



**Associate Vice President for Finance  
Mount Holyoke College**

*South Hadley, Massachusetts*

Mount Holyoke College (MHC), a highly selective liberal arts college in the heart of the Connecticut River Valley, seeks nominations and applications for the position of Associate Vice President for Finance. Reporting directly to the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the AVP for Finance serves as a key member of the Finance and Administration leadership team, with a broad portfolio overseeing the College's financial operations, planning, and compliance.

Founded in 1837 as the first and oldest of the original Seven Sister colleges, Mount Holyoke established a legacy of preparing students to become ambitious changemakers. Today, as a women's college that is gender diverse, the institution equips students with the tools to thrive and lead in a global, pluralistic, and changing world.

This is a moment of exciting beginnings at Mount Holyoke with new college leaders, President, [Danielle R. Holley](#) and Vice President for Finance and Administration, [Carl Ries](#). President Holley and Vice President Ries have been charged with stewarding the College's financial resources in service of a refreshed, clear, and forward-looking vision that will elevate the school's profile and visibility. The AVP will play a critical role in ensuring that financial resources are aligned with achieving the College's highest aspirations and strategic goals.

The AVP for Finance will be responsible for providing leadership and oversight of the implementation of a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system transition, from an Infor Lawson and Ellucian Colleague system to Workday for financial management and reporting. This transition provides an opportunity for the AVP to guide their team and the College through a transformational reevaluation of key systems, policies, and ways of working that has the potential to create significant positive outcomes across the campus.

The AVP for Finance's portfolio includes the following areas: budgeting, cash and debt management, investment and accounting support, real estate, accounting and financial reporting, accounts payable and receivable, gifts and grants, and trusts and estates. In addition, the AVP supports the VP for Finance and Administration in communicating on financial topics across the College community, including the Board of Trustees. The AVP oversees a high-performing staff of 24.

Mount Holyoke College has retained the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this important recruitment. Please direct all inquiries and applications as indicated at the end of this document.

## **ABOUT MOUNT HOLYOKE**

Consistent with its founding impulse, the Mount Holyoke College of today offers a transformative undergraduate experience grounded in the liberal arts and stands strong in its conviction that gender ought never be a barrier for one's achievement and impact on the world. From groundbreaking medical researchers, tech entrepreneurs, and social justice champions, to US presidential cabinet members and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwrights, Mount Holyoke graduates live lives of consequence, purpose, and engagement. As founder Mary Lyon asserted, "This institution is a great intellectual and moral machine, and if you jump in, you may ride very fast."

The school is also seen as a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Access and social justice are among its core legacy values. The College draws students from all backgrounds into an exceptionally diverse and inclusive learning community; it is known for its extraordinarily global student body.

Mount Holyoke enrolls 2,200 undergraduate students and 122 graduate students; 247 faculty and 647 staff are at the center of the work. The College offers a bachelor of arts degree across 48 departmental and interdepartmental majors and three graduate programs, as well as several professional institutes and pathways. It is part of the Five College Consortium, standing alongside Amherst, Hampshire, and Smith Colleges, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

### **Place**

The College's 700+-acre campus, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, is broadly considered one of the most beautiful in the nation. It consists of more than two million square feet of property in 100+ buildings, the oldest of which was built in 1852.

Mount Holyoke's current strategic plan, [The Plan for Mount Holyoke 2023](#), yielded major improvements to the physical plant, and to facilities and infrastructure planning. Key achievements include the centralization of dining and construction of the Dining Commons, the creation of the Fimbel Maker and Innovation Lab, and tackling deferred maintenance, an ongoing challenge for any campus of its age.

### **Location**

South Hadley is in the heart of the Connecticut River Valley, a picturesque New England landscape speckled with vibrant college towns. The nearby towns of Northampton and Amherst are home to the other four schools in the Five College Consortium. MHC lies 90 miles west of Boston and 175 miles north of New York City; the cities of Springfield and Hartford, Connecticut are also nearby.

### **Finances**

The College has adopted an annual operating budget for FY24 of \$163 million. Mount Holyoke's finances are strong, and the administration has consistently delivered balanced budgets in recent years. The endowment, managed by the College's in-house chief investment officer, sits at just over \$1 billion. See the full set of FY22 [audited financials here](#).

