



Presidential Search

Thank you for inquiring about the search for a new president at York College. This information packet provides guidance on the search process and offers potential applicants a wide-angle view of York and the role which the new president will play. The search committee welcomes any questions which applicants or would-be applicants may have. Inquiries may be addressed to presidential-search@york.edu.

Criteria and Qualifications

The board, in consultation with the faculty and staff, has developed the following set of qualifications for York's next president.

- Faith and spiritual maturity
- An advanced degree (terminal degree preferred)
- A track record of success in demanding management/leadership roles
- Demonstrated skill in operational management
- Acumen in financial management
- A thorough understanding of fund-raising (experience in fund-raising preferred)
- A heart for students
- Someone who treats faculty and staff with respect and honor
- A good communicator, both publicly and in writing
- A long-time member of the Churches of Christ
- A history of engagement in local congregational life
- Committed to maintaining close affiliation between York College and Churches of Christ
- Capable of advancing York's relationships with various communities and constituencies
- An entrepreneurial spirit
- A full job description for the president is available at york.edu/presidential-search-job-description

Past involvement with York College and its campus culture will be considered a plus, and York College alumni will have special consideration.

A full job description for the president is available at york.edu/presidential-search-job-description

Expectations and Challenges

York's 21st president will be expected to build on the momentum which has developed under the leadership of Dr. Steve Eckman. Student enrollment is at an all-time high, but the resident potential of the campus is yet to be fully exploited.

York was later than other schools in offering online courses. Through intensive effort, however, online programs are now a well-established part of the curriculum. York's first master's degrees are offered entirely online, and enrollment has grown steadily for both the M.A. in Education and the M.A. in Organizational and Global Leadership. York's next president will be expected to foster a broader and more extensive online program.

Like all small schools with limited endowment, York must be expeditious in managing costs and tireless in its efforts at fund-raising. As the CEO, York's president must make cost containment a priority, while working within fiscal constraints to optimize classroom excellence and the quality of student life. The president must also take a prominent role in gift solicitation, especially with current or prospective major donors.

The president should also bring an entrepreneurial spirit to the campus. In order to limit the amount of debt which students incur, York has not accelerated tuition as aggressively as other institutions. While this aids student recruitment, revenue from tuition and fund-raising increasingly strains to cover the cost of operations. Finding alternative ways to generate revenue will therefore be of prime interest over the next decade.

Administratively, York's president faces the challenge of not having an executive vice-president to assist with oversight of day-to-day operations. The net effect is that the president wears two hats as both the chief executive officer and the chief operating officer.

This dual tasking is eased by virtue of York's proven and veteran staff in finance and operations. Still, the president must shoulder significant on-campus responsibilities without sacrificing the time and effort required for fund-raising and building external relations.

Because York is a small campus, the president is widely-known and must be a role model of York's ideals. The president has an opportunity to build close connections with faculty, staff, and students on an individual basis. Past presidents have taken advantage of this opportunity and have been highly visible in their support of campus life. The campus community has openly expressed its hope that the next president will continue this tradition.

The Search Process

At its January 2020 meeting, the board of trustees appointed six of its members to serve as the search committee to find a new president. Members of the committee are:

Dr. Mike Armour, chair
Dr. Ed Bailey
Dr. Dickie Hill
Mr. Chester James
Mrs. Linda Thomas
Mr. Mitch Wilburn

Two faculty/staff representatives, Mrs. Christi Lones and Mr. Tim Lewis, serve as liaisons to the committee.

Process Outline:

1. Applicants are asked to express their interest by email to presidential-search@york.edu.
2. In addition to this expression of interest, applicants are asked to provide all materials as outlined in the president application packet. Please submit all documents in PDF format.

The application packet may be downloaded from york.edu/search-process
3. Once the application packet is complete, the entire committee will review it.
4. Following this review, the committee will conduct an initial interview with the applicant, most likely by video conference. The interview will be recorded so that committee members unable to join the interview can review it at length.
5. On the basis of this initial interview and the completion of background and reference checks, the full committee will identify a set of candidates for a second round of consideration. These candidates will then undergo more extensive interviews with the committee. These interviews will also be recorded and made available not merely to the committee, but to any board member who wishes to review them.
6. Ideally, the second round of interviews will result in the committee recommending a final list of two or three candidates to the board.
7. The candidates on this final list will be invited individually to visit the campus. The visit will include interaction with members of the faculty, staff, administration, and students, along with further discussions with members of the search committee and the board.
8. Shortly after these campus visits conclude, the committee will make its final recommendations to the board.

