SEARCH PROFILE:

VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

ELMS COLLEGE
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THE OPPORTUNITY

The College of Our Lady of the Elms (Elms College) in Chicopee, Massachusetts, seeks an energetic, innovative, and collaborative leader to serve as the next Vice President of Student Affairs. This is an outstanding opportunity for a talented and accomplished professional who is committed to providing an impactful environment for students to have a key leadership role on the executive team of President Harry Dumay, Ph.D., MBA. The new Vice President of Student Affairs will be selected by Dr. Dumay and is expected to begin in late summer.

An essential member of the President’s Cabinet, the Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA) is the senior student services officer for the College.

Responsibilities of the VPSA include leadership and support of a dynamic and dedicated team of professionals and strategic management in addition to creating programs and policies that support a diverse, inclusive and success-oriented student experience to complement and enhance academics. The new VPSA will support initiatives that enhance the general quality of life, engagement and a sense of belonging for Elms College students. The next VPSA will work collaboratively across the institution to provide strong and effective management and should be eager to serve as a visible, accessible and valuable member of the campus community.
ELMS COLLEGE

Founded in 1928, Elms College is a Catholic, coeducational institution dedicated to educating all students of all backgrounds and religions. Elms offers an outstanding liberal arts and science core, strong professional programs, and select master’s and doctoral degrees for career preparation in an academic environment that encourages scholarship, leadership, caring and commitment. Elms College is dedicated to an academic strategy based on developing a strong sense of what each person can contribute to the world, to their community, and to one another.

In the spirit of the founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph, Elms College embraces and celebrates all religious traditions. The mission and core values are rooted in the College’s Catholic identity and are characterized by a commitment to service, justice, and the inherent dignity of the person.

CHICOPEE, MASSACHUSETTS

Elms College is located in Chicopee, Massachusetts, in the heart of the Pioneer Valley with easy access to I-91 and the Mass Turnpike. Boston is 90 minutes away and Hartford, Connecticut and Bradley International Airport are 30 minutes away. Elms College’s location in western Massachusetts, in proximity to Springfield, Northampton, and Amherst, offers a wide array of outdoor, cultural, and intellectual opportunities. The College is located near many hiking and skiing attractions in the Berkshires and southern Vermont.

The 22-acre campus is in a quiet residential neighborhood adjacent to a historic district. Berchmans Hall is Elms’ flagship campus building, housing many administrative offices and classrooms, as well as Veritas Auditorium. There are three residence halls, housing approximately 400 students, and other administrative and academic buildings. A beautiful gathering space, the Keating Quadrangle is bordered by Berchmans Hall, the Lyons Center for Natural and Health Sciences, residence halls, Alumnae Library, and the Mary Dooley College Center. The Maguire Center for Health, Fitness and Athletics blends the accommodations for athletics, recreation, health fitness, and academics in an inclusive multi-purpose facility.
LEADERSHIP

DR. HARRY DUMAY, PH.D., MBA, 11TH PRESIDENT OF ELMS COLLEGE
Prior to joining Elms College in July 2017, Dr. Harry Dumay was Senior Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer at Saint Anselm College; Chief Financial Officer, Associate Dean for Finance and Information Technology at the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences; and has also held leadership positions in finance and administration at Boston College and Boston University. Dr. Dumay received a BS degree magna cum laude in Mechanical Technology from Lincoln University, Missouri; a MA degree in Public Administration from Framingham State University; an MBA and graduate certificate in Corporate Finance from Boston University; and a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from Boston College.

BRIDGES TO THE ELMS PLUS EXPERIENCE, THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 – 2023
“The most successful organizations start by articulating why they exist, rather than what they do or how they function, to paraphrase Simon Sinek. In that spirit, Elms College used the opportunity presented by our strategic planning process to reaffirm our purpose: Elms College bridges the path between where our students are and where they want to be, by preparing them for the fulfilled and purposeful lives that they desire to lead for themselves and their dear neighbor.” President Dumay, Strategic Plan 2021-2023, page 5

Beginning in 2019, the campus community embarked on a highly collaborative process which critically examined how the opportunities of an Elms College educational experience impacts their students in transformational tangible and intangible ways.

