Vice President for Finance and Administration
The Opportunity

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE is a top liberal arts college situated on a 750-acre arboretum campus above the Thames River and Long Island Sound. The mission of the College is to educate students “to put the liberal arts into action as citizens of a global society.” Combining rigorous academics with real-world experiences, graduates learn not just to make a living but to make a difference. This much has been true since the founding of Connecticut College in 1911, but in the past nine years, the College has seen its mission elevated to a whole new level.

It started in 2015, when Conn faculty created Connections, a nationally recognized program that promotes complex thinking, problem-solving, and off-campus learning to prepare graduates for next-generation success. Connections is a holistic approach to higher education that helps students to turn their academic major into something much greater—by combining it with interdisciplinary study, a world language, off-campus learning, guaranteed internships and focused professional development.

At the center of Connections is the “integrative pathway,” which provides a way for students to explore a personally meaningful question from multiple perspectives, here and abroad, in and out of the classroom. The goal is to unleash creativity; to ignite curiosity; and, ultimately, to promote the full participation of all students, in an environment where everyone can thrive, reach their fullest potential, and contribute to the flourishing of others. The program is designed for undergraduates but its ethos extends to the whole community. And it is unique to Connecticut College.
The College launched Connections in 2016. In the same year, the Board of Trustees endorsed a 10-year strategic plan, **Building on Strength**, making this educational vision foundational to the College's future. A campus master plan, an equity and inclusion action plan, an action plan for competitive athletics, and a comprehensive campaign plan followed, all of them built on the same vision and leading to a series of programmatic and capital investments that have strengthened the College. In 2018, the **Walter Commons for Global Study and Engagement** opened, making it possible for every student to integrate global learning into the four-year experience. In 2019, the new **Hale Center for Career Development** put professional development at the heart of a Connecticut College education. A $10 million gift from anonymous donors to develop the College's signature **Academic Resource Center**, and the launch of the **Agnes Gund Dialogue Project**, added quantitative, expressive, and dialogic skill-building to the offerings. 2022 saw the completion of the largest capital investment in recent years with the opening of the **Athey Center for Performance and Research at Palmer Auditorium**, a $24 million renovation that affirms the centrality of the performing arts to the liberal arts, while preserving a stunning example of Art Deco architecture. Also completed was a major renewal of the College’s beautiful riverfront property to support rowing, sailing, recreation, and marine science; as well as the creation of the Stark Center for the Moving Image as a new home for film studies. Current projects include the renovation of the College Center at Crozier-Williams; an upgrade of the College’s main dining facility; several sustainability initiatives; and a redesign of the central campus corridor to make a greener and more pedestrian-friendly landscape.

The goal of Connections is to unleash creativity; to ignite curiosity; and, ultimately, to promote the full participation of all, in an environment where everyone can thrive, reach their fullest potential, and contribute to the flourishing of others.
Differentiation is key to thriving in a competitive market and these investments, along with a new communications and marketing strategy, are driving recognition and success. For the past four years, Conn has been named a “most innovative college” in *U.S. News and World Report*. The College continues to be a top producer of Fulbrights scholars. In 2021, the College was awarded a gold ranking from the American Association of Sustainability in Higher Education, an honor given to just 15% of colleges and universities in the country. Also in 2021, the men’s soccer team rose to become national champions in Division III. Combined with the strong curriculum and a far-reaching strategic plan, the College has been attracting stronger and more diverse cohorts of students every year, seeing the largest number of applications in its history with the Class of 2026. Most students cite Connections as the main reason for choosing Conn.

In 2023, the College completed the *Defy Boundaries* campaign, the most ambitious in Conn’s history, exceeding its $300 million goal by reaching $317.5 million one year ahead of schedule to support the long-term strategy. With an innovative strategy, growing enrollments, robust fundraising and a growing national profile, we are now seeking a strong financial and administrative leader to build on the momentum and take the College to the next level of excellence. And in 2024, a new president took the helm, marking a moment of transition during which the College is re-examining its business model and taking other administrative, educational and operational steps to ensure Conn continues to be well positioned in a rapidly changing world.
The Role

REPORTING TO THE PRESIDENT, the Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPFA) is the chief administrative and financial officer, providing leadership for the College in the areas of finance, administration, operations, auxiliary services, community affairs, facilities and sustainability.

The next VPFA will have an exceptional opportunity to work with a dynamic new president, a talented staff and a strong new team of senior leaders to revitalize the campus, map a course of staff excellence, support faculty and student achievement at the highest level and build on the strength of Connecticut College as it enters its second vibrant century.

The VPFA serves as a key member of the senior administration, and as such, works closely with the president to develop, guide and achieve the strategic goals of the College, while working effectively with other members of the SA, trustees, faculty, staff on matters of general welfare to Conn. The VPFA will play a critical role in shaping the College’s approach to the renewal and sustainability of a historic and beautiful campus, and collaboratively building a sound financial plan to support institutional priorities.

