



Dean, Antonin Scalia Law School

Leadership Profile

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WittKieffer

Executive Summary

George Mason University (“George Mason” or the “University”), the largest public research university in the Commonwealth of Virginia, seeks an inspiring, dynamic, and entrepreneurial leader to serve as the Dean of the Antonin Scalia Law School (“Scalia Law” or the “School”). Consistently ranked among the nation’s most innovative universities by U.S. News and World Report, the University is located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and enjoys unparalleled access to the federal government, international organizations, and major corporations. Scalia Law has built a distinctive academic mission, a strong and impactful scholarly culture, and a faculty recognized for its productivity and influence. The School is on a strong, upward trajectory, thanks to its location, expanding financial resources, and relationships with the federal and state judiciary, including with several Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Given these exceptional advantages, Scalia Law offers its next Dean a set of compelling opportunities. The Dean will be expected: to sustain and strengthen the School’s identity as a community of scholars committed to rigorous, interdisciplinary research and analysis; to uphold its reputation as the law school most committed to civil public discourse and spirited intellectual exchange; and to maintain and deepen its dedication to outstanding legal education and professional development. The next Dean will also work to broaden the School’s appeal to a diverse array of constituents, consistent with its mission as a public institution in a state historically committed to access to higher education.

The Dean will have the opportunity to establish academic chairs supported by the Rouse Endowment—created in 2020 to facilitate the recruitment and retention of more than a dozen elite scholars—and to lead the launch of the Foundation for Scalia Law, a new 501(c)(3) entity that will manage contributions to the University for the exclusive benefit of the School. Strengthening collaborative relationships with University leadership, the Board of Visitors, and colleagues across George Mason’s many disciplines will be an essential part of the role. Equally important will be continued attention to student success, proactive stewardship of financial and human capital, and the cultivation of strong ties with the School’s alumni.

George Mason seeks a Dean who can inspire faculty, staff, students, alumni, and donors to elevate the School’s already strong momentum. The successful candidate will demonstrate distinguished intellectual leadership and encourage the continued production of influential legal scholarship. The candidate will have the emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills necessary to motivate the School’s community; to deepen Scalia Law’s integration within the University and its connection to the public it serves; and to build relationships with alumni, donors, civic leaders, and members of the bench and bar.

The next Dean must also understand Scalia Law’s distinctive academic tradition, which has played a central role in its rapid rise. The successful candidate will be able to position the School to compete effectively for top students and faculty, even against institutions with larger endowments or more established reputations. Entrepreneurial and organizational skill will be essential to successfully launching the Foundation for Scalia Law and developing other promising initiatives. The Dean will leverage the School’s unique reputation and location to expand collaboration with Justices of the U.S. and Virginia Supreme Courts, federal and state judges, Members of Congress, and regulatory agencies. The School seeks a leader who will project optimism and recognize that, in today’s academic environment, stasis invites decline while thoughtful innovation is essential to advancement and excellence.

The University, through Provost Dr. James Antony, has appointed a twelve-member Search Committee—chaired by Kenneth S. Ball, Dean of the College of Engineering and Computing—to conduct this search and advise on the appointment of the next Dean of Scalia Law. WittKieffer, a global executive search firm, has been retained to assist the Search Committee. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the firm as noted at the [end of this document](#).

Role of the Dean, Antonin Scalia Law School

The Dean will serve as the chief academic and administrative officer of Scalia Law, reporting to the Provost and working collaboratively with the President, fellow deans, and university leadership. The Dean is responsible for articulating and advancing Scalia Law's strategic vision, ensuring continued excellence, relevance, and financial sustainability in a rapidly evolving legal education landscape.

The Dean will provide visionary leadership and strategic direction for Scalia Law, fostering a collaborative decision-making environment that actively engages faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external partners—including those beyond the Washington, D.C. region—to strengthen Scalia Law's impact within the broader legal and civic communities. The ideal candidate will bring demonstrated organizational and management expertise, a commitment to excellence, and the ability to lead transformative legal education initiatives. A proven track record—or demonstrated potential—in fundraising and resource development is essential, as the Dean will play a central role in securing financial support to sustain and grow Scalia Law's academic programs, student services, and institutional impact. The ideal candidate will also get involved with and nurture Scalia Law's distinct culture.

