
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

Endowed Directorship for the Loeb Institute

Leadership Profile

January 2026



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

The George Washington University's Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr. Institute for Religious Freedom and Democracy seeks a visionary and collaborative leader with a deep commitment to religion and politics to serve as the Endowed Director.

The successful candidate will serve as the intellectual and administrative head of the Loeb Institute while maintaining a robust faculty presence in the Department of Political Science, which is based within the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. The Endowed Director must articulate and actualize a compelling vision and plan for the future of religion and politics programming at George Washington University.

Located in Washington, D.C., the Columbian College of Arts & Sciences is the oldest and largest college at George Washington University. It is the academic home for both generalists and specialists, and is a place where research thrives, critical thinking is encouraged, collaboration is constant, and real-world training goes hand-in-hand with learning.

George Washington University is a destination campus for students and faculty from around the world. Envisioned by President George Washington as a university that would serve as an intellectual hub for the country and created by an act of Congress on February 9, 1821, GW is the largest institution of higher education in the District of Columbia. More than 270,000 students from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and 130 countries take advantage of an educational experience like no other. The University's connections to the world's most influential organizations and institutions, many of which are within walking distance from campus, mean that a GW education is not limited to the classroom. Housed in a global city unlike any other, GW is immersed in the community and the buzz of D.C. life.

The successful candidate will be a distinguished, senior-level, tenured professor at the rank of associate or above, and in the field of political science.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this profile.



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Housed within the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS), the Loeb Institute serves as a premier center for academic collaboration. It is dedicated to fostering dialogue on religious understanding and the separation of church and state, inspired by George Washington's words: "to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance."

The Director will enjoy an established, well-regarded academic spire of excellence with sufficient resources to shape the future direction of the Loeb Institute. In addition to providing daily oversight of the Institute's staff and activities, the Director will provide vision for the Institute's scholarly activities, ensuring it remains a leading hub for research on religious freedom and its role in democracy.

In addition to the management of the Institute, key opportunities for the next Endowed Director for the Loeb Institute include:

- **Research Oversight:** The Director will oversee the Institute's core initiatives, including faculty research grants and student fellowships, and, in partnership with the political science department, chart a strategic path for religion and democracy at a crucial time in the nation's history.
- **Programmatic Stewardship:** The successful candidate will have the opportunity to direct the Institute's public-facing work, including symposia, academic conferences, and educator workshops designed to bridge the gap between scholarly research and public understanding. The Institute's endowment will provide an opportunity for the Director to imagine new directions, testing new approaches and activities, including synergies with external partners where appropriate.
- **Administrative Management:** The next Director will oversee the Institute's staff, budget, and daily operations to support its mission of interdisciplinary collaboration across religion, peace studies, history, and political science.
- **Maintain a Scholarly Agenda and Reduced Teaching Load:** As a part of the directorship, the successful applicant will maintain a scholarly agenda germane to the Institute's mission and identity. The Director will also serve in a reduced teaching capacity.
- **Engage Friends and Donors of the Institute:** With support from the Advancement Department, the Director will maintain a collegial partnership with the Loeb Foundation and seek additional investment from like-minded donors wishing to advance the Institute's cause.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences seeks an Endowed Professor and Institute Director who possesses broad intellectual insights, top-tier scholarly credentials, and the leadership capacity to implement a compelling and innovative vision for the future of religion and politics at George Washington University. The ideal candidate is dynamic, visionary, passionate, and collegial.