This is the tentative calendar for the search process:

March 1-April 30

- Active recruitment of potential candidates
- Search committee review of applicants
- Initial applicant interviews

May 1 – Application deadline

May 8 – Search committee recommendations to the board for second-round interviews

May 15-June 15 – In-depth interviews with candidates

June 30 – Short list of candidates approved

July 1-31 – Campus visits by finalists

August 5 – Final selection made; offer structured

This is an aggressive calendar, we realize, but it reflects the board's desire to maintain momentum in the search and to have the new president on campus no later than the last quarter of 2020.

York's Mission

The mission of York College is to transform lives through Christ-centered education and to equip students for lifelong service to God, family and society.

An expanded explanation of how the York community understands this mission and the goals which flow from it is found at www.york.edu/mission-statement.html.

York College Overview

York College combines a unique blend of academics, spirituality, and community. Founded in 1890 by the United Brethren Church, it closed in 1954 when its programs were transferred elsewhere. In 1956, the campus and corporate charter passed to Churches of Christ and classes convened in the fall.

York therefore has a heritage of 130 years as a private school with a strong spiritual foundation. Over that period of time, twenty presidents have served the college.

While York maintains its historic ties to Churches of Christ, the majority of its students currently come from other religious traditions or from no religious background whatsoever. The student body is also ethnically diverse, more so than any other post-secondary institution in Nebraska.

With that diversity come many students from low-income backgrounds. International students, especially athletes, comprise an increasing component of the student body.

Students are served by eleven academic departments which offer associate and bachelor's degrees, with growing online graduate programs in both education and organizational leadership. Opportunities for study abroad are also offered. York's enrollment of 518 students for the spring 2020 semester is the highest in its history.

Classroom instruction is in the hands of 65 faculty members, 26 who are fulltime, 39 of them adjuncts. Of these, 53% have terminal degrees, with three others presently pursuing terminal degrees.

A vibrant campus ministry undergirds York's mission to transform lives through Christ-centered education. The student body, faculty, and staff meet daily for a chapel service. And students are encouraged to participate in short-term mission efforts, particularly the Let's Start Talking program.

The performing arts have long been a strength at York. Currently 21% of the undergraduate student body participates in choral, musical, or theatrical productions.

The recent construction of the Bartholomew Performing Arts Center greatly enhanced both rehearsal and performance settings for theater productions, the concert choir, and other musical programs. The 5000-square-foot facility allows flexible staging arrangements, making a variety of events possible for the campus and the community.

A member of the NAIA, York fields intercollegiate teams in seven sports for men and eight for women. Roughly 80% of the student body participate in intercollegiate athletics. York competes in the Kansas Collegiate Athletics Conference (KCAC).

Both intercollegiate and intramural sports have benefited from recent campus investments in athletic venues. Construction of the Campbell Center created a first-rate intramural facility. Renovation of the gym (the Freeman Center) included new bleachers and a new floor for intercollegiate events. Construction of the Touchton Clubhouse gave the highly-competitive baseball team an exceptional facility.

Over the past five years York College has gained regional attention by opening the Clayton Museum of Ancient History. The state of Nebraska now actively promotes the museum as a recommended site to visit.

Major renovations are currently underway on campus. A \$2.25 million Federal grant is converting the Levitt Library into a thoroughly modern research facility, equipped with the latest in technology. The first phase of the renovation was completed in February 2020.

A separate grant of three million dollars will permit complete transformation of Hulitt Hall, erected in 1903 as the second campus building. Plans for the overhaul will be completed by the summer of 2020.

A fuller history of York College can be found at www.york.edu/college-history.

The City of York

From its inception, York College has had a unique relationship with the city of York and the people of York County. The original school charter in 1890 provided for the campus to revert to city ownership in the event the college failed. It was thus the City of York which formally passed the campus to Churches of Christ in 1956.