Leadership Opportunities and Challenges

There are several opportunities and challenges, both internal and external, for the next Dean of Scalia Law:

- Continue and strengthen Scalia Law's tradition of rigorous inquiry and research, academic freedom, and respect for all points of view.
- Maintain and enhance Scalia Law's commitments to the first-rate education and professional development of its students.
- Nurture and strengthen relationships between Scalia Law and its alumni.
- Continue to develop the School's appeal to diverse constituents and embrace its mission as a public institution in a state known historically for its investments in higher education.
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with the University administration, George Mason's Board of Visitors, and with the faculties across the University.
- Continue the use of the Rouse Endowment, by creating more academic chairs as called for in the Endowment and by identifying and appointing outstanding scholars to fill those chairs.
- Organize, staff, and launch the new foundation authorized by the Board of Visitors for contributions to the University for the exclusive use of Scalia Law.
- Develop new courses, programs, or centers as needed to address important and understudied problems in contemporary law and policy.
- Marshal the financial and human capital necessary to advance Scalia Law's mission.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

While no single individual will possess all the desired qualifications, the successful candidate should possess most of the following characteristics:

- Intellectual leadership and dedication to facilitating elite scholarship and teaching excellence;
- Commitment to public service and the mission of a public university;
- Ability to manage and lead large and complex organizations with multiple stakeholders;
- Ability to communicate with the leaders, deans, and senior administrators at a major public research university;
- Leadership characterized by appreciation for Scalia Law's distinct mission, inclusiveness, transparency, integrity, and the ability to build consensus;
- Ability to build and manage organizations that are inclusive, respect diversity, and provide equal opportunity;
- The abilities to protect academic freedom and foster civil discourse in the classroom and in high-profile debates about law and public policy;
- Ability to communicate and collaborate with legal leaders, including Supreme Court Justices, judges, Members of Congress, Cabinet Heads, agency commissioners, and other professional leaders;
- Ability to communicate the School's mission within the George Mason community and to diverse external constituencies, including alumni, donors, bench, bar, business leaders, and state government;
- Ability to succeed at fundraising and development;
- An appetite for innovation and an aptitude at making entrepreneurial decisions;
- Engagement with Scalia Law's faculty, students, administrators, alumni, and supporters;
- Abilities to manage the budget of a complex organization and to make decisive choices how best to maximize the organization's return on expenditures;
- Strong listening skills, intellectual curiosity, willingness to learn from others; and the abilities to multi-task and to delegate; and
- J.D., or other terminal degree in law, at least ten years of experience in the teaching and/or practice of law, and accomplishments meriting tenure at the rank of professor under the School's criteria.



About Antonin Scalia Law School

Overview

Scalia Law (formerly, the “George Mason University School of Law”) is located in Arlington, Virginia, three miles from Washington, D.C., the nexus for the world’s most important legislation and jurisprudence. The School is located in Arlington’s Clarendon neighborhood, a lively urban hub for young professionals. Numerous Fortune 500 companies are located in Arlington County, and nearby is the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia—known as the “rocket docket” for having the fastest trial docket in the country. Arlington County and the counties adjacent to it have a high-technology corridor; Arlington is home to “HQ2,” the second corporate headquarters of Amazon.

From its inception, Scalia Law has brought a distinctive and effective approach to legal education and scholarship. Scalia Law is committed to legal scholarship informed by social

sciences, particularly in law and economics but also in law and history, philosophy, government, and political science. Scalia Law also has a distinct approach to legal pedagogy. In their substantive classes, J.D. students are trained not only in traditional legal reasoning but also in economic analysis (Economics for Lawyers is a mandatory first-year course). J.D. students take four semesters of legal writing and write dozens of models of papers lawyers write in practice. And classroom teaching and School events exemplify the School’s commitment to robust exchanges of ideas and civil discourse.

Over the past five years, Scalia Law has grown and thrived under the leadership of Dean Ken Randall. Scalia Law has strengthened its online LL.M. and J.M. programs, enrolling more than 350 LL.M. and J.M. students annually and generating sustainable tuition revenue. The school is home to five centers of excellence, including the nationally recognized Law & Economics Center, National Security Institute, and the C. Boyden Gray Center for the Study of the Administrative State. During the past decade three United States Supreme Court Justices have taught law school courses and the law school routinely hosts Supreme Court Justices and other Article III judges, Cabinet Members, United States Senators, and other prominent national figures as speakers.