- **Academic credentials:** A Ph.D. in an appropriate academic field and an established record of leadership, excellence in teaching, and externally funded research or practice commensurate with an endowed associate or full professor appointment within the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences.
- **Administrative experience:** The successful candidate will bring sufficient administrative experience to oversee the day-to-day functioning of the Institute.
- **Research credibility:** Competitive candidates will maintain an active, theoretically-oriented research agenda in the field of Religion and Politics, evidenced by a high-impact record of peer-reviewed publications.
- **Commitment to teaching and mentorship:** Competitive candidates will teach graduate and undergraduate courses in political science and mentor students within the department.
- **Commitment to service:** Candidates will participate in the life of the Department of Political Science and the broader University through service and academic leadership.
- **Vision:** Competitive candidates will show evidence of a bold vision for religion and politics; the ability to communicate a vision for religion and politics at GW in a compelling way to internal and external constituents.
- **Interpersonal and communication skills:** Exceptional relationship building and interpersonal skills; vibrant communication skills; the ability to be a bridge builder and engage faculty, staff, students and to work effectively across campus.
- **Personal qualities:** Entrepreneurial spirit, emotional intelligence, courage, humor, and integrity.
- **External relations aptitude:** The selected candidate will have a natural ability for external relations, including donor stewardship, friend-making, and the interest to offer speeches and talks to interested, relevant audiences, positively representing the Institute and the University in doing so.

The Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr. Institute for Religious Freedom and Democracy

Overview

The Loeb Institute is housed within GW's Columbian College of Arts and Sciences through the philanthropy of [Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr.](#) and the [George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom](#).

Ambassador Loeb founded the New York City-based George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom in 2009. The original institute offered educational programs based in New York and Newport, Rhode Island, and partnered with civic organizations to reach tens of thousands of students. Following a 2016 donation of \$2.5 million by the John L. Loeb Jr. Foundation and the Institute for Religious Freedom, those educational programs were transferred over to GW.

Mission

The George Washington University Loeb Institute for Religious Freedom and Democracy is committed to promoting freedom of religious belief and observance, the equality of all law-abiding religions and separation of church and state in the United States and around the world. The institute seeks to promote open, respectful, discussion about religious liberty and the separation of church and state, and it explores the contemporary ramifications of these concepts in the United States and across the globe.

The goal of the institute is to help students, teachers and public leaders worldwide to go beyond “mere” toleration of our religious differences to sincere respect for each other’s beliefs and observances. It is a goal that reflects [George Washington’s aspirations](#): We must show respect for each other’s religious beliefs, even those most different from our own — so long as those ideas are lawful and contribute to a peaceful society.

Student Research & Resources

The GW Loeb Institute for Religious Freedom and Democracy offers funding to support student research in the areas of religious freedom, separation of church and state, religion in society and related topics.

Research funding can be applied towards travel for projects, living expenses, presentations at conferences and more. Both the [Undergraduate Research Fellowship](#) and the [Graduate Travel Grants](#) are open to students in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences.

About John Loeb, Jr.

Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr. earned his BA cum laude in 1952 from Harvard College and, in 1954, received his MBA from the Harvard Business School. He was a senior partner in Loeb, Rhoades & Co. from 1956 to 1976 and Chairman of the Board of Holly Sugar from 1969 to 1971. He has served as a director of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Rio Grande Industries, and John Morrell & Co., among other corporations.

His public career includes his service as U.S. Ambassador to Denmark from 1981 to 1983 and Delegate to the 38th Session of the UN General Assembly. An advisor to Governor Nelson Rockefeller on Environmental and Economic Affairs from 1967 to 1970, he served as Chairman of the Governor’s New York State Council of Environmental Advisors from 1970 to 1975.

He is the Founder and Chairman of the Loeb Institute and Chairman of Loeb, Rhoades Trust. He was trustee of the American University and served on numerous Harvard visiting committees, including John F. Kennedy School of Government and the Harvard Business School.

Ambassador Loeb currently serves as chairman of the Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States and the John L. Loeb, Jr. Foundation. He is a Vice Chairman of the Council of American Ambassadors and an executive trustee of the American Scandinavian Foundation and a member of its Investment Committee. He served for almost 40 years as a trustee and five years as Chairman of the Langeloth Foundation.

Among his numerous awards and recognitions are the Justice Louis D. Brandeis Award, the Distinguished Patriot Award of the Sons of the American Revolution and the John Clarke Laureate of the John Clarke Society. He received the designation of C.B.E. (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) bestowed by Queen Elizabeth II in 1994 for his work with the Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States. Ambassador Loeb is also a Knight of the Grand Cross of the Order of Dannebrog, received from Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. He holds an honorary Doctorate of Law from Georgetown University. He is a member of the Society of Colonial Wars and the Sons of the American Revolution.