The College is progressing well in its execution of the Strategic Plan 2021-2023, Bridges to the Elms Plus Experience as evidenced in the Year One Report. President Dumay, the Board of Trustees, along with the campus community developed five strategic priorities to lead their efforts as they move forward in alignment with mission and values.

- Excel in Academics
- Expand Experiential Learning
- Elevate Ethical Leadership
- Engage Our Learning Community
- Enhance Sustainability

“As a student affairs professional at Elms College, I am part of a community that seeks to cultivate meaningful experiences for students to truly explore the big questions of life in a holistic environment that is intellectually, spiritually and socially nourishing. The mission and values of Elms College reflect a spirit of service and dedication to seeing our students thrive in their lives as engaged global leaders. Elms is particularly committed to the work of access and equity within higher education. Such a clear emphasis within our work and the demographics of students we serve keeps me passionate about my personal contribution to the overall student experience of Elms College.”

Andrew Mercado, Assistant Director, Office of Campus Ministry

FAST FACTS 2021-2022

- Total enrollment: 1379
- First-generation students: 31%
- Full-time undergraduate enrollment: 1060
- Student-faculty ratio: 11:1
- undergraduate (84% Full Time, 17% Part Time)
- Six-year graduation rates: Fall 2015 Cohort, all FTFT students 68%
- Retention: Fall 2020, Cohort Fall-to-Fall Retention, 86% Overall
- Number of faculty: 52 full-time
- Number of athletic teams: 15 teams competing in the NCAA Division III, Great Northeast Athletic Conference
- Team mascot: Blazers

Race/ethnicity of students:
- Non-Resident Alien: <1%
- Hispanic: 15%
- American Indian: <1%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 3%
- Back/Non-Hispanic: 10%
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: <1%
- White/Non-Hispanic: 48%
- Two or More Races: 3%
- Unknown: 20%

Gender of student population: 77% Female, 23% Male
LEADERSHIP (CONT.)

MISSION AND CORE VALUES
The College of Our Lady of the Elms, a Catholic college, educates a diverse group of students in a supportive, vibrant learning community. Combining a liberal arts education with professional studies, Elms College empowers students to effect positive changes in the community and in the world.

Affirming the founding tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Elms College challenges students to embrace change without compromising principle, to respond creatively to the demands of their chosen careers, and to advocate for people in need. Elms College is a community rooted in faith, educated in mind, compassionate in heart, and responsive to civic and social obligations.

The Elms College community affirms the Catholic identity and the relationship with the Sisters of St. Joseph. The trustees, faculty, staff, and students, aspire to live and work as an academic community according to these core values.

The Sisters of St. Joseph live embracing their charism of “uniting neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God without distinction”. This charism is foundational to the Elms College mission and core values. It is through lived experiences of serving others, welcoming all, and building community that Elms reflects the charism. Since its founding, the College has embraced the challenges of our world by reaching across divides, developing leaders, and addressing injustices. The charism lives on through our students, staff, and faculty serving the ‘dear neighbor’ whoever they are, wherever we are.

FAITH
Elms College, empowered by love and faith, welcomes all, while seeking to promote the traditions of our founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph, through programs that challenge all members of the college community, spiritually, ethically and intellectually.

COMMUNITY
Elms College commits to compassion and relationship building, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, creating a sense of belonging for the entire campus community. This encourages us to respond to the needs of others, in a spirit of hospitality, within and beyond the college.

JUSTICE
Elms College aspires to the highest standards of social responsibility as an institution and is committed to instilling values of equal opportunity and justice in our college community. Individually and collectively, we are dedicated to pursuing the common good and to improving the lives of all people.

EXCELLENCE
Elms College fosters excellence in our students and in our community by educating the whole individual, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. We challenge each other to realize our full potential to impact the world through our knowledge and enhanced skills.
CAMPUS LIFE

The Elms College community shares a vision of working together to provide a supportive, welcoming, safe, and inclusive community. At the same time, the mission and core values are rooted in the College’s Catholic identity which faculty, administrators, staff, and students are invited to explore and celebrate. The living and learning environment emphasizes the importance of a student-centered, holistic, and transformational experience for all students.