Scalia Law faculty [ranks 1st in total SSRN downloads per author](#), and 30th for scholarly impact in the 2024 study by Gregory Sisk, et al., [Scholarly Impact of Law School Faculties in 2024: Updating the Leiter Score Ranking for the Top Third](#).

Scalia Law is recruiting the most elite law applicants and placing them in elite jobs post-graduation. The School’s most recent entering class (with 159 students) has a median 169 LSAT and a median 3.93 undergraduate GPA. Scalia Law students and graduates have secured 102 federal or state clerkships for the 2025 terms. Enrolled students also have unparalleled [opportunities to gain substantial practical experience](#) while in law school—through a Supreme Court Clinic, a Legal Aid Justice Center, the first-of-its-kind Veterans and Service Members Legal Clinic, and through externships in Virginia court chambers or the offices of Public Defenders, District Attorneys, and cybersecurity specialists. For a complete list of clinical and other practical opportunities for Scalia Law students, see [Clinics, Externships, and Legal Practicum](#).

Scalia Law graduates can be found in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and at least 19 foreign nations. For the most up-to-date employment information, see [Graduate Employment Statistics](#).

In October 2025, the University's Board of Visitors approved a new Foundation for Scalia Law. This independent foundation places the law school on an equal footing with that of the Commonwealth's other public law school, and with most of the nation's top 30 public law schools. The IRS recently approved the Foundation's tax-exempt status, and it is slated to begin operations by the close of 2025.

About George Mason University

George Mason University is one of the fastest growing and innovative institutions of higher education in the country and represents one of the most remarkable success stories in academia. George Mason was established in 1957 as "University College," the Northern Virginia branch of the University of Virginia. In the decades since, the University has been on a steep and pronounced growth trajectory. The largest public university in Virginia, George Mason enrolls

40,700 students from all 50 states and 130 countries. George Mason is the youngest university of the 130 Research 1 institutions in the United States and is one of the most diverse young research universities in the country.



The University has four campuses: a 677-acre campus in Fairfax, Virginia; a science and technology campus in Prince William County, Virginia; an international campus in Songdo, South Korea; and its professional campus in Arlington, Virginia, the home of Scalia Law. The Arlington Campus is home not only to Scalia Law but also to the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, the School of Business, the Schar School of Policy and Government, the Arts Management Program, Mason's Executive and Professional Education programs, and the School of Computing. The Arlington Campus has two conventional academic buildings—Hazel Hall (the home of Scalia Law), and Van Metre Hall (home for most of the other University departments on the Arlington Campus). The Arlington Campus also has a third building—FUSE, a mixed-use public-private research center. FUSE is home to the University's School of Computing and its Institute for Digital Innovation, many leading high-technology companies rent office space on its premises, and it is a hub of research on robotics and artificial intelligence research.

With over 1,800 faculty, George Mason offers 200 undergraduate, master's, doctoral, and professional degree programs across 10 schools and colleges. In the U.S. News and World Report 2025 rankings, George Mason is among the top 25 most innovative universities in the United States and 2nd nationally for ethnic diversity (#1 in Virginia). The University prides itself on being an innovative and inclusive academic community committed to making the world more prosperous, free, and just, and on providing a campus atmosphere that allows its students to thrive. George Mason is a minority-majority university with tremendous diversity among its students and with comparable graduation rates across all demographic groups (contrary to nationwide disparities in minority graduation rates). One in four of the University's students are first-generation college students and the University is committed to exemplary leadership around anti-racism and promotes research that supports social justice.

In fall 2025, George Mason welcomed its largest incoming class of new undergraduates, about 70% of whom entered with a 3.5 GPA or higher. The University's 2025 graduating class featured the most degree earners in George Mason history, more than 11,400 students hailing from 117 countries and 49 states. In 2024, the *Wall Street Journal* ranked George Mason among its top 30 public universities nationally and *U.S. News & World Report* ranked George Mason as the top public university in the state for innovation, upward mobility, and internships. In addition, the *Wall Street Journal* that year ranked George Mason tops in the state for value and upward mobility. Forbes ranks George Mason as a top 50 public university nationally, and George Mason is *Washington Monthly's* "Best Bang for the Buck" in Virginia.