York's presidents have made a concerted effort to build strong ties between the campus and the community. The community has reciprocated with generous gifts to York College and by providing employment opportunities for York students. Major facilities on the campus bear the names of prominent York citizens.

Surrounding the college are quaint homes built a century ago. They face tree-lined streets paved with bricks. The city is quintessential small-town mid-America, with friendly, industrious people and a community which is close-knit and safe.

The city of York is located at the intersection of Interstate 80 and U.S. Highway 81, a major north-south transit route through mid-America. An hour west of Lincoln, York has a population of about 8,000.

Yet its amenities are unusual for a town that size. The city boasts a full-featured daily newspaper. A convention center capitalizes on the capacity of numerous hotels and nearby restaurants. Banking is also prominent. Cornerstone Bank (one of the school's benefactors) ranks among the largest agricultural lending institutions in the nation.

Agriculture, indeed, dominates the economy of York County. The soil in this part of Nebraska is some of the most fertile anywhere in the country. And because of this, major agricultural research centers have chosen to locate to the area.

Nebraska's only correctional facility for women is located in York, housing 275 inmates. York College works closely with the prison and offers class work leading to a degree for select inmates.

Finances and Fund-Raising

At a time when most small colleges are struggling financially, York enjoys financial stability. For the past decade, the school has consistently operated within a balanced budget. Since 2009 York College has tripled its endowment to more than \$17 million, with a goal of \$20 million in the near future.

The college's most recent comprehensive gift campaign exceeded its original \$10.7 million goal by more than six million dollars. Alumni are particularly faithful in helping the school, and almost a third of them participated in the recent campaign.

York operates on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. An experienced Finance Committee within the board closely monitors endowment investments and recommends changes in portfolio allocations to the board as appropriate.

York's board plans to announce a new, multi-year comprehensive gift campaign in the fall of 2020. York's new president will play a major role in the campaign, which the board hopes to promote as the launch of a new era under a new campus leader.

The Board of Trustees

York's Board of Trustees consists of highly qualified men and women from far-reaching parts of the U.S. They predominantly have backgrounds in business, law, ministry, academics, engineering, and medicine. Many, including the current chairman, are graduates of York or parents of York alumni.

Trustees serve three-year, overlapping terms, with one third of the terms expiring annually. There is no limit on consecutive terms, and most current board members have long tenure, giving them extensive knowledge of York and providing valuable continuity in leadership.

Regular meetings of the board occur three times per year, in January, mid-spring, and October. The spring meeting is slated to coincide with graduation. The October meeting agenda centers on major corporate requirements, such as tentative approval of the budget for the next fiscal year, financial review of the previous fiscal year, trustee elections, and election of board officers.

The January meeting is usually conducted as an off-site retreat. Its purpose is long-range planning and board enrichment. Topics for the retreat usually revolve around key trends impacting higher education, the accreditation process, or best practices in non-profit boards. At this same meeting, the board also gives final approval to the budget initially presented in October.

The board does its utmost to avoid intrusion into day-to-day management of the campus and to restrict its decisions to policy matters and broad corporate governance of the institution. Presently the trustees are all members of the Church of Christ, although the bylaws permit up to 20% of the board to be from other religious affiliations.

Board Priorities for the Next Decade

The board of trustees has devoted substantive discussion to its overall vision for York College in the decade ahead. While this vision has not yet been formalized in writing, certain consensus themes have emerged from these discussions. These include the need to:

- Increase on-campus student enrollment to the maximum which can be facilitated
- Provide higher faculty and staff salaries
- Mature and diversify online course offerings and degrees
- Bring endowment to \$20 million in the near term and \$30-40 million by 2030
- Identify and implement alternative streams of revenue
- Steadily improve the number of terminal degrees in the faculty
- Upgrade older facilities on campus to bring them up to modern standards
- Reduce dependence on our line of credit
- Fill existing board vacancies with a younger cadre of trustees to reduce the average board-member age

York College is an Equal Opportunity Employer

York College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, religion, or disability in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, loan, and other financial aid programs, athletic and other College-administered programs or employment as required by federal laws, including Title VII and Title IX, except when such distinctions may be appropriate under state and federal constitutional provisions due to the religious identity of York College and its mission, as determined by its Board of Trustees and the nature of the particular employment position or activity in question.