The VPFA is responsible for the custody of all College funds, bank and investment bank relationships, rating agency and all other external financial relationships, fiscal planning, investment performance, preservation and protection of all College assets, leases, budget preparation and performance, real estate transactions, and insurance. Specific responsibilities include maintaining institutional books of account, preparation and administration of the budget, financing the College, capital structure including debt management, financial reports and analyses, general ledger, accounts payable and receivable, student loans, cash management, payroll, tax compliance and audit. The VPFA oversees enterprise risk management of the College, ensuring annual assessment of risk and identification of highest areas of risk, and develops and implements plans to mitigate that risk. In addition, the VPFA ensures the College has appropriate and adequate insurance coverage.

The Vice President oversees the administrative services of the College, including Financial Planning, Controller’s Office, Facilities Operations, Capital Projects Administration, Sustainability, Dining and Catering, and Auxiliary Services; and is responsible for contract administration, emergency contingency planning, facilities, administrative operations, and property and land management.

The VPFA serves as a critical member of several of the College’s key shared governance committees. For example, the Vice President works closely with faculty, students, and staff colleagues on the Priorities, Planning and Budget Committee in planning the annual budget of the College. With the Dean of Faculty and the Vice President of Human Resources, the VPFA also leads the Strategic Position Review Committee to review and approve staffing at the College.

The Vice President manages the implementation of the College’s Master Plan as Chair of the Facilities and Land Management Committee, and leads a subcommittee of the Facilities and Land Management Committee, the Space Committee, to determine the best use and maintenance of the College’s academic, residential and administrative spaces.

Finally, the VPFA staffs four standing committees of the Board of Trustees: Finance; Audit and Risk Management; Investment; and Facilities and Infrastructure.
Desired Qualifications and Attributes

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE will be a dynamic and visionary leader with appropriate educational and financial credentials (BA, CPA or MBA) and at least 10 years of progressive leadership experience, preferably in higher education. The candidate will demonstrate a deep commitment to the College’s mission of supporting a more sustainable campus. Interest in the unique culture and regulatory landscape of liberal arts colleges is essential. Success working with diverse constituents on complex issues, along with sensitivity, humility, humor and discretion are a necessity. In addition, the new Vice President will be:

- a strategic partner, with deep financial acumen and the ability to seize new opportunities, plan for the future, and carry out collaborative agendas that move the College forward
- a savvy planner, skilled in long-term financial modeling and in collecting, assembling, and analyzing data to support institutional decision making and institutional improvement
- a builder, with a sincere interest in sustainability and the environment, and the skill to bring capital projects to fruition in a timely, advantageous, and socially responsible manner
- a strong communicator, with a clear service orientation, a talent for developing relationships with both internal and external constituencies, skill in negotiating complex issues with a range of audiences, and the capacity to support and mentor a diverse staff—from hourly workers to directors to assistant vice presidents
- a sensitive manager, who leads with empathy and knows how to communicate clear goals and expectations, assess good work, foster professional development, engender trust, and instill leadership at all levels of the organization
- a natural collaborator, who builds positive partnerships across a diverse population of administrators, staff, students, and faculty in a culture of shared governance
- a willing guide, capable of leading the College through an array of contractual, financial and legal compliance issues in order to support programs of significant financial value for the College
- a visionary and optimistic leader, ready to join a campus of doers who are committed to creating a productive workplace and raising the College to a new level
- a champion for change, able to lead through change in ways that honor the College’s history and traditions while also supporting its future
- a consummate professional that sets the standard for character, competence and service, by demonstrating sensitivity, confidentiality, and good judgment in all personnel and institutional matters
- a thought leader, who understands the critical importance of sharing Conn’s story and enhancing the College’s national brand and reputation as part of a sustainable business model.
President Andrea Chapdelaine

ANDREA CHAPDELAINE became the 12th president of Connecticut College in July 2024. A strategic leader and compassionate community builder, President Chapdelaine has more than 30 years of experience in higher education, having served as a professor, dean, provost and, since 2015, president of Hood College in Maryland. At Hood, she led two ambitious strategic planning initiatives and bolstered academic programs, increased enrollment and retention, expanded experiential learning opportunities, established new structures and processes for fostering inclusivity and full participation, improved compensation and benefits for faculty and staff, enabled critical investments in campus facilities and strengthened the institution’s financial position. In 2017, she launched Hood’s first comprehensive campaign in more than 25 years, which met 150% of its original goal. During her tenure, Hood’s endowment grew by 103%. At Connecticut College, President Chapdelaine’s work will focus on building the College’s academic, residential, community, financial and reputational strength.

A proud first-generation college graduate and a noted scholar of social psychology and justice studies, President Chapdelaine earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology with a minor in justice studies from the University of New Hampshire and master’s and doctoral degrees in social psychology from the University of Connecticut. She began her academic career at Wabash College in 1993 and taught at Trinity College beginning in 1995. In 1998, she joined the psychology faculty at Albright College, where she also served as dean of undergraduate studies, provost and vice president of academic affairs.
Connecticut College

**FOUNDED IN 1911**, Connecticut College is a stellar four-year residential college with a history of excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. The College’s distinctive mission of “educating students to put the liberal arts into action” has encouraged students, from the beginning, to combine rigorous academics with real-world experience not just to make a living but to make a difference.

