumenical in its weekly use, home to our Catholic Masses, Meditation Group, Protestant

Worship and more. Additionally, prayer and meditation rooms are available across campus to meet the daily devotional and meditative needs of members of the Brown community.

More information on the Office of Chaplains and Religious Life is available [here](#).

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership and Vision (30%)

- Lead an inclusive strategic planning process that articulates a shared vision for spirituality, faith, and interfaith engagement at Brown and aligns OCRL's work with the priorities of the Division of Campus Life.
- Develop a pluralistic and spiritual life strategy integrated with Brown's academic mission and Open Curriculum and grounded in student development, meaning, purpose, belonging, and holistic wellbeing.
- Ensure that OCRL serves established religious communities as well as students who identify as spiritual, seeking, questioning, humanist, secular, or unaffiliated.
- Build a culture of collaboration across Campus Life, Academic Affairs, Athletics, the Swearer Center, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Student Health and Wellness, and other campus partners.
- Provide leadership for the design and programming of a future Brown Interfaith Center and the stewardship of existing sacred spaces, ensuring that sacred spaces are welcoming, accessible, and reflective of Brown's religious diversity.
- Serve as a University resource and strategic partner on religious practice, observance, accommodation, religious inclusion, sacred space, and the emerging needs of Brown's diverse religious and spiritual communities.

Interfaith and Multifaith Engagement (20%)

- Advance University-wide dialogue initiatives that build trust and help students engage constructively across religious, spiritual, cultural, ideological, and political differences.
- Ensure Brown-employed chaplains balance tradition-specific care with broad interfaith programming.
- Oversee the development of Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Interfaith Councils.
- Promote interreligious cooperation, religious literacy, and ethical dialogue across traditions.
- Engage students across differences in ways that build trust, understanding, empathy, open inquiry, and shared responsibility.
- Partner with the Community Dialogue Project and other University colleagues to strengthen students' capacity for listening, reflection, dialogue, conflict navigation, and engagement across profound differences.

Team Leadership and Organizational Development (20%)

- Supervise and develop a diverse chaplaincy team and sustain effective relationships with autonomous affiliated organizations and religious partners, including Hillel and the Catholic Center.
- Develop trusted, transparent, and mutually accountable relationships with affiliated religious organizations and professionals, recognizing their distinct missions while ensuring alignment with Brown's values, policies, and commitment to supporting students.
- Set clear expectations, provide regular feedback, develop staff, manage performance, and build a healthy, collaborative, and accountable organizational culture.
- Lead organizational change and staff development while honoring the relationships, traditions, and practices that are important to Brown's religious and spiritual communities. Ensure thoughtful and equitable support for Brown's diverse religious and spiritual communities, including emerging and historically underrepresented communities.

Religious and Spiritual Education (10%)

- Promote religious and spiritual literacy, multifaith understanding, and opportunities for students to explore meaning, purpose, values, identity, and belonging.
- Partner with Academic Affairs and the Department of Religious Studies to integrate ethics and identity formation into the intellectual life of the University.
- Serve as a resource for faculty on religious literacy in the classroom.
- Integrate spirituality, ethics, meaning-making, and identity formation into the broader intellectual and student life of the University.
- Support student development in personal and cultural identity, ethical leadership, civic engagement, global awareness, and relationships across differences.
- Optional: Engage in teaching or research as a Professor of the Practice or Lecturer, as qualifications permit.

Pastoral Care and Community Wellness (10%)

- Provide direct pastoral care, spiritual support, and crisis response for members of the Brown community, with clear professional boundaries between pastoral care and clinical mental health services.
- Advance spiritual well-being as an important dimension of holistic student development and collaborate with Student Support Services, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Health and Wellness, and other partners to support students.
- Partner with appropriate University offices to support students affected by antisemitism, Islamophobia, anti-Arab bias, religious discrimination, and other forms of religious or identity-based harm, while maintaining clear boundaries between pastoral support and formal investigative or compliance processes.

- Provide visible, compassionate leadership during moments of loss, tragedy, conflict, and community disruption, working with Campus Life and University leadership to support individual and collective healing.
- Provide leadership and consultation regarding memorials, vigils, remembrance, reflection, and other University responses to loss and significant community events.

Communication, Visibility, and Advancement (10%)

- Strengthen communications and outreach so students and the broader Brown community understand and can access OCRL programs, pastoral care, religious and spiritual communities, hardship funds, and other resources.
- Use assessment and student experience data to understand the impact of religious and spiritual life on belonging, well-being, engagement, and student success and to inform continuous improvement.
- Cultivate relationships with alumni, community partners, and national religious and interfaith organizations that strengthen OCRL's mission and visibility.
- Represent Brown's commitment to religious freedom, pluralism, spirituality, faith, and interfaith engagement with alumni, community partners, and national organizations.
- Partner with University Advancement to develop philanthropic support for OCRL priorities, including the chaplaincy endowment and future Interfaith Center.
- Position Brown as a thoughtful contributor to the evolving field of religious and spiritual life in higher education.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

- Advanced degree in divinity, theology, religious studies, higher education, student affairs, or a closely related field required; professional religious, spiritual, or pastoral formation strongly preferred.
- A minimum of 10 years of progressive leadership experience in higher education chaplaincy, religious and spiritual life, student affairs, ministry, or another complex multifaith or mission-driven environment.
- Demonstrated experience supervising and developing diverse teams, managing organizational change, and overseeing complex budgets and operations.
- Deep commitment to spirituality, faith, interfaith engagement, pluralism, religious literacy, open inquiry, and engagement across differences.
- Demonstrated understanding of contemporary college student development, including how students explore meaning, purpose, identity, belonging, spirituality, faith, and community.
- Proven ability to navigate the intersection of religious, spiritual, cultural, and political identities and to build trust across significant differences.

- Experience providing pastoral care and responding to grief, crisis, conflict, or community disruption in a complex academic or communal setting.
- Strong administrative, communication, relationship-building, and advancement capabilities, with the ability to work effectively with students, staff, faculty, senior leaders, alumni, and external partners.
- Exceptional public speaking and writing skills, with the ability to engage religious, spiritual, secular, questioning, and skeptical audiences with authenticity and respect.
- Demonstrated ability to cultivate communities of belonging, facilitate dialogue, and support constructive engagement across religious, ideological, and cultural differences.
- Ability to integrate spirituality, ethics, meaning-making, and religious literacy into the intellectual, civic, and student life of the University.
- Demonstrated judgment, emotional steadiness, discretion, and professional boundaries in high-stress, grief-stricken, polarized, or rapidly changing environments.
- Demonstrated ability to build collaborative relationships with autonomous affiliated religious organizations while maintaining institutional clarity, trust, and accountability.
- Ability to shape a forward-looking model of religious and spiritual life that reflects Brown's legacy while responding to the evolving needs of today's students and higher education.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. **Applications received by November 15, 2026, will receive priority consideration.** Inquiries, nominations, and CVs with cover letters should be submitted via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/brown-university/chaplain>.

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 Isaacson, Miller

Brown University provides equal opportunity and prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based upon a person's race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other characteristic protected under applicable law, in the administration of its policies, programs, and activities. The University recognizes and rewards individuals on the basis of qualifications and performance. The University maintains certain affirmative action programs in compliance with applicable law.

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