## **Enrollment and Financial Aid**

Mount Holyoke draws its student body from nearly every state, with large representation from California, New York City, and New England. Selectivity has risen in recent years with the admission rate dropping from about 50 percent for the class of 2025 to 38 percent for the class of 2027. For the third year in a row, Mount Holyoke received a record number of applications, receiving over 5,030 first year applications which represents a 2.7% increase from last year.

The College has an outstanding commitment to educational access and a robust financial aid program. Significant funds in 2020 – 2021 were raised to support financial aid, and this continues to be a high philanthropic priority. In its admissions practice, MHC is need-aware and meets the full demonstrated need of every admitted student who applies for aid. In fiscal year 2022, 66 percent of the College's students received need-based aid, with the average financial aid package totaling \$47,607, and an average need-based grant award of \$42,773. A total of \$64 million in institutional grant and scholarship aid was awarded, including \$56 million in need-based grants and \$8 million in merit scholarships. The discount rate hovers around 50 percent.

## **People and Culture**

Mount Holyoke's student body is diverse. Twenty-five percent identify as domestic students of color, 21 percent are Pell Grant recipients and 19 percent are first generation college students. There is a vibrant community of students who identify as LGBTQ+ and who have gender identities beyond the gender binary. Mount Holyoke students come from 50 states and US territories and 61 countries. The campus is a global microcosm; Mount Holyoke is home to one of the largest international student bodies among its peers, with fully 25 percent hailing from outside the U.S.

Mount Holyoke's staff are the institution's backbone, dedicated to supporting the overall mission of the College and the success, safety, and belonging of all students. Of 647 staff members, 73 are employed part-time and 574 full-time. The staff community is deeply connected to the College, with many members having served for decades; the cadre includes generations of Mount Holyoke alums and parents. Mount Holyoke's 247 faculty are best-in-class: celebrated scholars, active researchers, and gifted teachers.

The Board of Trustees comprises 30 individuals at present, with a capacity of 34, and 11 standing committees. Trustees serve five-year terms with a limit of two terms.

## **LEADERSHIP**

**Danielle Holley, President**, began serving as the twentieth president of Mount Holyoke College in July. A noted legal scholar and educator, Holley served as Dean of the School of Law at Howard University (2014 - 2023) prior to joining Mount Holyoke. She holds a B.A. from Yale University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School. Holley also previously served as a law clerk to Judge Carl E. Steward on the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. She is a nationally prominent scholar of the Supreme Court decisions regarding race-conscious college and university admissions.

**Carl Ries, Vice President for Finance and Administration**, joined Mount Holyoke in July coming from Hampshire College, where he served as Vice President of Finance & Administration and Treasurer since 2021, overseeing critical organizational transformations. Prior to joining Hampshire, he was the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for the Los Angeles Opera, where he oversaw a complex financial portfolio in an institution vital to its community and the national arts ecosystem.

## THE ROLE

Reporting to the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Associate Vice President for Finance will provide senior leadership for a high performing finance and treasury department at a pivotal moment with new college leadership and an ERP implementation underway. The AVP will serve as a thought partner to the Vice President to strengthen financial planning, analysis, and forecasting, positioning the College to mitigate future inflationary pressures and optimize the use of the College's significant financial resources.

The College is seeking a strategic, accomplished financial professional, dedicated to working in a mission-driven, highly collaborative environment. The successful candidate will join the management team of the Vice President, alongside AVPs overseeing Hospitality Operations, Human Resources, and Facilities Management and Planning.