The College’s innovative curriculum, Connections, realizes that mission for the 21st century. Connections is a holistic approach to the liberal arts that unleashes curiosity and promotes complex thinking and problem-solving to prepare students for next-generation success. Students maximize the impact of their academic major by combining it with interdisciplinary study, world languages, off-campus learning, guaranteed internships and other professional development in a personally meaningful pathway leading beyond college. More than 90% of the most recent incoming class said that the comprehensive, integrative vision of Connections was the reason they chose to enroll at Conn.

Students at Connecticut College have the opportunity to enhance their Pathways with unique certificate programs in museum studies and in distinguished centers for interdisciplinary scholarship: the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy; the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment; the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology; the Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts; and the Center for the Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity. A sign of its commitment to equity and student success, the College supports the highly endowed Academic Resource Center in the country, enabling excellence for every student. The Walter Commons for Global Study and Engagement allows all students to integrate meaningful international experiences into their Pathways. And the Hale Center for Career Development enhances the academic programs of every student with its own four-year curriculum, offering the opportunity to integrate College-funded internships and research experiences into Pathways in preparation for life beyond college.
The College supports approximately 700 employees, including 180 full-time faculty in 60 academic departments and programs. Excellence in research is evident through the many grants and awards garnered annually by faculty for their scholarship through disciplinary societies and through local, national, and federal foundations, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Social Science Research Council, the Ford Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Sloane Foundation and many others. The intimate 9:1 student-to-faculty ratio means students benefit directly from this research, working closely with faculty on research programs and frequently serving as co-authors in faculty publications.

The community as a whole is bound by a fiercely held value of shared governance, by high academic standards, by a student-run honor code, and by a commitment to environmental stewardship and to full participation. The campus is known for its eclectic and creative mix of artists, scientists, researchers, and activists, with a strong sense of social justice. The College’s scholar-athletes compete in NCAA Division III sports through the elite New England Small College Athletic Conference. In 2021, the College was crowned NCAA Division III Champions in men’s soccer.

Excellent outcomes have been a hallmark of the College from its origins. Princeton Review has repeatedly ranked College’s career program among the top 20 in North America. Nearly 100% of students are well situated in life less than a year after graduating, with more than half going on to complete advanced degrees. In the last several years alone, seven Connecticut College alumni have been named to Forbes “30 under 30” list, recognizing the world’s brightest young entrepreneurs, leaders and stars. The College is consistently ranked a top producer of Fulbrights and in 2021 it graduated the first Marshall Scholar in its history.

This success is inspired by an exceptional faculty, who win an outsized share of competitive external grants and fellowships every year, from NEH, NIH, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Fulbright, Social Science Research Council, Ford Foundation, and more. Excellent teaching is also point of pride. The Joy Schechtman Mankoff Center for Teaching and Learning has been held up by The New York Times as a national model for teaching excellence, and, in the last two decades, at least four Connecticut College faculty have been honored with “Professor of the Year” awards from the Council for the Advancement in Higher Education. For more information about the College, visit www.conncoll.edu.
New London, Connecticut

Located on the Northeast Corridor equidistant between Boston and New York City, New London is a historic port city with a rich Native American and maritime tradition owing to its location along the Thames River and Long Island Sound. Before the arrival of European settlers, it was known as Nameaug, the home the Mashantucket Pequot, the Eastern Pequot, Mohegan, and other indigenous tribal nations. In the 19th century, the city was a major trade and whaling center and the boyhood home of the great American playwright Eugene O’Neill. In the 20th century, it became the home of Connecticut College, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and Mitchell College.

Today the city of 28,000 residents has a progressive culture and a lively music and arts community. The Providence Journal once described it as a “seaside haven with a funky, hipster vibe.” It neighbors many beautiful towns along the Connecticut shoreline—from Niantic to Groton to Mystic to Stonington—offering access to beaches, farms, and outdoor activities. Since the founding of Connecticut College, the City of New London and the College have enjoyed a mutually beneficial partnership that continues to this day. Since Fall 2022, the College has had a new kind of residential living experience for students in downtown New London, in the newly renovated Manwaring Building on State Street.
Application Process

INQUIRIES, NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS are invited from all qualified parties. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile. Professional references are not requested at this time.

WittKieffer is assisting Connecticut College in this search. Application review will continue until an appointment is made. Expeditious application is encouraged.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer’s candidate portal.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Conn-VPFA@wittkieffer.com

As a top residential liberal arts college, Connecticut College is committed to creating a vibrant community enriched by diverse perspectives, talents and experiences. We encourage applications from candidates who share this commitment and will contribute to the diversity of our college community. AA/EOE