When asked why they chose Elms, current students mention the ability for personal connections to faculty and administrators, the numerous ways they can get involved and be engaged on campus, and the opportunity to utilize multiple learning modalities.

From athletics to student activities, campus ministry, and academic support services, students have an array of opportunities outside the classroom for activities and support services – and a dedicated staff to offer guidance and encouragement. Students participate in NCAA Division III Athletics as a part of the Great Northeast Athletic Conference (GNAC) in 15 sports.

At Elms, there are no strangers. This tight-knit, family-like atmosphere provides an environment that most describe as their home away from home. Faculty and staff describe a collaborative and collegial “boots on the ground, all hands-on deck” ethos, always with the student at the center of their work. Students describe the attentiveness of faculty and staff, specifically the care and concern universally demonstrated inside and outside the classroom.

The Elms community managed the extreme health and safety challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic well, although the return to post-COVID levels of on-campus engagement has been slow. Commuter student engagement is also a priority, including the Commuter Council and ways to engage students virtually.

Students look forward to a reinvigorated campus engagement strategy with the addition of a strong Vice President by the end of the summer and a new Director of Student Engagement, who will join the campus in July. Student leaders speak of amazing experiences and opportunities for leadership however; they express a desire for more guidance and mentorship. They articulate the need for Student Affairs to be more visible and represented on campus and hope the new Vice President will help educate the community on the value of a strong and vibrant campus life.

“I love Elms because of the small, close-knit community and the Colleges’ values. Elms provides students with the opportunity to expand on their interests by offering interesting hands-on courses and a variety of activities, clubs and organizations to be a part of!”

Kiley Arsenault, Class of 2023 Springfield, Massachusetts, Early Childhood Education
ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Elms College is a community with dedicated and outstanding faculty and staff who care deeply about students. However, the campus would benefit from the advocacy and education that comes through an experienced leader in student affairs who understands the practical and holistic needs of students and has the authority to influence campus policy. The VPSA will have a deep understanding of contemporary higher education, including the unique needs of a small, private institution. The VPSA will embrace and support the Catholic identity and mission of the institution.

The VPSA will work collaboratively across the campus to provide a culture of care for students, guided by best practices to promote student academic and personal success, thereby increasing student learning, engagement, and completion.

Elms is a diverse community of learners, with various modalities, including in the classroom, in the community and online. As a key leadership position on campus, the VPSA provides initiatives and educational opportunities which are inclusive of undergraduate, graduate, commuter, off-campus and resident students.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced student affairs professional to work collaboratively and cooperatively in an environment described as “a family, where everyone rolls up their sleeves to do what needs to be done.”

While serving as the senior student affairs officer at the College, the VPSA will be attentive to student culture, accessible to all students, interactive with colleagues, and involved in the delivery of high impact practices.

“I chose Elms because of the exceptional quality of the education and how tight-knit of a community it is. Elms has a place for everyone to find a home away from home, which is super important for someone who lives 1.5 hour drive away from campus! Being involved on campus gave me opportunities I would have never imagined, and I am forever grateful for all of them.”

Casey Gagnon, Class of 2023, Stoughton, MA
Communication Sciences and Disorders Major
ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS (CONT.)

RESPONSIBILITIES
The VPSA’s responsibilities include:

- Embodies the values of faith, community, justice, excellence, and upholds the College’s commitments to diversity and inclusion.
- Provides overall leadership for Dining Services, Campus Ministry, Student Engagement, Diversity and Inclusion, and the Dean of Students who oversees Residence Life and Housing, Counseling, Student Health. ([Student Affairs Organizational Chart](#))
- Understands the diverse populations of students served by Elms College (full-time, part-time, residential, commuter, online, off-campus, undergraduate, graduate) and ensures that all segments are fully served and receive the full Elms experience.
- Works collaboratively with Public Safety to maintain and enhance campus safety and security. Provides leadership for student crisis and emergency response preparation and protocols and assists as needed in emergency situations.
- Represents Elms College in the community with issues pertaining to student matters and activities.
- Is responsible for planning, implementation, and monitoring student affairs budgets.
- In collaboration with constituents from across and off-campus, develops a comprehensive student engagement plan which includes strategies for enrollment and retention.
- Is responsible for the assessment and development of fair, consistent and objective policies and procedures.
- Remains current in higher education policy, state and federal regulations to ensure compliance.
- Oversees the student affairs assessment processes, reports on key metrics and presents options for continuous improvement.