As a public research university in one of the most important political, economic, and intellectual hubs in the world, George Mason accepts its responsibility to serve others: to help its students succeed, to enrich the life of its community, and to contribute to solving some of the most complex global problems of our time. An example of its commitment to education access and community, the University strengthened its strong relationship with the military with a five-year, \$20 million extension of the Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program (EMDP2). This partnership with the Uniformed Services University of Health Services (USU) began in 2014 and creates an opportunity for highly qualified active-duty military members to complete an intense, two-year academic program that prepares them for medical school. George Mason is well-positioned to have a far-reaching impact in the Washington DC region and beyond.

George Mason's current President is Gregory Washington, the University's eighth president. Since arriving at George Mason in July 2020, Washington has formed new partnerships, created academic and entrepreneurial pathways, opened or broken ground on academic facilities on all three Virginia campuses across the university's 848 acres, launched programs to reskill and upskill the workforce, presided over the highest sponsored research expenditures in George Mason history and overseen five of the university's top six philanthropic years. President Washington launched a new five-year plan in 2023, titled "[Mason Is All Together Different](#)." The plan identifies five broad priorities with goals that cover: the student experience, research, scholarship, and creative activities, partnerships for economic and social impact, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and faculty and staff success.

George Mason University is governed by a 16-member Board of Visitors, a corporate body whose members are appointed by the governor of Virginia on a rotating basis to serve four-year terms. The University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

More information about George Mason University can be found at <https://www.gmu.edu>.

Leadership



Gregory Washington, President

George Mason University President Gregory Washington leads the only public doctoral university in Virginia—and one of just five very large public universities in the nation—designated by the Carnegie Foundation and American Council on Education (ACE) in the highest tier of Opportunity Colleges and Universities for its combination of Higher Access, Higher Earnings and being a top research university.

George Mason, the state's largest public university with an enrollment of more than 40,700, is ranked by U.S. News & World Report's "Best Colleges 2026" as the top public university in Virginia, and in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region, for upward mobility. Forbes ranks George Mason as a top 50 public university nationally, and George Mason is Washington Monthly's "Best Bang for the Buck" in Virginia.

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In fall 2025, Washington announced the university's Grand Challenge Initiative to focus the university's research expertise on solutions to pressing global issues. On George Mason's campus in Arlington, known as Mason Square, Washington marshaled the largest public-private partnership in George Mason's history, Fuse at Mason Square, which marked its grand opening in September 2025. In spring 2025, the Life Sciences and Engineering Building opened on the Science and Technology Campus in Manassas.

In fall 2023, Washington was inducted into the National Academy of Engineering.



Arlington, VA

Arlington, Virginia, is a vibrant, urban community located just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. Known for its dynamic mix of culture, history, and innovation, Arlington offers unparalleled access to the nation's capital while maintaining its own distinctive character. The area is home to world-class dining, arts, and recreational opportunities, as well as numerous parks and trails that make it one of the most livable regions in the country. Arlington's proximity to federal agencies, courts, and leading law firms provides Scalia Law students and faculty with exceptional opportunities for professional engagement and networking. With a strong sense of community and a reputation for safety and economic vitality, Arlington serves as an ideal setting for legal education at the intersection of policy and practice.

[Mason Square](#) places the academic excellence of George Mason University in the heart of Arlington's innovation district and just minutes from the nation's capital. As the region continues to grow in technology-driven innovation, this campus is a hub of education, research, and business development. [Fuse at Mason Square](#), the university's LEED Platinum building in Arlington, is a symbol of Mason's commitment to sustainability. In 2024, George Mason marked the commercial opening of the new innovation center, which is expected to open for academic activities in Fall, 2025, and house research and development labs, classrooms, offices, corporate innovation centers, incubators, accelerators, convening spaces, and retail units.

Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting George Mason University in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by Feb 16, 2026.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Werner Boel, LL.M. and Ashlee Musser

ScaliaLawDean@wittkieffer.com

George Mason University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and is committed to building a diverse faculty and staff. The University is committed to excellence in diversity and the creation of an inclusive learning and working environment. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, and all other protected classes under federal or state laws.