The successful candidate must be able to communicate effectively with all constituencies of the College about the financial challenges and opportunities for Mount Holyoke. Externally, the position is responsible for supporting relationships with financial institutions, rating agencies, and peer institutions. The ideal candidate must be well versed and remain current with regulations laws, accounting standards, and tax requirements that impact the College's financial operations.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Associate Vice President for Finance will address the following opportunities and challenges:

***Provide strategic leadership to the College through an enterprise resource planning system transition and implementation.***

As the College has embarked on an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system transition, the next AVP will play a critical role in migrating the College from an Infor Lawson and Ellucian Colleague system to Workday for financial management and reporting. The transition to Workday began this summer within HR and finance, coinciding with the summer audit season. As the use of Workday expands across the College, the AVP will employ a change management skillset to ensure that all constituents are informed of and well-versed in the new system. Workday is a powerful tool in the College's commitment to embrace best practices and new approaches that will improve efficiency and the end user experience. The AVP will play a central role in ongoing training and systems integration, and the development of consistent and equitable policies and procedures. They will serve as an essential champion for the transformation that Workday promises.

***Lead a team of high performing professionals and assess opportunities to realign roles and responsibilities to meet emerging needs.***

Inheriting a deeply committed and collaborative team of finance professionals, the next AVP will leverage the skills and strengths of the group. The implementation of Workday offers an exciting opportunity for the AVP and their team to reexamine roles and responsibilities with a focus on long term sustainability and taking advantage of new efficiencies and new tools.

The finance team are steadfast and resilient; that said, as in any institution, the planning and implementation of an ERP is taxing. The AVP will be an active and accessible leader who listens deeply and is a responsive advocate for the needs of the team. The AVP will serve as a strong liaison between the finance team and other departments across the College in support of shared understanding of policies and procedures.

***Collaborate with partners across the College serving as a translator and thought partner with a focus on end-user experience.***

The AVP will work with stakeholders across the campus community in formal and informal settings to foster trust, credibility, and transparency. They will embody a customer service orientation and actively seek feedback and opportunities to improve the end user experience. Working carefully with campus partners, the AVP will drive and promote innovation and collaboration to achieve cost savings and fortify financial management, reporting, and planning. They will work closely with colleagues across campus to break down siloes and be a model of collegial collaboration and creative problem solving.

***Partner with the Vice President for Finance and Administration to provide long range financial planning and forecasting in support of the College's strategic plan and institutional goals.***

With new leadership at the College and evolving challenges within higher education it will be critical for the AVP to work in close partnership with the Vice President and other members of the College's leadership team to develop long range financial plans grounded in data analytics. This will require the ability to employ innovative approaches in service of the College's ambitions and aspirations. The AVP will also need to be able to identify and clearly communicate potential scenarios and tradeoffs related to competing priorities.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

While no one candidate will embody them all, the successful candidate will possess many of these professional qualifications and personal qualities and values:

- Successful experience as a hands-on, collaborative, and developmentally focused supervisor; a change leader;
- Excellent analytical and organizational skills; a habit of both rigor and creativity;

- Superb communication skills. The aptitude to listen, discern, and illuminate. A talent for explaining complex ideas to a broad range of audiences with differing levels of background knowledge;
- Enthusiasm for connecting personally and maintaining open, accessible lines of communication across the College community;
- An authentic attraction to the diversity and equity commitments of the College, including gender diversity;
- Maturity, emotional intelligence, and fortitude;
- Unimpeachable integrity and high ethical standards;
- Higher education or nonprofit experience is useful and welcome but not required;
- Understanding of the higher education landscape and the challenges facing private residential liberal arts institutions in particular is a plus;
- Leadership experience during a major systems transition is strongly preferred;
- Bachelor's degree required, CPA and/or Master's degree preferred.

#### TO EXPRESS INTEREST

Mount Holyoke College has retained the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications can be sent electronically, in confidence, to the following:

**Lisa Savereid, Partner**  
**Liz Braun, Senior Associate**  
**Christina Errico, Senior Search Coordinator**  
[Visit Search Webpage Here](#)

*Mount Holyoke College is committed to enriching the educational experience it offers through the diversity of its faculty, administration, and staff members. Mount Holyoke seeks to recruit and support a broadly diverse team who will contribute to the college's excellence, diversity of viewpoints and experiences, and relevance in a global society. In furtherance of institutional excellence, the College encourages applications from individuals from underrepresented groups, including faculty, staff, and administration of color, diverse gender identities, first generation college students and individuals who have followed non-traditional pathways to college, and individuals with a demonstrated leadership commitment to including diverse backgrounds and perspectives.*

***Mount Holyoke College is an Equal Opportunity Employer.***