“I love Elms because of the small family atmosphere. At Elms everyone knows everyone, and I enjoy being able to go anywhere on campus and see someone I know and be able to talk to them. I also love Elms because of our athletics program. Everyone on the staff is friendly and easy to talk to and will always help every student athlete they can.”

Collin Liedke, Class of 2023 Newington, Connecticut, Accounting and Sports Management
LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The Vice President of Student Affairs will collaborate with the President’s Leadership Cabinet in addressing key priorities for the College: engagement, recruitment, and retention. Specifically, these are the top priorities:

- Provide visionary and operational leadership for the division of Student Affairs;
- Work cooperatively across the campus to support the College’s efforts to increase retention, academic progress, and graduation rates;
- Collaborate with faculty and staff across campus to create a best practice, evidence-based, inclusive campus experience; and
- Be the voice of Student Affairs, advocating for and supporting the creative and innovative team.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS
The new VPSA will demonstrate the following required qualifications:

- Master’s degree in higher education or related field.
- A progressive record of successful higher education leadership, including seven or more years of substantive leadership experience in student affairs, including supervision of staff and departments.
- A commitment to and evidence of tangible contributions to working with diverse student populations and to fostering an inclusive and empowering environment.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS
The new VPSA may additionally possess some of the following preferred credentials:

- A terminal degree in leadership, higher education or related field.
- Previous professional experience at a small, private religiously affiliated institution.
- A collaborative management style: the ability to develop and support teams, build consensus, and lead change.
- Ability to think strategically and solve problems from a college-wide perspective.
- A record of success in developing and assessing innovative initiatives that lead to student development, learning, and success.
- Experience working with academic departments and programs to connect curricular and co-curricular opportunities which impact student learning and social development.
- Experience in enrollment management and retention strategies.
- Financial acumen, including data-informed strategic planning/budgeting experience.
- Strong public speaking, and interpersonal communication skills.
- A robust “roll up the sleeves, boots on the ground” work ethic.
- The ability to recruit and retain staff, with a record of providing professional development opportunities.
- Training and/or experience with compliance regulations related to students, such as Title IX, ADA, VAWA, and the Clery Act.
- Prior experience as a vice president, dean or associate dean of students.
- Fundraising, grant writing and management experience.
Elms College is being assisted by Academic Search. Those who are considering applying are encouraged to schedule a confidential conversation with the senior consultant for this search: Dr. Nancy Crimmin (nancy.crimmin@academicsearch.org).

Nominations should include the nominee’s full name, position, institution/organization, and email address.

Semifinalist interviews will be virtual, and finalists for the position will participate in on-campus interviews. A background check (including identity, degree verification, and criminal records check) must be completed satisfactorily before any candidate can be offered this position.

Review of applications begins July 11, 2022 and the position remains open until filled.

A completed application will include these documents, to be submitted electronically in .pdf format: 1) a detailed letter of interest addressing the leadership agenda and qualifications as outlined in this profile; 2) a full résumé/curriculum vitae with relevant administrative responsibilities and accomplishments; 3) a 1-2 page Statement of Contributions to Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that addresses your commitment, and experiences in creating a safe and welcoming environment. This statement should address personal and professional experiences, lessons learned, and anticipated projects. Concrete examples are encouraged; and 4) a list of five professional references, including names, phone numbers, and email addresses, noting the candidate’s relationship for each reference. References will not be contacted until later in the search process and only with the candidate’s permission.

Applications and nominations should be sent to ElmsVPSA@academicsearch.org.

Elms College is an all-inclusive community of dedicated faculty and staff who strive to serve the needs of each and every Elms College student. Elms College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability for any job opening. Elms College is an Equal Opportunity employer. We educate individuals from diverse communities and cultures, and therefore encourage applications from women, minorities and individuals with a commitment to enabling the success of underrepresented groups. The College fully complies with the requirements of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and all other applicable federal, state, and local statutes, ordinances, and regulations.
ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Elms College in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute. For more information, visit www.academicsearch.org.