Ambassador Loeb received the 2015 Emma Lazarus Statue of Liberty Award from the American Jewish Historical Society for his work promoting religious freedom, and President George H.W. Bush lauded his work. He is a descendant of Emma Lazarus, a poet whose sonnet is engraved in the Statue of Liberty.



Columbian College of Arts and Sciences

Overview

Columbian College is GW's largest and most comprehensive academic unit. It's home to 42 academic departments, three affiliated schools, nearly 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students, 14 research centers, and more than 490 full-time faculty—including Fulbright and Guggenheim scholars, award-winning artists, cutting-edge scientists, and critically acclaimed authors.

Curious, socially aware, and ready to make a difference, Columbian College students can explore and pursue academic interests across a broad spectrum of fields that include the arts, politics, policy, natural science, social science, quantitative analysis, and the humanities. Columbian College faculty are dedicated mentors who guide our students to think, to ask questions, and to use their knowledge in meaningful ways.

Mission

CCAS prepares students to become responsible global citizens and visionary leaders across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors through:

- **An engaged liberal arts education:** To champion the importance of a broad and inclusive education in the sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities because we believe that innovation comes from thinking across disciplines.
- **Pioneering and innovative research:** To promote innovation and collaboration in research, scholarship, and creativity, working beyond the disciplinary boundaries of thought and imagination to enable advances for future generations.
- **Expansive and expanding student knowledge:** To teach students essential skills in critical thinking, leadership, written and oral communication, and analysis — all of which are needed for students to adapt to new industries and prepare for fulfilling, successful, and impactful lives.
- **Civic engagement:** To focus on linking intellectual knowledge with real-world applications, knowing that our students' critical thinking skills will help them solve problems in the community, the nation, and the world.
- **Diversity through inclusive excellence:** CCAS believes in a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff with varied backgrounds, ideas, and interests creates a vibrant learning environment, cutting edge curricula, and research excellence.

Vision

Solving the complex problems facing humanity and advancing global wellbeing requires agile minds capable of thoughtful deliberation and skillful collaboration. At GW's Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS), we seek to create opportunities for students to discover knowledge that is profoundly innovative and cross-disciplinary, and that embraces the university's unique proximity to governmental institutions and global power centers, prestigious research agencies, and iconic cultural institutions.

Strategic Plan: Charting Our Future Together

Through a collaborative effort with our broader community, the Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS) has developed a [strategic plan](#) to guide our priorities and actions through 2030. In a time of transformation across

higher education and society, our goal is to ensure CCAS remains a vibrant home for liberal arts and sciences education, innovation and public impact—right here in the heart of Washington, D.C.

This plan reflects CCAS' engagement with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and others. It builds on GW's institutional priorities and leverages our distinctive strengths as a college dedicated to critical inquiry, creativity, civic responsibility, and interdisciplinarity.

- **21st-Century Liberal Arts:** Prepare students to think critically, adapt to evolving challenges, and thrive in a rapidly changing world through real-world learning and future-facing skill development.
- **Interdisciplinary Thinking in Action:** Foster a culture of integrative scholarship that brings together diverse disciplines and perspectives to address society's most pressing challenges.
- **Innovation Through Emerging Technologies:** Harness the ethical, creative, and interdisciplinary use of emerging technologies to accelerate discovery, enhance education, and expand research impact.
- **Ideas into Action: Research for Public Good:** Connect scholarship to society by addressing real-world challenges through public engagement, policy-relevant research, and community collaboration.
- **Building Community & Belonging:** Strengthen connections within the CCAS community through shared purpose, inclusive leadership, and meaningful engagement.



About The George Washington University

Overview

Chartered by an act of Congress in fulfillment of George Washington's stated desire that a university be created in the country's capital to serve students from throughout the nation, The George Washington University was originally founded as Columbian College in 1821. Its name was changed to Columbian University in 1873, and to The George Washington University in 1904, in honor of the first U.S. president.

Today, The George Washington University is a premier independent research institution, enrolling more than 27,000 students from all 50 U.S. states and 130 countries, in ten colleges and schools across three campuses. *U.S. News and World Report* ranks the University as #59 among national research institutions, among the top 100 "Best Colleges for Veterans," and 93rd among "Best Value Schools." The University's endowment reaches nearly \$3 billion. There are approximately 1,600 full- and part-time faculty, including 95 endowed professorships. Combined faculty plus administrative and support staff number over 5,500.

GW's main campus is situated on 43 acres in the historic Foggy Bottom section of Washington, D.C., blocks from the White House, the U.S. State Department, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, many embassies, and the National Mall. Also nearby are the U.S. Institute of Peace and other important national and international organizations. The University owns considerable property in Foggy Bottom, and leases facilities to the World Bank, the IMF, and other institutions.

The University's location in the heart of Washington, D.C., affords innumerable educational, cultural, and career opportunities for students, as well as research and public engagement opportunities for faculty. As one example, the University, in partnership with the National Gallery of Art in 2014, assumed ownership of the Corcoran School of Art, founded by the oldest private art museum in Washington. The Corcoran School of Art now sits within the University's Columbian College of Arts and Sciences and includes all departments of visual and performing arts, plus Museum Studies. In 2018, the Corcoran School of Art resumed residence in its renovated 19th-century Beaux Arts building on the eastern edge of campus, an iconic architectural site in the city opposite the West Wing of the White House.

Most of the institution's residential facilities are located in Foggy Bottom, and the campus is conveniently served on its western edge by Foggy Bottom-GWU Washington Metro stop, which offers access to the Orange, Blue, and Silver transportation lines. The GW Hospital and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences are located adjacent to the Metro entrance.

The University's Mount Vernon campus, located in Washington's leafy Palisades neighborhood, complements Foggy Bottom with a library, residence halls, athletic facilities, and an extensive campus commons. Mount Vernon is well connected to the Foggy Bottom campus through regular University-provided shuttles.

GW's Science and Technology Campus, located in Virginia's technology corridor, offers more than 20 degree and certificate programs in cross-disciplinary STEM-based disciplines. The Virginia campus is a research and graduate facility spanning over 100 acres near Dulles International Airport, and is also home to the School of Nursing.

Leadership

Ellen M. Granberg, President

Ellen M. Granberg is the 19th President of the George Washington University, a preeminent research university and the largest institution of higher education in the nation's capital.

President Granberg is an accomplished academic leader who has a record of strengthening teaching and research excellence across disciplines, supporting a diverse and inclusive community of students, faculty, and staff, and collaborating with all stakeholders to drive transformative change and increase institutional prominence. She became the first woman to serve as GW's President on July 1, 2023.

Previously, President Granberg served as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and was a professor and senior leader at Clemson University.

As RIT's Chief Academic Officer, President Granberg oversaw nine colleges, two degree-granting units, and international campuses in Croatia, Dubai, Kosovo, and China. In this role, she oversaw key initiatives, including increasing undergraduate student success, expanding doctoral education, improving facilities for instruction and research, and leveraging RIT's strengths in innovation, creativity, and cross-disciplinary collaboration to advance the university's academic mission.

At Clemson, Dr. Granberg was the Senior Associate Provost and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. She chaired the development and implementation of the institution's strategic plan, which spurred growth in research, graduate studies, and inclusive excellence. In addition, Dr. Granberg developed a university-wide strategy for faculty recruitment, retention, compensation, and development.

A nationally recognized scholar in the sociology of self, identity, and mental health, President Granberg began her career in academia as a Professor of Sociology.

Prior to pursuing graduate studies, she spent eleven years in the telecommunications industry, leading large integrated software development teams that replaced aging billing and customer service systems.

President Granberg holds a B.A. in History from the University of California at Davis and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from Vanderbilt University.

John Lach, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

John Lach was named Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of the George Washington University effective July 1, 2025. Most recently, he served as Dean of GW's School of Engineering and Applied Science, a role he began in August 2019. Interim Provost Lach joined GW Engineering from the University of Virginia, where he served as the Director of Cross-Cutting Initiatives at the university's School of Engineering and Applied Science and as a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering in the Charles L. Brown Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He previously served as the Chair of the department. He is Associate Director for Translational Research for the NSF Engineering Research Center (ERC) for Advanced Self-Powered Systems of Integrated Sensors and Technologies (ASSIST).

Throughout his career, Interim Provost Lach has worked extensively with departments, schools, and initiatives to foster cross-disciplinary collaboration that supports strategic priorities. As a researcher, he focuses on wireless technologies in health. His primary research interests are cyber-physical systems, embedded sensor systems, smart and connected health, and body sensor networks. He has been the principal investigator or co-principal investigator on more than 35 grants totaling over \$57 million in research funding.

Interim Provost Lach received his Bachelor of Science degree from Stanford University and his Master of Science and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from UCLA.

Paul Wahlbeck, Dean

Paul Wahlbeck was named Dean of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences in 2020, after serving as Interim Dean for two years. As the leader of the university's largest academic unit, he remains committed to enhancing the student experience through investments in efforts to ensure student success and the development of innovative programs and expanded experiential learning opportunities. He also is focused on fostering a supportive environment for world-changing faculty research and building strong relationships with alumni.

Dean Wahlbeck came to Columbian College in 1993 as a faculty member in the Political Science Department after receiving his Ph.D. from Washington University. As chair of the Political Science Department, beginning in 2011, he focused on strengthening student engagement with career and student research panels, making the political science doctoral program one of the strongest in the country and supporting faculty scholarship. As vice dean for programs and research from 2016 to 2018, he oversaw graduate enrollment, research growth and academic and student services.

Dean Wahlbeck's scholarship centers on Supreme Court decision making, especially strategic interaction among justices. His co-authored book, *Crafting Law on the Supreme Court: The Collegial Game*, was awarded the 2017 Lasting Contribution Award from the Law & Courts Section of the American Political Science Association. His work has been published in many noteworthy journals, including the *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics* and *Political Research Quarterly*. A holder of a J.D. from the University of Illinois, he served as an attorney for the Illinois General Assembly and the Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation earlier in his career. In addition, he served as Director of the Law and Social Science Program at the National Science Foundation (NSF) from 2001 to 2003 and, in 2006, was named Director of NSF's Political Science Program. He also holds a courtesy appointment in the GW School of Law.



Washington, D.C.

The District of Columbia is a mosaic of neighborhoods, from historic Capitol Hill and Georgetown to the Penn Quarter's arts scene to the 24/7 buzz of Adams Morgan. The banks of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers are flourishing with some of the capitol region's most exciting destinations for live music, sports, dining, and on-the-water activities.

Washington is known as a central hub for American history and politics. There are renowned, free museums and stunning memorials and monuments dedicated to America's leaders, but the District also is known as a great place to live and work. D.C. has more than 30 neighborhoods and is currently growing at a rate of 1.28% annually; its population has increased by 19.77% since the 2010 census. It is known for its walkability and extensive public transportation system.

The Washington, D.C. Metro—one of the busiest public transportation systems in the country—connects all four quadrants of the city with suburban Virginia and Maryland and is a convenient way to navigate the region. Baltimore and Annapolis are within easy driving distance, as are other Maryland suburbs, and three major airports connect Washington with every major city in the U.S.

U.S. News & World Report ranked D.C. as:

- #1 Best Historical Cities to Visit in the USA
- #2 Best East Coast Vacation Spots
- #6 Best Spring Break Family Vacations
- #8 Best Family Vacations in the USA
- #15 Best Places to Visit in the USA



Procedure for Candidacy

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

WittKieffer is assisting The George Washington University in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by March 31, 2026.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Melody Rose, Ph.D. and Maya Holt-Brockenbrough, Ph.D.

GWULoebDirector@wittkieffer.com

The George Washington University will offer an annual salary of \$140,000 - \$175,000 for this role.

The George Washington University values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, color, disability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other status protected by law.